

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the research which elaborates background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, clarification of terms and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Research

Students' motivation in classroom activities can be different from one to another. One could exhibit high level of motivation by actively participating in discussion, asking question, or even by paying attention to teacher while other students could exhibit the opposite by doodling in their notebook, talking to each other, or by doing other subjects assignment. Various reasons underlie their different level of motivation.

In Kuningan, one of the rural areas in Indonesia, problems such as school failure and dropout because of low level of motivation can be easily found. An English teacher who has been teaching for 15 years in researcher's high school in Kuningan said that students' reasons were mostly because they thought school subjects had no relevance on their later life, especially in learning English. This reason led them for not taking school seriously thus having low level of motivation while doing classroom activities. Since most of the students come from middle and low economic status whom will support their parents' occupation or become farmer, manual labor, or other unstable occupations instead of taking higher level of education, this condition can be well understood. However, teacher still need to fulfill his/her role to make students understand the subject taught by him/her and it is a time consuming effort to confront each student's personal issue in order to improve their motivation that fluctuates over time.

Finn and Zimmer (2012) stated that there are two risk factors that related to school failures and dropouts, they are status risk factor and educational risk factor. Status risk factor is associated with sociodemographical factors such as socioeconomic status, race, and ethnicity; meanwhile educational risk factor is associated with educational results on one level which negatively affect the performance on later levels.

Parents' socioeconomic status (Aini, 2010; Sugiyanti, 2012; Purnomo, Munandar, & Setiajid, 2013; Ratnasari & Syahrudin, 2013; Nurhadiyanti, 2014; Pontoh, Nani, & Mopangga, 2014), level of education (Rahman & Yusuf, 2012), and cultural background (Rahman & Yusuf, 2012; Purnomo, Munandar, & Setiajid, 2013) have significant influence towards the decision of continuing school to higher level. For example, people who live in coastal area consider school as something useless. For them, it would be sufficient as long as their children are able to apply their religious teaching (e.g. praying and reciting Quran) (Rahman & Yusuf, 2012). Meanwhile, Samin people who live in Desa Klopo Duwur, Blora Regency are mostly agricultural workers. Some of them are unable to support their children to continue schooling in junior high school because of that. This condition has made their children decide to help them in their profession or seek for a job in other cities (Purnomo et al., 2013). Traumatic experiences in school, unsupportive teacher which causes in inability to learn well (Oktaviani, 2012), laziness in learning, and low ability to grasp learning material (Igirisa & Masaong, 2014) also have a contribution in this case. Students' sociodemographical factors indirectly contribute to their way of thinking and doing something including on how they think about school and then influencing their motivation to learn, leads them to encounter educational risk factors.

Engagement was formulated to alter academic outcomes of students who are exposed to aforementioned factors (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). School engagement, student's engagement, or simply engagement refers to student's efforts and willingness to take an active role in academic context to get desirable outcomes where student's emotion, behavior, and cognition are taking a part on it (Stovall; Krause & Coates, as cited in Beer, C. Clark, K., & Jones, D., 2010; Barkley,

2010; Harper & Quaye, 2009; Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Besides, it will also preserve student's interest in learning (Daoud, Hershberg, Hudley, Polanco, & Wright-Castro, as cited in Parn, 2006). Engaged children try to push their limit; show more initiative actions when they are given opportunities; and show enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity, and interest while they are doing ongoing task. In other words, they show positive behaviors and emotions to develop further (Skinner & Belmont, 1993).

In order to trigger engagement, self-determination theory (SDT) as one of the motivational theories suggests that there are three basic innate psychological needs that need to be fulfilled, they are autonomy, competence and relatedness; if those three needs have been fulfilled, intrinsic motivation, identified motivation, and well-being will be achieved and thus triggering engagement (Reeve, Deci, & Ryan, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Environmental conditions will not affect the fulfilling process since those needs are universal and they will be alike across cultures (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

In order to fulfill and maintain three basic innate psychological needs in the classroom, certain method is required. SDT assumes that human innately has characteristics (e.g. active, inquisitive, and curious) to reinforce their ability to learn and explore autonomously in order to gain new knowledge and skills regardless of their background (e.g. age, gender, family, level of education, and nationality) (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2002). In educational context, by exploiting those innate intrinsic motivational sources, SDT gives suggestion to develop teaching instructions that fuse, maintain, and foster the aforementioned source into teaching-learning process in order to create high-quality learning, creativity, and also student engagement (Reeve & Halusic, 2009; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Three SDT basic psychological needs can be nurtured by teacher who adapts autonomy-supportive motivating style (Reeve & Jang, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Therefore, by applying autonomy-supportive motivating style teacher is expected to be able to make students flourish in the school subjects regardless of

risk factors brought by them by improving students motivation to engage in classroom activities, thus they are able to gain benefit from engagement.

Majority of the research on applying autonomy-supportive motivating style were conducted on physical educational training (Su & Reeve, 2001). Nevertheless, some of the limited numbers of the research that conducted within classroom setting found that there were significant increases on students' engagement (Reeve, Jang, Carrell, Jeon, & Barch, 2004), effort, relatedness (Kaur, 2011; Kaur, Hashim, & Noman, 2015), perceived autonomy support (Kaur, 2011), interest, and integrated regulation (Kaur et al., 2015). In addition, research by Kaur (2011) also strengthened that SDT belief is not culturally bounded because it was applicable in Thailand.

