

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE RIVIEW

This chapter presents reviews of related literature, explain the theoretical foundation used as references in this research.

A. Basic Language Skills in English Language Learning

Language learning is fundamentally structured of four skills, which are 1) Listening; 2) Reading; 3) Speaking; 4) Writing. These skills are the foundation of communicative competence. Listening and Reading are considered as receptive skills, as they involve comprehension without immediate product. Speaking and Writing are considered as productive skills, as they requiring the learners to generate language spontaneously. In EFL context, these skills are inter-connected, as an example strong reading proficiency will support speaking skill due to the richness of vocabulary. However, in reality imbalance of these skills are often occurs due to curriculum emphases on grammar exams.

In traditional language pedagogy, those skills are taught sequentially or integrated to each other. Rustamov & Yaxshilikova (2019) emphasize that a sustainable EFL teaching must balance all skills (receptive and productive skills) to develop holistic development, especially in non-native English environments like Indonesia, where English taught as a Foreign Language and not used for daily life.

B. Speaking in English Language

1. The Nature of Speaking

Speaking is verbal communication done by someone with someone else to say something. This is the key to communication between people in everyday life to change information. Brown in Muhammad (2025) stated that speaking is an interactive process in constructing meaning that involves the production, reception, and processing of information.

Nunan & Carter in Murray & Cristison (2019) stated that speaking is to say orally, to communicate by talking, to inform, to make a request, and to make a speech. Also, he stated that speaking is the productive skill (oral). Speaking appropriately means using language that adapts to the needs, interests, knowledge, and attitudes of your listeners and avoiding language that alienates audience members (Mutalliyeva, 2024). In other words, speaking means choosing words that enhance the relationship between the speaker and the audience. Moreover, the speaker wants to convey a positive so the listener will pay attention and remember the speaker and the message positively. Speaking is a process during which speakers rely on all the available information (background and linguistic) to create messages that will be understandable and meaningful to the intended audience (Pawlak et al. as cited by Rosalinda, 2024).

Based on those interpretations, speaking is a process of creating meaning through saying words using voice for producing, receiving, and processing information between speakers and listeners, which is common in term of oral communication.

2. The Importance of Speaking in Language Learning

A review of current literature indicates that the term “learning” is mostly used to characterize learning as a process or a final outcome. For Indonesian people, English speaking ability is hard to achieve because, in Indonesia English is recognized as a foreign language. Means although it taught in schools, but it barely used in social life (Rustamov & Yaxshilikova, 2019).

Even though English is accepted as a foreign language, Indonesian students do not get more time to practice speaking in their social life, but it does not mean that students do not have any opportunity to have English speaking skill. Students are still able to learn, practice and develop this skill. If English as Foreign Language

(EFL) learner have speaking ability, it will allow them to get advantages particularly on doing interaction and transaction with native speakers.

Speaking is a fundamental aspect of communication. Therefore, this skill must be mastered when learning a language. Krashen in Muhammad (2025) mentioned that speaking encompasses all other skills in knowing the language. As an English learner, speaking is a skill that is taken seriously in real life situations. This is an application of daily interactions, and often a person's first impression is based on their ability to speak fluently and comprehensively.

3. Types of Spoken Language

Spoken language in English learning encompasses a range of forms differentiated by context, formality, and medium, with adaptations for contemporary digital and multicultural environments. Burns & Richards in Daulay et al. (2022) categorize it into monologue and dialogue.

a) Monologue

Monologues demand a high level of listening skills from the listener due to the lack of direct interaction. According to Brown as cited by Muhammad (2025) a monologue occurred when a speaker speaks for a set amount of time using spoken language, as in speeches, lectures, readings, news broadcasts, and the like. Listeners have to continuously process information without interruption, while the speaker continues their speech even if the listeners may not understand the content being delivered.

b) Dialogue

Dialogue is a tool for developing interpersonal interaction skills in the context of language learning. first, knowing how to react and modify language based on one's social standing. Nunan confirmed that dialogue is speaking that involves two or more speakers. It is social communication, which encompasses building

and preserving social relationships (Nunan & Carter as cited in Murray & Cristison, 2019).

Dialogue and monologue are two forms of oral communication that have different characteristics. Dialogue involves two-way interaction between two or more speakers. Meanwhile, a monologue is one-sided, with only one speaker.

