

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Public speaking is considered one of the key competencies that internship students and early career employees need to possess before entering the professional world (Rao, 2019). In the workplace, public speaking skills are not only required for formal presentations but also for everyday professional activities such as delivering reports, communicating with supervisors, serving clients, and collaborating with colleagues. Therefore, public speaking has become an integral part of professional communication skills that are highly valued across various industries (Robles, 2012).

Furthermore, in the business world, English serves as the international language within the business community, ensuring consistency in communication to support successful collaboration (Siregar, 2023). Communicating in a foreign language, particularly English, has become a challenge (Hidayat et al., 2022). Furthermore, many individuals who attain higher positions within organizations tend to demonstrate strong public speaking skills, as these skills significantly contribute to professional growth and career advancement (Khoirunisa & Pratama, 2024). Both of these factors are crucial in the professional world. By possessing strong public speaking and English language skills, especially when addressing large audiences, individuals gain more opportunities to interact with key clients, particularly in the international arena. In professional settings, employees are often required to present ideas or promote products, which demands persuasive communication and effective delivery strategies to capture the audience's interest (Khoirunisa & Pratama, 2024). Therefore, English speaking skills are a key factor serving as a starting point for interns and early career employees in achieving their dream careers, while also fostering the habit of speaking confidently in public as they enter the real working world.

Based on initial interviews with five individuals including interns and early career employees who work at the company and other workplaces that involve public speaking, many of them still struggle with English public speaking, such as a lack of self-confidence, limited vocabulary, difficulty organizing ideas systematically, and nervousness when expressing opinions or giving presentations. Given this situation, there is a need for practical and applicable learning media that suits the needs of internship and workplace. The *Speak Easy Handbook* was developed as a learning medium designed to help interns and early career employees improve their public speaking skills especially their English public speaking through systematic materials related to public speaking with professional communication, real work situations, practical exercises, and tips for building confidence. This handbook is expected to be an easy-to-understand guide that is relevant to the context of internships and work.

Among various forms of learning media, a handbook was chosen because it provides a structured, flexible, and self-paced learning resource that learners can access anytime according to their individual learning needs. According to Tomlinson (2011), effective language learning materials should be relevant to learner's needs, provide meaningful learning experiences, and facilitate the use of language in authentic contexts. A handbook also enables learners to revisit the materials repeatedly, making it suitable for developing practical skills such as public speaking, which require continuous practice and reflection.

With the development of the *Speak Easy* handbook as a learning medium, it is hoped that internship students and early career employees can improve their public speaking skills especially their English public speaking in a gradual and structured manner, enabling them to communicate professionally, effectively, and confidently in the workplace. Therefore, this study was conducted to develop and assess the feasibility of the *Speak Easy* handbook as a learning medium in improving the English public speaking skills of internship students and early career employees.

1.2 Statements of Problem

1. How are the process of creating a *Speak Easy* Handbook?
2. What are the perspectives of internship students and early career employees on the *Speak Easy* Handbook as a tool to help improve the public speaking skills of internship students and early career employees?

1.3 Aims of the Study

1. To explain the process of developing the *Speak Easy* Handbook as a learning medium for english public speaking.
2. To identify the perspectives of interns and early career employees toward the *Speak Easy* Handbook as a tool to improve the public speaking skills of internship students and early career employees.

1.4 Advantages of The Study

a. For Internship Students and Early Career Employee

This study provides practical and structured learning media and expected can helps internship students and early career employees improve their confidence, fluency, and effectiveness in public speaking, especially in professional business or workplace environments.

b. For Educators and Trainers

The results of this study can be used as a reference for lecturers, trainers, or mentors in providing learning materials that support the development of public speaking skills especially the english public speaking skills for students preparing for internships and early careers employees.

1.5 The Output

In this study, the product developed is a handbook. This handbook consists of 39 pages, excluding the table of contents, author profile, foreword, and bibliography. This handbook provides an overview of what public speaking in the

workplace entails and how it functions as a communication tool in business and professional settings. It also discusses the functions and important roles of public speaking in the workplace, particularly for students participating in internship programs and new employees. Additionally, the book includes practice materials and supplementary videos as brief summaries at the end of each chapter. The approach used involves using Indonesian for the definition and theory sections, and English for the practice and exercise sections.