

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Speaking

a. Definition of Speaking

Speaking is categorized as a productive language skill that allows individuals to convey ideas, share information, and negotiate meaning through spoken interaction. It goes beyond merely pronouncing words correctly; instead, it involves a multifaceted process that combines cognitive abilities, social interaction, and linguistic competence. In speaking, learners must not only understand vocabulary and grammar but also apply appropriate communicative strategies while being aware of the context in which the conversation takes place. This makes speaking a dynamic and interactive skill that requires both mental processing and social engagement.

Speaking proficiency in an EFL classroom is influenced by several interconnected dimensions, including cognitive, affective, and pedagogical factors. Learners need to process language mentally (cognitive), manage emotions such as anxiety or lack of confidence (affective), and engage with effective teaching methods (pedagogical). As highlighted by Najmiah et al. (2026), instructional approaches such as task-based learning, role-play, and project-based learning play a crucial role in enhancing students' speaking abilities. These methods provide meaningful opportunities for practice, encourage active participation, and help reduce students' reluctance to speak. As a result, students can

gradually build confidence, improve interaction, and develop their communicative competence in a more supportive and engaging learning environment.

Speaking English refers to learners' productive oral ability to use the language in real-life communicative situations. According to (J. Lin, 2025), speaking proficiency is defined as "L2 learners' ability to speak their second language to ensure communicative objectives in real-life settings." This underscores that speaking competence involves not just correctness but also the ability to convey meaning effectively in context. In other words, speaking is not merely about producing grammatically accurate sentences but also about using appropriate vocabulary, intonation, and expressions to achieve clear and purposeful communication. Speaking is the most complex skill compared to other skills (listening, reading, writing) because it requires mastery of linguistic aspects (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) as well as non-linguistic or sociocultural aspects such as interaction norms, speaking speed, pauses, and contextual appropriateness (Maji, et al. 2022). Furthermore, speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information in real time (Brown, 2015). This process demands not only linguistic competence but also sociolinguistic and strategic competence to adapt language use according to context, audience, and purpose.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, speaking plays a central role in enabling learners to engage in authentic communication. (Richards, 2017) points out that speaking proficiency allows learners to participate in daily

interactions, academic discussions, and professional exchanges, thereby contributing significantly to their overall communicative competence. Effective speaking involves fluency, the smooth flow of speech without excessive hesitation and accuracy the correct use of grammar and vocabulary, both of which must be balanced for successful communication. Therefore, mastering speaking in English means acquiring the ability to express ideas clearly, respond appropriately in conversations, and interact naturally in a variety of real-life situations. It is a skill that develops over time through practice, exposure to authentic language use, and the application of communication strategies to overcome linguistic and psychological barriers.

Yugafiati et al. (2025) state that speaking in academic contexts demands more than just correct language use; it also requires fluency, the ability to interact effectively, and the skill to present logical and well-structured arguments, especially in higher education settings. This indicates that speaking is not limited to mastering pronunciation or vocabulary alone, but also encompasses psychological preparedness, awareness of sociolinguistic norms, and the ability to adapt language use appropriately across different situations.

More broadly, speaking plays a crucial role in second language learning as it serves as the most immediate means of demonstrating communicative competence. Goh and Burns (2022) highlight that successful speaking performance involves the integration of several components, including clear pronunciation, accurate vocabulary use, grammatical correctness, effective discourse organization, and strong interactional abilities. In addition,

Fauziati (2023) explains that speaking is a complex process consisting of conceptualization, formulation, and articulation, where speakers must organize their ideas, construct grammatically appropriate sentences, and deliver them clearly within a limited amount of time.

b. Indicators of Speaking

The main indicators used to assess speaking skills include pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and vocabulary mastery. More recent perspectives expand these indicators by including interactional competence and strategic competence as essential components of speaking ability. This means that learners are not only expected to use language accurately, but also to manage the flow of conversation, initiate and maintain interactions, and effectively overcome communication breakdowns. In addition, speaking skills can be improved through the implementation of communicative approaches that incorporate peer feedback and group discussions. These methods provide opportunities for learners to actively practice speaking while also reflecting on their performance in meaningful and authentic contexts.

Speaking skills are very important skills for learning a foreign language or a second language. In looking at students' abilities in speaking skills, it is measured by students' abilities in conducting dialogue and verbal communication which is carried out by interacting using language. Speaking skills also involve how students can express their ideas clearly, respond to others appropriately, and use suitable vocabulary and pronunciation so that the message can be understood well. These skills are important because they help students communicate effectively in classroom

activities such as discussions, presentations, and conversations, as well as in real-life situations where English is needed. Speaking is an important skill in carrying out daily life in communicating and interacting, because without communicating by speaking because you do not know what people are saying, and speaking is a human way of interacting and communicating with other people. Based on the explanation above, speaking skills have several major aspects in speaking skills. (Wafa, 2022) explains that speaking skills have four aspects that have a great influence on speaking skills, namely, Pronunciation, Grammar, Fluency, Vocabulary.

1. Vocabulary

Vocabulary plays a crucial role as the core element of effective speaking. Without adequate lexical knowledge, learners may struggle to convey complex ideas or express emotions clearly. Recent findings show that the use of mobile applications and AI-supported speaking platforms can support vocabulary development while also helping to lower learners' anxiety during speaking activities. In addition, strong vocabulary mastery contributes to pragmatic competence, allowing learners to choose words that are appropriate to the context, tone, and audience.

Multimodal learning practices, such as dubbing and audiovisual translation, have been shown to support vocabulary acquisition in meaningful contexts. These approaches not only help learners understand how words are used in real situations but also improve retention and speaking fluency at the same time. Therefore, consistent exposure to language input and

learning vocabulary through context are essential for achieving long-term vocabulary growth.

