

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Review

1. Speaking Overview

Speaking is widely regarded as one of the most essential skills for English learners, developed through various practical methods such as conversation practice, impromptu speeches, and interactions with native speakers (Syahfutra & Wibowo, 2024). According to Horwitz et al. (1986), speaking in a target language can be perceived as a daunting aspect of learning a foreign language. Algrenita and Listyani (2020) describe speaking as a communicative activity that enables individuals to convey nonverbal messages through their body language. Budjalemba and Listyani (2020) emphasize that speaking is the most crucial step in mastering any language, as it serves as a fundamental means of communication, allowing individuals to express their thoughts, ideas, and emotions effectively. Speaking is undeniably a cornerstone of language learning, particularly for English learners aiming for fluency and effective communication. Though it can be intimidating, speaking enables learners not only to practice language structure and vocabulary but also to convey meaning through both verbal and nonverbal cues. Practical methods such as conversation practice, impromptu speeches, and engagement with native speakers play a crucial role in building this skill. As noted by researchers, speaking empowers individuals to articulate their thoughts, ideas, and emotions, making it an essential step toward mastering any language and connecting meaningfully with others.

The significance of speaking extends beyond mere verbalization, it is often considered the most critical language skill because it facilitates interaction in both social and professional contexts (Akhter et al., 2020). Speaking involves not only the production of verbal language but also the ability to engage in meaningful conversations, negotiate ideas, and build relationships with others. Nunan (2003) further highlights that speaking encompasses the capacity to articulate opinions and convey messages clearly, making it an essential component of effective communication.

In academic settings, strong speaking skills are vital for achieving success. Students who possess effective communication skills are better equipped to participate actively in class discussions, engage in debates, and deliver presentations with confidence (Matthews, 1994). Effective speaking enhances academic performance by enabling learners to articulate complex ideas clearly while considering both the audience and context. Strong oral presentation abilities demonstrate understanding, critical thinking, and effective argumentation (McPherson, 2023). Thus, developing speaking skills is crucial for learners not only to excel academically but also to thrive in their future careers.

2. Speaking Anxiety

The most common problem and most well researched aspect of second language acquisition, or SLA for short, is speaking anxiety. Spielberger (1983) defined speaking anxiety as a particular sensation of weight, concern, fear, and dread connected to the activation of our body's sensory nerves. In a similar vein, Horwitz (1986) defined speaking anxiety as the subjective sense of tension, uncertainty, restlessness, and anxiety caused by the activation of the autonomic nervous system. Speaking anxiety is a significant psychological phenomenon that affects many learners, particularly in the context of language acquisition. This anxiety can lead to physical symptoms such as increased heart rate, sweating, and a sense of panic, making it challenging for individuals to express themselves verbally. According to Dörnyei (2001), speaking anxiety is one of the major obstacles that students must overcome to enhance their speaking abilities. It creates a cycle of self-doubt and frustration, often resulting in students remaining silent in situations where they have the capacity to contribute meaningfully.

When students experience anxiety, their ability to articulate thoughts diminishes, leading to poor performance in oral assessments and classroom discussions (Zhang, 2011). Furthermore, speaking anxiety can hinder social interactions and limit opportunities, which are essential for language development. As noted by Lanerfeldt (1992), this anxiety not only impacts learners' self-confidence but also contributes to a negative feedback loop where previous failures discourage future attempts at speaking.

Speaking anxiety is a multifaceted issue that significantly influences learners' ability to communicate effectively in a foreign language. Understanding its definition and recognizing its importance are crucial steps for teachers seeking to create supportive learning environments. By implementing strategies that reduce anxiety, such as fostering a positive classroom atmosphere and encouraging practice, teachers can help students overcome their fears and enhance their speaking skills, ultimately leading to greater success in language acquisition.

3. Types of Speaking Anxiety

Research on speaking anxiety has identified several types, as noted by Suciati (2020). One classification is Trait Anxiety, which is a stable personality trait. Individuals with trait anxiety have a general predisposition to feel anxious in various settings, including public speaking. This type of anxiety is inherent to their personality, affecting them across different situations.

Another type is State Anxiety, which is temporary and closely tied to specific circumstances. Unlike trait anxiety, state anxiety arises only in particular situations, such as speaking in front of an audience, and dissipates once the event is over. It reflects an immediate response to the pressure of a specific moment.

