CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter sets out the background of the study, the research questions, and the purposes of the study as well as the significance and the scope of it. The clarification of the terms used and the outline for the organization of this thesis are also highlighted.

1.1 Background

The issue of the use of student's native language in the EFL classroom has been debated for years (Erton, 2009; Brown 1994; Miles, 2004; Tang, 2002; Medgyes, 1999). Literature reflects uncertainties which surround this issue and various positions have been argued for. A number of studies have been conducted, which either support (see Atkinson, 1993; Auerbach, 1993; Macaro, 2001; Cook, 2001; Deller and Rinvolucri, 2002; Widdowson, 2003; Harbond, 1992;Bolitho, 1983) or oppose (see Duff & Polio, 1990; Ellis, 2005; Hendricson, 1991; Krashen & Terell, 1983) the use of L1 in EFL classroom. Several authors (see, Krashen & Terell, 1983; Duff & Polio, 1990; Pennycook, 1994) maintain that L1 has no essential role to play in EFL teaching and that too much L1 use might deprive learners of valuable input in the L2 (Ellis, 1984), but some of the researchers stress the value of using L1 and the positive role in EFL teaching (Auerbach 1993; Mukattash 2003; Schweers 1999; Tang, 2002).

L1 has potentially both positive and negative consequences (Carless, 2008). Carless further says that the use of L1 may support social and cognitive function. Socially, the use of L1 serves to give instruction and rules, to establish attention, and support classroom management. Moreover, cognitively, the use of L1 facilitates the students' understanding. On the other hand, the over reliance on the L1 may undermine the interaction in English (Atkinson, 1987 and Polio, 1994).

The general assumption that has prevailed for some time is that English ought to be learnt through English only (Polio and Duff, 1994). Many ELT professionals even wonder how students can appreciate target language exchanges if they continually relying on their L1 (Bouangeune 2009). However, the arguments against the use of L1 in EFL classroom have not provided sufficient evidence for avoiding L1 (Hasan, 2010). Because of the increasing number of teaching methods and trends which supporting the use of L1 in EFL classroom, thus, the prohibition of the use of L1 in EFL classroom is breaking down and the attitude to L1 and translation in language classes has witnessed a positive change following the recognition that some learners use the L1 as a communicative strategy to learn and use the foreign language (James, 1998; Gill, 2003; and Cook, 2001)

In Indonesian context, where English is taught as a foreign language, there are a fewer chances for students to apply what they have studied outside the classroom, so the only exposure is only happened in the English classroom. As the consequences of this situation, based on the researcher's

observation, it is common for EFL teachers to use the students' mother tongue as a tool for conveying meaning as a means of interaction both in English language institutes and in the classroom.

A number of recent studies on the use of mother tongue in the EFL classroom indicated that appropriate and judicious L1 use in the EFL classroom can play significant role in facilitating a successful second language acquisition (Schweers, 1999; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nation, 2003; Tang, 2002). When used appropriately, students' L1 can be very beneficial, and in his research Schweers (1999) encourages teachers to incorporate the native language into lessons to influence the classroom dynamic. Moreover, Atkinson (1987) suggest that "starting with L1 provides a sense of security and validates the learners lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves"

In the middle of various positions and argumentations regarding the use of mother tongue in the EFL classroom, research about teachers' and students' perspective on the use of L1 in EFL classroom has not been excessively observed. Thus, the present study focuses on examining the realization of the use of Bahasa Indonesia in the EFL classroom and examining teachers' and students perspectives on the use of Bahasa Indonesia in EFL classroom. The findings are hoped to be of great contributions to the enlightenment of the use of Bahasa Indonesia in the EFL classroom.

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1.2 Research Questions

In relation to the above background, this study attempted to address the following questions:

1. What is the realization of the use of L1 in the EFL Classroom?

2. What are the perspectives of the teachers and students about the use of L1 in the EFL Classroom?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

Referring to the question formulated above, the investigation was intended to meet the following purposes:

1. To Explore the realization of the use of L1 in the EFL Classroom

2. To Investigate teachers and students perspectives about the use of L1 in the EFL classroom

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study will be of great contributions to three crucial aspects: theoretical, practical and professional aspects. Firstly, for the theoretical aspects, the results of the study are hoped to enrich the literature of second language acquisition and later to give an insight about the teacher and students perspectives about the use of L1 in the EFL classroom especially in Indonesian context which has been debated for years, because the key player of a successful education is the teacher and the students themselves.

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Secondly, from the practical aspects, observing how teacher uses the L1 in the EFL classroom, the result of this study can also provide some information regarding the actual condition of the teacher use of L1 in EFL classroom and also the students and teacher language preferences in the classroom. Lastly, from professional aspects, the result of this study are expectedly beneficial for the English teachers who are directly involved in classroom teaching and learning process. The information can be used by English teachers as a basic for the improvement in the teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom in terms of students needs in order to facilitate students L2 learning, particularly by the teachers at the research site.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study, is like any other case studies, is concerned with a certain case that happens in a certain context. The study dealt with the realization of L1 use in EFL classroom and teachers and students' perspectives of L1 use in EFL classroom.

1.6 Organization of the thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one is an introductory one giving the background discussion and overview of the study. It also introduces the research questions and considers the significance of the particular research. Meanwhile the literature review to understanding perceptions and the use of Bahasa Indonesia is presented in chapter two.

Chapter three describes the research methodology and research design used in this study. In chapter four, data presentation and discussion are presented based on the research questions outlined in chapter 1. This thesis is concluded in chapter five in which it provides the conclusion of the thesis as well as recommendation for further research.

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