

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1. 1. Background of the Study

As a human today, to be able to communicate with others by using foreign language becomes one of life's targets by people, especially English language. Most of parents today fight to send their children to expensive schools that have English language lesson as local content. Even not a few of them have to send their children to international schools with the aim to master an English language.

However, not all children succeed in its achievements as a parent would expect, due to many factors, one of them is anxiety problem. Chen (2011: 38) mentions that there are many kinds of emotional factors influencing language learning, including self-esteem and self-confidence, suppression and adventure, empathetic, outgoing, imitation and anxiety. Related to that statement, Nunan and Benson (2005: 44) said that the successful management of one's emotions or affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, empathy and self-esteem can lead to successful learning. The anxiety refers to learners' tension, worry, fear and other emotional experience; while empathy refers to the ability to put oneself in another's place; and self-esteem refers to feeling of self-worth the individual possesses.

The anxiety has different levels, low anxiety, moderate and high anxiety level (Horwitz, 1986). The anxiety is a highly influential construct in language learning. Studies have shown that anxiety and stress can negatively affect the

body and emotions of children and adolescents and can develop into many challenging issues such as school absenteeism, low self-concept, verbal and nonverbal problems, deficiencies in academic performance, decrease in focus and concentration, behavioral problems, heightened dependence, adult attention seeking behaviors, and difficulties staying on task (Allen & Klein, 1996; Costello et al., 2003; Orth, 2011). Students with high anxiety levels cannot concentrate on learning and as a result, they might fail in performing a task in classrooms (Chastian, 1988; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner 1993; MacIntyre, Noels & Clement, 1997 Samimy & Rardin 1994). American learners of foreign languages, at least, anxiety levels do not vary with respect to target language (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1986; Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999).

Researchers reported a negative relationship between language anxiety and achievement, e.g. the higher the anxiety, the lower the performance, (Clement, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977, 1980: cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999). Wu (2010) and Zheng (2008) stated that Anxiety, however, has been a matter of considerable interest in language education setting for educators since it is a major obstacle to foreign language learning that the learners need to overcome. Horwitz (2001) has reiterated that the issue of understanding the relationship between anxiety and achievement is unresolved. He also said that asserts that one - third of all foreign language learners experience some level of language anxiety. Therefore, foreign language anxiety has been a topic of much interest and research in recent years (Ellis, 2008), especially the 1980s witnessed the breakthrough in the studies on foreign language learning anxiety (Wang, 2014).

However, in the classroom, teacher is the crucial role in this issue. According to the Wilson (1999), teachers and educational leaders play an important role in addressing and reducing the anxiety of the children in their schools. Horwitz (2001) stated that teachers should realize that language learning, and particularly oral production, is a potentially stressful situation for some students, and that the “tension and discomfort related to language learning call for the attention of the language teaching profession”.

There are many behaviors that teachers do in teaching speaking. According to Paul (2006), teacher’s behavior can be a positive and negative reinforcement, punishment, etc. Positive reinforcement is demonstrated when a behavior is followed by a consequence that increases the behavior’s rate of occurrence. For example is to give a praise to students which can give a motivation to students to speak even it is not perfect grammar. While, negative reinforcement describes a relationship among events in which the rate of a behaviors occurrence increases when some (usually aversive or unpleasant) environmental condition is removed or reduced in intensity. For example, to give a promising to students like to ask students to finish the assignment before playing outside. And punishment is a behavior is followed by a consequence that decreases the behavior’s future rate of occurace. For example when a teacher threatens a student which makes stopping to speak.