The third type, Specific-Situation Anxiety, surfaces in distinct, high-stakes contexts where individuals feel particularly exposed, like during presentations or oral exams. This type of anxiety is not constant but is triggered by certain situations that heighten feelings of vulnerability.

In conclusion, understanding the various classifications of speaking anxiety—trait anxiety, state anxiety, and specific-situation anxiety—provides valuable insight into how individuals experience and manage their fears in different contexts, highlighting the need for tailored strategies to address these distinct forms of anxiety in public speaking scenarios.

4. Causes of Speaking Anxiety

The causes of speaking anxiety are complex and may be classified into several key factors that significantly impact individuals' ability to communicate effectively. One primary factor is Communication Apprehension, which refers to the fear or anxiety associated with interacting with others. This apprehension is

often intensified by a lack of vocabulary or proficiency in the target language, making individuals feel ill-equipped to engage in conversations (Horwitz et al., 1986; Yusuf, 2020). As a result, students may hesitate to participate in speaking activities, fearing they will not be able to express themselves adequately.

Another significant contributor to speaking anxiety is the Fear of Negative Evaluation. Many students have worries about receiving judgment or criticized by their friends and teachers, which can create a heightened sense of self-consciousness during speaking tasks (Horwitz et al., 1986; Suciati, 2020). This fear can lead to avoidance behaviors, where students refrain from participating in discussions or presentations altogether, further exacerbating their anxiety and limiting their opportunities for practice.

Lastly, Test Anxiety plays a crucial role in speaking anxiety, particularly in high-stakes environments where performance evaluations are involved. The pressure to perform well during assessments can lead to increased stress and anxiety levels, making it difficult for students to concentrate and articulate their thoughts clearly (Horwitz et al., 1986). This type of anxiety can hinder students' overall academic performance and discourage them from engaging in oral communication.

In summary, speaking anxiety is affected by various factors, including communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety. Understanding these causes is essential for educators seeking to develop effective strategies to support students in overcoming their anxieties and improving their speaking skills.

Another research conducted by Rajitha and Amelu (2020) identifies three internal components contributing to speaking anxiety:

1. Stage Fear

Stage fright is recognized as a prevalent cause of nervousness when delivering speeches in front of an audience. This form of anxiety stems primarily from performance-related stress. Individuals often experience this fear when required to perform or speak before a group, leading to significant apprehension.

2. Lack of Confidence

Confidence is essential for speaking a foreign language without succumbing

to anxiety. Rajitha and Amelu (2020) note that students often feel anxious when they doubt their abilities while simultaneously feeling pressured to make a positive impression on their audience. This lack of confidence can severely hinder performance.

3. Shame Factor

Shame is another critical issue that negatively impacts learners when they are compelled to apply the target language. Many students feel timid during interactions or when speaking in front of a class or public audience, which can further exacerbate their anxiety.

Moreover, three external factors identified in the research findings of Rajitha and Amelu (2020). They are elaborated as follows:

1. Language Aspect

One of the main causes of speaking anxiety is the language component. Students can struggle to adequately express themselves in the English language. They are also unable to communicate successfully in English due to their limited vocabulary.

2. Grammar Aspect

Students have determined that one of the main outside factors that contributes to speaking anxiety is grammar. It was found that some students were afraid of committing grammatical mistakes. They were worried about how accurately they had constructed their sentences. It appears that Rajitha and Amelu's research findings (2020) show that grammar is the foremost external aspect that generates students' speaking anxiety.

3. Pronunciation

It's crucial to pronounce the target language correctly. Some students admitted to being terrified about mispronouncing the target language.

4. Peer Factor

When they had to speak in front of the class, students would constantly worry about what their classmates or peers would think or judge them.

In conclusion, the research conducted by Rajitha and Amelu (2020) highlights both internal and external factors contributing to speaking anxiety,

including stage fear, lack of confidence, and feelings of shame, as well as language proficiency, grammar concerns, pronunciation issues, and peer judgement. Recognizing these complex causes is crucial for teachers to formulate effective ways that help students in reducing their anxiety and improving their speaking skills in different situations.

In this study, the theory of speaking anxiety factors or causes that can be used as a reference for this study is a combination of two theories from Horwitz et al (1986) and Rajitha and Amelu (2020), both of which have relevant theories and there are similarities between them.

