

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a wide-ranging description of the research. It comprises the background, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significance of the study.

#### 1.1 Background

Concerning the tremendous development of science and technology, plenty of mobile applications are used in English learning which is helpful for teachers and students when carrying out the learning process. Mobile application (MALL) facilitates interaction between teachers and students, aids in developing thinking skills, makes teaching and learning more student-centred, makes students feel confident, and increases learners' motivation to learn a foreign language effectively (Ahmadi, 2018). Also, it is seen as an excellent key to overcoming language learning constraints in terms of time and place, and it encourages learners to engage in EFL activities (Shamsi et al., 2019). Therefore, using a mobile application for language learning is beneficial both to the teacher and student inside and outside the classroom.

However, Stošić (2015) stated that the most major barrier observed in mobile applications is still not being appropriately implemented, primarily due to a lack of essential school equipment and insufficient teacher certification to implement these funds. For that, the usage of mobile learning is an attempt to increase active engagement in the learning process among students (Wang et al., 2009). Social and intellectual connections seek to

engage students in constructivist learning. The same thing that was found by this study is that since online learning was not as effective as face-to-face learning, senior high school students chose to use mobile applications on the smartphone to improve English lessons in informal situations, especially speaking skills. As a result, students may have access to rich and fascinating educational content, especially speaking skills through a mobile application without a classroom.

Currently, smartphone users can download educational applications among the applications available on Google Play Store or iOS store. Additionally, some are based on language learning and built for English-speaking (Rinanda et al., 2019). Tseng (2019) highlighted that a smartphone application for speaking skills enhanced students' intonation in Taiwan schools. Furthermore, the amount of anxiety associated with speaking skills has been dramatically reduced for individuals who have used mobile learning (Shamsi et al., 2019). Abugohar, et al. (2019) found that 80% of participants positively perceived that smartphone applications could improve students' speaking fluency. They were described as authentic, beneficial, practical, great, and excellent in increasing speaking fluency. It means the advent of mobile applications for English-speaking practice on smartphones offers students the opportunity to boost their motivation to study speaking English. Furthermore, mobile applications' availability and adaptability help students devote more time to speaking practice (Hwang et al., 2014). In other words,

they may improve their English-speaking skills using mobile applications on the smartphone.

There are hundreds of speaking applications available on the play store. One of them is Cake application. Cake application is a downloadable application that may be used to assist learners in learning to speak. Cake application benefits speaking skills and helps students be better speakers (Yanthi, 2020). For instance, AI speech recognition improves language, speaking, and pronunciation (Ananda, 2019; Daniel, 2020). Additionally, it also serves as a great learning tool because it contains all of the functionality of learning materials (Pulungan & Siregar, 2020). Also, they may subscribe to the channels that interest them (Suryani et al., 2021). Therefore, Cake application benefits students significantly, improving speaking skills because they feel comfortable during the speaking activity.

This current research is relevant to previous studies conducted by several researchers in the EFL context. Nurjannah (2020) discovered that many students make pronunciation mistakes when speaking English; thus, the researcher investigated an application that might assist students in English lessons to help them better grasp by utilising Hello English. Another research conducted by Saripudin et al. (2020) used the Orai application to teach senior high school students speaking skills. In the study findings, students felt they lacked confidence, became bored when they learned English without learning something new, were confused while speaking English. Meanwhile, Yanthi (2020) investigated the use of Cake application in teaching speaking to senior

high school students. The researcher found that students have difficulties speaking English; they failed to understand the information, were nervous, confused, and unsure how to communicate grammatically appropriately.

Previous research had focused on a quantitative study using questionnaire results such as practical or not to use Cake application in the English classroom. To fill this gap, the researcher conducted qualitative interviews based on students' perceptions of the use of Cake application in an informal manner without the assistance of the English teacher to have broader research findings in the EFL context.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problem**

The formulation of the problem in this research is “What are students’ perceptions toward the use of ‘Cake Application’ in speaking practices of senior high school students?”

## **1.3 Operational Definitions**

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

- 1.3.1 Students’ Perceptions** : It is a uniquely personal experience in which one can only draw on what one knows about an object in the use of ‘Cake application’ in the speaking practice through semi-structured interviews. The students could give meaning and interpret the observed object.

**1.3.2 Cake Application** : The mobile application for learning speaking uses short and fun English conversations for senior high school students, especially speaking practices. It is used by senior high school students in speaking practices outside the online classroom.

**1.3.3 Speaking Practices in EFL Context** : It is the speaking activity for improving the students' language fluency, confidence, and experience, using Cake Application as the mobile application for senior high school students in the EFL context.

#### **1.4 Aim of the Study**

This study aims to know the students' perceptions toward the use of 'Cake Application' in speaking practices of senior high school students.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

**1.5.1 Theoretical Use** : This study gave insight into 'Cake Application' in speaking practices.

**1.5.2 Practical Use** : This study provided valuable information for the teachers and students about the use of 'Cake Application.' The finding in point of view can

significantly help the new way in learning English, especially speaking practice.

**1.5.3 Empirical Use** : As an empirical contribution, this study added new insights about MALL and Cake Application for speaking practices and a new academic writing experience for the researcher.