Inline with kinds of behaviors that teachers do during the teaching learning process, researchers also interest to observe the way of the teacher’s behavior do. There are positive and negative ways of teachers in delivering the behavior in the

teaching learning process. Positive ways can be some behaviors that make students feel comfortable and feel happy during the interaction with teachers. According to Young (1990), being friendly, having a good sense of humour, being relaxed and patient, telling students that everyone makes mistakes are all qualities of a good teacher. These may make learners comfortable in the foreign language class and that may encourage students to see the L2 class as a positive experience and environment in which to learn (Young, 1990). While, to deliver negative ways like threatening and punishing makes students feel uncomfortable like MacIntyre&Gardner (1991a) says, “Apart from the difficulties originated sometimes from the language skill itself which may discourage the learner, negative experiences may stem from the teacher, the methods he adopts and the relation he establishes with his students.”. Many researchers have supported the idea that communicating in the foreign language class may be a traumatic experience causing feelings of fear (Beebe, 1983; Lucas, 1984; Horwitz and Cope, 1986; Liu, 1989; Phillips, 1992). It means that, the way of the teachers during delivering the behaviors is very important, whether it makes a negative or positive experience that would be remember by the students. According to Koch and Terrell (1991), Young (1990, cited in Young, 1991), and Price (1991), a large number of their subjects considered oral presentation as the most anxiety-provoking activity in the class. Some language teachers believe that students try to overcome their anxiety by trying to remember the presentation stuff and by rehearsing it, and then they bring another pressure on themselves by trying to remember what they have rehearsed and feel probably stressed because they

cannot remember everything (Tanveer, 2007). In line with the positive and negative ways, to give difficult tasks also influences the anxiety to the students. According to MacIntyre (1995), only when a given task is relatively simple, foreign language anxiety could be facilitating. Once the task is too difficult, anxiety will impair performance. In addition to task difficulty, factors such as teachers' attitude and evaluation, teacher-students interactions in class, parents' expectation, classmates' attitude, students' own achievement are the potential sources of students' foreign language anxiety. However, teachers have reasons why they deliver those ways of behaviors to the students. Every teacher has her/his own reason to show their ways of behaviors.

In fact, it is found that more than 50% students in Ikal school Medan have difficulties of speaking in the classroom. Based on the interview, some students feel not confidence to speak English in the classroom even though they know they have correct answer with them. Another students feel afraid to answer because of their friends' mocking. In line with the students' statements above, the teachers also confirm that they have difficulties to make the students speak English in the classroom. It is very few number of students who are able to share their opinion or answer the teacher's questions during the teaching speaking process, while other students mostly prefer to silent than to contribute the opinions.

In this research, the researcher will focus on the speaking skill of students, as being able to speak is one of the targets of the students in learning English. According to Richards (2006) and Brown (2007), the aim of the foreign language class today is to enable students using the target language to express their ideas,

present their needs, to hold a conversation with another participant, be it a native speaker or a non-native speaker.

Speaking process and practice at the school provokes anxiety where in fact many students hope their performance are much better than they have. Horwitz (1986) stated that it has been found that the feelings of tension or nervousness center on the two basic task requirements of foreign language learning: listening and speaking, because, in interaction, both the skills cannot be separated.

The first purpose of this study is to find out to what extend are the junior students of SMP Ikal Medan anxious in learning speaking. The second purpose is to investigate what are the teacher's behaviors appear in the teaching speaking process to the students. While the third purpose is to investigate how the teachers perform their behavior. And the last purpose is to investigate why the teachers do it the way they do.

1. 2. The Problems of the Study

The problems of the study are formulated in the following questions:

- 1) What are the students' anxiety levels in the process of teaching of speaking?
- 2) What teaching behavior do the teachers perform to the students' with different levels of anxiety?
- 3) How do the teachers perform the teaching behaviors?
- 4) Why do the teachers perform in the way they do?

1. 3. The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the levels of foreign language anxiety of the students.
2. To find out what the teaching behavior do the teachers perform to the students' with different levels of anxiety.
3. To find out how the teachers perform the teaching behaviors.
4. To find out why do the teachers perform in the way they do.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is the students and the teachers of SMP Swasta Ikal Medan, Indonesia. The study will investigate the kind of anxious students, to find out how do the teachers' behavior perform to the students with different levels of anxiety, and to find out why the teachers perform in the way they do.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this research is expected to to give a learning paradigm and worthwhile contribution to a large numbers of teachers of junior high students to enhance better skills and knowledge in behaving the student's with different level of anxiety.

Practically, it is expected that this research can be used as a reference to teachers to improve their competence, develop their skills and knowledge in the area of anxiety problems so that they can motivate all students with different anxiety problems.