

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the general portrayal of the research. It comprises the background of the research, the research questions, the purposes of the research, the significance of the research, the definition of operational terms, and the organization of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Feedback is necessary to support second language learning. Feedback can be positive or negative and corrective feedback belongs to negative feedback as a response to language error occurrences (Ellis, 2009). In the field of second language acquisition (SLA), corrective feedback has gone through a long and controversial history for over a past couple of decades. There is a contrastive perspective on corrective feedback and the main concern is on whether teachers should correct learner errors to avoid fossilization or ignore them so the communication flow can be maintained (Chaudron, 1986; Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

The concern regarding corrective feedback is closely related to the instruction of language learning classroom. In the 1980's, there was a major shift in the language classroom instruction from rule-focused approach (e.g. grammar-translation method and audio-lingualism) to meaning-focused one (e.g. Communicative Language Teaching) (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Brown, 2000; Lightbown, 2000; Lightbown & Spada, 1990; Liu, 2015; Russell, 2009). When audio-lingualism was practiced in second language learning, the amount of correction should be limited since errors are to be avoided although it is viewed as inevitable (Russell, 2009; Ur, 1996). Krashen (1985) argues that corrective feedback can also potentially create some drawbacks on students' affective factors, such as increasing anxiety among students.

This perspective is in contrast to the principle of the communicative approach in which errors are no longer avoided, but it has been viewed as a part

of language acquisition process. Somehow, teachers are allowed to ignore some errors and correction is given only if the errors interfere with the aim at conveying meaningful messages as the focus of the learning is on the fluency rather than accuracy (Rezaei, Mozaffari, & Hatef, 2011; Ur, 1996). As communicative language teaching becomes popular, corrective feedback also has gained much attention in which research in various contexts is conducted. Since current SLA researchers believe on the positive influences of corrective feedback on second language learning, the focus of the research has shifted from the effectiveness of corrective feedback to which corrective feedback strategy is the most effective to be used in the classroom (Ellis, 2006, 2009; Ellis, Loewen, & Erlam, 2006).

In classroom settings, teachers are responsible to provide corrective feedback to support the development of students' interlanguage system (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). However, providing corrective feedback is not a simple process. It has been an issue on when and how the teacher should correct the errors (Gebhard, 2009; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Even so, there is no certain technique which is considered appropriate for correcting learner errors since there are many significant factors that influence the effectiveness of corrective feedback, such as individual differences (Harmer, 2007a).

One of the individual differences that should be taken into account in providing corrective feedback is learners' age (Li, 2009; Rezaei et al., 2011). It may be influential to language development since younger learners seemed to benefit from corrective feedback more than older learners (Lyster & Saito, 2010b). Younger learners appeared to be more sensitive to corrective feedback in which the impact of corrective feedback will be greater than the older learners. Lyster and Saito (2010a) suggest that teacher should take benefits of this potential especially to enhance the development of language learners' accuracy.

Learners' age is not only influential to language development, but also leads to different preferences toward corrective feedback. Many research focusing on learners' preferences and attitudes toward oral corrective feedback have been

done in many contexts (Azar, 2013; Bakar & Abdullah, 2014; Katayama, 2007; Kazemi, Araghi, & Davatgari, 2013; Ok & Ustaci, 2013; Zarei, 2012; Zhu, 2010). The results showed that students' age was one of the individual difference factors which influenced their preferences and attitude toward corrective feedback. A research conducted by Zarei (2012) revealed that English learners in two groups with age range 15-20 and 20-35 had different preferences toward corrective feedback. The older learners preferred explicit correction to the other corrective feedback strategies while the younger ones found it boring and threatening to their fragile ego.

