

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the background of this research, the research question, the aim of research, the significance of research and the scope and limitation of research.

#### **Background**

Lots of research and reality have shown that there are a huge number of students who encounter difficulties in public speaking. For instance a survey done by Malaysian inhabitants which shows that there are 41% from 3000 respondent of people who are fear from the speaking in public space. There are various factors, such as psychological factor or environmental factor that contributes a lot to this fact on how students are difficult to speak English in the public area. According to the survey conducted in National University of Singapore, it is revealed that there are only about 5% of the students of English as Foreign Language who could speak English in the public space, and there are 95% of the students who commit to encounter difficulties in English public speaking (Barry, 2003, p. 11). Barry further explains that it happens because the students feel anxiety when they are speaking in the public space.

Moreover, public speaking is defined as an act of giving information to audiences which is basically the audiences themselves is in a large number. Public speaking is usually done by someone in school environment in a workplace or even in

people personal life (Baumayer, 2003, p. 6). Additionally, based on pre observation conducted to the random English Department students, it was found out that in the State University of Gorontalo, particularly the students of the English Department study program, there is a tendency where the students seem to have certain issue with the English public speaking. There are a lot of students who are afraid to speak even in front of the class, meanwhile, to be able to speak English in the public space is a proficiency or competency that should be owned by each English student.

Moreover, the students' difficulties in speaking English in public space according to several past researches is closely related to the students' anxiety where the students are worry to not be able to express their ideas through speaking, especially when they need to face a lot of people and stand up in front of them because they may have psychological aspect that cause them to feel anxiety when they are speaking in front of the large audiences.

Anxiety is defined as fear caused by the anticipation of something threatening (Steimer, 2002, p. 198). Public speaking anxiety is very common among the students especially for the English Departments students. Students with public speaking anxiety often avoid anxiety-producing social or performance situations, but when unavoidable, these situations are endured with feeling of intense anxiety and distress (Steimer, 2002, p. 201-202). Also anxiety frequently occurs as an individual imagines the situation in advance of the actual experience (e.g., worrying each day about a presentation to be given in a class several weeks in the future). Although individuals with these types of anxious responses recognize that

their fear is excessive or unreasonable, they are unable, without assistance, to change their responses in these situations.

The similar case of anxiety in English public speaking also happens in the State university of Gorontalo. This can be identified from the pre-observation that was conducted to some students in English department study program who stated that they sometimes feel worry and fear to speak in the public space especially when they speak English. Some of them also stated that they are afraid to see lot of eyes staring at them while they are speaking and noticing them doing mistakes.

In addition, individuals with public speaking anxiety most often experience a variety of syndromes in a public speaking situation, such as sweating, discomfort, diarrhea, muscle tension, and confusion (North & Rives, 2001).

Moreover, research into language anxiety has shown that anxiety could have a negative effect on students' speaking performance as stated by North & Rivers (2001). Some people will have a worse performance than usual when they are having speaking anxiety. Therefore, in order to encourage the students to speak English bravely, it is needed to find out the factors that underlies on their English speaking anxiety. Thus, a research towards the students' anxiety in English public speaking should be conducted, thus the factors that caused the students anxiety based on their perspectives could be investigated and identified to find out a problem solving towards this problem.

### ***Research Question***

The question of this research can be formulated as follow:

1. What factors that caused the students anxiety in English public speaking?

### ***Objective of Research***

A study of the students' anxiety in English public speaking is important as it helps identifying what aspects that caused the students' anxiety in English public speaking. By understanding those aspects, it is expected that the students will find a way out on how they need to improve their speaking skill and on how their point of view towards this issue. Therefore, based on those consideration, then the present objectives of this research is first to look after the factors that caused the students' anxiety in English public speaking. The second result that is expected to be revealed in this research is to understand the students' perspectives towards their anxiety for English public speaking.

### ***Significant of Research***

This present study is aimed to bring a great understanding about the fundamental aspect of the students' English speaking improvement. It gives a light to the implications of the students' anxiety in English public speaking by providing a systematic framework deals with the way of how its implication to the educational side especially in the process of producing a high qualified students that can compete the world. This study can also serve as a guide for the teachers on how to

overcome the barriers or obstacles in teaching students with English speaking anxiety problem.