

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

As the first part, this chapter is written in order to give detailed introduction about the research. The background of the study is provided as well as the research question, objective, and significance. Besides, the theoretical framework, assumption, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms are also elaborated.

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

In this era of globalization, English has become the primary language of communication in the world. The use of English has become more important since it unites all people from different countries by supporting the process of international communication. According to observations conducted by David Crystal (2012) and Anna Klappenbach (2018), English is considered as a global language which is spoken by over 100 countries in the world. Furthermore, Eton Institute also conducted a linguistic research in 2018 by comparing the data covering the use of English with the use of other worldwide languages, such as Chinese, Spanish, French, Arabic, and German. As the quantitative result, it is shown that English is spoken by the highest number of non-native speakers; 370 million native speakers over 50 countries and 600 million non-native speakers over 40 countries. In other words, Eton Institute successfully proved that “English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world.”

Through the book entitled “English as a Global Language”, David Crystal (2012) also emphasized that English is considered as global language since it has two main functions. First, it becomes the official language spoken in particular

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domains, “such as government, the law courts, the media, and the educational system.” Second, it is chosen as a priority in foreign-language teaching in some countries. In Indonesia, English is taught in schools and universities as a foreign language in order to support the development of Indonesians’ worldwide communication skills.

Since the main function of a language is to communicate, speaking skill has become the most important skill to be mastered. Hence, speaking is more emphasized than other language skills during the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. In other words, speaking is the main key of foreign language learning. Such idea refers to Rakhmania and Kusumaningrum’s (2017) point of view that the goal of learning a foreign language is the ability of language learners to express their ideas orally. Having the similar opinion, Chaney et al. (1998) believes that through speaking, every learner has an opportunity to build and share meaning using verbal and non-verbal symbols in a variety of contexts.

Besides, another opinion about the importance of learning speaking came from Richard (2008) who believes that the improvement of spoken language proficiency can be measured to evaluate the success in language learning. In his study, he stated:

The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second language or foreign language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency.

This standpoint shows that students should have a good grip of speaking skill and attain good achievement. Furthermore, mastering speaking skill aids people to

communicate easily in order to avoid misunderstanding and misapprehension in communication. By mastering the stress, rhythm, and intonation, students are supported to have a better interaction with their interlocutors.

However, foreign language learners often endure some hurdles in learning speaking. Firstly, acquiring speaking is quite difficult for some learners since they are also expected to learn some other language components; such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and intonation. Rakhmanina and Kusumaningrum (2017) discussed this challenge in their study by showing that those components are also needed in order to master speaking skill. Vocabulary guides speaker to express their idea in proper words while grammar guides listeners to understand the concept of any information well through the good structure of language. By pronouncing the words correctly, speakers avert misunderstanding. Mispronounced words should be avoided, especially for several words with the same spelling yet different pronunciation. Intonation is also useful as well as three previous aspects. The use of exact intonation supports the speaker to deliver the message. Different intonations bring different meanings to listeners. Secondly, most of foreign language learners exposure lack of motivation in learning Speaking. This matter occurs indirectly as a result of the classmates' judgement. According to Miller (2003), students in an English classroom often experience the discrimination from their classmates because of their lack of required language competency that brings them to have a negative self-image. Responding to such situation, most language learners have a tendency to suffer more fear, anxiety, and worry in producing the target language. They will confine themselves to speak

only in their language classroom. Thirdly, even though language learners are able to converse and communicate with each other inside the classroom, finding ways to speak English outside classroom is such a significant challenge. English language learning is happening in the classroom for many years, yet most learners still do not have exposure to use English outside the classroom.

Those three drawbacks induce foreign language learners' passivity. By being passive in a speaking classroom, learners can possess a lack of accurate pronunciation and improper oral fluency that indirectly decrease learners' confidence in producing the target language. In fact, a lot of practices wrapped in good learning strategies are required in order to master English speaking skills. This idea is synthesized from Harmer's (1991) theory cited in the previous study conducted by Anggraeni and Wulanjani (2017). It is stated that good teaching strategies and numerous riveting media are needed to trigger students to be more autonomous so that the speaking skill can be acquired well.

To resolve the mentioned problems, VLOG or Video Blog is one of many available strategies that can be used as a riveting learning media in teaching speaking. VLOG is a form of Blogging with the basic concept of video. As the major component, speaking is emphasized during the VLOG production since everything in VLOG mostly is orally spoken. VLOG is supported by technology and internet. No doubt, this strategy is purposely designed for millennial foreign language learners in this modern era.

VLOG is a quite favorable activity supporting language learners in speaking English outside the classroom. In other words, VLOG encourages every learner to

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improve their personal communication skill on foreign language. The process of VLOG production tends to affect the learners positively in improving their fluency, accuracy, and accent or language complexity.

