

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the introduction of this research proposal which consists of a background of the problem, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, research questions, hypothesis, purpose of the research, significance of the research, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Problem

English has been a necessity for daily life almost in every aspect of life, such as education, communication, occupation, organization, and all of the things that drive to globalization. People cannot avoid the role of English which is important. In life, people start with education, as mentioned, “life-long education”.

Besides education, every occupation in today's world asks people to have the ability in English so that they have plus value compared with other people who do not have the ability in English. Priyasudiarja (2010: 12-13) states that English has taken an important role in occupation especially in global competition. People need English to deliver the presentation in front of international relations, specifically, with using English, people have four advantages in the eyes of international audiences such as to inform, to train, to persuade, and to sell. These functions of English make the audience easier to understand what the product is about.

Unfortunately, this thought of getting a great job after graduation is not easy. When people still became students, many of them were not being motivated in learning English. The lack of background knowledge of English and supported by the use of English as a foreign language itself especially in Indonesia made the students were difficult to study further about it. Rini (2008: 10) finds this case is still ongoing in society.

It is inevitable that the fact which the students think English is difficult and creepy such a ghost always frightens them. The more days pass, English becomes more popular. It makes this language should be adopted in almost every country includes Indonesia. The spread of English in Indonesia is very fast. It has its standard curriculum and is one of the subjects that always be taught in every department not only for English students themselves. Many non-native English-speaking countries start to teach English from elementary school, even some of them start from an early age, even though the obligation is started from grade seven in every country (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010: 89).

Nowadays, mostly all occupations need English to compete in globalization. Not only in occupation, but English is also used as international education journals. It is supported by Genç and Bada (2010: 142) who states that if you want your research study is seen by the world, using English is the one that is your choice.

In adopting English as a foreign language in Indonesia, it is not easy to teach it equally. Besides the lack of students' background knowledge, there are

some challenges that the English teacher should face. According to Marcellino (2008), as the Minister of Education acquaints the competence-based language curriculum pointing at performance-based outcomes starts from elementary until high school in the format of national standards, it brings some problems such as cultural, practical, and professional factor in the implementation of this approach, because it insists the students to have supple and independent learning. For further explanation, he states that the problem of culture is the culture itself; for example, teaching English in Java, they mostly use Javanese, it does not rule out the possibility that this also happens in other cultures. In practical problems include the things around that influence the learning process itself, such as classroom, media, the number of students, and others. In professional problems, it concerns the problems of the teacher, whether in teaching materials, the way she or he delivers the topics, and the instructions, it determines the lesson is well received or not.

It supports the idea that teaching English needs more effort. Adapting a foreign language is not easy because the students have used different language, most of them adapted traditional language, not Bahasa at first. When entering the school, they feel strange to English, moreover to use it daily. To face this problem, experts have tried many ways to teach English in different and fun ways. Rini (2008:11) concludes that the most important things in teaching English are fun and comfortable. It means the teacher should find a way that makes the students are not realized that they are studying. Therefore, the English game has been booming and becoming the most effective way to deliver English.

To make the students feel comfortable in learning English, teachers need to analyze the learning style of the students because every student has different styles and characteristics (Rezaeinejad, Azizifar, & Gowhari: 2015). As Yaqin (2015) found that the teachers or other educators ignore the function of learning style is attracting the students' attention to the lesson, especially most of the students think that English is boring and difficult. To face this problem, Mangendre (2015) states the teacher is better to have good preparation between material and learning situations.

In following the learning process, each student has a different learning style. The lecturer needs to pay attention to this case because each teaching will be dependent on the way or style of students learning besides their characteristics and intellectual ability (Papilaya & Huliselan: 2016). This research aims to find out whether learning style and interest have a relationship in improving students' ability to understand the materials, especially in writing skills.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Indonesian universities prepare English as a general subject (MKDU) that should be taken by the students at least for one semester. The students are trained to be familiar with English in their department and major field which aims to prepare the students to compete in the globalization era (Mangendre: 2015). Pandarangga (2015: 90) states that English is the most used language to get many advantages in life besides it is used to communicate, people could be involved in the global community, get a scholarship, or live in another part of the world.

English also takes a role as a unifier of all people from different countries, cultures, and racists. By learning English, people could pass in many countries. It is like a foundation since English has been a requirement of applying many job opportunities or scholarships in the world. Especially in Indonesia itself, people who could speak English are more respected and praised. This fact is in line with Mappiasse and Sihes (2014) statement who said that people who use English show a higher level of social status.

Many languages such as English and Japanese use past tense in a different form, but Bahasa Indonesia does not use the form of past tense (Nose: 2016). This fact makes the Indonesian students are difficult to follow the rule of English which has a clear difference with their original language, Bahasa Indonesia. In using the past tense, they are required to change the form of “to-infinitive” becomes the past form and pay attention to whether the verb is a regular or irregular verb. The interview result of the third year Biology students on March, 4rd 2019, showed that past tense was the most difficult material to be mastered. According to their achievement, only very few students got high scores and most of them got middle to lower scores.

