

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are seven important points discussed in this chapter. Namely, the research background, study identification, study definition, study formulation, research objectives, research significance, and operational definition.

A. Background of the Study

English is one of the foreign languages studied in Indonesia and is designated as the first foreign language; this is in accordance with the Ministerial Decree Education and Culture No. 096/1967 dated December 12, 1967 (Kartono, 1980, p. 126). Many considerations made English the first foreign language in Indonesia, as stated by Kartono (1980: 125) that the national language that we currently have cannot be used as a means of communication with other countries, and because Indonesia is also incorporated as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN. So, for the sake of smooth communication and friendship with other nations, it is necessary to have a language that becomes an international language, namely English; besides that, English is also used in science, modern technology, trade, and politics, and is used in almost all fields. For these many reasons, it is clear that English must be given priority among other foreign languages to be studied by the Indonesian people, especially school students.

In learning English, Indonesian students are oriented towards developing 4 language skills, consisting of listening, writing, reading, and speaking. The four language skills are learned from elementary school to university level. These skills have the aim of improving students' ability to communicate orally and in writing. However, the state of learning English in Indonesia has only a few that lead students towards achieving these goals. According to Sumardi (1992: 206), in the process of learning English in schools, teachers dominate learning. Teachers provide more provisions in the form of theory and language knowledge rather than prioritizing language skills, both oral and written. Then, of the four skills mentioned, speaking is an important part that is used to be able to communicate with others. This is

something that needs to be learned from English as a foreign language. Students in neighboring Thailand have difficulty speaking a foreign language; the same thing happens to students in Indonesia. According to Fung & Min (2016), in learning speaking skills, anxiety is an interesting variable that can affect speaking ability.

For language learners, several things make speaking anxiety. A mental block is the first thing that causes problems from speaking anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that some students claimed to have mental blocks when they were about to learn or start speaking a foreign or second language. The mental block that students have makes students feel restless, not confident and also nervous. These things end up interfering with their every learning process in speaking a foreign or second language. Several researchers have found that speaking English is a challenge for many EFL students. Anxiety, which hinders the development of speaking skills for many students in EFL lessons, is a very common and important barrier.

The second thing that is a problem for foreign language learners is related to fear. According to Talbot (2016), anxiety often occurs on tests, and this anxiety develops because of the fear of negative evaluations; this is similar to social phobia and then causes the fear of being judged negatively. Students spend much of their time worrying about test results and about how others rate their performance rather than the exam itself. Thinking that they will get a negative judgment from their listeners, the students eventually become overly afraid, which refers to worries about not being able to make a good impression in front of others when using a foreign language.

The third thing that becomes a problem in speaking anxiety is anxiety that comes from a limited vocabulary, difficulty expressing ideas verbally (speaking), inadequate language skills (grammar), difficulty pronouncing words, and lack of courage to start speaking. The teaching curriculum is the fourth thing that is included in students' speaking anxiety. In Indonesia, the language teaching curriculum has changed several times, starting from the 1984 curriculum, which focuses on mastering grammatical matters. Then, it shifted to the 1994 curriculum

change and underwent the next change to the 2004 curriculum, then continued to the 2006 and 2013 curriculum. The last one was the independent learning curriculum, which Medikbudristek officially published in February 2022, which was related to the COVID-19 pandemic for the application of flexibility for schools in meeting student learning needs. Basically, every existing language teaching curriculum expects students to have good language and communication skills.

Nevertheless, in reality, according to Maksan (inutama, 1998), students have not been said to be able to speak (English) properly and correctly, orally and in writing, at every school level, from elementary to high school. Alwi (1999: 1) said, "When we talk about the quality of language learning currently available, we can honestly say that the quality is still very low." It is not much different from Thailand; although Thailand uses books or an English curriculum written directly by native speakers, the curriculum does not support students' speaking skills (Kongthong & Passornsiri, 2014). Compared to speaking skills, most teachers in Indonesia only focus on solving National Examination questions to get good grades.

