

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The use of target language in the EFL classroom has been a debatable issue for a long time. Some people believe students are required to get a lot of exposure to the target language to comprehend the target language. Krashen (1982, as cited in Nazilah et al., 2021) argued that the process of learning a second language or a foreign language is comparable to learning a first language. Thus, students should get as much exposure to the target language as they can. Kadhim et al., (2022) assumed that the usage of native language when studying a foreign language is taboo. According to pedagogical theory, a teacher's language choices can influence classroom success. For this reason, teachers should provide as much exposure to the target language as possible to students. Students are exposed to the target language more when the teacher uses it more often than they do (Tiffany & Zainil, 2018). In contrast, not a few people think that using the L1 in the target language classroom does not interfere with target language acquisition. Nation (1990, as cited in Alshehri, 2017) argued that students who are not allowed to utilize their L1 suffer since it makes them believe that the L2 or foreign language is somehow superior to their own language. Enama, (2016) stated that students' first language should be followed as in one framework during the learning process of a nonnative language.

In Indonesia, English is positioned as a foreign language where English is commonly used or taught in schools or universities, mostly for communicating globally. Even though English is only a foreign language in Indonesia, most Indonesian people are aware of the importance and power of English. As a result, English has been proposed to be taught in schools and colleges. In practice, most teachers allow the use of the first language in the EFL classroom to aid students in learning the language. English teachers in Indonesia

sometimes explain challenging topics in Indonesian to encourage students' interest in learning English. This can happen for several reasons. Using English all the time in the teaching and learning process is not easy for both teachers and students. The lower proficiency of some students becomes one of the reasons why teachers in Indonesian EFL classes still allow the use of L1 in the classroom. Some students, particularly those with lower proficiency, find it difficult to convey their ideas clearly and confidently, therefore they translate them into the target language, in this case, English, using their native tongue (Liando et al., 2023).

However, among the Indonesian schools that are implementing L1 use in EFL classrooms, several schools implement the target language in EFL classrooms. One of the schools can be found in a junior high school in Tasikmalaya. Based on the preliminary interview with an intern teacher at the school, it was found that this phenomenon exists at the school. Specifically, there is a language class in which English is mandatory for both students and teachers, especially during English lessons. Nevertheless, several teachers of other subjects also occasionally utilize English although to a lesser extent compared to the predominance of the L1. Therefore, the researcher was interested in finding out how students' attitudes would be when the English teacher uses English optimally (100%) in middle school-level EFL classrooms.

Several studies on this issue have been carried out by many researchers. Previous studies have focused on teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions toward the use of target language in EFL classrooms. The study conducted by Korkmaz (2021) focuses on the teachers' beliefs toward teaching and their practices regarding the use of foreign language (L2) in the classroom. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' attitudes toward the use of target language in EFL classrooms. The findings show that most teachers agreed that using L2 in the classroom will give students the best exposure to the language. In the practice, teachers embrace their beliefs. However, at some specific moments, teachers still have to use L1. On the other hand, the study

conducted by Septiani et al. (2021) focuses on how junior high school teachers and students communicate and receive instruction in English as the target language. The findings showed that using TL as a communication and instruction medium can encourage non-native students to acquire TL optimally. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' attitudes toward the use of target language in EFL classrooms. The attitudes referred to in this research include cognitive, affective, and behavioral. In contrast to the previous studies, this study focuses on the students' points of view regarding the full usage of the target language in the EFL classroom.

1.2. Formulation of the Problem

“How are students' attitudes towards the use of target language in EFL classroom?” is the question the researcher attempts to answer in this study.

1.3. Operational Definitions

The researcher provides the following explanations of the terms used in this study to avoid misunderstandings:

Target Language :	A target language is a language that is learned, studied, or acquired by learners, and also a language that they or the teacher wants them to learn. In this research, the target language refers to English as a foreign language that is learned, studied, or acquired by Indonesian junior high school students.
Attitude :	Attitude is a part of human behavior that reflects how they think and feel about someone or something. It can also be a gesture, body position, or action. During learning, junior high school students also definitely show

their attitudes. There are three aspects of attitudes. The cognitive aspect describes how the students react mentally toward the use of the target language in an EFL classroom. For example, the students are able to connect their knowledge from the previous ones to the new ones, or the students are struggling in understanding the lessons. Moreover, affective attitude describes their feelings during learning such as how the students feel excited or anxious in the classroom. Behavioral attitude describes their tendencies towards the learning process such as how they engage in a group work.

EFL : EFL is an English language that takes place as a foreign language where English is not spoken as a first or second language. English as a foreign language is taught in non-English speaking countries such as Indonesia, Japan, China, etc. In Indonesia, English has been proposed to be taught in schools and universities. Therefore, Indonesian students who study English are referred to as EFL students.

1.4. Aims of the Study

This research aims to investigate students' attitudes toward the use of target language in EFL classrooms.

1.5. Significances of the Study

1.5.1. Theoretical

The theoretical use of this study is to expand previous studies related to the use of TL in EFL classrooms.

1.5.2. Practical

The practical use of this study is to provide learning strategies for EFL learning that will contribute to students, lecturers, and English Education Department majors.

1.5.3. Empirical

The empirical use of this study is to explore EFL students' perceptions and attitudes toward the use of TL in EFL classrooms.