CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

English with its status as a global language has been an increasingly important subject to be taught in schools around the world including in Indonesian schools. In the big cities of Indonesia such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan and Bandung English is introduced from an early age whereas in the more remote areas it is taught from secondary level schools. According to Depdiknas, English as a subject is taught to support the development of the intellectual, emotional and social skills of the students, to assist the mastery of other subjects and to develop communication skills in English (Suherdi, Rekonstruksi Pendidikan Bahasa, 2012, p. 6). This statement implies the importance of English acquisition for Indonesian students to develop their academic and non academic skills. This is in line with the general assumption about English as stated by Crystal (2003) where a language achieves a genuinely global status, in this case English, it develops a special role that is recognized in every country. The acceptance of a language to become an international or a global language has a very strong connection with political, technological enhancement and economical power (Crystal, 2003, p. 9). This acceptance has made English taught and learnt across the globe.

In Indonesia, various efforts have been done to improve the quality of English teaching but none seems to yield the desired results. The implementation of a full English immersion program (FIP) is an ambitious approach chosen by some elite schools in Indonesia aiming at maximizing the exposure to the target language in meaningful contexts. One of the founders of the school where this research took place claimed that through a full immersion program, Indonesian students will be able to speak and write almost as good as the native speakers of English (Juliono, 2013). This is similar to Lanneberg's critical period hypothesis (1967) as cited by Bot, Lowie and Verspoor which claims that it is not possible to acquire a native-like level of proficiency when learning the second language starts after a critical period, normally associated

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with puberty (Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2005, pp. 65-69). As promising as it may seem, there have been no thorough and valid studies to support this claim.

Another aspect of the implementation of a full English immersion program which is worth consideration is the aspect of the social and cultural development of the students. The use of English as a medium of instruction is driven by the demand to create a universal and international standardization in the field of education (Ballantine & Spade, 2008, p. 452). However, according to the Indonesian Constitution Court in the case of the closure of international standard schools in Indonesia (RSBI), such practice displays an obvious threat to students' sense of nationalism. Indonesian education system therefore should prepare its students to be able to form their identity as Indonesian, who are abode to the nation's values and are proud of its culture while gaining the knowledge and skills they need to compete globally.

There have not been many researches conducted to investigate how this program is perceived by the involving parties and what are the observable impacts the program has on the students' sense of nationalism. This research fills the gap in which it thoroughly examines the stakeholders' perceptions on the implementation of a full immersion program (FIP) at an Indonesian senior high school and investigated the influence the program has on the students' sense of nationalism and identity. Stakeholder by definition means a person, group or organization that has interest or concern in an organization. Stakeholders can affect or be affected by the organization's actions, objectives and policies. Some examples of key stakeholders are creditors, directors, employees, government (and its agencies), owners (shareholders), suppliers, unions, and the community from which the business draws its resources (businessdictionary.com, 2014). In the context of this study, the stake holders that participated in this research are ten senior high school teachers and fifty nine students. There are three areas of interest in this study. The first area deals with the students' and teachers' general perception of the implementation of a full immersion program (FIP) which includes the underlying reasons for favoring and not favoring the program. The second area investigates the influence of FIP on the instructional process, which includes the problems teachers and students face, the advantages and disadvantages of, and challenges faced and strategies used in the

implementation of an FIP in a senior high school. The third area of discussion is related to the effects of the implementation of an FIP on students' sense of nationalism and identity as Indonesian.

1.2 Research questions

The research questions guiding this research are:

1. What are the general perceptions of the students and teachers regarding the implementation of a full immersion program at secondary school?
2. What are the underlying reasons of the students and teachers for favoring and not favoring an FIP at secondary level?
3. According to the perceptions of students and teachers, does the implementation of an FIP influence the instructional process at the school?
4. To what extent does learning in an English environment influence the sense of nationalism and shape the identity of the students as Indonesian citizens?

1.3 The significance of the study

This study is significant in four aspects namely theoretical, policy, practical, and social. In the area of theory, this study will give new insights in terms of how to organize a bilingual or immersion program within the national education system. In terms of policy, this study will provide a holistic perception of how a bilingual and full immersion program is implemented in concordance with local values and practices. Furthermore, learning about the difficulties and challenges faced by teachers and students in teaching and learning in a full immersion school, the government will be able to better regulate and provide assistance to bilingual schools.

In the areas of learning and teaching practice, this study is needed to supply relevant and useful inputs to involved parties such as the teachers, the students and parents, the administrators, and policy makers in the areas of education. The teachers will benefit from this paper as it shows the challenges the teachers face in implementing the programs. Furthermore, the study may also provide data as to the educational and instructional problems in secondary school education, particularly in the Indonesian secondary school context; investigating the underlying reasons behind the student and teacher perceptions and instructional aspects of FIP

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may lead us to curricular issues. The students will benefit, as the readiness they should have before entering a full immersion or bilingual school will be identified. School administrators will benefit as they will understand how the teachers feel about the programs and be made aware of the input given by the teachers and parents.

