

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews several theories and previous studies related to the present research. It explains key concepts about speaking anxiety, peer support, and their relationship to students' speaking performance. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a theoretical foundation and background that support the current study and help the researcher identify the gap between previous studies and the present research focus.

A. Speaking

1. Definition of Speaking

Speaking is generally an oral mode of communication and an essential language skill that learners must master to interact effectively. Pakula (2019) defines speaking as a complex process involving the coordination of linguistic knowledge, cognitive processing, and social interaction. According to Pakula, effective speaking does not merely involve producing grammatically correct sentences but also requires speakers to convey meaning appropriately in different communicative contexts. This perspective emphasizes that speaking is inherently interactive, as it involves both producing and responding to messages during communication. Therefore, speaking plays a crucial role in language learning, particularly in enabling learners to participate meaningfully in classroom interaction and real-life communication.

In line with this view, Abdullaev et al. (2021) explain that speaking refers to the ability to use language orally with accuracy, fluency, and appropriateness to achieve communicative goals. They highlight that speaking

proficiency involves several interrelated components, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency, which must function simultaneously during oral communication. Speaking proficiency is not only determined by learners' linguistic competence but also by their ability to organize ideas, respond spontaneously, and interact effectively with others. This definition underscores that speaking is a multidimensional skill that reflects learners' overall communicative competence rather than isolated language knowledge.

Furthermore, Pratiwi and Ayu (2020) emphasize that speaking is a skill that develops through continuous practice and meaningful interaction. Their study suggests that learners improve their speaking ability when they are actively engaged in communicative tasks that encourage them to describe, explain, and express ideas orally. This finding indicates that speaking involves both linguistic performance and communicative function, as learners must use language to convey meaning clearly and confidently. Taken together, these definitions suggest that speaking is a dynamic and complex skill that integrates linguistic knowledge, cognitive processing, and interactional ability, making it a central component of successful English language learning in EFL contexts.

2. The function of speaking

One of the main objectives for most learners of English as a second or foreign language is to achieve proficiency in speaking. Several linguists have attempted to classify the various functions and roles of spoken language in communication. Brown and Yule (1983) initially identified two main functions of speech: interactional and transactional. This framework was later expanded by Jones (1996) and Burns (1998), and further developed by Richards (2008),

who proposed three categories of spoken language: talk as interaction, talk as transaction, and talk as performance. Each type of spoken activity serves different purposes and therefore requires distinct instructional approaches in language teaching.

a. Talk as interaction

Talk as interaction refers to communication that is primarily for social purposes. It is commonly understood as a conversation in which people greet one another, engage in small talk, exchange experiences, or maintain relationships. This sort of discussion is primarily concerned with how speakers express themselves and interact with others, rather than the exchange of information. Depending on the situation, such encounters might take place in either formal or informal contexts. Richards (2008), building on Brown and Yule's (1983) distinction between interactional and transactional language use, explains that talk as interaction reflects social roles and relationships, conveys aspects of the speaker's identity, follows norms and degrees of politeness, employs common vocabulary, and is collaboratively constructed by participants.

b. Talk as transaction

Talk as a transaction is a type of speaking that emphasizes information exchange to achieve a specific goal, with the message taking precedence over the social interaction between speakers. It is goal-oriented and practical, as demonstrated when ordering meals, requesting directions, or negotiating a transaction. Communication tactics, repeats, and checks are commonly used to

assure message comprehension, but linguistic precision is often less important than job completion.

c. Talk as performance

Talk as performance refers to public speaking that transmits a message to an audience. It is distinguished by a focus on the message and audience, a monologic (one-sided) delivery, a predictable framework, and vocabulary more comparable to written communication than to informal chat.