Vocabulary is an aspect of speaking skills which is one of which can be called an extreme aspect because it supports oral activities. Vocabulary must be done by choosing the correct and adequate words. Vocabulary is very important to speak English because speaking it requires a lot of vocabulary to be mastered because the more students have vocabulary the better, they are at expressing their thoughts, emotional states, and ideas both in writing and verbally. Vocabulary plays an important role in helping students develop fluency and confidence when speaking English. When students have limited vocabulary, they often struggle to express their ideas and may pause frequently while trying to find the right words. This can affect the smoothness of their speech and make communication less effective. On the other hand, a rich vocabulary allows students to choose more precise and appropriate words, making their speech clearer and more meaningful. Vocabulary knowledge also helps students understand others better during conversations, so communication can take place more naturally and without misunderstanding. Therefore, continuous vocabulary development is essential in improving students' overall speaking ability.

Vocabulary in spoken language is very important in the aspect of speaking skills because vocabulary in spoken form can be used in everyday life, and that means that vocabulary must be mastered by someone because it aims to communicate and understand the speech of others. In using words in

communicating by speaking, one must speak proficiently by mastering and understanding the meaning, spelling, and pronunciation. The teacher in teaching vocabulary, the teacher must ensure the explanation of the meaning, as well as the spelling and pronunciation of the students are good and correct in the pronunciation they convey.

2. Grammar

Grammar serves as the fundamental structure that supports meaningful communication. Many EFL learners tend to depend heavily on memorization, which can hinder their ability to produce sentences spontaneously. To address this issue, it is recommended that grammar be taught through communicative activities rather than through isolated exercises, so that learners can apply it more naturally in real interactions.

In addition, it is important to maintain a balance between grammatical accuracy and meaning-focused communication. Grammar instruction should aim to develop automaticity, where learners can use language forms effortlessly and without conscious effort during conversations. Recent findings also indicate that the use of speech feedback technology and peer correction, when incorporated into speaking activities, can effectively enhance learners' grammatical performance (Zhang et al., 2024).

Grammar is an aspect that must be mastered by students because if they can master and understand grammar then they can speak well and fluently when communicating. Therefore, when someone speaks properly and correctly when communicating with others, they use grammar when speaking.

Grammar are the rules in English that are used when speaking because they have meanings and are part of the language to provide information to other people so that others understand what is being conveyed. Grammar is what is needed by students to express an appropriate expression in interacting when communicating with other people through conversation, both in written and oral form. In general, the definition of grammar is the way someone calculates and predicts an organized model of knowledge about both speakers and listeners that is carried out to be able to create language utterances that can be grammatically shaped in English.

According to (Riansyah, 2022), grammar is the basic principles and structure of language, in this grammar there is a clear and correct sentence construction in the right word form. The same as opinion, says that the aspect of speaking skills is grammar which makes the technique of words combined so that they have good English sentences. The function of grammar is to make good sentences when talking to other people to avoid misunderstandings when having conversations with other people.

3. Fluency

Fluency involves smooth, coherent speech production with minimal hesitation. Mukti et al. (2025) demonstrate that integrated listening-speaking tasks enhance learners' fluency by developing rhythm and intonation awareness. Likewise, Mudawy (2025) reports that repeated conversational practice on AI platforms fosters confidence and automatic speech flow, especially in learners who initially experience performance

anxiety. Fluency also depends on interaction frequency: the more learners engage in meaningful dialogue, the more automatic their speech becomes. Najmiah et al. (2026) emphasize that task-based speaking and role-play allow this process to occur naturally by simulating real-life conversation.

Speech is an activity that someone does verbally in reproducing words. This can be referred to as a brainstorming process between the speaker and the listener. Therefore, in speaking skills, it is very important to have other components of speaking skills such as fluency when speaking. Fluency is when students can communicate by speaking the language without hesitation or without pause and they speak English using fluent and spontaneous language. According to (Radjuni et al., 2024) fluency means that students have the ability to speak well and correctly, confidently, and accurately. In general, fluency is that they express spoken language freely without any pauses or stops. A teacher in teaching English when he wants to see the ability of students to speak English fluently, the teacher can see students when they express themselves freely and see the level of students' speaking by looking at the interference when speaking.

4. Pronunciation

Pronunciation influences comprehensibility and listener perception. Even minor phonological errors can hinder understanding and confidence. According to Fitriati & Williyani (2025), the use of AI-assisted pronunciation tools, such as automatic speech recognition systems, has been proven to enhance students' accuracy and self-monitoring ability.

Pronunciation is a very important aspect in speaking skills because in speaking one must produce appropriate and correct speech in communicating because pronunciation is very important in communicating so that other people can understand what we are talking about when communicating. There are five aspects of speaking skills, namely vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and understanding. In this case pronunciation is one aspect of speaking skills. Pronunciation is the way a person pronounces words when language is spoken to communicate with others (Gilakjani et al., 2020). Pronunciation is an act of students in speaking with speech, articulation, stress, and intonation, all of which strongly refer to several standards of truth or acceptance. Many students have difficulty in pronouncing English even those who have studied English for many years also have difficulty in learning the language with good pronunciation. Students who have difficulty in pronouncing the language because they cannot use the target language.

c. Types of Speaking

There are some types of speaking as in the following taxonomy:

1. Imitative

Imitative speaking is the ability to simply imitate (follow) a word, phrase, or sentence. Although this is a purely phonetic level of spoken production, some prosodic, lexical, and grammatical properties of the language may be included in the performance criteria. This type of speaking primarily focuses on accurate sound production rather than understanding meaning.

At this level, speaking performance is concerned with phonetic accuracy, including pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation. Although considered a basic level of spoken production, imitative speaking can also involve limited lexical and grammatical elements. This type is commonly implemented in drills, repetition exercises, and pronunciation practice, especially for beginning learners, to help them develop confidence and familiarity with the sound system of the target language.

Imitative speaking plays an important role as a foundational stage in developing learners' overall speaking competence. By repeatedly practicing sounds and patterns, learners gradually internalize the phonological system of the target language, which later supports more complex speaking activities such as responsive and interactive communication. In addition, this type of speaking helps reduce learners' anxiety because it does not require them to generate original ideas, but rather to focus on accurate reproduction of language forms. As a result, imitative speaking becomes an effective initial step in building learners' confidence before they move to higher levels of speaking performance.

