# **CHAPTER IINTRODUCTION**

This chapter introduces the nature of present study and theoretical foundation of the research. It begins with the background of the study, the reason for choosing the topic, the scope and limitation of the study, the research questions, the purposes of the study, the significance of the study, and clarification of terms.

* 1. **The Background of the Study**

Humans cannot read other people's minds, therefore language is needed as a way to communicate, as stated by Delahunty & Garvey (2010:5) that defines language as a system capable of connecting thoughts, where thoughts cannot be seen, heard, or touched, whether by sound, letters, manual signs, or tactile symbols (eg, Braille) that can be. Furthermore, Amberg & Vause (2009:2), states that a language is a communication tool, and in a social context communication almost always occurs. This is one reason why effective communication requires understanding and recognition of the relationship between language and the people who use it.

Learning foreign languages refers to conditions where a language that is not spoken by the surrounding community so that the community learns and acquires non-native languages or what are commonly referred to as foreign languages (Fasold & Linton,2006:434). Fatiha, Sliman, Mustapha, & Yahia (2014:121), state that English language has become the international language which widely adopted for communication worldwide, as it became a tool of communication between native and non-native speakers. In Indonesia, English is a foreign language as well as a global language that must be mastered to support various aspects of life, one of which is learning in education. According to Schunk (2012:2), learning is a process of behavior change that is able to last long enough or to behave in a certain way in a capacity, which results from practice or other forms of experience. Learning can acquire and modify knowledge, skills, strategies, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors through the process. Many people want to learn cognitive, linguistic, motor, and social skills, and this can be produced through a variety of different forms.

In Indonesia, there are still many teaching and learning activities that prioritize face-to-face meetings in class. However, with the Covid-19 pandemic widespread in Indonesia, all activities must be carried out from home. The Minister of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud), Nadiem Anwar Makarim, issued Circular Number 4 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Education in Emergency Coronavirus (Covid-19), one of which emphasized that online learning (distance), was carried out to provide meaningful learning experiences for students, without being burdened by the demands of completing all curriculum achievements for class and graduation. Online / distance learning is focused on increasing students' understanding of the corona virus and the Covid-19 outbreak. The learning activities and tasks can vary between students according to their interests and conditions, including in terms of gaps in access/ learning facilities at home.

According to Dabbagh & Ritland (2005:15), online learning is an open and well-known learning system using pedagogical tools (educational aids), which can be done via the internet and network-based technology to facilitate learning and knowledge through meaningful actions and interactions. Furthermore Downes (2008:23) states that online learning is at heart a form of distance learning, and therefore offers as one of its primary advantages a form of time and place independence for the learner. So, online learning is the best choice for education in the midst of the Covid-19 outbreak.

The researcher know that the role of media and applications facilitates the learning network of course and is balanced with the conditions for each student because of the online learning system. The learning process must be more equitable to students. Researchers found that in using online learning there were many alternative media or applications that could be used to support the learning process. The application can be adjusted to the media that is owned quickly, and almost every student has a laptop or smartphone. This application should make it easier for students and instructors in the learning process and what learning is done by learning carried out by college students in Garut, especially the English Education Department which uses learning applications such as Zoom, WA Group, and Google Classroom. However, indeed the obstacles faced are different and also from environmental conditions. Maybe from a financial perspective, because it requires an internet package to support learning, signals, and difficulties in understanding the maximum expected from each given task. The existence of these obstacles will undoubtedly lead to various perceptions from students, especially the English Education Department in the speaking class.

Thus, the perception will arise because the learning system that usually uses the face-to-face method turns into total online learning, so this is a new thing that requires adaptation. Students' perception about this learning system will also vary. Therefore, this study tries to investigate how students' perception about online learning are applied in their education. According to Kotler (2009:179-180), perception is the process by which we select, organize, and translate input information to create a meaningful picture of the world. Furthermore Walgito (2004:87) states that perception is a process that is preceded by a process of sensing, which is the process of receiving a stimulus by an individual through the senses or also called a sensory process. However, the process does not stop just like that, but the stimulus is continued and the next process is a perceptual process. In other words, researchers want to know that in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic students are still learning well or not through the online learning system, especially in speaking classes.

Speaking is one of the four skills of English learning. It also becomes the most important skill because it is always used in daily conversation. According to Leong & Ahmadi (2017:35), also explains that speaking is the most important skill because it is one of the abilities that is needed to perform a conversation. Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching, it is an art of communications and one of 4 productive skills that must be mastered in learning foreign language (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014:9).

According to Fulcher (2003:23) states that speaking is the use of language to communicate with others. It means that speaking involves two or more people in which the participants are both hearers and speakers. Speaking also is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 2001:267). Furthermore, according McDonough, Shaw, & Masuhara (2013:157) define that “Speaking is desire and purpose driven; in other words, we genuinely want to communicate something to achieve a particular end”. This may involve expressing ideas and opinions; expressing a wish or a desire to do something; negotiating and/or solving a particular problem; or establishing and maintaining social relationship and friendship.

