

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a comprehensive overview of the background and objectives of the research, formulates research questions, defines the scope of the study, and explains the significance of the research in a clear and organized form.

### 1.1. Background of Study

Due to globalization, which makes English the primary language of communication, everyone must be able to speak it. Speaking is a required ability for everyday living when learning a language (Derakhshan et al., 2016). People who want to succeed in various kinds of academic and professional contexts must be proficient in the English language (Sari, 2023). According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017), students who are learning a language typically assess their degree of success depending on how much their speaking skills have improved. Accuracy, fluency, and language understanding are all components of speaking ability (Derakhshan et al., 2016; Derakhshan & Shirmohammadli, 2015).

Despite its importance, there are some difficulties that people experience when learning speaking skills, especially when speaking in another language (A. Gani et al., 2015). Some of them are related to activities in class, where the focus of learning English in class is not only speaking so students' attention is divided. Meanwhile, students' ability to communicate is hampered by the teacher's personality. In addition, the high difficulty material plus the use of English as an intermediary, as well as the development of students' speaking abilities is also severely hampered by teachers' failure to provide feedback (Irmawati, 2016).

Nowadays, many people are becoming more aware of the anxiety that comes with learning a foreign language (Tien, 2018). According to Xiao and Wong (2014) in Pratolo et al. (2019), Foreign language anxiety refers to the uncomfortable emotions that a person experiences while learning a language. Students who are learning a new language typically experience anxiety related to foreign languages. This is because students are required to speak as well as listen in front of the class. Often speaking in a foreign language for students can cause trauma (Ismail et al.,

2022). Gani (2015) also mentioned that it is very stressful for some students when they are required to speak using a second language. Many students feel nervous, confused, embarrassed, depressed so they are anxious and sometimes they forget what they want to say. Not only that, quoting from Wulandari et al. (2022), not a few high school students think that speaking in English is difficult because many factors trigger the students' sense of difficulty, one of which is the lack of motivation to practice speaking English. To dig deeper into this phenomenon, this study uses the Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) theory proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986) as the basic theory. Quoting Mukminin et al (2018 According to Horwitz, foreign language anxiety is a complicated emotion and behavior that occurs when learning a language. Horwitz et al. (1986) in Atanasius et al (2020) classify foreign language anxiety into three: 1. communication apprehension, a situation where students feel afraid to communicate with people 2. Fear of negative evaluation, which is anxiety that arises from fear of being judged negatively by others when speaking 3. Test anxiety which means the anxiety that arises when faced with an exam for fear of failure. In addition, the Motion of Emotion theory by Gregersen, MacIntyre and Meza (2014) is also used to find out that the anxiety experienced by students is dynamic because it is influenced by thoughts about themselves and the environment, as well as heart rate factors.

In Indonesia, the use of English in daily activities is still relatively rare. This is because Indonesian students are considered to have low competence in learning English (Suganda et al., 2021). Quoting Renandya & Nguyen (2022) in Nanda et al. (2024), Teachers often incorporate the students' mother tongue when teaching English in countries where it is considered a foreign language. The status of English in Indonesia as a foreign language makes students have few opportunities to apply what they learn outside of class activities. Students use English only when they study in class with limited time (Sibarani, 2019). Quoting Solihin, (2021), Through the Merdeka curriculum, English presents unique opportunities and challenges. In the Merdeka Curriculum, based on the Keputusan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 56/M/2022 tentang Pedoman Penerapan Kurikulum dalam Rangka Pemulihan Pembelajaran, Menteri Pendidikan Kebudayaan Riset dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia, 2022 the time

allocation for English subjects at the junior high school level is adjusted to the number of learning weeks in one year. In general, students learn English for 3 lesson hours per week, with each lesson hour lasting 40 minutes. The total time allocation per year may vary depending on the number of learning weeks at each grade level.

Many Indonesian students report that learning English is challenging. (Fahmi et al., 2020). Since speaking is one of the skills learned in English, students are required to have speaking skills. Many Indonesian students find it difficult when asked to express ideas because these students feel confused about how to express ideas in English (Masruddin, 2018). Many Indonesian students feel anxious when learning English. There are several factors that influence the appearance of student anxiety including difficulty in pronouncing words in English, lack of vocabulary mastery, as well as lack of courage to speak in English (Masruddin, 2018). There are also problems that are faced when teaching speaking, namely psychological factors (Purwati et al., 2023). Usually, this factor is caused by a lack of self-confidence that a person experiences as a result of depending on how others perceive him. A person who experiences anxiety in speaking generally has a sense of worry about what others see or judge him/her (Masnawati, 2021).

