

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is intending to investigate students' anxiety in the impromptu activity in speaking class. This chapter presents background of the study, scope of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, significance of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

English as a foreign language takes an important part in the communication system. Many people are motivated to learn English, some of them decided to learn English (Ajeng, 2016). There are four skills that have been mastered by students to enrich their English skills, one of which is speaking skills, and these skills play a very important role in good oral communication. One area of public speaking is impromptu speech (Heinz, 2013). An impromptu speech, a speech delivered with little or no direct preparation, is one of the activities normally offered during this course. Girardelli (2017) states that the importance of impromptu speeches as an important vehicle for promoting the ability of students to communicate effectively, especially in organizations settings.

The universal development of English has increased the demand for good communication skills in English. This is a general idea among students that speaking is more difficult than other skills of learning English and may be more important than other skills. Language learners are face with anxiety problems when they speak in front of the class without preparation. Speaking class sometimes becomes an anxiety-breeding class, as students have to deliver English

impromptu activity in front of the class. Speaking in the class is often cited as anxiety provoking by anxious learners (Mak, 2011). It is in accordance with what Occhipinti (2009) state that foreign language class can make students become more anxious rather than any other class they take.

In Indonesia, the awareness of mastering English as the first foreign language is quite high. One of the skills that must be possessed in English is speaking and some people think that they want to be able to speak fluently in English. Speaking is very important since by mastering speaking skill, people can carry out conversation with others, give ideas and exchange information with others. In this case, the students should have the ability to speak English in order that they can communicate with others. Although speaking skills are crucially important, many students consider that speaking is a frightening skill and they feel anxious when speaking in front of class, it is often reported that they feel stressed and even start to freeze when they have to act out a role-play or deliver a speech.

In speaking, students have an activity called impromptu activity. It is one of the teaching strategies to accomplish expectations towards the students' competencies for gaining confidence in expressing basic communicative functions in English and building up English speaking habits. Impromptu is a mode of presentation in which the speaker has little or no time for preparation (Zarefsky (1996), In impromptu speech, many use one speech or impromptu activity as a means to improve public speaking performance (Mortaji, 2017). Actually, impromptu activity performance is an activity that pushes the students to talk actively. Gebhard (1996) says that, pre-communicative activities are used by the teacher to isolate specific elements of knowledge or skills that comprise

communicative ability, giving students opportunities to practice the pre-communicative activities without having to fully engage in communicative meaning.

Speaking in front of the class can cause a high level of them to feel insecure when doing spoken English in front of the class (Ajeng, 2016). This is in line with Szyszka's view (2017) that the students who take an oral performance may experience a high level of performance anxiety; she encountered anxiety indicators, such as a fast heartbeat, cold hands and forgetfulness. These physical indicators may differ from one to another person who experienced anxiety (Szyszka, 2017). Students might lose self-esteem when some people, both in and out of classroom are unwilling to help them to communicate in a new language. For that reason, students need to prepare for new and unexpected situation whereby they will have to write what they wish to say on a piece of paper. This is to ensure they use the correct English and can encourage them to be more confident in future.

Based on the phenomena, the researcher predicts that speaking anxiety in the impromptu speech performance is still a problem in speaking class. Therefore, the researcher intends to examine the types of speaking anxiety experienced by the students in performing impromptu speech. Besides, the researcher also investigates the factors affecting students' speaking anxiety in performing impromptu speech in speaking.

1.2 Scope of the Study

To optimize and implement impromptu activity to facing public speaking anxiety, the researcher focuses on activity performance, question that given by

teacher, students have to answer the question and speech in front of the classroom. The researcher also discovered suggestions for further implementation of impromptu speech practice in order to improve students' speaking skills. The researcher limited the participants of the research to the students of speaking class at second semester in English education department in one of institutes in Southeast Sulawesi who had experienced impromptu speech activity.

1.3 Research Questions

This study focus on the following questions as to what extent students' anxiety in impromptu activity performance in speaking class.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research background, this present study is aiming to identify students' anxiety toward impromptu activity performance in speaking class.

1.5 Significance of the study

The strength of this study learns on the responses from the students who have the main role in learning and teaching process. This study produced detailed information about students' responses to the implementation of impromptu activity that hopefully reflect the lecturers to develop more interesting activity and materials in conducting better teaching and learning activities. The lecture in speaking class expected to find a teaching learning method that is appropriate to the students' needs based on the students' responses and suggestion.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

For the purpose of this study, the terms to be defining are speaking anxiety, impromptu activity and speaking class.

Speaking anxiety is anxious feeling when students should speak in front of their class without some preparation when the teacher or the lecturer gives them a sudden question.

Impromptu activity can be defining as a speech with a little time preparation where the speaker gets a particular topic to deliver. Impromptu activity is a technique to develop students' spontaneous speaking fluency. In speaking class, impromptu activity is call hot seat.

Speaking class designed to give students practice to express basic communicative functions in English covering greetings and leave takings, introducing, talking about family and describing likes and dislikes, controlling conversations including greeting attention, interruption, and apology.

