

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The phenomenon of students' silence has been recorded in the negative light. As an absence of speech, students' silence is often problematized in the classroom context since theoretically classroom is for talking, and teachers may view it as trouble because it is not appropriate with their professional role to get the learner to talk using many techniques (Ollin, 2008).

In line with the study, there is a teacher who taught in two classes in one of the secondary schools in Tasikmalaya. She experienced and responded that students' silence is a phenomenon that should be resolved. She perceived that learning should be done in an enjoyable way so that the students would be able to participate actively. She considered learning with a game to provide a safe environment for students especially silent students in expressing their idea particularly in hard materials like grammar. She changed the plot into a group presentation and asked students to create the list of their daily activities. The emergence of students' silence phenomenon showed several views such as low interaction to answer the questions given by the teacher in case, they only bowed the head or stared to the teacher, less participation in giving the opinion or idea, and not interesting to join a small group activity. One thing that becomes the concern for the teacher is that one of the students indicated as silence is a high achiever in the classroom. Additionally, the teacher desired that student would be changed into an active learner as she

perceived also that a good student should be balanced by both cognitive and psychomotor. Thus, she tried to bring the class more attractive and interesting to invite all learners to be engaged generally and particularly to silent students.

Research about students' silence has been firmly established previously. In 2014, Saylag has investigated silence in the classroom and issued that students faced several difficulties in learning English proven by their diaries written such as shyness, felt alien to herself, exhausted as too difficult to grasp everything the teacher says in English, and being compared in the classroom. In addition, it also discussed that students behaved as silent due to face-saving strategy and insufficient content knowledge (Tatar, 2009; Choi, 2015). Furthermore, there are several strategies that enable teachers to apply in the classroom such as let the students work with smaller group, the opportunity to work alone, and maximize the use of technology (Medaille & Usinger, 2019).

Those studies were conducted in an EFL classroom setting where English is not used as a dominant language in the teaching-learning process. However, they were only talking about factors that affect students' silence and opinions that are supported by theories about how the strategies to engage students' silence without focused on the investigation of teacher's perception and more explanation as follow up toward the phenomenon. Thus, using qualitative analysis and conducted in one secondary school in Indonesia, the present research investigates into teacher's perception as the main basis to see

what the action is given, classroom decision, and relationship pattern that is shaped among teacher and student.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Two research questions placed in the present study. The researcher investigates

1. What are the teacher's perceptions of students' silence in the EFL classroom context?
2. How does the teacher create strategies in facing students' silence phenomenon?

1.3 Operational Definitions

To prevent misconception, the researcher affords some operational definitions interrelated to the study, as shown below:

1.3.1 Teacher's perception: the thoughts that influence certain action in

learning practice and formation of the teacher-student relationship, as a result of what she has observed, seen, and taught to students' silence in case their behavior in learning.

1.3.2 Students' silence: the behavior of the students that proves low interaction with the teacher in the classroom, unwillingness to answer the question from the teacher, only bow their head and stare to the teacher, felt as they are alien in the teamwork among colleagues, and show lower sound.

1.4 Aims of the Study

The research aims to find the teacher's perceptions of students' silence in the context of the EFL classroom. It aims to know deeper the thought by the teacher in responding to specific child behavior in case, students' silence which influences decision-making or teaching strategies applied in the classroom including the formation of the teacher-student relationship.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1 Empirical: this study gives the reader an illustration and more information that teaching practice or another pedagogical aspect is driven by the teacher's perception

1.5.2 Theoretical: this study extends the theory about classroom interaction and perceptions about silence in the classroom context not only from the student but also from the teacher.

1.5.3 Practical: this study provides the reader especially a pre-service teacher, as a novice in teaching-learning, that perception of the teacher is basic information to see what the action, decision-making are given to the student in learning, and teacher-student relationship shaped.