

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This study tries to elaborate correlation between peer group interaction in a classroom and English learning motivation. This chapter presents background of the study, formulation of problems, aims of the study, and hypothesis. This chapter also provides a brief description about the method of the research.

1.1 Background

Motivation is often seen as the key learner variable that differentiates between success and failure in learning. Motivation is a power, force or energy or a complex state and preparatory set in an individual (organism) to move toward certain goals, whether consciously or subconsciously (Syamsudin, 1990: 26). Motivation is the key in learning because without it, nothing much happens.

People involved in language teaching often say that strongly-motivated students will succeed in learning the target language. This issue accords to what Krashen (1985) claims that learners who more succeed to be proficient in L2 / FL are with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety. It is reasonable to say so because they will tend to use more strategies than less-motivated students (Oxford, 1990 a). According to Gardner (1985), students with high motivation to learn L2 / FL will enjoy learning the language, want to learn the language, and strive to learn the language.

Walker and Symons (1997: 16-17) summarise, when the leading theories on human motivation are viewed as a whole, five themes emerge. Human motivation is at its highest when people:

- are competent
- have sufficient autonomy
- set worthwhile goals
- get feedback
- are affirmed by others

At the last part, we know that motivation is also influenced by others (people in our surrounding).

Hill (1977) said that:

“The children are influenced in countless ways by the varied aspects of the classroom situation. They learn much from the teacher, including many things not prescribed in the curriculum and some things of which neither teacher nor pupils are aware. They also learn from books, from fellow students, and from the physical arrangements of the school”.

From the above quotation, it is evidence that there are some factors influencing the instructional process in a classroom.

(Ashley Montagu, 1965 in Johnson, 1994) stated that:

“How students perceive each other and interact with one another is a neglected aspect of instruction. Much training time is devoted to helping teachers arrange appropriate interactions between students and materials (i.e., textbooks, curriculum programs) and some time is spent on how teachers should interact with students, but how students should interact with one another is relatively ignored. It should not be. How teachers structure student-student interaction patterns has a lot to say about how well students learn, how they feel about school and the teacher, how they feel about each other, and how much self-esteem they have”.

Legutke and Thomas (1993) stated that:

“To mobilize the interactive potential of the classroom learning situation, they do not only need to be aware of its dimensions, they need to be able to set up points of encounters for the components and participants in the interaction (the person, the group, the theme, and the external factors and constraints). Only through such encounters is a process of balancing out, of negotiating together, and of learning set in motion”.

All these components and the participants in the interactions contain inherent potential and offer space for learning and action which could have concrete significance within the classroom. They could, for example, function as a source of self-perception, as a stimulus for the exploration of knowledge and experience, as an opportunity to talk about oneself, as a data bank for the production of texts or as a source of energy in situations of insecurity when one is researching or experimenting. The potential power of a group can also hinder learning, slow it down or in due course make it impossible.

Considering the importance of classroom interaction in determining the success of teaching-learning process, the writer take this proposition as a starting point to carry out a research entitled **THE CORRELATION BETWEEN INTENSITY OF PEER GROUP INTERACTION AND ENGLISH LEARNING MOTIVATION** which aims at finding out if there is a correlation between peer interaction and English learning motivation, and also the significance of correlation between those two variables.

1.2 Formulation of Problems

The present study is aimed at finding out the significance of correlation between peer interaction in classroom and English learning motivation. Related to this problem, the main issues undertaken by the researcher are as follows:

“Is there a significant correlation between the intensity of peer group interaction and English learning motivation?”

1.3 The Aims of the Study

Derived directly from the mentioned problems above, the purposes of this research is: “To find out if there is a significant correlation between the intensity peer group interaction and English learning motivation”.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

The present study can be categorized as inquiry in sociology in relation with educational psychology and the field of EFL. To avoid misinterpretation of the research scope, the writer believes that it is necessary to clarify the scope of the research.

Peer interaction observed in this study is one which occurs in classroom context. In William and Burden’s framework of L2 motivation, it is stated that L2 motivation is influenced by internal factors (among which cover self-efficacy, confidence, anxiety, fear, etc) and external factors (among which cover parents, teachers, peers, rewards, learning environment, etc.). This study focuses on one of external factors influencing L2 learning motivation, that is, peers.

1.5 Methodology of Investigation

1.5.1 Method of Research

This research used descriptive method. According to Frankel and Wallen (1990: 12), “*a descriptive method is used when researchers summarize the characteristics (abilities, preferences, behaviours, and so on) of individuals or groups*”. A descriptive research generally has two categories: a qualitative research and a quantitative research. The qualitative research is the study in which the data can be analyzed without the use of numerical data; but by the use of factual information to describe events or persons. The quantitative research is a study in which the data are analyzed in terms of numbers. According to this explanation, this study then categorized into quantitative approach.

