

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Research**

Small group is one of the best methods in learning English. The use of small group can increase students' motivation because the size of the small group makes the English lecturer easy to control the members each group, small group also provides a social framework because the students interacting on each other and share their experience to solve their problems. Brewer (1997) also states that discussion in group is an arena in which differences in opinion, race, gender, and participant should be accepted. Differences allow the diffusion of new ideas and attitudes. Group work of any sort helps participant build their interpersonal skills and confidence about offering individual opinions in a group atmosphere.

Small group is a learning group where each member has the same task or material that will be discussed between one another in order to achieve the common goal, and then the result of the discussion will be presented in front of the class and other audience given the opportunity to provide a response. In this line Baker in Umiyati (2011) also state that small group is three or more people interacting face to face, with or without an assigned leader in such a way that each person influences, and is influenced by another person in the group.

Paul (2010) says that when students learn in a group is that the small group learning is the best method of learning that can occur but on the other hand, there are situations where the small group learning is not a possibility because of

various logistical reasons. Therefore, Tubs (2004) stated that there are several advantages of small group, such as developing self-awareness, managing personal stress, solving problems analytically and creatively, coaching counseling, and establishing supportive communication, gaining power and influence, motivating others, empowering and delegating, managing conflict, building effective teams and teamwork.

Based on a preliminary investigation of some students' in the English program study, the researcher found that students in fifth semester have their own perception toward small group interaction. Through the learning process in small group, students feel like solve problems finding in teaching and learning process. by way of discussion and sharing ideas between members. Besides that there are some disadvantages from small group that is students also often burdening only one student to finish the task given by lecturer and when present the material in front of class there is a question who can answer only students who understand the material.

Regarding the explanation above, it is interesting to do a research relating to students' perception toward small group interaction. This research becomes more specific by only investigating on fifth semester of English program study. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a research entitled "Students' perception toward working in small group at the fifth semester of English program study in Jambi University".

## **1.2 Research Question**

The focus of the present study is on Students' perception toward small group interaction in Jambi University. More specifically, the study aims to find the answer of these questions:

The study was intended to answer the following question:

- "What are students' perceptions toward working in small group of fifth semester of English department in Jambi University"?

## **1.3 Purpose of the Research**

The purposes of this study:

- To find out students' perception toward working in small group of English program study in Jambi University.

## **1.4 Limitation of the research**

The researcher tried to find out the students' perception toward working in small group at the fifth semester of English program study in Jambi University.

## **1.5 Significant of the Research**

The research is conducted in order to gain the information relating to students' perception toward using small group. Besides, the significance of the result of this research is expected to be useful: (1) for fifth semester, (2) next researchers, (3) for the researcher herself. First to make students' easier do they

assign and the second is for next researchers who are going to conduct a research in the same field. This research is expected to provide useful information about using small group, students' characteristic in facing using small group, and students' perception toward using small group. Third is for English lecturers in Jambi University.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Term**

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation on the topic discussed, it is better to state the definition on each keyword in the title of this research; the researcher clarifies the main term as follows:

a. Perception

Judging that advantages of small group as the best method to learning. It means that when students' used that method have got many benefits like gained when doing the task with the group.

b. Small group

Small group interaction is the process by which three or more member of a group exchange verbal and nonverbal messages in an attempt to influence one another, small group is a limited number of people who communicate face-to-face, sharing a common understanding of an interdependent goal, influencing one another, and expressing a sense of belongingness to the group.