

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the description of the research widely. It comprises the background of the research, formulation of the problem, operational definition, the aim of the research and the uses of the research.

A. Background

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes require various activities which need students' involvement. One of the most effective ways to encourage students' involvement is to set up the proper classroom seating arrangement based on the classroom activity and interaction, lesson sequences, students' enthusiasm and the aim of teaching learning process (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 1998; Zerlin, 2009; Lofty, 2012; Fernandes & Huang, 2013).

Harmer (1998) stated the most common used are orderly rows, u-shape/semi-circle/horse shoes, and separate table. Orderly rows seating arrangement (ORSA) is good when the teacher needs students focus and suitable for formal classrooms where the teacher could take a front position for a lecture format. U-Shape/semi-circle/horse shoes would enable students to face each other while giving the teacher an opportunity to move around students and it is appropriate for speaking practice; while separate table (ST) is proper to get students doing their group work (Harmer 1998; Lofty 2012; Walter & Frei, 2007).

Nurmala (2014) found listening is the fittest activity to be done when using ORSA because of the students can focus to give their attention when listening teacher's explanation. It can promote their listening skill. Meanwhile, US seating arrangement can improve the students' speaking ability because of the students who sit in this seating arrangement are talkative in speaking.

Many researchers reported that ORSA is still used in the majority of classroom in around the world. Most of the teachers never thought of changing the furniture arrangements because they were not used to different settings. Besides, considering effective classroom management and setting effective seating arrangements are often neglected by most of teachers in their teaching preparation (Lofty, 2012; Cooper, 2011), while creating an environment through physical layout of the seating arrangement will support students' action and academic achievement of the students. Moreover, students are rarely asked about their opinion and desire on the use of classroom seating arrangement.

Many studies have been discussed in the seating arrangement context. For instance, the past research examined the students' behavior on seating arrangement in learning environment (Haghighi & Jusan, 2011). The research found that each type of seating arrangement has a strong influence on students' behavior and performance in the classroom. Meanwhile, another research has observed the student's perception of higher education classroom: impact of classroom attributes on student

satisfaction and performance (Yang, Gerber and Mino, 2013). This research resulted that students' perception should be treated as important determinants by effort that focuses on improving learning environment in higher education. Although most researches have explored the issues about seating arrangement, there is less attention to see from the students' perception about the use of ORSA and US in EFL classroom. Dealing with the issues, this research aims to investigate the students' perception on the use of ORSA and US in EFL classroom.

B. Formulation of the Problem

A research question in this research is "What are the students' perceptions on the use of ORSA and US in the EFL classroom?"

C. Operational Definition

To avoid misunderstanding about the terms set out in this research, the researcher provides some definitions related to this research, as follows:

1. Students' Perception : The judgement of the students by interpreting the meaning of their behavior which it occurs in seating arrangement.
2. ORSA : A type of seating arrangement which the students' seats are in row.
3. US : A type of seating arrangement which the tables and chairs are arranged in the shape of a U-shape/horseshoe.

D. Aim of the Research

This research aims to find out students' perception about the use of seating arrangements (ORSA and US) in the EFL classroom.

E. Significances of the Research

1. Theoretical

The present research expands the Self-Perception theory (Critcher & Gilovich, 2010) toward the ORSA and U-Shape seating arrangement in EFL classroom.

2. Empirical

The present research provided empirical insights into how the student' perception contribute in selecting the type of seating arrangement in EFL classroom.

3. Practical

The present research served the practical way to select the type of seating arrangement which appropriate for EFL classroom.