

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter consists of the background of the study which discusses the importance of English language and speaking anxiety. It is followed by identification of the problem, delimitation of the study which explains the scope of the research, research questions and objectives of the research. Significance of the study and organization of the chapters are also presented in this chapter.

Background of the Study

English is an important means of communication in the world. Wierzbicka (2006) stated that it is the world's most important language. As an international language, English has become one of the foreign languages taught to students in Thailand. It is well known that Thailand has a large number of English language learners. English speakers in Thailand have increased dramatically over the years. However, the growth of English for nation building as a second or official language does not exist in this land (Pairote & Azirah, 2014).

Thailand tries to improve and open up to English several years ago. It results to the growing numbers of students learning English. Thailand through MEDAT (Muslim Education Development Association of Thailand) has cooperation with Muhammadiyah Organization in Indonesia providing scholarships. The scholarships are offered to Muslim High School graduates in Thailand to continue their study in Indonesia including in private universities in Yogyakarta. Some grantees were enrolled in English Department in these

universities. To support their study, the students were required to be proficient in English. They have to master four skills covering speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Speaking is an important skill that students should master. It involves oral communication involving several elements such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension. The researcher noticed that generally Thai students majoring in English in two private universities in Yogyakarta still faced difficulties in speaking. There are still a lot of difficulties faced by Thailand students, especially in speaking. Most of them say that it is hard to speak English. These difficulties are caused by many factors. Most of them have anxiety to speak English which finally impedes their competence during teaching and learning processes.

One of the factors causing the problem in speaking is anxiety. Students' anxiety is a real problem that majority of students face in learning English as a foreign language. Anxiety is a feeling that is overwhelmed by fear, suspense, or nervousness (Souad, 2011). It is a sensation of unease and interruption that typically arises from a scenario with unknown results. When nervous, a person finds it difficult to concentrate on the challenges they are facing. It has an impact on the actions that make a person passive in a circumstance. Additionally, the majority of students find it challenging to master a second or foreign language. This assumption was explained by Young (in Cabansag, 2013) stating that one kind of anxiety is language anxiety, which affects those who are learning second

and foreign languages. Students are reluctant to communicate in a second or foreign language.

Another thing about anxiety in learning is that anxiety can be both seen and unseen by others. The researcher had experienced that some students showed the symptoms like her acquaintance squirmed when he talked in front of the group. While the researcher's classmates were giving a presentation, they were toying with their clothes or hair. The researcher had own experience, when she had presentations in front of the classroom, she was often nervous, worried, beating fast and afraid to speak English. Also, the person touched the objects such as paper, pens, hijab, skirts, etc. Therefore, many kinds of symptoms are potential to be experienced by Thai students during speaking English.

Based on the explanation, anxiety is surely disadvantaging students as they finally are unable to perform their capability maximally. Moreover, there are many factors causing speaking anxiety for students, especially for Thai students in some private universities in Yogyakarta. This condition makes the anxiety in English speaking is important to be investigated. Beside its factors, this study also investigates symptoms of anxiety experienced by Thailand students. Therefore, the problem should be identified to get some solutions to encourage students' confidence and competence.

Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the study above, some problems are identified in this study. The researcher has conducted initial interviews with some of the

Thai students. The researcher learned that some students had symptoms of shyness and lack of vocabulary, low self - confidence that causes speaking anxiety. The students assert that they have a mental block to learn or speak a second or foreign language, and other students choose not to speak out of fear of being accused of being showing off. Previous research also showed that there are several factors that cause language anxiety especially in Speaking. In other words, students with English speaking anxiety still become a problem in the teaching and learning process in the English classrooms.

Delimitation of the Study

Based on the identification of the problem above, the delimitation on this research focuses on Thai students' anxiety in speaking English. In this study, speaking English means the process of dealing with speaking either before speaking or while speaking English. This research focuses on finding out what factors causing students' anxiety in speaking English and what anxiety symptoms experienced by the students in speaking English.

The study is delimited to six Thai students of English Education Department in two private universities in Yogyakarta. This study only used a qualitative approach to gain deeper information from the participants.

Research Question

Based on the researcher background above, the problem statements of the research are as follows:

1. What are the factors causing speaking anxiety experienced by Thai students?
2. What are anxiety symptoms experienced by Thai students in speaking English?

Objectives of the Study

Based on the formulations of the problem, the objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the factors causing the speaking anxiety experienced by Thai students.
2. To find out the symptoms of anxiety experienced by Thai students in speaking English.

Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to be beneficial for the following parties:

For Students

The result of this study will help Thai students to be aware of the anxiety symptoms when speaking English. The result of this study will also help students understand better the factors causing anxiety while speaking English in EFL classroom. Therefore, it is expected that the students can be more prepared and able to manage their anxiety during speaking English.

For Teachers

The researcher assures that the result of this study could help the lecturers to evaluate their class. In this sense, English lecturer could create a preferable and great classroom management or approach to avoid students' speaking anxiety

For other Researchers

For other researchers, this result of the research can be used as the references when holding research. The other researchers may use this research as the basic information for their research and develop either with similar or different purpose.

Organization of the Chapters

The report of the research is organized into five chapters. In chapter one, the researcher explains the introduction of this research. It provides the reasons why the researcher chose the topic of English-speaking anxiety among Thai students at two private universities in Yogyakarta. The reasons were based on the researcher's observation that generally Thai students faced some difficulties in speaking. The difficulties could contribute to the speaking anxiety. Therefore, the researcher was interested in investigating the reasons why Thai students anxious feel in speaking English.

In chapter two, the researcher explains the literature review of this research topic. It focuses on the explanation of the definition of anxiety, anxiety in speaking foreign language, types of anxiety, factors causing speaking anxiety, symptoms of anxiety and review of related research.

In chapter three, the researcher explains the methodology used to collect the data. The researcher explains how to collect the data. There are several things discussed in this chapter, including research design, research setting, research participants, data collection method, data collection procedure, research instrument and data analysis.

Chapter four provides the data collected in this study as well as discussions about the data as the research findings. The data are collected from the result of interview. The researcher discusses the factors causing students' anxiety in speaking English and the student's symptoms of anxiety in speaking English. There are two sections presented to answer the research problem. The first is the data presentation of the interviews. The second is the discussion.

Chapter five consists of two parts. The first part is about the conclusion of the research. The second part provides some suggestions relate to this study for the student, the teachers and for future researchers.