CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, statements of the problem, aims of the study, limitation of the study, significance of the study, research method, clarification of the terms, and organization of paper.

1. 1 Background of the Study

Speaking in foreign language is something difficult for some students. It can bring several difficulties for them. It is because speaking needs more efforts and certain skill. The students have to speak and think at the same time and they are required to speak fluently and accurately. To speak fluently and accurately is not something easy to do and it can be achieved by practicing (Pinter, 2006 as cited in Ariani, 2009)

In English classroom setting, the students are required to speak English in order to respond to teacher's questions, make a dialogue about particular topic, practise material, and give opinion. In giving opinion, the students have to construct idea while finding appropriate words to convey the idea of the argument to the others. Moreover, the students should think in a short time to get an answer of a question in responding to teacher's questions. Because of that condition, speaking is considered as difficult skill and might bring several difficulties for them. The difficulties which are encountered by the students can relate to their

linguistic competence such as lack of vocabulary, poor grammar, lack of idea to speak, wrong intonation, and inappropriate pronunciation.

Besides the difficulties related to their linguistic competence, the students might face difficulties related to their psychological traits such as lack of confidence, fear, and afraid to speak in front of other students, and anxiety of producing wrong sentences. Brown (2001) states that one of the major obstacles learners have to overcome in learning to speak is the anxiety generated over the risks of blurting things out that are wrong, stupid, or incomprehensible.

A research conducted by Yastutik (2007) shows that there are some speaking difficulties appear in a conversational class. Those difficulties are worrying about others' responses, using Indonesia rather than English, having inadequate English vocabulary, being unable to pronounce well, being timid or less confident of speaking English. In addition, Saputro (2008) found that some difficulties faced by students in expressing idea are nervousness, lack of confidence, and lack of linguistic supports including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

All that difficulties which might be faced by the students will affect students' ability in speaking. The students with speaking difficulties tend to be passive or less participation in the classroom. It means that they loose their opportunity to practice their speaking skill which may cause poor speaking skill.

This study focuses on observing difficulties of vocational high school students because they are prepared to enter job world after their graduation and today's companies and institutions, both national and international, require human

resources that are proficient in English. Therefore, the ability to communicate in English is important for vocational high school students to help them compete in job world. As Gatot, the director of Directorate of Vocational Secondary Education (Dikmenjur) said in Kompas (2001) cited in Sriningsih (2009) that speaking ability will help the students in the job world. It shows that speaking skill is very important for vocational high school students.

According to standard competence for vocational high school, second grade students are required to be able to communicate with English in elementary level. In the term of TOEIC test in vocational school, score that should be achieved for elementary level is 305 – 450. According to resume descriptions based on TOEIC score ranges cited in Sriningsih (2009), this score demonstrate that speaker has a functional but limited proficiency and able to maintain very simple face to face conversations on familiar topic. It means that second grade students of vocational school are required to be able to communicate in simple conversation and maintain the conversation.

To achieve that requirement, they have to participate actively in learning process in the classroom in order to practice their English. In fact, participating actively in the classroom is a big deal for some students and they choose to be less participation. It can be caused by some difficulties of speaking they face or they are worried about unable to speak fluently.

Based on the explanation above, this study is going to observe difficulties encountered by vocational high school students in speaking English in the classroom. The difficulties encountered in expressing idea will be the focus of the

study. Furthermore, their strategies used to solve the difficulties will be investigated.

1. 2 Statements of the Problem

The statements of the problem of this study are:

1. What speaking difficulties do the students encounter in classroom?

2. What strategies do they use to solve the difficulties?

1. 3 Aims of the Study

The aims of the study are as follows:

1. To investigate speaking difficulties encountered by students in the classroom setting.

2. To reveal strategies used by the students in solving their difficulties.

1. 4 Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on discovering difficulties which are encountered by the students in speaking English in classroom setting. There are many forms of speaking in the classroom conducted by the students so that the researcher limits this study in difficulties encountered by the students in expressing their idea. In addition, the strategies they use in solving their difficulty in speaking English are also investigated.

It focuses on vocational high school students because they are prepared to enter job world after their graduation and communication competence is important for them to compete in job world.

