CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, research questions, the purposes of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, the clarification of terms, and the organization of the whole study.

1.1.Background of the Study

As an essential skill in English as foreign language (EFL) learning, speaking provides many benefits for those who master it. Speaking allows students to express their feelings, ideas, and thoughts effectively (Brown, 2003; Gillis, 2013; Rao, 2019). Primarily amid the use of English to communicate globally, students with good English-speaking skills have more opportunities to actively participate in classroom discussions, live or study abroad, and do business internationally (Rao, 2019). Judging from these benefits, preparing students with this ability is worth mentioning, especially for vocational schools.

Vocational school is designed to prepare the student for post-school life. This statement is clearly stated in regulation no. 20 in 2003 by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture that vocational schools are equipping students with specific skills related to their major to optimize competency. In addition, supporting subjects such as language are also studied to help students develop communication skills. Especially for hospitality basis schools, they require foreign language skills to give optimal service for costumers. Therefore, *English* is a compulsory to enhance tourism students' communication skills and give the best hospitality service to the tourists (Zahedpisheh et al., 2017). Therefore, being fluent in English speaking is necessary for them. With good speaking skills, the students can excel in their academic and career prospects (Baker & Westrup, 2003; Gillis, 2013; Kirst, 2017; Rao, 2019; Tran et al., 2012).

However, issues appear in the speaking practice of EFL students since English is not the mother tongue (Yuniarti, 2017). For instance, the rising of negative feeling towards the speaking practice or even in themselves. In line with this, Horwitz et al., (1986) states that foreign language raises anxiety among students compared to other courses. This phenomenon also has been known as foreign language anxiety (FLA), where anxiety occurs while learning foreign

language. Students' anxiety manifest in several forms such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986). Since speaking both a productive skill and a performance, the anxiety mostly arises among learners is caused by fear of negative evaluations and self-perception (Abdurrahman et al., 2017; Ademir & Papy, 2021; Sayuri, 2016). Students tend to be anxious to perform oral communication because they worry to get negative evaluation for improper pronunciation, feel unconfident to see better performance, and have difficulty in arranging sentences into the target language. Speaking anxiety manifests in several symptoms such as sweating, shaking, fear, difficult to concentrate, forgetfulness, freezing, and going blank (Horwitz et al., 1986). These manifestations certainly influence the students. Not only adverse effects on students' performance but also may lead the students to be ineffective learners (Horwitz, 1996; Horwitz et al., 1986; Kralova & Petrova, 2017; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Onwuegbuzie & Bailey, 1997; Yasuda & Nabei, 2018).

Like anxiety in general, FLA concerns someone's subjective feelings (Horwitz, 2013). Therefore, the appearance of anxiety and their self-mechanism in facing anxiousness will differ for each student (Yasuda & Nabei, 2018). Although FLA is an old concept, it is still relevant, especially in EFL contexts, such as Indonesia. For Indonesian students, language anxiety is the other obstacle after the difficulties in learning English, specifically in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (Eddraoui & Wirza, 2020; Fadlan, 2020; Horwitz et al., 1986; Hutabarat & Simanjuntak, 2021; Hosni, 2009; Khoirunnisa, 2018; Yuniarti, 2017). This phenomenon also makes Sparks and Ganschow (1995), as cited in Trang (2012), look at the other side, whether this FLA appears as a source or an effect of learning difficulties. Horwitz (2001) responds positively to their statement that the challenge is to determine it. Thus, it is worth to figure out the specific causes in order to treat the students appropriately depending on their causes. Besides, knowing the root cause of this problem will aid the teacher to give the best treatment for the students.

Many scholars have discussed coping strategies and its implementation on speaking anxiety. According to Kondo and Ling (2004), coping strategies are classified into five forms such as preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer

seeking, and resignation. Similar strategies also appear in related research findings (Abdurahman & Rizqi, 2020; Yasuda & Nabei, 2018; Yuniarti, 2017). Coping strategies, such as positive thinking and preparation, significantly reduced student performance anxiety. In contrary, some findings also discover that not all the coping strategies went effectively. Yasuda and Nabei (2018) state that peer seeking does not provide any influence. In line with that, Mejia (2014), as cited in Abdurahman and Rizqi (2020), assumed that good preparation to increase student self-confidence is less effective if the students have a high level of anxiety. Besides the positive coping strategies that nurture the students, the negative coping strategies (i.e., avoidance and resignation) do not much help students' growth. On many occasions, students show avoidance behavior in the classroom, such as avoiding eye contact or barely participating in the classroom activity (Aeni et al., 2017; Hosni, 2014; Yuniarti, 2017).

