

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Speaking is one of the English language skills, along with listening, reading, and grammar, which is very well recognized. Speaking is one of the most important skills to acquire and hone as a means of useful communication. The development of speaking abilities is one of the most difficult language-learning processes. Students currently experience anxiety when they are assigned to perform public speaking in front of an audience because they feel a great deal of pressure to speak well in front of an audience.

Public speaking is one of the subjects in English education which is based on speaking skills. Many people have learned and done public speaking in a crowd of people. According to Ayesha (2021), public speaking is a learnable skill that requires excellent communication skills. A good public speaker should be a good communicator; they know how to keep the audience engaged. A good public speaker should know the art of presentation, and by doing so his speech becomes a remarkable one. Speaking is all about controlling the discussion and learning how to communicate fluently and impulsively. For all people, speaking is a crucial part of life. People can express their feelings, ideas, and opinions through speaking.

People who are going to speak in public often feel anxious and nervous when they stand in front of people. For example, college students often encounter public speaking anxiety. People who struggle with public speaking anxiety mostly avoid feelings that cause anxiety in performance circumstances, but this is a feeling that cannot be avoided and they must deal with the resulting feelings of extreme worry and anguish. Horwitz, Horwitz,

and Cope (1986) stated that anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system.

According to Rahayu (2016) anxiety is a psychological phenomenon that influences the activity of the students in classroom activity. If the students feel confident in the learning process, transferring knowledge will be easy. In the context of language learning, some students see public speaking as an enemy. Many university students not only demonstrate public speaking anxiety, but also avoid public speaking assessments completely, and show a lack of effort to improve their public speaking skills. (Nash et al., 2016).

The study aims to comprehend and investigate the strategies used by individuals to overcome speaking anxiety, particularly in the context of public speaking. Many people have public speaking anxiety when they are compelled to speak in front of an audience. This anxiety can express in a variety of ways, ranging from minor anxiety to severe anxiety, and it frequently has consequences for personal, academic, and professional performance. In the education context, in a university in Indonesia, many students felt anxious when public speaking in front of a large audience. When students are already taking public speaking classes, they are directed to perform public speaking as it is a frequently used type of assessment in higher education. Based on preliminary observations that have been conducted by the researcher the researcher found what happened in the campus environment, especially in public speaking classes. Therefore, they experienced stress and anxiety whenever they wanted to give a speech or any oral presentation in front of others. This phenomenon needs to be tackled. Hence, this research will reveal the strategies to overcome speaking anxiety during public speaking.

In previous studies, Yaikhong and Usaha (2012); Mahmudi and Anugerahwati, (2021) found that the focus of the research was not to find strategies to overcome anxiety in public speaking but only to find out the

students' anxiety in public speaking class, and the research participants were from students' high schools. The researcher decided to find out the strategies to cope with anxiety in public speaking classes in a university context. The importance of this research is to add knowledge for students, especially EFL students who want to be good and fluent doing public speaking in class or outside class and to find strategies to overcome anxiety in public speaking. Another research conducted by Suparlan, (2021) and Hasibuan et al, (2022) related to the research found factors that cause speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms and factors that can trigger the students' speaking anxiety. Most researchers that have been researched by Sulastiani, (2020) and Gallego et al., (2022) make a finding by using questionnaires and interviews with EFL Students.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the background above, the researcher can conclude the formulation of the problems with research questions as follows

“What are the students' strategies to overcome speaking anxiety in the public speaking class?”

## **1.3 Operational Definitions**

To avoid misunderstanding on this research, the researcher provides some definitions related to this study, as follows:

### **1.3.1 Public Speaking**

Public speaking is one of the subjects in English education classes, that consist in one of the universities in Tasikmalaya. The purpose of public speaking is to share information and to improve speaking skill in front of an audience. Public speaking is a form of interpersonal communication that involves giving speeches at formal or informal events with the intention of

educating, influencing, or entertaining a sizable audience. In this context, public speaking is the main topic of this research to find out the students' strategies to overcome public speaking anxiety.

### **1.3.2 Public Speaking Anxiety**

In public speaking anxiety context, anxiety can cause someone to feel extreme worry and intense pressure to speak in front of people. They find it difficult to concentrate and restless during the presentation. Because of that the students felt anxious during the public speaking, it need to be discovered how are the strategies to cope their public speaking anxiety especially during public speaking class. Which means the strategies of public speaking anxiety consist of several parts. The student's anxiety levels are the thing that considered in this research.

## **1.4 Aim of the Research**

The purpose of this study is to find out and analyze the strategies of students when doing public speaking and how to overcome the factors that can affect students when they feel anxious.

## **1.5 Significance of the Research**

### **1.5.1 Theoretical Use**

This study contributes to enriching the literature review on students' strategies to overcome speaking anxiety.

### **1.5.2 Practical Use**

This study contributes to English Language Teaching (ELT), and English students who want to participate in public speaking classes about strategies to overcome anxiety during public speaking. This research provides strategies to overcome public speaking anxiety to develop students' public speaking skills and grow the students' talent in public speaking skills.

### **1.5.3 Empirical Use**

This study will show an empirical understanding of what student strategies are to overcome public speaking anxiety. This study aims to give a reviewer or reader about the strategies that can overcome public speaking anxiety