

Chapter One

Introduction

This introduction presents the background of the study that includes a description of the topics. The identification of the problem and the delimitation are also stated clearly. Then, this chapter elaborates on the research questions, objectives, and significance of the study.

Background of the Study

Learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) can be challenging for many students. One of the common issues when learning English as a foreign language is anxiety. This is in line with Brown's statement who mentioned that anxiety is an important affective factor among other factors during second or foreign language acquisition (as cited in Al-Shboul, Ahmad, Nordin, & Rahman, 2013). Experience suggests that foreign language learning and foreign language acquisition situations are especially prone to the arousal of anxiety. Students feel anxious every time they learn a new language, such as about what they are going to learn and achieve. Besides having a negative impact on students' learning processes and outcomes, anxiety also influences the acquisition of a skill (Al-Shboul et al., 2013).

Since 1970, foreign language has acknowledged the indispensable role of anxiety in foreign language learning. The early study has examined foreign language anxiety in general (Azher, Anwar, & Naz, 2010). Many studies have also investigated about anxiety in listening (Sumalinog, 2018; Tahsildar & Yusoff, 2014), writing (Miri & Joia, 2018), and speaking skills (Gopang, Bughio, Umrani, & Lohar, 2015).

However, the correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension is still not widely discussed. Learning a foreign language means students also learn language skills, background, and motivation, which will make reading more complicated.

To obtain a good outcome, good inputs are needed. According to Santoso, Sutarsyah, and Sudirman (2013), someone is considered successful when learning a language when they can use that language well and can be understood by others. Out of four skills, reading tend to be a very important input because it is considered as the center of new knowledge. If students have problems while they are reading, it will be difficult for them to understand the passage of the reading. When students have problems while reading, they tend to panic because they cannot understand the content of the text. This condition is called reading anxiety which will interfere with students' reading comprehension. Reading anxiety occurs when people read a specific language and they feel that they do not understand what they are reading. This will certainly affect their reading comprehension. This has been said by Mohammadpur and Ghafournia (2015) who stated that foreign language anxiety will affect cognitive and strategic interference which will ultimately affect the reading comprehension of the reader.

In reading, some factors can make students anxious. According to Rajab, Zakaria, Rahman, Hosni, and Hassani (2012), factors that can affect reading anxiety and reading comprehension are linguistic factors, cultural and curricular content. Linguistic factors such as unfamiliar vocabulary, grammar, and text features tend to make students feel anxious while reading. While cultural factors such as unfamiliar

topics or cultures will make students confused while reading. Last but not least, the curricular content will also make the students confused.

Many classes at one of the English Language Education Department at an Islamic Private University in Yogyakarta implemented reading activities and reading assignments. Sometimes the lecturer assigned the students to read a specific academic text and then they had to make a summary based on what they read. As students, the students must read a lot of academic text to increase their knowledge. According to the researcher's experience, reading an academic text can be challenging because the researcher found many difficulties and anxiety while reading the academic text. Also, based on the prior interview with some students, it is found that they also faced reading anxiety. They also said that reading an academic text was quite challenging because of reading anxiety affected their reading comprehension, leading to them feeling demotivated while reading academic text. This situation makes them feel anxious every time they are assigned to read academic text. Therefore, this study attempts to focus more on reading anxiety and reading comprehension.

Identification of Problems

Two kinds of reading are intensive reading and extensive reading. Intensive and extensive reading is very beneficial in foreign language learning. Considering the advantages of intensive and extensive reading, a good reading course should include intensive and extensive reading activity (Mart, 2015). At one English Language Education Department at an Islamic Private University in Yogyakarta, some courses also implemented intensive and extensive reading. From the

researcher's experience and the prior interview with some students, there were few difficulties when it comes to extensive reading because they did it for pleasure. However, when it came to intensive reading, such as reading an academic text, some students felt anxious. They were afraid that they could not understand what the text was about. There are a lot of things that should be explored, such as the factors that can trigger reading anxiety when reading an academic text. The level of students' reading anxiety and the level of students' reading comprehension is also important to be explored so that they can know what they need to do next. Besides, it is also necessary to find out whether there is a correlation between reading anxiety and reading comprehension.

Delimitation of the Problem

From those problems which have been mentioned the researcher wants to focus on intensive reading. Through this study, the researcher wants to know the level of the students' reading anxiety and the level of students' reading comprehension in one of the English Language Education Department at an Islamic Private University in Yogyakarta. Moreover, the researcher also wants to know the correlation between students' reading anxiety and reading comprehension.

The Research Questions

The research questions are constructed below:

1. What is the level of students' reading anxiety?
2. What is the level of students' reading comprehension?

3. What is the correlation between students' reading anxiety and reading comprehension?

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the level of students' reading anxiety.
2. To identify the level of students' reading comprehension.
3. To identify the correlation between students' reading anxiety and students' reading comprehension.

Significance of the Study

This study hopefully give a benefaction to English teaching and learning process mainly in reading skills for students, teachers, and other researchers.

For students. Students becomes aware about the existence of reading anxiety. Furthermore students can find out whether reading anxiety have correlation with reading comprehension or not. By knowing this, they can suppress their reading anxiety during reading comprehension.

For teacher. The teacher becomes aware of the reading anxiety that may be experienced by students. Furthermore, the teacher can help students to overcome reading anxiety.

For other researchers. Hopefully, this study can be a reference for other researchers who want to research reading anxiety or even reading comprehension. Many things are related to reading anxiety which can be researched by other

researchers. Moreover, hopefully this research can enrich the extensive studies on reading anxiety.