

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Several different topics are covered in this chapter. The following are some of the topics covered in this section: background of the study, formulation of research problems, research objectives, purpose and significance of the research, scope and limitations of the research, and definition of key terms.

### A. Background of the Study

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected 2020, creating new challenges in every aspect, including education. The fast spread of covid-19 in 114 countries, with 118.000 cases, caused 4.291 people to lose their lives, making WHO declare it a global pandemic (Kuriawati, 2021). It has consequently triggered numerous countries to find the best solution to avoid it. Abidah *et al.* (2020) stated that various countries developed new policies in every aspect to reduce people interaction, such as lockdowns or quarantines. These policies are implemented to ensure public safety and control the spread of the virus.

In response to those situations, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture has announced significant changes to Indonesia's educational system in anticipation of the widespread of covid-19. This aims to provide alternative educational opportunities for students who cannot attend school due to the pandemic (Abidah *et al.*, 2020; Ariebowo, 2020). One of Indonesia's new alternative educational policies allows students to study at home by replacing face-to-face learning with online learning (Aji, 2020). In summary, the covid-19 pandemic brought about unexpected global challenges, including education, making online education the most effective means of teaching and learning activities.

Online learning has become a popular choice for teachers and students as the most excellent learning method throughout the covid-19 pandemic. Even though online learning was already being widely used as a new technology innovation before the pandemic, the shift towards online learning has proven beneficial for teachers and students in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. As declared by Nurhayati (2022) in the learning process the existence of technology appears as a

major part of giving easiness. Technology gives significant benefits for online learning such as online learning provides flexibility. According to Punyaporn and Soontornwipast (2022) one of the major benefits that online learning gives is to let teachers and students do the teaching and learning process everywhere and every time. Besides Kurniawati (2021) also stated that online learning allows all students learning all together even though they are in different places. In this context, online learning proved as helpful ways in the process of teaching and learning. in hand with this Nurhayati (2019) stated that online learning rises as an advanced and inventive means in teaching English efficiently. Thus, by making use of online learning the teacher and students can adapt and conduct the teaching and learning process during the pandemic.

Moreover, online learning also gives varied options for teacher in conveying lessons and assignments. For instance, as highlighted by Sinaga (2021) the process of teaching and learning using online learning can be done using numerous online media or platforms. Susilowati (2020) also adds that by using online learning, the teacher can easily assign lessons and tasks through online media and the students can give respond through numerous technology tools. Thus, it can make the students become autonomous learners. As described by Iswandari and Juwita (2021), online learning encourages autonomous learning based on inquiries because teachers and students can speak with one another even if they are in distant locations. In brief, online learning offers many possibilities for delivering lessons and assignments.

Unfortunately, along with its benefit and popularity, online learning is associated with several challenges. One of the major challenges is related to psychological factors. Alam (2020) claims that many challenges and obstacles, such as psychological or affective factors, arise during online learning and affect teachers and students. Similarly, Irawan *et al.* (2020) and Nugroho *et al.* (2021) stated that shifting learning settings into online learning and several classroom instruction adjustments anticipated to covid-19 have created negative affective issues for the students.

Besides, unlike face-to-face learning, which provides physical interaction, online learning does not provide physical interaction, which can affect the learning

process. Brouwer *et al.* (2022) stated that online learning gives difficulties for teacher and students doing social interaction and developing collaborative learning. Accordingly, it can create students have negative views toward online learning as the result affecting their psychological factors (Hasan and Bao, 2020).

Furthermore, this unpredicted teaching and learning process from face-to-face into online learning has extensively affected students' speaking skills that can increase anxiety in speaking. Studies conducted by Pahargyan (2021); Sumarsono *et al.* (2021), Valizadeh (2021); and 'Asifa *et al.* (2022) uncover that most online students within the covid-19 pandemic suffering anxiety in speaking. This anxiety comes from various factors, such as the effect of the shifting learning environment from a traditional classroom setting to online (Nugroho *et al.*, 2021); problems dealing with linguistic (Sumarsono *et al.*, 2021; Hanif *et al.*, 2021; Andini *et al.* 2022; Yusuf *et al.*, 2022 and Noerilah and Puspitaloka, 2022); less confident and practice (Sumarsono *et al.*, 2021; Anugrah *et al.*, 2022; and Kusumawardhan and Lestari 2022; ); afraid to create error and negative feedback (Nugroho *et al.*, 2021; Sumarsono *et al.*, 2021; Anugrah *et al.*, 2022; Andini *et al.*, 2022; and Kusumawardhan and Lestari, 2022).

