

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Speaking is one of the four crucial skills to learn in English, particularly when the speakers are not using English as the first language. Students in Indonesia use English as a foreign language. Studies on speaking show that several factors affect students' speaking skill. Anxiety and self-confidence are two of them.

Anxiety is one of the most negatively influential affective variables, which prevents learners from successfully learning a foreign language. It makes language learners nervous and afraid, which may contribute to poor oral performance (Park & Lee, 2005). Another factor which is highly correlated with anxiety is self-confidence. Self-confidence can have a negative impact if the learners think of oneself as deficient and limited in the target language. However, self-confidence can have a positive impact, if it correlates with oral performance.

The more English learners practice speaking in the target language the faster they can improve their communication skills and facilitate their language acquisition (Humphries, Burns, & Tanaka, 2005). Therefore, many English teachers prefer to use communicative English teaching.

Research from Korea showed that the more anxious the students are in speaking English, the lower their grades they get in oral performance. On the contrary, the higher self – confidence they have, the

higher oral performance they showed. The participants of Park & Lee's (2005) study were 132 Korean college students who joined English conversation classes in 2004. The questionnaires were related to anxiety and self – confidence. Their oral performances were assessed in terms of IATEFL's criteria. The correlation analysis of anxiety/confidence and the elements of oral performance show that confidence was more closely related to attitude and interaction such as communication strategies and conversation skills of oral performance, while anxiety was more negatively correlated with the L2' learners of oral performance such as vocabulary and grammar (Park & Lee, 2005).

Increasing students' level of confidence can be achieved by employing a certain kind of learning strategies. For example, teacher may use authentic materials (Songsiri, 2007). Other methods will be adopting communicative strategy, using communication strategies, promoting positive attitudes and a positive atmosphere to help students and teachers to reflect on their successes and failures in teaching and learning.

Research also indicated that the students' confidence increased because teachers incorporated additional speaking activities into the classroom and encouraged them to collaborate with their peers (Doqaruni, 2014). Students' confidence will increase if they are able to work together with their classmates.

In addition, the opposite of self-confidence is self-reticence. Self-reticence happens because of the anxiety of public failure, lack of delivery

skill, poor organizing ability and memory. Self-reticence is one of the reasons of students' unwillingness to speak in English (Chowdhury, 2016). Most of the students will get self-reticence when the teacher asks them to speak English even just for answering a simple question. They prefer to be quiet rather than speaking their minds.

This study was aimed at investigating student's confidence and anxiety in speaking English in Faculty of Language and Arts. Many studies on speaking skill focus on the methods to make students speak more in the classroom. This study, however would like to examine whether students' anxiety and confidence affect their oral performance.

1.2 FIELD OF THE STUDY

This research is related to the field of applied linguistics.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research focuses on college students' confidence and anxiety in speaking English. The researcher conducted this study in Faculty of Language and arts Sogijapranata Catholic University, Semarang.

1.4 PROBLEM FORMULATION

The writer, in this research, formulates two problems related to students' confidence and anxiety in speaking English.

1. Are there any relations between self – confidence - anxiety and oral performance for Indonesian learners of English?
2. What kind of challenges do students face in speaking class?
3. What kind of strategies do students make to increase their speaking skills?

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

With regards to the problems mentioned above, this research is conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To analyze whether anxiety and self-confidence affect students' oral performance.
2. To know the kind of challenges they face in speaking class.
3. To know the kind of strategies they make to increase their speaking skills

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is to analyze whether anxiety and self-confidence affect student in oral performance. The result of the study will make the readers understand about the main factors that influence student to speak confidently especially in English. Moreover, the writer hopes that the readers can use this research as the reference when they are trying to write thesis with the same topic. Further, the findings of this study will certainly

help to enrich students' knowledge and better understanding about the main elements of self-confidence in Indonesian learners of English.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

a. Self-confidence

Specifically, self-confidence is purported to increase the probability that cognitively anxious performers can tolerate higher levels of arousal before experiencing a decrement in performance (Hardy, 1996 as cited in Hanton, Mellalieu, & Hall, 2004)

b. Anxiety

Anxiety is a complex affective concept associated with feeling of uneasiness, frustration self-doubt, apprehension or worry (Scovel, 1978 as cited in Park & Lee, 2005).