3. Components of speaking

There are some components or criteria of speaking presented by Brown (2004) to assess students' speaking performance:

a. Comprehension

In communication, people need to talk and listen. Understanding someone's comprehension is crucial when speaking, since communication requires both the sender and the recipient. According to Harris (1974), comprehension is one of the components that plays a role in speaking skills. In this section, the speaker must have a good method for ensuring that the listeners understand what is being conveyed. As we know, the function of speaking is to communicate ideas from the speaker to the listeners. So, the speaker must ensure that the listeners understand what they are going to convey.

b. Grammar

Grammar describes a language's structure and how linguistic elements, such as words and phrases, are put together to produce sentences. Grammar is the framework for creating sentences. Setting up a grammatical framework is challenging and undoubtedly makes it harder for students to communicate

effectively, as the structure varies between the source and target languages. A good understanding of grammar enables students to produce sentences that are grammatically and lexically correct. If the speaker makes a mistake in using grammar while communicating, the listener will also make a mistake in interpreting the meaning of the speech (Noviasari et al., 2024).

c. Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the appropriate dialect that is employed in communication. One definition of vocabulary is the understanding of words and their meanings. Additionally, the right diction utilized in communication is known as vocabulary. It indicates that a term is suited for communication and that it relates to a suitable word for expressing human thought.

d. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is another crucial aspect of speaking. It involves our ability to speak words well enough for other people to understand. Richard and Schmidt claim that the way a sound or sounds are created determines their pronunciation. Good pronunciation is therefore important when speaking a language. A variety of factors must be taken into account when it comes to pronunciation, such as the students' habits; if they are accustomed to pronouncing a word correctly, they will master it. However, the students themselves also have an impact on their pronunciation, for instance, due to the influence of their mother tongue.

e. Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read, speak, or write with ease, fluidity, and expressiveness. In addition, the speaker can relate meaning and context while

reading, understanding, and responding clearly and succinctly in a language. The capacity to communicate effectively and fluidly is known as fluency. Students must talk clearly and smoothly to convey the information they are trying to convey.

B. Speaking Anxiety

1. Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety is defined as an overwhelming and uncontrolled sense of concern or uneasiness about a variety of issues. It may also be defined as a normal emotional reaction to conditions, such as perceived stress, fear, or danger. Physical and psychological symptoms, including worry, restlessness, perspiration, or an elevated heart rate, are common manifestations.

Akiskal (2019) explains that anxiety is a natural psychological reaction to perceived threats or challenges, functioning as a protective mechanism that prepares individuals to respond to demanding situations. However, when anxiety becomes excessive or persistent, it can interfere with cognitive processing, emotional regulation, and performance. Akiskal further emphasizes that anxiety is closely related to other affective conditions, particularly stress and depression, and should be understood as part of an integrated emotional system that influences human behavior and performance.

Similarly, Perrotta (2019) defines anxiety as a complex psychological condition that involves cognitive, emotional, and physiological components. From a clinical perspective, anxiety arises when individuals perceive situations as uncontrollable or threatening, leading to heightened worry, fear, and avoidance behaviors. Perrotta highlights that anxiety disorders develop when

these responses become disproportionate to actual situations, negatively affecting individuals' daily functioning. This definition underscores that anxiety is not solely an emotional experience but also a condition that impacts attention, decision-making, and task performance, which is particularly relevant in learning and performance-based contexts.

2. Definition of Speaking Anxiety

Speaking anxiety can be defined as a type of performance anxiety that occurs when students are required to communicate in a foreign language, particularly in situations involving assessment or social judgment. Rajitha and Alamelu (2020) state that speaking anxiety commonly occurs in classroom situations that demand oral participation, such as presentations, discussions, or spontaneous responses. Speaking anxiety is often associated with learners' fear of making mistakes, limited language proficiency, and lack of self-confidence. These conditions may cause some students to feel uncomfortable or hesitant during speaking activities. Consequently, they may be less willing to participate in speaking tasks or experience difficulties expressing their ideas in English.

In addition, Putri et al. (2020) explain that speaking anxiety is closely related to learners' fear of negative evaluation from teachers and peers. Students who experience high levels of anxiety tend to worry about being judged, corrected, or laughed at, which reduces their willingness to participate in oral communication. This emotional pressure leads learners to become passive, speak with hesitation, and produce limited or fragmented responses. Speaking anxiety, therefore, is not merely an emotional reaction but a factor

that directly influences students' confidence and engagement in speaking activities in the EFL classroom.