In addition, because in Indonesia, the teacher dominates in every English lesson, students have less opportunity to be able to speak and convey their thoughts while studying. This case is also the same as the case of learning English in Thai schools. English lessons taught in a school environment are only teacher-centred. The teacher communicates more, and students are only given few opportunities to respond (Ritthirat&Chiramanee, 2014). Students sometimes feel afraid to say something using English in the discussion being studied in a classroom or large meeting, assuming that what they want to say is true or not. They feel insecure and comfortable when in that situation. This makes students in Indonesia lag in speaking English skills because they do not have the opportunity to be able to do it, even though they start with a simpler language.

Overall, the problems with speaking anxiety, as mentioned above, have spread in Indonesia. In fact, Indonesia is one of the big countries that has many schools and students with various conditions. Regions in Indonesia that are also included in

the problem of speaking anxiety are Yogyakarta; Yogyakarta has quite a number of Muhammadiyah schools. Muhammadiyah schools apply English to one of the subjects studied starting at the elementary level. However, even though Muhammadiyah schools have started teaching English as one of their subjects, there are still few studies related to speaking anxiety. The English lessons that have been learned from the elementary level do not have much effect on speaking skills at the high school level. Therefore, it is relevant to conduct research at the high school level about their English-speaking anxiety. In this case, the researcher takes data at SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta.

Therefore, this research has the aim of knowing the level and reason of speaking anxiety experienced by students of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta when speaking in English and the potential triggers. The further aim of this research is to be a distinct source of information for relevant future studies.

B. Identification of the Study

Some of the things those are problems in the background above can be identified in the study, including:

1. When they decide to start learning a foreign language, they have a mental block against anxiety.
2. Some students choose not to speak up because they worry about being accused of being cocky.
3. The limited vocabulary in a foreign language makes Indonesian students anxious to speak.
4. The curriculum of instruction does not support speaking skills.
5. Does not focus on the 4 main skills of language; some teachers only focus on getting good scores on the exam.
6. The chance for a student to practice their speaking is lacking.

C. The limitation of the Study

Based on the identification of the problem above, the focus of this study's

limitation is on Indonesian students' anxiety. The purpose of this study is to determine the level and reason of English-speaking anxiety among students as well as the cause of this anxiety.

D. Formulation of the Study

Based on the limitation above, the researcher formulates the problem as follows:

1. What is the level of speaking anxiety perceived by 10th-grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta?
2. What are the reasons for the 10th-grade student of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta experiencing speaking anxiety?

E. Objective of the Study

In the study, the researcher has two main objectives, namely:

1. To find out the level of speaking anxiety perceived by 10th-grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta.
2. To find out the reason for the 10th-grade student of SMA Muhammadiyah 3 Yogyakarta experiencing speaking anxiety.

F. Significance of the Study

For the following parties, this research is expected to be useful:

1. For students

This study is expected to be useful for Indonesian students in learning how to speak English easily and in understanding the reasons why speaking English in EFL class causes them anxiety.

2. For teachers

From this study, the researcher expects that the teachers learn and understand the students' anxiety in speaking English. So the teachers can choose the best material to teach them English.

3. For the next researchers

When conducting similar studies, future researchers can take the findings of this study as a starting point. These can have different purposes or use different methods.

G. Operational Definition

To avoid misinterpretation of the terminologies used in this research. In this sense, the following explains the terminologies associated with this research:

1. Speaking

Speaking is the nature of language as it is expressed orally. When it comes to communication, students face certain difficulties. One of them talks about the actual language. Despite having a stronger vocabulary and accurately writing their sentences, the majority of pupils actually find it difficult to talk.

2. Anxiety

Stuart and Sundeen (2008), claim that anxiety is a bad emotion that we occasionally experience in varied degrees and that is characterized by worry, concern and fear.

3. EFL classroom

English learning and teaching space, where English is learned as a foreign language, not a second language after the mothertongue.