

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents background of the research, statement of the problem, research questions, and objective of the research. The significance of the research is also presented in this chapter.

#### **Background of the Research**

Speaking English is considered as an important language skill and fundamental to human communication. Many people around the world use English to communicate each other. Being able to speak English, people can interact with others without obstacles. In addition, people speak English to upgrade themselves to survive in the globalization era. According to Al-Sibai (2004), we a student live at a time where the ability to speak English fluently has become a must, especially those who want to advance in certain fields of human endeavor. In other words, mastering English speaking skills is not an exclusive requirement anymore since English is required in many fields. Therefore, students should be supported to be able to master English.

Although speaking is considered a main language skill that students should improve, this does not mean it is simple to master. Therefore, students need to be encouraged to master this skill. According to Brown and Yule (1983), spoken language production is often considered one of the most difficult aspects of language learning. Another supporting statement is argued by Zhang (2009), speaking remains the most difficult skill to master for the majority of English learners, and they are still incompetent in communicating orally in English. In short, it is indeed difficult to be able to speak English. However, if students keep practicing using English, they will get used to it.

Based on the researcher's experience, there are many difficulties that students of English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta face when speaking English. Student has own difficulties in speaking English, such as difficult to pronounce English words, fear of committing mistake, difficult to understand different in syntax, and confused in transferring language (from native language to English and vice versa). The factors that influence the difficulties in speaking faced by the first year students of English Education Department are their confidence, lack of vocabulary and understanding grammar. Based on Hetrakul (1995) vocabulary is a component in speaking. In speaking English, students need to master a lot of vocabulary, because by mastering many words, they would study way of speaking easily. Sometimes, students felt difficult when they were learning because they had limited vocabulary (as cited Afisa, 2015).

The researcher's experience in the first year at English Education Department's learning process was that there were many students who found difficulties in speaking English. Student had own causes in difficulties. The student suddenly stopped when they were in the middle of speaking, the student kept quiet or spoke as little as possible, the students got confused in transferring into target language, and got difficulties in pronunciations. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested to know the difficulties and the factors that influence in speaking English among the first year Students' of English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Speaking is considered a main language skill that students should improve. It has been widely noticed that they face many difficulties in speaking English. Tuan and May

(2015) stated in reality, many language learners find it difficult to express themselves in spoken language in the target language. Hinkel (2005) argued that “speaking skill is still regarded as the most difficult skills to master especially for university students” (as cited Nazara, 2011, p.29).

The factors that affect the difficulties such as some of students hesitate to speak English because they fear the other students can laugh or insult at them if they make mistake (fear of committing mistake). Other students have low self-confidence, be nervous and anxious when they want to speak. Some of students also got difficulties when they used the words because lack of vocabulary and suitable grammar. Another factor that makes students to hesitate to speak in English is that they are shy and nervous. They feel fearful to speak English in front of other people because they lack confidence about their own competence in English.

Another problem that becomes difficulties in speaking is the students are not in same range, there are variant ranges of student ability in English lesson. Other than that, due to lack of English language capabilities will make it possible obstacles in learning activities such as speaking English. Furthermore, English Department is not the major choice in taking study program, therefore the students become less enthusiastic and have lack ability in speaking English. It happened to the researcher, the researcher's option is another study program. Because of that reason, makes the author is less excited in learning, and making learning English is difficult to follow, especially speaking English.

For the researcher's experience that is explained above, there were difficulties in speaking English that are faced by the researcher in the first year. The researcher sees these difficulties in speaking English are experienced by the students the following years

in the first year. This is obviously a problem, because the aim of the English Education Department is to provide students with the capabilities to understand the language and the ability to speak it. If learners are not able or difficult to speak English, this aim has not been fully achieved. Therefore the researcher would identify the difficulties in speaking English among the first year students' of English Department.

### **Research Questions**

The researcher formulated two research questions. The questions of this study are;

1. What are the difficulties faced by the first year students' of English Education Department of UMY in speaking English?
2. What factors causing the difficulties in speaking English among the first year students' of English Education Department of UMY?

### **Objective of the Research**

Based the formulation of the problem in a form of research questions, the researcher started this study which aims to:

1. Reveal the difficulties found by the first year students' of English Department in speaking.
2. Reveal the factors causing the difficulties in speaking English among the first year students' of English Department.

### **Significance of the Research**

There are four significant points of this study that might give benefit to lecturers, the researcher, the students of English Education Department, and the next researcher.

**For lecturers.** This result of the research will benefit the lecturer to show how to encounter the difficulties in speaking for student in first year. After the lecturer read this

research, they can provide the appropriate way in teaching speaking English skills because the teachers knew what the causes the difficulties.

**For the Students.** The findings will inform the student about difficulties speaking that knock down the first year students of English Education Department and become more conscious to what causes the difficulties on their speaking English skills. Besides, the students will know the difficulties and the factors in speaking so that the students could reach self-awareness. It will develop their sense of responsibility to improve their speaking skill.

**For the next researchers.** This research provides a topic that is related to the factors that cause the difficulties of students in speaking English. Possibly, it will be a good review for the next researchers who require some references/ resources in similar topics.