

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

Having fluent speech in target language becomes a desire for non native students who learn the target language. For some people, someone who has fluency in speaking the target language becomes a marker that he/she has good speech. Fluency also often becomes the main goal for some learners in mastering the target language. When someone asks about people's proficiency level, many of them answered that they have an ability to speak the language fluently (Kormos and Dénes, 2004). Therefore, fluent speech becomes a measurement of the level of language proficiency, and in mastering the target language.

Language problems much occur in non-native students speech. Their speech habits might influence their target language speech, especially in English. Non-native students have their own speech habits, for example, Indonesian students tend to say the words in a sentence individually, word by word. If they use this kind of habit in speaking English, it is heard that they do not have fluent speech in English because native speakers of English do not often say the words individually. However, although habits are often difficult to change, it is possible to change if students can practise English regularly. They have to work hard and practice a lot to change their habitual speech. And of course, having a good

speech in target language does not come immediately so that they have to be patient in the process to get it.

In real connected speech, people sometimes join or “link” words together when they say a sentence in English (Roach, 2000). When people say the words individually, the sounds are not always the same as the sounds when they link them. In speech, speed is considered as a factor in fluency. People speak in groups of words which are continuous and may not have pauses between them when they speak quickly (Darn, 2007). If people can link the sounds of the words when they speak in English, the sounds of the words are more likely to sound both natural and fluent. Roach (2000) stated that learning to produce connected speech without gaps between the words is an essential part of acquiring fluency in English, and this case is the practical importance of linking.

Linking is one of the aspects of connected speech. It is important to be used in English speech. When people join or link the words in a sentence when they are speaking in English, it means that they use linking in their speech. By using linking in the speech, people are easier to say the words. For non-native students, using linking means helping them to have a fluent speech. It is supported by numbers of research that have investigated linking in the connected speech that linking as a marker of fluent speech.

Linking holds significant role in pronunciation teaching. It is useful for students to do practice related to linking to help them producing fluent speech in the target language. The teachers might not ask the students explicitly to practise using linking in the speech, but to make them aware of speaking customs and help

them improving their fluency of their speech, the teachers can ask them to perform dialogues and extracts which are taken from a drama or a short story (Harmer, 2003:198 cited in Sarosdy, 2006). So, it can help the students accustom to use linking in their speech in order to have a good and fluent speech in English.

This research concerned with the use of linking in the speech by students in one of Senior High School in Jakarta. It is one of schools in Jakarta which implements English Public Speaking subject which gives a contribution to make the students be able to speak fluently in public. It is because speaking in public is the main learning activity of this class. They have to play and change the roles as MC, students council chairman, and other activities related to speaking in public. By having this kind of activities, the writer is easily work out with linking from the students' speech.

The writer is interested in doing this kind of research since she noticed that there are many students who have good pronunciation in English. They also can speak English quickly. However, there were many of them who were still not aware that linking is useful to be used in their speech as the marker of their fluent speech. If they do not use linking, the speech sounds unnatural. Therefore, the writer is curious to observe whether linking actually occurs in students' speech and what types of linking that are used by students as means to help them speaking the target language fluently, and also to find out how frequent each types of linking that are used by the students in their speech and see the fluency of the students' speech based on the use of linking.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background, there are research questions which need to be answered in this study:

1.2.1 What types of linking are used by students in their speech?

1.2.2 How fluent is the students' speech based on the use of linking?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Based on the research question mentioned previously, this study aims to identify the types of linking that are used by students in their speech and the frequency of each types which is used by the students as a marker of their fluent speech. Moreover, the study also aims to investigate the fluency of students' speech based on their use of linking.

1.4. Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is the students' speech. The study is focused on investigating the types and frequency of linking that are used by the students in their speech as a marker of their fluent speech. And, the study is also focused in the fluency of students' speech based on the use of linking.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The study is expected to enrich the information or knowledge about the topic researched. It is aimed to investigate whether linking are also used by

students as a marker of their fluent speech. This study is also expected to be a basic for further research in related topic. Moreover, the writer expects the result of this study can give the understanding about linking in relation to speech and give the explanation of the importance of linking for the teacher to teach this kind of connected speech to the students in order that students can say the words easily and smoothly, and speak in English naturally so that they will have fluent speech approaching the speech of native speakers.