5. Effects of Speaking Anxiety

Speaking anxiety can have severe consequences on students, impacting their communication skills, emotional well-being, and academic performance. Firstly, impaired communication skills arise when students are fearful of expressing their thoughts clearly. This fear leads to a cycle of avoidance, where students hesitate to speak up, resulting in further anxiety and reinforcing the pattern of poor communication (Amaliah & Atmowardoyo, 2022).

Secondly, emotional distress is another significant effect of speaking anxiety. During speaking tasks, students may exhibit symptoms such as sweating, trembling, and increased heart rate. These physical manifestations contribute to a negative self-image and decreased self-esteem as students perceive themselves negatively due to their anxiety-related behaviors (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020).

Lastly, speaking anxiety also affects academic performance. High levels of anxiety correlate with lower achievement in language courses because anxious students are less likely to participate actively during class discussions or presentations. This reduced participation limits their opportunities to practice and improve their communication skills, ultimately hindering their progress in language studies (Sutarsyah, 2017). In addition, Hidayati et al., (2022) find out that the effect of speaking anxiety indicated that the learners could not participate well in the learning process. When the participation was not good enough, they would be able to achieve the learning objectives. As a consequence, it may lead them to failure of their learning

In summary, speaking anxiety imposes substantial burdens on students, compromising their ability to communicate effectively, affecting their mental health, and undermining their academic achievements. Addressing this issue is crucial to support students in overcoming these obstacles and achieving better outcomes in educational settings.

6. Teacher's Role in Managing Student's Speaking Anxiety in the Classroom

Students' speaking anxiety in the classroom is a complicated issue that requires effective classroom management strategies and teacher conduct. Students' speaking abilities can be significantly enhanced by teachers creating a relaxed environment that lowers nervousness. Strategies for lowering speaking anxiety that emphasize the teacher's role in fostering a supportive classroom atmosphere were stated by Atifnigar (2024). Teachers should use student-centered learning strategies and a variety of classroom activities to engage students and lower anxiety. Additionally, he mentioned that using role-playing, drama, and cooperative learning might help create a less stressful environment for language practice. Students' nervousness can be further reduced and their confidence increased by using technology and straightforward teaching techniques.

Therefore, classroom management is a pivotal aspect of teaching, and Dacholfany et al. (2023) research outlines two essential criteria for managing classrooms effectively, particularly in relation to mitigating anxiety among students.

One of the primary criteria emphasized by Dacholfany et al. (2023) is the implementation of preventive strategies. These strategies aim to motivate students and psychologically prepare them for classes, thereby reducing anxiety levels. By motivating students, educators can instill a sense of enthusiasm and interest in the subject matter, encouraging active participation and engagement. Psychologically preparing students involves setting realistic expectations, providing adequate resources, and fostering a supportive learning environment. Such proactive measures help students feel more confident and prepared, minimizing the likelihood of anxiety-induced disruptions during classes.

Additionally, Dacholfany et al. (2023) recommend curative approaches when anxiety does arise. Once anxiety is identified, teachers can employ counseling techniques or systematic desensitization to support affected students. Counseling techniques involve offering personalized guidance and advice to help students cope with their anxiety. Systematic desensitization, on the other hand, is a gradual exposure therapy technique used to gradually expose students to feared stimuli in a controlled manner, helping them become accustomed to the source of their anxiety over time. These curative approaches enable teachers to intervene promptly and effectively whenever anxiety becomes apparent, ensuring that no student falls behind due to untreated anxiety.

In summary, Dacholfany et al. (2023) research underscores the dual importance of preventive and curative strategies in classroom management. By implementing motivational programs and psychological preparations upfront, educators can prevent much of the anxiety that might otherwise disrupt learning processes. Conversely, having accessible curative methods ready ensures timely intervention whenever anxiety surfaces, supporting students throughout their educational journey.

7. Strategies for Mitigating Speaking Anxiety

1. Students' View

Anxiety about speaking English can be reduced through an integrated approach that combines various theories of psychology and language learning. Based on the theory of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986), strategies such as conversation simulation, private error correction, and progress-based assessment can help reduce fear of negative evaluation and increase self-confidence. The Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) emphasizes the importance of fulfilling the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness through interest-based topic selection, gradual learning, and collaborative activities. Meanwhile, social support (Cohen & Wills, 1985) plays a crucial role in creating a safe learning environment through peer mentoring, constructive feedback, and classroom rules that value mistakes as part of the learning process. Oxford (1990) complements these with language learning strategies such as shadowing techniques,

reflective journals, and relaxation exercises to manage anxiety directly. The combined implementation of these four approaches—including material preparation, structured practice, social support, and relaxation techniques—creates a comprehensive framework that not only reduces anxiety but also builds competence and sustained motivation in speaking English.

