

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a description of the study. It comprises the background of the study, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significances of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

People think that college students are experienced learners. This is because they have been studying for at least 12 years. Conversely, in reality there are a number of students who are still weak in managing their own learning strategies during classroom and while self-studying. Many students only capture about one to third of important lesson information in their notes, which negatively impacts their academic performance since more recorded points correlate with higher achievements (Kiewra et al., 2018). As a result, learning in the classroom becomes less effective. Most educators teach content but fail to teach how to learn such content (Kiewra, 2002). Therefore, it is important for students to be given special classes on learning strategies to provide exposure on how to learn.

One of the popular student learning strategies is note-taking. Note-taking is the process of recording information captured from different sources and platforms, such as reading, oral discussion or meeting, and a lecture. It is a crucial skill in personal knowledge management. As stated by Williams and Eggert (2002), taking notes plays an important role in formal learning. Note-taking is one of the study aids which are popular and used as students' learning techniques or strategies for decades. Most students are taking notes during lectures.

Preliminary study in a state university in Tasikmalaya reveals general note-taking habits of EFL students in the class. There are at least four types of students' habits in the class, those are; 1) students who just sit and listen to the material without taking out notes to record, 2) students who listen to the material while taking notes on their notebook, 3) students who listen to the material while taking notes using electronic devices (phone, laptop), and 4) students who listen to the material and record notes by taking pictures. Students carry out note-taking because

they may think that note-taking practice helps them understand teachers' material explanation or the book they read. Students rely on their notes to memorize and review the material for preparing the test or examination. Therefore, EFL students tend to take notes to capture unfamiliar names, terms and ideas to memorize and understand later.

In addition, teachers also believe that note-taking is beneficial so they directly instruct students to take notes during the lectures as has been done by several EFL teachers at a university in Tasikmalaya. It can be said that methods used in the classroom are ways for teachers to help students learn and also teach them how to learn. Teachers have also been students, at least they have an understanding or being a student. Reflecting on their own education can help teachers choose the right strategies to implement into their classroom. A teacher is also an instructor. A good instructor must know what strategies are most effective and know how to teach their students by embedding strategy instruction into content teaching (Kiewra, 2002).

Within the scope of higher education, especially in the context of EFL student's learning strategy during lecture, note-taking is learnt in more depth during class. One of the courses that requires students to take notes is the Academic Listening and Speaking course (hereafter, ALS course). Not only it is a routine activity, but note-taking is one of the material topics discussed in this course. So, students can gain in-depth knowledge about note-taking. Apart from that, the note-taking activity in this course is a mandatory task for students. The results of student notes are checked and then assessed.

Due to today's technological development, classroom and note-taking technologies have evolved. Some classes use synchronous learning, other classes use asynchronous learning, and there are also those that use both which are currently referred to as hybrid. The widespread use of portable electronic devices has changed the way in which students take their notes (Jansen et al., 2017). Students can take notes on electronic devices like tablet, laptop, or gadget. So, as a result of these changes, longhand note-taking is now considered as traditional note taking (Lin & Bigenho, 2011; Reimer et al., 2009 as cited in Jansen et al., 2017), while typing is

a modern form of note-taking. Nonetheless, in the realm of education, traditional note-taking is still used especially in Indonesia. This is because not all students bring electronic devices to class. In the end, the use of traditional note-taking becomes superior because the tools used are things that are always in student's bag, those are pen and paper. These reasons strengthen the researcher to further discuss the use of longhand note-taking as a traditional note-taking in a classroom including its advantages over digital note-taking.

One phenomenon was found in the Academic Listening and Speaking course at a university in Tasikmalaya. With the advancement of technology nowadays, longhand note-taking technique is still used. In this course, students are facilitated with listening experiences through a variety of spoken texts multimodally presented in the academic context (e.g. conference, podcast, talk show, and discussion). The main purpose of this course is to improve students' communication skills. Note-taking and communication skills are closely related, as both involve the ability to actively process, organise and convey information. In addition, by taking notes in a way that encodes information effectively, students are able to remember the information they learnt previously (Lichty, 2022). Moreover, note-taking strengthens communication skills by enhancing listening, organizing, and memory retention which is essential for conveying information effectively. In ALS course, students are instructed to take notes in a certain notebook. Through the notes they take, it is hoped that students will be able to interpret the lectures heard and be able to convey the ideas they have. To sum-up, longhand note-taking is a strategy used by the EFL teacher of this course as a study aid in teaching and learning practice.

Numerous studies regarding students' note-taking habits have been investigated to update the literature on students' general note-taking behaviour. They also investigated the impact of these newer technological advances on note-taking. Morehead et al. (2019) conducted an up-to-date survey of student's note-taking habits both for lectures in the classroom and in the online courses for undergraduate students at Kent University. From the survey, students are flexible in their note-taking behaviour but may not always make the best decisions about

how and when to take notes (note-taking by a laptop or notebook or deciding to not take notes). Meanwhile, survey research by Siegel (2023) shows that those students who favor paper and pen note-taking believe that note-taking improves concentration, comprehension, and organizational skills more than those who favor computer note-taking. Preference for note-taking method may affect students' reported views on and behaviors related to note-taking. Previous studies have mostly focused on the use of note-taking in the student's perspective, as a learner. In contrast, in the perspective of a teacher who also plays an important role in helping improve students' ability to learn is still rare. In fact, as a teacher, they can also teach note-taking specifically to students to facilitate the selection of the most effective note-taking strategy at least for themselves. In this case, choosing the note-taking method to be used in the classroom is also important while looking at the classroom situation. Different from the previous research that was described, this research tries to use single case study as the research method to find out the factors that encourage an EFL teacher to choose longhand note-taking in this digital era.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Research question is addressed in this present study. Based on the background of the study, the research question is, “what are the factors that influence EFL teacher to teach longhand note-taking as a learning tool in the Academic Listening and Speaking course?”

1.3 Operational Definitions

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

- 1.3.1 Longhand Note-Taking : Longhand note-taking is one kind of note-taking technique. In longhand note-taking, students use pen to write their notes on the paper. In the ALS course, students write their notes from the lectures they hear on a certain book using a pen or marker.

- 1.3.2 Academic Listening and Speaking Course : The Academic Listening and Speaking course is one of compulsory courses available in the 4th semester in the English Education Department, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Teachers' Training in a state university in Tasikmalaya. Academic Listening and Speaking course focus on training student communication and strengthening their listening and speaking skills.
- 1.3.3 EFL Teacher : Teachers that are categorized as nonnative English speakers whose English is not their first language. EFL teacher in this research is from the English Education Department of one university in Tasikmalaya who teaches Academic Listening and Speaking course.

1.4 Aim of the Study

This research aims at investigating factors influencing EFL teacher to teach longhand note-taking as a learning tool in the Academic Listening and Speaking course.

1.5 Significances of the Study

This research is expected to generate beneficial results in three ways, which are:

- 1.5.1 Theoretical Contribution : This research contributes to relevant literature regarding note-taking as classroom activity as well as a reference for further research in the future.
- 1.5.2 Practical Contribution : This research is expected to help EFL teachers find the appropriate ways to

engage students' participation in the classroom. In addition, this research enables EFL students to know the benefits of note-taking practices both in class and in self-study.

- 1.5.3 Empirical Contribution : This research provides an empirical description and understanding for the researcher regarding the advantages of one note-taking technique over another as a classroom activity. Moreover, this research provides valuable experience for the author in writing scientific papers and conducting research.