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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

In the era of globalization, English has become an international language that plays an important role in communication across countries and cultures. English is widely used in various fields such as education, technology, business, tourism, and international relations. According to Kasihani (2018) in Nurfadilla (2024), English is the first foreign language that is considered important for the purpose of accessing information, absorption and development of science technology, arts and culture and fostering relations with other nations. For this reason, it is crucial that English be taught and learned. Therefore, the ability to communicate effectively in English is considered an essential skill for students to compete in the global world. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and has been included in the national curriculum from junior high school to senior high school and even university. In addition, there are four skills in languages criteria for English as a foreign or international language that students must meet. In particular, these are speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Of the four language skills, speaking is one of the important skills to master.

Speaking is a crucial skill that enables students to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings effectively and to participate actively in communication as the main goal of language teaching. According to



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Derakhshan et al. (2021), speaking covers a significant portion of the output and serves as an important agent in the learning process. Furthermore, speaking competence reflects students' ability to use language knowledge communicatively and appropriately. Therefore, improving students' speaking ability has become an important mission for many schools in Indonesia, as English is increasingly needed for academic, social, and professional purposes. Speaking skill is one of the most challenging English skills for students to master, as it requires confidence, vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation accuracy, and fluency simultaneously. This may cause students to feel anxious because they are worried about making mistakes when speaking English. As a result, one of the issues that many students have when speaking English in class is anxiety.

Anxiety is a condition in which students feel nervous, shy, and afraid of making mistakes when speaking in front of the class. Anxiety is defined by Casado (2001) in Sukarno (2025) as tenseness, fear, and concern connected to the activation of the autonomic nervous system. According to Horwitz and Cope (1986), as cited in Ula Saidatul (2016), language anxiety refers to a combination of learners' self-perceptions, feelings, and behaviours that are related to the process of learning a language in the classroom. This feeling can negatively affect students' behaviour and confidence. In addition, speaking anxiety may discourage students from participating in classroom activities and hinder their success in learning English.



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According to the researcher' observation during the teaching practice program on 7th October 2025 at tenth grade of SMAN 2 Tembilahan, several students were found to have difficulties in expressing their ideas orally. One of the major problems is anxiety, as students often feel nervous and afraid of making mistakes when speaking in front of others. Some students also experience physical symptoms of nervousness when they are asked to perform in front of the class. In addition, limited vocabulary makes it difficult for students to express their ideas clearly. Problems with pronunciation also reduce students' confidence in speaking. Many students are also afraid of being judged, criticized, or laughed at by others. Furthermore, some students may fear miscommunication if their message is misunderstood. Students may also lack speaking practice because they are more familiar with reading and writing. Finally, some students feel more anxious when they have to speak suddenly without preparation or when they are being assessed. Considering the problems experienced by students in speaking English, anxiety becomes an important issue that needs to be addressed. If students continue to feel anxious, they may be reluctant to speak and participate in class. Therefore, analyzing English speaking anxiety is necessary to help improve students' confidence and speaking.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher interested in conducting the thesis titled "An Analysis of English Speaking Anxiety in the Tenth Grade at SMAN 2 in the Academic Year 2025/2026".



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B. Identification of the Problems

Based on the background above, the researcher identified the following problems:

1. Some students feel anxious when they have to speak English in class.
2. Some students feel that their limited vocabulary makes them shy when speaking English.
3. Some students feel nervous and less confident when they have difficulties with English pronunciation.
4. Some students feel afraid of being judged, criticized, or laughed at by others.
5. Some students may fear miscommunication if their message is misunderstood.
6. Some students lack speaking practice because they are more familiar with reading and writing.
7. Some students may also feel more anxious when they have to speak suddenly without preparation or when they are being assessed.

C. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification above, the researcher limits the problem to make it more specific. The limitation of the study is focused on an analysis of English speaking anxiety in the tenth grade at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the academic year 2025/2026”.



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D. Research Question

In this research, the researcher formulates one research question. As follow: “How is English speaking anxiety in the tenth grade at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the academic year 2025/2026?”

E. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to find out how is English speaking anxiety in the tenth grade at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the academic year 2025/2026.

F. Significances of the Research

The result of the study is expected to be able to give benefits to the teachers, the students, the readers.

1. For the Student

To help students understand their speaking anxiety in English and encourage them to improve their confidence and ability in speaking English during the teaching and learning process.

2. For the Teachers

To help teachers identify students' speaking anxiety and implement appropriate teaching strategies to reduce anxiety and improve students' English speaking performance.



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3. For the Readers

This research can be used as a reference for other researchers who want to conduct similar studies or further research related to students' speaking anxiety in English learning.

G. Definition of the Key Terms

There are so many terms involved in this research. In order to avoid misunderstanding the terms used, the following terms need be defined:

1. Speaking

Yanti and Hardi (2019), states that speaking was a process of producing meaning through various stages, including production, reception, and processing of information, making it an interactive process.

2. Speaking Anxiety

According to Nety and Purnomo (2023), speaking anxiety is a fear or communication apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in the second or foreign language.