CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English as an international language has an important role for Indonesian society, even though English is only a foreign language in Indonesia; there are many people who are enthusiastic about mastering English. This is illustrated in the three language dimensions, namely; prioritizing the Indonesian language, preserving regional languages, and mastering foreign languages. A person who has good English skills is considered to have a better life and broad knowledge so that he has the ease of getting a job. In addition, English in Indonesia is a compulsory subject; because it is in the curriculum. This is because of the important role of English in the international world.

Having good English, at least mastering the four language skills, namely; good listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Speaking as a language skill has an important role because speaking means we are trying to convey ideas or intentions. Through speaking we try to express things that are in our minds, recorded information, and speaking English can improve competence in English, namely; grammar, pronunciation, spelling, and vocabulary, as well as communication goals. Cameron in Pratiwi, I. (2013: 9) mentions that "speaking is the active use of language to express meaning so that other people can make sense of them to speak in the foreign language in order to share understanding with other people requires attention to precise details of the language". A speaker needs

to find the most appropriate words and the correct grammar to convey meaning accurately and precisely and also need to organize the discourse so that a listener will understand. Chaney in Kayi (2006) states that "speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of context". Speaking is a crucial part of language learning. It needs the speakers to produce the target language in the spoken form. Moreover, it involves the speaker using speech to express meanings to other people (Spratt, Pulverness, and William, 2005). Some people think that if they want to be able to speak fluently in English, they need to be able to pronounce words correctly, use appropriate stress and intonation patterns and speak in connected speech. However, speaking is more than that. Actually, speakers of English have to be able to speak in different genres and situations (Harmer, 2007).

To support the enthusiasm of this community, various studies were carried out to find the right strategy to make learning about speaking more interesting and easy to understand, and in a pandemic like today what learning media can support our learning process. At Widya Mandira Catholic University (henceforth: UNWIRA), the English education study program, speaking, is evenly divided into several types, namely; speaking for everyday communication, speaking for group activities, and speaking for formal settings.

Along with the development of science and technology, learning models must also be in accordance with the applicable curriculum. Good and advanced learning media are the main demands of the new curriculum in this 4.0 era, the entire ecosystem in the world of education is the implementer and success of this. Learning that can be done anywhere and anytime is a major breakthrough for the

sake of educating the nation's children. Teachers, lecturers, and experts in the world of education are required to be more creative. Learning with virtual media or electronic learning and or technology-based online learning is a very significant breakthrough in its development.

Since the 1970s e-learning has been introduced and developed in western countries. Basically, e-learning is a learning model that prioritizes innovative learning by utilizing technology or electronic devices. E-learning consists of two parts, namely 'e' which stands for 'electronic' and 'learning' which means 'learning'. E-learning means learning using electronic device assistance services, especially computer devices (Wicaksono, H., 2010 P. 4), but along with the development of science and technology, especially ICT (Information, Communication, and Technology), now e-learning is not only learning that only utilizes electronic devices. E-Learning can now be accessed anywhere and anytime, by the internet. Even now, E-Learning is growing rapidly, apart from distributing learning materials in the form of docs, pdf, excel, ppt files, and so on, a teacher can also share video materials in the form of links from Youtube, Google Video, and so on. In addition, E-Learning can currently be used for face-to-face learning via Video Call or Video Conference. Through video conferencing teachers and students can learn like in class.

UNWIRA Kupang, as one of the largest and accredited universities in East Nusa Tenggara Province, located in the mainland of Timor Island - Kupang City, has made various efforts to improve the quality of education. Institute for Learning Development and Quality Assurance (henceforth: LP3M) is currently known as Center for Information and Education Technology (henceforth: PITP)

through the Education Sector with the Information and Technology (henceforth: IT) team of UNWIRA working together and actively improving the quality of education at Unwira, starting from procuring a number of electronic tools such as computers, laptops, etc., and WiFi (Wireless Fidelity) portable in almost every room in UNWIRA. A number of training for lecturers or teaching staff were also carried out in order to introduce the Online Learning System (henceforth: SPADA). Various software in the form of applications and portals or WEB addresses are also provided for lecturers or teaching staff, students and employees. In addition, the UNWIRA IT team trying to create an online learning system itself. By the hard work of this UNWIRA IT team, there was an online learning system in early 2017, which is electronic learning named cel - WIRA (henceforth: Central Electronic Learning Unwira). Cel - WIRA itself is an Online Learning System or Online Course or Electronic Learning created or implemented through a Learning Management System (henceforth: LMS) called MOODLE (henceforth: Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) which is designed using pedagogical principles to help educators create an effective E-Learning system. Besides aiming as an online learning system, cel - WIRA also aims to provide a systematic and structured distance learning system. This is also supported by the content standards in the applicable curriculum, that at least 40% of learning uses E-Learning and a number of socializations to each study program.