3. The Components of Speaking Anxiety

Since speaking is often considered the skill most affected by anxiety, it is essential to examine the factors that shape this phenomenon. According to Horwitz and Cope (1986), speaking anxiety can be understood through three interrelated components: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

a. Communication apprehension

Communication apprehension refers to the shyness or fear that learners experience when they are expected to communicate in a foreign language. This aspect is closely linked to difficulty expressing thoughts verbally, especially in front of an audience or during spontaneous conversations. Students with communication anxiety may hesitate to join class discussions, avoid speaking tasks, or remain silent even when they know the correct answer. Their anxiety stems from the belief that they lack the necessary language skills, grammar, or fluency to speak effectively. As a result, this issue often prevents students from fully participating in speaking activities, which significantly impacts their oral performance.

b. Test anxiety

Test anxiety is the fear of failure that occurs during assessments. This usually occurs during speaking tests, oral exams, or performance assessments in the classroom when learning a language. Test anxiety: students frequently worry excessively about their grades, the possibility of making mistakes, or

falling short of their teacher's expectations. Even when students are well-prepared, this type of worry can impair focus, memory, and general performance, occasionally producing subpar outcomes. As a result, test anxiety serves as an example of how the stress of assessment can significantly hinder students' ability to demonstrate their speaking skills.

c. Fear of negative evaluation

Fear of negative assessment is the anxiety that students experience when they think they will be negatively assessed by others. The fear of a bad evaluation can arise in any learning environment, unlike test anxiety, which is exclusive to formal assessments. For example, students could be afraid of being made fun of by their classmates, getting scathing feedback from teachers, or seeming foolish in front of the class. This element frequently causes students to be reluctant to contribute to group discussions, give their answers, or try speaking English in front of others. The cycle of worry and poor speaking performance is thus reinforced by the dread of receiving a poor assessment, which limits opportunities for practice and development.

C. Speaking Performance

1. Definition of Speaking Performance

Speaking performance refers to a person's ability to convey ideas, information, and messages orally in a way that is understood by the listener (Brown, 2004). This reflects the application of language competence through observable and measurable speaking activities. In other words, speaking performance shows how well learners apply their language knowledge in real communication situations (Arniatika, 2021). As an interactive process,

speaking involves using spoken language to express thoughts, opinions, and feelings, thereby facilitating communication between the speaker and the listener. Therefore, speaking performance can be used to assess students' ability to communicate effectively in English.

Furthermore, speaking performance is considered one of the most important language skills due to its wide use in both academic communication and daily life. According to Al-Hafiz and Gushendra (2021), speaking performance plays a major role among other language skills because it provides learners with the opportunity to communicate in situations that resemble real-life contexts outside of the classroom. Speaking performance is also an effective way to convey meaning and messages to listeners through oral communication. So, students' speaking performance can be used to assess their ability to communicate ideas and interact effectively using the target language.

2. Speaking assessment

Speaking assessment is the process of evaluating students' oral language skills based on specific criteria. Speaking assessment is used in English language learning to determine how effectively students communicate ideas, express opinions, and convey information using spoken language. Brown (2004) suggests that speaking assessment should consider several aspects of speaking ability, including grammar, comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency. These aspects provide a comprehensive evaluation of students' speaking performance and communicative competence.

To ensure objective and systematic evaluation, speaking ability is generally assessed using an analytical scoring rubric. Harris (1974) proposed

five main aspects for assessing speaking ability: comprehension, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency.

D. Peer Support

1. Definition of Peer Support

Peer support is defined as emotional, social, and academic assistance offered by peers during the learning process, such as encouragement, acceptance, and collaboration among students (Wentzel & Ramani, 2016). In the EFL classroom, peer support fosters a supportive learning environment in which students feel more comfortable participating in speaking activities. According to Juvonen et al. (2019), supportive peer interactions can minimize students' anxiety about negative evaluations and increase their readiness to communicate in English.

Similarly, Sato & Ballinger (2016) and Ukhra et al. (2020) define peer support in the context of language learning as the help learners provide to one another to achieve success in acquiring a foreign language. This implies that peer support involves every student playing an active role in assisting others to achieve learning objectives. When students engage in supportive peer interactions, they often feel more comfortable, which helps reduce anxiety, encourages participation, and enhances their speaking performance.

