CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the study. It consists of background of study, research questions, objectives of study, significance of study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of The Study

As a global language, English has become a communicative tool used by many countries including Indonesia. Also, Indonesia is one of the countries where people learn it. It has become a trend, especially for its speaking skill for over two billion people use English to communicate with other people from different countries, languages, and cultural backgrounds (Tika 2021). Therefore, speaking English is essential for human viability.

According to Nunan (2003) speaking is the most important skill for foreign learners. Through advanced speaking skill, people can have effective communication and share ideas effectively. Also, a successful learner is someone who carries the conversation fluently. To put the students at a good English level, based on the 2013 curriculum, the Ministry of Education of Indonesia puts English as a compulsory subject in the school curriculum. Starting from junior high school (SMP) and senior high school (SMA) learn English subjects in class. It also becomes the test for students in their National Exam (Ujian Nasional).

However, scholars mention that the most difficult skill to master is speaking. In the process, a person needs to produce and receive information. It is such a difficult

task to do more likely in their second language. Foreign language learners face unpleasant experiences to participate in speaking activities because of that. In fact, for that reason, internal and external factors contribute to the cause. Such as feeling shy, fear of making mistakes, also do not have enough vocabulary. Not to mention the teaching strategies in the class do not help the students to speak much because they focus on the textbook more.

For speaking skills, practice is the primary activity in the class. Conducting the practice makes the students aware of their difficulties. So does the teacher (Arnanda: 2017). According to Arnold (2000), EFL learners need many speaking practices for vocabulary usage and structure usage contextually. Here, students link themselves to the context in practice performance. Even though it is difficult, the activity helps students to use their knowledge of a foreign language. In the end, Hinkel in Lia (2020) stated problems of communication happen because the learner does not understand, does not know the structure, or failed to express the meaning.

Putri (2021) mentioned that students eventually find strategies to solve the difficulties in learning to speak. Strategy means steps or the way to accomplish a certain goal. In the first place, teachers plan the strategy then it is followed by the students in the learning process. Nevertheless, the students find problems to follow the task, so they create some strategies to overcome them in class. In facing the problem, students use strategies to express themselves when they lack the knowledge to communicate (Fulcher 2003). Those ways are called communication strategies when students solve difficulties to find the suitable way to deliver meaning correctly.

Since English has become widely recognized, many institutions establish a suitable place for mastering English skills. Generally, English is a lesson taught in formal schools such as elementary schools and universities. Not only formal institutions but also informal institution has been a reputable place for English learner (Handini: 2019). The course is famous for its different durations of the learning process. The shortest is a week while the longest is six until nine months. Also, they provide English camp where the students must converse in English every day. Despite the short period, the students testify taking English courses helped them a lot in improving their skills than at school.

Pare, the best-known English village, has built many English courses. Many students from different backgrounds choose it for staying and learning English. Most of them have goal to be able to communicate in fluent and accurate English. There are many purposes after mastering speaking. For example, they want to continue their university abroad or to improve their position in their job. Meanwhile, they should be familiar with important aspects such as pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (Lestari: 2019). It is to help them be able to perform speaking well in class. Particularly, not all students have thus basic when they arrive.

Each class performance has different topics and indicators. For instance, in the introduction, description, expression, dialog, or short conversation they may face some difficulties following the classes for that reasons as well as the class level. *Language Center* is the biggest course in Pare, Kediri. They divide the class into basic, intermediate, and proficient. At proficiency level, the students should be able

to perform advanced skill level effortlessly fluent. For the case, students in proficiency level indicated that they have problems or difficulties in speaking English.

Moreover, studies related to this topic have been conducted by many researchers. The first study was written by Yumniamatillah (2017). She analyzed the difficulties on students of English Education. The result of the study showed students difficulties and the factors of it. The researcher conducted the the study at Universitas Muhamadiyah Yogyakarta toward the first year student. She selected the participant through recommendation from every lecturer that thought the course. She elaborated that difficulty in pronouncing the words, lack of vocabulary, lack of self-confident, and confusion of using grammar was the difficulty from the students. Also, the factors from the difficulties are lack of knowledge, lack of practicing, the attention of the audience, environment, accent or mother tongue, different writing or spelling, and the last lack of motivation. In conclusion, the factors are supported by linguistic and non-linguistic factors.

