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Submission date: 22-Sep-2026 10:21AM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 3038774446

File name: SKRIPSI_FITRIANI_Bahasa_Ingggris.pdf (973.92K)

Word count: 11185

Character count: 62764

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

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 ¹one of the most challenging English skills for students to master, as ²²it requires confidence, vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation accuracy, and fluency simultaneously. This may cause students to feel anxious ²²because 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.

²²Anxiety 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 ⁵⁰to the activation of the autonomic nervous system. According to Horwitz and Cope (1986), as cited in Ula Saidatul (2016), language anxiety ⁵⁰refers to a combination of learners' self-perceptions, feelings, and behaviours that are ⁹⁸related to the process of learning a language in the classroom. ⁵⁰This 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.

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. ²⁹ One of the major problems is anxiety, as students often feel nervous and afraid of making mistakes when speaking in front of others. ³ Some students also experience physical symptoms of nervousness when they are asked to perform in front of the class. ¹² 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.

⁷⁶ Based on the explanation above, the researcher interested in conducting the thesis titled "An Analysis of English Speaking Anxiety in ⁹ 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.

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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".

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.

3. For the Readers

²⁹ 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.

⁷ 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

¹³ 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

⁴⁰ 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.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**A. Review of Related Theories****1. Speaking****a. Definition of Speaking**

Speaking has been defined in various ways by several experts. Majeed (2022: 79) describes speaking as a productive language skill that involves the ability to produce meaningful sounds and utterances that can be understood by others, allowing effective communication to occur. Similarly, Josephine (2019) states that speaking is ⁹⁰ the use of language as a means of communication with others. In this process, speakers and listeners interact with each other by responding to messages and expressing their intended meanings. Therefore, English teachers need to provide communicative activities and engaging learning media to encourage students to develop their speaking abilities and gain more opportunities to practice speaking skills. Speaking is an interactive process in which speakers construct meaning through the processes of producing, receiving, and interpreting information.

Furthermore, Mantra and Maba (2018: 17) explain that speaking refers to ² the ability to produce articulated sounds or words to express ideas, opinions, and feelings. Kurniasih (2023: 60) also states that speaking is a way of expressing individuals' thoughts and

emotions through spoken language. Alrajafi (2022: 1) adds that speaking involves creating and exchanging messages through verbal and nonverbal symbols in various contexts. In addition, Folse (2022: 12) emphasizes that speaking is one of the oldest and most universal forms of human communication, allowing individuals to convey thoughts and emotions through oral interaction. ³⁸ Fulcher (2003: 23) defines speaking as the verbal use of language to communicate with others, while Nation (2024:114) explains that speaking involves expressing ideas, opinions, and feelings through spoken forms such as dialogue and speech.

¹³ Based on the definitions provided by these experts, it can be concluded that speaking is a productive language skill that serves as an important medium for communicating ideas, opinions, and feelings through oral language. ¹ Speaking is not only limited to producing understandable sounds or words but also involves an interactive process between speakers and listeners to create shared meaning. This process requires individuals to produce, receive, and interpret messages by using both verbal and nonverbal communication. Therefore, speaking can be considered a dynamic and meaningful activity that enables individuals to exchange information, express themselves, and establish social relationships.

²⁷ b. Types of Speaking

According to Arif (2022: 108) there are five types of speaking:

1. Imitative

²⁵
Imitative speaking refers to the ability of learners to reproduce or repeat words, phrases, or sentences based on what they hear. This type of speaking mainly focuses on accurate pronunciation and the ability to imitate spoken language forms.

2. Intensive

Intensive speaking focuses on learners' linguistic competence, particularly their ability to use specific language elements correctly. This type involves the mastery of grammatical structures, pronunciation, ¹³ intonation, stress, rhythm, and other phonological features.

3. Responsive

Responsive speaking refers to the ability of learners to respond orally in a spontaneous manner. This type of speaking commonly occurs in short interactions, such as answering questions, giving responses, ¹³ greeting others, and participating in simple conversations.

4. Interactive

Interactive speaking involves communication between speakers and listeners who actively exchange information and

respond to each other. This type can occur in both direct and indirect interactions, such as face-to-face conversations, discussions, and daily communication.

5. Extensive

Extensive speaking refers to longer forms of oral communication where speakers deliver information or ideas through monologues. Examples of extensive speaking activities include speeches, presentations, storytelling, and other forms of extended oral expression.

c. Purposes of Speaking

The primary purpose of speaking is to convey messages and establish communication with others. Speaking serves as an important medium for individuals to express their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and opinions in social interactions. Therefore, speaking plays a significant role in communication. According to Menggo (2019: 314), speaking has four main purposes, which are as follows:

1. To inform

The purpose of informing refers to the speaker's intention to deliver facts, ideas, information, feelings, or opinions to the listener. Through speaking, individuals can share knowledge and provide information about a particular topic or situation. In this case, ³⁵ the main focus of the speaker is to make the listener understand certain facts or messages.

2. To entertain

The purpose of entertaining means that the speaker aims to create enjoyment and interest for the listener through the information or materials delivered. The content of the speech is usually selected based on its ability to attract attention and provide pleasure. For example, storytelling activities conducted by teachers in classrooms or humorous stories shared among family members can make communication more engaging and enjoyable.

3. To persuade

The purpose of persuading refers to the speaker's effort to influence the listener's thoughts, attitudes, or actions toward a particular matter. Through speaking, the speaker attempts to convince others to accept certain ideas or take specific actions. In the learning process, for example, teachers may use persuasive communication by providing examples and explanations to encourage students to understand the material and actively participate in activities.

4. To discuss

The purpose of discussing refers to the activity of exchanging ideas, opinions, and information in order to achieve understanding, make decisions, or develop plans. Discussion allows speakers and listeners to interact actively and solve

problems together. In the classroom context, discussion activities can increase students' involvement because they are encouraged to share opinions and find solutions to given tasks.

d. Aspects of Speaking

In speaking, there are some aspects that must be fulfilled by the learners. These aspects can be used to evaluate whether a person's speaking performance is effective or not. According to Fikri et al. (2025:29), the main aspects of speaking include fluency, comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

1. Fluency

Fluency refers to the ability of learners to express their ideas smoothly and naturally without excessive pauses or difficulties in organizing their thoughts. A fluent speaker can deliver messages clearly and continuously, allowing listeners to understand the intended meaning. Fluency is considered one of the main goals in speaking instruction because it can be improved through various communicative activities that encourage learners to use English in real communication situations, even when their language proficiency is still developing.

2. Comprehension

Comprehension refers to the ability of learners to understand the messages conveyed by other speakers. In

speaking, comprehension plays an important role because effective communication requires both speakers and listeners to understand each other's meanings. Without adequate comprehension, misunderstandings may occur and the communication process may not run effectively.

3. Grammar

Grammar refers to the ability to arrange words and construct sentences correctly according to language rules. Having good grammatical knowledge helps learners express their ideas accurately and choose appropriate sentence structures when speaking. Therefore, mastering grammar is essential because it supports learners in producing meaningful and understandable spoken language.

4. ² Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the fundamental components of language that supports all language skills, including speaking. Having sufficient vocabulary enables learners to express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings effectively. The appropriate use of words based on the context also helps speakers convey their intended messages clearly. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is an important foundation for developing speaking ability.

5. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is an important element of speaking because it affects how well listeners understand the speaker's message. It refers to the way sounds, words, and sentences are produced in spoken language. Good pronunciation helps prevent misunderstandings, as incorrect pronunciation may change the meaning of words or make communication difficult. Therefore, learners need to develop accurate pronunciation to improve their speaking performance.

³ 2. Speaking Anxiety

a. Definition of Speaking Anxiety

Anxiety is a common emotional response experienced by individuals when they encounter situations that are considered threatening, challenging, or beyond their ability to handle. It may appear in various ⁴ situations, such as job interviews, classroom presentations, speaking in front of an audience, or performing activities that individuals perceive as difficult. According to Lakhera (2018: 241), anxiety refers to ³⁸ feelings of discomfort, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, and worry experienced by a person. ³ In the context of language learning, speaking anxiety refers to the fear, nervousness, ⁴¹ or tension experienced by individuals when they are required to communicate using a foreign language. ¹⁵ Horwitz et al. (1986) explain that foreign language speaking anxiety is a specific

form of anxiety related to language use, which is different from general anxiety. This type of anxiety can negatively influence learners' fluency, confidence, thoughts, emotions, and physical responses during communication.

Furthermore, Zhang (2022: 892) states that anxiety is associated with feelings of worry, uneasiness, discomfort, and restlessness. Hanake (2024: 244) defines speaking anxiety as a condition characterized by feelings of tension, nervousness, worry, uneasiness, and physiological reactions that arise when individuals face uncomfortable or undesirable situations. These negative emotional responses may occur when individuals perceive certain circumstances as threatening, causing them to feel insecure, pressured, or lacking confidence. Therefore, anxiety can be understood as a negative emotional reaction that emerges when a person encounters situations perceived as frightening or stressful. Additionally, anxiety may develop as a result of previous negative experiences that create psychological pressure or emotional distress.

Speaking anxiety is considered a common problem experienced by students in educational settings. Ramadhana et al. (2026: 594) explain that speaking anxiety can occur among students regardless of gender and is often accompanied by physical symptoms, such as increased heart rate, changes in breathing patterns, excessive reactions, and muscle tension. Peck and Hwa

(2017) also state ² that speaking is one of the language skills that can trigger high levels of anxiety among learners and is often considered one of the most anxiety provoking activities in language classrooms. This indicates that speaking anxiety is an important factor influencing students' learning processes because it involves negative emotional responses toward certain communication situations.

The anxiety experienced by individuals ¹⁹ can have negative effects on various aspects of life, including foreign language learning. ⁸⁶ Language anxiety has been recognized as one of the major challenges faced by learners when acquiring a second language. MacIntyre in Zheng and Cheng (2018) ¹⁹ describes language anxiety as a feeling of concern and negative emotional reaction that occurs when individuals learn or use a foreign language. Many learners experience anxiety when they are required to communicate in the language they are learning. Students with high levels of anxiety may feel intimidated, less confident, and doubtful about their language abilities. According to Sadiq (2017), anxiety is an emotional factor that can influence the academic performance of EFL learners. Similarly, Deyan (2018) explains that ⁶¹ speaking anxiety involves an individual's fear and nervousness, which may lead to avoidance of communication when using a foreign language. Among various forms of language anxiety, speaking anxiety has received

considerable attention from researchers because speaking is one of the skills most affected by learners' anxiety levels.

³ b. Types of Anxiety

Recent research in the field of linguistics EFL has showed some types of anxiety. Alelina and Kosonogov (2026:2) explain that ⁵⁴ anxiety can be categorized into three main types, namely trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety.

1. Trait anxiety

¹⁹ Trait anxiety refers to an individual's general tendency to experience anxiety across various situations. ²⁴ This type of anxiety is considered a stable characteristic of a person's personality, causing individuals to be more likely to feel nervous, worried, or panic even when facing ordinary situations. ²⁴ People with high levels of trait anxiety tend to experience anxiety more frequently and with greater intensity compared to others. ³ In other words, trait anxiety represents a person's consistent predisposition to respond anxiously in different circumstances.

2. State anxiety

State anxiety refers to a temporary emotional condition ³ that occurs when an individual encounters a particular situation perceived as threatening, stressful, or uncomfortable. This type of anxiety is usually influenced by the circumstances being

experienced at a specific moment. When the situation causing stress or threat is resolved, the feeling of anxiety may gradually decrease or disappear. Therefore, state anxiety is characterized as an immediate emotional response accompanied by temporary cognitive and physiological reactions.

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3. Situation Specific Anxiety

Situation-specific anxiety refers to anxiety that appears consistently in particular situations or activities but does not necessarily occur in other contexts. Although it shares similarities with trait anxiety because it can remain stable over time, it is limited to specific circumstances. Examples of situations that may trigger this type of anxiety include examinations, public speaking, classroom participation, or other specific performance situations. The situations that cause anxiety may vary depending on individual experiences and perceptions.

c. Elements of Anxiety

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According to Horwitz in Rachman (2025: 36-37), anxiety appears in the form of this: communicate on apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

1. Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension refers to anxiety related to the process of communicating with others. This type of anxiety

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occurs when students feel unable to understand the information they receive or have difficulty expressing their thoughts clearly during communication. As a result, students may experience feelings of embarrassment, nervousness, and fear when interacting with others, especially in situations that require them to use a foreign language.

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2. Test Anxiety

Test anxiety is associated with feelings of fear and worry related to academic evaluation or performance assessment. Students who experience this type of anxiety are usually concerned about the possibility of failure during tests or examinations. Previous negative experiences with academic assessments may contribute to students' insecurity and increase their fear of performing poorly. This condition can affect students' confidence when facing evaluations.

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3. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative social evaluation is related to students' fear of negative opinions and views from those around them. When they talk, they are afraid that they will get an evaluation, criticism, or a bad impression from others. It causes them to be anxious and try to avoid these kinds of things. This type of anxiety is broader than the test anxiety situation, it can attack a

variety of other social evaluation conditions, such as job interviews, speaking in front of the class.

d. The Effect Anxiety in Speaking

Anxiety can have both negative and positive effects on students. However, excessive anxiety generally produces negative impacts on students' cognitive processes, physical conditions, and behaviors. Horwitz et al. (1986) as cited in Ramadanis and Authar (2026: 83) categorize the effects of anxiety into two areas, namely second language studies and clinical experience. In the context of second language studies, anxiety influences students' communication strategies during language learning activities.¹¹ Students who experience high levels of anxiety tend to avoid participating in classroom interactions, hesitate to provide responses during learning activities, skip classes, and delay completing assignments. Meanwhile, from the perspective of clinical experience, anxious students may experience physical symptoms such as difficulty concentrating, excessive sweating, and increased heart rate.