2. Intensive

Short-term oral language production designed to demonstrate competence in a narrow range of grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationships. Intensive speaking involves producing a limited amount of language in a highly controlled context. In this type, learners are required to produce language in a highly controlled context, often based on

instructions or structured tasks. Examples of intensive speaking activities include reading aloud, completing sentences orally, modifying sentences, or practicing dialogues. The primary emphasis in intensive speaking is accuracy rather than fluency, as learners focus on the correct use of language forms. This type allows teachers to assess students' mastery of specific linguistic features in a focused and systematic manner.

3. Responsive

Responsive speaking encompasses interaction and comprehension, but to a rather limited extent, including very brief conversations, standard greetings and brief greetings, simple requests, and comments. It involves brief responses to limited questions or comments from teachers or students, instructions, and directions. These responses are usually sufficient and meaningful. Interactions are usually brief but involve real communication and understanding. Unlike imitative and intensive speaking, responsive speaking emphasizes understanding and meaningful use of language. Responses are usually brief but must be relevant, appropriate, and sufficient to maintain communication. This type of speaking helps learners develop spontaneous speaking skills and confidence in everyday communication.

4. Interactive

The difference between interactive and responsive speaking lies in the length and complexity of the interaction, which sometimes includes several or more exchanges. Interactive speaking involves longer and more complex exchanges between two or more participants. Interactive

speaking can include multiple turns, negotiation of meaning, clarification, and feedback between speakers. Activities such as role-playing, interviews, group discussions, debates, and problem-solving tasks are examples of interactive speaking. In this type of speaking, learners are required to demonstrate fluency and accuracy while maintaining communication. Interactive speaking plays a crucial role in developing communicative competence, as learners actively use language to express ideas, opinions, and feelings in a social context.

5. Extensive (monologue).

Extensive oral production tasks include speeches, oral presentations, and storytelling, where opportunities for listener interaction are very limited (possibly limited to nonverbal responses) or non-existent. Extensive speaking, also known as monologue speaking, refers to oral production in which learners produce extended discourse without significant listener interaction. This type includes activities such as speeches, oral presentations, storytelling, reports, and public speaking. Learners are expected to organize ideas logically, use appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures, and maintain fluency for extended periods. Opportunities for listener interaction are very limited and may be limited to nonverbal responses such as nodding or eye contact. Extensive speaking is often used to evaluate learners' overall speaking ability, confidence, and ability to convey information clearly and coherently.

2. Anxiety

a. Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety can be defined as a mental and physical state characterized by specific emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioural symptoms (Nilsson, 2019). Anxiety refers to an emotional and psychological state in which learners experience tension, worry, and apprehension, especially when required to perform tasks in a second language. According to (Zheng et al., 2023), language anxiety is defined as “A psychological state characterized by tension, worry, and apprehension that arises specifically during second language use and learning.” Anxiety is a state or feeling of worry and the belief that something bad is going to happen (Jannah & Setiyowati, 2024). In addition, anxiety is a mixture of various emotions such as fear, uneasiness, and tension that arise when a person faces a situation perceived as threatening or beyond their control. Anxiety usually appears as a reaction to pressure, demands, or uncertainty experienced by individuals, whether in personal or academic contexts.

According to (Liu et al., 2018) anxiety is an emotional state characterized by feelings of tension, worry, and increased activity of the autonomic nervous system, such as a racing heartbeat or sweating. In the context of educational psychology, anxiety can hinder an individual's ability to concentrate, think clearly, and perform at their best. Naturally, anxiety is the body's normal response to stress or perceived threats, serving as a mechanism to prepare for potentially dangerous situations. However, when anxiety occurs continuously, intensely, and interferes with daily activities, it can be categorized as an anxiety disorder. Common

symptoms of anxiety include heart palpitations, difficulty sleeping, trouble concentrating, rapid breathing, cold sweats, and feelings of restlessness. From a psychological perspective, individuals with anxiety often experience irrational fear or excessive worrying about possible negative outcomes in the future.

The causes of anxiety can stem from biological factors, such as an imbalance of neurotransmitters in the brain, as well as psychological and environmental factors, including severe stress, trauma, or social pressure. Types of anxiety disorders include panic disorder, phobias, social anxiety disorder, and generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). Treatment for anxiety can be carried out through psychological therapies such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), relaxation techniques, and in some cases, medication under the supervision of mental health professionals. In the context of education, anxiety can also emerge in more specific forms, one of which is language anxiety. Language anxiety refers to the fear or apprehension experienced when using or learning a foreign language, particularly in classroom settings. Language anxiety is often associated with students' fear of making mistakes, being negatively evaluated, or failing to express themselves accurately in the target language.

b. Types of Language Anxiety

(Ilmu & P-issn, 2022) classify language anxiety into three main types:

1. Communication Apprehension

This type of anxiety refers to the fear or discomfort experienced when speaking or interacting in the target language. Learners with high levels of communication anxiety

often avoid speaking in class, remain silent during discussions, or experience physical symptoms such as trembling or an increased heart rate when asked to speak. This anxiety commonly occurs during oral communication activities such as class discussions, presentations, role-plays, or spontaneous speaking tasks. Learners with high levels of communication anxiety tend to avoid participation, remain silent, or rely on minimal responses during classroom interactions. In addition to behavioral avoidance, they may experience physical symptoms such as trembling, sweating, an increased heart rate, or difficulty concentrating when asked to speak. This type of anxiety can hinder the development of speaking fluency, as learners are reluctant to practice oral communication despite having sufficient linguistic knowledge. Consequently, communication anxiety is often a major barrier to effective speaking performance in foreign language classes.

