

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The effectiveness of the implementation of role-play techniques in English-speaking classrooms received a lot of attention. Role-play has been widely used in speaking classes as a technique to improve students' speaking skills. Role-play was judged successful in getting students to practice speaking due to students' high levels of enthusiasm, self-confidence, inventiveness, and active participation in the classroom (Rosmayanti & Yahrif, 2019; Idham, Subramaniam, Khan, & Mugair, 2022; Sari & Hamzah, 2023). Van and Khang (2022) stated that in the process of learning the English language, implementing a role-play technique can enhance students' achievement and learning outcomes. Meanwhile, even though role-play techniques have been implemented in English-speaking classes, some students are still afraid to speak English. A study by Ramdani and Rahmat (2018) proved that students with low speaking skills typically felt anxious and even reluctant to do a speaking task with a typical roleplay caused by language anxiety and difficulties with speech production.

In line with the study, found in the English Education Department at one of the universities in Tasikmalaya, one of the lecturers used role-play as a technique in an English speaking classroom. Role-play was used during the Professional Listening and Speaking class in the third semester. Students were required to show speaking and listening skills according to the context during the performance. According to Purnamawati and Suhartono (2015), role-play help the teacher to teach speaking and encourage students to speak up in the classroom. However, found in preliminary observation, even though in Professional Listening and Speaking class implemented role-play as a technique for developing students' speaking skills, there are some students who are unwilling to speak English.

Hence, it is important to investigate students' perceptions to find out what students think and what they get during the implementation of role-play technique in Professional Listening and Speaking class since the perception

will lead students to different behavior responses, the more positive their perception in the learning activities, the higher motivation they will have. Perception plays an important part in the learning process since it influences someone's behavior or attitudes and motivation to learn (Nunan, 2020 (as cited in Kadafie, 2022)). On the other hand, both students and teachers play an important role in designing classroom material. In this case, teachers need to be aware of students' learning needs and the demands that students face when communicating through spoken language. Gusmuliana et al. (2021) claimed that the techniques used in teaching speaking determine the success of the teaching which should always be conditioned to the students' ability. This will ensure that students are directed and joyful, which will boost their interest and confidence in expressing their thoughts.

The study of role-play in enhancing students' speaking abilities has existed in some research. However, the previous research mostly focused on the phenomenon of developing students speaking skills using role-play technique (Kuśnierek, 2015), benefits and shortcomings of role-play as a speaking activity in English language classrooms (Kumaran, 2017), promoting speaking spontaneity using modified role-play in large classes (Ramdani & Rahmat, 2018), and the effectiveness of role-play techniques in improving Foreign Language students' speaking skills (Van & Khang, 2022). To fill this gap, this research will focus on knowing students' experiences, feelings, beliefs or opinions, and their knowledge of the implementation of role-play in English speaking class. Hence, this study aims to find out the perception of Indonesian university students related to the implementation of role-play techniques in their Professional Listening and Speaking class with the case study as the design of this research. This study investigates what students think and what they get from the implementation of role-play techniques in the Professional Listening and Speaking class, thus can be a consideration for teachers to utilize teaching techniques that make speaking class have a more lively and enjoyable atmosphere as well as improve students' speaking skills.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the background above, in this study, the researcher addresses the following question, “What are the university students’ perceptions toward the implementation of role-play techniques in Professional Listening and Speaking class?”

## **1.3 Operational Definitions**

To avoid misunderstanding the terms set out in this study, the researcher provides the definitions related to this study, such as:

### **1.3.1 Speaking**

Speaking is one of the skills in English learning that requires students to produce ideas and messages orally that helps students to communicate with others in the professional context during Professional Listening and Speaking class.

### **1.3.2 Role-play**

Role-play is a technique used in improving students' speaking skills which brings real-life situations under several themes into Professional Listening and Speaking class to help students engage with the topic.

### **1.3.3 Student’s Perception**

Students’ perceptions are the feelings and beliefs of EFL students who learn using role-play as a technique in their Professional Listening and Speaking class.

## **1.4 Aim of the Research**

This study aims to find out the university students’ perceptions toward the implementation of role-play techniques in Professional Listening and Speaking class.

## **1.5 Significances of the Study**

This study significantly shows practical and empirical contributions to the speaking learning process. In practical contribution, this study shows

things that should be avoided when implementing role-play as a teaching technique in speaking classrooms. Moreover, the empirical contribution of this study is to provide empirical insight related to the use of various topics when implementing role-play in speaking class, so that students will not be bored during the teaching and learning process. Speaking class will have a more lively and enjoyable atmosphere as well as improve students speaking skills.