Many research concerning teacher's corrective feedback mostly dealt with adult learners in English classroom (Bakar & Abdullah, 2014; Faqeih, 2012; Fidan, 2015; Méndez, Cruz, & Loyo, 2010; Rassaei & Moinzadeh, 2011) while research involving younger learners such as adolescents is still rarely carried out (Taipale, 2012). Regarding this issue, this research tries to investigate teachers' corrective feedback strategies by involving adolescents in an EFL setting. This research will provide not only additional information on the teachers' reasons for providing corrective feedback strategies, but also the students' perception of teachers' corrective feedback which was examined as supporting data. Thus, it is expected that this research can fill the gap of the previous research which mostly focused on the distribution of teachers' feedback, students' uptake, and students' preferences (Choi & Li, 2012; Kazemi et al., 2013; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Ok & Ustaci, 2013; Sheen, 2004; Suzuki, 2005).

1.2 Research Questions

Regarding the issue of teacher's oral corrective feedback strategies, this research is going to answer these three questions:

- 1) What are teachers' corrective feedback strategies used to correct students' oral production in EFL classrooms?
- 2) For what reason, do teachers use those corrective feedback strategies in their classrooms?

- 3) What are students' perceptions of teacher's corrective feedback strategies used in the classrooms?

1.3 Purposes of the Research

This research is aimed at discovering various strategies of teacher's oral corrective feedback in EFL classrooms and investigating the teachers' reasons for providing those corrective feedback strategies. Students' perceptions of the teachers' corrective feedback strategies will also be figured out as supporting data to the research findings.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give a significant contribution not only for theoretical aspects in the framework of corrective feedback, but also for English teaching and learning practices in EFL classrooms, especially in Indonesia non-formal education setting, as well as teacher's professional development.

In the theoretical aspect, this research provides further information on corrective feedback strategies used by the teachers involving adolescents in EFL classroom which is still rarely investigated in previous research. This research not only seeks additional information on teachers' reasons for providing certain corrective feedback strategies for the students, but also students' perceptions of teachers' corrective feedback strategies. Thus, it is expected that the findings of this research can fill the gap from previous studies which mostly focused on teacher's corrective feedback and learners' preferences in an adult formal classroom setting.

In the practical aspect, this research offers various strategies of corrective feedback that can be used by teachers in their English teaching practices. In addition, teachers should consider adolescents' characteristics as well as their perceptions that may affect the efficacy of corrective feedback toward second language acquisition. The results are also hopefully beneficial for teachers in

gaining insights into providing effective corrective feedback that may support the process of students' language learning development.

In the professional aspect, this research can be advantageous for teachers' development, especially in terms of teacher's strategies in providing appropriate corrective feedback to adolescents as a response to their errors. Hopefully, teachers are able to improve their skills in terms of using appropriate oral corrective feedback strategies, especially in relation to adolescents' characteristics in an EFL setting.

1.5 Definition of Operational Terms

Here are several terms used in the research that are clarified to avoid misconception and misunderstanding:

- 1) Corrective feedback refers to the feedback that learners receive on the linguistic errors they make in their oral production in a second language (L2).
- 2) Adolescents in this research refer to 12-14 years old students in the pre-intermediate level of an English course in EFL classrooms.
- 3) EFL classroom refers to an English language instruction in which English is learned as a foreign language.

1.6 Organization of the Research

This research is organized into five chapters comprising:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter focuses on the introduction of the research that gives information about the background of the research, the statement of the problems, the aims of the research, the significance of the research, the definition of operational terms and the organization of the paper.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter focuses on some theories and literature related to the topic of the research. It will mainly discuss about theories and relevant studies about teachers' corrective feedback in EFL classrooms.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology used in the research. The explanation is divided into four subchapters namely research design, research site and participant, data collection and data analysis.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussions

This chapter provides the results of the research and discusses the research findings based on the collective data to answer the research questions.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents the entire conclusion of the research and also provides recommendations as a contribution for further learning and research.

1.7 Concluding Remarks

This chapter presents the introductory part of the research. The background of this research is related to the provision of corrective feedback strategies in adolescent classrooms which is still rarely investigated. This research mainly focuses on figuring out teachers' corrective feedback strategies used to correct students' oral production, which is also supported by the additional information on their reasons for providing those corrective feedback strategies and students' perceptions of teachers' corrective feedback strategies. It is expected that this research will be a beneficial contribution to the development in the theoretical aspects, practical aspects of English teaching and learning practices in the EFL classroom, as well as teacher's professional development.