

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The first chapter is an initial description that sets the nature of the present research in exploring students' foreign language anxiety in EFL Classroom in a University in Bandung. This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research questions, the purposes of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of the terms, research location and thesis organization.

### 1.1 Background of The Study

Learning at least one foreign language is a current demand for every learner especially in university level. Nowadays, mastering more than one foreign languages is an obligatory for educators either teachers or students. In order to answer that challenge, many programs have been built by some universities in Indonesia. One of the programs is by developing a boarding school project, where students can stay and study in one place. They learn many things include foreign language subjects. Two or more foreign languages are taught in that program. In other hand, most foreign language learners experience of nervousness when they speak the foreign language in front of their classmates or native speakers. Some may forget even easy words, and others may be worried about making mistakes. Horwitz (2008) stated that "some language learners become anxious when they cannot be themselves when speaking in the new language" (p. 9). As Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) stated, foreign language anxiety is fairly common among students. Understanding foreign language anxiety would give the researcher ideas for helping students cope with the difficulty of learning a new language.

When a student cuts class, fails to prepare for class or to do homework, or is unable to answer even simple questions about the topic being studied in class, it is clear that the student is not learning well, and teachers and educators may wonder why. There may be many causes of these types of behavior. In an attempt to better understand why some language learners have more difficulty acquiring a target language than other learners do, there has been a relatively recent increase in research into potential relationships between foreign language acquisition and affective variables (Gardner, 1997). Specifically, in her work, Rebecca Oxford (2005) suggested that foreign language anxiety (FLA), or the experience of anxiety when an individual is working towards attaining a foreign language, is one of them. According to a variety of researchers (e.g., Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991a, 1991b), FLA can be a predictor of success in learning the foreign language. Since anxiety can have profound effects on many aspects of foreign language learning, it is important to be able to identify those students who are particularly anxious in foreign language class. Based on the phenomenon, this study tries to investigate foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) by questioning students' levels of anxiety, to explore its sources stemming from the foreign language classroom and to find out the coping strategies students used in their foreign language classroom.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the research background the following research questions are revealed

1. What kind of anxiety do students experience in learning English?
2. What are the sources of anxiety among EFL students?
3. What kind of coping strategies they used for their foreign language anxiety?

### **1.3 Purpose of The Study**

Based on research questions the following purposes were drawn up as possible answers to the research questions presented.

1. To find out the different levels of students' Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA).
2. To find out the sources of FLCA are likely to lie in the EFL classroom.
3. To investigate students' coping strategies for their foreign language anxiety in their learning situation.

### **1.4 Scope of The Study**

This study is conducted to undergraduate students in one of Islamic University in West Java Province, Indonesia. The students were in the second semester in the university majoring various study that learn English as foreign language. It aims to know their levels of anxiety, the sources of their language anxiety and their coping strategies to their language anxiety. Moreover the observation, questionnaires and interview analysis attempt to find out types of students' anxiety, the sources of students' anxiety, the coping strategies of their anxiety.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Understanding student's FLCA in EFL classroom may provide educators with additional information on how to best support these students during their learning activities. Besides, the educators also will prevent to minimize the anxiety by knowing the attributed sources and students' coping strategies.

## **1.6 Clarification of the Terms**

### **1.6.1 Anxiety**

Anxiety is defined by Spielberger, (1983; p. 15) as a “subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of autonomic nervous system” (cited in Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1991, p. 27).

### **1.6.2 Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA)**

“A distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the (foreign) language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128).

### **1.6.3 Coping Strategies (Defense Mechanism)**

“A variety of behaviors for softening failures, protecting ourselves from overwhelming anxiety, and maintaining our sense of personal worth.” (Ehrman, 1996 as cited in Tasnimi, 2009, p.120)

## **1.7 Thesis Organization**

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 gives a general description of the introduction to the topic of the research. This introduces the background of the study, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, clarification of the terms, the organization of the thesis and conclusion of the chapter. Chapter 2 describes the theories which support the study. This covers the theories relevant to the purposes of the study. It includes anxiety, type of anxiety, foreign language classroom

anxiety, factors of anxiety, source of anxiety, coping strategies (defense mechanism) and previous study. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of the study that includes introduction, research design, data collection, data analysis and validity and reliability. Chapter 4 elaborates findings and discussion which shows the data from the observation, questionnaire and interview. Chapter 5 illustrates conclusion of the research, implication and recommendation for further research.