4. Component of speaking

According to Masbiran & Fauzi (2017), the main components of speaking are 1) comprehension, 2) grammar, 3) vocabulary, 4) pronunciation, and 5) fluency. Comprehension involves understanding the message, grammar relates to correct sentence structure, vocabulary is the ability to use appropriate words, pronunciation is about clear sound production, and fluency is the ability to speak smoothly and without excessive hesitation. These components are all necessary for effective oral communication.

a) Comprehension

Hidayah (2016) stated that comprehension involves understanding and responding appropriately during interaction. It is an important aspect to know what the speaker is saying to the listener so that the message being conveyed is not misunderstood, whereas comprehension refers to the ability of the listener to obtain correct information from the speaker more easily.

b) Grammar

In both spoken and written discourse, grammar refers to how words are arranged into proper sentences. For readers or listeners, the use of grammar will become more obvious and understandable. The same thing was said by Prasojo et al. (2023) that in speaking conversation is needed correct grammar to be easier to understand.

c) Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a very important basic asset for language proficiency. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary,

vocabulary is a list or collection of words or of words and phrases usually alphabetically arranged and explained or defined. Those will be a choice from the wealth of vocabulary used when speaking. It also supported by Brown in Hidayah (2016) stated that vocabulary refers to the range of words a speaker can use. Speaker who has lot of vocabulary will be easier to express ideas, feelings, and what they think in oral form.

d) Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a way for people to express their speech more clearly. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, pronunciation is a manner of producing words clearly when they are spoken. It means that even if someone speaks with incorrect grammar and vocabulary because it is said with the right pronunciation, the meaning of the message to be conveyed is easier for listeners to understand.

e) Fluency

Fluency is the ability to speak smoothly and expressively. Brown in Hidayah (2016) described that fluency the speaker's ability to maintain speech flow without unnatural pauses. In addition, Ur in Muhammad (2025) stated that fluency has to be accurately, where fluency is the ability to speak easily and effortlessly, while accuracy relates to the correctness of language use in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

C. English Speaking Difficulties

English language in Indonesia is taught as a foreign language. It means although it taught in schools, but barely used in social life (Rustamov & Yaxshilikova, 2019). For English learners in Indonesia, this may highlight potential disparities, for example many learners may excel in reading and writing due to academic focus but struggle in speaking due to limited oral practice. Hossain in Muhammad (2025) found that productive

skills are often sidelined, leading to long-term gaps. There are some studies which have investigated the speaking difficulties encountered by EFL learners.

Goh & Burns in Maqnunah (2023) mentioned that difficulties in English speaking are affected by 2 main factors which are, internal and external factors. The internal factors are low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, and lack of motivation to practice speaking. The external factors are ineffective teaching methods, the influence of mother tongue, social pressure or shame, and lack of opportunities to practice speaking in real context.

1. Goh and Burns' Theory of English Speaking Difficulties

a. Low self-confidence

Confidence serves as a primary determinant of how individuals perceive their own capabilities. This difficulty arises when a student maintains a deeply negative self-perception or low self-concept regarding their second language competence. Anxious learners often focus excessively on their linguistic deficiencies rather than what they can do. This lack of confidence impairs cognitive functioning, causing them to evaluate themselves harshly and perceive speaking as a highly uncomfortable risk, which ultimately reduces their willingness to communicate (Goh & Burns, 2012).

Supporting the statement, Ventik (2017) found that the students not confident to speak English because they do not want to look foolish in front of the class. Also, most of them are feel shy to express their ideas, they are afraid to make mistake when they speak English. These conditions can affect students' performance, even make the students fail in speaking ability. This may stem from a student's self-perception of their ability. When students compare themselves to "perfect" models, they

often feel inadequate, which leads to the “shyness” observed among senior students.

b. Fear of Making Mistakes

The fear of making mistakes is a leading cause of speaking difficulties among English learners. Goh & Burns (2012) described it as an internal apprehension toward producing inaccurate language due to strict self-monitoring or perceived perfectionist standards. Many learners operate under the belief that they must understand and follow an overwhelming number of rules to speak properly. This fear forces them to dedicate too much processing capacity to internal editing, resulting in halting, overly cautious speech, or a total avoidance of voluntary speaking.