Writing is one of four important English skills. *“In Indonesia, the purpose of the teaching of writing is to enable EFL students to master functional and monologue texts in the form of genres such as descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, and report”* (Depdiknas, 2006 in Supiani: 2017). Based on the interview with the Chief of English Department on March 3, 2019, the English

skills of other departments students are categorized is lower than English students' ability because they only learn English in one semester. If some of them got good scores, the lecturers would take the plus score from other aspects, such as attendance, attitude, and homework. In this case, the writing skill might be seen as easy, however, in real life, it was not easy at all. The student should follow appropriate grammar that matched with the genres, for example, recount text should use the past tense because it happened in the past time.

Husna, Zainil, and Rozimela (2013) found that the students were difficult to organize and develop the idea. It was related to the limited vocabulary of the students and their knowledge about tenses. In writing, students are not only asked to write, but they also have to pay attention to some parts as Supiyani (2015) mentions, “...*writing itself involves aspects of grammatical form, choice of words, generating and organizing the ideas into coherent and logically ordered.*” It could not be avoided it became a hard challenge for Indonesian students. To teach this subject, the teacher should have more approaches, one of them is analyzing the learning style of them further.

Marwiyah and Kaswan (2015) state the students might not receive the lesson well because the teacher's teaching style is not matched with their learning style. The teacher needs to find students' learning styles to motivate students' interest in learning English. There are three kinds of learning styles, they are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Although learning style is one of the keys to high achievement, these learning styles often be ignored by the teacher, even the

students themselves (Nihayah:2011). To create better material in teaching English, we need to gain students' interest and motivate their learning style by doing the teaching-learning process match with their style.

Based on the identification above, the researcher wanted to find out the correlation between learning style and interest towards the third year Biology students' ability in writing past activities. The researcher chose the third year Biology Department students due to their ability was lower compared with other departments in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

Concerning with the identification of the problem as mentioned before, the researcher limited her study to the correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students' ability in writing a paragraph of past activities at Bung Hatta University.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

The general problem of this research was, "Was there any significant correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students' ability in writing a paragraph of past activities at Bung Hatta University?"

1.5 Research Questions

In line with the research formulation above, the researcher proposed some research questions. In general, the research question was, “Was there any significant correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students’ ability in writing a paragraph of past activities at Bung Hatta University?” in the specifics as follow:

1. How was the correlation between the Biology students’ learning style towards their ability in writing past activities?
2. How was the correlation between the Biology students’ interest in learning English towards their ability in writing ability?
3. How was the correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students’ ability in writing a paragraph of past activities t Bung Hatta University?

1.6 Hypothesis

Based on related reference about students’ learning style, interest, and writing ability of the third year Biology department students, the researcher proposed some hypotheses as follows:

Alternative Hypothesis (Ha)

- 1) Alternative hypothesis₁ (Ha₁): There was a significant correlation between Biology students’ learning style towards their ability in writing a paragraph of past activities.

- 2) Alternative Hypothesis₂ (Ha₂): There was a significant correlation between Biology students' interest in learning English towards their ability in writing a paragraph of past activities.
- 3) Alternative Hypothesis₃ (Ha₃): There was a significant correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students' ability in writing a paragraph of past activities at Bung Hatta University.

Null Hypothesis(H₀)

- 1) Null hypothesis₁ (Ho₁): There was no significant correlation between Biology students' learning style towards their ability in writing a paragraph of past activities.
- 2) Null Hypothesis₂ (Ho₂): There was no significant correlation between Biology students' interest in learning English towards their ability in writing a paragraph of past activities.
- 3) Null Hypothesis₃ (Ho₃): There was no significant correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students' ability in writing a paragraph of past activities at Bung Hatta University.

1.7 Purpose of the Study

In general, the purpose of the study was to find out the correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students' ability in writing a paragraph of past activities at Bung Hatta University.

In the specific, the researcher mentioned the purposes as follows:

1. To find out the correlation between Biology students' learning style towards their ability in writing a paragraph of past activities.
2. To find out the correlation between Biology students' interest in learning English towards their ability in writing a paragraph of past activities.
3. to find out the correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students' ability in writing a paragraph of past activities at Bung Hatta University.

1.8 Significance of the Research

This study was considered as the significant one because its findings provided the correlation between learning style and interest in learning English towards the third year Biology students' ability in writing a paragraph of past activities at Bung Hatta University. Hopefully, the result of this study would be useful for the researcher, the lecturers, and the students. This research was hoped to provide the lecturers the information about the Biology students' learning style and their interest in learning English.

This finding was aimed to improve the qualities of other departments in mastering English in both performance and professionalism to produce a better alumnus. English lecturers could use this finding as feedback and better material preparation for teaching English in other departments. The students could use this finding as a helpful source to know about learning style and conduct a better and effective way about their ability to catch the lesson materials.

1.9 Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding with the keywords or key terms in this study, the researcher defined the key terms for each item here as follows:

- 1) Correlational research is research that comprises collecting data that aims to see the relationship between variables and give a level to the relationship (Refnita, 2018: 26).
- 2) Learning style is the easiest way that is owned by individuals in raping, organizing, and processing information (A. Bire, Geradus, & J. Bire: 2014).
- 3) Interest is a strong motivational process that provides learning support, academic and career direction, and is very important for academic success (Harakiewicz, Smith, and Priniski: 2016).
- 4) Writing is an expression of an idea on a paper and a way of communication between the writer(s) and reader(s) (Kamlasi & Nokas: 2017).
- 5) Past tense is an expression to express past activities but they do not have any impact at present because they started and ended at that time too (Refnita, 2015:39).