CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to investigate students' anxiety in speaking English in one Hotel and Tourism College in Bandung. This chapter discusses the background of the study, the purpose of the study, scope of the study, research method, significance of the study, clarification of the terms and thesis organization.

1.1 Background of the study

Being able to speak English means able to communicate with more than 1.5 billion people all across the globe. Since the late 19th century, English has been referred to as a global lingua franca. Moreover, English is the most widely used foreign language on the internet (80%) and for book publication with over 60 countries publish their titles in English. Books, magazines, and newspapers written in English are available in many countries around the world (Graddol, 2000: 4 - 9).

In addition, as stated by Crystal (2003: 86) the importance of English is without a doubt very prominent to professional industry as the language continues to grow. It is, by international treaty, the official language for aerial and maritime communications. English is an official language of the United Nations and many other international organizations, including the International Olympic Committee.

In fact, English is by far the most widely spoken language in the hospitality industry. That is why English is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language.

In terms of language learning, there are four key skills; Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. No matter what languages a student learn or no matter how the students learn, a language learner should take interest in all of the four skills. However, speaking can be a challenging task for many students because it needs interactions. The other three skills can be practiced alone, but for speaking, the students cannot really speak by themselves, that is why students should make every effort possible to find somebody to speak with. In line with this point, Nunan (2000: 39) states that speaking is one of a key aspect of learning a second or foreign language. Moreover, he further notes that the success of learning a language is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the target language. It can be said that being able to speak fluently is essential in students' language learning to communicate both in inside or outside the classroom.

As previously mentioned, speaking English is also widely used in various professions and one of them is hospitality professionals. Communication skills are an important element of hospitality industry. Understanding performance expectations are keys to the achievement of tourist satisfaction. Good oral and written communication skills are among some of the most important skills for hospitality practitioners at different position levels. Good English communication

during the study will add value to students' education. In the tourism industry supply and demand side must communicate perfectly in order to ensure quality and meet performance standards. In the business tourism, oral practice communication is a bit higher than written communication, but both categories are rated high (Kay and Russette: 2000). Therefore, it is crucial that students be proficient in speaking English so that they can use the language efficiently for academic and practical purposes. Moreover, the use of English as a medium of instruction in the classroom requires the students to be proficient in the second language.

In the context of speaking English, being able to speak to friends and even speak with foreigners, in their language which both of them understand is surely the goal of many learners of English. Yet, speaking in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a long time to develop (Luoma, 2006 as cited in Samanhudi, 2011). However, the biggest problem English learners face is to be able to speak in English. Consequently, many reasons to take into consideration might be the lack of confidence in terms of anxiety about making errors as stated by Boonkit (2010). It can be stressful when they are expected to speak in the second or foreign language before fluency is achieved.

In line with the issue of anxiety, Thornburry (2005: 28) states that the lack of vocabularies, improper grammar, and fears of mistakes are some of the factors that can contribute to speaking failure and cause an acute sense of anxiety when it comes to speaking. Moreover, the problem of language anxiety not only

happens to beginner but also to the university students who usually deal with English. In addition, Cebreros (1998) adds that they have to cope with the demands of being able to sustain communication by means of an instrument they are not completely familiar with.

Research on language anxiety has been a concern of many educators from both second and foreign language education. Different people have investigated the issue of learning anxiety from different perspectives. Focusing on factors causing students' anxiety, Worde (2003) found that speaking activity causes inability to comprehend, negative classroom experience, fear of negative evaluation, pedagogical practice and the teachers themselves were the main factors that trigger in learning anxiety. In addition, Kondo (2009) asserted that language anxiety in the speaking test was only a poor predictor of English proficiency.

Although many researchers have investigated many previous studies about language anxiety, only a few studies have explored the students' anxiety in English speaking class (see Worde, 2003; Abdullah and Lina, 2008). In the research of types of anxiety, there is a research that investigated the types of anxiety that they experienced (Ellis, 1994). Thus, research on students' types of anxiety in speaking English is necessary to be further conducted. This study would like to both aim at investigating the students' types of anxiety in speaking English and to find out the factors that cause the students' anxiety in a Hospitality College. The study also tries to seek the solution to reduce anxiety. Additionally,

investigating the students' anxiety might contribute to enticing and motivating the students to have more chances to use the target language in daily life and for academic purposes

Obtaining the data of students' anxiety would give valuable input for teachers so that they are able to give the appropriate solution to overcome the anxiety and they could improve their teaching and encourage the students to be able to speak without having feeling anxious in speaking English inside or outside the classroom.

1.2 The Purpose of the Study

Departing from the problem mentioned in the statement of the problem, this study aims at:

1. Investigating the types of anxiety that the students experienced in speaking English.

2. Investigating the sources of students' anxiety in speaking English.

3. Finding out the strategies to reduce anxiety.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The study is a case study of students in a hotel and tourism college in West Java province, Indonesia. The students were in the first semester in Hotel Operation Department. They were selected to be the respondents for this study during the conversation class. This class focuses on the students' ability to

communicate in English. It aims to enhance students' confidence in communicating in English as well as to enrich their vocabulary in English through a variety of interactive activities. Moreover, the observation and interview analysis attempts to find out the types of students' anxiety, the source of students' anxiety and the solution or strategies to overcome the anxiety.

1.4   Research Method

The study is a descriptive –qualitative design (Silverman, 2005) the specific design of this study employed a case study design. This study is conducted in a group of students in an English conversation class in one Hotel and Tourism College in Bandung (Creswell, 1994; Freebody, 2003, in Emilia, 2005). Related to this study, the pilot study has been conducted for this research project. It employed three types of data collection, namely classroom observation, questionnaire and interview. Further explanation of the pilot study will be described in chapter 3.

This study employed two data collection techniques, which are the observations and interviews. Data analysis in this study was conducted over the course. All the data gained from two data collections were analyzed gradually. The data from interview were transcribed and subsequently categorized and interpreted to answer the research questions.

1.5   Significance of the Study

With regard to the significance of the study, this study has the potential to the theory, education and professional practices. Theoretically, this study will be of considerable interest to language educators and students because of the potentially negative impact of foreign language anxiety, this study is expected to enrich the literature on students' anxiety in the context of speaking skill which is likely received a little attention in English Foreign Language and teaching context.

Practically, this study also provides information related to students' anxiety in order to overcome the problems, particularly in the context where the students have to get more exposure to practice oral communication. Professionally, the investigation of anxiety sources that arise while learning to communicate in the target language will hopefully broaden the insight into the issue of language anxiety and will help language teachers in making the classroom environment less stressful and he/she should try to create a friendly classroom environment in order to make students feel free to speak the language.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

There are some operational terms used in this study: anxiety, and communication strategy. Each term is defined as follows:

a. Anxiety

"A subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system" (McIntyre& Gardner, 1994: as cited Tanver in 2007: 4)

b. Communication Strategy

"Communication strategy is a way to express a meaning in a second or foreign language, by a learner who has limited command of the language" (Richard and Plat, 1992: 64)

1.7   Thesis Organization

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 gives a general description of the introduction to the topic of the research. This introduces the background of the study, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, and the organization of the thesis. Chapter 2 describes the theories which support the study. This covers the theories relevant to the purpose of the study. It includes the discussion of the nature of speaking in foreign language, anxiety, type of anxiety, factors of anxiety, what makes speaking difficult and communication strategies. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of the study that includes research question, research design, research setting and participant, data collection and data analysis. A sample of the instrument will also be presented in this chapter. Chapter 4 elaborates findings and discussion which shows the data from the observation and interview. Chapter 5 illustrates conclusion of the research, implication and reomendations for further research.