This issue also found at SMPIT (Sekolah Menengah Pertama Islam Terpadu) Dinamika Umat Bogor. As shown in the preliminary study conducted by researchers through interviews with the principal, English teacher, and several students, it shows that many students are reluctant to speak in English because of feelings of fear, anxiety, or lack of confidence. This is supported by the statement of the English teacher who said that around 30%-40% of students show signs of speaking anxiety which is often caused by the fear of making mistakes and having their friends make fun of them. Meanwhile, student interviews described different levels of anxiety. Students who have high anxiety say that they feel nervous, afraid of being judged negatively, and have difficulty forming sentences when speaking. In contrast, students with low anxiety felt calm, did not feel afraid of being judged badly, and did not have difficulty forming words when speaking. The results of this interview show that speaking anxiety can be one of the reasons that hinder students' English skills so that the English Day program does not carry out well.

There are several studies that have discussed speaking anxiety. Among them is research by Sutarsyah (2017) which discusses what factors underlie speaking anxiety and its impact on students' speaking performance. According to this study, English speaking anxiety has a significant impact on students' speaking performance. This study shows that nervousness is the dominant factor coupled with worry and tension. Other findings are anxiety can have an influence on students' speaking ability, where students who have low anxiety levels are better in speaking. Another study conducted by Muhammad (2019) The degree and causes of speaking anxiety among students in English classrooms are determined by this study. The background of this study is that although English has been taught for many years in Indonesia, there are still many students who experience speaking difficulties. This study found that the most students were at the moderately anxious level which shows that speaking anxiety is a common phenomenon in English classes and has a negative impact on students, where it is caused by several factors: requests to speak in front of the class, being laughed at by classmates, lack of preparation, teacher personality, students' perspectives on language learning, and incomprehensible input. In addition, research conducted by Afebri & Muhsin (2019) discusses what factors influence the appearance of difficulties in speaking performance. According to this study, many students who feels anxiety in studying English find it difficult to speak. According to the study's findings, affective factors, linguistic factors, and performance conditions all have an impact on students' speaking abilities.

However, these studies have different scopes. Many previous studies have examined speaking anxiety among high school and college students. There has been few research on speaking anxiety in Islamic junior high schools. Furthermore, in the context of schools which implement English day programs have rarely explored the underlying causes of speaking anxiety among junior high school students. This gap is significant because the implementation of English Day programs assumes frequent oral participation, which may intensify students' speaking anxiety. Therefore, a more focused investigation is needed to examine the causes and effects of speaking anxiety among junior high school students in educational settings that promote the use of English.

Students at SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor experience difficulties in speaking English, especially when delivering a speech in the language. The principal of the school said that there is actually an English Day program at the school. However, the output is not in line with expectations. Students still find it difficult to speak English because students are not used to using English in the school environment. Therefore, SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor teachers need to understand what factors cause speaking anxiety in students. SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor is chosen as the location and object of research because it represents a school environment where English is considered a foreign language marked by the English Day program. The grade chosen for this study is the second-grade students who are considered to have learned English. Therefore, this study will specifically investigate what factors influence the appearance of speaking anxiety in SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor students. This research aims to explore The elements that affect speaking anxiety in SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor students, as well as describe students' perspectives on the impact of speaking anxiety affect them in learning English.

Based on the previous findings, it can be inferred that it is very important to understand the internal factors such as communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, also test anxiety. Additionally, speaking anxiety is brought on by outside variables like the classroom environment, peer pressure, and the instructor's style of instruction. Speaking anxiety has a detrimental effect on students' capacity to communicate, making them afraid to speak. Hence, this study focuses on identifying the factors that cause speaking anxiety and its impact on students, especially among grade 9 students at SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor Bogor.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

1. Which factors of speaking anxiety that frequently felt by students in SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor?
2. How do students perceive and experience speaking anxiety during English speaking activities?

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

This study aims to identify factors or causes that can lead to speaking anxiety among SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor students. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to explore the internal and external factors that influence feelings of speaking anxiety and understand students' perceptions of the effects of anxiety on their English learning process. The researcher presents insights that are expected to help educators and teachers in developing strategies to reduce speaking anxiety and help students to be more confident in using English.

### **1.4. Scope of the Study**

This research focuses on exploring the internal and external factors that trigger English speaking anxiety in SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor students. This research also describes how students' perspectives on the impact of speaking anxiety affect them in learning English

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to guide light on the variables that contribute to speaking anxiety in SMPIT Dinamika Umat Bogor students. There are two categories for the study's significance. They are both practically and theoretically significant.

#### **1.5.1 Theoretical Significance**

This study can contribute to the existing knowledge about foreign language speaking anxiety, especially English speaking anxiety. It offers a more thorough comprehension of the internal and external forces that affect junior high school students' anxiety when speaking English which can enrich theories and frameworks related to language learning and affective factors. The findings can also serve as a foundation for future research in similar contexts or with different student populations.

### 1.5.2. Practical Significance

1. Benefits for researchers:

This study provides valuable data on the factors contributing to English speaking anxiety, which can be used as a reference or foundation for future studies in similar contexts.

2. Benefits for teacher:

The findings can help teachers identify the causes of students' speaking anxiety and implement strategies to create a more supportive and comfortable learning environment.

3. Benefits for students:

This study helps students recognize the factors causing their anxiety, encouraging them to address these challenges and build confidence in speaking English.

