

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Learning is a changed in an individual caused by experience. It is not only about gaining knowledge, but an individual must modify the knowledge itself, then elaborate it into attitudes, strategies, beliefs, behavior and skills. It is not a simple process because learning involves change, endures over time, and occurs through experiences (Schunk, 2012). The teacher can know how far students have learned in their learning through achievement tests. An achievement test is intended to measure what the students have learned or skills the student has mastered (Santrock, 2011). Usually, it is designed as the scores by test scores or teacher marks. According to Syah (2013) there are external and internal factors that affect students' achievement such as environmental, physical, and psychological.

There are four skills that students need to master when they learn English, i.e., reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Speaking is a productive skill; the skill in which utterances are produce and such is observable. The form and meaning of it depend on the context, audience, experience, environment and the goals of the speaking. It is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves the production, reception and processing of information (Brown, 2007). According to Apriyanto (2019), speaking is a complex process of sending and receiving messages through the use of verbal or non-verbal symbols such as gestures and

facial expressions. Learners need to know the elements of speaking to be able to speak a foreign language. Those elements are connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language.

Harmer (as cited in Mohtasham, 2017) stated that common perceptions among language learners towards speaking skill are complex but can be more important than other skills. It is important as it has great significance for daily interaction to communicating ideas and messages orally (Gilakjani, 2016). Speaking also develops learners grammar, vocabulary and writing skill. With speaking, students can show their emotions, ideas, and various function of language (Leong, 2017). Speaking is difficult because integrating listening and comprehension based on communicative competence and situational context (Koran, 2015). It is also involving many aspects, such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and even cultural knowledge of the language abilities at the same time (Putri, 2015). In addition, Speaking is a crucial skill to express the meaning of what the speaker is saying. In the language teaching and learning process, the student needs to use a right diction in order to convey appropriate meaning and understood by listeners (Cameron, 2001). The other skills like reading, listening, writing can be practiced alone, but for speaking, students need to find somebody to interact with them. Speaking can be a challenging task for many students because of their fear of performing a foreign language. This fear phenomenon is known as foreign language anxiety.

Horwitz (1986) claimed anxiety as complex self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning. It appears from the

uniqueness of the language learning process. Language anxiety affected learner performance directly and indirectly. It will directly create avoidance and reduce class participation and indirectly cause learners to worry and self-doubt that will affect their learning achievement. Brown (2007) claimed that “some affective factors in human behavior in learning language are inhibition, risk-taking, anxiety”. Anxiety is one of the important variables that determine the students’ success with people’s emotions and cognition of learning a new language.

The obvious factor that blocks students to achieve their learning goals and performance is classroom anxiety. Krashen (2013), stated a “mental block” can be formed and improve effective filters to prevent comprehensive language acquisition input. It is also decreasing student willingness to participating in learning activities. The anxious students will have difficulties in the learning process and their speaking ability. Students may learn less or may not be able to demonstrate what they have learned to practiced. Even worse, anxiety also may increase more failure in learning processes and student achievement.

Anxiety is seen in the English Conversation class (hence referred to as EC). This class is one of the English programs at the Budhi Warman 2 Vocational High School Jakarta. Since 2006, EC used to be one of the compulsory courses, but in 2017 its status changed to a mandatory extracurricular. Once a week, each class has a schedule to attend this special class and the student evaluation is conducted in the form of midterm and final examinations. This class aims to develop students' English skills, especially speaking. Students are expected to have great speaking skills for their college or work-life after graduation. In this class,

students are taught on various topics such as daily activities, forecasting, marketing, speech, asking for direction, etc.

However, students still cannot use English actively in this class. They often speak Indonesia than English language during the lesson. They also feel shy and anxious to talk in front of the class. That feeling also experienced students that have good scores but rarely to speak during the class. The anxious feeling may be due to some problems, for instance, English is not their mother tongue. Some students are shocked when listen and speak the oral form of English. It happens because spoken language is different from the written language especially when the conversation in the form of informal situations, and using several slangs. The next problem is the students are often confused to choose appropriate vocabularies to convey their message. Some students stutter or have long pauses when speaking from one sentence to another. They might also afraid to be embarrassed if making a mistake, especially pronunciation because their classmates will be laughing or sneering. Another possible factor is the lack of teacher attention to English programs. The teachers used to support English language programs and motivated students to interact a little bit using English in their regular classes, but in recent years there has been a lot of new teachers who do not motivate student to talk in English. It make their motivation is not as high as before, and caused higher foreign language anxiety.

Several studies have revealed the impact of student anxiety on their speaking performance. The first study conducted by by Hakim (2015). The study investigated the factors causing students' anxiety in speaking English and its

relation to students' speaking performance in English class. The study shows the factors that caused speaking anxiety are self-perceptions, learners' beliefs about language learning, and classroom procedure. Furthermore, there is a high level of negative significant correlation between students' speaking anxiety and their speaking performance.

The level of correlation in Hakim (2015) is different from Sutarsyah (2017). He found a negative correlation with a low level significance between student foreign language anxiety and their speaking performance. The study was carried out towards 7th graders of secondary school in Bandar Lampung. He also claimed the factor that caused students anxiety was worry and tension. The student nervousness can occur when they had not self-reliant in their performance.

The same level of correlation in line with Lestari (2019). She found the correlation between anxiety and speaking achievement among 112 students have a negative and low significance level. It also revealed that students get facilitating and debilitating anxiety. It means that student get positive and negative effect of their anxiety. She stated that anxiety make students give better performance because of the motivation to be better than others. In addition, Students felt anxious because they got experience from their friends that were not easy to achieve good score, not serious in learning process, and feeling lazy to study the subject.

Meanwhile, there are also studies reveal the correlation between foreign language anxiety and student achievement. The first study conducted by Amiri

(2015) about the relationship between anxiety and student achievement on examination. The relationship of anxiety based on student scores, student gender, and anxiety components. The components based on five level anxiety namely, communicative anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and anxiety of English classroom. The results showed a significant and high negative correlation coefficient between the students' score in anxiety scale and their performance in their final examination. This result of the study is slightly different from Dogan (2015). He involved 683 engineering department students of Firat University that were receiving compulsory English preparatory education at the school of foreign language His research has a significant result of -0.23 ($p < 0.001$) which means that there is a low negative correlation between anxiety and student achievement.

Since foreign language anxiety can affect student's performance and learning achievement, it is important to know about student anxiety. From previous studies, there has been no study of the relationship between foreign language anxiety and speaking performance, if there is learning achievement as a controlling variable. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the correlation between student foreign language anxiety and student speaking performance at English conversation class with the use of learning achievement to control the foreign language anxiety.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the description, the research question is formulated as follows:

“Is there any correlation between foreign language anxiety, learning achievement and student speaking performance in an English conversation class 11th graders at Budhi Warman 2 Vocational School?”

1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the correlation of foreign language anxiety and student speaking performance at an English conversation class with the use of learning achievement to control the foreign language anxiety.

1.4 Scope of The Study

This study focuses on the relationship between foreign language anxiety and speaking performance by involving students learning achievement as a control variable in an English conversation class. In this study, the relationship correlated based on each score in each variable.

1.5 Significant of study

This study is expected to raise teacher awareness of students' anxiety and its impact to student's speaking performance. Thus, teachers can manipulate the ways of teaching speaking skills with respect to such a hindering impact. The result of this study is also expected to give beneficial references, positive contributions and information for further research or investigation in the same area with different contexts.