

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the research background of the research, the research problems, the research objectives, the significance of the study, the hypothesis, the scope, and limitation, and the definitions of the key terms.

#### **A. Background of the Research**

English is being studied as a foreign or second language all over the world as a result of globalization. In recent years, there has been a notable increase in research on independent speaking strategies for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. This trend is consistent with a larger shift in education toward learner autonomy and self-directed learning. According to Holec (1981), the main goal of learner autonomy is to give students more control over the course material and instructional strategies. It develops when a person accepts that learning is their responsibility. The learner is seen as a decision-maker who can select from among the tools and resources to produce what is required for the current task or who will eventually acquire this ability (Dickinson, 1995; Holec, 1985; Little, 1991).

To understand the role of autonomy and how it works in learning, learners should be more interested in asking what, how, and why they learn. Learners should also be encouraged to become autonomous English learners by incorporating appropriate strategies (Lengkanawati, 2017). Due to the proper strategy that can help them choose and modify their learning strategies, these will be incredibly potent in implementing. It also allows them to enhance their

learning independently. Therefore, learners should be focused and interested in language pedagogies. Yet some of their request were the general ignorance in learning English and needing more experience in autonomous learning. But in real practice, they put less effort into it and still needed to learn to speak the language. For instance, they missed opportunities to learn English outside the classroom, such as attending conferences or seminars, interacting with friends and teachers outside of class, and improving their skills with audio-visual materials.

As stated by Harmer (2007) and Pourhosein Gilakjani (2016), human communication is a challenging process. To share information and express themselves, people need to communicate. People use language to inform others about situations when interacting with others. Speakers accomplish their goals through language. Therefore, speakers need to listen and speak simultaneously to communicate effectively. Speaking a lot is necessary when learning a foreign language. The importance of speaking has been overlooked in schools and universities for several reasons, such as the emphasis on grammar and unfavorable teacher-student ratios. Speaking has yet to be tested because speaking examinations are time-consuming and make it difficult to evaluate speaking objectively (Clifford, 1987). Both first- and second-language learners should prioritize perfecting their speaking skills. Developing speaking skills is the most important aspect of learning a foreign language, and one's ability to converse in the target language determines success (Nunan, 1995).

Speaking is essential to language proficiency, especially for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. Gaining these abilities requires acquiring a variety of cognitive and linguistic skills necessary for efficient communication.

The background research on speaking abilities in the context of EFL covers the significance, difficulties, conceptual foundations, and tactics associated with speaking proficiency.

Learning strategies are actions made by the learners to advance their linguistic development. The tactics allow students to improve learning outcomes, including abilities, self-assurance, and motivation (Shi, 2017). In this regard, O'Malley & Chamot (1990) recommended focusing on picking components of new knowledge, analyzing, monitoring information during the encoding process, and evaluating the learning; hence, learning methods are essential to assist students in reducing their anxiety. An approach to learning and utilizing knowledge was called a learning strategy. According to Bruen (2001), students employed learning strategies to understand the material and develop solutions. With the proper knowledge and tools, students may study passively and experience academic success. As a result of their understanding of learning strategies and how to apply what they had learned to succeed, students were encouraged to become more engaged during learning strategy lessons. Some measures should be taken to improve the student's performance, even in the high school setting. The right instructional tools, the student's readiness, and acceptable learning strategies should all complement university students' efforts to learn English.

There are instances where qualified instructors do not support teaching, students are unprepared to study the content, and universities lack sufficient facilities or supplies. However, they can succeed, with speaking being one of the key abilities language learners should acquire (Richards, 2008). It is possible if

the language learners employ appropriate learning strategies or approaches and have a working grasp of classroom management. As Mister & Umamah (2014) established, speaking is substantially influenced by learning processes. Speaking practices are the most effective way for learners to practice authentic communication. Since most Indonesian students struggle to convey their thoughts and feelings in speech, conversation, and discussion, it takes a lot of work to improve their speaking skills at the high school level. Speaking is regarded as the most difficult skill to develop when learning English, so speaking classes should incorporate a variety of tactics. The variations in how students learn speaking strategies indicate the variety of techniques students employ to be active speakers.

Several previous research studies related to the implementation of autonomous strategies for speaking skills. The first research used descriptive research, written by Inayanti et. Al. (2021), entitled Students Strategies in Online Autonomous English Language Learning. The second research in 2021, entitled Autonomous EFL Learners' Ways of Practicing Speaking Skills During Pandemic of COVID-19; A Study of Engineering Fresh Graduates, was written by Fidyati, Idaryani, Suryani, Fhonna, and Rahmi. The third research used qualitative research in 2023, written by Ahmad Wael, entitled Autonomous Learning Strategies for Academic Speaking by English Education Department Students. The fourth research in 2023, entitled Implementation of "Merdeka Belajar": Evolving Learner Autonomy and Speaking Skill through Cultural Discovery Learning Model, was Rafiqqa, Asfihana, Aswad, and Sigh. The last research used descriptive qualitative in 2020, written by Maria Dian Purnama Sari, entitled Analyzing EFL Autonomous Learners In Learning Speaking In The 21st Century.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in researching, paying attention, and learning about students' autonomous strategies and how EFL learners implement these strategies to their speaking skills.

### **B. Research Problem**

Based on the research background above, the researcher states the research problem as follows:

1. What are students' autonomous strategies for speaking skills by EFL learners?
2. How do the students implement autonomous strategies for speaking skills by EFL learners?

### **C. Objective of The Research**

Based on the research problem above, the researcher decides the objective of the study:

1. To know EFL learners' autonomous strategies for speaking skills by EFL learners.
2. To know the implementation of autonomous strategies for speaking skills by EFL learners.

#### **D. Significance of The Research**

The findings of the research are likely to be valuable both theoretically and practically.

##### 1. Theoretically

Studying autonomous strategies used by EFL learners to improve speaking skills enriches the students' autonomous strategy experience. This study will also give information about the types of autonomous strategies for speaking skills mostly used by students learning English outside of the classroom or in formal education settings to master and become fluent in speaking English.

##### 2. Practically

Hopefully, this research can benefit the writer by fostering self-confidence and reducing fear of speaking, encouraging self-regular practice to improve English speaking skills, and promoting critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

##### 3. Future Research

This study also serves as a valuable resource for other researchers interested in conducting similar studies in different fields in the future.

#### **E. Scope and Limitation**

Based on the problem identification, the researcher focuses on the following scope and limitations: the scope of this research is English students who are senior high school students, English department students, and English course students. The analysis concentrates on the autonomous strategies and their implementation for speaking skills by EFL learners in terms of their outcomes.

The limitation of this research is that English is a foreign language that focuses on the students' speaking skills. The researcher conducts questionnaires as the instrument of this research.

## **F. Definition of Key Terms**

This research has some terms that must be clarified properly to prevent misinterpretation. The terms are as follows:

### 1. Autonomous

Holec (1981) defines autonomy as an attribute of the learner, a capacity learners possess to various degrees of taking control over their learning (Ning and Lin, 2008). He also explains that autonomy is when the learner is willing and capable of taking charge of his/her own learning (Nordlund, 2001).

### 2. Speaking

Speaking comes from the word "speak." As Hornby (1995) states, speaking is to talk or say something. Here, students practice their English orally with friends, teachers, and others.

### 3. Learner Autonomy

Hilgard defines learning as the process by which an activity originates or is changed through training procedures (whether in the laboratory or the natural environment), distinguished from change by factors not attributable to training (Suryabrata, 2005). This means that students learn in the context.