Furthermore, Gardner (1994) as cited in Susini et al. (2025: 64)¹² explains that anxiety can negatively influence three stages of cognitive processing, namely input, processing, and output. Students who experience anxiety may encounter difficulties in receiving and processing important information, which can reduce their ability to

understand and respond effectively during language learning. As a result, anxiety may interfere with students' language acquisition and learning outcomes.

⁸ Horwitz et al. (1986) as cited in Supriyani and Kartikasari (2022: 2) also explain that the factors contributing to language anxiety can be divided into three main aspects: teacher related factors, learning material factors, and student related factors. Teacher related factors include classroom speaking activities and teaching methods that may influence students' anxiety levels. Certain classroom activities can increase students' ⁴⁸ fear of negative evaluation from teachers or peers, while inappropriate teaching approaches may create pressure and difficulties for students in understanding the learning materials.

In addition, the learning materials provided during the learning process can also influence students' anxiety. Materials that are considered too difficult or excessive in quantity may increase students' anxiety, especially during speaking activities. Student-related factors are associated with learners' beliefs and perceptions about language learning. Some students may believe that learning a foreign language is difficult, making them feel incapable of overcoming challenges. Moreover, the expectation of producing perfect speaking performance, low self-confidence, negative

learning experiences, and inadequate preparation can also contribute to speaking anxiety.

Therefore, speaking anxiety ¹⁰¹ has a significant influence on students' speaking performance and academic achievement.

Students with higher levels of anxiety are more likely to experience difficulties in developing their speaking abilities, which may eventually affect their achievement. In other words, an increase in students' anxiety levels may lead to a decrease in their speaking performance.

B. Review of Related Findings

Several studies have been conducted by other researchers related to this title. The first findings is ⁵ *An Analysis of the Factor of Speaking Anxiety of the Tenth Grade Students at SMAN 1 Tembilahan* by Nurfadilla et al. (2024). ⁵ The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of students' speaking anxiety factors when using English at SMAN 1 Tembilahan. This research employed a descriptive quantitative design, with a questionnaire consisting of 10 statements as ¹⁷ the research instrument. The population of this study consisted of 313 students, while the sample was selected using purposive sampling involving students from ⁵ class X.9 at SMAN 1 Tembilahan. The findings showed that several factors contributed to students' English speaking anxiety. The factor of learners' beliefs about language learning obtained the highest score of 212.5, which was categorized as a ⁵ very high level. The second factor was instructor beliefs about language teaching, with a score of 137, categorized as a high level. Meanwhile, other factors, including ⁵ personal and interpersonal anxieties, classroom procedures, and language testing, obtained scores of 107.2, 104.5, and 110, respectively, which were categorized as moderate levels. Overall, the results indicated ⁵ that the level of speaking anxiety among tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Tembilahan reached a score of 134.3, which was categorized as a high level. The study concluded that students still experienced difficulties in managing their speaking ¹⁰⁰ anxiety during English learning activities.

The second findings is ¹¹ *Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety: A Study of English Language Learning* by Selvia Ramadhani & Fauzul Etfita (2022). ³⁵ This study aimed to analyze students' English speaking anxiety. The research employed a quantitative approach, involving 40 students from class B of the third semester in ⁷⁰ the English Language Education Study Program. The participants were selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The research instrument consisted of 18 statements measured using a Likert scale. ² The results of the questionnaire revealed that students experienced anxiety when speaking English, particularly when they were required to speak ⁵⁹ during the teaching and learning process. After analyzing the collected data, ⁹² the researchers identified several factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety. These factors included fear of self-prediction, irrational beliefs, sensitivity to threats, sensitivity to anxiety, misinterpretation of physical symptoms, and low self-efficacy. Furthermore, the study found that students' speaking anxiety was influenced by several conditions, such as lack of confidence in using English, fear of making mistakes, anxiety when being asked to speak by teachers, and feelings of embarrassment when performing in front of the class.

The Third findings is ¹⁶ *The Perception of Freshman English Education Students on Their Speaking Anxiety During the Learning Class* by Mochammad Zaidan Dahsyat, Diah Retno Widowati & Fitri Awaliyatush Sholihah (2025). ¹⁶ This study examined the speaking anxiety experienced by

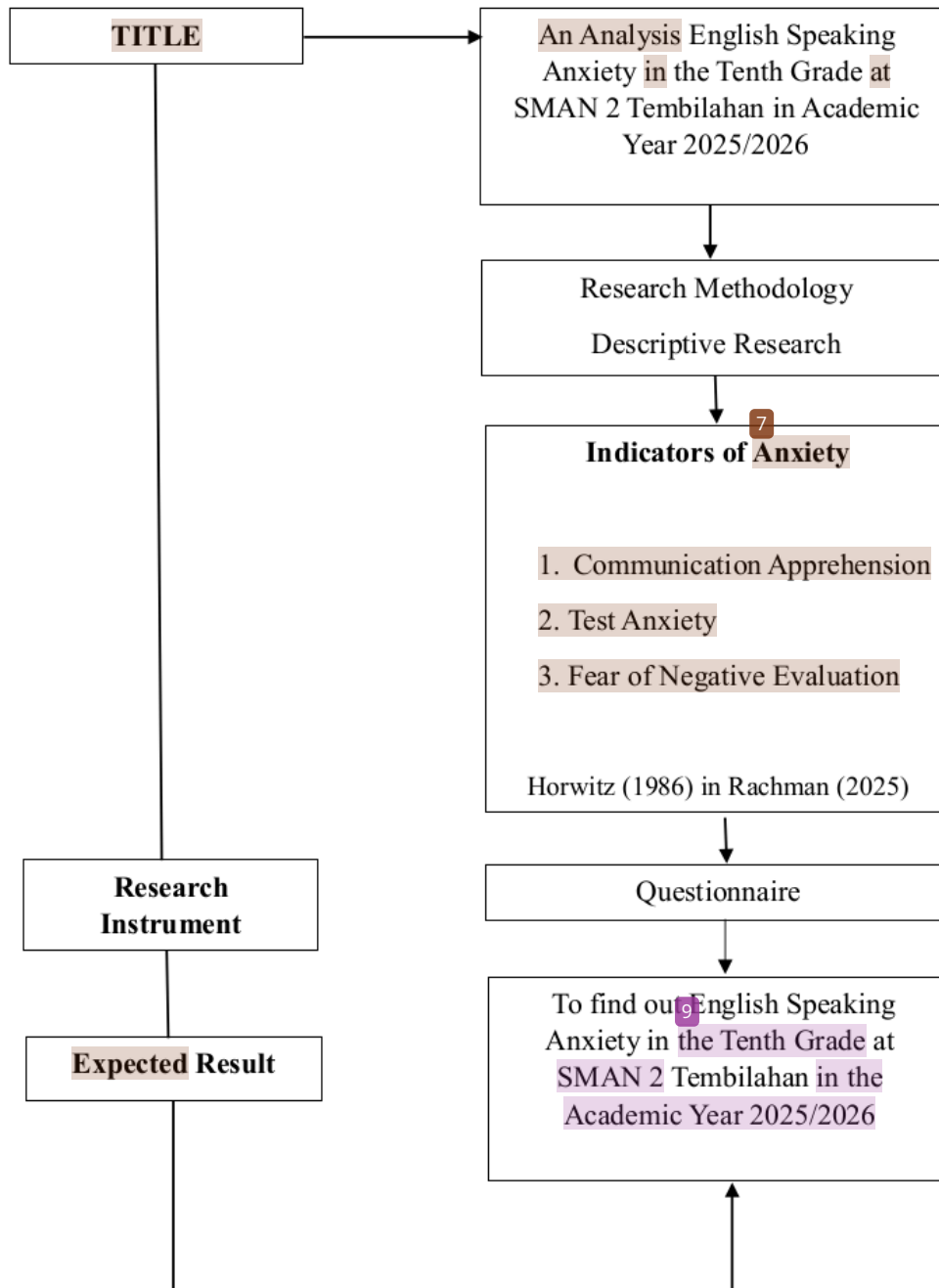
second-semester students in the English Education Department at the University of Islam Malang. The research utilized the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) to identify the main factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety, which include communication apprehension, physiological symptoms, and fear of negative evaluation. The study applied a quantitative approach, where data were collected through Google Forms and analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. The findings showed that the majority of students experienced a moderate level of speaking anxiety, with 76% of students categorized as having moderate anxiety, 20% experiencing high anxiety, and 4% experiencing low anxiety when speaking English in the classroom. The study highlights the importance of creating supportive learning environments and implementing appropriate teaching strategies to help reduce students' anxiety and improve their communicative competence.

