

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, assumptions, limitation of the study, theoretical framework, hypothesis of the study, definition of key terms, and the organization of the study.

1.1. The Background of Study

Language is used as a tool for communication to link one person to another. Some common languages in the world are English, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, and Arabic. “English is not in the first rank of the most widely spoken languages in the world in terms of the number of native speakers. There are many more Chinese speakers than native English speakers but English is the most widespread language in the world. Chinese is spoken little outside of Chinese communities. It is hard to count exactly how many English speakers there are, but according to one estimate there are more than 350,000,000 native English speakers and more than 400,000,000 speakers of English as a second language which is a language used in everyday life, even though it is not the native language and as a foreign language which is a language studied but not used much in everyday life” (Kitao, 1996, p. 1).

The importance of English is not just in how many people speak it but also in what it is used for. English is the major language of news and information in the world. It is the language of international business, maritime communication and international travel. American and British popular culture primarily in books, movies and music carries the English

language throughout the world (Kitao, 1996). The major language of news and information in the world is in English. English dominates global information resources more than 44 % of printed and electronic materials. Almost 50 % of all information in the world is produced in English (Lobachev, 2008). This numbers measure the importance of English nowadays. Many people in the world use English as an international language and it is used in every aspect in life.

Many countries realize that the need of English skills in all aspects is crucial in responses to the importance of English and the impact of globalization. Every country nowadays has equipped its people become better with English performance (Khamkhien, 2010). In our country, Indonesia also prepares its people with English since they are in schools. English becomes one of compulsory subjects that must be learnt in schools as the foundation for students in facing globalization era.

Correspondingly with the increase of the awareness of the importance of English, many schools in Indonesia have begun to develop teaching English skills to the students. Therefore, schools have to pay attention to many factors that determine the students' achievement in learning English: students' intelligence, students' motivation, students' attitudes, students' anxiety, students' social-life, students' physical, classroom environment, school environment, family environment, and many more. According to Mushtaq (2012, p.2), "Student academic measurement has received considerable attention in previous researches, it is challenging aspects of academic literature, and student performance are affected due to social, psychological, economic, environmental and personal factors. These factors strongly influence on the student achievement, but these factors vary from person to person and country to country".

This study just focused on two factors which influence students' achievement. Classroom environment and language anxiety are two factors that may affect the success of the students in learning a foreign language. Teachers have to create positive classroom environment which makes the students engaged with the lesson, comfortable in trying to answer questions, brave in making mistakes, and active in producing English. The teachers have to pay more attention to creating classroom environment where the students know that all their efforts to participate will be received, respected, and supported. Besides classroom environment, teachers have to consider about language anxiety of the students as a factor from the students themselves. Students with high anxiety level are often considered to be passive. They are not willing to participate in learning. They do not join the discussions, ask and answer questions and read in front of the class. Language acquisition is increased when students feel the engagement in meaningful activities and their anxiety level in language learning is low.

“Classroom environment is referred to learning environment, as well as by terms such as atmosphere, ambience, ecology, and milieu. The impact of classroom environment on students and staffs can be beneficial for a barrier of learning” (Adelman & Taylor, 2015, p.1). Hussain (2011, p.2) defines that “classroom environment is the total of all social, emotional, mental and physical factors that contributes significantly to the total of the process of teaching and learning in the classroom.”

Classroom environment used in this study has a meaning at the psychological and social aspects of classroom rather than the physical environment. The environment refers to the atmosphere or climate which is built by the teacher and students who interact with each other in the classroom everyday (Dorman, 1999). Classroom's psychological and social

environment is called classroom environment. This term refers to psychological and social environment created by teacher and students in the classroom (Limpo, 2012).

