

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates the general ideas related to the introduction of this study. The discussion involves the background of the study, the research questions, hypothesis, research assumption, the research objectives, the scope of the study, the significances of the study, and the clarifications of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

It is granted that individual capacities to learn foreign language tend to be different. Among so many factors contributing to second or foreign language learning success, including motivation, attitude or personality types, it seems that one important factor which accounts for success in language learning is the degree of intelligence that individual possess (Pisghadam, 2009 p.1). In other words, students' level of intelligence plays important role in English language learning.

Meanwhile, Smith (2002) mentions that Intelligence Quotient (IQ) does not seem to adequately explain individual difference in academic success or fail to fully explain cognitive ability. Among other intelligences, emotional intelligence is argued to be more important than Intelligence Quotient (IQ) for promoting academic, personal and occupation success (Jahandar, et.al, 2012, Mayer & Salovey, 1993, Mayer & Geher, 1996, Zeidner,et.al, 2009). Turner (2011) adds that emotional intelligence is a better indicator of success than traditional cognitive intelligence. People with higher emotional intelligence find it easier to form and maintain interpersonal relationships (Rode,et.al, 2006) and to solve problems (Juvec & Gerli, 2001 in Bracket & Salovey, 2006). Thus, EI is argued to be more vital than simply being cognitively smart.

Furthermore, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is also so much necessary for effective social interaction and classroom success (Elias, 2004 in Fatum, 2008 p. 27). Research indicates that emotional intelligence is associated with success in

many areas of life, including effective teaching, student learning, quality relationships, and academic performance (Brackett & Katulak, 2006 p.1). Considerable studies also reveal that EI plays a central role in students' academic success, personal and social lives beyond the effects of personality and general intelligence (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009 p.1). The importance of EI exists because emotions drive attention which impact learning, memory, and behavior (Ohman, Flykt & Esteves, 2001 in Brackett & Katulak, 2006).

Moreover, studies reveal that emotional intelligence can be taught and students can be coached to develop the tools and skills needed to manage their positive and negative emotions (Darling-Hammond, et.al n.d p. 92). Emotional Intelligence (EI) is not like IQ which is relatively fixed, but Emotional Intelligence is something that can be built as the age (Jahandar, et.al, 2012,p.1). IQ is more static measures and likely to stay quite constant through life ("Emotional Intelligence", 2014) while emotional intelligence is something that can be improved by learning (Turner, 2011). In contrast, Shipley, Jackson & Segrest (in press) showed in their research that age is not positively correlated with Emotional Intelligence. It means that the elder person does not guarantee to have higher Emotional Intelligence. However, this intelligence is something that can be trained and improved with the knowledge.

Emotional Intelligence influences people's action (Fatum, 2008 p.26) whereas academic aptitude (IQ) has no connection with how people understand and deal with their emotions and others' emotions (Schutte, et.al, 1998). Fatum (2008,p.26) argues that if schools focus only on academic instruction and school management in their effort to help students attain academic success, they will fail to achieve their goals. Thus, it is important to educate students to be socially and emotionally intelligence in order to receive the maximum benefit of a teaching program.

On the other hand, as stated by Krashen (1981) in Zarezadeh (2013) that learning a foreign language is difficult, exhausting and replete with stresses and

strains for the learners. The problems get more difficult for the students as they are expected to communicate with a language which is different with their mother language. Thus, having the ability to manage emotions when facing complicated learning situation is useful for students.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that there is ample evidence that emotions affect performance. Positive emotions can improve performance, while negative ones can diminish it (Darling-Hammond, et.al n.d p.90). In relation to speaking skill, Arita (2008) states that one of students' difficulties in speaking English is caused by psychological factors such as fear of making mistake, shyness, anxiety, lack of self-confidence, and lack of motivation. Those difficulties, as theorists argue, hinder the students to speak actively in English class (Juhana, 2011 p.35). Thornburry (2005, p.28) states that those psychological factors contribute to speaking failure and cause an acute sense of anxiety when it comes to speaking. Thus, if the students have been introduced to the power of Emotional Intelligence (EI), they likely would be able to effectively handle anxieties, shyness, anger, fear and the stresses of learning difficulties.

Although many studies show EI has the potential to have important role in predicting the overall academic performance (Zeidner et.al, 2009). However, in Indonesian context, as far as the writer is concerned, there has not been found any studies conducted in the area of emotional intelligence and English language learning especially in speaking skill. Therefore, the major concern of this study seeks to shed light on the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and learners' English language proficiency in Indonesian context. To be more specific, this study investigates the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and students' speaking ability in one Private University in Bandung in academic year 2013/2014. In addition, this study also aims to reveal which dimensions of Emotional Intelligence can mostly predict students' English speaking ability.

