

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **A. Theoretical Review**

This chapter discusses theoretical perspectives relevant to students' confidence in speaking English, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The discussion is divided into three main areas: (1) Speaking Skills, (2) Speaking Challenges, and (3) Speaking Activities. These aspects form the conceptual foundation for analyzing the problems faced by students and the strategies they use to build confidence in speaking.

#### **1. Speaking Skill**

Speaking is a fundamental skill in language learning, especially for EFL learners, as it reflects their ability to communicate effectively in real-world contexts. According to Brown (2004), speaking is an interactive process of meaning-making that involves the production, reception, and processing of information. Nunan (2003) defines speaking as a productive oral skill used to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly. Effective speaking requires not only linguistic competence (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) but also pragmatic and sociolinguistic awareness to adapt language appropriately to the context.

In an educational setting, speaking is often considered one of the most challenging skills to master. Harmer (2007) notes that many students struggle due to fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, or lack of confidence. Thornbury (2005) emphasizes that fluency in speaking is developed through regular and meaningful use of language in communicative situations, not just through repetitive

drills or memorization. Therefore, speaking is closely related to the opportunities for practice and the affective conditions in which students learn.

In this study, speaking skills are defined as the ability of students to express ideas verbally in English clearly, fluently, and confidently. The development of these skills is influenced by internal and external factors, which are discussed in the next section.

## **2. Speaking Challenges**

Speaking challenges refers to psychological and environmental barriers that prevent students from speaking confidently in English. These challenges are generally divided into two main groups: internal challenges and external challenges. Each group includes key factors that directly affect students' speaking performance, such as anxiety, motivation, confidence, and the learning environment.

### **2.1 Internal Challenges**

Internal challenges originate from within the students themselves. These include psychological factors that can hinder students' willingness and ability to speak English effectively.

#### **a. Anxiety**

Anxiety in language learning is commonly defined as a subjective feeling of tension, nervousness, or worry that arises during language use. Horwitz et al. (1986) introduced the concept of Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), which includes three main components: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. In the context of speaking, anxiety often manifests in behaviors such as hesitation, avoidance of eye contact, trembling, or difficulty organizing thoughts. High levels of anxiety can interfere with

fluency and reduce students' willingness to participate in speaking activities, thereby lowering their self-confidence. Anxiety in speaking situations may also be influenced by factors such as peer pressure, classroom atmosphere, and personal expectations.

This is supported by Hadi et al. (2021), who found that more than half of students experiencing speaking anxiety tend to avoid speaking situations, which slows down the development of their speaking ability. These findings indicate that speaking anxiety is not only a psychological barrier but also has direct consequences on students' learning outcomes and confidence.

**b. Motivation**

Motivation is another critical internal factor that influences students' willingness to speak. According to Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, motivation can be intrinsic (driven by personal interest or enjoyment) or extrinsic (influenced by external rewards or pressures). Motivated students are more persistent in practicing speaking and more resilient when facing difficulties.

Dornyei (2001) emphasizes that motivated learners are more likely to engage in communication, even when they feel unprepared. In contrast, low motivation can lead to disinterest, fear, and reluctance to participate. Therefore, motivation plays a key role in building and maintaining students' speaking confidence.

**c. Self-Confidence**

Self-confidence is one of the most important affective factors in language learning. According to Bandura (1997), self-confidence is closely related to

self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to successfully perform specific tasks. In the context of speaking English, students with high self-confidence are more likely to take risks, engage in conversations, and recover from mistakes, while those with low self-confidence often avoid speaking opportunities and fear negative evaluation (Brown, 2007). Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) also emphasizes that learners with low self-confidence tend to have a high affective filter, which impedes language input and negatively impacts language acquisition. Thus, self-confidence is a fundamental component that directly influences students' speaking behavior.

Furthermore, Bandura (1997) explains that self-confidence, or self-efficacy, is built from four main sources: (1) mastery experiences, in which success in speaking tasks strengthens confidence; (2) vicarious experiences, where observing peers' successful performances enhances belief in one's own ability; (3) social persuasion, through encouragement and constructive feedback from teachers and peers; and (4) physiological states, such as feelings of calmness or nervousness, which affect how confident students feel during speaking.

