

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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

In Indonesia, English is classified as a foreign language (EFL) because generally people learn and speak English during the English class at school. When the English class ends, the students speak in their local languages again. Peng (2019) defines as a language that is not officially used in a county. People only learn the language acquire language skills specifically for purposes such as business, employment, or advancing in education. This situation indicate that students have a limited amount of exposure to the use of English.

For instance, many Indonesian students continue to encounter challenges in oral and written communication, despite dedicating over a decade to studying English from elementary school through college (Renandya et al., 2018) Indeed, it is reasonable to infer that the students' proficiency in English remains inadequate. They have not attained a satisfactory level of English proficiency upon entering university (Kirkpatrick, 2010; Lengkanawati, 2018; Zein et al., 2020) Moreover, the final examination outcomes at universities reflect diverse levels of proficiency, with a significant number failing to meet the required standards (Renandya et al., 2018). These findings indicate serious problems for Indonesian graduates who generally have weak competence in English.

Undeniably, improving Indonesian graduates' English-speaking skills should become a priority. One of the appropriate solutions is to implement learner

autonomy (Lengkanawati, 2018; Renandya et al., 2018). Autonomous language learning suggests that the learners should determine their own objective and materials to be learned and select their own method and technique for learning (Afdaliah et al., 2022b; Boonma & Swatevacharkul, 2020; Cirocki et al., 2019; Han, 2021). The Learners Need to create opportunities beyond the classroom to enhance their English skill independently. The concept of Learning autonomy This pertains to students' capacity to assume responsibility for their own learning and requires them to learn more effectively on their own time and speed. This concept is thought to empower learners to take a more proactive role and become proficient language learners (Coronado et al., 2019; Fidyati et al., 2020; Rahman & Suharmoko, 2019).

Learner autonomy serves both as a method and an objective in education (Anh & Tuyen, 2023a; Melvina & Julia, 2021; Tuan, 2021). When students take the the lead in their learning, exert effort, and possess the skills to structure their learning process, they can attain favorable learning outcomes. Put differently, learner autonomy can enhance the caliber of language acquisition, enhance social networks, and prepare them with the mentality to become lifelong learners. This suggests that autonomous learning is a factor that can be utilized to assess the success or failure of the process of acquiring a foreign language (Han, 2021; Inayati et al., 2021; Rahman & Suharmoko, 2019).

Recently, students' autonomy in the process of acquiring English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) has attracted various researchers and scholars. Their studies reveal the significance of promoting learner independence

in the teaching and learning of English language. Autonomous English learning can foster students' active participation in classroom activities (Chong & Reinders, 2022; Inayati et al., 2021), boost students' enthusiasm (Jianfeng et al., 2018; Wachob, 2018), raise students' responsibilities to learn (Melvina & Julia, 2021; Tao et al., 2022), and assist students in becoming more proficient and self-reliant (Yu & Shen, 2022) several studies have also investigated the correlation between learner independence and language proficiency (Jianfeng et al., 2018; Wachob, 2018), Additionally, student autonomy fosters continuous learning throughout their lives (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2021; Iamudom & Tengkiengsirisin, 2020). In short, learner autonomy gives positive results in English language teaching and learning.

Despite the positive contributions of learners' autonomy in learning English, several studies revealed the challenges to sustainable autonomous learning. Learner motivation stands out as a pivotal factor among the variables that can impact autonomy in learning. Autonomy distinguishes itself by requiring learners to take accountability for their own learning (Liu, 2015). The research that understanding the connection among self-directed learning and motivational aspects among students studying English as a second language in central Taiwan, Liu (2015) advocated that out 157 fresh graduates, The majority of participants exhibited a satisfactory degree of self-reliance concerning their sense of responsibility, yet they tended to demonstrate inadequate autonomy concerning their involvement in learning activities both within and outside the classroom. Moreover, the outcomes revealed that students across all proficiency levels tended

to regard their abilities as average. Additionally, the findings highlighted a significant positive correlation between motivation and autonomy. The frequency of engagement in learning activities displayed the most robust connection with motivation, followed by perceived ability and responsibility. Lastly, the findings suggested that motivation significantly predicted autonomy, explaining a substantial portion (50%) of the variability in the dependent variable. (Liu, 2015).

