Chapter I

Introduction

This chapter covers several aspects. It elaborates the background of the study, the research questions, the research objectives, the scope of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

It is with no doubt that English is an international and global language (Crystal, 2003; McKay, 2002). Much of the world's advances, be it in technology, science, trade, and education are conducted in English. However, a huge number of English language learners face remarkable difficulties in terms of learning and using this language especially when it comes to speaking. Likewise, Moroccan and Indonesian English language learners are not an exception. Considering that I came from Morocco where English is a foreign language, I have experienced a number of obstacles in my English conversation classes. Similarly, from my humble teaching experience and English class observations, I have noticed that a number of students avoid speaking English even though they are good students and they know the answers. Once they are pointed by their teachers to speak they blush, stammer, and sweat. Some of these students are lack self-confidence which hinders them to express themselves using a foreign language, though they have sufficient vocabulary, and ideas to convey their message. They fear others' negative evaluation or correction as they believe they are less than others, which is not always the case. On the other hand, some students avoid talking using English because their pronunciation is far from native-like speakers of English. So, they prefer to keep silent to protect their self-esteem.

Through my daily contact with Indonesians for three years besides my experience as a volunteer teacher of English in some Indonesian schools in Java, I have noticed that most of Indonesians get anxious when speaking English, particularly with foreigners. It's not a matter of language mastery, but it's more likely a psychological factor.

Nervousness, fear, the negative ideas and the feeling of being inferior affect negatively students' performance and impede their learning process. Woodrow (2006), posited that anxiety experienced in communication in English can be debilitating and can influence students' adaptation to the target environment and ultimately the achievement of their educational goals.

My previously cited experiences urged me to conduct a comparative study to investigate the level of anxiety Moroccan and Indonesian high schools students experience

when speaking English as a foreign language and to figure out the most common causes and sources of their speaking anxiety.

English language has always been considered as a foreign language in both Morocco and Indonesia. "*Amazigh*" and "*Darija*" are the most common languages spoken amongst Moroccan citizens on a daily basis. On the other hand, the standard Arabic and French are the two official languages used in Moroccan administrations. Arabic language is being taught at kindergarten, and French or Spanish starting from grade 2 in public schools. English language is being taught at grade 3 of junior high school in public schools, but private schools provide its primary school students by one hour a week of English language classes. We can see that English is not given much importance in Moroccan schools, especially in the public sector. However, a huge number of Moroccan students prefer English language over other languages, even over Arabic which is their mother tongue. S.Buckner (2011) a researcher at Stanford university, has conducted a research entitled 'The Growth of English Language Learning in Morocco' and had revealed that 54.1% of the respondents claimed English as their favorite language. The research has also revealed that the learning of English in Morocco is steadily growing as 48.6% of the participants in her research expressed their agreement that all Moroccans should learn English, and 33.98% were strongly agree. "Anyone who does not master English has no future" said Daoudi (2014), the Moroccan Minister of Higher Education, stressing out the necessity of learning English. .

On the other hand, in Indonesia, English is the first foreign language taught at school (Komaria, 1989, Lauder, 2008). Although, English has been taught at early stages, but still, the language proficiency of Indonesian students is not satisfying. Some researches revealed that the main cause of this is the lack of qualified teachers to teach English, as Hamied (2011) declared that only 35% of English teachers are academically qualified to teach.

According to the English First English proficiency Index (EF EPI), (Valentina, 2017) declared that Indonesia was ranked 32nd out of 72 countries in the world with a score of 52.91 in 2017, and a score of 52.15, ranked 39 out of 80 countries. This says that Indonesia still should put much effort on the teaching and the learning of English language.

There are various socio-cultural factors involved in learning English as a foreign language and English speaking anxiety among Indonesian and Moroccan high school students. The use of the most appropriate word or expression in a particular situation creates confusion for EFL learners as they frequently interfere to their own culture standards. This leads them to the misinterpretation of the nonverbal messages that vary from culture to culture (Shumin, 1997,

P.8). As for example in the Indonesian culture the word (*Ibu*) refers to mother, or Madame/ma'me. This creates a big confusion for some Indonesian students when speaking English. When willing to address a woman, they use the expression 'mother' instead of ma'me. Baker and Westrup (2003) stated that "barriers to learning can occur if students knowingly or unknowingly transfer the cultural rules from their mother tongue to a foreign language" (p.12). Hence, EFL learners are required to be acquainted with the culture of the target language along with its linguistic systems.

