

Chapter I

Introduction

Research Background

Within the field of education, language learning strategies (LLS) have been portrayed as a considerable attention in which are among the main factors that help to determine how well learners learn second or foreign language. In recent years, many researches have been conducted in order to fulfill the need of investigating what aspects that can influence learners' success in achieving the target language. The use of language learning strategies to be one of the tools which can be interfaced with the learners' prosperity in language learning. Many familiar researchers in many years ago like Rubin (1975), Stern (1975), O'Malley (1995), Chamot (1995), and Oxford (1990) explored that the success in language learning is likely influenced by the use of language learning strategies that easy for the learners to experience with and take for granted.

In language learning, learners are strived to be capable of achieving the four skills including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Since the overview of the acknowledgement of English as a language communication tool, speaking is one of the skills which can demonstrate to the existence of English. For most foreign language learners, the main goal of learning a foreign language is to be able to communicate or to create learners who are able to speak English as their communication tool. It is in line with Chastain (1988) in Skandari, Behjat & Kargar (2015) that speaking is essential part in evolving language skill and

communicating the culture knowledge. Approximately, speaking becomes the skill that promote communication, therefore, people knowing a language means that people are able to speak.

Many English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners encounter problems in speaking that result in creating many cases around the learning process. Indeed, many of EFL learners face the difficulties in speaking especially when there is a communication activity in the class. It is proven after the researcher has interviewed some learners at EED UMY Batch 2015 and learners batch 2013 in December when they had a break time outside the class, who were lack of enthusiasm to speak during the discussion in the learning process. It is supported by Lazarton (2001) in Moattarian & Tahririan (2013) stated that “speaking appears to be demanding for foreign language learners” (p. 22). To encourage their communication skill, they need more opportunities to practice speaking. It is also asserted by Lucas (2009, p. 7) that “as you learn to speak more effectively, you may also learn to communicate more effectively in other situations.” Learners also usually feel anxious to communicate spontaneously. Anxiety level might influence potentially to the learners’ affective (Krashen, 1981). These cases lead into a remarkable question that should be answered orderly; what is the appropriate method to deal with? It can be answered by considering the available strategies to overcome problems encountered in communication. Thus, investigating speaking strategies is critically needed.

Seeing that communication strategies play an important role in acquiring or producing the language, thus, one way is to consider the strategies which can

solve the problems that faced by learners. It is apposite with an assumption which is said by Moattarian and Tahririan (2013) that communication strategies are used to tackle communication problems. Besides, there have been extensive researches regarding the speaking strategies used by EFL learner. According to Willems (1987), integrating communication strategies to the learners can permit the weaker learners to “develop a feeling of being able to do something with the language” (p.352). It has also been proven by some studies, Najafabadi (2014) showed that the use of speaking strategies would produce better speaker, and more recently, Skandari, Behjat, and Kargar (2015) established the high proficient learner influenced to the greater use of strategies. It is believed that the use of speaking strategies will help improving the learners’ speaking proficiency. By deciding the strategies, learners can manage their own ways to engage their speaking skill. The greater of frequency use of the speaking strategies also contribute to their success in solving the speaking problems. For reaching that goal, the current issues around speaking have been investigated especially in the area of foreign language learning. To date, previous researches were conducted to investigate the relations between communication strategies and proficiency (Liu, 2004; Ardekani & Razmjoo, 2011; Kaivanpah et.al, 2012; Moattarian & Tahririan, 2013; Uztosun & Erten, 2014; Maldonado, 2015).

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting the research in order to discover the speaking strategies used by EFL learners of English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (EED UMY) batch 2015 and to analyze the correlation on the speaking strategies used

by EFL learners and their speaking proficiency. To know the speaking strategies used by the learners, the researcher used modified questionnaires from Moriam Quadir (2014) which was adapted from Oxford (1990) 'The Strategies Inventory for Language Learning' (SILL). The questionnaires consisted of six group categories of strategies which was divided into direct strategies including memory, cognitive, and compensation, then, direct strategies including metacognitive, affective, and social strategies.

Problem Identification

After interviewing some English as Foreign Language (*EFL*) learners (personal communication, December, 2015) at EED UMY, the researcher has identified several problems appeared related to the study. Firstly, some learners feel difficult in the process of speaking practice. Since speaking is a crucial part of language learning, then the objective of learning language is learners' capability to produce the knowledge and the language itself. Even the rule of speaking is conveying information or thought into expression in spoken language, but the way of sending message should be accurate in order to be succeeded in communication. Indeed, this is something faced by the learners as obstacles or rules that they should be perceived to reach the perfectness. The evidence point is the possibility that they will only think how to be as perfect as the rule without considering their feeling of worry will derive them into failure. Frequently, they just focus on the feeling without providing actions to encourage this skill and to step forward. Hence, the learners should be capable of preparing strategies focused on their needs specifically in developing speaking skill based on their

preferences.