In addition, acquiring English as a second language autonomously requires strong personal desire in learn. When learners are requires to acquire a language, it's important for them to possess a positive attitude towards the proses of language acquisition. This personal desire is called motivation (Iamudom & Tangkiengsirisin, 2020). This implies that motivation plays a crucial role in learner autonomy. It has the potential to instill a sense of responsibility in learners and enhance their confidence in their learning abilities.

Apart from personal desires and motivations to learn a language, learning autonomously requires the learner to have The readiness and capability to take charge of their own learning. According to Wenden (1991), enhancing learners' confidence can foster both their willingness and ability to take responsibility. This indicates that Students need to have confidence in their capacity to learn and to oversee their learning process. Without learners' willingness to assume responsibility for their learning, their autonomy will not progress. (Iamudom & Tangkiengsirisin, 2020; Wenden, 1991). In other words, the willingness to take on the responsibility to do various strategies to acquire the language plays a central role in language learning. Finally, A student with positive attitudes, driven by

motivation, typically demonstrates a readiness to assume responsibility in their learning endeavors (Jianfeng et al., 2018; Liu, 2015).

Within the realm of English communication, a multitude of approaches has been explored to learn and practice English autonomously. Fidyati et al. (2021) mentioned several activities that the students can use to practice their English. For example, the students use to enhance their speaking, listening, reading, writing, and pronunciation skills in English, individuals can utilize various resources such as podcasts, audio books, dramas, TV programs or movies, engage in karaoke, and participate in games with English language instructions.. During Covid-19 Pandemic, students learn English autonomously using various strategies such as talking to your-self (self-talking), using mirrors, singing English songs, using tongue twister, and taking online courses.

Although numerous research endeavors have explored the autonomy of English language learners. teaching and learning, there are still gaps for additional investigation within the Indonesian setting. For example, many students in Indonesia including those who learn English at Widya Mandira Catholic University believe learner autonomy being a recent concept, thus difficult to encourage students to learn autonomously. Furthermore, in the context of remote area of English learners, the studies about the types of autonomous learning strategy are still limited. Therefore, conducting more research to explore learner autonomy in the Indonesian context is still essential learning context.

Accordingly, the writer interested to explore about the EFL undergraduates autonomous learning strategies to improve their speaking ability, entitled: **“AUTONOMOUS LEARNING STRATEGY AND MOTIVATION TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILL OF THE FIFTH SEMESTER ENGLISH STUDENTS OF WIDYA MANDIRA CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY.** This research is going to discover the types of autonomous learning strategies used by the fifth semester English students of Widya Mandira Catholic University in improving their speaking skills and the most common mobile application forms used to practice their English communication skills.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the background the study above, the researcher formulated the research questions as follows:

1. What are the types of Autonomous Learning Strategies used by the fifth semester English students of Widya Mandira Catholic University to improve their speaking skills?
2. What are the most common mobile application forms used autonomously to improve the speaking skills of the fifth-semester English students of Widya Mandira Catholic University?
3. What are the effort to improve the speaking ability of the fifth-semester English students of Widya Mandira Catholic University?

### **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

This research aims to find out the types of autonomous learning strategies and to know the most common mobile application forms used by the fifth semester English students of Widya mandira Catholic University to improve their speaking skill.

### **1.4 The Significance of the study**

#### **a. Theoretical significance**

The study of autonomous learning strategy and mobile application forms used to improve speaking skills enriches the students' learning strategy documentation. This study will also give information about the type of Autonomous learning strategy and mobile application form mostly used by students in learning English out of the classroom or formal education setting to master and be fluent in speaking English.

#### **b. Practical significance**

This research hopefully can be beneficial for the writer herself in fostering self-confidence and reducing the fear of speaking, encouraging self-regular practice to improve English speaking skill, promoting critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

c. Future Research

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