2. Test Anxiety

Test anxiety refers to the fear, tension, or nervousness associated with evaluative situations, such as written exams, oral tests, quizzes, or performance-based assessments. Students experiencing this type of anxiety often feel anxious before and during exams, which can interfere with their cognitive processes, including concentration, memory retrieval, and information processing. As a result, students may forget previously studied material, have difficulty organizing their thoughts, or perform below their true abilities despite adequate preparation (Al-sukaini et al., 2025). This type of anxiety is generally associated with unrealistic self-

expectations, where students set excessively high standards for themselves and perceive anything less than a perfect score as failure. Such beliefs can increase psychological distress and lead to excessive worry about exam results.

In the context of foreign language learning, test anxiety tends to be more pronounced because assessments often require immediate and spontaneous language production, leaving students with limited time to plan their responses. Frequent testing and continuous evaluation in language classes can also raise students' anxiety levels. Even high-achieving and well-prepared students are not immune to test anxiety, as the pressure to perform accurately may result in careless errors, hesitation, or decreased fluency. These negative experiences can reinforce students' fear of future evaluations, creating a cycle of anxiety that impacts their confidence, motivation, and overall language learning performance. As a result, test anxiety can be a significant barrier to effective language acquisition, particularly in developing speaking skills where performance is directly observed and assessed.

3. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative evaluation occurs when learners are overly concerned about how others will evaluate their language skills, causing them to focus more on avoiding errors than on conveying meaning (Akaraphattanawong, et al. 2024). As a result, learners may rely heavily on memorized phrases, limit their responses to very short utterances, or avoid spontaneous speaking situations. This anxiety can negatively

impact learners' confidence and willingness to communicate, especially in foreign language classes where oral performance is frequently observed and assessed. Learners experiencing this type of anxiety often feel embarrassed, insecure, or overly self-conscious when making errors in pronunciation, grammar, or word choice during speaking activities. This fear can cause learners to hesitate, speak quietly, or avoid participating in class interactions altogether.

Furthermore, fear of negative evaluation can be exacerbated by classroom environments that emphasize error correction or comparison with peers. When learners perceive errors as signs of failure rather than opportunities for learning, they may experience increased anxiety and decreased motivation to speak. Over time, this type of anxiety can hinder the development of speaking fluency and communicative competence, as learners have fewer opportunities to practice and receive constructive feedback.

c. Symptoms of Speaking Anxiety

Symptoms of speaking anxiety can manifest in three interrelated dimensions: cognitive, physical, and behavioral. These dimensions influence one another and collectively hinder students' speaking performance in English classrooms.

1. Cognitive symptoms: Cognitive symptoms involve negative mental processes that arise when students are required to speak English. In addition to difficulty concentrating and forgetfulness, students often experience self-doubt, fear of negative evaluation, and excessive worry about making mistakes. For example, learners may think that their

pronunciation is poor or that their classmates will judge them negatively. These negative thought patterns can block language retrieval, making it difficult for students to recall vocabulary, grammar structures, or ideas they want to express. Consequently, even students who have adequate linguistic knowledge may perform poorly in speaking tasks due to mental pressure and lack of confidence.

2. Physical symptoms: Physical symptoms are anxiety-related bodily reactions that occur before or during speaking activities. Besides sweating, trembling, dry mouth, and rapid heartbeat, students may also experience shortness of breath, stomach discomfort, or shaky voice. In classroom settings, these symptoms often become noticeable when students are asked to speak in front of the class or respond spontaneously to questions. Such physical reactions can interfere with articulation, intonation, and fluency, causing students to pause excessively or speak unclearly. Over time, repeated physical discomfort may lead students to associate speaking English with stress and fear.
3. Behavioral symptoms: Behavioral symptoms are outward actions that reflect students' anxiety and coping strategies. In addition to avoiding speaking, giving very short answers, and code-switching into the native language, students may pretend not to know the answer, avoid eye contact, or sit quietly at the back of the classroom. Some learners may rely heavily on reading from notes or memorizing dialogues instead of speaking spontaneously. These behaviors reduce students' engagement in communicative activities and limit meaningful

practice opportunities. As a result, their speaking development becomes slower, and anxiety may persist or increase over time.

These symptoms often occur simultaneously during speaking tasks, significantly reducing students' fluency and willingness to communicate.

d. Anxiety in Speaking English

Anxiety is defined as a state of unease, worry, or fear caused by anticipation of something perceived as threatening (Hakim & Syam, 2019). This emotional state commonly occurs in everyday life and can be experienced by individuals in various situations and conditions. Although anxiety is a normal psychological response, excessive levels of anxiety can negatively impact an individual's performance, concentration, and emotional well-being. In the context of language learning, anxiety is considered one of the most significant affective factors that can hinder second or foreign language acquisition (Irmayani, et al. 2022). Learners who experience high levels of anxiety often have difficulty processing input, remembering vocabulary, and expressing ideas fluently. Anxiety can impair cognitive function, reduce learners' self-confidence, and limit their willingness to actively participate in language learning activities, particularly those involving oral communication.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), such as in Indonesia, speaking English often triggers higher levels of anxiety. This condition is influenced by limited exposure to English outside the classroom, a lack of opportunities for authentic communication, and a fear of making mistakes in front of teachers and peers. Cultural tendencies to avoid embarrassment in public

and maintain social harmony can also contribute to students' reluctance to speak. As a result, students may feel nervous, shy, or hesitant during speaking activities, which can negatively impact their speaking performance and overall language development. Persistent anxiety about speaking English can lead to avoidance behaviours, such as remaining silent, giving very short responses, or relying on memorized phrases. Over time, these behaviours can reduce students' opportunities to practice speaking and hinder the development of their communicative competence. Therefore, understanding anxiety as a crucial affective factor is crucial for developing effective teaching strategies that help students reduce anxiety and build confidence in speaking English.

3. Students' Strategies

a. Definition of Learning Strategies

In the context of language learning, strategies refer to specific actions, behaviors, or techniques that learners consciously employ to facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information in the target language. These strategies represent the learners' active and purposeful involvement in the learning process, as they attempt to make language input more meaningful, manageable, and personally relevant. According to (Salam, et al. 2020), learning strategies are not only a set of techniques for memorizing or practicing linguistic items, but also include the learners' cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective processes that support successful language learning.

