

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Speaking Anxiety in Classroom

Speaking is a way that is most often used by humans to communicate with each other. Speaking is an activity to exchange ideas, thoughts, and feelings with others so that they can understand each other. According to Brown (2006), speaking is the productive skill of language, which involves producing sounds, words, and sentences in a meaningful way to convey a message to the listener. Speaking involves the use of speech sounds, words, and grammar to express thoughts, ideas, emotions, and information to others (Lyons, 1981). In another word, speaking is a fundamental part of human interaction. It is a complex skill that requires coordination of cognitive, linguistic, and physical processes.

Anxiety is the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system (Horwitz et al., 1986). Having a sense of anxiety in learning to speak is something that is difficult to deal with, it greatly affects performance in learning. In the language classroom, there are learners who suffer from negative language anxiety (that is to say, anxiety impedes language learning), while others do not (Llinas & Garau, 2009). In the EFL context, Suleimenova (2013) reported that a high level of anxiety can lead to a few outcomes, among which uncertainty of one's abilities, trouble speaking in public, partaking in discussions minimally, inability to start a discussion, lastly turning out to be unsure and restrained speakers.

Speaking anxiety in the classroom can be a serious issue for many students, causing them to feel nervous or fearful when giving presentations or participating in class discussions. This can lead to a variety of negative outcomes, such as poor performance on assignments, avoidance of public speaking situations, and a general decrease in academic and social confidence. Students who experience high levels of speaking anxiety may go to immense efforts to avoid public speaking situations, which can limit their academic and professional opportunities (Hope et al., 2010).

Eventually, this would lead the students to do something that should not be done, such as avoiding class activities that are associated with speaking skills or worse skipping the class.

Chand (2021) found that most of the students get four major speaking difficulties such as personal problems, linguistic problems, social problems, and environmental problems. Personal problems include a lack of confidence, poor vocabulary power, hesitation, and anxiety toward speaking. Linguistic problems include a lack of appropriate vocabulary, problems in initiating the speech, creating linkage among the sentences, mother tongue interference, and pronunciation of the words. Social problems such as the culture of class, fear of criticism, and fear of committing mistakes also play a vital role in speaking difficulties. Environmental problems include not having a suitable environment to practice English and no strong motivation from teachers.

Furthermore, Sandin (2016) divided anxiety symptom to three different categories. For physical conditions usually characterized by a trembling body, sweating, stuttering speech. In the emotional aspect, it can usually be characterized by fear, excessive worry, uncomfortable feelings, feeling shy in front of a lot of people, difficult to concentrate. In terms of cognition, they will feel afraid of being wrong in arranging words, think negatively about people's judgments, feel doubtful about the ability to speak.

2.2 Strategies for Overcoming Speaking Anxiety

Speaking anxiety is a common issue that occurred in learning speaking. Alazeer & Ahmed (2023) mentioned that in the EFL context, anxiety has been a common issue and has had a significant impact on language learning. Therefore, arranging strategies for overcoming speaking anxiety is essential for learners. Prasetyaningrum et al. (2020) stated that a strategy is a set of actions intended to accomplish a particular objective. In addition, there are several strategies according to the experts about reducing speaking anxiety;

Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest two ways to overcome students' anxiety:

- a. The teacher has the ability to assist students in confronting their fears, and there are various techniques proposed by experts to alleviate student anxiety. For instance, Foss & Reitzell in Young (1991) suggested a method in which students are asked to verbalize their fears and then record them on the whiteboard. According to the experts, it is important for students to recognize and acknowledge the fears they experience in order to identify the root causes and address the anxiety rather than avoid it. Teachers can assist students by reassuring them that they are not alone in facing these challenges and that many other students also encounter similar fears and difficulties. This can help students feel less anxious and more inclined to confront the underlying causes of their anxiety.