Kondo and Ying Ling (2004) identified five ways to help students overcome their fear of public speaking: preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation. Preparation, which includes methodical rehearsal and content mastery, is the first and most basic strategy. Thorough preparation significantly reduces anxiety by boosting competence and self-efficacy, according to recent studies (Ying-Ling et al., 2021). Among the methods that have been demonstrated to help speakers become less sensitive to performance anxiety are practicing in front of mirrors, recording speeches for self-evaluation, and giving simulated presentations. Additionally, Martiningsih, Susilawati, and Rezeki (2024) claim that preparation techniques help students overcome anxiety by boosting learning. For instance, rereading the material that will be presented and studying a lot of grammar and vocabulary can help students learn a lot of new words. By practicing speaking with others, students also attempt to get better at pronouncing words correctly (Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020).

The second strategy, relaxation techniques, has gained empirical support from contemporary psycholinguistic research. Kondo's later work (2019) demonstrates how controlled breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and brief mindfulness exercises can lower physiological arousal during speech performance. Positive thinking, the third strategy, aligns with current cognitive-behavioral approaches to anxiety management. Modern interpretations emphasize cognitive restructuring - replacing maladaptive thoughts ("I'll fail") with evidence-based affirmations ("I'm well-prepared") (Ying-Ling et al., 2021). Peer seeking, the fourth strategy, reflects the growing recognition of social learning in anxiety reduction. Recent classroom-based studies show collaborative learning environments decrease anxiety by 30-40% compared to individual performance contexts (Kondo, 2019).

The fifth strategy, resignation, remains controversial in contemporary

pedagogy. While Kondo and Ying-Ling originally included it as a coping mechanism, their later work (Ying-Ling et al., 2021) cautions against passive acceptance of anxiety, instead advocating for active management through the first four strategies. As stated by Kondo (2019), current best practices in language education therefore emphasize preparation, relaxation, cognitive restructuring, and peer support as an integrated approach to public speaking anxiety reduction. This evolution reflects two decades of refinement to their original model while maintaining its core psychological foundations.

After that, there are relaxation techniques that have been shown to be useful in overcoming speaking anxiety and public speaking anxiety itself. Muscle stretches, meditation, and music listening are all methods of relaxation (Oxford, 1990 as referenced in Toyama & Yamazaki, 2021).

According to Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004), the third includes positive thinking techniques that assist students in overcoming their fear of public speaking. These techniques have a palliative role that concentrates on the cognitive issues that underlie students' speaking anxiety. Students' capacity to handle stress can also be enhanced by positive thinking. In order to assist students in linking their ideas, feelings, and actions, positive thinking lowers anxiety and improves stress management skills (Shokrpour et al., 2021). In addition, students can experiment with self-efficacy, which, according to Maulidia and DJ (2023), is the conviction in one's own capacity to manage and complete activities successfully. This can serve as a powerful motivator for students.

The fourth technique is peer seeking, which gives students solace in knowing they are not alone in their struggles to grasp speaking class. Furthermore, individuals who suffer from speech anxiety may find that social comparison with others who share their concern helps them regulate their emotions (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004). Last but not least is the resignation technique, which is the least common and is also seen to be unsuitable for the classroom setting.

In summary, Kondo and Ying-Ling's strategies—preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, and peer seeking—effectively reduce public speaking anxiety, while resignation has been deemphasized. Modern approaches combine these

techniques with cognitive-behavioral and social learning methods, offering a robust framework for anxiety management. Further research should explore their application across diverse educational settings.

2. Teachers' View

Teachers' strategies for reducing speaking anxiety play an important role. There is one method, which comes from the popular theory from Dörnyei (2001) that is about motivational strategies, that can increase learner's motivation in speaking English which is teacher's MS (Motivational Strategies). Teacher motivation strategies are a sort of motivation that comes from teachers in several ways in order to encourage learners to learn English.