2. Aspect of Peer Support

According to Sarafino and Smith (2011), social support consists of five aspects: emotional support, self-esteem support, instrumental support, informational support, and social network support. These aspects explain the various forms of support that individuals can receive from others, including

peers, in stressful situations. In the context of learning English, social support from peers can help students feel more comfortable, confident, and motivated during speaking activities.

a. Emotional support

Emotional support refers to expressions of empathy, care, love, and attention given to individuals. This type of support helps individuals feel comfortable, valued, and emotionally supported when facing stressful situations. In speaking activities, emotional support from peers may reduce students' nervousness and help them feel more confident when speaking English.

b. Esteem support

Esteem support is support expressed through positive appreciation, encouragement, and respect toward individuals. This support includes giving compliments, encouraging others, agreeing with their opinions, and providing positive comparisons. In classroom speaking activities, esteem support can increase students' self-confidence and motivation to participate actively.

c. Instrumental support

Instrumental support refers to direct assistance provided to individuals, such as helping complete tasks, lending materials, or offering practical help when difficulties arise. In English learning, peers may provide instrumental support by helping classmates practice speaking, complete assignments, or prepare presentations.

d. Informational support

Informational support is advice, suggestions, guidance, or feedback that helps individuals solve problems or face difficulties. In speaking activities, peers may provide suggestions about pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, or speaking strategies to help classmates improve their speaking performance.

e. Network support

Social network support refers to support that makes individuals feel they are part of a group with shared interests, togetherness, and companionship. This type of support creates a sense of belonging and social connection among peers. In English classrooms, social network support can encourage students to participate more actively in speaking activities because they feel accepted and supported by their classmates.

Based on the explanation above, peer social support includes emotional support, esteem support, instrumental support, informational support, and social network support. These forms of support can help students cope with anxiety and improve their confidence during speaking activities.

3. Factors influencing Peer Support

According to Myers (as cited in Putri, 2022), three factors encourage individuals to provide peer social support.

a. Empathy

Empathy refers to an individual's ability to understand and feel the difficulties experienced by others. Through empathy, individuals are encouraged to provide help and emotional support to reduce others' distress.

b. Social Norms and Values

Social norms and values serve as guidelines for individuals in carrying out social responsibilities. Individuals may provide support to peers because helping others is considered socially acceptable and morally appropriate

c. Social Exchange

Social exchange refers to reciprocal interactions between individuals in social relationships, such as giving help, attention, love, or information. Interpersonal relationships tend to be satisfying when there is balance and reciprocity in social interactions.

E. Previous studies

Several previous studies have evaluated the relationship between the factors covered in this study. This research offers significant insights and acts as a reference to assist the present study:

1. A study conducted by Akbar (2024) investigated students' speaking anxiety in the EFL classroom at MTs Malang. The study aimed to identify factors causing students' anxiety when speaking English. It employed a qualitative descriptive design using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to collect the data. The findings revealed that students' speaking anxiety was influenced by several psychological and environmental factors, such as low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, lack of preparation, and fear of negative evaluation from teachers and peers. These factors caused students to feel nervous, hesitant, and reluctant to participate in speaking activities. As a result, many students avoided speaking tasks, which negatively affected their learning process.

2. Djahimo et al. (2018) examined the relationship between students' anxiety and their speaking performance in an EFL context. The study involved 25 university students and used a qualitative descriptive approach through questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. The findings indicated that students experienced anxiety due to factors such as limited vocabulary, low self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes. The study also found that anxiety had a significant negative impact on students' speaking performance. Anxious students tended to avoid speaking activities, showed low fluency, and lacked confidence during oral tasks. These results highlight that anxiety plays an important role in influencing students' speaking ability
3. Chen et al. (2022) investigated the relationship between speaking anxiety and speaking performance using a quantitative correlational design. The study involved 59 participants who completed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and a speaking test. The findings showed that students generally experienced moderate levels of speaking anxiety. The correlation analysis revealed a negative but non-significant relationship between speaking anxiety and speaking performance ($r = -0.082$, $p = 0.537$). This result indicates that although anxiety tends to reduce speaking performance, it is not the only factor influencing students' speaking ability. Therefore, other variables may also contribute to students' speaking performance.
4. A study conducted by Suryani et al. (2024) entitled "*The Relationship Between Peer Support and Public Speaking Anxiety in High School*"

Students” investigated the relationship between peer support and students’ public speaking anxiety. The study employed a quantitative correlational design involving 100 high school students in Islamic boarding schools using purposive sampling. The data were collected using two Likert-scale questionnaires that measured peer support and public speaking anxiety. The findings showed a significant negative correlation between peer support and public speaking anxiety ($r = -0.358$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that students who received higher levels of peer support tended to experience lower public speaking anxiety. This study highlights the important role of peer support as a social factor that can reduce students’ anxiety and create a more supportive environment for speaking activities.