- b. The teacher recommended creating a conducive and stress-free learning environment by fostering a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere in the classroom. This includes delivering the material in a manner that is not overwhelming and communicating with the students in a friendly and approachable manner. Additionally, the teacher emphasized the importance of getting to know the students on a deeper level, such as understanding their anxiety levels and identifying potential fears they may have when learning a language. By doing so, the teacher can avoid creating situations that may make the students feel uncomfortable. Based on the information provided, it can be deduced that teachers play a crucial role in alleviating students' anxiety levels and can take various measures to help their students. One-way teachers can address students' anxiety is by developing a deep understanding of their students, including their fears and anxieties. Additionally, teachers can avoid situations that may trigger students' stress levels and create a comfortable and supportive classroom environment. They may also use techniques that can help students shift their perspectives or beliefs about learning English. Ultimately, there are many strategies that teachers can use to assist their students in overcoming their anxieties.

Kondo and Ying (2004) also suggest 5 strategies to reduce students' speaking anxiety:

- a. Preparation is an essential step in preventing potential threats that may arise during a speaking performance. To do so, one can study the topic or subject matter thoroughly and take comprehensive notes to be well-informed and well-prepared for the task at hand.
- b. Relaxation, by taking a deep breath, holding hands, and making attempts to settle down and maintain control, relaxation can be used for relieving anxiety symptoms.
- c. Positive thinking, anxiety can be reduced pretty effectively through the application of positive thinking. Students can avoid negative thoughts and feelings of stress that may cause them anxiety by thinking positively. You can achieve this by thinking positively about yourself.
- d. Peer seeking, in order to feel less alone and less anxious, students who are peer-seeking seek out others that might be experiencing similar things.
- e. Resignation, or the refusal of students to deal with problems like not taking part in class, might help lowers some of the anxiety that students experience.

Arranging strategies are important in overcoming speaking anxiety because they provide a framework for managing and reducing the fear and nervousness associated with speaking in public. These strategies can help individuals to focus on the task at hand, rather than allowing their fears to consume them.

2.3 Study of Relevant Research

Some studies have investigated speaking anxiety in EFL classrooms. A study by Siagian & Adams (2017) explores the prevalence and impact of speaking anxiety, particularly in educational and professional settings. The researchers investigated how speaking anxiety affects individuals' performance and identified several key causes, including fear of negative evaluation, insufficient preparation, past negative experiences, and low self-confidence. Their findings revealed that speaking anxiety significantly impairs performance, leading to issues like poor delivery and reduced engagement. The study also highlighted effective strategies

for managing anxiety, such as thorough preparation, relaxation techniques, constructive feedback, and gradual exposure to public speaking. Overall, the study underscores the importance of addressing speaking anxiety to enhance communication skills and confidence

Another study by Ashraf (2019) examines how this issue affects individuals' performance in academic and professional settings. The study aimed to identify the root causes of speaking anxiety, assess its impact on communication effectiveness, and explore potential strategies for alleviation. Conducted within educational institutions or workplaces, the research found that speaking anxiety significantly hinders performance by causing nervousness, reduced fluency, and lower audience engagement. Key causes included fear of negative judgment and inadequate preparation. The study recommended practical approaches such as improved preparation techniques, exposure therapy, and relaxation exercises to help individuals manage and reduce their speaking anxiety effectively.

Moreover, study by He (2017) investigates impact on individuals' public speaking performance, with a focus on educational environments. The study aimed to identify the primary sources of speaking anxiety, evaluate its effects on speech delivery, and recommend effective interventions. Conducted primarily within classroom settings, the research revealed that speaking anxiety often stems from fear of negative evaluation and lack of preparation. The study found that this anxiety significantly detracts from performance, leading to diminished clarity and confidence during presentations. To mitigate these effects, He suggested strategies such as structured practice, cognitive-behavioural techniques, and creating a supportive environment to help individuals overcome their anxiety and improve their public speaking skills.

Since the studies settings conducted in senior educational, in this research the researcher concern about the strategies that implemented by the EFL students in higher education at the English Education Department. Therefore, it is important to know that overcoming speaking anxiety on EFL learners is essential knowing that coping speaking anxiety can reduce the symptoms during the speaking activity

process. Richards (2001, as cited in Ratnasari & Apriyani, 2021) argues that students' strategies are the methods and activities that students will use to overcome the challenges. Therefore, the researcher was interested in conducting the study in order to find out the strategies that students use toward anxiety in speaking activities.