Lastly, socially, this study could better bridge the gap between the demands of having an international standard education on the one hand and building a solid foundation of being an Indonesian school on the other hand. The negative perceptions people have with regard to English speaking schools, which mostly are political, should be addressed by proving that the ability of using English does not threaten the student's identity and love of their country. This controversy is mainly related to the status of the Indonesian language as the language of unity, the national language, and the formal language of Indonesia (Muslich & Oka, 2010, p. 47).

1.4 The clarification of main terms

Full immersion program (FIP), also known as English-medium Instruction (EMI) or Content-Based Instruction (CBI): Refers to instruction of subjects through the medium of English. In the wording of the data collection instruments, namely both the survey questionnaire and interview protocols, English-medium instruction and immersion program has been used interchangeably with the latter being more frequently used especially in international standard schools in Indonesia.

Perceptions refer to evaluative concepts encompassing opinions and beliefs. Attitudes, opinions, beliefs, intentions, evaluative beliefs are interrelated concepts that have been areas of study for social psychologists (Tarhan, 2003). A conceptual overview of the umbrella term "attitude" in the literature is presented in Chapter two of this paper.

The impacts refer to the potential risks of the implementation of a full English immersion program within the Indonesian education context. The word impact here should not be treated as it has a causative relation between the implementation of an FIP to the student's sense of nationalism's level.

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Instructional Process: Instructional process is a broad term that covers various aspects of instruction (Tarhan, 2003). Within the boundaries of the present study instructional process has been used to refer to the learning of the subject matter and teacher's teaching performance. Tarhan elaborates conceptual definitions of each of these terms below:

- Learning of the subject matter/ content: refers to the degrees to which learning takes place during the process of instruction. This covers the extent of student's comprehension of the subject matter as delivered in class by the teacher; the ability to express the content orally and in written form during class interaction and assessment (use of academic skills); learning of concepts; retention of content vs. memorization; student achievement in exams; and the use of academic sources conducive to learning of the subject matter in out-of-class tasks.
- Teacher's teaching performance: refers to the teachers' self-perception of 1) a teacher in general and as a teacher in an FIP context, and 2) ability to perform teaching tasks in the target language (Tarhan, 2003).

Airasian and Russel explain that the instructional process comprises three basic steps. The first is planning instruction, which includes identifying specific expectations or learning outcomes, selecting suitable materials to achieve these expectations or produce the desired outcomes, and organizing learning experiences into a supportive, coherent, reinforcing sequence. The second step involves delivering the planned instruction to students which means teaching the students. The third step involves assessing how well students learn or achieve the expectations or outcomes (Airasian & Russell, 2008, pp. 64-66).

Nationalism refers to an ideology which is defined by Handler (1988) as an ideology about individuated being. He says that it concerned with boundedness, continuity, and homogeneity encompassing diversity. He also mentions that nationalism is an ideology in which social reality, conceived in terms of nationhood, is endowed with the reality of natural things (Handler, 1988, pp. 6-8).

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Another definition is given by Smith (2010) as he states that nationalism is simply "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential "nation" (Essays, 2013). To this definition Hans Kohn argues that the two main types of nationalism are eastern and western. His definition states, "Nationalism is a state of mind, in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due to the nation-state (Kohn, 1965)." Kohn believes that nationalism relates directly with eastern and western Europe and that it is also where the 'state of mind' of nationalism originated. (Essays, 2013).

From the definitions above it can be concluded that nationalism does not merely concern the political aspect of a nation but also the cultural and value system that lead a community to form an agreed entity of a nation. Koentjaraningrat states that nationalism shapes the identity of a nation, each of the members is expected to show particular traits to represent their nationality. With this definition it is obvious that a language plays a vital role as a mean of identification of a nation. He lists three shapes of culture; ideas, complex activities, and artifacts. Ideas are abstract and they can be documented in the forms of letters, books, recordings, database etc. This study limits the discussion on nationalism to four categories, namely the ability to speak and appreciation of Indonesian language, the knowledge and appreciation of Indonesian national days, the appreciation and knowledge of Indonesian dances and music, and the awareness and appreciation of the concept of collaborative community service or so called *gotong royong* (Koentjaraningrat, 1974, pp. 8-12).

Senior high school refers to grade ten to twelve of senior high school in Indonesia.

1.5 Thesis organization

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I introduces the present study, outlining background, research questions, the significance of the study, the clarification of main terms and thesis organization. Chapter II reviews the related literature on the topics being studied, i.e. the concepts of perception, bilingual education system, immersion program, language, culture and nationalism, and it ends with an elaboration of the Indonesian context in which this study took

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place.   Chapter III discusses a set of methodology which covers research questions, research design, participants, data collection and data analysis. Chapter IV presents research findings and interpretations, while, conclusions and recommendations are successively presented in Chapter V.