In addition, Thornbury as cited by Rosalinda (2024) also mentioned fear of making mistakes is one of the factors that make students do not fluently speak in English. This condition has been a common issue for EFL students like in Indonesia.

c. Limited Vocabularies

This situation often linked to limited proficiency of linguistic aspects such as vocabulary and grammar knowledge. This problem stems from an insufficient internal mental lexicon (productive vocabulary size) required to map abstract concepts into precise spoken words under intense time pressure. During the formulation stage of speech production, a speaker must rapidly retrieve words from memory. A limited vocabulary results in slow lexical access, forcing learners to stall, use communication strategies to buy time, or settle for highly simplified meanings (Goh & Burns, 2012).

Therefore, linguistic difficulties such as grammar and vocabulary also become the difficulty that influenced students in speaking English.

d. Lack of Motivation

Goh & Burns (2012) stated this difficulty involves a lack of internal drive, interest, or perceived utility in engaging with the target language for communication or academic advancement. While some learners are genuinely disengaged, the authors caution that teachers frequently misinterpret reticence (silence caused by deep-seated language anxiety or fear of negative evaluation) as low motivation when it is actually an emotional coping mechanism.

In addition, Juhana in Ventik (2017) mentioned there are some causes that influence students' motivation, they are: 1) uninspired teaching; 2) monotonous teaching; and 3) not motivated students to communicate in English.

e. Ineffective Teaching Methods

Ineffective teaching methods represents a critical pedagogical failure where classroom practices fail to explicitly teach speaking skills, provide adequate linguistic scaffolding, or address the emotional needs of the learner. This often occurs when a classroom merely forces students to complete speaking activities without explicitly teaching them *how* to speak, or conversely, when an instructor relies on dry, repetitive drills that completely ignore real-world communicative context and fluency (Goh & Burns, 2012).

Align with the theory, as noted by Muhammad (2025), Krashen's research emphasizes that even when students are exposed to significant amounts of language input, the absence of a supportive, conducive and low-anxiety environment can hinder second language acquisition.

f. Influence of Mother Tongue

Goh & Burns (2012) stated this difficulty involves the psycholinguistic interference or “linguistic distance” between the learner's native language (L1) and the target language (L2)

during speech processing. When producing rapid speech, a learner's formulation and articulation processes can be weighed down by their L1. This manifests when learners resort to slow, direct mental translation from their mother tongue, or when they struggle to vocalize unfamiliar target sounds due to entrenched native articulatory habits.

The theory also supported by Brown, as cited by Muhammad (2025) that excessive reliance on the mother tongue in English classes limits opportunities to develop speaking fluency. There is a reason why students still use their mother tongue in English class, a lack of topical knowledge, which forces students to rely on their native language for expression, and the inherent naturalness of their mother language use. Consequently, without proactive encouragement from teachers to use English, students will instinctively utilize their native tongue to interact with peers (Harmer as cited by Muhammad, 2025).

g. Social Pressure or Shame

Social pressure is an acute anxiety arising from a fear of negative evaluation, loss of “face,” or failing to meet perceived peer and societal standards during public speech performance (Goh & Burns, 2012). Because speaking is an inherently public and dynamic social act, learners in many classroom contexts become severely self-conscious about being monitored, judged by their peers, or rejected for using non-standard accents or making errors.

h. Lack of Opportunities to Practice Speaking in Real Contexts

This difficulty refers to an instructional or environmental deficit where speaking activities serve only as artificial, scripted exercises rather than authentic interactional discourse. Most classroom activities do not match real life. In real life, you cannot guess what someone will say to you, so you have to speak

and react naturally on the spot. Without exposure to authentic contexts, students are left unprepared for the dynamic, unpredictable nature of real-world communication.

Based on the theories mentioned before, there are many factors can be affected the students' speaking ability. Each factor interconnected with others causing a bigger problem to the students. All those factors that mentioned above commonly happens to EFL learners like in Indonesia when they are learning English. Some of the factors might have possible solution from the teacher, but there are also some factors that depend on the learners themselves to overcome when they learn or speak in foreign language. Furthermore, this research focuses more on Goh and Burns's theory as the core theoretical reference. Furthermore, this theory will serve as the basis for developing the research instrument used in this study.