Dörnyei (2001) suggested four points of motivational strategies called as MTP (Motivational Teaching Practice): (a) creating the basic motivational conditions, it's the foundation for a supportive learning environment. This involves ensuring that the classroom atmosphere is welcoming and free from distractions. Teachers can achieve this by organizing seating arrangements that facilitate collaboration, using visual aids to capture attention, and maintaining a consistent routine that provides predictability and stability (Dörnyei, 2001).

By establishing these foundational elements, teachers lay the groundwork for learners to feel comfortable and engaged. (b) generating initial motivation, focusing on sparking learners' interest in the subject matter early on. This can be achieved through engaging lesson plans that incorporate relevant examples and real-life applications. For instance, using videos, podcasts, or current events related to English culture can captivate learners' curiosity and make the content more relatable (Krashen, 2004). Additionally, introducing fun icebreaker activities or games at the beginning of the course can help learners bond with their peers and develop a positive association with learning English. (c) maintaining and protecting motivation, is essential for sustaining learners' enthusiasm over time. Teachers can achieve this by providing continuous feedback that acknowledges progress while offering constructive criticism aimed at improvement. Regularly setting achievable goals with clear criteria helps learners stay focused on their objectives without feeling overwhelmed (Bandura, 1997). Moreover, incorporating varied teaching

methods such as group discussions, role-playing exercises, or project-based learning ensures that lessons remain engaging and dynamic, preventing boredom from creeping into the classroom, and (d) encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation, this strategy promotes intrinsic motivation by allowing students to recognize their own growth and accomplishments. By regularly conducting reflective activities like journal entries or class discussions about what they have learned, teachers empower learners to evaluate themselves objectively (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Such practices foster a sense of pride and accomplishment which reinforces continued effort towards mastering English skills. Additionally, Horwitz et al., (1995) stated that a supportive teacher can help alleviate some anxiety by acknowledging students' feelings and providing concrete strategies to build confidence in language use. Recognizing and addressing foreign language anxiety is crucial for improving teaching practices at all educational levels. While teachers can implement various techniques to reduce anxiety, such as relaxation exercises and effective learning strategies, severe anxiety may require referral to outside counselors or specialists for more targeted support.

B. Study of Relevant Research

Several studies relevant to this issue have been conducted by many researchers. Damayanti and Listyani (2020) conducted a study related to factors contributing students' speaking anxiety in English speaking class. The study aimed to gain information about what made students felt anxious and what factors triggered students' speaking anxiety in Academic Speaking class in English Language Education Program (ELEP) in a private university in Central Java, Indonesia. The research revealed the three main factors of anxiety, i.e. communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

Furthermore, another study that is connected with this study was conducted by Syahfutra and Wibowo (2021). The study explores speaking anxiety: the identification of speaking anxiety in English education study program. This research investigated that the main factors of speaking anxiety at public university were essentially affected by nervousness and idea delivery.

The research by Rajitha and Amelu (2020) provided further nuance by distinguishing between internal factors, such as lack of self-confidence and shame, and external factors, including grammar mastery, pronunciation difficulties, and peer judgment. While comprehensive in identifying causes, their study notably omitted examination of student coping mechanisms.

Lee and Chen (2022) conducted a significant longitudinal study demonstrating that structured peer support systems and collaborative learning activities reduced anxiety levels by 37% among participants. Their findings emphasized the social dimension of language learning anxiety. Kondo and Ying-Ling's (2004) theoretical framework proposed preparation, relaxation, and positive thinking as key strategies, though their Western-centric study lacked contextual adaptation to EFL environments like Indonesia.

More recent work by Theriana (2023) examined cognitive and behavioral strategies among Indonesian EFL students, finding that mindfulness techniques and gradual exposure were particularly effective. However, the study's small sample size (n=25) limited its generalizability, and it did not adequately consider classroom environmental factors.

In addition, the previous studies mentioned about focused on the factors that causes students' speaking anxiety, and there is still little discussion about the strategies used by the students themselves. However, to fill the gap in previous studies, this research focuses on student strategies such as self-practice, breathing techniques, and peer collaboration that have not been widely discussed in previous research. The findings complement existing studies by offering practical solutions from the learner's perspective. This research was carried out to investigate students' strategies in reducing their speaking anxiety in class with three students who experience speaking anxiety in the classroom in the English Education Department at a university in Tasikmalaya.