Socio-linguistic factors also play a big role in learning a foreign language. In both Morocco and Indonesia, English is not a mother tongue and it's not a language that is spoken every day. In Morocco the mother tongue is Arabic and it is totally different from English; in terms of alphabets, vocabulary, grammar etc. So, interfering to Arabic to learn English is a challenge for learners. French is a first foreign language in Morocco but not everyone is fluent in it regardless of the amount of exposure. French in Morocco is a language of elites and "prestige". Learning French at early stages helps somehow in learning English as there are a number of similarities between the two languages in terms of Alphabets, vocabulary etc, with a difference in pronunciation. For instance "prononciation" in French equals "pronunciation" in English with a small difference in spelling and articulation. "communication", 'information', 'attention', 'transformation', 'action', 'table', 'stable', 'adorable', 'visible', 'Comfortable' and other similar words make learning English easier. On the other hand there are various vocabularies that create confusion. For instance "bras" in English is a piece of women's clothing worn under clothes while "bras" in French is an arm! "envy" in English is a feeling of jealousy while "envie" in French means to wish or desire. "library" in English is a place you go to borrow books while "librairie" in French is the place you go to buy them.

The Indonesian language and English language have many similarities as well as differences. Both English and the Indonesian language use the same 26 alphabets divided similarly between vowels and consonants, the ways of arranging sentences and paragraphs are similar, both languages use similar methods of classifying word types into nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, etc, both languages form words in the same way by attaching prefixes and suffixes to root words, both languages have passive & active voices - Bahasa Indonesia uses "di-" prefix to indicate the passive voice while English uses the "-ed" suffix. On the other hand English has tenses for verbs while Bahasa Indonesia has no similar concept, Bahasa Indonesia doesn't have gender (male/female/neuter personal pronouns). These two concepts make learning English difficult for Indonesian learners as they are not familiar with present and past tenses as well as gender. For instance "Dia" in Indonesian language is a subject

pronoun, third person, singular and it is not gender based, while in English there is 'he', 'she', 'it', with reference to gender. Bahasa Indonesia doesn't have a plural suffix which is comparable to the English "s", Indonesian plural concept is understood by context or by the addition of other words to express the concept of something being "more than one", Modifying adjectives are usually placed before the noun in English but after nouns in Bahasa Indonesia.

The amount of exposure to English language might be a factor to language proficiency. Indonesian students spend about 160 minutes a week taking English classes, compared to 120 minutes for their fellow Moroccan students. As English is not spoken daily in Indonesia and Morocco, students have limited exposure to the target language and lack of opportunities to practice speaking in such environments do not let the communicative abilities of target language learners fully develop and result into embarrassment or stress for them when they are required to speak both in and out of the class.

The EFL curriculum in Morocco adheres to the competency-based approach. The distinctive characteristics of this approach are generally stated as follows:It is organized around a set of learning tasks and/or activities that are based on language knowledge, skills, strategies and abilities that learners have to demonstrate; and directed towards the likeliest uses learners will have to make of English in their future studies and professions. Specific themes and situations are used as means to develop competencies and improve performances. Competency-based approach is learner-centered and task-based, and it assesses learner behavior/ performance in relation to the competencies focused upon. Moreover, competency-based approach capitalizes on the performances that the learners should expect to attain, not just content to be covered. On the other hand, The Indonesian curriculum adheres on Genre-based approach which refers to teaching learners how to use language patterns to produce coherent, purposeful piece of writing (Hyland, 2003).

1.2 Research Questions

There are two research questions that this present study attempts to address. They are formulated as follow:

1- What is the level of anxiety experienced by Moroccan and Indonesian students in speaking English?

2- What are the sources of anxiety experienced by Moroccan and Indonesian students in speaking English in the classroom?

1.3 Research Objectives

In accordance with the outlined research questions, this study attempts to;

1- Figure out the level of anxiety experienced by Moroccan and Indonesian students in speaking English?

2- Shed light on the sources of anxiety experienced by Moroccan and Indonesian students in speaking English in the classroom?

1.4 The significance of the study

Previous researches have made significant achievements in investigating social anxiety, communication anxiety, language anxiety and self-perception, and foreign classroom anxiety, as well as in the development of related scales for measurement and strategies for anxiety management. However, limited work has been done in Morocco and Indonesia to investigate English speaking anxiety among high school students and the situations that provoke the anxiety. The results of this study will be beneficial to students, teachers, policy makers because it will provide detailed description of how students feel in speaking English as a foreign language, bestow in numbers the level of anxiety experienced by the learners, as well as highlight the psychological, and linguistic factors involved in English speaking anxiety of the participants. This study will also compare the degree of the involvement of those factors of both Moroccan and Indonesian high school students,