Classroom environment plays a vital role in reducing the students' language anxiety when the teachers can organize and control it well. The teachers use classroom environment to accomplish their teaching activities through the flexible and interactive nature of classroom environment. The teachers have to create an environment in classroom that is most conducive to maximizing learning, minimizing the behavior problems, and creating a positive and safe environment (Hussain, 2011). Positive classroom environment must be created because students often face some difficulties in English class activities such as reading texts, pronouncing words, and answering grammar exercises and they have to produce English language in the classroom. If they do not have good classroom environment, the teacher will not involve the students to the activities and the students will not encourage each other to be successful in learning English. In addition, Tarmidi (2006) says that teachers often neglect this for improving the quality of learning and education in Indonesia. Classroom environment is believed that has a positive correlation with academic achievement of students. In other words, making a positive classroom environment is a way to improve the effectiveness and quality of the learning in classroom.

Many international research studies have been conducted to investigate the assessment and the understanding of psychological and social dimensions of classroom learning environment. Those studies have established learning environment as a potential field of study. They show that classroom environment influences matters such as student engagement, behavior, self-esteem, academic efficacy, achievement, and students'

satisfaction (Adelman and Taylor, 2005). Hussain (2011), Bennet (2001), Baek and Choi (2001) also found that classroom environment influences student achievement positively. In Indonesia, there are just a few of studies which focused on classroom environment (Tarmidi, 2006). The writer had not found yet a study which focused on the influences of classroom environment in learning English.

Language anxiety, self-esteem, self-efficacy, inhibition, and risk-taking are some affective factors in language learning. Affective factors are emotional factors which influence students' learning process. Anxiety plays a major affective role in language acquisition (Brown, 2007). Spielberger (as cited in Brown, 2007, p.161) defines anxiety as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system." Horwitz (2001) states that anxiety negatively influences language learning to many people. Not only language learning but also many types of learning. Anxiety has been found to be one of the most highly examined variables in all of psychology and education.

English, being a foreign language is considered to be a cause of anxiety due to affective factors among the students. The issue that anxiety affects students' foreign language learning has been recognized by many researchers. Emotional and feelings of the students are considered very important part of learning environment (Hussain, 2011). Anxiety has been identified as one of the most important factors in foreign language learning. In school, some of the students still have anxiety to use English in class. If they are afraid in producing English, it will influence their achievement in the classroom. It is one factor of why some students still have unsatisfied achievement.

Many studies have been conducted to investigate quantitative relationship between language anxiety and language learning. Young (1991) used a questionnaire to study what kind of activities caused anxiety among high school students. Similarly Price (1993) interviewed ten high school students to get their views on language anxiety. Both studies showed that the students experienced language anxiety not only in written activities but also particularly speaking in front of others. They also found that teachers' personal qualities like friendliness and cooperation greatly affected the level of anxiety in the learning of foreign language. In Indonesia, there are just a few of studies which focused on language anxiety such as on students' achievements in learning English (Fadillah, 2009) and on students' achievement in learning accountancy (Susanti, 2011).

Among the influencing factors, the writer would like to know further about the influences of two factors which are classroom environment and language anxiety in learning English since these factors determine the degree of the students' achievements in English class. Therefore, this study finds out the correlation between classroom environment, language anxiety and grade nine students' English achievements.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Based on the reasons presented in the background of the study, the problem of this study is stated as follow "Is there any significant correlation between classroom environment, language anxiety, and grade nine students' English achievements?" This major problem is divided into four minor problems:

- a. Is there any significant correlation between classroom environment, language anxiety, and grade nine students' English achievements all together?
- b. Is there any significant correlation between classroom environment and grade nine students' English achievements?
- c. Is there any significant correlation between language anxiety and grade nine students' English achievements?
- d. Is there any significant correlation between classroom environment and language anxiety?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

According to the statement of the problem, the purpose of this study is to find out the correlation between classroom environment, language anxiety, and grade nine students' English achievements. This major aim is divided into four minor aims as follows:

- a. To find out the correlation between classroom environment, language anxiety and grade nine students' English achievements all together.
- b. To find out the correlation between classroom environment and grade nine students' English achievements all together.
- c. To find out the correlation between language anxiety and grade nine students' English achievements.
- d. To find out the correlation between classroom environment and language anxiety.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to analyze classroom environment, language anxiety, and grade nine students' English achievements. Therefore, the

writer wants the result of this study to give some contribution to the teaching of English to fulfill the students' needs as well. Hopefully, it will be beneficial for the English teachers in helping their students in learning English by considering classroom environment to encourage and involve them to the lessons without being anxious and afraid. This study might also guide the teachers to manage and control the students' anxiety in such a way that helps in improving the students' achievements. The results of this study are also expected to give information and knowledge about the influence of classroom environment and language anxiety in learning English.

