

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Oral communication is the most important part of mastering a language. English is becoming a global means of communication used in education, work, and throughout globalization between countries. Oral English communication refers to the process of conveying information, ideas, and thoughts spoken in English. According to Bsharat & Barahmeh (2020) To succeed in their specific fields or disciplines, learners must develop their communication abilities using English as the medium. It covers a wide range of skills, including speaking and comprehending spoken communications in real-time interactions, whether it take place in official contexts like presentations or informal ones like casual conversations. Clear articulation, logical thought processes, and active participation in conversation are all necessary for effective oral English communication, which enables people to accurately and understandably communicate with others. English as lingua franca refers to the language that is used as a bridge of communication amongst speakers of many languages worldwide. Therefore, one way to master English is through oral communication.

Communication can be developed through speaking. Speaking is a crucial skill for understanding and communicating with one another in daily interactions. Speaking is a Productive skill that produces speech to communicate thoughts, information, and meaning when interacting with others (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022). Speaking is also essential to communication, which is an interactive process of meaning development that entails the production, reception, and processing of information. For instance, during the teaching and learning process in the classroom, the instructor and the students communicate in order for them to comprehend one another. Speaking is not only an essential component of learning and teaching second languages, but it also plays a significant role in the human life process. It's an oral communication process wherein two or more people exchange messages or information to talk to each other and convey their thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Oral communication can be speaking activities in a variety of contexts including conversation, presentations, interviews, and discussions.

English oral communication skill is a priority nowadays, but on the other hand, there are several obstacles in the process of learning English. The students in the class have a variety of qualities, including being reticent when learning English. Ngân (2022) mention reticence is a prevalent issue,

especially in the classrooms where the majority of the students are Asian. This phenomenon is familiar to educators where students become inactive in the learning process, thus affecting students' ability to master the language. Reticence is one of the primary factors that is shown to have a major influence on students' proficiency in speaking English (Tuyen et al., 2021). Reticence often be found especially in foreign language learning, this makes it difficult for students to master a language due to undeveloped abilities. Reticence in this context refers to the jittery, nervous, uncomfortable, and apprehensive sentiments that non-native speakers encounter when speaking in a second or foreign language class (Ngân, 2022). This is the reason for the reticence of some English students in speaking. It can be identified that reticence is closely related to anxiety.

Anxiety is an issue experienced by students in every circle. According to Horwitz et al., (1986), Speaking is one of the circumstances triggering the most anxiety-provoking for the majority of learners. It can be identified that in the process of learning English, especially in speaking activities most students feel anxiety which is a form of negative feeling. Abdullah Hammad (2020) Anxiety is a negative outlook that is accompanied by poor cognitive function, physical signs, and inappropriate behavior. Anxiety in speaking has a big impact that can affect the continuity of

learning, this problem occurs because there are various aspects that cause anxiety when speaking English. Anxiety speaking in English is one of the outcomes of significant elements, such as ignorance, inadequate preparation, fear of making mistakes, and difficulty comprehending the lecturer's directions (Syahfutra, 2021). Anxiety is an issue that is very often encountered when communicating orally in English in the classroom.

In an effort to find the true problems, the researcher conducted pre-research by interviewing English students in class 4A at Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University of Bengkulu on 29 November 2023. Based on the result, the researcher can find some problems that their biggest problem in speaking is anxiety which is characterized by trembling, blankness, lack of confidence, fear of being laughed at, and fear of making mistakes, fear to speak without preparation, students being passive in the classroom, also confused about what to say which could have an impact on low speaking achievement. In line with Woodrow (2006), The oral performance of English as a second language speakers are severely impacted by second language anxiety. The interview script available in Appendix 2.

There have been many researchers conducted studies related to the same topic about reticence and anxiety faced by students. Previous research Wu, H. (2019) discussed about

reticence in the EFL Classroom by Chinese university students. The purpose of this study was to explore the students' perception regarding the reasons behind their reticence. The results show a significant association between student reticence and low language proficiency, foreign language fear, introversion, and instructor influence. The similarity from the previous study with this research that use both data quantitative and qualitative. But the limitation of previous study was only focusing on factors reticence.

