

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English is a compulsory subject in Indonesia which had been taught formally to Indonesian students since they are in elementary school. The English subject consists of four skills including speaking, writing, listening and reading. Speaking skill has become the first priority to be taught over other skills since communicative approach implementation has been influential in foreign language learning. It is based on instructional goal of the curriculum of 2006 of KTSP. English teachers should create active learning condition and develop their technique to help learners communicate more effectively by considering suitable activities for each group of learners. Brown and Yule say that one of the main aims of most English teachers are to make their students able to communicate and most of English teachers have the same aims when they taught English. One of the main aims is to make their students able to communicate and convey information effectively in spoken English. Besides the teacher should create active learning condition and develop their techniques they also should pay attention on the factor of sex differences of their students.¹

The factor of sex differences can not be ignored in learning language, because it can affect students' achievement and proficiency in learning.² It is clear that the students may be grouped into two different sexes, male and female or boy and girl.

As the writer observation, when she practiced teaching, she observed students of second grade of Senior High School. She found that most of female students liked studying English. They were able to finish more quickly over male

¹ Kathleen M., *New Ways in Teaching Speaking*, (USA: Bloumington Illionois, 1994), p. vii.

² Arnold, *Project in Linguistic*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 139.

students in making short conversation. They also did better on the conversation in front of the class. Besides, many linguists believe that there is a significant difference between the two sex groups in the acquisition of the language. For example, Trudgill found that female used standard high status speech forms while male used non standard low status speech forms in working class speech. Pappalia and Olds also say that from adolescence throughout adulthood, female outperformed male in reading, speaking, spelling and grammar. They started to talk earlier and did better on vocabulary.³

According to national assessment for educational progress (2001) girls did better in reading test and boys had slightly higher scores than girls in science test.⁴ Based on this statement, it is real that there is a sex difference such as women are more superior in verbal abilities than men, but men in mechanical ability are superior and boys are not less social than girls.

Related to the explanation above the writer is interested to know the differences between male and female in their speaking ability. As the assumptions believe that language learning is a feminine domain.⁵ Based on that background, the writer will focus on the ability of male and female speaking skill. The writer also will make a comparative study between them, by doing a test on their speaking ability including accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. And also use their score of speaking test to analyze it and identify the students' ability of English speaking. So, the writer decided to write a thesis entitled: "Male and Female Students' Speaking Ability (A Comparative Study at the Third Semester of English Department of IAIN Walisongo in 2009/2010 academic year)."

³ [http://language.idc.open.edv/myl/hodgins\].pdf](http://language.idc.open.edv/myl/hodgins].pdf) 23 nov 2009.

⁴ Mac Graw-Hill, *Educational Psychology*, (New York: McGraw Hill Companies, 2004), 2nd Ed., p. 158.

⁵ Barbara Schmenk, *Tesol Quarterly*, 2004, Volume 38, Number 3, Autumn, p. 514.

B. Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation in reading this research, the definitions of the key terms are described as follows:

1. Male and female

Male is defined as sex of organism, which produces small mobile gametes, called spermatozoa and female was sex of organism or a part of an organism which produces mobile ova (egg cell) according to biology side.⁶

Based on some dictionaries male define as a person bearing an X and Y chromosome pair in the cell nuclei and normally having a penis, scrotum, and testicles, and developing hair on the face at adolescence a boy or man. Male, masculine, virile are adjectives that describe men and boys or attributes and conduct culturally ascribed to them. Male, which is applied to plants and animals as well as to human beings, is a biological or physiological descriptor, classifying individuals on the basis of their potential or actual ability to inseminate in bisexual reproduction. Generally male was defined as belonging to the sex that does not give birth and female was referred to the sex produces young.⁷ Sex was defined operationally across species by the type of gametes produced and different between male and female.

Female is a person bearing two X chromosomes in the cell nuclei and normally having a vagina, a uterus and ovaries, and developing at puberty a relatively rounded body and enlarged breasts, and retaining a beardless face; a girl or woman. Female, feminine, effeminate are adjectives that describe women and girls or attributes and conduct culturally ascribed to them. Female, which is applied to plants and animals as well as to human beings, is a biological or physiological descriptor, classifying individuals on the basis of their potential or actual ability to produce offspring in bisexual reproduction.

⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/maleandfemale> 23 nov 2009.

⁷ A S. Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, (New York: Oxforduniversity press, 2004), 3rd Ed., p. 228.

It contrasts with male in all uses: her oldest female relative; the female parts of the flower.

Feminine refers essentially to qualities or behaviors deemed by a culture or society to be especially appropriate to or ideally associated with women and girls. In American and Western European culture, these have traditionally included features such as delicacy, gentleness, gracefulness, and patience: to dance with feminine grace; a feminine sensitivity to moods. Feminine is also, less frequently, used to refer to physical features: a lovely feminine figure; small, feminine hands. Effeminate is most often applied derogatorily to men or boys, suggesting that they have character or behavior traits culturally believed to be appropriate to women and girls rather than to men an effeminate horror of rough play; an effeminate speaking style.⁸

2. Speaking ability

Speaking ability is the ability to communicate orally. It is not only to apply the grammatically correct sentences, but also to know when and where to use these sentences and to whom. The ability of communication is related to the rules of language use and rule of grammar.

Spoken language is an oral phenomenon in communicative competence. Communicative competence depends on the negotiation or meaning between two or more persons who share some knowledge of language. In this sense communicative competence can be said to be an interpersonal rather than an intra personal trait. As the writer mentioned in the previously, in foreign target language teaching, the ability to speak is the primary goal of learning a language. The learners must do simultaneously the point below to reach the aim; to decide what they want to say, to choose the pattern they are going to use, to select appropriate words, to use the correct accent, and to say it appropriate situation.

⁸ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/femalendfemale> , 11.15 pm, 19 nov 2009.

3. Comparative study

Comparative means compare two different things or more. Comparative study in this thesis is study of a systematic comparison of two sexes on their speaking ability. They are between male and female students speaking ability. Here writer compares male and male students on five components of speaking ability. They are pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension.

C. Limitation of The Problem

In order to makes the scope of the research not to wide, researcher necessary give limitation to the study. To limit the scope of the research in analyzing the problem, the findings of the research should be limited.

This study is limited to the ability of male and female student on speaking ability only. So, the writer compares their ability of speaking between male and female's speaking.

D. Formulation of the Problem

It is impossible to start the research without any basic knowledge about research material, or in black mind. Usually, researcher starts his research from a phenomenon that is look so interesting investigates to study. Related to what researcher tries to investigate.

The problem of this study is formulated as follow:

To what extent is the speaking ability of male students different from that of female students?

E. Objective of the Study

In line with the research question, this study has purpose as follow:

To find out extent to which the speaking ability of male students is different from that of female students.

F. Pedagogical Implication

1. To give contribution in educational world, especially in teaching learning process of English Department in her institution.
2. To give contribution to the teacher and curriculum designers to select the most appropriate teaching strategy of speaking and method to certain categories of students in teaching English as a foreign language.
3. To give contribution and information dealing with the research findings, particularly to English teachers, so that better learning outcomes can possibly be achieved.