

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the study, research questions, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, and the definition of key-term.

A. Background of the Study

Students of English as a second or foreign language are frequently reticent. McCroskey (1977) assigned reticence as “an individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons”. McCroskey related reticence with anxiety, that is students’ lack of verbal participation is owing to the language anxiety. This develops into a condition that occurs in all situations, particularly when speaking. When students speak in a second or foreign language, they may feel anxious and more reluctant to participate in English conversation (Liu, 2005). Most of the time, second or foreign language students are passive in class and choose not to use the target language, especially while speaking and responding to the teacher in the classroom (Aghazadeh & Abedi, 2014).

Many students, particularly Asians, prefer to remain passive and silent rather than participate actively in class discussions because they are fearful of making mistakes and also feel afraid if they are evaluated negatively by their peers (Siew, 2012). According to previous data, Asian students are underrepresented in speaking classes. When students are confined in the classroom, low involvement is

characterized as an impediment. Asian students, on the other hand, are quite talkative outside of class.

Teachers have difficulties persuading students to respond to the instructions in the classroom at times. Students are sometimes viewed as passive and unwilling to participate in class discussions. They are unwilling to give responses, they do not ask any questions, and they are highly dependent on the teachers (Aghazadeh & Abedi, 2014).

Students with high self-esteem are more likely to participate actively in the speaking class. On the other hand, other students who lack self-esteem, become easily embarrassed and anxious when practicing English in a speaking class. Being reticent in speaking class is not good. There are various reasons why students feel reluctant to speak in second or foreign language classroom situations such as fear of making mistakes, being laughed at, low proficiency in the target language, previous negative experiences with speaking class, habits to be passive in the English class, and lack of confidence (Liu & Jackson, 2009).

Some of the factors that account for the success of foreign language learning is the willingness to engage in second language or foreign language communication, motivation to learn a language, language exposure, competence perception, language anxiety, personality, intelligence, and the social context (MacIntyre et al, 2001). The learners' willingness to speak in a second or foreign language is helpful to their actual usage of the target language in communication; as a result, the learners can gain self-confidence learning the second or foreign language.

Learning another language as a second language is a process which requires risk taking and is problematic. To study and practice the second language, students will have to put in extra work. They would also be nervous and fearful of making mistakes while learning the language. Learning a second language is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to hesitation, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic (Donald, 2010). Some learners will be motivated to practice their second language more, while others will be reticent because they lack confidence. The thought and belief that they are not fluent in the language resulting an anxious reaction in the classroom

The researcher is interested in conducting this research because the previous studies focus on the speaking skills of the English Education students. While studies on speaking reticence among them are underrepresented. Understanding the cause of students' reticence in the classroom will contribute to the discussion of why students are reluctant to speak and of how to remedy the situations.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulates a research problem: "What factors influence the students' reticence in speaking class?"

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, the objective of this study is to describe the factors that influence students' reticence in speaking class.

D. Significance of the Study

This research aimed to examine the factors that influence the student's reticence in speaking class. Hopefully, the result of this study would enrich the

understanding of why students are reluctant to speak. Furthermore, the researcher expected that this research could be used as a reference for the second semester students of the English Department in IAIN Kediri when they responded to the lecturer's instructions, communicated, and participated actively in the speaking class.

E. Scope and Limitation

In order to make this research not too broad or too narrow, the researcher limits the problem that is being observed. The research focuses on factors of students' reticence when learning a second or foreign language. The researcher would conduct this research in the second semester of the English Department at IAIN Kediri.

F. Definition of Key-Term

The key-term is used to clarify and avoid misunderstanding the term. The researcher gives the following limitation as follows:

1. Reticence

Reticence is an unwillingness to do something or talk about something, for example because you are nervous or being careful. The researcher uses Chowdhury's Reticence Scale (RS-12) to find out the factors and causes of students' reticence.

2. Speaking Class

Speaking class is a class that offers speaking skills and linguistic knowledge in performing speaking in various formal academic contexts (Damayanti and Listyani, 2020). This class has some activities, such as doing

presentations, mini-lecturers, group project work and class discussions. It means that this class has a lot of activities that require students to have more discussion and talking every time.