

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of: 1) background of the study, 2) problem identification, 3) limitation of the study, 4) research questions, 5) research objectives, and 5) research significance.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Over one and a half billion people worldwide can converse in English to some extent, establishing it as the global language of communication. Fluency in English is increasingly valuable in a range of contexts, including education, the workplace, and international relations (Prayudha & Pradana, 2023; Tyana et al., 2022; Wahyuningsih & Ni'mah, 2023). However, a significant number of people lack confidence when speaking English. They are also limiting their ability to interact effectively and participate in activities where English is the primary language (Ayop & Namocot, 2023; Hayati et al., 2020; Nadila, 2020; Riadil, 2020; Syahfutra, 2021).

Speaking confidence is defined as the ability to explain ideas or concepts clearly and comprehensibly, without fear or hesitation (Nadila, 2020; Renaldi, 2020; Rosmayanti et al., 2023). Speaking confidence is essential for English learners because it enables them to communicate effectively in English and express their ideas and opinions clearly and precisely (Hasanah, 2022; Wahyuni, 2020). Confidence in speaking English can also help students overcome language barriers and communicate more effectively with native speakers. It can also help students build self-esteem and confidence in their linguistic abilities (Hasanah, 2022).

Furthermore, speaking confidence is a key component of language learning since it allows learners to improve their speaking skills and fluency.

Speaking confidence is vital in various scenarios, including academic or professional settings where English may be required for communication. Confident English speakers do better in interviews, presentations, and negotiations, and they create stronger professional relationships (Farista et al., 2018; Jayanti et al., 2022; Pujiani et al., 2021). Establishing speaking confidence is an essential goal for English learners because it can lead to enhanced fluency, more comfortable communication, and increased opportunities for success in personal and professional circumstances (Jayanti et al., 2022).

The problem of English-speaking confidence has been noted multiple times, most notably in the tourism class at SMKN 1 Singaraja, which is widely regarded as one of the educational institutions in Bali. The findings of an unstructured interview with the English instructor and school principals in February 2023 revealed that the kids' confidence in their ability to speak in English appeared to be doubtful. A subsequent investigation revealed that, even though speaking exposure was included, such as in the video project, optimization was not realized since students rarely participated in the discussion project.

Based on the results of the early investigation, it appeared that the accumulated issue would evolve into the problem of students' lack of confidence when speaking English. According to the preliminary research findings, students at SMKN 1 Singaraja had limited exposure to opportunities to practice speaking over an extended period, resulting in a drop in their English proficiency. Furthermore,

because fluency in English has been a prerequisite in recent global competitiveness, these pupils' speaking abilities are crucial.

This research implements the analysis of speaking confidence based on Bandura's theory. Bandura's theory (1995) highlights the role of self-efficacy in shaping behaviour. Bandura mentions that the human confidence level can be examined through the affective process. In the context of speaking confidence, students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to approach speaking tasks with optimism and persistence, viewing challenges as opportunities for growth. Sander and Sanders (2006) add that Bandura's theory provides important beliefs on comprehending students' confidence; it emphasizes specific context and malleable judgments.

Bandura's theory is particularly apt for exploring students' speaking confidence due to its emphasis on social modelling and observational learning (Pham et al., 2021). By adapting Bandura's theory, the researcher may not only assess students' current speaking confidence levels, but also create interventions through modelling and opportunities for comprehensive speaking experiences (Ilmiani et al., 2021; Manik et al., 2022; Pham et al., 2021). In the speaking learning process, students often develop their confidence by observing and imitating others who communicate effectively. Bandura posited that individuals learn through direct experience and by observing the behaviours and outcomes of others' performances. Observational learning allows students to build confidence gradually as they emulate behaviours that lead to positive speaking performance.

The previous study has implemented Bandura's theory in analyzing self-confidence. Parsons et al., (2011) employed Bandura's theory to explain students'

self-confidence in math. Further, other research has also adopted this theory in English teaching, specifically in analyzing speaking confidence during the pandemic era. Khanafiyah et al., (2021) applied this theory to interpret students' confidence or anxiety when speaking through digital media. The finding mentioned that the decrease in students' speaking confidence is affected by several factors: the challenges of using digital media, lack of comprehension of the learning material, and the influence of social relations/environment. Meanwhile, numerous relevant studies also utilized Bandura's theory to reveal the influence of self-confidence on English speaking (Fitriah et al., 2022; Ghafar, 2023; Yousefabadi & Ghafournia, 2024). Based on these relevant studies, it could be approved that Bandura's theory is adaptable to analyze and interpret students' speaking confidence.

Further investigation of the relevance of self-confidence in English speaking is required to obtain academic descriptions for explaining the phenomena of English-speaking confidence among SMKN 1 Singaraja students. As a result, the researcher felt forced to conduct this examination. This study aims to look into pupils' levels of English-speaking confidence. According to the results of the early research, there appeared to be an accumulation of damage in the students' speaking skills, which could affect their confidence in delivering their message through verbal communication.