Based on the review of studies above have investigated English speaking anxiety, some gaps can still be identified. Previous research conducted by Nurfadilla et al. (2024) mainly focused on identifying the factors influencing students' speaking anxiety. Similarly, the study by Ramadhani and Etfita (2022) emphasized the psychological causes of speaking anxiety, while Dahsyat et al. (2025) focused on students' perceptions on speaking anxiety. However, most of these studies tend to examine speaking anxiety separately, either in terms of factors, causes, or perceptions, without providing a more comprehensive description of how

anxiety is experienced by students as a whole. In addition, limited studies focus on the specific context of senior high school students in different educational settings, which may have unique characteristics. Therefore, ³ this study attempts to provide a more comprehensive analysis of English speaking anxiety by describing students' anxiety as experienced in a specific context, namely the tenth grade students at SMAN 2 Tembilahan. ³⁹ This research is expected to give a clearer picture of students' speaking anxiety in a real educational setting. For that the researcher will raise the title *An Analysis of English Speaking Anxiety in ⁹ the Tenth Grade at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the Academic Year 2025/2026*

⁷ C. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this research can be seen below:



In the conceptual framework explains the main parts and the flow of the study entitled “An Analysis of English Speaking Anxiety in the Tenth Grade at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the Academic Year 2025/2026.” This study uses descriptive research to describe students English speaking anxiety. The speaking anxiety is measured using the indicators proposed by Horwitz (1986) in Rachman (2025), which include Communication Apprehension, Test Anxiety and Fear or Negative Evaluation. A questionnaire is used as the research instrument to collect the data based on these indicators. Through this framework, the research aims to obtain a clear description of the tenth grade students of English speaking anxiety at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the academic year 2025/2026.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This research uses a descriptive research design. Descriptive research is a method used to describe and explain a phenomenon, condition, or situation systematically and accurately. This type of research focuses on observing and presenting phenomena as they naturally occur without any manipulation or intervention from the researcher. According to Deckert and Wilson (2023), the purpose of descriptive research is to examine, observe, and describe specific situations, samples, or variables based on their actual conditions. Therefore, descriptive research aims to provide a detailed description of the characteristics and conditions of the research subject.

In addition, this research applies a quantitative approach. A quantitative approach emphasizes the collection and analysis of numerical data through statistical procedures. Creswell (2018) explains that quantitative research is used to examine objective theories by analyzing relationships among measurable variables using research instruments. This approach involves statistical analysis to interpret data that can be expressed in numerical forms. Therefore, a quantitative approach is considered appropriate for this research because it aims to analyze the level of students' English speaking anxiety based on numerical data obtained from the research instrument. Therefore, to analyze students' English speaking anxiety, this research uses a quantitative approach.

B. Location and Time

The research was conducted in April until Mei 2026. This research was conducted at Tenth grade of SMAN 2 Tembilahan in second semester of 2025/2026 academic year, which is located at Tanjung Harapan Ujung street, Tembilahan, Riau, Indonesia.

C. Population and Sample

According to Sugiyono (2025), population is defined as a group of objects or subjects that have particular characteristics and qualities established by the researcher for investigation. The population becomes the main source of data in a study, from which the researcher obtains information and makes conclusions based on the research findings. The population of this research consists of all tenth grade students, totaling 76 students from 3 classes namely X Merdeka 1, X Merdeka 2 and X Merdeka 3.

Table III.1 Population of the Research

NO	Class	Population
1.	X Merdeka 1	31
2.	X Merdeka 2	20
3.	X Merdeka 3	25
Total		76

A sample is a part of the population that represents the whole population. Sugiyono (2025), states that a sample is a subset of the population that reflects its number and characteristics. The sample of this

research includes all students of class X Merdeka 1, consisting of 31 students. This research employs non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2025: 131), Nonprobability ⁴⁷ sampling is a sampling technique in which not all members of the ⁷⁸ population have an equal chance of being selected. It is usually ⁷⁸ based on the researcher's subjective judgment, convenience, or specific criteria. Furthermore, purposive sampling ¹¹ is defined as a sampling technique conducted based on specific criteria required by the research (Sugiyono, 2025: 133). Therefore, the sampling process is not carried out randomly. Class X Merdeka 1 is selected because students of class X Merdeka 1 show symptoms of speaking anxiety such as feeling nervous, being ¹¹ afraid of making mistakes, and lacking self-confidence compared to students in other ¹ classes.

Table III.2 Sample of the Research

No	Class	Sample
1.	X Merdeka 1	31

D. Research Instrument

The questionnaire was used as the research instrument in this study to identify ⁸ of English speaking anxiety among tenth-grade students. According to Sugiyono (2025: 199), a questionnaire ⁷² is a data collection method in which researchers provide respondents with a series of written questions or statements that need to be answered. The researcher selected a

questionnaire because it is considered an appropriate instrument for quantitative research and allows data collection to be conducted efficiently. ³⁶ The questionnaire used in this study consisted of closed ended questions. This type of question enables respondents to provide answers more easily and allows researchers ²⁸ to analyze the collected data systematically. The ⁶ questionnaire was designed using a Likert scale. Sugiyono (2025:146) explains that a Likert scale is used to measure individuals' or groups' attitudes, opinions, and perceptions toward certain social phenomena. The responses provided in each questionnaire ¹⁷ item using a Likert scale range from strongly positive to strongly negative responses.

