

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is the primary language used for communication worldwide. It is used globally in almost all of the fields such as education, science, healthcare, technology, engineering, etc. Certainly, English is established as a dominant language in the world in the mentioned fields, and the dominance has become too big to prevent (Rao, 2019b). As the world's primary language, English is taught to students in Indonesia, with the hope that they will be able to communicate with the world. Furthermore, students are expected to be able to connect and compete in this global era. English is crucial for learning because it fosters students' intellectual, social, and emotional development (Al-Barakat et al., 2025). It is key to success in various fields, particularly in educational contexts. In Indonesia, English is taught for practical use, particularly for communicating with foreigners who speak languages other than Indonesian. Therefore, mastering English is crucial for students to communicate and interact within a global context.

However, according to English First (2025), Indonesia continues to rank relatively low in English proficiency globally, as reflected in EF EPI (English Proficiency Index) data showing limited performance in speaking (447), which is the lowest score among all language skills. This highlights ongoing gaps in productive skills. The data also shows that students have the lowest scores among all occupational groups. The persistently low rankings reinforce the need

for students to master English to communicate with non-Indonesian speakers and access opportunities in business, education, and technology.

At present, people need to convey their ideas, express their feelings, and share experiences in English to connect with the world. To perform this communication with the world, the significance of speaking skills increases (Akhter, 2021). This answers the question why teaching speaking skills become important in the EFL Classroom. Students need to master their speaking skills because speaking English is required for effective communication in the academic and professional context. Speaking English is needed at the time of interviews, presentations, or in the workplaces. For twelfth-grade students who will soon face these occasions, it is crucial for them to become proficient speakers.

In the EFL classroom, high school students are encouraged to be able to share their ideas, perspectives, and experiences verbally, that is why speaking skill is very important to be acquired. According to the *Kemendikdasmen (n.d.)*, the general standard of learning objectives of the English language at Senior High Schools in Indonesia are as follows: 1) Students use English confidently and independently to communicate in various contexts, express opinions, participate in discussions, and apply communication strategies; 2) Students understand, analyze, and evaluate a wide range of text types across print and digital formats, identify main ideas and implicit meanings, and read both for learning and enjoyment; 3) Students write a fictional and factual text types, express complicated ideas, use a variety of vocabulary and verb tenses in their

writing, present information using various of presentation techniques to suit different audiences and achieve different purposes.

The expectations from the curriculum makers are mostly about how students can use English in everyday context, which is to communicate their ideas, to present their works, and deliver information. Ironically, even for twelfth-grade students, when they are required to speak in the classroom, they still face difficulties in expressing their ideas in English. These difficulties can be seen through hesitation, lack of confidence, avoidance in speaking tasks, and limited participation during classroom discussion (Norahmi et al., 2025). Certain classroom activities, including oral presentations or group discussions, make these challenges more apparent. For example, students frequently pause, rely a lot on their notes, or switch to Bahasa Indonesia when they are asked to present in front of the class. Some students avoid actively participating in group conversations by either remaining silent or contributing minimally. These behaviors are commonly associated with foreign language speaking anxiety, particularly difficulties in communicating orally and concerns about making mistakes or being negatively evaluated by others (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Students' speaking anxiety is a major contributing factor to these difficulties in speaking process. Speaking anxiety among students is a common issue that makes them struggle to learn and speak English effectively (Aulia, R. & Dalimunte, M., 2024). According to Spielberg (1983, as cited in Horwitz et al., 1986), anxiety is defined as a sense of tension, helplessness, restlessness, and concern related to the activation of the autonomic nervous system. This anxiety is often shown in different forms such as losing ideas while speaking or

avoiding eye contact and participation. Various factors may contribute to students' anxiety when they speak English, such as fear of judgement, lack of vocabulary, classroom atmosphere, insufficient preparation, low self-confidence (Supriyani & Kartikasari, 2022). Even when students have positive and good opinions, anxious students frequently speak less clearly, use simpler language, and pausing too much (Kasap et al., 2019).

During the researcher's teaching practicum at SMAN 31 Jakarta, similar conditions were observed, particularly among twelfth-grade students. Many students hesitated before answering questions even though they already know the answer, relied heavily on their notes during presentations, and sometimes switched to Bahasa Indonesia when they could not express their ideas in English. Some students also avoided participating in classroom discussions by remaining silent or giving only brief responses. These observable behaviors indicated that speaking anxiety was present during English speaking activities and might have effects students' willingness and ability to communicate. Based on these problems, an in-depth investigation is needed to identify the types of speaking anxiety experienced by twelfth-grade students, the factors that contribute to students' anxiety, and how twelfth-grade students perceive the anxiety in speaking English.

Many researchers have conducted studies related to speaking anxiety. Previous studies researched on university students or high school students' anxiety (Aulia & Dalimunte, 2024; Susilawati et al., 2025; Asysyfa et al., 2019). While studies specifically investigating twelfth-grade senior high school students remain limited, this group represents a unique academic context. As

final-year students, they face greater academic demands, including graduation requirements, university entrance preparation, and frequent assessed speaking activities. These responsibilities may increase the pressure to perform well in English and intensify their speaking anxiety. Eighty percent of students in the twelfth-grade experienced anxiety when they must speak English in the classroom (Quthbi, 2019). Therefore, examining speaking anxiety among twelfth-grade students is particularly important. By concentrating on twelfth-grade students, specifically in the setting of SMAN 31 Jakarta, this study seeks to fill the research gap.

