

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Communication is essential for people. People use the communication as a part of their lives either to communicate or to get the information, messages and ideas each other as clear. McPheat (2010) defined that communication is the art and process of creating and sharing ideas, and it involves getting information from one person to the other person. It means that communication is a process used to share the information and to get the ideas or information in social activity such as conversation and interaction.

In English learning context, students have to master communication skills in order that they are able to communicate the message in English as well without getting lost in translation. Brown and Atkins (2002) emphasized that there are skills supporting the communication namely listening, explaining, questioning, and responding. Barker (2006) stated that communication skills are the tools that we use to remove the barriers to effective communication. The obstacle can cause the difficulty among student in building effective communication, because the obstacle can make miscommunication. The mastery of communication skill can help the students to make effective communication and avoid the obstacles especially when they are communicating each other using English.

Based on the researcher's experiences when studying at English Education Department (EED) of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY), there are some problems related with communication skill. First, student seldom speak with English in learning activity/class activity. Second, some students do not really

understand what they hear from the other friends while using English in classroom activity such as class presentation. It appears because students do not deliver the messages properly, so that it causes miscommunication between them.

From those problems, researcher concludes that the students have drawbacks with communication skill. So, they have to enhance their communication skills through the activities like listening, explaining, questioning, and responding.

Group discussion is one of popular learning methods especially in language learning. Group discussion involves interaction activity where there are speaking and listening to build the communication among members. Indeed group discussion gives the more opportunities for student to build the communication skills, because there is either interaction or conversation between students. Barker (2006) defined that conversation is the most important means of communication and conversation is dynamic of talking and listening. In other words, group discussion which involves the conversation is considered as the way to develop the language mastery especially in communication skill.

Then, group discussion becomes an important learning method to enhance students' communication skill. Ornstein (2000) in Argawati (2014) said that dividing students into small group seems to provide an opportunity for students to become more actively engaged in learning and for teacher to monitor students' progress better. According to Azis (2013, p.101), "the group discussion forced the students to have opportunities to speak, to share the ideas". With some opportunities which are provided by group discussion, it makes any possibilities for students to be more active and willingly to communicate in English.

The use of group discussion as a means to improve communication skill of student is an essential matter therefore it has to be carried out in this research. By considering these reasons that group discussion gives the opportunities to become more active in communication practice and provides the development of communication skills; intellectual and professional competencies; and personal growth (Brown and Atkins: 1988), group discussion consists of elements such as expressing, clarifying and linking the knowledge, ideas, opinion and feeling each other with the members of group. Overall, those reasons are involved with communication activity so that the use of group discussion as a means to improve communication skill should be investigated through this research.

At EED UMY, group discussion is used as the learning technique to support learning activity. The researcher summarizes some views concerning with group discussion which is implemented at EED UMY. First, students tend to do more speaking English while they involve in group discussion activity. Second, each student has more opportunities to enhance the communication skill through group discussion activities including listening, explaining, questioning, and responding. These two points about implementation of group discussion at EED are conjured from researcher's experiences as long as a student at EED.

Furthermore, based on researcher's experience in participating group discussion, many students join the group discussion merely because the teachers ask them to do what teachers command. Some students are not aware that group discussion is not only about practicing speaking in English, but also in listening, explaining, questioning, and responding which can develop communication skill.

Based on the above background, the researcher is then interested in conducting research entitled “*Students’ Perception on the Use of Group Discussion in Improving Communication Skills at English Education Department (EED), Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta*”.

Statement of the Problems

Communication skill is an important matter in social life especially for student. The necessities of communication skill are to communicate the thoughts, ideas or messages across people as well as clear.

But, at EED researcher finds out the problems dealing with development of communication skills. First, student seldom speak with English in learning activity/class activity. Second, some students do not really understand what they hear from the other friends while using English in classroom activity such as class presentation. Third, there are still several students who feel difficult to communicate in English. It concludes that students’ of EED, UMY have shortages with their communication skills.

Group discussion is also implemented as the one learning technique at EED. Researcher has several views about the use of group discussion at EED which are students tend to do more speaking English while they involve in group discussion activity, each student has more opportunities to enhance the communication skill through group discussion activities including listening, explaining, questioning, and responding.

Limitation of the Problems

The research is focused on the students’ perception on the use of group discussion in improving communication skill. Researcher takes the data from

student of English Education Department (EED) Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. The students of EED UMY batch 2015 where group discussion technique is implemented in EED UMY.

Research Question

There are two research questions underlying this research:

1. What are the students' perceptions on the use of group discussion in improving communication skills?
2. What are the students' perceptions on the benefits of group discussion in improving communication skills?

Objective of the Research

The objectives of the research are:

1. To find out students' perceptions on the use of group discussion in improving communication skill.
2. To find out students' perceptions about the benefits of group discussion in improving communication skills.

Significance of the Research

Teacher.Teacher can use the result of the research as input in order to make more effective learning activity. They make effective learning along with facilitating their students' needs in class. So that, teacher helps students to achieve the goals of learning after teacher understands about what students' perception especially in group discussion.

Student. This research gives benefits to students. Namely, students become more aware to the benefits of group discussion concerning

communication skill improvement. So that, when they are doing group discussion, the students participate actively.

Researcher. The significance of this research for researcher is researcher can gain the new information and knowledge about the students' perception on the use of group discussion as a means to improve communication skill. This research also gives to researcher the context about relation between group discussion and communication from students' point of view. And this research can become the reference for other researchers.

Outline of The Research

The outline provides the chapters of this research in order the readers get the information about each chapter. The outline of the research is structured by five main chapters namely chapter one, chapter two, chapter three, chapter four and chapter five.

Chapter one is the introduction of the research which includes background of the study, statement and limitation of the problem, research question, objective of the research and significance of the research.

Chapter two consists of literature review including the theories about perception (definition of perception, the importance of students' perception in learning process), group discussion (the importance of group discussion, the goal of group discussion, the strategies of group discussion, the variations of group discussion and the advantages of group discussion), and also the theories about communication skill (the definition of communication skill, elements of communication skill and supporting skills to develop communication skill, then the related of the study, and conceptual framework).

Chapter three is the methodology consisting with research design, research setting, research participant, research instrument, data collection method and data analysis.

Chapter four consist of some findings and discussion about the result of this research. The finding and discussion itself consist of students' opinion about their views of the use of group discussion and the benefits of group discussion in improving communication skill. They their perceptions are linked with related theories from some experts.

Chapter five is the final chapter of this research. It includes conclusion and recommendation. The conclusion is completely explaining and concluding about the result of research. Then, the recommendation gives some advices for student, teacher, and other researchers concerning the result of this research.