Supporting this, Ozturk and Gurbuz (2014) found that students' confidence in speaking is often reflected in their ability to manage anxiety, respond to feedback, and evaluate their own progress. This indicates that self-confidence interacts closely with other psychological factors such as anxiety and motivation, making it a central element in determining students' willingness and ability to speak in English.

## **2.2 External Challenges**

External challenges are factors that arise from the learning environment and affect students' ability to participate in speaking activities with confidence.

### **a. Learning Environment**

The learning environment refers to the physical, emotional, and social atmosphere in which the learning process occurs. According to Brown (2007), a supportive and positive classroom climate can reduce students' anxiety and encourage active participation in speaking activities. On the other hand, an overly competitive, rigid, or judgmental environment may increase stress and inhibit students from expressing themselves in English.

In this context, the teacher's role, peer relationships, and classroom dynamics are central in shaping students' confidence. Constructive feedback, encouragement, and collaborative tasks help students feel safe to practice, which gradually strengthens their confidence. Conversely, negative feedback, lack of support, or limited opportunities to speak may weaken their willingness to participate.

Empirical findings also support this perspective. Wahyuni et al. (2023) highlight that students tend to be more confident when learning in interactive, student-centered settings. In such environments, learners experience lower anxiety, higher motivation, and stronger belief in their abilities, which reflects how external conditions directly interact with internal psychological factors.

## **3. Speaking Activities**

Effective speaking activities are crucial in developing both fluency and confidence, as they provide structured opportunities for learners to use

language authentically. According to Thornbury (2005), fluency-oriented tasks such as role-plays, interviews, and discussions allow students to practice in contexts that simulate real-life communication. These activities help reduce hesitation, encourage spontaneous use of language, and strengthen learners' belief in their ability to speak English.

In addition, self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies support the effectiveness of speaking activities. Zimmerman (2002) outlines three cyclical phases: planning (forethought), performance, and self-reflection that learners can apply to manage their learning. When students set personal goals, monitor their progress, and reflect on their performance, they are better able to overcome anxiety, maintain motivation, and enhance their confidence.

In the context of this study, speaking activities are understood not only as instructional techniques but also as practices embedded in supportive environments and complemented by learners' strategies. Both teacher-led activities and student-initiated efforts play a role in helping students face internal challenges (such as anxiety, lack of motivation, and low confidence) and adapt to external factors (such as classroom atmosphere and peer interaction).

In summary, speaking activities serve as a bridge between the challenges students face and their progress in speaking skills. Through structured practice, supportive environments, and the use of self-regulated strategies, learners can gradually build stronger confidence and fluency in speaking English.

## **B. Previous Study**

Several previous studies have investigated the factors that influence students' self-confidence in speaking English. These studies provide important empirical insights into how psychological and environmental variables such as anxiety, motivation, and learning environment affect students' oral performance. However, most of these studies tend to focus on isolated variables or are limited in contextual depth, which highlights the need for a more integrated and contextual exploration.

Muklas et al. (2024) conducted a study examining the relationship between social support and students' speaking confidence. The results revealed that students who received consistent encouragement from peers and instructors showed significant improvements in their speaking performance and were more willing to participate in class discussions. This supports the idea that motivation and supportive environments can enhance self-confidence, yet the study focused primarily on support systems without exploring personal strategies.

Yetti et al. (2024) explored how students with a sufficient level of vocabulary knowledge still experienced low confidence in speaking. The study found that even though students had the linguistic tools, psychological factors such as anxiety and self-perception were barriers to effective communication. This research emphasizes the importance of emotional readiness and suggests that vocabulary mastery alone is insufficient for building speaking confidence.

In a different context, Hadi et al. (2021) analyzed Indonesian students' speaking performance and identified several internal and external factors affecting their confidence, including fear of making mistakes, lack of practice, and teacher feedback. Their study confirmed that anxiety plays a crucial role in hindering

students' willingness to speak, especially in classroom settings. However, their study did not explore how students attempt to overcome those challenges.

