

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Speaking is one of the skills in English language learning that students are expected to master. Mastery of speaking is a high priority for students learning a foreign language, and students often measure their success based on how well they have mastered their speaking skills (Richard, 2008). This indicates that teaching speaking in schools is a fundamental component because it is a crucial part of language learning and plays a direct role in social interaction. Speaking directly reflects students' ability to communicate effectively in social life, therefore it is a challenging task for many students.

It is also shown in Indonesia that indicators of speaking ability still face various challenges. Based on an interview with English teacher at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Kedungbanteng, students are still afraid to speak English. The teacher stated:

One of the main challenges in teaching speaking is the lack of adequate facilities in the classroom. Many students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking English. Grammatical errors become one of the major obstacles in learning English, which prevents the development of their speaking skills. Furthermore, many students still do not know how to read or spell English words correctly.

Salah satu tantangan utama dalam mengajar keterampilan berbicara adalah kurangnya fasilitas yang memadai di ruang kelas. Banyak siswa takut membuat kesalahan saat berbicara bahasa Inggris. Kesalahan tata bahasa menjadi salah satu hambatan utama dalam belajar bahasa Inggris, yang menghambat perkembangan keterampilan berbicara mereka. Terlebih lagi, banyak siswa masih belum tahu cara membaca atau mengeja kata-kata bahasa Inggris dengan benar.

The statement from the teacher is reinforced by the students' speaking scores in class, which averaged 72.5. Although they have achieved that score,

it is still below 75, which is the criterion for achieving the learning objective (KKTP). It indicates that students at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Kedungbanteng have not been able to achieve the predetermined learning objectives.

In addition, several research have also found the same issues. According to research by Candraloka & Rosdiana (2019), the results show that students have difficulty speaking due to personal factors such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, embarrassment, confusion, and lack of confidence. A similar statement was also made by Pardede et al. (2022), that students face various difficulties in speaking English. These include lack of confidence and fear of making mistakes, difficulty focusing due to not understanding the material, not knowing what to say, and lack of participation due to not understanding the task or not caring.

Challenges in speaking ability can stem from psychological and linguistic factors. According to research conducted by Maji et al. (2022), psychological factors include anxiety, shyness, motivation, native language, self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes. Meanwhile, linguistic factors include limited vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Woodrow (2006) revealed in his research that anxiety is the most dominant factor affecting speaking ability and hindering speaking performance. This can certainly hinder students' mastery of speaking ability.

Speaking anxiety is an emotional condition in which a person feels afraid, tense, and nervous when speaking in front of others (Horwitz et al. 1986). Speaking Anxiety can hinder the learning process and prevent students from completing tasks effectively (Altun, 2023). Speaking Anxiety caused by low motivation to learn English, limited vocabulary, poor grammar knowledge, poor pronunciation, lack English speaking practice, few opportunities to speak in front of many people, and nervousness (Zuhri et al. 2022). Kulsum & Ridwan (2025) found in their research that high speaking anxiety can cause students to perform poorly on tasks and speak less effectively. This means that speaking anxiety can significantly hinder the improvement of speaking ability. Therefore, a learning strategy is needed to overcome this hindrance.

Teachers should implement learning methods that provide a sense of security and positive support to reduce students' anxiety when speaking (Kulsum & Ridwan, 2025). Teachers, as the frontline of education in schools who interact directly with students, have a responsibility to create a pleasant speaking learning environment that is well understood by students. Teachers must analyze students' needs and adjust speaking materials. This can include using small group discussion approaches, listening and repeating techniques, and interactive approaches such as educational games (Widiyanti & Umami, 2025). One learning strategy that can be implemented is the Think Pair Share (TPS) method.

TPS was first proposed by Frank Lyman in 1981. Think Pair Share is an active learning approach that allows students to think and discuss what they have learned (Harianja et al. 2022). This method is considered effective for speaking activities because it helps students think about answers and requires them to speak to convey their ideas. In line with this, Putri et al. (2020) also revealed in their quasi-experimental research that the average post-test score of the TPS class was higher at 79.28 than the control class at only 66.56. This shows that TPS is effective in improving students' speaking skills. The research also stated that TPS helps students overcome their fear of making mistakes, creates a more relaxed environment, and increases their engagement. In addition, TPS has been proven to substantially improve speaking skills through increased post-test scores, more opportunities for practice, and peer assistance in developing ideas and improving language. Therefore, the TPS method was chosen as one of the strategies that can help students achieve competence in speaking skills.

After reviewing several studies that used the Think Pair Share method, it appears that TPS has good potential in reducing speaking anxiety and improving speaking ability. One such study was conducted by Sitompul et al. (2025) using a quasi-experimental approach. The study found that TPS significantly improve English speaking ability of students at SMP Negeri 1 Siantar. This was evidenced by the pre-test and post-test results, where the

experimental class score increased from 44.0 to 75.2, while the control class increased from 40.8 to 68.53. The experimental class that was given the TPS method showed a higher increase than the control class. This means that the TPS method can help improve students' speaking ability. Similarly, a case study conducted by Hidayat (2024) explains that TPS can reduce student anxiety and also improve speaking skills through enjoyable learning experiences using the Think Pair Share method. Students also said that they felt more confident and motivated after undergoing learning using the TPS method.

