CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides background of the research, research questions, objectives of the research, hypotheses, scope of the research, significances of the research, clarification of key terms, and organization of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Good student-teacher rapport is important in English Language Teaching (ELT) since it could improve student's chances to be successful in their performance, so that educators must strive to form meaningful relationships with students (Harmer, 2007; Pianta, 1999). Rapport in educational context has two dimensions, namely, positive rapport indicated by the high degree of students' feeling of connectedness to their English teachers and negative rapport indicated by a high level of students' anxiety in their interaction with English teachers (Creasey, Jarvis, & Knapcik, 2009). In Indonesian context, negative rapport is still found because not all teachers build close relationships with their students. Although some teachers care enough in helping students to deal with their problems, apathetic teachers are still found (Wahyuni, 2018). Moreover, another study also stated that every teacher would have different understanding of teacher-student rapport and many of them are unaware about how to build and maintain rapport (Farrell, 2014). This condition cannot be ignored since negative teacher-student rapport would affect academic achievement, because the role of rapport in an ELT context is very important as the foundation for a constructive, active, cooperative, and enjoyable learning process in the classroom (Fleming, 2003).

The same problem also happened in its relation to speaking performance, which is still considered as one of challenging skills in English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia (Bygate, 1987; Mukminin *et al.*, 2015). One fundamental problem happens when students feel anxious to speak English in the classroom because they do not want to make errors in front of teachers, which can hinder them to perform their speaking ability. This condition would stop their

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language learning and performance abilities, as discovered by some researches which emphasized that this problem lowers learners' speaking performance (Tanveer, 2007; Woodrow, 2006). The students might become less tense in trying to practice and improve their English speaking skill if they have positive connection with their English teacher, so that they will feel safe even though making mistakes in speaking English several times.

Several studies related to the relationship of teacher-student rapport and English academic achievement had been conducted previously (Basch, 2012; Lee, 2012; Yunus, Osman, & Ishaq, 2011). However, the exploration of those researches was only covers English academic achievement generally. The studies which specifically try to relate the two dimensions of rapport (teacher connectedness and student's anxiety when interacting with teachers) to English speaking skill have not been effectively investigated, especially in Indonesian context. Based on the explanation above, it is crucial to conduct a research about teacher-student rapport and students' speaking performance to discover how much the two dimensions of rapport are correlated to students' English speaking performance and to find out teacher's strategies in building rapport in an ELT context.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research questions investigated in this study were focused on these questions:

1. Is there any relationship between the two dimensions of teacher-student rapport and student's English speaking performance?

2. What are teacher's strategies in building rapport in an ELT context?

1.3 Aims of the Research

In accordance with the research questions above, this study aimed at:

1. To find out the relationship between the two dimensions of teacher-student rapport and student's English speaking performance.

2. To discover teacher's strategies in building rapport in ELT context.

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1.4 Hypotheses

Based on the research question 1, the hypotheses of this study will be:

$H_1 : \rho \neq 0$ (There is a positive and significant correlation between students' speaking performance and teacher connectedness).

$H_1 : \rho \neq 0$ (There is a negative and significant correlation between students' speaking performance and students' anxiety in their interaction with English Teachers).

1.5 Scope of the Research

Due to the researcher's limitation of time for conducting the research, among four essential skills in English language learning (listening, reading, speaking, and writing), the researcher will only focus on English speaking performance.

1.6 Significances of the Research

This study will be expected to be significant in the following aspects: First, the result of this study could be used as a suggestion for teachers to build positive teacher-student rapport and to design school activities which support positive teacher-student rapport in order to create good atmosphere when the students learn to speak English. Second, this study could also be used to enrich the theories of teacher-student rapport and English speaking performance.

1.7 Clarification of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding concerning the use of terminology related to this paper, these are the definitions of the terminologies.

1. Teacher-student rapport

    This study defines teacher-student rapport as a positive and harmonious educational relationship between teachers and students in terms of classroom interaction, characterized by mutual acceptance, understanding,

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warmth, closeness, trust, respect, care and cooperation, which makes students feel comfortable to learn in the classroom.

2. English speaking performance

    English speaking performance is the actual use of language knowledge in actual speech production and comprehension in concrete situations which could be measured.

3. Teacher connectedness

    Teacher connectedness is one of two rapport dimensions which reflects how connected or close the student felt towards the teacher. Teacher connectedness is a sign of positive rapport between students and teachers.

4. Students' anxiety when interacting with English teachers

    Students' anxiety when interacting with English teachers is one of two rapport dimensions which reflected students' apprehensions regarding teacher acceptance. Students' anxiety when interacting with English teachers is a sign of negative rapport between students and teachers.

1.8 Organization of the paper

The thesis would be presented into five chapters elaborated below.

Chapter I Introduction

This chapter provides the introduction of the research consisting of background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, hypotheses, scope of the research, significances of the research, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II Literature Review

This chapter reviews the related theoretical background of this study. It consists of the notion of teacher-student rapport, two dimensions of rapport, teacher-student rapport within English Language Teaching (ELT), teacher-

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student rapport and students' speaking performance in ELT, strategies to improve teacher-student rapport, Indonesian senior high school students' performance in speaking English, students' problems in speaking, and previous related studies.

Chapter III Research Methodology

This chapter provides research methodology of the present study. The explanation of research design, research site and participants, data collection techniques including the validity and the reliability test, and data analysis technique are elaborated in this chapter.

Chapter IV Findings and Discussion

This chapter deliberates the findings of research and relates the findings to theories discussed in the chapter II and other previous relevant researches.

Chapter V Conclusions, Limitations, Implications and Recommendations

This part presents the conclusion of the study summarized from the previous chapter. It also provides implications and recommendations of the study in terms of educational context.

1.9 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has presented an introduction of the study, including background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, hypotheses, scope of the research, significances of the research, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper, followed by relevant theories presented in the next chapter.

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