

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

In language learning, there are four abilities which language learners should master either through the process of learning or acquisition. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In this research, the researcher emphasizes on the speaking ability among those four abilities.

Moreover, mastering speaking is important, because when people can speak they can communicate what they feel and think. Speaking in English is a priority for English Education Departments students, but in reality there are many students unable to speak English well. Whereas, there is a range of language learning strategies they can use to help them to improve their speaking ability.

There are many ways to acquire the speaking ability; one of them is by using appropriate language learning strategies. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) define "the learning strategies as the special thought or behavior that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn or retain new information".

As students of English Education Department, knowing the appropriate language learning strategies is needed. It can help them in how to learn language especially in mastering the speaking ability and also can make them easier to learn the language with the pleasant and comfortable learning. So the students are encouraged to expose themselves to speak English.

Furthermore, to master the speaking ability, there are many language learning strategies that can be used by the learners to help them in mastery the speaking, and one of them is by using the cognitive strategies based on Oxford (1990). In the cognitive strategies there are four strategies namely practicing, receiving and sending message, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output.

B. Statement of the Problem

Mastering English becomes a problem for English Education Department students. There are many students who do not have good speaking ability whereas there are many ways to mastering the speaking ability. One of them is by the using of appropriate language learning strategy. The strategy is needed to make the language learners feel motivated to master the speaking ability. This is the reason why the researcher is interested to conduct research on what the language learning strategies of English Education Departments Students of UMY to acquire the speaking ability.

C. Objective of the Research

1. To describe the speaking proficiency of English Education Department students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta.
2. To explore the language learning strategies used by English Education Department students of UMY to acquire their speaking ability.

D. Questions of the Research

1. How is the students speaking proficiency based on their pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency?
2. What are the language learning strategies used by English Education Department Students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta to acquire their speaking ability?

E. Significance of the Research

1. English Teacher

The result of this research may help to give knowledge to the English teacher that they can choose the appropriate language learning strategies for speaking; one of them by uses cognitive strategies.

2. Students

In the learning language, the students can use the cognitive strategies to help them practicing the English speaking ability.