

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

In a pedagogical situation, especially one that concerns language, it is expected that students should be actively exposed to the language they are attempting to learn. Krashen (1982: 44) claims that more exposure means more proficiency. In other words, language learners should be given more opportunities to expose themselves to any form of language activities that devoid of L1 (first language) interferences. It is of course, however, simpler said than done to accomplish such an ideal language learning environment for students since the interference of L1 in language learning is often, but not always, unavoidable.

As English has long become global lingua franca and a means of international communication around the world, Indonesia thus set English as a foreign language for its educational curriculum. To date, in Indonesia, it is no shocking matter to see an English class that is severely lacking in English use, especially in speaking and listening. Be it language learners or English teachers, both parties often, but not always, prefer using L1 (Bahasa Indonesia) over L2 (English) during class activities.

The issue about the use of first language (L1) in foreign language learning has still been debated for years. It goes without saying the use of L1 is still necessary and unavoidable. Liao's (2006) investigation into the role L1 plays for Taiwanese college students learning English identifies three strategic functions in the students' use of L1. First, students use L1 as a memory strategy to improve their ability to memorize words, idioms, grammar, and sentence structures. Second, L1 is used as an effective strategy for reducing learning anxiety and increasing their motivation to learn English. Third, students utilize L1 as a social strategy to assist them in asking

questions or cooperating with others, and this, in turn, promotes their learning outcomes. In yet another example, Greggio and Gil (2007) did an audio-recorded twelve class sessions of Portuguese-speaking beginner EFL learners. They determined that the teacher utilized L1 as an effective teaching strategy for the explanation of grammar and the offering of feedback. Students used L1 as a viable learning strategy to both clarify their understanding of lesson content and as a means of participating in class discussion. Based on these results, Greggio and Gil offer the suggestion that L1 may play an important role in the facilitation of interaction between classroom participants as well as foreign language learning.

On the other hand, Bowen (2004) stated that the use of L1 was a ‘bad thing’ in English and should be avoided at any cost. Furthermore, Swain and Lapkin (2000) declared that facilitating L2 language learning with the help of L1 will not guarantee an improvement in students’ language proficiency as it would limit students’ English exposure and thus slow down their English learning progress since more exposure to target language prove to be a great advantage in honing their English proficiency.

As there is still no clear consensus about the use of Bahasa Indonesia in English classroom in Indonesia, each school or educational institution thus adopt their own approach in addressing the use of Bahasa Indonesia in their English as foreign language teaching. Some allowed the use of Bahasa Indonesia, even to full extent, in their English teaching program while other prohibit it to promote a maximal use of the English (full immersion) in order to enhance the students’ English proficiency as quickly as possible. The learners, on the other hand, often times just go along with what is presented to them without knowing what each approach might have had in effect in their English learning journey. As a result, it worth investigating to what

kind of perception students hold in regard to the use of Bahasa Indonesia in English learning context.

The aforementioned causes thus lead the researcher in conducting a research entitled, ‘Students’ Perception Toward The Use of Bahasa Indonesia in EFL Classroom in Jambi University’. The researcher intends to find out what perceptions and opinions do English department students in Jambi University hold toward the use of Bahasa Indonesia in their everyday English class activities. They are chosen because there is still no common stance against the use of Bahasa Indonesia in English-related activities in English department. The researcher hopes the knowledge within this paper could provide insights to both teachers and students about the use of Bahasa Indonesia in English classroom which help them to define their own stance about the presence of L1 in English pedagogical situation.

1.2 Research Question

This study aims to answer this question:

1. What are students’ perception toward the use of L1 (Bahasa Indonesia) in English learning classroom in Jambi University?

1.3 Objective of the Research

This research has the following objective:

1. To find out what perceptions do English department’s students of Jambi University hold toward the use of Bahasa Indonesia in EFL classroom.

1.4 Limitation of the Research

In this research, the study is only limited on finding and exploring the perceptions from various students in their respective years in English department. This study is only aimed at the

2019/2020 and 2020/2021 students (e.g: first semester to fourth semester) since Bahasa Indonesia is less used when they reach fifth semester and onward.

1.5 Significance of the research

Hopefully, this research could give informations to both students and teachers in regard of using L1 (Bahasa Indonesia) in English learning situation. It may help them develop their own stance and opinions regarding the use of L1 in EFL classroom. In addition, this research could also help teachers to understand in what situation L1 is allowed to be used or not and to what degree it should be used in teaching English as foreign language. By doing so, it could significantly improve the efficiency and quality of learning English for both parties.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

- Perception

Perception is a process where one recognize and interpret any sensory data that occur in their surroundings. Furthermore, perception occurs in five stages: stimulations, organization, interpretation, evaluation and memory and recalling. Human's perception is highly valued as a mean to find out a solution of a particular problem or solely just for satisfying one's curiosity.