In Indonesian context, a limited number of studies have been conducted to seek some relations between teacher involvement and academic motivation (Maulana & Opdenakker, 2014); basic psychological needs and perceived autonomous motivation (Maulana, Helms-Lorenz, Irnidayanti, & van de Grift, 2016); and between two types of autonomous motivation (intrinsic and identified motivation) and two aspects of academic engagement (psychological and behavioral) (Maulana, Helms-Lorenz, & van de Grift, 2016). Those studies have proved that the concept of SDT and its influence on students' academic improvement are relevant within Indonesian context. However, none of them has conducted an autonomy-supportive motivation style intervention research to find out a change on students' engagement within SDT framework in Indonesian context and moreover, specifically within an English class.

Therefore, based on the elaboration above, the proposed research would intend to testify whether fostering three basic innate psychological needs which is proposed by SDT through increasing teacher autonomy support in English class would improve students' engagement towards English subject in Kuningan as one of the rural areas in Indonesia.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the issue and findings which were mentioned in the background of the research, this proposed research would intend to seek an answer whether fostering three basic innate psychological needs which is proposed by SDT through increasing teacher autonomy support in English class will improve students' engagement towards English subject in Kuningan. In order to achieve that, the researcher postulated a research question:

- Can the implementation of autonomy-supportive motivating style improve students' engagement?

1.3 Aims of Research

This research is aimed to find out whether students' engagement in English class can be improved through teacher autonomy-supportive motivating style within rural Indonesian context since engaged student will get more educational benefit from teaching-learning process.

1.4 Hypothesis

Null hypothesis and alternate hypothesis were used as the hypotheses in this research. Null hypothesis (H_0) means that there is no difference between the condition before participants of the research received the treatment and after they received the treatment. Meanwhile, alternate hypothesis (H_1) indicates the possible outcome of the research.

The hypotheses that formulated in this research were

H_0 : there is no significant difference between students' engagement score in pre and post-test.

H_1 : there is a significant difference between students' engagement score in pre and post-test.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research focuses on differentiation that occurs in an English class before and after a teacher implements autonomy-supportive motivating style. The teacher will apply the theory of students' engagement; SDT; and how to adapt autonomy-supportive motivating style and become autonomy-supportive teacher. This research will take ten sessions. Two sessions for data gathering, before the implementation of autonomy-supportive motivating style has been conducted to take the pretest data and after it has been conducted to take the post-test data. Other eight sessions (four weeks) would be used to do the intervention in the form of autonomy-supportive motivating style.

1.6 Significance of the Research

This research is expected to provide practical and professional benefit. Teachers, especially English teachers, will find this research useful for them as this research could be used as an empirical support in applying theory of students' engagement; SDT; and how to adapt autonomy-supportive motivating style and become autonomy-supportive teacher in English class. Successful attempt in achieving students' engagement will also bring many educational benefits for students. Any positive or negative result on this research could be useful as a contribution to develop perfection on future research in this topic within rural Indonesian context. Moreover, teachers may also use and even modify the elaborated experiments depend on their needs and situations to conduct more experiments to have more beneficial results regarding the topic of students' engagement and SDT.

1.7 Clarification of Related Terms

1. Self-determination theory (SDT) - One of the motivational theories which is used as the main framework of the research. SDT meta-theory revolves around the fulfillment of human basic psychological needs (autonomy,

competence, and relatedness) in order to explain human healthy personality development and autonomous self-regulation (Reeve, Deci, & Ryan, 2004). Engagement, the topic of this research, is one of several outcomes after the needs have been fulfilled. SDT also offers how engagement can be maintained by constructing a motivating style in the classroom that nurture the needs level when the class is ongoing.

2. Autonomy-supportive motivating style - Autonomy support refers to "the instructional effort to involve, nurture, and develop students' inner motivational resources and capacity and responsibility for self-motivation" (Reeve, 2009, p.168). Thus, in this study autonomy-supportive motivating style refers to a motivating style that is used by a teacher to see whether students' engagement towards the English class will increase or not.
3. Student's engagement/school engagement/engagement - Student's efforts and willingness to take an active role in school that involved behavioral, affective, and cognitive component in order to get desirable outcomes (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). In this research, this term refers to students' effort and willingness that involve their emotion, behavior, and cognition to participate in the classroom in a beneficial way. It will be measured by a set of measurement test before and after a treatment (autonomy-supportive motivating style) is given to the students.

1.8 Organization of the Paper

This research paper is divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1: This chapter contains background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, clarification of terms and organization of the paper.

Chapter 2: This chapter contains the elaboration of relevant theories that are used as foundation for this research.

Chapter 3: This chapter contains the elaboration of research methodology that is used in this research. This chapter also briefly explain how the data would be collected and analyzed.

Chapter 4: This chapter elaborate research findings and discussions from the data that had been gathered.

Chapter 5: This chapter contains the conclusions of the research and suggestion for the future research.