The second research was by Lestari (2019) who analyzed students' speaking difficulties among vocational high school students and the teacher's strategies to solve the problems. She focused on the difficulties faced by students at SMK Muhammadiyah Kajen grade 10th majoring in automotive engineering. After analyzing the data, she found three difficulties such as difficulties in memorizing vocabulary, difficulties in conveying sentences, and they could not answer the questions. The finding shows the students' linguistic problem.

The other research was an undergraduate thesis from Tasmia (2019). She studied the difficulties from junior high school students in Jambi. The result supports the previous study about the internal and external factors contributing the students speaking difficulties. The internal factors found in the research are categorized as linguistic problems; poor in grammar, lack of vocabulary, and lack of pronunciation. Meanwhile, the external factors are from the psychological; anxiety and shyness.

The research from three researchers support the writer consideration to analyzed students' speaking difficulties. This study will be different from the previous research. As shown above, the place where they conducted the research was in formal school. While, the researcher is interested in studying the difficulties of the students in informal institutions where they only focus on one subject. English is the only subject they learn and the decision to come and learn was mostly from their own intention. It means they have their own goals and motivation to learn. The researcher will conduct an analysis about the students' ways to solve the problems or difficulties. In the end, the researcher try to complete the previous study from different perspective.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the research before, students with proficiency levels may face some difficulties speaking English. Therefore, the researcher conducts the study. The research focuses are:

1. What are students' difficulties in speaking English at the proficiency level of *Language Center?*

2. How do the students overcome difficulties in Speaking English at the proficiency level of *Language Center?*

3. Is there any differences between high-achievers and low-achievers students in speaking difficulties and strategies?

1.3 Objectives

According to the research questions, the objectives of study are:

1. To know the speaking difficulties of the students at the proficiency level of *Language Center.*

2. To reveal the strategies in overcoming speaking difficulties of students at proficiency level of Language Center.

3. To explain the differences between high-achievers and low-achievers students in speaking difficulties and strategies.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study will be useful for:

a. Students

The result of the study will inform students about the difficulties they may encounter in speaking. By knowing them, students are expected to

anticipate the difficulties in speaking. Also, they will be able to apply or exercise the overcoming strategies for their difficulties.

b. Teacher

For speaking teachers, in particular, this research is expected to develop their strategies in teaching speaking class.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

As explained in the title, this study will be limited to students' difficulties in speaking as well as their overcoming strategies to solve the difficulties. The researcher will do the research in an informal institution or course, named language center, in their highest level which is proficiency class.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

a. Speaking Difficulties

Speaking activity provides a speaker to communicate with other people to exchange information, ideas, or feeling. This activity sometimes does not go smoothly due to the difficulties. It is said that speaking is the most difficult skill among all four skills. In this term, the writer defines speaking difficulty is when a speaker encounter some problems in speaking such as producing, receiving, and processing information. As a result, the verbal communication errors happens between the speaker and the listener. The difficulties or problems are most likely supported by linguistics and non-linguistic factors. The writer employs the definition above to do the research in the classroom speaking activity.

b. Speaking Strategies

Richard (2011) in Hanunah (2009) explained speaking strategies as means of the method that students employ to attain the goals. Strategies is used to help students to overcome the the problem in order to get better in speaking. Generally, students have different strategies to overcome difficulties. The strategies depend on their levels. Yet, Gani found that the students' used varied learning strategies to improve their speaking skills (2015). Proficiency students tend to have better strategies on speaking difficulties (Ellis: 1986). On the contrary, lower students often use the less effective which leads them to do less on the assignment. On the other hand, when students combine some strategies, it shows a successful speaking performance. In conclusion, the strategies are varied based on the student's proficiency level.

c. Proficiency Level class

Based on the article of *The Glossary of Education Reform,* proficiency-based learning is a systematic education process to help students to achieve the language standard. According to Oxford dictionary, it means "a high level of oral proficiency in English". In other words, proficiency-level students are people who meet the language standard perfectly. There are six levels of proficiency such as *not proficient, elementary proficiency, limited proficiency, professional proficiency, fully proficient,* and *fluent*.

Language Center (LC) divides proficiency level class into some categories. Each level has its own goals which encourage the students to perform some tasks

to improve their English speaking skill. Here are the level that LC has given; basic for 1st month, intermediate for the 2nd month, independent for the 3rd month, speak up program (categorized as proficiency level) for 4th month, pre-academic for 5th month, and TOEFL mastery for 6th month students.