Wahyuni et al. (2023) focused on the role of a supportive learning environment in developing students' motivation and confidence. The research highlighted that a positive classroom atmosphere, peer encouragement, and constructive feedback from teachers significantly contributed to students' willingness to speak English. While the study effectively examined environmental factors, it did not delve into students' personal coping mechanisms.

Nawi (2019) investigated the effect of time pressure on speaking performance among university students. The study indicated that students tend to become more anxious and less articulate under time constraints, which negatively impacts their speaking fluency. Although the study provides valuable insights into situational anxiety, it was conducted in a university setting and may not fully represent the experiences of students in informal language institutions such as Kampung Inggris.

Ozturk and Gurbuz (2014) examined Turkish EFL students' self-confidence in speaking and found that learners often experienced anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, which directly reduced their willingness to communicate. Their findings underline that self-confidence is not only influenced by linguistic competence but also by psychological readiness and classroom dynamics. However, the study did not fully address how students develop strategies to overcome these barriers.

From these previous studies, it is clear that factors such as anxiety, motivation, learning environment, and self-confidence significantly influence speaking performance. However, most of the research treats these variables separately or lacks contextual focus on informal education settings. Moreover, there is limited

exploration of how students themselves strategically respond to these challenges. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by conducting a case study of intermediate-level students at Inspire English Course to examine not only the problems they face, but also the strategies they employ to overcome them and build self-confidence in speaking English.

### **C. Conceptual Framework**

This study focuses on students' self-confidence in speaking English. To understand how students develop their confidence during speaking activities, this study uses Bandura's (1997) concept of self-efficacy as a supporting perspective. According to Bandura, confidence can develop through learning experiences, peer observation, social encouragement, and students' emotional conditions during learning activities. In the context of speaking English, these aspects help explain how students perceive their speaking abilities and respond to speaking activities.

In addition, this study also considers several factors that may shape students' self-confidence during speaking activities, including anxiety, motivation, learning environment, and self-regulated learning. These factors are not treated as separate main theories, but as supporting factors that help explain how students develop confidence in speaking English. Anxiety may affect students' willingness to speak, motivation may influence their engagement in learning, a supportive learning environment may encourage participation, and self-regulated learning may help students manage speaking challenges independently.

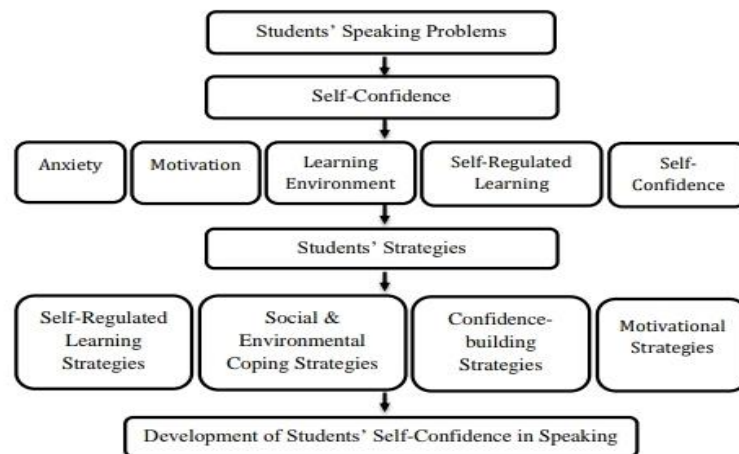
Therefore, this study explores students' speaking problems related to self-confidence and the strategies they use to overcome speaking difficulties and gradually develop their confidence in speaking English at Inspire English Course.

Therefore, this conceptual framework directs the study into two main focuses:

- a. Identifying students' speaking problems related to self-confidence in speaking English.
- b. Analyzing the strategies used by students to overcome speaking problems and develop their self-confidence in speaking English.

Overall, this framework illustrates the flow of the study, starting from students' speaking problems related to self-confidence, followed by supporting aspects such as anxiety, motivation, learning environment, and self-regulated learning, and leading to the strategies used by students to gradually develop their confidence in speaking English.

Based on the conceptual framework described above, the relationship between the aspects explored in this study can be illustrated in the following figure.



**Figure 2.1** Conceptual Framework of the Study