D. Factors of Speaking Difficulties

According to Cambridge dictionary, factor refers to a fact or situation that influences the result of something. Speaking difficulties can be caused by many factors. Harja et al. (2025) in their research, found that internal and external factors can affected students' speaking difficulties. Internal factors such as learning interest, intelligence level, and shyness or nervousness come from within the learner's own mind and emotions. On the other hand, external factors such as family environment, peer environment, and teaching methods come from the environment around the learner, like their social life and classroom experiences. When these different factors combined, they heavily influence how well students can practice and improve their English speaking skills.

1. Harja et al. Research Findings

1) Learning Interest

The first internal factor is learning interest, which plays a major role because it drives a student's personal desire to learn English. Students with high interest are usually active, curious, and pay closer attention in class. In contrast, a lack of interest means

students will not put enough effort or time into practicing, which slows down their speaking development (Fathi & Behzadpoor, 2025).

2) Intelligence level

Another internal factor involves is the student's intelligence level, which relates to a learner's natural mental capacity to process information. It directly affects how fast an EFL student can understand grammar rules, remember words while speaking, and quickly put sentences together during real-time conversations (Muengnakin & Narathakoon, 2025).

3) Shyness

A final key internal factor to consider is shyness or nervousness, which acts as a very common emotional barrier for students when they have to speak in front of others. When students feel too shy or nervous, their brains focus more on managing their anxiety rather than finding the right words to say. This stress leads to broken speech, heavy hesitation, or a total refusal to speak in class (Tleuov, 2025).

4) Family Environment

An external factor that shapes a student's language journey is the family environment, which serves as their very first social influence. A student's home background, how often they hear English at home, and the amount of support they get from family members play a huge role in shaping their confidence and general attitude toward learning a new language (Fathi & Behzadpoor, 2025).

5) Peer Environment

In addition to the family, the peer environment represents an external factor that involves the classmates and friends surrounding

the student. While good friends can create a safe space to practice, the peer environment can also cause heavy pressure. The fear of being judged, laughed at, or misunderstood by classmates often makes students too afraid to speak up in public (Kusuma et al., 2025).

6) Teaching Methods

Lastly, an essential external factor lies in the teaching methods used by the teacher, which refers to how the classroom is managed. The way a teacher instructs dictates how students practice the language. Passive or boring methods leave students unprepared for real life, while interactive tasks and helpful guidance from the teacher can successfully help students speak more fluently (Sya, 2025).

2. Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis

The other theory that explained about factors of speaking difficulties is came from Krashen as cited in Rosalinda (2024). Krashen stated that emotional and psychological aspects play a role in whether a second language learner can successfully process input and produce output. The theory defines the filter as an invisible, mental screen that can either open to let language flow smoothly or shut down to block communication completely.

According to this model, the screen is controlled by three main variables: anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation (Krashen, 2009). When a student experiences high anxiety, self-doubt, or situational shyness, the filter rises, causing the brain to treat target language input and output as a psychological threat. In relation to speaking difficulties, a high affective filter explains why students often experience an absolute breakdown in oral production even when they understand the language rules perfectly (Krashen, 2009). This psychological barrier locks the

vocal apparatus, causes physical nervousness, and produces feelings of immense pressure, effectively neutralizing the student's linguistic knowledge and crippling their self-confidence before they even begin to speak (Krashen, 2009).

3. John Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory

Sweller (2024) rooted Cognitive Load Theory in human cognitive architecture, which divides the brain's processing into a virtually limitless long-term memory and a highly restrictive working memory. He emphasizes that working memory can only hold and process a very small amount of new information at any given time. Cognitive load refers to the total amount of mental effort being used in the working memory during a specific task (Sweller, 2024). If the cognitive demands of a task exceed the limited processing capacity of the working memory, a cognitive overload occurs, causing immediate processing failure, memory stalls, and performance drops (Sweller, 2024).

In oral communication, spontaneous transactional speaking is one of the most demanding cognitive tasks a human brain can perform. Within a split second, a speaker must simultaneously manage several complex operations: conceptualizing the idea, searching for the correct words, applying syntactic grammar rules, and monitoring phonetic pronunciation (Sweller, 2024). For learners who lack automated structures, these tasks cannot be processed in parallel. When forced to speak spontaneously, the sheer number of elements overwhelms their limited working memory capacity. This causes the brain to freeze, resulting in the sudden blanks, severe hesitation, and communication breakdowns reported by students as they try to process grammar and words at the same time (Sweller, 2024).

