

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by an unpleasant state of internal anxiety, accompanied by feelings of fear about anticipated events. In line with Brown (2000 : 151) in Masthurah et al. (2021), anxiety is associated with feelings of restlessness, frustration, self-doubt, anxiety, and worry. The increased anxiety students feel in foreign language classes often prevents them from learning English, especially speaking skills. Speaking anxiety is a type of social phobia, which is characterized by the thought that one will be criticized or judged badly by other people. Based on Wahyudi et al. (2015) in Fuadiyah et al. (2022), one of the factors of speaking anxiety is that students are afraid of making mistakes. Students feel anxious when they have to speak or write a particular language even though they are not native speakers of that language. Therefore, teachers have an important role in helping students reduce their anxiety, by approaching students to support and appreciate them.

Speaking has several segments and functions. Many attempts have been made to classify the functions of speaking in human interaction. Based on Richards (2008) in Murti P (2022), there are three functions of speaking: speaking as interaction, speaking as transaction, and speaking as performance. Firstly, speaking as interaction, refers to social conversation,

which two or more people interact to exchange ideas or opinions. The social function of speaking as interaction is to build relationship with other people to share meaning with each other. For example, chatting with others or telling a friend about an interesting thing. Secondly, speaking as transaction, plays a role to ensure that an individual comprehends the message we are conveying. The function of speaking as transaction is to provide information and obtain goods or services. For example, group discussions in the classroom, talking on the phone with friends, and ordering food from restaurants. Lastly, speaking as performance, is the type of speaking to convey information to an audience, which generally incorporates public speaking. This type of speaking is focus on sequencing, organization, and accuracy of speaking. For examples, debate, political speeches, and lectures.

Learning a foreign language can cause anxiety, particularly when it comes to speaking. The anxiety of EFL students has attracted the attention of many researchers in the fields of psychology and education. Several studies have a consistently demonstrated a correlation between foreign language anxiety and difficult in speaking. Learning a foreign language can be daunting for those who are not equipped with the necessary fluency in spoken language.

Speaking anxiety is the feeling of nervousness, fear, discomfort, and lack of confidence that people often experience when speaking in a foreign language, especially in front of others. This is a frequently problem for language learners and is considered a significant challenge to achieving

effective spoken communication. Speaking anxiety manifests physically and emotionally, with symptoms such as trembling, mind going blank, panic attacks, fast heartbeat, sweating, dry mouth, and voice stuttering. This anxiety is not only experienced by low-achieving students but also by high achievers due to the pressure of speaking in a foreign language. (Yulia & Akhriyah, 2023). Public speaking anxiety, a related concept, is recognized as a social anxiety disorder and is considered one of the most common fears worldwide (Gallego et al. 2021). Students' physical and emotional health are affected by it, and their academic and professional development can be hindered. It has been shown in studies that severe difficulties with public speaking are reported by a significant number of students, highlighting the importance of addressing speaking anxiety in educational settings.

Research shows that speaking anxiety is one of the most common obstacles faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students (Fuadiyah et al., 2022).

“Heightened anxiety levels are contributed to by factors such as fear of making mistakes, low language proficiency, and negative feedback. Avoidance behaviors, reduced participation, and decreased self-confidence can be led to by these internal factors. As speaking is a crucial skill for academic and professional success, addressing anxiety in language learning becomes a critical priority”.

Speaking anxiety is a common problem that affects many people, especially students who are required to give presentations or speeches as a part of their academic requirements. Educators and psychologists can help students overcome their fear and develop their ability to speak confidently

in public by understanding the cause and effect of speaking anxiety. Therefore, the researcher wants to identify factors that contribute to public speaking anxiety. The study of speaking anxiety has gained considerable attention within the fields of psychology and education. Among the factors may be language proficiency, fear of negative feedback, and learning circumstances. Suparlan (2021) argue that students feel anxiety when speaking English due to fear of negative consequences from the teacher and feelings of being less capable compared to their peers. In addition, limited vocabulary and lack of preparation are identified as key factors contributing to their anxiety. The negative emotional state causes anxious students to display physical symptoms and directly interferes with their short-term memory performance. Understanding these factors empowers educators and psychologists to devise targeted interventions that can assist students in conquering fear and enhancing their proficiency in public speaking. If individuals are aware that discussing anxiety is a common issue, they may feel more comfortable asking for help and advice to help them manage their fear.

In any case, speaking anxiety remains a determined challenge for many of them. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the emotional and psychological boundaries faced by EFL learners by identifying and analyzing the internal factors of speaking anxiety. Based on the background of the study above, the researcher chooses

the title “Analyzing Internal Factors Contributing to Speaking Anxiety Among Final-Semester Students at PGRI Delta University”.

B. Statements of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulates a research question as follows:

1. What internal factors are associated with speaking anxiety among final-semester students at PGRI Delta University?
2. How do internal factors and experience form final-semester students' confidence in speaking English?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the research question that have been described above, this study aims to obtain an overview of what factors are contribute to speaking anxiety. The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To identify the internal factors that contribute to speaking anxiety in final-semester students at PGRI Delta Sidoarjo University.
2. To analyze how internal factors and experience form final-semester students' confidence in speaking English.

D. Significances of the Study

For English language educators, this study aims to provide valuable insights on understanding the internal factors contributing to speaking anxiety among EFL students. For EFL students, this study is expected to raise awareness about the internal factors causing their speaking anxiety and

how these factors can impact their speaking performance. Finally, the findings can be used as a reference by future researchers for exploring other dimensions of speaking anxiety, such as external or cultural factors.

E. Scope and Limitation

1. Scope of the Study

The researcher explores students' emotional and personal factors that influence their anxiety levels during speaking activities in English.

2. Limitation of the Study

The study is limited to final semester EFL students at a single university, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to broader EFL contexts. It focuses solely on internal factors of speaking anxiety and does not address external factors, such as teaching methods, classroom environment, and peer influence.

F. Operational Definition

1. Speaking Anxiety

Speaking anxiety, a common phenomenon among language learners, is defined as the worry and fear that arises when individual has to speak in a foreign language. The focus in this study is on the internal psychological experience rather than external situational factors. Individuals feel nervous, shyness, and fear of negative feedback when presentation or speaking in public, which is characterized by sweating and shaking.

2. Internal Factors of Speaking Anxiety

Internal factors are factors that originate from within a person or the individual that impact an individual's behavior. In this study, internal factors of speaking anxiety refer to self-confidence, shyness, learning experience, and lack English proficiency. Students may involvement anxiety due to the fear of making mistakes or not being able to express themselves successfully when encounter these factors.