1.2 PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The topic of this study is the worry about English speaking confidence among EFL vocational high school students, particularly in the tourism program. This problem is being explored due to two factors. First, based on preliminary research conducted at one of the vocational high schools with a tourism program of study, SMKN 1 Singaraja, the principal stated that most students' English-speaking confidence had become a concern. The school stakeholders are concerned because confidence in English speaking has become an important indicator for students to have a professional career in the future.

This is also becoming a concern because, according to the curriculum, one of the main goals of vocational schools in Indonesia is to train students to work in industries linked to their major. As a result, students should obtain all indicators relating to working professionalism during their studies. In this circumstance, English-speaking confidence has become one of the most influential aspects of being involved in the tourism sector because it is employed in practically every situation and activity.

The previous studies focused more on investigating the influence of speaking confidence and the factors affecting students' confidence. Furthermore, a review of studies on speaking confidence revealed little attention was paid to the English-speaking confidence of EFL vocational high school students. As a result, this gap will be researched further as it is believed to serve novelty regarding English-speaking confidence in a broader aspect.

1.3 LIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

The scope of the research was constrained in several ways so that the focus talks could be efficiently handled. The primary goal of this study is to look into people's confidence in their ability to communicate verbally, focusing on the breadth of English-speaking confidence. The research highlighted three main focuses, i.e., students' view of their English-speaking confidence, the issue, and the solution to the problem related to students' English-speaking confidence. The study was limited to EFL vocational high school students, particularly in the tourism program, because this area has received less attention in recent years, as seen by the number of papers on English speaking confidence that have been examined.

This limitation could be further occupied at SMKN 1 Singaraja. This vocational school has been chosen because it serves tourism education, which relates to the problem being investigated in this study. Moreover, the principal and stakeholders have allowed the researcher to research English-speaking confidence in their school. The research participants were all graders of EFL learners at SMKN 1 Singaraja who were concerned with tourism majors.

The students who participated were limited to the tourism major because they had a higher need for English speaking than other majors at SMKN 1 Singaraja. This was done in response to an incident that would impact the student's future employment, which demands effective English speaking as one of the essential prerequisites. The number of students who will participate in the study as research participants was limited and carefully chosen, with academic performance being the most critical factor. The relevance of choosing participants carefully is due to the need to obtain valid data and complex findings for this research.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the described narration regarding EFL students' English-speaking confidence, some research questions were further formulated as follows:

1. How do the tourism department students at SMKN 1 Singaraja in the academic year 2023/2024 view their English-speaking confidence?
2. What are the issues around English-speaking confidence encountered by tourism department students at SMKN 1 Singaraja in the academic years 2023/2024?
3. How do the tourism department students at SMKN 1 Singaraja in the academic years 2023/2024 encounter their English-speaking confidence issues?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the aforementioned research questions, there were three objectives, as follows:

1. To describe the viewpoint of tourism department students at SMKN 1 Singaraja in the academic year 2023/2024 toward their English-speaking confidence.
2. To investigate issues around English-speaking confidence encountered by tourism department students at SMKN 1 Singaraja in the academic years 2023/2024.

3. To describe the method used by tourism department students at SMKN 1 Singaraja in the academic years 2023/2024 in encountering their English-speaking confidence issues.

1.6 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCES

Those who reach this stage of the research are expected to gain some significance. The findings of this study were predicted to enrich theoretical and practical perspectives.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significances

It is anticipated that this research will contribute to the richness of the discussion on speaking confidence, particularly regarding the subject of English-speaking confidence. The extended discussion is also expected to provide more data and information regarding the English-speaking issue, EFL students' viewpoint toward their English-speaking confidence, and the methods that EFL students utilized to encounter the issue of English speaking. These are all expected to be able to be provided by the extended discussion that was provided. It is predicted that this study will contribute to the richness of the conversation on speaking confidence, particularly in English-speaking confidence. The expanded discussion is also expected to provide more data and information about the English-speaking issue, EFL students' perceptions of their English-speaking confidence, and the techniques that EFL students use to deal with the English-speaking issue. These are all expected to be addressed throughout the provided extended discussion.

1.6.2 Practical Significances

1) For EFL students

This study is expected to capture EFL students' voices and communicate their concerns about speaking, focusing on English speaking in general and English-speaking confidence in particular. This study is also intended to provide a platform for individuals to reflect on their learning English, which may be used to test their capacity to engage in self-reflection and enhance their skills in this area.

2) For English educators

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this study will provide further data and information to help English instructors who come across this research better understand the problem of English speaking and the impact that English-speaking confidence has on their pupils. This study is also expected to address the demand voiced by English teachers for the opportunity to reflect on English teaching and learning strategies implemented before, during, and following the pandemic.

3) For other researchers

This study's findings are expected to stimulate future researchers to conduct more rigorous investigations into English-speaking confidence. Furthermore, it is highlighted that this study provides other researchers with references to English-speaking confidence in the context of EFL students.