In addition, inadequate chance to conduct face-to-face interaction in online learning consequently influences the students' anxiety in speaking. Research conducted by Brooks *et al.* (2020) shows that inadequate opportunity to interact with other might enhance students' anxiety and increase anxiety and less dullness symptoms. In hand with this, Sumarsono *et al.* (2020), Valizadeh (2021), and Asifa *et al.* (2022) reported similar findings, which found that the absence of physical presence and the difficulty in receiving social clues make the students have speaking anxiety. Anugrah *et al.* (2022) also conducted a study that confirms that the limited face-to-face interaction in online learning environments hinders students from engaging in spontaneous conversations and developing confidence in their speaking abilities. In brief, the effect of online learning amid covid-19 pandemic has resulted from a lack of real-time interactions for students, which caused many students to experience speaking anxiety.

Furthermore, students experience speaking anxiety in online learning during the pandemic have different levels. For instance, several studies conducted by

Pakpahan and Gulton (2020), Aziz (2020), and Khusna *et al.* (2021) reveal that student experience moderate levels of anxiety. Nevertheless, Aziz (2021) emphasizes that the students with moderate level of speaking anxiety have much time and opportunities to increase their speaking skills through online learning. In contrast, Pakpahan and Gulton (2020), Liu and Yuan (2021), and Anugrah *et al.* (2022) emphasize that students who join in online learning have a tendency to experience a major level of anxiety in speaking because they tend to less practice so that it can make them anxious in speaking. Moreover, contrasting to the previous studies, which emphasize that students more likely to have high and moderate speaking anxiety levels, the study done by Yaniafari and Rihardini (2021) reveals that students suffer lower anxiety levels when they speak in online learning. In summary, the students speaking anxiety levels within online learning are diverse, namely from low, moderate, and high anxiety levels, also various factors support these levels.

Furthermore, speaking anxiety during online learning within covid-19 pandemic might also influence the students' willingness to communicate in class. As stated by McCroskey (1992) willingness to communicate is indicated as individual trait that plays significant role to make people communicate with others in various circumstance. However, students who experience speaking anxiety are more likely to be unwilling to communicate. Studies by Manipuspika (2018) and Alqarni (2021) show that students with high anxiety levels tend to be less willing to communicate and vice versa. Similarly, research conducted by Liu and Liu (2021) revealed that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students' anxiety levels have risen, which can negatively affect their motivation to engage in communication within online learning settings.

Several researchers studied the effect of the covid-19 pandemic on students' willingness to communicate within online learning environments. Alqarni (2021) and Said *et al.* (2021) reveal that learners are highly willing to communicate during online learning amid the covid-19 pandemic. Besides, Said *et al.* (2021) reveal that students are willing to communicate in online learning through group discussions. Furthermore, several studies also show the aspects which inhibit students' willingness to communicate in online learning, such as students' personalities,

teachers' feedback, online classroom situations, and lack of self-confidence (Punyaporn and Soontornwipast, 2022; Altunel, 2021). Briefly, anxiety stands as a major negative factor impacting students' willingness to communicate in different learning environments and situations.

Furthermore, the same challenge was faced by English Department students dealing with speaking anxiety and a lack of willingness to communicate in the new learning era due to covid-19 pandemic. After adopting online learning for almost 20 months due to covid-19 pandemic, schools and universities have started new learning systems that employ hybrid teaching, offline and online learning. Even though the teaching and learning process is conducted offline, several schools or universities employ hybrid teaching, online and offline (Mufarrihah *et al.*, 2022). However, despite the availability of online or offline learning classes, many students still experience speaking anxiety, which affects their willingness to communicate in class. As noted by Nurhayati *et al.* (2016), speaking remains one of the four English skills that present considerable challenges for Indonesian students, particularly when it comes to fluency during the process of teaching English.

A pre-survey conducted among fourth-semester English Department students on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 by distributing a questionnaire through Google form, revealed that English Department students still experience speaking anxiety, which affects their willingness to communicate. The pre-survey revealed that the students experience speaking anxiety with different levels namely, high and moderate level of speaking anxiety. Relating to their willingness to communicate, the student who had a moderate level of anxiety in speaking would have a high level of willingness to communicate and vice versa. This is in line with studies by Manipuspika (2018) and Alqarni (2021) show that students with high anxiety levels tend to be less willing to communicate and vice versa.

Besides, the result from the pre-survey also revealed that major students experienced anxiety in speaking such as feeling nervous or anxious when have to speak spontaneously, experiencing a rapid heartbeat when they were going to be called to give answers or opinions in speaking class, worrying that their classmates would laugh when they made mistakes in speaking. Consequently, these anxiety

symptoms negatively impact students' confidence in speaking and hinder their communication ability. While dealing with their willingness to communicate, the major students are willing to communicate when ask for clarification from the teacher about the learning material, feel confident when speaking to friends, and when would not be judged by the teacher, the classroom atmosphere was relaxing. Regarding these situations, anxiety in speaking can hinder students to have effective communication, especially in the context of English as a global language. As Nurhayati (2019) highlighted, there is a growing recognition among public regarding the importance of English as the main language for communication in the era of globalization. Therefore, addressing and overcoming anxiety in speaking becomes crucial for students aiming to communicate effectively in English and take advantage of the opportunities presented by globalization.