1.5. Assumptions

This study based on the assumptions below:

1. The students are honest in answering the questionnaires. Therefore, the data was considered to be true based on the factual and actual condition.
2. The answers of the students reflect the data which is needed in this study.

1.6. Limitation of the study

Being aware of how broad the topic of this study is, the writer feels that it is necessary to limit the scope of the study. The study focuses on the classroom environment, language anxiety, and grade nine students' English achievements in a Private Catholic Junior High School in Surabaya.

The population of the study was grade nine students of the Catholic School Surabaya belonging to the school year of 2013-2014. The writer chose this school because the writer had an access to take the data while she

did her teaching practice in this school. The writer took grade nine as her subject due to its availability.

1.7. Theoretical Framework

In this study, the writer chose two factors which play important roles in students' learning process as the needs of the students to be concerned classroom environment and students' language anxiety. Therefore, theoretical frameworks used in this research are the theory of classroom environment, the theory of language anxiety, and the theory of students' achievement.

Theory of classroom environment used in this study is by Moos (1979) and Dorman (1999), while the second theoretical frameworks used is the theory of language anxiety by Hansen (1977) and Horwitz (2001). Last but not least, the third theoretical frameworks used in this research is the theory of students' achievement by Evans (2007) and Hussain (2011).

1.8. Hypothesis

Seeing the fact of this study that this study finds out the correlation between classroom environment, language anxiety, and grade nine students' English achievements, the writer made the temporary answers to the problem statements. The hypotheses are:

Ha(a) : There is a significant correlation between classroom environment, language anxiety, and grade nine students' English achievements all together

Ha(b) : There is a significant correlation between classroom environment and grade nine students' English achievements.

Ha(c) : There is a significant correlation between language anxiety and grade nine students' English achievements.

Ha(d) : There is a significant correlation between classroom environment and language anxiety.

To test the alternative hypothesis, the null hypotheses are formulated as follows:

Ho(a) : There is no significant correlation between classroom environment, language anxiety, and grade nine students' English achievements all together.

Ho(b) : There is no significant correlation between classroom environment and grade nine students' English achievements.

Ho(c) : There is no significant correlation between language anxiety and grade nine students' English achievements.

Ho(d) : There is no significant correlation between classroom environment and language anxiety.

1.9. Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding, it is important to define the key terms. The terms to be defined are psychological classroom environment, language anxiety, and students' achievements.

- a. Classroom Environment is an atmosphere in a classroom which is appeared by interactions between teacher and students, even student and students in the process of learning. The classroom environment is important to promote learning process to the students (Limpo, 2011). The term of "classroom environment" used in this study refers to psychological and social classroom environment.

- b. Language anxiety is “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz and Cope, 1991, p.128).
- c. Students achievement is “student ability in computations and solving problems, which can normally be measured by written test” (Evans, 2007, p.1). In this study, grade nine students’ English achievements refer to students’ accomplishment in mid-term test made by their English teacher.

1.10. Organization of the Thesis

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction which describes the background of the problem, statement of the problem, the objective, the significance, scope and limitation of the study, theoretical framework, assumption of the study, hypothesis of the study, definition of key terms, and the organization of the thesis. Chapter II is the literature review which explains about the review of some relevant theories. This chapter discusses the theories of the correlation between classroom environment, students’ language anxiety, and students’ achievement in learning English. Chapter III is the research methodology including the research design of the study, validity and reliability of the instruments, procedures of collecting data, and procedures of data analysis. Chapter IV consists of the results of data analysis, findings and discussions. The description of the data and the data analysis and findings are also explained. Chapter V focuses on the conclusion of the study based on the findings and

discussions. This chapter aims to answer the questions in chapter one. It also presents the suggestions of this study.