In addition, the use of learning strategies enables learners to take greater control over their language learning process. Through strategic behaviour, learners are able to identify their strengths and weaknesses, select appropriate approaches for different language tasks, and adjust their efforts when facing difficulties. This self-regulatory function is particularly important in language learning, as progress often depends on continuous practice and reflection rather than immediate results. Learning strategies contribute to learners' ability to transfer knowledge from one learning situation to another. When learners apply strategies consistently, they can use previously learned vocabulary, grammar, and expressions in new communicative contexts, especially in speaking activities. This transferability supports more flexible and spontaneous language use, which is essential for developing communicative competence.

Learning strategies also play a significant role in enhancing learners' motivation and confidence. By using strategies that help them cope with errors, manage anxiety, and seek support from others, learners are more likely to engage actively in classroom interactions. As learners experience small successes through effective strategy use, their positive attitudes toward language learning tend to increase, leading to sustained effort and persistence. From an instructional perspective, understanding learners' strategy use provides valuable insights for teachers. It allows educators to design learning activities that encourage strategic learning, provide explicit strategy training, and create supportive classroom environments. Such instructional support can help learners develop effective strategies that not only improve

language performance but also foster long-term independence in language learning.

From a cognitive perspective, language learning strategies help learners process new linguistic information through activities such as repetition, summarizing, analyzing grammatical structures, or linking new vocabulary to prior knowledge. Metacognitively, learners use strategies to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning for instance, by setting goals for speaking practice, tracking their progress, or reflecting on which methods are most effective for them. These strategies enable learners to become more autonomous and self-regulated, taking control over their own learning rather than relying solely on the teacher. In addition, social and affective strategies play a vital role in language learning. Social strategies involve interacting with others to enhance communication such as asking questions, collaborating in group discussions, or seeking feedback from peers and teachers. Affective strategies, on the other hand, help learners manage emotions like anxiety, motivation, and confidence, which are crucial for maintaining persistence and reducing fear of making mistakes during speaking activities (Katal, 2023).

Modern research in applied linguistics emphasizes that learning strategies are dynamic and context-dependent, meaning that their effectiveness varies according to the learning environment, the learner's proficiency level, personality, and even cultural background (Alamer, 2024). Effective learners are typically characterized by their strategic flexibility and the ability to choose, adapt, and combine different strategies depending on the

language task at hand, whether it involves speaking, listening, reading, or writing.

b. Kinds of Speaking Strategy

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, speaking anxiety is one of the most common emotional barriers that hinder students from effectively expressing themselves in the target language. To cope with this anxiety, students employ a variety of strategies that help them regulate emotions, improve confidence, and enhance communication performance. According to (Diana, 2023), these strategies can be categorized into several main types: cognitive, metacognitive, affective, social, and compensation strategies.

1) Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies involve mental processes that learners use to understand, produce, and practice language more effectively. Students use these strategies to increase their control over language use and reduce their fear of making mistakes.

Examples include:

- a. Repetition and practice, such as practicing sentences or pronunciation before speaking in class.
- b. Translation or visualization, where students translate ideas from their native language or imagine real-life speaking situations.
- c. Note-taking and summarizing, to organize thoughts before speaking.

Cognitive rehearsal and mental preparation help learners feel more secure and organized, which significantly lowers speaking anxiety.

2) Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies are those that involve planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's own learning process. Students who use metacognitive strategies can manage their anxiety by controlling their learning behavior consciously. Common examples include:

- a. Planning before speaking, such as preparing key points or predicting possible questions.
- b. Monitoring during speaking, by being aware of grammar, pronunciation, or pace.
- c. Self-evaluation after speaking, to reflect on strengths and weaknesses.

Metacognitive regulation allows students to stay focused on communication goals instead of worrying about performance, thus decreasing nervousness.

3) Affective Strategies

Affective strategies focus on emotion management helping students' lower anxiety, increase motivation, and build confidence. These strategies are crucial since emotional factors strongly influence speaking performance. Examples include:

- a. Deep breathing, positive self-talk, or relaxation techniques before speaking.
- b. Encouraging oneself with affirmations such as "I can do this".
- c. Rewarding oneself after successful speaking performance.

According to (Diana, et al. 2024) affective regulation reduces physiological symptoms of anxiety (e.g., trembling, sweating) and builds psychological readiness to speak.

4) Social Strategies

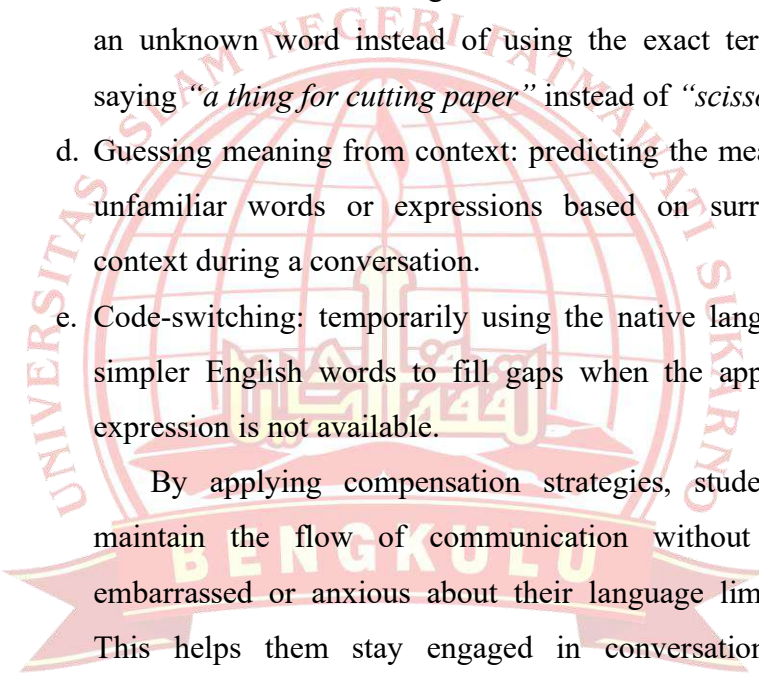
Social strategies involve interaction with others to gain feedback, reduce nervousness, and increase speaking opportunities. Communicating with supportive peers or teachers can build self-confidence and reduce fear of negative evaluation. Examples include:

- a. Asking teachers or friends for help with vocabulary or pronunciation.
- b. Practicing English in groups or pairs to make speaking more enjoyable.
- c. Seeking feedback or clarification to improve performance.