1.5.2 Research Design

An *ex-post facto* design is used to reveal the students' English learning motivation and peer group interaction, and to see the significance of correlation between those two variables. Hatch and Farhady (1982: 26) state that “an *ex-post facto* design is used when the researcher does not have control over the selection and manipulation of the independent variables”. Correlational designs are most commonly used subset of *ex-post facto* designs.

1.5.3 Population and Sample

The sample of this research is late-adolescent students (approximately 17-18 years old), i.e., third-grade Senior High School students. This sample choosing is due to the evidence that during this age period, the students are considered to be mature

and wise enough to decide which peer groups are of good or bad influence to them.

This study applies *cluster sampling*. Gay defines: “*cluster sampling is a sampling in which groups, not individuals, are randomly selected*”. Thus, from 3 classes of social science major and 2 classes of natural science, the writer chose class XII A IPA as the sample. This class is chosen through a shuffle. There are several reasons for choosing these students as the respondents, namely:

1. They are accessible. All respondents live in Bandung
2. Students' intelligence level of SMAK 2 BPK Penabur Bandung, especially those who chose exact science as their major, is considered above average. Thus, it is assumed that they are able to distinguish between useful and harmful influence on their academic achievement.
3. Third grade students are considered to be mature enough in deciding which groups are of good or bad influence to them.

1.5.4 Data Collection procedure

1.5.4.1 Instrument

Instruments used to measure the two variables in this study are both in the form of questionnaire. To measure classroom peer interaction, the writer used instrument developed by herself, based on five elements of co-operative learning proposed by David W. Johnson, and Roger T. Johnson (1991). As the X variable of this research is peer group interaction (in classroom context), it is considered appropriate to use co-operative learning principles in finding out the intensity of

students' interaction in the classroom. Meanwhile the instrument used to identify English learning motivation is the one that is developed by Robert C. Gardner and Wallace E. Lambert (1972), who have done research in language learning motivation for twelve years. The questionnaire has been translated and adapted into context familiar to the respondents. Among the indicators are integrative and instrumental orientation, motivational intensity, and desire to learn English.

1.5.4.2 Procedure of Collecting Data

The data were gathered on 25th of August 2006, at the Biology laboratory of SMAK 2 BPK Penabur Bandung. Questionnaires were given to the respondents after they have got explanation of how to fill them out. The researcher gave amount of time for the respondents to fill out all the questions in the questionnaire. Both questionnaires were distributed at the same day for the sake of effectiveness. Then the questionnaires were submitted at the very day.

1.6 Data Analysis

Variables analyzed in this research are the intensity of peer group interaction in classroom context as independent variable (X variable) and English learning motivation as dependent variable (Y variable), both of which belong to ordinal scale. The output of the questionnaire is in the form of number (scores), which will be correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Pearson Product Moment is used since the data fit the character of the formula (Hatch and Lazaraton, 1994:436-437) namely:

1. the data measured as scores or ordinal scores;
2. the score of the two variables are independent, meaning Y is not a subject of X and vice versa;
3. the data should be normally distributed through their range;
4. the relation between X and Y must be linear.

1.7 Clarification of Terms

To avoid misinterpretation, the writer clarifies some terms used in this research:

- Correlation: close relationship or connection between peer group interaction and English learning motivation.
- Intensity: state or quality of being intense; strength or depth (of feeling, etc.) (Hornby, 1974). Extreme degree of strength, force, energy, or feeling (Merriam, 2002).
- Peer group: group of people of approximately the same age or status (Hornby, 1995)
- Interaction: communication among or between people. (Hornby, 1989)
- Motivation: some kind of internal drive that encourages someone to achieve the goal. (Marshall, 1987)

1.8 Organization of Paper

The paper of the research will be organized as follows:

Chapter I : Introduction

Provides the background of the study. It explains aims and limitation of the study, and also a brief description of the research method.

Chapter II :Theoretical Foundation

Explains the theoretical framework that is relevant to the research field. It contains several theories about the nature of peer group and adolescence, and also English learning motivation.

Chapter III :Research Methodology

Contains methodology of the research, which includes the preparation stages, instruments, method and procedures of data analysis.

Chapter IV :Data Presentation and Discussion

In this section, the obtained data are analysed and presented in such a systematic way that it would be easier to comprehend.

Chapter V :Conclusions And Suggestions

Finally, after the data are analysed, presented and discussed, conclusions are drawn and suggestions for further research are offered.