# CHAPTER 2
# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1. Concept of Speaking

Speaking is the delivery of language through the mouth. To speak, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal tract, vocal cords, tongue, teeth, and lips (Al Nakhalah, 2016). Also, the researcher defined speaking as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, the participants, and the purposes of speaking (Burns & Joyce, 1997, as cited in Torky, 2006). Speaking is one of the four main skills, which are: 1-Listening 2-Speaking 3-Reading 4-skill that we learn. This form of utterance usually requires at least one listener. Talking or discussing between two or more people is called a "dialogue". Speech can flow naturally from one person to another in the form of dialogue. Speaking can be formal or informal. i) Informal conversations are usually used with family, friends, or people you know very well. ii) Formal conversations occur in business or academic situations or when meeting a person for the first time. Speaking is a language skill that most language learners want to learn as soon as possible.

Speaking is considered a primary language skill that must be mastered. Speaking is more than the biological activity of producing voices by using articulatory and respiratory features but also a mental process (Sangaji, 2019). The words that come out of your mouth are processed in your brain and mind. This shows that speaking is indeed a personal thought process. It also shows that the development of speaking skills depends not only on the maturity of an individual's vocal system but also on the maturity of the mind in the individual's head.

Speaking is also a social activity where individuals build and share meanings in a given context (Chaney, 1998:13, as cited in Sangaji, 2019).

From this perspective, the ability to speak is considered not only an expressive function but also a communicative function. This leads us to believe that the development of speaking skills is also determined, or at least influenced, by the development of social interactions. Therefore, to develop the speaking ability, it is not enough just to focus on a single part. The development of speech requires the fulfillment of its social functions. From this perspective, problems or difficulties in speaking or learning to speak may stem not only from individual disabilities but also from social barriers.

## 2.2. The Importance of Developing Speaking Skills

Speaking is one of the four skills that play an important role in human life. It is the most effective skill that humans use to communicate. Humans need to express their thoughts, views, and opinions, and this need can be fulfilled through language (Akhter, 2021). People cannot survive without communication. Torky (2006) stated that success in learning a language is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the (target) language. Thus, developing speaking skills is of vital importance in EFL programs. Also, Florez (1999) as cited in Torky, (2006) stated that speaking is probably a priority for most learners of English. Therefore, speaking instruction is important because it helps students develop their EFL language skills and converse spontaneously and naturally with native speakers. Speaking can improve the overall motivation of learners and make the English classroom a fun place if you teach proper speaking activities in the classroom. Additionally, recent research has shown that speaking can help develop other language skills. The researcher has considered oral interaction as an important factor in the shaping of the learner's developing language (Varonis, 1994). For instance, as stated in Torky (2006), it was proved that learning speaking can help the development of reading competence, the development of writing as well as the development of listening skills.

## 2.3. English Speaking Difficulties

The importance of speaking competence for second or foreign language communication has been underlined for decades; however, research has shown that either ESL or EFL learners find it challenging to speak a foreign language (Shen & Chiu, 2019). Speaking difficulty refers to factors that cause a student's lack of speaking ability. Some previous researchers have found that students have difficulty speaking in the various knowledge areas mentioned above.

Shen & Chiu (2019), for example, found that (a) psychological problems (e.g., nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence) were the primary reason for English speaking difficulties, followed by linguistic problems (e.g., insufficient vocabulary), and environmental problems (e.g., lack of learning context for English conversation). These findings are consistent with that of Thalìa & Vargas (2021) which indicate learners are having affective difficulties (e.g.: anxiety, nervousness, fear of making mistakes), linguistics difficulties (e.g.: correct use of grammar, pronunciation, and fluency), and social difficulties (e.g.: lack of confidence during speaking activities) which affect their oral performance.

Based on the surprising description above, the researcher can summarize that students' speaking difficulties can be classified into three main categories: psychological category, linguistic category, and social category. Linguistically, a lack of knowledge of the language system can make it difficult for students to speak. This includes not only speaking but also listening and pronunciation. To develop these skills, teachers and students should use available learning and teaching resources rather than relying solely on textbooks. Psychologically, a student's speaking difficulties can result from a lack of ideas or self-confidence. These two of her categories lead to her third category in which students failed to communicate optimally in real-life social situations.