1.2 Research Question

The problems to be discussed in this paper are summarized in the following research questions:

1. What is the state of students' emotional intelligence (EI) ?
2. What is the state of students' English speaking ability ?
3. Is there any significant relationship between Indonesian EFL learners' EI and their English speaking ability?
4. Which dimension(s) of Emotional Intelligence can mostly predict the Indonesian EFL learners' English speaking ability?

1.3 Hypotheses

Based on the specific problems which are the concern of this research, the researcher has come up with the emotional intelligence which is believed to have significant relationship on students' English speaking ability. This belief is based on the prior studies conducted on the topic of Emotional Intelligence and education especially in English language learning. Hence, the alternative hypothesis is formulated:

There is significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and English speaking ability of Indonesian EFL learners.

1.4 Research Assumption

Research problem in this study is built based on the assumption that emotion is a part of human nature. Emotion typically arises in response to an event (Salovey & Mayer, 1990.p.186) and has the potential to influence people's ability to process information (Nelson, 2007). Therefore, based on the explanation above, it can be assumed that emotional intelligence also contributes to students' speaking performance.

1.5 Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to investigate whether there is any significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and students' English speaking ability in Indonesian context. Most specifically, this research is aimed to know which dimension(s) of Emotional Intelligence based on the Goleman theory can mostly predict the students' ability in speaking English.

1.6 The Scope of Study

This paper specifically concerns on discovering the relationship between students' Emotional Intelligence and their English speaking ability in one of Private Universities in Bandung in the academic year 2013/2014. In addition, this study also tries to find out which dimensions of Emotional Intelligence such as Self-Awareness, Self-Control, Self-Motivation, Empathy and Social skills, can mostly predict students' English speaking ability. This study employs the theory of Emotional Intelligence of Goleman which defines EI as the way in which an individual processes information about emotion and emotional responses. Furthermore, oral presentation is administered to measure students' English speaking ability. The students are asked to deliver a speech in English language. According to Bruford (2008, p. 54), oral presentation requires students to identify and explore the knowledge issues raised by knowledge claimed from a substantive real-life situation that is of interest to them.

1.7 The Significances of Study

The results of this study is hoped to give a meaningful contribution theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the literature on the relationship between emotional intelligence and English language learning especially in English speaking ability.

For the practical contribution, this study is hoped to give meaningful contribution for four important components; the education policy maker, the teachers, the students, and the next researcher. First, the finding of this study is important for the education policy maker to include the programs to raise the emotional competencies of Indonesian students especially in English language learning. As many studies have found the importance of Emotional Intelligence in foreign language learning, therefore, the education policy maker needs to develop more educational programs designed to improve emotionally and socially intelligent behavior that are based on scientific observations and empirical findings.

Second, the result of this study is meaningful in terms of providing English teachers with evidence that emotional intelligence is one of important aspects in influencing the students' academic performance especially in their English speaking performance. Third, based on the fact that speaking is one of the difficult skills in English (see Togatorop, 2009; Juhana, 2011), therefore, practically this study can be empirical findings for students to improve their emotional intelligence as many studies have showed the significant contribution of EI to students' academic performance (Pishghadam, 2009; Saidy, et.al, 2009; Motallebzadeh, 2009; Skourdi & Rahimi, 2010; Jahandar, et.al, 2012; Zarezadeh, 2013). Thus, it is hoped that the students will learn the knowledge of Emotional Intelligence and the ways to improve this intelligence.

The last significance relates to further researchers. This study can encourage them to continue studying the impact of EI on various aspects of student's and teacher's performance and behavior using a number of different EI instruments. It will provide teacher and student with more information on the various type of performance and behavior that are affected by EI (Bar-On, Maree & Elias, 2007 p.12)

1.8 Clarification of Key Terms

There are some key terms used in this study, they are:

1. Relationship is defined as connection between two things in which one thing changes as the other does (Oxford Learners Pocket Dictionary, 2003: 362). In this study, the relationship is between students' English speaking ability and their Emotional Intelligence.
2. Emotional Intelligence is the ability of being aware of feelings and handling disruptive emotions well, emphasizing with how others feel, and being skillful in handling the relationships (Goleman, 2001). Furthermore, Goleman also explains that there are five dimensions in emotional intelligence; self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, empathy and social skill.
3. Speaking ability is students' oral communication ability in terms of five sub skills: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and confidence.

1.9 Thesis Organization

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter one discusses the introduction dealing with the background of the research, the objectives of the study, the scope of the research, the significance of the study, the definitions of the terms and the organization of the thesis. Then, chapter two presents the supported theory to the topic of the research and previous researches on Emotional Intelligence in foreign language learning. In chapter three, research methodology and design are explained in detail. Furthermore, chapter four contains the description of data analysis, data presentation, and discussion. In the last chapter of this thesis, the conclusion of the study and recommendation for further research will be explained.