Students who frequently collaborate and interact in supportive environments tend to experience less speaking anxiety and show higher speaking fluency.

5) Compensation Strategies

Compensation strategies refer to the techniques used by learners to overcome gaps or limitations in their linguistic knowledge, such as lack of vocabulary, grammar mastery, or fluency. These strategies allow students to continue communicating effectively despite having incomplete language competence. In the context of speaking anxiety, compensation strategies play an essential role in reducing fear of communication breakdowns and maintaining fluency during conversation. Compensation strategies include several common techniques such as:

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- a. Using synonyms or paraphrasing: when a student cannot recall a specific word, they use another word or expression with a similar meaning to convey their message.
 - b. Using gestures or facial expressions: employing body language, such as hand movements or facial cues, to support verbal communication and help listeners understand the intended meaning.
 - c. Circumlocution: describing the characteristics or function of an unknown word instead of using the exact term (e.g., saying "*a thing for cutting paper*" instead of "*scissors*").
 - d. Guessing meaning from context: predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words or expressions based on surrounding context during a conversation.
 - e. Code-switching: temporarily using the native language or simpler English words to fill gaps when the appropriate expression is not available.

By applying compensation strategies, students can maintain the flow of communication without feeling embarrassed or anxious about their language limitations. This helps them stay engaged in conversation, build confidence, and gradually expand their speaking skills in English.

c. Strategies to Overcome Speaking Anxiety

The strategies used by students to overcome speaking anxiety, namely preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation are based on the classification of language learning strategies proposed by Rebecca L. Oxford (1990) and are supported by the concept of foreign language anxiety introduced by Elaine K. Horwitz (1986) and Dolly J. Young (1991).

1) Preparation

Preparation is a strategy in which students prepare themselves before engaging in speaking activities. This preparation may include studying the material in advance, writing key points, practicing pronunciation, enriching vocabulary, or rehearsing speaking at home or with peers. This strategy helps students increase their confidence and reduce fear of making mistakes when speaking in front of the class.

Preparation strategy is widely recognized in recent research as a foundational coping mechanism for reducing anxiety in speaking contexts among EFL/ESL learners. Preparation does not only involve memorizing material or vocabulary; it also includes engaging in strategic planning and rehearsal that enhance students' sense of readiness and control before speaking tasks. For example, learners may organize their ideas, anticipate possible questions, rehearse with classmates, or even simulate speaking situations prior to actual performance. Such deliberate preparation helps students reduce uncertainty and increase their self-efficacy, which has been shown to correlate with lower levels of anxiety and greater performance quality in speaking tasks.

Research in EFL settings indicates that preparation strategy is often among the most frequently used and effective approaches to mitigate speaking anxiety. Duong and Trang (2023) found that preparation was the strategy most commonly adopted by EFL learners in reducing anxiety, as it provided them with confidence and familiarity with the task at hand. In that study, participants reported asking peers for suggestions and clarifications during the preparation phase, which also helped them reduce anxiety through social interaction and shared understanding before performance. Moreover, a study examining strategies for managing EFL speaking anxiety in an Indonesian university context revealed that all participants reported using preparation strategy during speaking tasks, highlighting its central role in helping learners anticipate linguistic demands and organize their communication. In particular, structured preparation such as reviewing key vocabulary, outlining speaking points, and practicing delivery was perceived as a strong influence on learners' confidence levels.

2) Relaxation

Relaxation is a strategy aimed at reducing physical and emotional tension caused by anxiety. Common relaxation techniques include taking deep breaths, calming oneself before speaking, relaxing muscles, or controlling heartbeat. By applying relaxation techniques, students can lower their anxiety levels and remain more focused and calmer during English speaking activities.

Recent studies indicate that relaxation strategy is effective because it helps learners manage the immediate physical and emotional symptoms of speaking anxiety. When students feel nervous, techniques such as controlled breathing and self-calming enable them to stabilize their emotions and maintain concentration during speaking activities. By reducing physiological tension, students are better able to focus on delivering their message rather than worrying about mistakes or negative evaluation (Teimouri, Plonsky, & Tabandeh, 2020; Pawlak, 2021).

In addition, relaxation strategies support students' emotional regulation in the classroom and encourage continued participation in speaking tasks. Research shows that learners who apply relaxation techniques tend to feel more comfortable and less pressured when speaking English, especially when these techniques are reinforced by a supportive classroom environment. This condition allows students to remain calm and engaged, contributing to improved speaking performance and reduced anxiety over time (Richards, 2020; Alrabai, 2022).

3) Positive Thinking

Positive thinking is a cognitive strategy that involves developing positive thoughts and beliefs about one's own abilities. Students encourage themselves to believe that making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process and that they can express ideas despite language limitations. This strategy helps reduce fear of negative evaluation and increases students' motivation to participate actively in speaking activities. Beyond its role in encouraging students to accept mistakes as part of

learning, positive thinking helps learners reframe anxiety into a constructive mindset. When students believe that their efforts are valuable regardless of errors, they are more likely to take risks in speaking and sustain participation in classroom activities. This strategy also fosters self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to perform tasks successfully, which is directly linked to improved oral performance.

Research in Indonesian EFL classrooms highlights that positive thinking is among the most frequently used strategies to manage speaking anxiety. Students who practice positive self-talk and maintain optimistic beliefs about their progress demonstrate higher persistence, reduced avoidance behaviors, and stronger motivation to communicate. Moreover, positive thinking interacts with socio-affective strategies, since students who maintain optimism are more open to peer collaboration and feedback, further reinforcing their confidence.