Table III.3 Blueprint of Questionnaire

NO	Indicators	Number of Item	Items Numbers
1.	Communication Apprehension	7	1,2,3,4,5,6,7
2.	Test Anxiety	6	8,9,10,11,12,13
3.	Fear of Negative Evaluation	7	14,15,16,17,18,19,20

The likert scale contains 5 level which are: ⁶² 1) Strongly Agree 2) Agree 3) Neutral 4) Disagree 5) Strongly Disagree.

E. Data Collection Technique

For data collection, the researcher used a questionnaire as the research instrument. The questionnaire consisted of 20 statements. ² The students were given 30 minutes to respond to the statements ² based on their

own understanding. In gathering the data, the researcher used the following procedures:

1. The researcher gave questionnaire to the sample of the research.
2. The researcher collected the questionnaire.
3. The researcher analyzed the data obtained from the questionnaire.
4. The responses were classified based on each item.
5. The researcher made ⁸¹ conclusion based on the results of the data analysis.

F. Data Analysis Technique

1. Validity

Validity is one of the essential requirements that must be fulfilled by a research instrument. A valid instrument is able to ⁶ measure what it is intended to measure accurately and appropriately. In this study, the type of validity used is empirical validity, which refers to validity obtained through direct testing of the instrument using data collected from respondents.

According to Sudaryono (2019), empirical validity is the validity obtained by trying out the instrument on respondents and then analyzing the results to determine the validity level of each item. It can be concluded that empirical validity is the validity obtained through direct testing of an instrument on respondents and analyzed using statistical

techniques to determine the validity of each item. The obtained correlation coefficient (r count) is then compared with the r table value at a significance level of 0.05. The decision criteria are as follows:

1. If r count $>$ r table, the item is considered valid.
2. If r count $<$ r table, the item is considered not valid.

The validity test can also be conducted using statistical software such as SPSS to simplify the calculation process. Items that are declared valid will be used in the research, while invalid items will be revised or discarded.

2. Reliability Test

Arbeni (2025) states reliability test is conducted to determine the consistency and stability of the research instrument. An instrument is considered reliable if it produces consistent results when it is administered to the same group under similar conditions. In other words, reliability refers to the degree to which an instrument yields the same results over repeated trials. A reliable instrument ensures that the data collected are dependable and can be trusted for further analysis.

In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire is measured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient through IBM SPSS Statistics. Cronbach's Alpha is commonly used to assess the internal consistency of an instrument, especially when the items are in the form of a Likert scale. It measures how closely related a set of items are as a group, indicating

whether the items consistently reflect the same construct, in this case, English Speaking Anxiety. However, in this research, the calculation is performed using SPSS software to ensure accuracy and efficiency. The result of the reliability test can be seen in the value of Cronbach's Alpha with a coefficient closer to 1 indicating greater consistency among the items. In general, a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.70 or above indicates adequate reliability, while values below 0.60 suggest that the instrument should be reviewed or deleted. Thus, through the reliability test, the researcher ensures that the questionnaire used in this study is consistent and appropriate for measuring students' English speaking anxiety.

There are some procedures in doing the analyzed of questionnaire that the researcher applied in research. Firstly, collect the data which to be analyzed. Secondly, classified the answer based on the questions. From the data of questionnaire, the researcher used likert scale as a measured of data. According to Sugiyono (2025: 146) state that likert scale use to measure attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of a person or group of people about social phenomena. In research, this is social phenomenon has been specifically by the researcher, here in after referred to as research variables. With likert scale, then the variable to be measured is translated into indicator variable. Then the indicator is used as a starting point to arrange the items of the instrument can be a statement or question. To identified students' English speaking anxiety the researcher used questionnaire. For each item consist of 5 alternative answer by using likert scale. After the students'

English speaking anxiety is known, we use the formulation to identified how the mean score of students' English speaking anxiety. The formula used to mean score the data in this research as follow:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$

Where: $\bar{x}$ = mean score of students' speaking anxiety

$\sum x$ = ¹⁷ the total score of all respondents

N = the number of respondents

Table III.3 Classification of speaking anxiety questionnaire score

No	Mean Score Range	Category Level
1	1.00 – 1.79	Very Low Anxiety
2	1.80 – 2.59	Low Anxiety
3	2.60 – 3.24	Moderate Anxiety
4	3.25 – 4.29	High Anxiety
5	4.30 – 5.00	Very High Anxiety

Faye Alnahidh (2020)

Based on classification, if the mean score falls with the range of 1.00–1.79, the students is classified as very low anxiety. A mean score ranging from 1.80–2.59 indicates low anxiety. Conversely, a mean score within the range of 2.60–3.24 is categorized as Moderate anxiety, while a mean score between 3.25–4.29 is classified as High anxiety. Furthermore, a score ranging from 4.30–5.00 indicates very high anxiety.

Furthermore, the data are processed using IBM SPSS Statistics to ensure accuracy in calculating the mean score and reliability of the instrument. ⁶ The results of the analysis are then interpreted and presented in the form of tables and descriptive explanations.

Finally, the researcher draws conclusions ⁸⁹ based on the results of the data analysis to answer the research questions regarding students' English speaking anxiety.

THE PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

A. The Presentation of Data

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1. Result of Validity Test

The researcher conducted a validity test to determine whether the questionnaire items were appropriate and able to measure students' English speaking anxiety. In this research, the researcher used empirical validity to examine the validity of the instrument. Empirical validity refers to the validity obtained through direct testing of the instrument on respondents and analyzing the results using statistical procedures.

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The validity test was conducted by distributing the questionnaire to respondents and analyzing each item using the Pearson Product Moment correlation through IBM SPSS Statistics. The validity of each item was determined by comparing r-count with r-table at a significance level of 5%. An item was considered valid if the r-count value was higher than the r-table value. Meanwhile, an item was considered invalid if the r-count value was lower than the r-table value.

