

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

Speaking skill is one of the language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) which is very useful in daily activities. As stated by Shen & Chiu (2019), English speaking skill is the most important compared to the others because it has been recognized as a global language. Speaking skill is one of the most important skills we need to learn as a necessity to communicate with others and express our thoughts and feelings which should be developed in EFL learners (Shen & Chiu, 2019). Speaking skills include the abilities to use spoken words to examine ideas, produce ideas, informations, intentions, emotions, and feelings of others in order for the person receiving the message to understand, it shows that in EFL context, speaking is categorized as the productive skill after writing skills (Pae, 2017). However, in EFL context, speaking ability is still considered a difficult ability. Because in EFL context, English is not used in everyday life. Meanwhile, language is an ability that must always be practiced, so that it can form habits.

Speaking English is not easy as it seems. According to Shen & Chiu (2019), regardless of its important role, most EFL learners face many difficulties in speaking English. Some students choose to remain silent without saying a word or choose their mother language when talking to both the teacher and classmates. Several studies indicated that oral language development has

largely been neglected in the classroom, and frequently, oral language in the classroom is used more by teachers than by students (al Hosni, 2014). This phenomenon is in serious contradiction to the notion that the major goal of all English language teaching should enhance learners' ability to use English effectively and accurately in communication (Davies & Pearse, 2000, as cited in Shen & Chiu, 2019)

Therefore, it takes a lesson that learns about speaking skills practically. Survival English Class aims to teach students in higher education to communicate in daily life contexts and to achieve a specific goal or to express their own opinions, intentions, wishes, and perspectives to make the students confident to communicate in English. Regardless of the purpose of Survival English Class, most students experience difficulties in speaking English.

Dealing with difficulties in speaking skills, this study will present students' perceptions of the difficulties in speaking in Survival English Class. This study originated from a phenomenon found by researcher in the English language education environment in everyday life. This phenomenon was obtained from the researcher's pre interview with students who met in one of campus activities. Researcher saw students who had attended the Survival English Class program still have difficulty to speak English, and they do not use English inside or outside the classroom, such as when preparing assignments, discussing with classmates, cheating between classmate or groupmate, or question and answer sessions. By observing the class of Survival English Class,

there are some students who are active and passive to participate in this research.

The previous research has investigated the Problems Faced by the University EFL Learners in Speaking English Language (Islam et al, 2022). This previous study applied mixed methods, and eighty-eight students and four teachers from four universities participated in it. The results show that both public and private students with English majors face many problems communicating in English. However, this study found that public university students were slightly more competent in English and faced fewer problems than private university students. The participants expressed different insights about the role of curriculum, teaching techniques, and individual institutions to address students' weaknesses in speaking English skills. In this study, the researchers found differences and similarities with previous researchers. The similarities in this study were the same as researching on the topic of speaking difficulties. This research was conducted at the university level. The difference in this study was using a qualitative approach with a case study design, where previous research used a mix method. Participants in this study only focused on students' perception, where the previous researcher presented four lecturers from four universities. so, in this study the author wants to deepen the information to investigate more deeply the students' perspectives on this problem, and be more specifically about difficulties in speaking abilities on Survival English Class and completes the gaps of this research with the previous study.

The form of classroom communication in attending Survival English Class are, for example; First, when preparing assignment; Second, when doing assignment in individual or group work; Third, when cheating between students; Forth, when having group discussion; Last, when questions and answers session between student and student or student and lecturer in the class. The researcher found the phenomenon that difficulties face by students in English Department is students who start conversations with their peers and with their lecturers using English, but both classmates and lecturers respond in Indonesian or local languages, this is not what students expect in this course, students expect in speaking class when the activities use English, maybe the reasons are the interlocutor cannot respond in English, doesn't understand, or doesn't want to try.

Meanwhile, what distinguishes this research from the previous research is that the researcher wants to reveal more about students' difficulties in speaking English based on students' perceptions using the semi structured interview to gain more data. Additionally, this is an opportunity for teachers and researchers to fully understand the EFL students' perceptions of the language problems they are experiencing and develop their teaching methods and activities until they meet their expectations when they took a speaking class in Survival English Class.

## **1.2. Formulation of The Problem**

This study has a research question as follows, “What are the EFL Students’ perceptions on the difficulties in speaking on Survival English Class?”

### **1.3. Operational Definition**

1. Speaking Difficulties : The difficulties that can be affected by the psychological, linguistic, and environmental state of students and prevent them from speaking in Survival English Class.
2. Students' Perceptions : Students' points of view about an object and how the object should be. In this case, speaking difficulty is the object of students' points of view. The data were obtained from the result of interview.
3. Survival English Class : Survival English Class is a first level of speaking class as a gateway of communication practices in daily life contexts in English Department.

### **1.4. Aim of the Research**

This present study aims to investigate students' perceptions about speaking difficulties in Survival English Class.

### **1.5. Significance of the Research**

The findings are expected to give contribution as follows:

#### 1.5.1. Theoretical Use

This research is expected to expand existing theories related to students' perception about English speaking difficulties and this research can be one of alternative sources of information about the similar research.

#### 1.5.2. Practical Use

The finding of this research hopefully also can help students in comprehending about their difficulties and the solution to overcome the difficulties in speaking English, so they are able to evaluate themselves after knowing their abilities.

#### 1.5.3. Empirical Use

This research will contribute empirically for teachers and learners related to speaking skills and the use of English as a viability. It will be references for the further research as an empirical insight about students' perceptions on language learning difficulties. Therefore, it will give a better understanding about students learning difficulties.