

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher discusses about background of the study, identification and limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, purpose of the study, and significance of the study.

#### **Background of the Study**

English is an International language which has important roles in all aspects of human life such as technology and science field, politics, and economics. Besides, speaking plays an important role in making a social interaction with other people in order to gain information (Harmer 2001). According to Crystal (2003) English is a language that is used as a communication in such domain as government because English can be made a priority in a country's foreign language teaching.

Teaching English in Indonesia is focused on the ability of the student's communication. The students should be capable of developing the four language skills in the class, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The students should have speaking skills to support their speaking. This statement above is supported by Oradee (2012) who explained in foreign language of teaching and learning, speaking ability is the most essential skill since it is the basic for communication.

Moreover, why the researcher chooses the title about small group discussion to improve speaking ability because based on researcher's experience, the researcher's speaking ability is bad. The researcher is a students of English

Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. The researcher does not have any confidence to speak up in front of the people. The researcher is also shy and lack of vocabularies. However, if the researcher did small group discussion in the class or outside the class, the researcher is brave to speak up because in small group discussion there are only four until five members in group. The researcher felt more confident and she reduced her shyness when she was speaking in front of the people.

Based on the researcher's questionnaire that the researcher has distributed in English Education Department especially of the students batch 2011 as an assignment from the Lecturer who teaches Research Methodology, the researcher could find out the problems faced by the students related to speaking skill. In English Education Department, not all the students can speak English fluently. There are many problems faced by students in English Education Department related in speaking. The first is they did not have self-confidence to speak English in front of people. The second is the students have lack of vocabulary so that they face obstacle when they are speaking in English. The third is the students are always nervous if they want to speak English in front of people. The fourth is the students are not always practicing speaking in the class and outside class. The fifth is the students are worried if they make mistake when they speak English.

In addition, there are also many problems of speaking in other countries. According to Paakki (2013) Finnish learners of English say that speaking English is a difficult task. They understand the language and know a lot about its grammar and lexicon but when they have to speak, they do not know the meaning of the

words. According to Bilal, Adnan, Tariq, Abbas, and Rashid (2013), there are various problems in speaking English as L2 in Pakistan. The first is lack vocabulary bank so that students cannot speak English. The second is poor listening facilities so that the students do not have opportunities to listen to the conversation about speaking English. The third is students' first language is more dominant so that they use it while speaking English. The fourth is about their environment that do not support and help them to speak English. The fifth is family's low educational background that cannot help and make them understand about English. The sixth is lack of interest to improve language skills so that the students cannot speak English fluently. The seventh is the students cannot focus on speaking skills in their educational system. The eighth is the school cannot implement the use of English in speaking persistently. The last is in the school does not have specialist English teachers that teach the students.

Therefore, the teachers need technique to teach the students to be active and participative in the class. According to Haron, Ahmad, Mamat, and Mohamed (2012) the first step is the students should collect new vocabulary to improve their speaking by searching the meaning of words that they do not understand. Moreover, they can write the vocabularies so that they can use them in their speaking. The second is that the students should look for new vocabulary, for example in their dictionary. If the students look for some vocabularies in their dictionary, the students know the meaning of the word and the students can speak fluently in front of the people. The third is the students study about pronunciation. For example, when the students watch American films, the students can imitate

what the actors said. So, if the students imitate the pronunciation from actors, they can speak English fluently.

In addition, another technique that can be used to improve speaking ability is small group discussion. For example, the teacher could invite the students to make a small group discussion and the students should participate in that activity. The students also can increase their speaking ability because in small group discussion the students can express their ideas and they do not feel shy if they want to speak. Based on the data above, it is supported by Walton (1997) who argue that small group discussion can make the students think critically and the students can also express their ideas to share with other members in group.

Based on the background above, the writer decided to carry out a research entitled Student's Perception on the Effectiveness of Small Group Discussion to improve their Speaking Ability at English Education Department of Universitas Muhammdiyah Yogyakarta.

### **Identification and Limitation of the Problem**

There are a lot of students of English Education Department who face problems in speaking. The students do not have any confidence to speak up in front of people because the students feel shy and they are lack of vocabularies. Besides, the students seldom practice speaking English in the class, outside the class, and in their environment. The students are worried to speak up because they are usually nervous if they want to speak and make the mistake in speaking English.

Nevertheless, there are many techniques to overcome the students' problem in speaking. The first is the students should collect new vocabularies. The second is the students should repeat the pronunciation. The last is the students make small group discussion. However, in this research, the researcher only focus on small group discussion to improve the students speaking ability. This research also only focus to investigate about the students' perception of English Education Department especially batch 2011.

### **Formulation of the problem**

Based on the background of the study, the research problems are as follows:

1. What are the student's perceptions about small group discussions implemented in English Education Department of UMY?
2. What are the student's perceptions about the effects of small group discussion to improve their speaking ability?

### **Purpose of the study**

Based on the research problem, I have two purposes as follows:

1. To identify the student's perception about small group discussion implemented in English Education Department of UMY.
2. To find out student's perception about the effect of small group discussion to improve speaking ability.

### **Significance of the study**

This study gives advantages for teachers, students, researcher, other researchers, and educational institutions that include in education setting especially in learning process implementation.

**For Lecturers.** This research provides information about the implementation of small group discussion to improve students' speaking ability. Hence, the lecturers can apply the strategy of small group discussion to improve their student's speaking skill in the class. If the lecturers want to make the students have self-confidence to speak English in front of the class, the lecturers can apply small group discussion as a strategy that can be used in the learning processes.

**For Students.** This research can help the students to use small group discussion to improve their speaking ability. The students can make small group discussion to improve their speaking ability. The students can make a group with their friends to discuss whatever they want to discuss and the students can express their ideas in group. So, the students can improve their speaking ability.

**For Researcher.** This research is hoped to provide inspiration in writing paper in the future that related with small group discussion and speaking ability. For the researcher, as a teacher in the future, this research can help her to know about the situation in the class. Hence, the researcher can apply the strategy of small group discussion to improve their student's speaking ability in the future.

**For Other Researchers.** This research can become the references for the other researcher who want to conduct the same research. Besides, if the other

researchers are teachers, they also can apply small group discussion as a strategy in teaching learning to improve the students speaking ability.

**For Educational Institution.** This research provides information about the implementation of small group discussion including its significance for the students. The result of this research is expected to be the consideration to Educational Institution in designing the classroom learning activity through small group discussion in order to build students' speaking ability, especially in English learning.