

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Language is a communication tool that plays an important role in people's lives to convey a message or intention from one person to another. There are many different kinds of languages around the world, including regional, national, and international. English is one of the international languages. People use English extensively all around the world, both as their national language and as an international language.

According to Darmawan (2019), in Indonesia, English has been introduced in schools since independence in 1945 and has been included in the national education system through the curriculum. English is considered an important international language because it was represented by the United States and England, which were the dominant global political powers at that time, and this serves as a significant reason for including English in the national education curriculum (Zein et al., 2020). This indicates that English has been part of the educational curriculum in Indonesia for a long time ago as an effort to improve human resources' ability to communicate with speakers of this language. English is recognized as a subject that students must enrol in Senior High Schools because it is thought to be crucial for preparing pupils to thrive in the face of the 21st century.

In the 21st century, the education system is developing to follow global education needs. One thing that continues to develop is competence or ability. The 21st-century competencies adopted into the curriculum consist of 6 terms, abbreviated as 6cs of the 21st-century education. The 6cs stand for critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, culture/citizenship, and character education/connectivity. English-speaking skills mean the ability to build direct communication with speakers, whether native speakers or foreign language learners. Within the scope of classroom learning, English-speaking skills provide students with the opportunity to communicate with their peers, share and defend thoughts, deliver different conceptual frameworks, and be actively involved in communicative activities (Pardede, 2020). From the description above, it is very appropriate to

explain why speaking English is an important skill for students to master in the 21st century.

The teaching of English requires pupils to acquire proficiency in four areas: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Speaking is a beneficial language skill that enables speakers and listeners to interact orally for information transfer, connection building, and sharing (Ork et al., 2024). However, in the context of English lessons at school, speaking skills are considered one of the four English skills that are difficult for students to master. This is due to the students do not practice speaking English enough, or they do not have the opportunity to practice it. Apart from that, according to Astutie (2018), stated that speaking is a separate issue that must be mastered by students. This is because speaking skills are not just about speaking, but combining the ability to process words or sentences and listening skills.

Naturally, under these circumstances, where students think that English-speaking skills is a skill that is difficult to master, student needs to study and practice a lot to master speaking skills, and the teacher needs to be able to help by fostering the right environment for learning. However, when the researcher participated in a *Magang Kependidikan*, which is part of the *Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM)* program, held from March 6, 2024, to June 16, 2024, at SMAN 12 Kota Jambi, she found that in the classroom, especially in speaking activities, was the opposite of this. During this program, the researcher and other students who joined the *Magang Kependidikan* had the opportunity to observe how English teachers at the school conducted their lessons. More importantly, the researcher was also given the chance to teach English, particularly in several tenth-grade classes.

Throughout the teaching experience, the researcher noticed that the tenth-grade students were reluctance to speak English in English class, which became the focus of this research. According to Ur (1996), some common characteristics that often occur in English class, students were low or uneven participation, and the most important thing is that the use of the mother tongue in speaking activities was still prominent. What actually happened in the classroom, based on the researcher's observations, was that the students' reluctance to speak English was accompanied by fear of making mistakes, fear of being laughed at by their peers, and lack of self-confidence, even though they had studied English at school from elementary to high

school. When they were asked questions, most of them struggled and even chose to remain silent. Even when they were required to share their ideas or comments, they tended to use Indonesian or their local regional language instead of English. These kinds of things probably happen for several reasons, such as the lack of time to study English subjects in class, and the use of Indonesian in teaching English is still used in class. Students' reluctance to speak English may also be caused by influencing factors that come from within the students themselves or from outside.

However, these findings are still subjective based on the observations as a researcher. Therefore, to ensure the accuracy of internal and external factors influencing students' reluctance to speak English, it needs to be confirmed from the students' point of view. Based on the explanation, the researcher chose to investigate more into factors influencing students' reluctance to speak English among the tenth-grade students of SMAN 12 Kota Jambi.

1.2 Research Question

The research question formulated for this research is as follows:

Which factors most influence the tenth-grade students of SMAN 12 Kota Jambi in their reluctance to speak English?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to find out which factors most influence the tenth-grade students of SMAN 12 Kota Jambi in their reluctance to speak English.

1.4 Research Significance

The findings of this research are expected to make an important contribution to teachers, students, and future researchers. For the teachers, the result of this research is expected to provide insight into the factors that most influenced students' reluctance to speak English, so that they are able to identify the methods suitable for teaching English speaking skills and provide a more supportive activity. For the student, the findings of this research will provide insight for the students and help them become more aware of the factors that most influence their reluctance to speak English and find potential solutions to overcome these problems. For future research that investigates factors most influence students' reluctance to speak English, it is hoped that this research will become a reference for researching more deeply into factors influencing students' reluctance to speak English, and allow them to explore the

factors influencing students' reluctance to speak English and find solutions to overcome those problems. In addition, it is hoped that the findings of this research will be able to contribute to increasing insight that can bridge the research gap regarding internal and external factors influencing students' reluctance to speak English.

1.5 Research Limitation

The researcher limits the research's focus by focusing on the entire population of tenth-grade students of SMAN 12 Kota Jambi, so these findings cannot be generalized to different grade levels and other schools. Furthermore, this research only focuses on factors influencing students' reluctance to speak English among the tenth-grade students of SMAN 12 Kota Jambi.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

1. Factors

In this research, factors refers to the elements or conditions that influence students' reluctance to speak English. These factors are categorized into internal factors and external factors. Internal factors come from within the students themselves, such as fear of mistakes, anxiety, shyness, and lack of confidence. External factors come from outside the students, such as low motivation, mother tongue use, lack of parents' attention, and learning media use.

2. Reluctance to Speak

Reluctance to speak in this research refers to students' tendency to avoid, lack, or not want to participate in speaking activities during English learning, which can limit students' active engagement.