

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the study, statements of problem, aims of the study, research methods, significance of the study, clarification of terms of the study, and the organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

This study is an attempt to observe students' speaking performance, especially in terms of grammar, fluency, and comprehension, while they are having English conversation class with a native English teacher.

The subject of English is already common to be taught at all levels of education in Indonesia. This is due to the importance of English in some aspects in life such as for having good communication in international scale governmental corporation, business, tourism, and education (Emilia, 2005: 1-2; cited in Emilia, 2009; Richards, 2008). One of the important parts of English that is crucial for oral communication is speaking. What is important in speaking is to pronounce the English words clearly and how to convey the messages so that the other party understands it. All of these will later lead into a good flow of the conversation.

In order to have the accuracy and fluency in conversation, many schools in Indonesia have native English speakers as teachers. This is with the hope that students can have the experience of learning English directly from those who

practically speak the language. The role of native English speaker teachers is needed and estimated to be more helpful than non-native teachers because they can help students to make direct conversation with people who speak that language. By having these native teachers, students are expected to be able to speak and understand English well.

On the other hand, there are other theories which say that learning English directly from native speakers is not the best way in improving students' speaking performances. Rajadurai (as cited in Adityarini & Hidayat, 2007: 121) stated that native speakers are no longer be wanted or considered as easier to be understood. This issue is probably due to the lack of the students' comprehension about what is said by the native speaker since they are not accustomed to it. Cultural differences in both sides are also one of the reasons of why some people don't think that learning English with native speakers will guarantee a good result on their production (speaking) skill.

Considering the importance of learning English with native speakers, the study is going to investigate students' speaking performances in English conversation class with a native English teacher. This study will also investigate the advantages and disadvantages of a native English teacher toward the students' interests in learning English.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the explanation above, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- a) How is students' speaking performance especially in terms of grammar, fluency, and comprehension in English conversation class with a native English teacher?
- b) What are the advantages and disadvantages of a native English teacher toward the students' interests in learning English?

1.3 Aims of the Study

Referring to the background and the statements of problem, the aims of this study are:

- a) To find out how students' speaking performance especially in terms of grammar, fluency, and comprehension in English conversation class with a native English teacher is
- b) To find out the advantages and disadvantages of a native teacher toward the students' interests in learning English

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give contribution for the development of teaching English speaking, both theoretically and practically. The result of this study is expected to enrich the literature in terms of the students' speaking performance in English conversation class with a native teacher, and to give beneficial references for further research/ investigation in the same area with different contexts. The result of this study is also expected to give information for both teachers and students in the process of teaching-learning English speaking. For teachers, especially non-natives, this can be used as an input and challenge to improve their English skill to be as fluent as native teachers. Moreover, students must not be afraid of learning English and practicing their speaking with native speaker teachers since they can experience the real practice of using English. Hopefully, schools and teachers can find out whether having native English speaker teachers is beneficial for students' speaking achievement or not.

1.5 Clarification of Terms

The following is the clarification of terms used in this study:

1.5.1 Speaking Performance

Speaking is one of the important communication skills, along with reading, listening and writing, which are the four major skills in English.

Speaking is one of the productive activities for language use; usually occurs in

contexts which also involve listening in which appropriateness of what is said requires understanding of what others have said and prediction of how the speakers will respond (Troike, 2006). In this study, what is meant by speaking performance is how students produce/use their speaking ability to communicate their ideas for interpersonal and transactional purposes (Nunan, 1999: 228; cited in Kroeker, 2009: 9).

1.5.2 A Conversation Class

A conversation class can be defined as a group of students meeting regularly to study a subject (conversation) under the guidance of a teacher (*“English Conversation Lessons and Classes”*, 2011). In this conversation class the same teacher and learners meet class after class, and the class takes place at the same time on the same days (Davies & Pearse, 2008)

1.5.3 Native English Speakers

Native English speakers are those whose first language (L1) is English. According to Troike (2006), the important features that all shades of L1s share are that they are assumed to be languages which are acquired during early childhood - normally beginning before the age of about three years – and that they are learned as part of growing up among people who speak them.

1.6 Organization of the Paper

This research paper is organized into five chapters as follows:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter provides the background of the study, statements of problem, aims of the study, research methods, significance of the study, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter consists of related theories that are relevant to the research. The related theories from other experts and researchers built the foundation that the researcher used in investigating the problems of the study.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology that is used to conduct the study. It includes the research design, the formulation of problems, clarification of terms, population and sample, research procedure, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion

This chapter reports the findings and discussion of the study generated by interpreting and analyzing the collected data. It provides the data collection, data presentation, the explanation of data analysis, and the result of data analysis.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter concludes the result of the study and suggests recommendations for further research.