Then the research conducted by Limbong, (2020) to investigated the reticent factors and its behaviors. Demonstrated by the third-semester students of the academic year 2019/2020 in STBA Pontianak. The research's findings suggested that three elements, student factors which were the most diversely influencing factors, lecturer factors, and cultural factors were liable for the students' reluctance to speak and their continued reticence in language classes. The differences between the previous research and the current study that the previous study used qualitative descriptive method, while this research used mixed method. Not only that, but other researchers also revealed anxiety factors from studies that have been done.

Another research conducted by Hermaniar et al., (2021) The aim of the study was to carry out what are the factors that usually affect the anxiety in speaking English. The

subject of this study was eight semester students of English Education Department of STKIP PGRI Banjarmasin. Speaking English correctly is a particularly challenging ability for students who study other languages, especially for experienced learners, as evidenced by the analysis of students' anxiety in this area. It was based on three variables that affect students' anxiety when speaking English communication anxiety, worry about receiving a bad review, and test anxiety. The similarity between the research and this current research was also investigated anxiety in speaking but the previous study used qualitative descriptive and only from one instrument questionnaire while this research used mixed method.

Several researchers have studied almost similar research on the same topic. There have been several limitations from the previous research that most of the study only focus on one side either reticence or anxiety, it is also common for studies that only investigated the factors of anxiety and ignore the levels. This study fills the gaps of knowledge to existing research that focus on both anxiety and reticence not only one of them. This topic is very important to be deepened since reticence and anxiety are two issues that students face and which hinder their ability to communicate effectively in English, teachers need to address them in the field of education. Therefore, the researcher was excited to carry out

this research with the title “Anxiety and Reticence in Oral English Communication (A Study at the Fourth Semester Students of English Department of Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University of Bengkulu in Academic Year 2023/2024)” which focused on the level of anxiety and the factors that contributed to anxiety and reticence that experienced by students when speaking English.

B. Identification of the Study

Based on the background of the study the researcher formulates problems as follows:

1. Students experience shaking, blankness, and negative feelings that impede or disrupt the concentration of the study.
2. The Students are afraid of being laughed in speaking English and fear of making mistakes,
3. The lack of communication knowledge skills especially in speaking English without preparation.
4. The Students are inactive in the classroom and prefer to be silent.
5. The lack of timing and thought organization skills.

C. Research Questions

Based on the focus of the research, the researcher formulates the research question as follows:

1. How is the anxiety level of 4A class students in oral English communication in the English department of Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University of Bengkulu?
2. What are the factors that contributed to anxiety and reticence of 4A class students in speaking activities?

D. Research Objectives

Based on the research questions, the objectives of this research are:

1. To investigate the anxiety level of the 4A class students in oral English communication in the English department of Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University of Bengkulu
2. To find out the factors that contributed to anxiety and reticence of 4A class students in speaking activities.

E. The Significances of the Study

1. Theoretically

The study offers valuable insights into overcoming anxiety and reticence in oral English communication, which makes it a useful theoretical contribution.

2. Practically

1. For English Educators, it can help to understand students who are anxious about their learning and can make students participate more actively in the process of honing their English skills, especially for students who are still poor in speaking English.
2. For English Department Students of Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University of Bengkulu, have the opportunity to voice their opinions and develop their speaking skills without feeling uncertain when they participate in class activities.

3. Further Research

For other researchers, this study can be a reference if they later research the same topic and relate to anxiety and reticence.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Study

In this study, the researcher focuses on exploring the problems of anxiety and reticence experienced by students towards oral English communication in class for 4th semester English department students of Fatmawati Sukarno State Islamic University of Bengkulu.

G. Definition of Key Terms

1. Oral English communication refers to the act of conveying information, concepts, feelings, and thoughts in the context is speaking in the class. Speaking is a productive oral skill that involves using verbal expression to convey meaning, thoughts, ideas, or feelings between two or more people.
2. Reticence is the most universal of the constructs since it describes a personality quality that causes a person to habitually keep quiet rather than take part in communication. Reticence is the trait or state of being reserved, quiet, or hesitant to speak or express what a person thinks or feels.
3. Anxiety is defined as the expression of negative feelings or emotions when confronted with speaking tasks or activities, Anxiety is a typical frequently adaptive reaction to pressure or risk that is typified by unease, worry, or fear.