6

1

The result of the empirical validity test of the English speaking anxiety questionnaire is presented in the following table:

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1 **Table IV.1**
Result of Validity Test

No	30 Statment	R-count	R-table	Result
1.	I feel nervous when I have to speak English in front of the class.	0,654	69 0,361	Valid
2.	I find it difficult to express my ideas clearly when speaking English. 58	0,577	0,361	Valid
3.	I feel afraid when the teacher asks me to speak English suddenly.	0,785	69 0,361	Valid
4.	I feel shy when speaking English with my classmates. 96	0,647	0,361	Valid
5.	I feel confused when I try to speak English without preparation.	0,662	0,361	Valid
6.	I feel confused when trying to respond in English during a conversation. 55	0,708	0,361	Valid
7.	It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in the English class.	0,653	0,361	Valid

8.	I feel nervous during English speaking tests.	0,790	0,361	Valid
9.	I feel anxious when I have to do a speaking presentation.	0,723	0,361	Valid
10.	I feel panicked when I forget what to say during a speaking test.	0,557	0,361	Valid
11.	I feel worried about getting a low score in speaking tasks.	0,371	0,361	Valid
12.	I feel uncomfortable when being assessed in speaking activities.	0,645	0,361	Valid
13.	I feel more anxious in speaking tests than in other English activities.	0,631	0,361	Valid
14.	I feel anxious because of my past bad experiences in English speaking tests.	0,357	0,361	Invalid
15.	I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I speak English.	0,602	0,361	Valid
16.	I worry that the teacher will			

	criticize my mistakes when I speak English.	0,695	0,361	Valid
17.	I feel anxious when others evaluate my English speaking.	0,704	0,361	Valid
18.	I am afraid of being compared with others when speaking English	0,718	0,361	Valid
19.	I feel that others speak English better than me.	0,518	0,361	Valid
20.	I worry about making a bad impression when I speak English.	0,692	0,361	Valid
21.	I am afraid that others will think my English is poor when I speak.	0,756	0,361	Valid

Based on Table IV.1, 20 out of 21 questionnaire items obtained an ³⁹ r-count value higher than the r-table value (0.361), indicating that these ²³ items were valid. However, item number 14 obtained an r-count value lower than the r-table value, so it was considered invalid and was removed from the instrument. Therefore, the remaining 19 valid items were used to measure students' English speaking anxiety.

2. Result of Reliability Test

The reliability test was conducted to determine the consistency of the questionnaire items in measuring students' English speaking anxiety. The reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's Alpha through IBM SPSS Statistics. The criteria for reliability interpretation are:

Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.70 = Reliable

Cronbach's Alpha < 0.70 = Not Reliable

Table IV.2
Result of Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Item	Interpretation
0.93	20	Reliable

Based on Table IV.2, the Cronbach's Alpha value obtained was 0.93 with 20 questionnaire items. Since the value was higher than 0.70, the questionnaire was considered reliable. Therefore, the instrument had good internal consistency and was appropriate to be used for measuring students' English speaking anxiety.

3. Result of Reliability Test

In this section, the researcher presented the results of the research question that was "How is English speaking anxiety in the tenth grade at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the academic year 2025/2026?". The

researcher explains the results of each statement in detail to make them easier to understand. The results are presented in the following tables:

Table IV.3
The Students' Responses Mean Score on Communication Apprehension

No	Statement	Mean score	Category
1.	I feel nervous when I have to speak English in front of the class.	3.61	High Anxiety
2.	I find it difficult to express my ideas clearly when speaking English.	3.74	High Anxiety
3.	I feel afraid when the teacher asks me to speak English suddenly.	3.65	High Anxiety
4.	I feel shy when speaking English with my classmates.	3.65	High Anxiety
5.	I feel confused when I try to speak English without preparation.	3.97	High Anxiety
6	I feel confused when trying to respond in English during a conversation.	3.81	High Anxiety
7.	It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in the English class.	3.61	High Anxiety
Total		3,68	High Anxiety

Table IV.1 shows the mean score of students which include seven sub-indicators. This indicates that most students experienced a high level of anxiety when communicating in English. The

highest mean score was found in Statement 5 "I feel confused when I try to speak English without preparation" with a mean score of 3.97. This finding suggests that ⁴⁶ students tend to feel very anxious when they are required to speak spontaneously without having enough time to prepare their ideas. It indicates ⁴⁵ that preparation plays an important role in increasing students' confidence during English speaking activities. On the other hand, Statements 1 and 7 obtained the lowest mean scores, both at 3.61. Although these statements received the lowest scores within this indicator, they are still categorized as High Anxiety. This means that many students still feel nervous when speaking English ⁴³ in front of the class and when they do not understand the teacher's explanation in English. all of the statements under the Communication Apprehension indicator were categorized as High Anxiety, indicating that students generally experience communication difficulties and nervousness when using English in classroom interactions. This finding is also supported by the observation at SMAN 2 Tembilahan, where several students had difficulty expressing their ideas orally, possessed limited vocabulary, and became more anxious when they were required to speak without preparation. These classroom conditions may explain why communication apprehension obtained the highest mean score, because spontaneous speaking requires students to retrieve vocabulary,

organize ideas, apply grammar, and pronounce words at the same time. This result is also in line with Ramadhani and Etfita (2022), who found that students' speaking anxiety was associated with low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and anxiety when they were asked to speak by the teacher.

Table IV.4
The Students' Responses Mean Score on Test Anxiety

No	Statement	Mean score	Category
1.	I feel nervous during English speaking tests.	3.71	High Anxiety
2.	I feel anxious when I have to do a speaking presentation.	3.45	High Anxiety
3.	I feel panicked when I forget what to say during a speaking test.	3.71	High Anxiety
4.	I feel worried about getting a low score in speaking tasks.	4.16	High Anxiety
5.	I feel uncomfortable when being assessed in speaking activities.	3.00	Moderate Anxiety
6	I feel more anxious in speaking tests than in other English activities.	3.58	High Anxiety
Total		3,60	High Anxiety

Table IV.2 shows the mean score of students Test Anxiety indicator obtained an overall mean score of 3.60, which is categorized as High Anxiety. This result indicates that most students experienced a high level of anxiety when they participated in English speaking tests. Among the six statements, Statement 4

"I feel worried about getting a low score in speaking tasks." obtained the highest mean score of 4.16, which was also classified as High Anxiety. This indicates that students were highly concerned about receiving low scores when completing speaking tasks. Their concern about academic performance may have increased their anxiety during speaking assessments. On the other hand, Statement 5 "I feel uncomfortable when being assessed in speaking activities." obtained the lowest mean score of 3.00, which falls into the Moderate Anxiety category. Although students still felt uncomfortable during speaking assessments, this aspect was not as dominant as their concern about test results and speaking performance. In addition, the remaining statements obtained mean scores ranging from 3.45 to 3.71, and all were categorized as High Anxiety. These findings indicate that students tended to feel nervous during speaking tests, oral presentations, and situations where they forgot what they wanted to say while speaking. From the findings suggest that test related activities were one of the main factors contributing to students' English speaking anxiety, as reflected by the overall mean score of 3.60, which falls into the High Anxiety category. In the classroom context of SMAN 2 Tembilahan, students were also observed to become more anxious when their speaking performance was assessed or when they were asked to speak suddenly. This situation may cause students to focus

more on possible mistakes and low scores than on communicating their ideas. The finding supports Nurfadilla et al. (2024), who reported ¹⁴ a high level of speaking anxiety among tenth grade students and identified learners' beliefs about language learning as an influential factor. Students who believe that English must be spoken accurately may interpret a low score as evidence of failure, thereby increasing their test anxiety.