4. Michael Long's Interaction Theory

Long (2017) states that language acquisition and conversational fluency are developed primarily through active oral interaction, specifically through what he terms the negotiation of meaning. When communication breakdowns occur between speakers, they are forced to negotiate meaning by using comprehension checks, clarification requests, and confirmation checks (Long, 2017). This process forces the learner to receive comprehensible input and adjust their linguistic output in real time. Through this constant cycle of interaction, abstract grammar and vocabulary rules are gradually automated in the brain (Long, 2017).

This hypothesis exposes the structural root cause behind a lack of opportunities to practice in real contexts. In a standard foreign language environment, language instruction is confined strictly inside the classroom walls, creating a severe exposure drought in daily life. Outside the campus gates, the local family and peer environments offer zero functional necessity or opportunity for English interaction (Long, 2017). Without an external community to negotiate meaning with, students cannot practice or test their output in real situations. Their language knowledge remains entirely solitary, theoretical, and non-automated. Consequently, when they are suddenly forced to communicate, their unpracticed language structures fall apart, triggering a cyclical pattern of vocabulary blocks, mother tongue reflexes, and a severe drop in self-confidence (Long, 2017).

E. Transactional Speaking

Speaking is a multi-dimensional skill, and in the academic context, it is often categorized based on its function. Burns & Richards in Daulay et al. (2022) distinguishes between two primary functions of spoken language:

interactional and transactional. While interactional speaking is “person oriented” and focuses on maintaining social relationships, transactional speaking is “message-oriented”. It focuses on the exchange of information and the fulfillment of specific tasks. In a transactional speaking class, the primary goal is to ensure that the message is understood clearly and accurately to achieve a specific outcome, such as making a reservation, giving instructions, or participating in a business discussion (Burns & Richards as cited by Daulay et al. 2022).

A transactional speaking class is designed to move students beyond basic pronunciation toward functional competency. According to Safitri (2022), Transactional speaking used to connect with others for the purpose of obtaining what we want. For example, if a student is tasked with “ordering a meal” in English, the success lies in the accuracy of the order, not just the beauty of the accent.

F. Related Studies

Several researchers have investigated the challenges students face when speaking English, highlighting both psychological and linguistic barriers. Rosalinda (2024) explored the psychological aspects affecting the speaking performance of 11th grade students at SMK Diponegoro 3 Kedungbanteng Banyumas. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, her study quantified the primary psychological inhibitors to oral proficiency. The findings revealed that lack of confidence was the most significant factor (39.03%), followed by anxiety (34.79%), fear of making mistakes (15.92%), and a lack of motivation (10.26%). This research emphasizes that internal emotional states play a critical role in how effectively vocational students communicate in a foreign language.

Complementing these findings, Chand (2021) conducted a qualitative study at the Department of English Education in Far Western

University to analyze the difficulties in learning English speaking among the sixth and eighth semester, studying major English at the undergraduate level. The research findings revealed four major categories of speaking difficulties: personal problems, linguistic problems, social problems, and environmental problems. Such as lack of confidence, poor vocabulary power, hesitation, anxiety towards speaking, fear of making mistakes, not having a suitable environment to practice English, no strong motivation from teachers were some common difficulties students faced while speaking in English.

These studies indicate that speaking difficulties are multifaceted and persist across different educational levels. Despite these contributions, existing studies tend to focus primarily on identifying the types of difficulties experienced by students, with limited emphasis on systematically examining the underlying factors that cause these difficulties within specific speaking contexts. Moreover, previous research has not sufficiently explored English speaking difficulties among ELT students in transactional speaking classes, nor has it applied a process-oriented speaking framework to analyze these challenges.

To address these gaps, the study investigates not only the speaking difficulties encountered by ELT students but also the factors contributing to those difficulties, using the speaking model proposed by Goh and Burns as its theoretical framework. By employing this approach, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of English speaking difficulties in transactional speaking contexts and contribute pedagogical insights for ELT programs.