Cel - WIRA as an electronic learning system in UNWIRA goes through various challenges on its journey as a learning system because previously there were various other electronic learning systems and even other online learning applications. For example, Google Classroom, Google Meet, and so on were

already present at UNWIRA, so that at that time cel - WIRA was not needed. However, at the beginning of 2019, we were surprised by the presence of COVID-19 (Corona Virus Disease 2019) which has paralyzed the economy of people almost all over the world, school activities, work, and so on. This is felt to be a breath of fresh air for almost all online learning systems because they have become more effective. Online learning, which was originally only known or found in urban areas and countries or developed areas, can now be found or carried out by everyone, anyone, anytime and from their homes, even by the underdeveloped communities. The UNWIRA IT team moves fast, cel - WIRA as an online learning system at UNWIRA is used as a learning system that must be used by both students and lecturers. Because of the UNWIRA IT team, cel - WIRA was fixed and made more effective and innovative, which was originally just sending and receiving assignments, attendance, video URLs, and teaching materials, now through cel - WIRA students and lecturers can face each other like learning inside a class because of the Video Conference (hence forth: VICON).

It is not a human creation if an object or tool or system has no flaws, cel - WIRA as an innovative technology-based learning system is applied for all courses in almost every study programs of each faculties at UNWIRA. Several problems arose regarding cel - WIRA which were deemed not yet effective and even ineffective for several courses in the English study program, one of which was the Speaking course. Some aspects, such as spelling, pronunciation, fluency, and so on, will be very difficult to see the development directly because the system in cel - WIRA does not support it yet. Even video conferencing at cel - WIRA is newly present in 2020, in addition Thornburry in Sayuri (2016) the main

problems of learners-speaker face are two areas; knowledge factors and skills factors because the speaker low of confidence. Knowledge factors mean here, the learners do not know yet aspects of the language that enable production, such us communication strategies. Skill factors mean here, the learners' knowledge is not sufficiently automated to ensure fluency. Therefore, English speakers should also have linguistic knowledge; firstly, genre knowledge which is about the purpose of speaking whether as transactional function or interpersonal function. Secondly, discourse knowledge which is about how to organize and connect individual utterance. Thirdly, pragmatic knowledge which is the relation between language and its contexts of use, including the purpose for which language is used. And the last is English speakers should speak English grammatically correct, a wide range of vocabulary, and good pronunciation. In addition, for EFL learners communicative competence would be hard to achieve without explicit instruction because it is not something that can be mastered automatically but needs to be learned and practiced, like any other language skills (Aleksius, 2017).

Based on the above problems, the researcher tries to find out and analyze the problems regarding the implementation of cel - WIRA in speaking course by conducting a study entitled; Usefulness of cel – WIRA in Learning Speaking: English Department Students Perceptions.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

What are the perceptions of the English department students of UNWIRA on the cel – WIRA in learning speaking?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

To find out the perceptions of the English department students of UNWIRA on the cel – WIRA in learning speaking.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The results or outputs of this research are very useful for students, lecturers or teaching staff, cel - WIRA developers, and writers.

1. For Students

This research has enormous benefits for students; this research is conducted to measure the extent of their understanding of the use of cel - WIRA in the learning process, especially in the speaking course.

2. For lecturers or teaching staff

For lecturers or teaching staff, this research can be used as a guide to see the extent to which students understand speaking as one of the basic skills in English, as well as to what extent students understand cel - WIRA; advantages and disadvantages of using cel - WIRA in the learning process.

3. For the cel - WIRA Developer

This research also helps developers or cel - WIRA developers, in order to be able to solve problems that exist in a number of features or other things that become problems in certain courses when using cel - WIRA.

4. For Researcher

For the researcher, this research becomes additional knowledge or understanding regarding cel - WIRA and speaking, as well as knowing what problems may arise in it.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study is only present information based on the results of research on the perceptions of cel - WIRA users, especially the English department students of UNWIRA in the speaking course.

1.6 Definition of Terms

1. Perception

Perception is a way of thinking and acting in an individual who is influenced by sensory elements based on his experience.

2. English Department Students of UNWIRA

English Department Students of UNWIRA are the subjects of the research conducted, these students are students in the speaking subject that have gone through three types of speaking subject namely; speaking for everyday communication, speaking for group activities, and speaking for formal settings, which in the learning process uses cel - WIRA as an online learning medium.

3. Cel - WIRA

Cel - WIRA is an electronic learning system used as an online learning platform for Widya Mandira Catholic University, which was present in early 2017 with the help of LMS called MOODLE.

4. Learning Speaking

      Learning is a process of gaining new understanding, knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and preferences. While speaking is the process of conveying information and/or ideas that are in your mind. So learning speaking is meant as a process of obtaining understanding, knowledge, skills, and values in speaking; through a formal and structured learning system.