Table IV.3
The Students' Responses Mean Score on Fear of Negative Evaluation

No	Statement	Mean score	Category
1.	I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I speak English.	3.52	High Anxiety
2.	I worry that the teacher will criticize my mistakes when I speak English.	2.94	Moderate Anxiety
3.	I feel anxious when others evaluate my English speaking.	3.19	Moderate Anxiety
4.	I am afraid of being compared with others when speaking English.	3.10	¹⁰ Moderate Anxiety
5.	I feel that others speak English better than me.	3.87	High Anxiety
6	I worry about making a bad impression when I speak English.	3.39	¹⁰ High Anxiety
7.	I am afraid that others will think my English is poor when I speak.	3.52	High Anxiety
Total		3,36	High Anxiety

¹ Table IV.3 shows the mean score of students for the Fear of Negative Evaluation indicator was ⁶⁰ 3.36, which falls into the High Anxiety category. This finding indicates that students generally experience a high level of anxiety related to receiving negative judgments from others when speaking English. They tend to worry about how their classmates and teachers perceive their speaking ability, making them less confident during speaking activities. Among the seven statements, statement 5 "I feel that others speak English better than me" recorded ¹ the highest mean score of 3.87, indicating that many students believe their classmates have better English-speaking abilities. This perception may lead students to compare themselves with others, resulting in lower self-confidence and increased anxiety during speaking activities. In addition, statement 1 ⁵¹ "I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I speak English" and statement 7 ⁵³ "I am afraid that others will think my English is poor when I speak" each had a mean score of 3.52, suggesting that students are highly concerned about being ridiculed or negatively judged by others. Furthermore, statement 6 "I worry about making a bad impression when I speak English" received ¹ a mean score of 3.39, indicating that students also worry about creating a negative impression when communicating in English. In contrast, three statements were classified as Moderate Anxiety. The statement 2 "I worry that the teacher will criticize my mistakes

when I speak English" had a mean score of 2.94, while statement 3 "I feel anxious when others evaluate my English speaking" and statement 4 "I am afraid of being compared with others when speaking English" obtained mean scores of 3.19 and 3.10, respectively. Although these statements indicate a moderate level of anxiety, they still demonstrate that evaluation and comparison from others contribute to students' speaking anxiety. As the result, these findings suggest that fear of negative evaluation contributes to students' English speaking anxiety. Students are more likely to feel anxious because they fear being laughed at, judged negatively, perceived as less competent than their classmates, and making a poor impression. These concerns can reduce their confidence and make them less willing to speak English in the classroom. This finding also reflects the actual condition at SMAN 2 Tembilahan, where some students were afraid of being judged, criticized, or laughed at by others. Such concerns may lead students to compare their speaking ability with that of their classmates and become reluctant to participate in speaking activities. This finding is consistent with Dahsyat et al. (2025), who also identified fear of negative evaluation as an important dimension of speaking anxiety. However, their participants generally experienced a moderate level of speaking anxiety, whereas the students in the present research experienced a high level. This difference may be related to

differences in educational level, English proficiency, classroom experience, and opportunities to practise speaking English.

Table IV.4
Table of indicators of speaking anxiety at the tenth grade
SMAN 2 Tembilahan

No	Indicators	Mean score	Category
1.	Communication Apprehension	3.68	High Anxiety
2.	Test Anxiety	3.60	High Anxiety
3.	Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.36	High Anxiety
Total		3,55	High Anxiety

B. Research Findings

The present research aimed to identify the level and characteristics of English speaking anxiety experienced by the tenth-grade students at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the academic year 2025/2026. Based on the analysis of 20 questionnaire statements, the overall mean score of the students' English speaking anxiety was 3.55. According to the classification used in this research, this score was categorized as High Anxiety. This result indicates that speaking anxiety was not experienced only in particular situations, but appeared in various classroom conditions, including communicating spontaneously, participating in speaking assessments, and speaking in front of teachers and classmates. This finding is consistent with Horwitz et al. (1986) In Rachman (2025), who describe speaking anxiety as a distinct form of language anxiety that may negatively

affect learners' fluency and self-confidence. students' anxiety appeared through the ⁴² three indicators namely communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. All three indicators were classified as High Anxiety. Therefore, the result suggests that the students perceived English speaking activities as challenging because they were required to communicate, organize their ideas, perform in front of others, and receive evaluation at the same time.

Among the three indicators, communication apprehension obtained the highest mean score of 3.68. This result shows that communication apprehension was the most prominent general dimension of the students' speaking anxiety. The students had trouble when they had to express their ideas, respond to conversations, understand spoken English, or speak without sufficient preparation. The highest statement within this indicator was "I feel confused ⁵⁸ when I try to speak English without preparation," with a mean score of 3.97. It was followed by the statement "I feel confused when trying to respond in English during a conversation," ⁶⁴ with a mean score of 3.81. These results indicate that students' anxiety increased when they were expected to produce English spontaneously. Speaking without preparation requires students to organize ideas, recall vocabulary, apply grammar, and pronounce words simultaneously. When students have not developed sufficient confidence and automaticity in using English, these demands may create cognitive pressure and cause them to become confused or unable to express their ideas clearly. This

finding can be connected to Gardner's (1994) in Susini (2025) explanation that anxiety may ¹²negatively influence the three stages of cognitive processing, namely input, processing, and output. When students feel anxious, they may have difficulty understanding the information they receive, processing their ideas, and producing an appropriate spoken response. Therefore, the students' confusion does not necessarily mean that they have no knowledge of English, but may indicate that they have difficulty accessing and using their knowledge under pressure.

The second indicator, test anxiety, obtained a mean score of 3.60, which was also categorized as High Anxiety. Although communication apprehension was the highest general indicator, the most dominant individual source of anxiety was found in the test anxiety indicator. The statement "I feel worried about getting a low score in speaking tasks" obtained the highest mean score among all questionnaire items, namely 4.16. Thus, concern about receiving a low speaking score was the most dominant specific trigger of students' English speaking anxiety. According ³¹to Horwitz et al. (1986) in Rachman (2025), ¹²test anxiety is related to students' fear of failure in academic tests or performance situations. In speaking assessments, students are expected to demonstrate their ability directly and have limited opportunities to revise their answers. Their pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension can be observed immediately by the teacher. Consequently, students may perceive speaking tests as more threatening than other classroom activities because

their mistakes are directly visible and may influence their academic scores. The high mean score for concern about receiving a low score may also be related to students' beliefs about successful language performance. As explained in Chapter II, some students believe that they must speak accurately and perform perfectly when using a foreign language. When they cannot meet these expectations, they may consider their performance unsuccessful. A low score may therefore be interpreted not only as an academic result but also as evidence that they have poor English ability. Such perceptions can increase self-doubt and make students focus more on possible failure than on communicating their ideas. An important pattern was also found when the highest test anxiety statement was compared with the statement "I feel uncomfortable when being assessed in speaking activities," which received a moderate mean score of 3.00. This difference suggests that students were not mainly anxious about the assessment process itself. Instead, they were more concerned about the possible result or consequence of the assessment, particularly receiving a low score. In other words, students may be able to participate in speaking assessments, but the expectation of an unsatisfactory score makes the activity more stressful. Therefore, teachers' scoring practices, students' academic expectations, and their perceptions of failure may have ⁸an important role in increasing speaking anxiety.