Furthermore, to overcome anxiety in speaking and create effective communication in current situations, it is important to recognize that different students would employ different strategies, for instance, depending on their personalities. Students' personality has a crucial role in their effort to speak in online learning amid the covid-19 pandemic. According to Handayani and Purbani (2018), students studying English could have various personalities, each of which undoubtedly impacts their work to be successful in speaking. Saucier and Srivastava (2012) define personality as characteristics and abilities that differentiate them from others in their actions, perceptions, and emotions. Jung *et al.* (1976) proposed that everyone has two major psychological personality types: introverted and extroverted. Ancorwitz (2010) describes introverts as thoughtful individuals who think about their words before expressing them. On the contrary, extrovert students tend to have various interests, take the initiative at work, and have a good sense of expressing themselves (Murphy *et al.* 2017).

Additionally, personality also affects the students' participation in speaking activities in the classroom. According to Yeung *et al.* (2012), introverted students are more likely to be passive and enjoy working alone, which causes them to be uncomfortable speaking facing large groups. In contrast, extroverted students are more likely to enjoy speaking in front of a large group (Marwa and Tamrin, 2016). Additional studies conducted by Hennig-Thurau *et al.* (2018) indicate that more

introverted students may experience increased anxiety when speaking in public due to being self-conscious and fearing criticism from others. On the other hand, extroverted students tend to have higher self-confidence and are less worried about how others perceive them. These emphasize how students' personality traits significantly influence their willingness and comfort when participating in speaking activities.

Furthermore, various researchers have conducted studies on anxiety and willingness to communicate; however, there is still a dearth of studies revealing the students' strategy to reduce speaking anxiety and increase willingness to communicate among different personalities. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a study to dig up the students' strategy to reduce speaking anxiety and increase willingness to communicate among different personalities in new learning settings due to the covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, to fill a gap with previous studies, this study would be conducted with a different focus; first, it focuses on investigating students' strategies by employing Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory Language Learning (SILL) questionnaires to cope with anxiety and increase their willingness to communicate in the new learning era. Then, unlike the previous studies, this research would investigate the students' strategy from different personalities, namely introverts and extroverts.

The result of this study is supposed to give new insight into students' strategies to cope with anxiety and increase their willingness to communicate among different personalities in the new learning era. Thus, it can give further insight for the English teacher to provide the students with exciting and versatile learning media and speaking activities. By understanding the research's context and the research gap, the researcher intends to conduct research with the title **“Students' Strategies Used to Reduce Speaking Anxiety and Increase Willingness to Communicate among Different Personalities at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung During the New Learning Era.”**

## **B. Statement of Research Problems**

To align with the background of the research, the followings are the formulation of research problems:

1. What strategies do students use to reduce their speaking anxiety among different personalities at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung in the new era of learning?
2. What strategies do students use to increase their willingness to communicate among different personalities at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung in the new era of learning?

## **C. Objective of the Research**

In light of the formulation of the research problem, which has been stated in the following order, the objective of this research is to obtain the following information namely:

1. To find out the strategies students use to reduce their speaking anxiety among different personalities at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung in the new era of learning.
2. To find out the strategies students use to increase their willingness to communicate among different personalities at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung in the new era of learning.

## **D. Significance of the Research**

Theoretically, the results of this study could be used by future researchers as new academic improvements in examining strategies to cope with anxiety and increase the willingness to communicate among different personalities. Also, examining other students' psychological factors among different personalities in different skills.

Practically, the findings of this study are supposed to give English lecturers and teachers a new sight to have a greater awareness of the conditions of students with different personalities in speaking in the new era of learning. Thus, it can trigger the English teacher and educational practitioner to be more aware and



consider providing and choosing the learning media and speaking activities in the new era of learning.

### **E. Scope and Limitation of the Research**

This research uses the scope and limitations to prevent an unplanned study. The scope of this study is the purpose, types of personalities, English skills, subject of the research, and learning setting.

After understanding the scope of the research, this study would be limited; first, the purpose of this study would be limited to the strategies to cope with anxiety and increase willingness to communicate. Then, the types of personalities; in this study, the researcher limits the types of personalities to introvert and extrovert. Next, the English skills; the researcher limited English skills to speak. The next point is the research subject, and the researcher would limit the third-semester English Department students to two out of five classes as the subject of this study. The last is the learning setting; in this research, the learning setting would be limited on learning setting due to covid-19 pandemic, which can be online or offline, or blended.

### **F. Definition of Key Terms**

To prevent misinterpretation of the research topic, the researcher must specify the words employed in this study.

1. Speaking anxiety is a negative feeling during a speaking activity, such as the worry of making errors and receiving criticism, discomfort, and other negative feelings that can influence students' speaking performance.
2. Willingness to communicate can be described as someone's desire to communicate the target language quickly and without any tension.
3. Personality is someone's characteristics that make them different from one another.
4. An introvert is a type of personality indicating that someone desires to be quiet.
5. An extrovert is a type of personality that indicates someone likely to be expressive and talkative.