CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a wide-ranging description of the study. It contains the background, the formulation of the problem, the operational definitions, the aim of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Student engagement has an important role in the learning process in the EFL classroom. According to Han (2021, p.1), he stated that "Language learning achievement depends on student engagement which is at the center of attention these days". Even though the current era of learning emphasizes a student-centered approach, in fact, student engagement is still lacking (Hanh, 2020). Al-Obaydi et al. (2023, p.1), pointed out that "Student engagement is divided into three aspects, namely behavioral, cognitive, and emotional. One aspect of engagement, namely cognitive engagement, is a crucial problem at this time". Cognitive engagement is students' thinking processes using learning strategies and actively involve themselves in the learning process to contribute and understand complex concepts voluntarily (Tang et al., 2022). For example, students do not want to ask and answer questions because their English skills are lacking, and they are afraid of being criticized. Several other factors that cause students not to engage in EFL classes are cultural factors, classroom norms and environment, gender age, fear of making mistakes and losing face, and confidence level (Wan, 2021).

The issue of student silence in English classes remains a significant challenge. Addressing this problem requires an understanding of students' cognitive abilities. Delving into cognitive processes can offer insights into how

students process and internalize language information, even when not expressed verbally (Cherukunnath & Singh, 2022). By exploring cognitive aspect, researchers can unveil the underlying mechanisms contributing to students' silence. Moreover, studying cognition in silent English classes aids educators in identifying potential barriers or challenges hindering active student engagement. This facilitates a thorough examination of the psychological processes involved in foreign language learning for professional purposes, enhancing learning efficiency, language skills, and memory retention (Delbio & Ilankumaran, 2018). Furthermore, insights gleaned from cognitive research can guide the development and refinement of teaching strategies and methods aimed at fostering greater participation and engagement in silent English classes (Thao et al., 2024). Ultimately, a deeper comprehension of cognition in quiet English classes can enhance the effectiveness of language learning experiences and teaching approaches (Jiang & Zhang, 2019).

Seeing the challenges of cognitive engagement of students in EFL classes, several approaches can be taken to fix this problem. One popular approach that can be used is the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) (Jamaludin & Osman, 2014). FCM is a role reversal between class activities and homework. If students usually get knowledge in class, then at FCM students will get knowledge before class starts at home, such as watching videos and understanding the material given by the teacher before class starts. Meanwhile, if skills practice is usually used as homework, then in FCM skills practice is carried out at school, where the teacher can monitor and correct students (Hsieh et al., 2017). According to Jamaludin and Osman (2014, p.129) argued that in the flipped classroom, when the lecturer posts questions on the discussion board or asks a question in class, students are cognitively engaged by trying to make connections with their own experiences, relating the ideas to what they already know, attempting to fit different ideas together and make sense of them, and

generating their own examples to understand the concepts. This statement shows that the use of the FCM as a learning approach can make students more cognitively engaged in the classroom.

At the English Language Education Department at one of Universities in Tasikmalaya, students also experience the issue of silence when in class. Based on data obtained from the results of pre-interviews with students, they stated that they tend not to actively respond or ask questions. Even in the discussion process, if it is not initiated by the lecturer, the discussion tends not to go well, and students only communicate at the end of the discussion session. This indicates that cognitive engagement is considered lacking. However, in the Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) course which was implemented online, students demonstrated more active cognitive participation. They actively answer questions asked by the lecturer and ask if there is any lack of understanding. Then, 73.68% of participants from the pre-interview also said that the application of FCM in TELL courses made students' cognitive engagement run very well because the FCM approach provided a new experience for students where they were asked to be responsible for their learning. The application of the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) has a positive impact on students' cognitive participation. FCM allows students to prepare before class meetings. Therefore, FCM not only prepares students for classroom learning but also increases their independence throughout the learning process, previous knowledge, and practice critical thinking skills regarding the material to be studied (Smith et al., 2018). Then, this approach puts students in charge of time management and monitoring their progress. In addition, FCM stimulates students' cognitive engagement and enriches their learning experience through independent preparation before class. This makes students the center of their class. Therefore, through students' active engagement in the cognitive aspects of the classroom, FCM has the potential to

make a positive contribution to improving their academic grades (Bergmann & Sams, 2014).

In previous research conducted by Alebrahim and Ku (2020), it was found that the use of the flipped classroom model (FCM) increased student engagement in class, which had a positive impact on student performance and grades, although there were still challenges faced. The data in this study suggested that these challenges and benefits of FCM influenced behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement. However, this research had a limitation in that it focused more on behavioral and affective engagement rather than cognitive engagement. Although some aspects of cognitive engagement were touched upon in the study, such as students' need to understand the material, take notes, and participate in activities, the primary focus of the study was on students' effort, their preferences for learning materials, and their level of satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to address and investigate this gap further by exploring the challenges and benefits of FCM in order to assess its effectiveness as a teaching approach.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem(s)

Based on the background, the formulation of the research problem is "What are the challenges and benefits of the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) on students' cognitive engagement?"

1.3 Operational Definition

1.3.1 Flipped Classroom Model

The Flipped Classroom Model or FCM is a teaching approach that is different from traditional teaching methods. In FCM, materials and assignments are given before class meetings through an online platform. So

that students can understand and study them before attending class. When in the online classroom which is also carried out via an online platform, the teacher's role focuses on facilitating students to reflect on their understanding. In addition, in class, students are actively involved in practicing skills related to the material they have studied, while the teacher monitors progress, provides guidance, criticism and suggestions when necessary.

1.3.2 Students' Cognitive Engagement

Students' cognitive engagement involves active participation in thinking, processing information, and understanding subject matter. This includes students' ability to solve problems, analyze, and apply the knowledge they learn. This engagement encourages more effective learning and increases student motivation in the classroom.

1.3.3 EFL Classroom

EFL is an acronym for 'English as Foreign Language'. So, the EFL Classroom is an environment or room where students can learn and practice English as a second language.

1.4 Aims of the Research

The study aims to know challenges and benefits of the flipped classroom model (FCM) on students' cognitive engagement in the learning process.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1 Empirical Significance

This study provides researchers with empirical insight into the challenges and benefits of using the flipped classroom model on students' cognitive engagement in English as a foreign language classes. This means

that this study provides a strong understanding of how the flipped classroom model influences student learning interactions in concrete ways.

1.5.2 Theoretical Significance

This study enriches the literature by exploring the challenges and benefits, based on students' opinions, regarding the implementation of the flipped classroom model to enhance cognitive engagement in the EFL classroom.

1.5.3 Practical Significance

The study aims to provide an overview of the flipped classroom model as a teaching method, as well as to identify the challenges and benefits associated with students' cognitive engagement in the EFL classroom.