

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the research

English is a foreign language, and it is one of the compulsory subjects from formal school to university. English is an important language that learners should master. This is because English, as an official international language, plays an important role in verbal communication. Many people are trying to acquire this skill, which is for having deep conversations with people from other countries. English consists of four competencies that must be mastered by learners: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Nunan (1995) in Leong and Ahmadi (2017:34) stated that "learning the speaking skill is the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language, and success is measured based on the ability to perform a conversation in the language." Speaking contains sounds to convey meaning so that interactions can occur. This means that speaking is an interactive communication process that connects ideas between a speaker and interlocutors with a specific goal.

It is not easy to speak English because students have to master several elements such as pronunciation, grammar, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. The majority of English language students excel at writing, listening, and reading but struggle with speaking. Richard and Renandya (2002:204) said that foreign language learners find it particularly challenging to speak a language because good oral communication demands appropriate language use in social situations. In addition to verbal communication, diverse interactions also entail

paralinguistic speech components, including pitch, stress, and intonation. Having good speaking skills is the main purpose of most people who learn a language, without knowledge of the language, they will remain silent.

The English education study program has several speaking classes, namely speaking for daily communication, speaking for group activities, speaking for formal settings, and English for public speaking. However, in these classes, students still have obstacles with their speaking skills. Based on the researcher's preliminary observations in the fourth semester, the researcher found some difficult experienced by students in speaking English, such as students being afraid of making mistakes, afraid of wrong pronunciation and grammar, lack of vocabulary and confidence, and feeling embarrassed to speak. Those problems, affect students become silent and hesitant to speak.

The results of this initial observation is relevant to previous research conducted by Makhsun (2020) about "Obstacles in Learning Speaking Faced by The 8th Grade Students in SMP Muhammadiyah 01 Kartasura," and the results show that there are two factors involved in obstacles in learning speaking: internal and external factors. In terms of internal factors, there are six obstacles faced by the students in learning to speak: mother tongue, lack of motivation, fear of mistakes, shyness, anxiety, and lack of confidence. External factors are divided into four categories: an unsupportive environment, limited learning time, too many students in one class, and different class behaviors. Based on these findings, the researcher intends to conduct deeper and more complex research on students' speaking obstacles to learn more about internal and external factors, particularly

among fourth-semester English language education study program students, who are expected to be more active in communicating in English.

In light of the phenomenon described above, the researcher would like to conduct the research entitled “Students' Speaking Obstacles in the Fourth Semester of the English Language Education Study Program.”

B. Scope of the Research

Based on the background, this research is focused on exploring students' speaking obstacles in the fourth semester of the English language education study program.

C. Statements of the Problem

Based on the background explain previously, there are some problem statements as follow:

1. What are the students' speaking obstacles in the fourth semester of the English language education study program?
2. How do they overcome the speaking obstacles in the fourth semester of the English language education study program?

D. Objectives of the Research

Based on the research problems, the objective of this research are:

1. To find out what the students' speaking obstacles are in the fourth semester of the English language education study program.
2. To find out the students overcome their speaking obstacles in the fourth semester of the English language education study program.

E. Significance of the Research

1. Theoretical Significance

The results of this research can contribute to the literature and information about the study of students' problems in speaking English.

2. Practical Significance

The result of the research is expected can be beneficial for teachers or lecturers, students, and other researchers.

a. For teacher or lecturers

The results of this research will help teachers or lecturers better understand students' obstacles in speaking English and find solutions to overcome them and hopefully, the teacher or lecturers can provide innovation in learning to speak.

b. For students

The result of this research hopefully helps students comprehend their difficulties and the solutions to overcome them, so they can evaluate themselves after knowing their abilities.

c. For other researcher

Hopefully, the results of this research can add knowledge and understanding as considerations, comparisons, and references for researchers who want to do research.