Secondly, many foreign language learners have experienced with the communicative anxiety in learning foreign language, specifically in speaking or producing the language. The high-anxiety of foreign language learners indicate many symptoms such as freezing up when speaking in front of the class and feeling blank when asked to answer question even though knowing the answer (Ortega, 2009). On Ortega's theory, the result of the previous survey about the statement related to anxiety in speaking, "some individuals report experiencing intense feelings of apprehension, tension, and even fear, when they think of foreign languages" (Ortega, 2009, p. 200). This statement even happens at the researcher's own experience in the class, similar to other learners in which they face the same obstacle about anxiety. According to Noon-ura (2008), some speaker feel terrifying stress and encounter great nervous up to blushing face. This may be caused by a lack of confidence due to fear and anxiety as asserted by Trent (2009). Without adequate knowledge and awareness, those obstacles cannot be faced wisely, hence, those will effect on their speaking proficiency which was assumed to be related to each other. This needed the role of strategies to face the obstacles in speaking in order to enhance the learners' speaking proficiency as proposed by Skandari, Behjat, and Kargar study (2015).

Thirdly, some of the learners have already tried to find out various actions in dealing with the obstacles in speaking such as through self-talking, watching English movies, listening to English songs, practicing new vocabularies, and having conversation with friends. Those kinds of way become a proof of the

existence of speaking strategies used by learners as their own formula to overcome speaking difficulties. Hismangolu (2000) as cited in Razmjoo and Ardekani (2011) states that “language learners are continuously looking for ways of applying strategies to deal with situations in which they face new input and tasks proposed by their instructors”(p. 116). Based on the statement above, the researcher concludes that language learning strategies have fundamental role to the learners’ language proficiency and the use of speaking strategies also contributes to the teaching and learning process. Therefore, the role of strategies are needed to face the obstacles in speaking in order to enhance the learners’ speaking proficiency as proposed by Skandari, Behjat, and Kargar study (2015).

Problem Limitation

One area of constraint in carrying out this research is to reveal the speaking strategies that most frequently used by EFL learners and their speaking proficiency, and to examine the correlation on the most frequent speaking strategies used by EFL learners and their speaking proficiency.

In this study, the researcher used the modified questionnaires from Moriam Quadir (2014) which consisted of 31 items and speaking score of 52 EFL learners at EED UMY batch 2015. The questionnaire was used to discern the speaking strategies that were employed by learners.

Problem Formulation

By considering the importance of speaking strategies used on learners’ speaking proficiency, this research explores the following research questions:

1. What speaking strategies are mostly used by EFL learners at EED UMY in Listening and Speaking for Academic Purposes class?
2. What are the speaking proficiency of EFL learners at EED UMY in Listening and Speaking for Academic Purposes class?
3. Does the most frequent speaking strategies used by EFL learners correlate with learners' speaking proficiency in Listening and Speaking for Academic Purposes class?

Research Objectives

By carrying out this research, several objectives will be sought according to the research questions. First, this research aims to explore the speaking strategies are mostly used by EFL learners in Listening and Speaking for Academic Purposes class. Second, this research attempts to identify the EFL learners' speaking proficiency in Listening and Speaking for Academic Purposes class. Lastly, this research aims to scrutinize the correlation on the most frequent speaking strategies used by EFL learners and their speaking proficiency in Listening and Speaking for Academic Purposes class.

Research Hypothesis

Based on the research questions above, the hypothesis are formulated as follow:

Ho = there is no correlation on the most frequent speaking strategies used by EFL learners and their speaking proficiency

Ha = there is a correlation on the most frequent speaking strategies used by EFL learners and their speaking proficiency.

Research Significance

Researcher. This research hopefully can help broaden the researcher's insight in the various speaking strategies that are often used by learners and its correlation to the proficiency. Then, the researcher can have the awareness of what strategies best for her in learning, and it can be reflected in researcher's capability in understanding, solving problems, and challenging the obstacle in speaking into her own learning style.

Learners. This research aims as a beneficial guide to exhibit learners in choosing what speaking strategies that can help them in their own learning styles. Moreover, learners can create and seek out opportunities to learn more effectively based on their own needs and preferences.

Teachers. This research is beneficial for language teachers as an overview about the various styles of speaking strategies used in order to develop the teaching technique based on the various speaking strategies.

Other researchers. This research provides an overview in order to find the appropriate teaching method that cover the various speaking strategies in teaching and learning process.