1. 5 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

English is learned as a foreign language in Indonesia. Learning English as a foreign language is not something easy. If students want to master English, they should master all skills of the language. In learning the language there are so many difficulties faced by the students and the difficulties occur in each skill of the language including speaking skill. The researcher interested in conducting the study relates to speaking difficulties because she found that some students keep silent in her classroom activity when she taught in one vocational school in Bandung. In addition, there are some students who were difficult to speak English in giving response when they are interviewed in one of teaching sessions.

1. 6 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is hopefully able to present information about difficulties faced by students in speaking English and their strategy used to overcome the difficulties. In addition, this study hopefully can give some information for the teachers to help them decide teaching strategy which can facilitate their students to improve their speaking ability. Besides, by knowing students' difficulties in speaking, the teacher can introduce other strategies to be used by the students in solving their problem.

The result of the study is also expected to increase teachers' awareness about speaking difficulties encounter by their students so that the teachers can help their students to minimize and solve the difficulties in order to improve students' speaking ability.

1. 7 Research Methodology

1. 7. 1 Research Design

This study employed a case study research design. Case study is appropriate for this study because it allows the researcher to do study in small amount of respondents. It is also because this study does not seek to generalize the findings to other context. The focus of this study is on students' difficulties and strategies in speaking English.

1. 7. 2 Sites and Respondents

The site of the study is the second grade students of a vocational high school in Bandung. One of second grade classes in that vocational high school was chosen as the respondents of this study.

1. 7. 3 Data Collection

A. Instruments

Questionnaire was used to get information about difficulties faced by the students in speaking English. It also used to obtain the information about their strategies in solving the difficulties.

Interview was used to gain deeper information which is not available in questionnaire. Semi-structured interview was used in this study because by using semi-structured interview, the researcher enables to ask interviewee flexibly while focus on the topic of the study.

Observation was used to know about students' speaking behavior in the classroom. It is also used to know the real fact when the students use communication strategies in solving their speaking problem.

B. Data Collecting Procedures

The data in this study are collected through these procedures:

- Administering questionnaire to the respondents in order to gain information about students' difficulties in speaking English and their strategy to solve the difficulties.

- Conducting the interview to obtain deeper information which is not available in the questionnaire.

- Conducting the observation in the classroom to know students' difficulties in speaking and the implementation of students' strategies in solving their speaking difficulties.

1. 7. 4 Data Analysis

After collecting the data, several steps were conducted to analyze the data gained. The data from questionnaire were counted and classified into group in order to make it easier to be analyzed. Then the data from interview were

transcribed into interview script. All the data were analyzed and interpreted to find out difficulties encounter by the students and the strategy they use to solve the difficulties. The difficulties found were classified into two groups, difficulties relate to speaking competence proposed by Oxford (1990) and difficulties relate to psychological traits proposed by Brown (2001) and Harmer (2003). The strategy found in the data was classified into communication strategies outlined by Thornbury (2005), those are: circumlocution, word coinage, foreignizing, approximation, using an all purpose word, language switch, paralinguistic, appealing for help, avoidance strategy and discourse strategy. It is also classified into affective strategy proposed by Oxford (1990).

1. 8 Clarification of the Terms

1. Difficulty

Difficulty can be defined as something that is hard to understand.

2. Speaking difficulty

In this term speaking difficulty means the difficulty in producing a language.

3. Strategy

Strategy is a plan, step, or conscious action toward achievement of an objective (Oxford, 1990:8)

4. Communication Strategy

Communication strategy is techniques of coping with difficulties in communicating in an improperly known second language (Stern, 1983 as cited in Zhang, 2007).

8

5. Vocational School

Vocational schools, also called trade schools and technical colleges, are popular choices for people who prefer to learn specific job skills without having to spend four years in college (Moore, 2011).

1. 9 Organization of Paper

The paper is presented in five chapters. Each chapter discusses certain issue.

Chapter I presents an introduction consisting of background of the study, scope of the study, research question, aims of the study, significance of the study, research methodology and clarification of term.

Chapter II confers a theoretical foundation. It focuses on theories related to speaking skill, communicative competence and communication strategies.

Chapter III discusses about research methodology. It presents research design, subject of study, data collection, instrument, procedure of collecting data and data analysis.

Chapter IV presents the findings and discussion of the study. It presents the discussion of the data which is gained during the study. Moreover, it presents the findings of the study.

Chapter V draws the conclusions and suggestions.