Another important implication is that positive thinking contributes to long-term language learning attitudes. Learners who cultivate optimism are less likely to develop chronic anxiety and more likely to view English speaking opportunities as challenges rather than threats. This aligns with the broader pedagogical perspective that emotional regulation and mindset are as critical as linguistic preparation in achieving communicative competence.

4) Peer Seeking

Peer seeking is a social strategy in which students seek support from their peers to reduce speaking anxiety. This support may include practicing together, participating in small group discussions, asking questions, or requesting help when facing difficulties. Supportive peer interactions make students feel more comfortable and confident in using English. In addition to providing a sense of comfort, peer seeking also plays a role in building a positive sense of community and collaboration in the classroom. When students support each other, they not only reduce their anxiety about speaking, but also increase their intrinsic motivation to participate in communication activities. Peer support helps students feel that they are not alone in facing difficulties, thereby fostering the courage to try to speak despite language limitations. This positive social interaction also strengthens the sense of belonging in the classroom, which ultimately increases confidence and speaking skills.

In addition, peer seeking encourages scaffolding among students, where more capable students can help those who are still struggling. This process is in line with Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which emphasizes that optimal learning occurs through social interaction with more competent individuals. Thus, peer seeking is not only a strategy for reducing anxiety, but also an important means of language acquisition through collaboration.

5) Resignation

Resignation is a less adaptive strategy in which students tend to give up or avoid speaking situations because they feel incapable. Students using this strategy often remain silent, do not participate, or accept anxiety without attempting to overcome it. Although resignation may reduce anxiety in the short term, it can hinder the development of speaking skills and self-confidence in the long run. Resignation as a strategy for coping with speaking anxiety is considered less adaptive because students choose to avoid communication situations rather than attempt to overcome them. This tendency to give up may provide temporary relief, but in the long run it actually reinforces fear, lowers motivation, and hinders the development of speaking skills. Students who rely on this strategy often lose opportunities to practice, causing their language ability to stagnate and their self-confidence to decline.

Moreover, resignation can lead to negative psychological impacts, such as increased feelings of inferiority and the belief that they are incapable of speaking English. This may create a recurring cycle of anxiety: the more students avoid speaking, the greater their fear becomes when they are required to communicate. From a pedagogical perspective, this strategy highlights the need for teacher intervention and social support so that students do not remain trapped in avoidance patterns. Teachers can help by creating a safe classroom environment, offering positive encouragement, and emphasizing that mistakes are a natural part of the learning process.

B. Previous Study

The first study by (Diana et al., 2024) entitled “Researching factors and coping strategies of EFL students’ speaking anxiety” Researchers explored various factors influencing EFL students’ speaking anxiety and the strategies they use to overcome it. The results revealed five main factors contributing to speaking anxiety: lack of preparation before speaking, fear of making mistakes, limited English proficiency, excessive concern about academic performance, and fear of negative reactions or judgment from others. The study also described various strategies used by students, such as increased preparation, independent practice, and social support. However, this study focused on college students, not junior high school students, so the age context, developmental level, and classroom situation differed from those of eighth-grade students. The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive approach to identifying factors and coping strategies at the student level, thus providing an in-depth picture of the dynamics of speaking anxiety in adult learners.

The second research by (Rizkiya & Pratolo, 2023) conducted a study entitled “Students’ strategies to overcome English speaking anxiety” The researchers examined the level of speaking anxiety and the strategies used by students to overcome it. The study findings showed that most participants experienced moderate to high levels of anxiety, caused by three main factors: communication anxiety, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The study also identified commonly used coping strategies, such as intensive preparation, positive thinking, relaxation, and seeking peer support. Interestingly, they also found the "surrender" strategy, which is the mental acceptance of the possibility of making mistakes, helps students reduce psychological stress. While

this study makes an important contribution to understanding students' strategies in general, it does not attempt to understand how these strategies are implemented in real-life classroom situations, as well as the internal and external factors that influence students' strategy choices.

