

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent years, researchers worldwide have investigated the issue of speaking fluency. For example, Namaziandost et al. (2020) examined the effects of adopting cooperative learning techniques on the improvement of the speaking fluency of EFL learners. In addition, Castillejo (2018) claimed that FLA strongly predicted four elements of L2 utterance fluency during a final exam. Furthermore, Kormos and Prefontaine (2016) argued that affective factors have a role in L2 speech processing and how learners' perceptions of their tasks influence fluent performance. Moreover, Chami et al. (2017) investigated two semantic fluency tasks that comprised coding of fluency, clustering, and switching type responses were used to measure verbal fluency development. The number of researchers who studied speaking fluency showed how important it is since it makes effective and meaningful communication.

Speaking fluency is essential in delivering ideas to one another, especially for prospective teachers who must convey material fluently to their students. Speaking fluency enables the speaker to maintain communicative ideas more effectively and to communicate continuously without the listener having any comprehension issues (Namaziandost, 2020). In EFL English speaking in China context, speaking fluency refers to measuring one's capacity to speak naturally and quickly without pausing to consider the grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation one needs to express (Chong, 2016). Even so, in the field, the students found grammar and vocabulary as something they were concerned about, so it affected their speaking fluency. On the other hand, students' speaking fluency may be affected by several factors. A study by Lestari (2018) demonstrated that the factors affecting

students' English-speaking fluency consist of affective and linguistic factors. Furthermore, the previous research conducted by Dinh and Dung (2020) stated that the factors influencing students' speaking fluency consist of affective factors, performance factors, automation, and teacher error corrections in speaking class. Therefore, students must practically and empirically understand those factors to improve their speaking fluency because speaking fluency will affect their performance later as a teacher.

Due to the importance of speaking fluency, many universities provide speaking classes for EFL English learners in Indonesia. As evidence, the English education department provides various speaking classes at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya. After taking those speaking classes, the students in the English department will have good speaking fluency so that they can perform better as an educator in conducting the teaching and learning process. The phenomena found that even though the students enter the English language education department through a selection process and go through several stages of speaking-based courses from the first semester until the fourth semester, their progress in speaking fluency still needs to improve. Specifically, there is a student who has good speaking fluency while the other student still needs to improve in speaking fluency. It shows that there is a degradation in terms of students' competence. Therefore it is necessary to investigate what factor arises in students' English speaking fluency because they have to prepare themselves, especially in speaking skills, before joining a school-based internship in the higher semester that requires them to be pre-service teachers. This phenomenon emerges from the results of the pre-interview as evidence of the initial field study. Moreover, the focus of this study regarding speaking fluency refers to monologues and dialogues.

In addition, the previous investigations only focused on linguistic factors. Meanwhile, in this study, the researcher investigated students' feelings when students have to speak in front of the class, students'

motivation, linguistic factors and students' environment. Then, the participants of the previous studies are not those who are educated as prospective teachers while in the current study, the researcher examined the participants who are educated as prospective teachers. In other words, in this research, the data collection techniques in the previous study are questionnaires, document analysis and recording tasks. While in the current study will use a semi-structured interview. This research is necessary because students will carry out school-based internships in higher semesters where they are required to become teachers. So, they must prepare themselves regarding their speaking fluency in delivering ideas by understanding the factors that influence their speaking fluency.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

To investigate the factors affecting students' speaking fluency, the research formulation in this study is formulated as follows "What factors affect students' English speaking fluency?".

1.3 Operational Definitions

The researcher provides some definitions related to the study, as follows:

1.3.1 Speaking : Speaking is the ability most used to interact with other people in everyday life by using a language while paying attention to the aspects of speaking, one of which is speaking fluency.

1.3.2 Speaking Fluency : Speaking fluency refers to speaking softly without too many pauses in joining classroom activities.

1.4 Aim of the Research

The study aims to investigate what factors affect students' English-speaking fluency.

1.5 Significances of the Study

The study's objective is to perceive the phenomenon of speaking fluency experienced by students as prospective English teachers in higher education.

1.5.1 Practical Use

This study is expected to be a consideration for lecturers or teachers who teach speaking classes to review and identify the appropriate teaching strategies that students must follow to grasp the extent of their speaking capabilities and find out the solution regarding the factors arise that their speaking fluency.

1.5.2 Theoretical Use

This study is beneficial in discovering the phenomenon that occurs, and it could give awareness to university students who choose to be upcoming teachers to prepare themselves and monitor their speaking capabilities to have good speaking fluency.

1.5.3 Empirical Use

This study will demonstrate an empirical understanding of the factors affecting students' English-speaking fluency for university students educated as prospective teachers.