

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

In English learning, speaking skills are one of the important skills that students must master. According to (Brown, 2001), speaking is a complex skill that requires learners to master grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as have the courage to express their ideas orally. Speaking is not only about producing words, but also about organizing thoughts clearly and delivering them in a way that others can understand. Learners need grammar to build correct sentences, vocabulary to express their meanings accurately, and good pronunciation to make their speech clear.

However, many students experience difficulties in speaking skills due to anxiety or fear when using English in class. This phenomenon is known as speaking anxiety, which is a feeling of tension, nervousness, and insecurity that arises when a person has to speak in a foreign language. Horwitz et al., (1986) call this phenomenon Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA), which is a special form of anxiety experienced by students when learning or using a foreign language in the classroom.

FLCA, according to (Horwitz et al., 1986), consists of three main components, namely, (1) Communication Apprehension is fear or discomfort in talking to others using a foreign language, (2) Fear of Negative Evaluation is fear

of negative judgment from teachers or peers, (3) Test Anxiety is anxiety that arises due to pressure to perform well in exams or oral assignments.

This anxiety can have a negative impact on the student's learning process. MacIntyre & Gardner, (1991) stated that high anxiety can interfere with information processing in the brain, making it difficult for students to understand, remember, and produce language effectively. This causes students to be reluctant to speak, avoid verbal interactions, and can even experience an unwillingness to communicate.

Research by (Liu & Jackson, 2008) on EFL students in China revealed that speech anxiety is often caused by fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, and fear of being ridiculed by peers. Meanwhile, Tanveer (2007) found that cultural factors, teaching methods, and teachers' attitudes can also exacerbate speaking anxiety.

In the context of madrasah education, English is taught as a compulsory subject that aims to develop students' communicative competence, including their ability to speak confidently and appropriately. However, the learning process in madrasah often takes place within a formal classroom atmosphere where students may feel pressure to perform well in front of their teachers and peers. In addition, the integration of general subjects with religious values can create a unique learning environment that influences students' attitudes, motivation, and emotional responses toward English, especially in speaking activities.

This phenomenon is also found in the context of madrasah education in Indonesia. Based on the initial observations of researchers at MTsS Madinatul Munawwarah, it can be seen that many grade VIII students have difficulty speaking English. Some students show shyness, hesitation, or even silence when asked to speak, even though they have received regular oral learning. This indicates that there is speech anxiety that needs to be explored more deeply.

Therefore, the researcher is interested to analyze the factors that affect speaking anxiety in MTsS Madinatul Munawwarah students and to find out their anxiety level. This research not only aims to understand the students' experience directly, but also provides input for teachers and schools to create a more supportive learning environment and encourage students to actively speak English.

B. Identification of the Problem.

Based on the background, that most students feel nervous, embarrassed, and reluctant to speak in English in class. They tend to be silent when asked to answer oral questions or discuss in groups. This indicates a symptom of speaking anxiety that inhibits their language skills.

This problem shows a gap between the goal of learning English, being able to communicate well verbally and the reality in the field that shows low students' verbal participation. This situation raises an important question: What causes students to feel anxious when speaking in English in class? And what factors affect the appearance of anxiety?

C. Limitation of the Problem

This study is limited to identifying and analyzing the factors that influence English speaking anxiety and to determine the level of anxiety among class VIII students at MTsS Madinatul Munawwarah Bukittinggi.

D. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background and identification of the problems that have been described, the formulation of the problem in this study is as follows:

1. What is the level of speaking anxiety experienced by eighth-grade students at MTsS Madinatul Munawwarah Bukittinggi?
2. What are the factors that affect the anxiety of grade VIII students in speaking English at MTsS Madinatul Munawwarah Bukittinggi?

E. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is:

1. To identify the level of students' English speaking Anxiety at MTsS Madinatul Munawwarah Bukittinggi
2. To identify the factors that affecting students' English speaking anxiety at MTsS Madinatul Munawwarah Bukittinggi

F. Significance of the Study

This research is expected to provide benefits both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the results of this study can enrich scientific studies in the field of English language learning, especially related to the phenomenon of foreign

language speaking anxiety among junior high school students. This research can also be a reference for future researchers who are interested in studying the psychological aspects of foreign language learning. Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide insight for English teachers in understanding the factors that cause students to feel anxious when speaking in class, so that teachers can develop learning strategies that are more empathetic, communicative, and support students' courage to speak. In addition, this research can also be beneficial for schools in designing a more conducive learning environment, as well as for students themselves to be more aware of the causes of their anxiety and motivated to overcome them.

G. Definition of Key Term

1. Speaking

Speaking is a complex process that requires mastery of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and courage in conveying ideas orally that is stated by (Brown, 2001).

2. Anxiety

An activation of the autonomic nervous system is linked to the subjective sensation of tension, uncertainty, nervousness, and worry known as anxiety, (Horwitz et al., 1986).

3. Speaking Anxiety

The worry or trepidation that a student feels when they have to speak the target language in front of other people (Horwitz et al., 1986) .