

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the general issues related to the problem investigated in this study. These include the background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, research method, clarification of related terms, and paper organization.

1.1. Background of the Study

Speaking as a part of communication is difficult for some college students, particularly non-English department students (NEDS). Speaking is more than just pronouncing a word. The students have to speak fluently and accurately, and think at the same time (Pinter, 2006: 55). Yet, it is not easy to do. Some students have been learning English for a long time, yet they cannot speak fluently. They understand the conversation but they cannot respond to the interlocutor immediately.

Related to the difficulties of speaking skill, Floris (2005: 56) conducted a research in fourteen non-English departments and it showed that 50% of the students found that speaking was the most difficult skill to master, especially while presenting materials. It was because they had to face the fear to stand in front of many people, to look smart, and to use a language that they seldom used in their daily life. It is accordance with Brown (2001: 270) who states that one of the major obstacles that learners have to overcome in learning to speak is the anxiety in producing wrong and incomprehensible thing.

Actually, there are some reasons that make speaking in English difficult. Beside what was said by Brown, there are also other difficulties appear in a speaking class, those are students worried about other responses, using their first language - Bahasa Indonesia, rather than English, having inadequate English

vocabulary, being unable to pronounce well, and being timid or less confident in speaking English (Yastutik, 2007). Saputro (2008) on his research also found that students encountered some difficulties in speaking English, such as nervousness, lack of confidence, and lack of linguistic supports including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. In addition, all those difficulties which might be encountered by the NEDS will affect their speaking skill. It will make the students tend to be passive and less practice that may cause poor speaking English skill.

However, English has been playing an important role in facilitating students' preparation for professional requirements. English belongs to the requirements for those who are seeking jobs, as its use as the working language in 85% of international organizations (Crystal, 1997, as cited in Graddol, 2000: 3). Therefore, nowadays, NEDS are demanded to use English in terms of communication. Placement Deputy of BNP2TKI, Noch (2013), said that the demand of international labor market particularly for nurses is increasing. For instance, until 2015, the demand of nurses to Japan is 600.000 people, yet so far nurse placement workers to Japan since 2008-2012 has reached as many as 892 people. It can be seen that the demand is high but unfortunately, Indonesia has not taken benefit from it. Most of Indonesian nurses are not qualified, for instance they cannot speak English fluently.

In addition, related to the importance of English skill mastery, Floris (2005: 56) on his research also asked the students to rate the importance of speaking English mastery and it showed that 86.8% of the respondents perceived the mastery of English as very important (51.7%) and important (35.1%) especially for communication related to their study purposes. Consequently, the students should learn English more comprehensively to meet the standards. In other words, regardless of the difficulties encountered while they are trying to speak in English, they have to find some ways or strategies to overcome those difficulties.

According to the explanation above, this study is designed to observe the difficulties encountered by non-English department students in speaking English particularly nursing students. Furthermore, students' strategies used to overcome the difficulties are also investigated.

1.2. Research Questions

The research problem of the study is formulated in the following questions.

1. What difficulties are encountered by non-English department students in speaking English?
2. What strategies are applied by non-English department students to overcome the difficulties encountered in speaking English?

1.3. Aims of the Study

In accordance with the background and research questions, the aims of this study are:

- a) to identify difficulties encountered by non-English department students in speaking English; and
- b) to observe strategies applied by non-English department students to overcome the difficulties encountered in speaking English

1.4. Scope of the study

The study focuses on investigating the difficulties which are encountered by non-English department students in speaking English. This study also identifies strategies applied by non-English department students to overcome the difficulties encountered in speaking English.

1.5. Significance of the study

The study is expected to give contributions to both English subject lecturers and students. For lecturers, hopefully it provides information about difficulties faced by NEDS in speaking English and their strategy used to overcome the difficulties so that the lecturers can decide which teaching strategies can be used to help the students in improving their speaking skill. Meanwhile, for the students, it will provide information that can be used to minimize the difficulties they encountered in the process of learning speaking English.

1.6. Research Method

This study was designed as a case study research design. Case study was appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to focus on a unit to produce an in-depth description by looking at a process with a small amount of respondents (Ary et al, 2010: 452; Gerring, 2007: 48). The foci of this study are NEDS' difficulties and strategies in speaking English. Thus, the study employed a qualitative method.

To collect the data, there were two instruments used in this research, those are questionnaire and interview. Questionnaire was used to get information about NEDS' difficulties and strategies in speaking English. An interview was used to gain deeper information from questionnaire. Further elaboration related to research method is presented in chapter three.

1.7. Clarification of related terms

The following key terms are presented to avoid misunderstanding of several terms or concepts in this research.

a) *Speaking English Difficulties*

In this study, speaking English difficulties refer to troubles or problems encountered by Non-English department students in speaking English.

Generally, speaking English difficulties are troubles or problems in speaking tasks that result insufficient speaking proficiency (Ferris and Tagg 1996; Kim 2006; Ostler 1980, as cited in Chen, 2009: 119).

b) *Non-English Department Students*

In this study, non-English department students refer to nursing students who are learning English. Bailey (2006: 12) defines non-English department students as a group of learners who have particular specialization which is not English either literally or education.

c) *Interlocutor*

In this study, interlocutor refers to a person involved in a conversation or dialogue (Hornby, 2003). Related to nursing, interlocutor can be patient or colleague.

1.8. Paper Organization

This paper is presented into five chapters, as follows.

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, research question, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, research method, clarification of related terms, and paper organization.

CHAPTER II : THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter discusses some theories of speaking skill, related theories of difficulties and strategies in speaking English, and also previous studies.

CHAPTER III : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter gives clear discussion on how the study is conducted and analyzed. It clarifies how the data are collected. The data analysis also will be explained.

CHAPTER IV : FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter reports the data that has been collected, the findings of the study and discussion of the data which are gained during the study.

CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the conclusion and several suggestions of the study based on the analysis in chapter four. The conclusion states the answer to the research questions.