Through VLOG, people usually talk and describe various topics such as hobbies, tips, or brief speech. Hence, people have utilized VLOG as online diaries. More input from several aspects including hobbies, motivation, and interests are required in enhancing foreign language learners' speaking skills outside the classroom. Thomas (2009) states that by producing video online, the learners are able to practice their language skills anywhere and with little prior preparation, which keeps them involved in the process.

Video Blog is included as an activity for second semester language learners in Speaking A class of English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya. The learning objectives of Speaking A course are exchanging information of daily topics in pairs; exchanging feelings of daily topics in pairs; and performing various sustaining types of speech functions relevant in transactional and interpersonal exchanges.

Through this study, the researcher intends to dig students' perceptions on the implementation of VLOG assignment in Speaking course to measure whether such a speaking activity can be considered as a beneficial media for the undergraduate students. It is expected that the students' perceptions could reveal whether the students perceived more positive learning exposures in spite of the hurdles while they were producing VLOG. In this case, according to Lumen (n.d.),

students' perceptions is important since it covers and represents students' learning motivation. So far, research on students' perception is still limited.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

As stated in the title and the background of this study, a research question is designed as follows: "What are the English Department students' perceptions of carrying out VLOG (Video Blog) assignment as a Speaking activity in Speaking A course?"

### **1.3. The Objective of the Study**

Related to the statement of the problem, this study is aimed at finding out the English Department Students' perceptions of carrying out VLOG (Video Blog) assignment as a Speaking activity in Speaking A course.

### **1.4. The Significance of the Study**

Through this study, the researcher looks forward to giving significant information for language teachers related to students' perceptions of applying Video Blog as a speaking activity. As an evaluation, it is also expected that the result of this study can be meaningful feedbacks for the study program as well as the lecturer of Speaking A course.

### **1.5. Theoretical Framework**

According to its objectives, this study focuses on language learners' perception of producing Video Blog as an alternative activity in Speaking course. Therefore, the theory of perception coming from Demuth (2013) is used as the basic theory. There are two notions of perception. The first notion is called bottom-up theory considered as the direct theory of perception. Referring to this

notion, someone's perception arises after experiencing or gathering some information related to certain things or events. On the other hand, the second notion is the top-down theory. Known as the indirect theory of perception, this notion shows another belief of perception stating that perception is the result of an interaction between stimulus and internal hypotheses, expectation, and knowledge before someone experiencing certain things or events. From those two notions, it is concluded that perception can be collected based on someone's experience or someone's hypotheses. Since the researcher emphasized learning exposures as as perceived by the students, then the bottom-up theory is used in this research.

Additionally, the theory of Speaking is also provided followed by the theory of Video Blog and the system of applying Video Blog assignment implemented by Speaking A course.

### **1.6. Scope and Limitation**

Using the term perception as the basic concept, this study is focused on the learning exposures perceived by English Department students who have applied and produced Video Blog in Speaking A class. The significant interests of this study is students' perception of Video Blog production as an alternative activity in Speaking class, the peer feedback, the lecture guidance during the VLOG production, challenges in producing Video Blog, and what have students learned from Video Blog assignment.

The subject of this study is 34 undergraduate students in the second semester. The students are all from the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic

University of Surabaya on academic year 2017/2018 who have taken and passed Speaking A course and who have applied Video Blog assignment.

### **1.7. Assumption**

Related to the purpose of this study, the researcher has an assumption that VLOG is a compulsory activity in Speaking A Class, especially for English Department students in the academic year 2017/2018.

### **1.8. Definition of Key Terms**

Here are the key terms used to limit the interpretation of this study:

a. Perception

According to the bottom-up theory introduced by Demuth (2013), the word perception is related to the way people think of something based on what they have experienced. Here, perception is considered as someone's thought or opinion about something that has already been experienced.

b. Video Blog

As defined by Kirschner (2012) in one website, "Video Blog, known as VLOG, is a form of Blogging which the main medium is video." Since the basic concept used is Video, then VLOG provides more riveting features, such as sounds, emotions, images, movies, and also text.

c. Speaking A Course

Speaking A course is the first stage of speaking courses in English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya. Having 3 credits, this course is designed for second semester students. There are 3

measurement aspects in this classroom: classroom participation; VLOG assignment; and mid-term and final test.

### **1.9. Organization of the Thesis**

The researcher organizes this thesis into five chapters. In the first chapter, the research study is introduced by providing background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, theoretical framework, scope and limitation, assumption, definition of key terms, and the definition of key terms. In the second chapter, the review of related literature which is related to the research is presented as well as the previous studies. In the third chapter, the researcher focuses on the research methodology including the research design, research subjects, instruments, data collection, and data analysis. In the fourth chapter, the result of the study is revealed and discussed by connecting the related theories written in chapter 2. Lastly, the fifth chapter concludes the research findings generally followed by the suggestions for English Department, the lecturer of Speaking A course, the undergraduate students, and the future investigation.