Several studies concerning the students' perception of online learning have been done by several researchers in various ways. First, the study conducted by Muthuprasad, Aiswarya, Aditya, & Jha (2020), which conducted a study to investigate understanding Agricultural Student’s perception and preference towards the online learning through an online survey of 307 students. They also explored the student’s preferences for various attributes of online classes, which will be helpful to design effective online learning environment. The results indicated that majority of the respondents (70%) are ready to opt for online classes to manage the curriculum during this pandemic. Majority of the students preferred to use smart phone for online learning. Using content analysis, we found that students prefer recorded classes with quiz at the end of each class to improve the effectiveness of learning. The students opined that flexibility and convenience of online classes makes it attractive option, whereas broadband connectivity issues in rural areas makes it a challenge for students to make use of online learning initiatives.

Second, the study conducted by Asiry (2017), which conducted research to investigate the readiness of students for online learning, to investigate their preference and perception, and to measure the quality of online tutorials. A 14-statement questionnaire was administered to fourth year undergraduate dental students in male campus at King Saud University who completed preclinical orthodontic course. The students responded to each statement by using Likert scale. The results reveal a high agreement of students (27.8–31.5% agree and 38.9–50% strongly agree) on a possession of necessary computer skills and access to internet. 59.2% and 64.8% of the students replied that online flash lectures and procedural videos were helpful to their learning, respectively. With respect to students’ learning preferences, few students preferred online flash lectures (31.5%) and procedural videos (17.1%). Most students (38.9% agree and 31.5% strongly agree) preferred a combination of traditional teaching methods and online learning. Overall, student attitudes were positive regarding online learning. The students viewed online learning helpful as a supplement to their learning rather than a replacement for traditional teaching methods.

Third, the study conducted by Almaghaslah (2018), The aim of the study was to evaluate previous exposure to online learning and preference for learning through pre-recorded online lectures with or without live active learning among pharmacy students in their fifth year. An anonymous online survey was self-administered to fifth-year students enrolled on the Graduation Research Project Course. The response rate was 100%. Ninety-seven percent of students had previous experience with at least one online course during their pharmacy undergraduate curriculum; 76% of the courses were science courses. The majority of respondents preferred face-to-face, in-class lectures to online lectures, but 17% expressed no preference. Pharmacy students expressed some interest in online learning methods within the pharmacy curriculum.

Previous research has similarities with this research where all of them used online learning in education. However, this study is different from the research above where this study investigates students' perceptions of online learning in speaking class during Covid-19 which can be used as evaluation material and for further research on online learning. In addition, a striking difference from this study is the time and place in this study, namely when the Covid-19 pandemic was endemic in Indonesia so that online learning became the only option for continuing learning activities.

The researcher took this topic because three years ago, the researcher learned speaking in a class by practicing speaking directly in front of the class one by one and telling the topic given by the lecturer. Because of the impact of coronavirus at this time, all students study with online learning from their houses. Because of the change in learning methods, students naturally have their perceptions about this.

The success of online learning rests in the experiences of both students and instructors. Student motivational dispositions and perceived value of distance education and uses of educational technology are areas in need of further investigation (Bernard et al., 2004). Modifying existing face-to-face courses to meet the specific characteristics of online learning environments requires a great deal of effort and resources, such as using various kinds of media.

In particular, this study focuses on the students’ perception and motivation of online learning in speaking class during Covid-19 pandemic. This study will be proposed as a qualitative study to investigate students' perception of online learning.

* 1. **Reason for Choosing the Topic**

This research related to Students' perception of online learning in speaking class during the Covid-19 pandemic. The reason for choosing the topic are as follows:

1. The researcher wants to know each of the students' perceptions of speaking class related to online learning.
2. The researcher wants to know that in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic students are still learning well or not through the online learning system.
	1. **The Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This research focused on finding out how English students’ perception of online learning in speaking class. The subjects of this study were students of one of the universities in Garut, especially the second semester students of the first year.

* 1. **The Research Question**

Based on the background of the problem, identification of the problem, and limitation of the problem, the problem of this research could be formulated as follow:

1. What are the students' perceptions of online learning in speaking class during Covid-19 pandemic?
2. What are the students’ motivations of online learning in speaking class during Covid-19 pandemic?
	1. **The Purpose of Study**

Based on research questions mentioned before, thus the purpose of this research is to find out students' perception and motivation of online learning in speaking class during Covid-19 pandemic.

* 1. **The Significance of the Study**

The writer hopes this research can contribute to everyone. The benefits that the writer intend was distinguished into two benefits as follows:

* + 1. **Theoretically**

This research provided specific knowledge about students' perceptions and motivation of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. then this research can also be used to increase knowledge about the perception of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

* + 1. **Practically**
1. For researchers by conducting this research, the authors increase their knowledge of perceptions, especially the perceptions of English Education Department students about how to study online efficiently during the pandemic. This helps researchers understand more about the subject.
2. For Reader, the result of this study hopes to enrich the knowledge of the reader about perception, especially in learning about the perception of online learning.
3. For future researchers, the writer hopes that the result of this study was useful for further researchers who want to conduct the next research dealing with the study of the perception of online learning.
	1. **Clarification of Terms**

In this section, the researcher presents the clarification of key terms to avoid ambiguity, misunderstanding, and misinterpretation. There are:

1. Perception is the process by which we select, organize, and translate input information to create a meaningful picture of the world (Kotler, 2009).
2. Online learning is an open and well-known learning system using pedagogical tools (educational aids), which can be done via the internet and network-based technology to facilitate learning and knowledge through meaningful actions and interactions (Dabbagh and Ritland, 2005).
3. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 2001:267).
4. Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus (WHO, 2020).
5. A pandemic is the worldwide spread of a new disease (WHO, 2010).