In addition, many previous studies emphasized the level, the causes, and the strategies to overcome speaking anxiety, while this study will uncover the types of speaking anxiety, the factors that might cause it, and the effects of speaking anxiety on students' speaking process in the context of senior high school students in SMAN 31 Jakarta.

1.2 Research Questions

To gain a better understanding of students' speaking anxiety, this study investigates the following questions:

- a. What types of speaking anxiety proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986) are most experienced by twelfth-grade students at SMAN 31 Jakarta?
- b. What learner-internal and -external factors, as categorized by Dewaele, et al. (2018) contribute to the twelfth-grade students' speaking anxiety at SMAN 31 Jakarta?
- c. What are the effects of speaking anxiety on students' English-speaking process at the input, processing, and output stages, as described in the stage-

specific anxiety model adapted by MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) in the context of twelfth-grade students at SMAN 31 Jakarta?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study is to explore students' speaking anxiety. First, it aims to investigate the types of speaking anxiety that twelfth-grade students experienced in the English classroom. Second, it helps to understand the factors that contribute to students' speaking anxiety from their own perspectives and experiences. Finally, it describes the effects of speaking anxiety on students' speaking process during English classroom activities in the context of twelfth-grade students at SMAN 31 Jakarta.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The purpose of this study is to look at the speaking anxiety of twelfth-grade students in the English classroom at SMAN 31 Jakarta. The study involves eighty twelfth-grade students during the second semester of the academic year 2025/2026. The questionnaire was completed by eighty students with eight from each class to gather quantitative information about the speaking anxiety they experienced. Additionally, a smaller group of eight students were chosen for in-depth interviews to go deeper into the detail explanation about their speaking anxiety experiences.

The scope of this study is limited to the speaking activities in the English classroom, excluding the other language skills such as reading, writing, or listening. The focus of the study is twelfth-grade students speaking anxiety,

including the types, the factors that may cause it, and the effects of it on students' speaking process in the English classroom.

This study intends to uncover the speaking anxiety within these specific contexts and not be generalized to all senior high school students.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute as an enrichment of the English Language Teaching (ELT) field by discussing the speaking anxiety among twelfth-grade students. It provides a deeper understanding on the types of speaking anxiety, the factors that might cause it, and the effects on twelfth-grade students' speaking process in the classroom context.

This study aims to benefit students, to help them become aware of their own anxiety in speaking English and to make them realize that anxiety is natural in learning English language, especially speaking process. If students are more aware of their anxiety, the factors that may cause it, and how it affects their speaking process, it will be easier for them to cope with the strategies and improve their speaking processes in the classroom. This awareness could empower them to self-advocate, seek specific help from teachers, or employ targeted coping mechanisms like better preparation or joining a speaking club.

This study can provide information for teachers that can help them learn more about students' emotional and psychological challenges during speaking activities. By knowing and being acknowledged of their students' difficulties, teachers can design more supportive classroom environments, select appropriate speaking activities, and use various teaching strategies that reduce

anxiety and motivate students to participate actively. The results of this study might encourage teachers in Jakarta to, for instance, create specific, constructive classroom norms for feedback to overcome the fear of receiving a negative evaluation.

1.6 State of the Art

Previous studies have consistently shown that speaking anxiety is influenced by various learner-related factors, such as limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, insufficient preparation, and fear of making mistakes (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020; Santoso & Perrodin, 2022; Aulia & Dalimunte, 2024). These studies have also demonstrated that speaking anxiety negatively influences students' participation in English speaking activities and highlighted several strategies used by teachers to reduce anxiety. However, most previous studies focused on university students or junior high school students and primarily examined speaking anxiety from a single perspective, such as its causes or coping strategies. Few studies have investigated speaking anxiety among twelfth-grade senior high school students, who face distinctive academic demands during their final year of study.

In addition, those previous studies emphasized the causes and the strategies. Most studies discussed the anxiety level and stopped on the factors that cause it using the framework by Horwitz, et al (1986). Unlike those studies, this study uses an integrated framework (types-factors-effects). It will combine the previous studies from Horwitz et al. (1986) about the types of speaking anxiety, Dewaele et al. (2018) about the factors that cause speaking anxiety, and MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) about the effects of speaking anxiety on speaking

process in the context of senior high school students in SMAN 31 Jakarta. Since each framework examines a particular dimension of the problem, this study integrates them to build a deeper and more coherent view of speaking anxiety. This combined perspective allows the research to explain the phenomenon more compressively than a single framework could.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in two aspects. First, it examines twelfth grade senior high school students as a group that experiences specific academic demands and performance pressure which can strengthen speaking anxiety yet remains less explored in earlier studies. Second, it uses an integrated theoretical framework that explains the types of speaking anxiety from Horwitz et al. (1986), the contributing factors identified by Dewaele et al. (2018), and the effects of speaking anxiety on speaking performance from Tobias (1983) adapted by MacIntyre & Gardner (1994).