5. A study conducted by Solihati et al. (2025) entitled “Peer-Supported Practice Strategy in Overcoming Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA) among Students” investigated the effectiveness of the Peer-Supported Practice Strategy (PSPS) in reducing students’ public speaking anxiety and explored how students with different levels of speaking proficiency responded to the strategy. The study took a mixed-methods approach, using a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-post-test design and qualitative interviews. The study included 30 university students enrolled in a public speaking class who completed a 12-item questionnaire before and after implementing the method. Throughout the intervention, students participated in structured speaking exercises that emphasized peer collaboration, frequent practice, and positive feedback from classmates. The quantitative analysis showed a significant decrease in students’ anxiety levels, as indicated by the reduction

of mean scores from 45.93 in the pretest to 39.28 in the post-test, and the paired sample t-test confirmed that the reduction was statistically significant. In addition, the findings demonstrated that the method benefited both beginner and advanced students, with beginners showing the greatest progress. The qualitative results corroborated these findings, demonstrating that students felt more at ease, competent, and less worried about making mistakes when practicing speaking in a nonjudgmental and supportive situation. They also noted that peer feedback, regular speaking practice, and collaborative learning helped them better manage their nervousness. Overall, the study found that including peer support in structured speaking practice is an effective pedagogical strategy for reducing anxiety and increasing students' confidence in public speaking activities.

6. A study conducted by Hafifah and Anggraini (2023) entitled “Factors Influencing Students’ Speaking Skills: Social Support and Speaking Anxiety” examined how speaking anxiety and social support affected senior high school students’ speaking abilities. 135 students participated in the quantitative correlational design study, which included questionnaires and speaking performance evaluations as tools. The results showed that social support and speaking anxiety were modest for the majority of students. According to the statistical study, students’ speaking abilities were significantly correlated with both speaking anxiety and social support ($\text{sig} = 0.000 < 0.05$), supporting the hypothesis. The results also demonstrated that speaking anxiety had a negative impact on students’ speaking abilities, whereas social support improved their performance. Among the factors of

social support, a trustworthy alliance appeared as the most effective factor in improving students' speaking abilities. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination indicated that speaking anxiety and social support accounted for approximately 12% of the variance in students' speaking competence, suggesting that other factors may also play a role. These findings underscore the significance of both psychological and social elements in understanding students' speaking development.

Based on the previous studies above, it can be concluded that previous research has reported different findings regarding the relationships among speaking anxiety, peer support, and speaking performance. Several studies found that speaking anxiety tended to have a negative relationship with speaking performance, while peer support was associated with increased confidence and participation in speaking activities. However, some studies also reported non-significant relationships, suggesting that these variables may not consistently influence students' speaking performance across different contexts.

Although these studies provide valuable insights, most of them examined the variables separately or focused on only one or two relationships. Therefore, further research is needed to investigate the relationships among speaking anxiety, peer support, and speaking performance within the same context, particularly among senior high school students.

F. Gap in the literature

Although various studies have been conducted to explore speaking anxiety among EFL learners, there are still some gaps in the literature. Akbar (2024) and Djahimo et al. (2018) focused on the psychological and environmental factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety, such as lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and unfavorable assessment. Their studies provided valuable qualitative insights into learners' emotional experiences when speaking English. However, these studies did not include social classroom factors, particularly peer support, nor did they provide quantitative evidence on the strength of the relationship between speaking anxiety and classroom social interaction and students' speaking performance.

On the other hand, Chen et al. (2022) employed a quantitative correlational approach to examine the relationship between speaking anxiety and oral performance and found a negative but nonsignificant correlation, indicating that speaking anxiety alone may not fully explain variations in students' speaking performance. This finding suggests the possible influence of other factors, including the classroom social environment. Moreover, most existing studies were conducted in general EFL contexts involving university or secondary-level students, with limited attention given to senior high school learners who face different learning conditions, peer dynamics, and performance expectations. Therefore, the present study aims to address this gap by examining whether significant relationships exist among students' speaking anxiety, peer support, and speaking performance in a senior high school context, particularly at SMAN 4 Kediri. This study is also expected to provide additional empirical evidence

regarding the relationships among these variables within the Indonesian EFL context.