The third indicator, ¹⁴fear of negative evaluation, obtained a mean score of 3.36 and was categorized as High Anxiety. Although it had the

lowest mean score among the three indicators, it remained an important contributor to the students' speaking anxiety. The highest statement in this indicator was "I feel that others speak English better than me," with a mean score of 3.87. Moreover, the statements concerning fear of being laughed at and fear that others would consider their English poor each obtained a mean score of 3.52. These findings show that students tended to compare their speaking ability with that of their classmates. When students believed that others spoke English better, they might develop a negative perception of their own ability. This social comparison could reduce their confidence and make them more cautious when speaking. According to ⁷³Horwitz et al. (1986), fear of negative evaluation occurs when learners are worried about receiving criticism, negative opinions, or an unfavourable impression from others. Therefore, students may avoid speaking or participate less actively because they expect that their mistakes will cause their classmates to laugh at them or consider them less competent. However, several statements related to direct evaluation were only categorized as Moderate Anxiety, including concern about being criticized by the teacher, being evaluated by others, and being compared with classmates. This pattern indicates that the students' anxiety was not necessarily caused by actual criticism from teachers or classmates. Instead, anxiety may arise from students' own expectations and assumptions about how other people perceive them. In other words, students may negatively evaluate themselves before receiving

any direct negative response from others. This internal fear can be sufficient to reduce their confidence and willingness to speak English.

²⁸ The findings of this research are in line with the study conducted by Nurfadilla et al. (2024), which found that the ⁵ speaking anxiety of tenth-grade students at SMAN 1 Tembilahan was categorized as high. Their research also showed that learners' beliefs about language learning became the most influential factor. This supports the present finding because concern about receiving low scores and confusion when speaking without preparation may originate from students' beliefs that English is difficult and that they must perform correctly when speaking.

The present findings also support Ramadhani and Etfita (2022), who found that ⁸ students experienced speaking anxiety because of low self-confidence, ¹⁰² fear of making mistakes, anxiety when being asked to speak by the teacher, and embarrassment when performing in front of the class. Similar conditions were identified in the present research, particularly students' fear of speaking suddenly, confusion when speaking without preparation, concern about low scores, and ⁷ fear of being laughed at by ⁶⁵ classmates. Therefore, both studies demonstrate that speaking anxiety is connected not only to students' linguistic ability but also to their confidence, expectations, and perceptions of classroom evaluation.

Meanwhile, Dahsyat et al. (2025) found that most English Education students in their study experienced ¹⁴ a moderate level of speaking anxiety,

whereas the students in the present research experienced a high level of anxiety. This difference may be related to differences in participants, educational levels, English proficiency, classroom experiences, and familiarity with English speaking activities. Dahsyat et al. (2025) investigated university students majoring in English Education, while the present research involved tenth-grade senior high school students. University students majoring in English may have more experience and opportunities to use English than senior high school students. Nevertheless, both studies identified communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation as important aspects of speaking anxiety.

Although the descriptive design of this research cannot establish a direct causal relationship, the pattern of the findings suggests that the three dimensions of anxiety may reinforce one another. Students who have difficulty communicating spontaneously may predict that they will receive a low score. Their concern about receiving a low score may then increase their fear of making mistakes and being negatively judged. Greater anxiety can further interfere with their ability to process information and express ideas, which may strengthen their belief that they are not capable of speaking English well. Therefore, speaking anxiety should be understood as an interconnected condition rather than a single or isolated fear.

In General, the main contribution of this research is that it provides a comprehensive description of English speaking anxiety of the tenth grade students at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the academic year 2025/2026. The

students experienced a high level of anxiety across all three indicators. Communication apprehension was the highest general dimension with a mean score of 3.68, while concern about receiving a low score was the most dominant specific trigger with a mean score of 4.16.⁸ These findings indicate that students' speaking anxiety was primarily characterized by difficulty communicating spontaneously and concern about the academic consequences of their speaking performance. Therefore, reducing speaking anxiety requires not only more speaking practice but also sufficient preparation time, supportive feedback, clear assessment criteria, and classroom activities that emphasize gradual improvement rather than perfect performance.

¹CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

¹² This research was aimed to find out the English speaking anxiety of the tenth grade students at SMAN 2 Tembilahan in the academic year 2025/2026. ³⁷ experienced a high level of English speaking anxiety, with an overall mean score of 3.55. All three indicators were categorized as high anxiety. Communication apprehension obtained the highest ⁴⁴ mean score of 3.68, followed by test anxiety with a mean score of 3.60 and fear of negative evaluation with a mean score of 3.36. These results indicate that the students' speaking anxiety was mainly characterized by difficulty communicating spontaneously, concern about speaking assessments, and fear of being negatively judged by others. The most dominant specific source of anxiety was the students' concern about receiving a low score in speaking tasks, with a mean score of 4.16. Therefore, it can be concluded that ¹⁵ the students generally experienced high English speaking anxiety, particularly when they had to speak without preparation and when their speaking performance was assessed.

¹B. Suggestion

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher would like offer suggestion for the students, the teachers, and future researchers. The Suggestion are:

3

1. For the Students

The students are suggested to practise speaking English regularly through simple and gradual activities, such as practising with classmates, participating in pair or group discussions, and preparing short notes before speaking. Since communication apprehension was the highest indicator, students should prepare relevant vocabulary and organize their main ideas before participating in speaking activities.

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They should also understand that making mistakes is a natural part of learning English and should not avoid speaking because of fear or embarrassment. Furthermore, students are encouraged to ask the teacher for constructive feedback and clarification about assessment criteria so that they can focus on improving their performance rather than worrying excessively about receiving low scores.

2. For the English Teacher

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The English teacher is suggested to create a supportive classroom environment in which students feel safe and confident when speaking English. Speaking activities should be conducted gradually, beginning with individual preparation, pair work, and small-group discussions before students are asked to speak in front of the entire class. The teacher should provide sufficient preparation time, explain the assessment criteria clearly, and use simple speaking rubrics before conducting speaking assessments. Since concern about receiving a low

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score was the most dominant source of anxiety, the teacher should provide constructive feedback that emphasizes students' progress instead of focusing only on their mistakes. Teacher should also give students understanding ⁸⁴ that making mistakes is a natural part of learning English and should not avoid speaking because of fear or embarrassment. Public criticism and direct comparison between students should also be avoided because they may increase students' fear of negative evaluation.

¹ 3. For Future Researchers

Future researchers are suggested to investigate English speaking anxiety using larger and more varied samples from different schools or grade levels. Interviews, classroom observations, or mixed-method research may be used to obtain more detailed information about the causes of students' anxiety. Future studies may also examine specific factors such as vocabulary mastery, self-confidence, preparation, classroom atmosphere, peer responses, and speaking assessment. In addition, researchers may conduct experimental studies to examine the effectiveness of teaching strategies, such as pair work, group discussion, gradual speaking activities, or supportive feedback, in reducing students' English speaking anxiety.

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