Although myriad researches have been carried out, rapid change is happening these days (i.e., blended learning situation). It may create new possibilities for the individual state, causes, and coping strategies. Hence, this research is expected to fill that gap to enrich the literature of English-speaking teaching practices in EFL classroom.

1.2. Research Questions

In line with the background of the study, this study aims to find the answer of those questions:

1. What are the causes and symptoms of the English speaking anxiety experienced by tourism students in English?
2. What are the tourism student's coping strategies to ease their English speaking anxiety?

1.3. Purposes of the Study

Speaking anxiety encountered by EFL students could be a barrier for them in reaching the demands of the era. Therefore, this current study aims to investigate tourism students on how anxiety manifest among them, the speaking anxiety sources, and how they deal with the circumstances.

1.4. Scope of the Study

The focus of this current study is to investigate the students' source of anxiety, symptoms, and coping strategies for speaking anxiety among 11th tourism students. In addition, this research is also limited in terms of sample size, time, and geographic area. Respondents are 11th-grade students of tourism major. Student reflection and interviews are carried out among six out of 51 students. Those six respondents have the lowest (3) and highest (3) scores of anxiety levels in FLCAS.

This research was conducted in one of the vocational schools in Bandung, West Java. It took almost three months to gather all the data, and the situation here was in the transition from online learning to face-to-face learning as the effect of the covid-19 pandemic. Because the context is limited to the research site, the result will likely differ from the other site.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This current study is expected to theoretically, practically, and professionally enrich the teaching and learning of English in the EFL classroom regarding the coping strategy in speaking skills.

Theoretically, the findings are expected to enrich the literature regarding the study of coping strategies for speaking skill anxiety in secondary school students, especially for vocational high schools in Indonesia.

Practically, it is expected to be a meaningful source for English teachers in vocational school, especially the research site, in giving treatment effectively, encouraging the students with different anxiety levels, and enhancing teachers' awareness of speaking anxiety that arise among the students.

Professionally, the researcher hopes this study can be valuable material to be considered by the teacher trainers or the teachers itself to develop their teaching competencies in dealing with students with anxiety problems. It will create a comfortable learning environment for students to learn English.

1.6. Clarification of Terms

To comprehend the contents of the current research, the terms below are defined to avoid misunderstandings and misconceptions:

a) Speaking Anxiety

Brown (2003) defines speaking as a form of oral communication in which speakers and listeners exchange information, ideas, and feelings. Thus, speaking anxiety is where the students having difficulties in doing speaking activities due to their negative feelings or perception. This research only focuses on anxiety in speaking skills.

b) Coping Strategy

It describes person's behavioral and cognitive in dealing with stressful situations, circumstances, and demands (Carr & Pudrovska, 2007). It is a natural response to managing stressful experiences (Gardner et al., 2021). A coping strategy helps people to manage difficult emotions.

c) Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA)

Anxiety means a subjective syndrome that appears under certain conditions depending on the symptoms brought on by humans (Horwitz, 2013). Foreign language anxiety refers to a specific context where someone feels negative emotions (worry and fear) in learning a foreign language (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012).

1.7. Organization of the Paper

The current study consists of five chapters which discuss the following matters:

Chapter I Introduction

This chapter describes the background of the study, the research question, the purposes of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, the clarification of the terms, and the organization of the whole paper.

Chapter II Literature Review

This chapter explains the theories that underlie the research to aid elaborate the findings. It will explain the definition of speaking, speaking components, and speaking in EFL vocational classroom. Furthermore, a detail explanation of foreign language anxiety, speaking anxiety, symptoms, sources, and anxiety level are also deliberated in this chapter. Furthermore, this chapter provides the theory regarding coping strategies and previous studies.

Chapter III Research Methodology

The third chapter discusses the methodology applied in this research including the research design, site, respondent, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV Findings and Discussion

The fourth chapter serves the research findings and the discussion of result obtained from the data collection.

 Chapter V Conclusions and Recommendations

The fifth chapter presents the conclusions of the current study, the implication of the current study, and the recommendation from the researcher for further research in the similar field.