In addition to the fact that the Think Pair Share method can reduce speaking anxiety and improve students' speaking ability, there are several research gaps that can be further investigated by researcher. Although several studies above have concluded that the TPS method is effective in speaking learning, research related to the application of TPS to reduce speaking anxiety and improve speaking ability using the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method needs to be conducted to support previous research. The Classroom Action Research (CAR) method is a research approach conducted systematically by teachers to understand and improve learning practices in the classroom through a qualitative and interpretive investigation (Kemmis et al. 2014). CAR can be used to determine whether the implementation of the Think Pair Share learning method can reduce speaking anxiety and improve students' speaking ability. The results of research using the CAR method will provide new references and perspectives in the practice of language education regarding the effectiveness of the TPS method in teaching speaking skills.

Another research gap is the rarity of similar research conducted at the junior high school level. This gap also exists at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Kedungbanteng. This provides an opportunity for researcher to conduct research at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Kedungbanteng. This research filled the gaps mentioned above, and it is hoped that the results of the research can provide an alternative solution to problems in speaking classes. By applying student-oriented methods, the research is expected to improve students' competence in the English learning process, particularly in speaking skills.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the research backgrounds, the researcher formulates the problem:

- 1.2.1 Can the Think Pair Share method reduce the speaking anxiety of students at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Kedungbanteng?
- 1.2.2 Can the Think Pair Share method improve the speaking ability of students at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Kedungbanteng?

1.3 Purpose of the Research

Based on the problem finding, the primary purposes of this research are:

- 1.3.1 To reduce speaking anxiety of students at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Kedungbanteng through Think Pair Share method.
- 1.3.2 To improve speaking ability of students at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Kedungbanteng through Think Pair Share method.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The significances of this research are following:

1.4.1 Teachers

1.4.1.1 Increasing Teaching Effectiveness

Teachers can reduce students' anxiety about speaking, which often hinders their participation in class, by using the Think Pair Share method. Through independent thinking, group discussion, and sharing in class, this approach encourages active learning and allows students to participate more without putting excessive pressure on them.

1.4.1.2 Developing Pedagogical Skills

This study provides empirical support for the application of Think Pair Share in the classroom, helping teachers upgrade their English teaching strategies. This helps teachers achieve learning objectives more effectively and increases student

motivation by supporting the national curriculum that emphasizes teamwork.

1.4.1.3 Providing Sustainable Benefits

By implementing the Think Pair Share method, teachers can create a more welcoming classroom environment, reduce student anxiety levels, and improve English learning outcomes which are essential for preparing students for national exams or international communication.

1.4.2 Students

1.4.2.1 Reducing Speaking Anxiety

The Think Pair Share method, which focuses on students, allows them to have a lot of interaction in speaking, which can reduce anxiety and increase confidence. This allows students to participate actively without worrying about being evaluated.

1.4.2.2 Improving Speaking Ability

Think Pair Share teaches students to think critically, consider various concepts, and listen to their friends. This is a factor that can improve fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation in English. It helps students not only in their education but also in their daily social interactions.

1.4.2.3 Experiencing Joyful Learning

This method reduces boredom and increases the desire to learn English. Students gain a greater sense of support, which can improve their academic performance and prepare them for future challenges.

1.4.3 Researcher

1.4.3.1 Contributing to Language Education

This study contributes to the field of language education, particularly English language education. This study can serve as a reference for further research.

1.4.3.2 Bridging Theory and Practice

By connecting the Think Pair Share method theory with practical application, this research provides a bridge between the theoretical approach to language learning and its application in the real world, creating a real contribution to the field of education.

1.4.3.3 Implicating Policy and Social

Researchers can use these findings to encourage education policies that focus more on reducing student anxiety, contributing to global goals. This also opens up opportunities for collaboration with international researchers for cross-cultural studies on language learning.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1.5.1 Speaking Ability

According to Nasir (2021), speaking is a human ability involved in an interactive process to create meaning, which includes producing and receiving information.

1.5.2 Speaking Anxiety

Speaking anxiety is an emotional condition in which a person feels afraid, tense, and nervous when speaking in front of others (Horwitz et al. 1986).

1.5.3 Think Pair Share (TPS)

The Think Pair Share learning method is a cooperative method designed to influence the way students interact in the classroom (Achadah, 2025). This method emphasizes students' personal thinking and intense interaction between students.

1.5.4 Classroom Action Research (CAR)

Classroom Action Research (CAR) method is a research approach conducted systematically by teachers to understand and

improve learning practices in the classroom through a qualitative and interpretive investigation process (Kemmis et al. 2014).