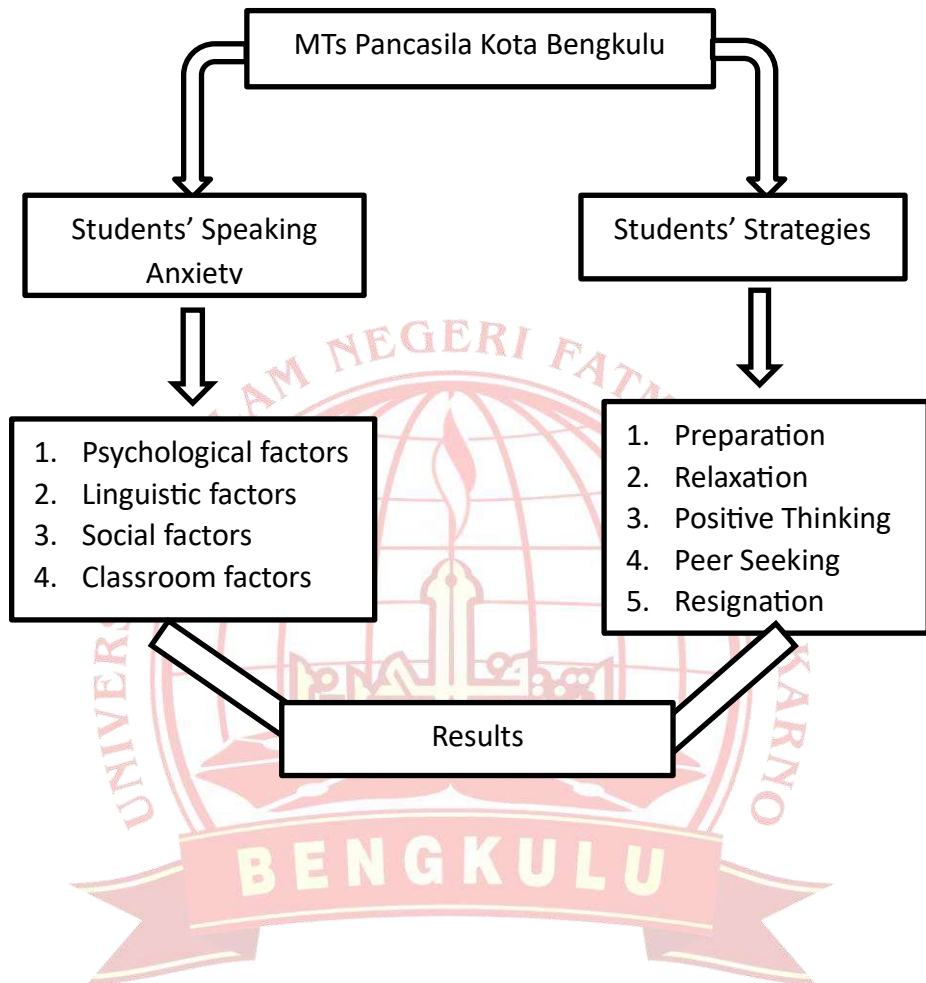
Furthermore, (Quvanch et al., 2024) conducted a study titled “Analyzing levels, factors and coping strategies of speaking anxiety among EFL undergraduates in Afghanistan”. This study analyzed the levels of speaking anxiety, contributing factors, and coping strategies used by EFL students in Afghanistan. The results showed that speaking anxiety ranged from moderate to high levels, influenced by several factors such as limited English proficiency, lack of self-confidence, negative learning experiences, and anxiety about being judged by others. Coping strategies found included repeated practice, self-motivation, seeking a supportive environment, and the use of relaxation techniques. Although this study provides broad insights into speaking anxiety among EFL students, there are important differences between this study and the previous study. The previous study focused on university-level students, while this study specifically examined eighth-grade students at MTs Pancasila, Bengkulu City, who are at different stages of cognitive and emotional development. This allowed this study to explore strategies that are more appropriate to the characteristics of adolescents at the junior high school level.

C. Conceptual Framework

The problem in this study is that many students still experience anxiety when speaking English in class. This anxiety often manifests as nervousness, fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, and avoidance of speaking activities. This condition negatively impacts students' oral performance and limits their opportunities to practice speaking English communicatively. Based on initial observations, it was found that some students at MTs Pancasila Kota Bengkulu hesitated to actively participate in speaking activities due to feelings of anxiety and fear of negative evaluation from teachers and peers. Considering this, the researcher was interested in conducting further research because some students were known to have their own strategies for overcoming this anxiety, such as preparing themselves before speaking, thinking positively, seeking help from peers, and using relaxation techniques. These strategies, if identified and understood properly, can be beneficial in reducing speaking anxiety and improving students' speaking skills.

The conceptual framework of this study aims to analyze the strategies used by 8th-grade students at MTs Pancasila Kota Bengkulu, to overcome anxiety in speaking English. This study focuses on the types of strategies they use and how these strategies help them reduce anxiety and increase their speaking confidence. The primary focus of this study is on students' strategies, including preparation strategies, relaxation strategies, positive thinking, and seeking out peers. The following graph illustrates the conceptual framework of this research as follows:

Grafik 2.1 Conceptual Framework



Explanation:

This conceptual framework illustrates the flow of the research entitled “An Analysis of Students' Strategies to Overcome Anxiety in Speaking English of Grade 8 Students at MTs Pancasila Kota Bengkulu.” The focus of this research is on students’ anxiety in speaking English and the specific strategies they use to cope with it. The study is conducted at MTs Pancasila Kota Bengkulu, where eighth-grade students frequently experience anxiety when engaging in English speaking activities. This anxiety may arise from several factors, including psychological aspects (fear of making mistakes or being negatively evaluated), linguistic aspects (limited vocabulary and grammar mastery), social aspects (peer pressure and lack of self-confidence), and classroom-related aspects (teaching methods and classroom atmosphere).

To cope with speaking anxiety, students apply five main strategies, namely preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation.

- i. Preparation refers to students’ efforts to get ready before speaking by studying the material and practicing in advance. This strategy helps students feel more confident because they have a clearer understanding of what they are going to say. By preparing vocabulary, ideas, and possible responses, students can reduce uncertainty and minimize mistakes during speaking activities. As a result, preparation plays an important role in lowering anxiety and improving performance.
- ii. Relaxation involves techniques to reduce physical and emotional tension, such as deep breathing or calming oneself. When students feel anxious, their bodies may respond with symptoms

like nervousness, sweating, or a fast heartbeat. Through relaxation techniques, students can control these reactions and create a more comfortable state of mind. This allows them to focus better on the speaking task rather than their anxiety.

- iii. Positive thinking is related to maintaining positive beliefs and self-confidence in one's speaking ability. Students who apply this strategy tend to encourage themselves by thinking that making mistakes is a normal part of learning. By replacing negative thoughts with positive ones, such as believing that they are capable of speaking English, students can gradually build their confidence. This mindset helps them face speaking situations with less fear and more motivation.
- iv. Peer seeking refers to students' efforts to seek support and assistance from peers through discussion or practice together. By interacting with classmates, students can share ideas, practice speaking in a less formal environment, and receive feedback. This social support reduces feelings of isolation and anxiety, as students realize that others face similar challenges. Consequently, peer seeking can make the learning process more engaging and less stressful.
- v. Resignation represents a less adaptive strategy in which students tend to give up or avoid speaking activities due to high levels of anxiety. Students who use this strategy may remain silent, refuse to participate, or rely on others to speak on their behalf. While this may temporarily reduce anxiety, it can negatively affect their speaking development in the long term. Therefore, resignation is considered an ineffective strategy compared to the others.

Through data collection and analysis, this study examines how these five strategies are used by students and how effective they are in reducing speaking anxiety and improving students' confidence in speaking English. The findings of the research are expected to provide insights into students' coping strategies and their role in addressing speaking anxiety at MTs Pancasila Kota Bengkulu.