**2.4.Study of Relevant Research**

Before deciding to conduct this study, the researcher reviewed past research on EFL students' speaking difficulties. Because study on EFL students' speaking difficulties in English majors is still uncommon, the researcher focused on a related topic.

Shen & Chiu (2019) researched the factors that caused EFL learners' English-speaking difficulties and then investigated the successful learners' strategy used to improve their English-speaking performance. He conducts a five-level Likert-scale questionnaire to investigate 148 EFL sophomore and junior English majors in Taiwan. Results of the analysis showed that (a) psychological problems (e.g. nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence) were the primary reason for English speaking difficulties, followed by linguistic problems (e.g. insufficient vocabulary), and environmental problems (e.g. lack of learning context for English conversation); (b) a majority of successful learners tended to use various speaking strategies to improve their English speaking performance and particularly focused on linguistic accuracy by repeatedly practicing the pitch, pronunciation, and intonation.

Thalìa & Vargas (2021) also explore what causes English speaking difficulties in EFL learners. The researcher conducted a Likert-scale questionnaire to investigate 70 high school students at a private institution in Guayaquil. And again, the result shows the learners are having affective difficulties (e.g.: anxiety, nervousness, fear of making mistakes), linguistics difficulties (e.g.: correct use of grammar, pronunciation, and fluency), and social difficulties (e.g.: lack of confidence during speaking activities) which affect their oral performance. While (Shen & Chiu, 2019) find that students have their own personal strategy, (Thalìa & Vargas, 2021) finds that most of the students agreed it is very advisable to practice English speaking by working in pairs.

Amoah & Yeboah (2021) researched the factors that affect the speaking performances of Chinese EFL learners. This study involved the observation of non-English major students in the foreign language department of Nanjing Tech University. Two survey questionnaires, as well as an interview item, were constructed. The factors that inhibit speaking performances were categorized as either linguistic or psychological. The result is similar to the previous study, the researcher revealed that Chinese EFL learners have speaking problems that relate more to psychological factors like anxiety, fear of mistakes, unwillingness, and fear of negative evaluation than linguistic factors such as lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, insufficient knowledge of grammar rules, reading, and oral presentation.

The research above is related to each other, and all the findings are supported by Adriani Putri et al., (2020) that said English is more difficult than other subjects because there are some difficulties experienced by students in speaking, such as low vocabulary mastery, the difficulties in pronouncing, confused in arranging words, afraid of making mistake and many other factors that cause of speaking difficulties such as teaching strategy, the curriculum, and the environment. Furthermore, the research aims to know the factors of the students' speaking difficulty. The researcher uses a questionnaire as an instrument with as many as 15 items and also uses an interview technique. After analyzing the data by using the descriptive qualitative method, it is known that the four factors of speaking difficulty have a positive value of more than 50%. The values of these four factors were 62.5% for personal factors, 95% for teaching strategies factor, 90% for curriculum factors, and 57.5% for environmental factors. And also, the researcher stated that the dominant factor which causes students' difficulties in speaking here is teaching strategies.

Al Nakhalah (2016) also focuses on the study aims at exploring the speaking difficulties encountered by English language students at Al Quds

Open University. The study moreover aims at exploring the causes of such difficulties. The researcher used the experimental method to show and measure the speaking difficulties encountered by English language students at Al Quds Open University. The results showed and indicated there were some difficulties in the speaking of the students due to some reasons such as fear of mistakes, shyness, anxiety, and lack of confidence. The researcher adopted some recommendations; the most important one is to establish environmental support and encourage the students to speak English frequently, and he suggested carrying out more research and studies regarding speaking difficulties encountered by English language students.

With all the findings of the previous research, the researcher knows that EFL students' speaking difficulties have similar problems with each other all over the world. This made the researcher want to deepen the research according to the reason why problems occur in almost all EFL students, that made in the present study has some similarities and differences with those previous studies. The similarity is this research tries to gain an understanding related to EFL speaking difficulties. While the difference between this research is this present study tries to uncover the factor that made the problems in EFL students speaking difficulties in the English language at Indonesian University using the semi-structured interview to gain more data according to its flexibility for the participant to explain.