CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical framework, assumptions, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays people consider that English is very important to learn since it is used around the world. They do not mind spending much money to learn English. Parents send their children to English courses as early as possible to enable them to speak English fluently. Eventhough they know that their children will get English lessons in schools, they insist in registering their children in English courses. This phenomenon happens because most parents realize that speaking is really important. The main objectives of language learning are enabling the learners to communicate or interact in the target language. In other words, interaction skills become the most crucial factors to achieve in language learning. It can also be said that the ability to speak is the easiest way to be recognized by people. If someone can speak English fluently with no grammatical mistakes, and using the right vocabularies, people will automatically think that the person comprehends English very well.

Bygate (2003:14) also states that interaction skills involve making decisions about communication, such as what to say, how to use and whether to develop with one's intentions, while maintaining the desired relations with others. In this case, teachers should teach speaking skills with

various kinds of techniques in the classroom because it motivates students to speak as what Nunan (1991) states that success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language. Therefore, if students do not learn how to speak or do not get any opportunity to speak the language in the classroom, they may soon get de-motivated and lose interest in learning.

On the other hand, if the right activities are taught in the right way, speaking in class can be a lot of fun, raising general learner motivation and making the English language a fun and a dynamic place . A technique with a lot of interaction to one another should be built in order to make them learn how to speak and express their ideas to each other.

Based on the phenomenon above, the writer is interested in conducting an observational study on the use of group discussion in teaching speaking. Group discussion is a technique which is believed to able to accelerate the process of teaching English. Krigas (1980) also adds that group work is also a useful technique in a foreign language teaching, because it makes the students act in cooperation with one another toward the solution of a situation given by the teacher. Therefore, the teacher should have the ability to know how to implement a good group discussion in order to deliver the lesson well.

A preliminary informal interview has been conducted by the writer by interviewing some students from different schools about the use of group discussion in teaching speaking in their school. This informal interview was conducted on September 2009. The fact showed that group discussion is rarely used by the teachers to teach English, especially in teaching Speaking. Most of them were taught using a traditional method, where the teacher is the center of attention in the class, but there are also some

3

teachers who use group discussion in the teaching speaking. Because of that reason, the writer wants to do research to find out how a teacher implements group discussion in teaching speaking. This research covers how a teacher teaches speaking using group discussion and how the students' responses to the use of group discussion in the teaching of speaking are.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the above background of the study, the writer formulates the statement of problem in this study as follows:

1.   How a group discussion is implemented by the teacher in teaching speaking?

2.   What are the students' responses to the speaking class taught using group discussion?

1.3   Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to find out:

1.   The steps used by the teachers in implementing group discussion in teaching Speaking.

2.   The students' responses in the speaking class taught using group discussion.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to be useful not only for teachers who teach speaking but also for the students. The result of the study is expected to:

•   give useful insights to the English teachers who would like to improve the way of teaching speaking using group discussion.

4

- lead the teachers to comprehend the importance of using group discussion as a teaching technique in teaching speaking.

- give information to the students about how they would learn speaking using group discussion in their effort to master English.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study is limited to find out the steps used by the English teacher in implementing the group discussion to teach speaking and the students' responses to the speaking class taught by using group discussion.

Due to the constraint time, the study is limited to the seventh graders of a Junior High School in Surabaya. The seventh graders are considered to possess enough language skills, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. And in the first year of junior high school, the students are still enthusiasm and they will absorb a lot of knowledge. This research was done only in one school due to the limited time.

Based on the reason above, this study focuses on the implementation of group discussion in the teaching speaking to year 7 students of Junior High School.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the communicative approach. Julia M. Dobson (1992:22) states that group discussion is underpinned by the communicative approach. It is regarded as a promising frontier to provide students with ample opportunity to develop their skill to communicate in the target language. This approach places the students as the center of the class activity. Furthermore, it is used in the teaching learning activity to achieve communicative competence. Ur (2007:2) also explains that communication

5

practice is one of the most important components of the language learning or teaching process and the most natural and effective way for learners to practice talking freely in English. So, every effort is made to train them to become communicatively competent.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding, the writer deems it necessary to define the following key terms.

(1) Teaching

Teaching is guiding and facilitating, learning, enabling the learner to learn, setting the conditions for learning (Brown, 1987:7). It means that teaching is a process of a two way interaction between the teacher and students and between students and students in such way that learning can take place.

(2) Speaking

The term "speaking" according to Oxford dictionary means to hold conversation (with or to person of or about thing), make oral address and deliver speech.

(3) Group discussion

Group discussion is the small group process (preferably no fewer than five members in a group and no more than seven, with practical maximum of nine or ten) through which people work together in the effort to add to their learning or solve part of a problem or all of it (Ray E. Nadeau, 1972:165).

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I, the Introduction, is about the background of thesis problem, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, scope and limitation, the theoretical framework, the hypotheses, the definition of key terms and the organization of this study. Chapter II deals with the review of related literature which includes the theories of speaking, group discussion as well as review of previous study. Chapter III presents the methodology of the research. It covers the research design including variables, the research instructor, and the research raters, subject of the study, data including the type of data and the instrument of collecting data, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents data analysis and interpretation of findings. The last chapter, chapter V, deals with the conclusion and suggestions.