

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the introduction of the study. It mainly talks about the background and statements of the problem, the objective of the study, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, limitation and scope, definition of key terms, and the organisation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Vocabulary is one of the most important components which students need to learn to be able to speak English well. Vocabulary, as one of the knowledge areas in language, plays a great role for learners in acquiring a language (Cameron, 2001). It consists of a set of familiar words in one language. One word in English can have so many different meanings, and vice versa, people can express something or a meaning with so many different words. Those what makes vocabulary to be difficult to learn, especially for those whose English is not their second language but their foreign one.

Practicing is the best and fastest way to learn it. However, Indonesian students have a lack of practice since not many people around them in the society speak English. According to Montolalu and Suryadinata (2007), there are seven main vernacular languages, namely: Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Batak, Minangkabau, Balinese, Buginese; with Javanese as the greatest number in terms of speakers. They prefer speaking the local language which each region has. This makes school or classroom as the only place they can learn or practice English in.

English as a universal language is very needed by students nowadays which makes meeting difficulties in learning it becomes a problem. The habit that the students are used to or have in schools are usually just applied when they are in school. In another word, they tend to forget or do not practice English at home, unless their family speak it. This happens not only in kindergartens or playgroups, but also elementary, secondary, even high schools. No matter how long people study or learn English, it would still be very difficult for them to learn and improve since they do not practice it outside the school. Hence, learning in classroom only is obviously not enough to learn and practice since English vocabulary is pretty rich and takes time to learn and remember.

Furthermore, English has a big importance in one of the most common job requirements in a lot of companies. One of the evidences shows that many Indonesian people have a working ability in the English language (Lauder, 2008). However, Dardjowidjojo (2003) found that many academics and students in a university in Jakarta could not meet the minimum requirement for US English university entrance. Therefore, students could overcome their difficulties and use other ways to enrich vocabulary outside the classroom, even from unexpected things, like songs.

In this new global era, people get used to something that they see daily or do everyday easily. A song is something that cannot be denied to be involved in everyone's daily life. Songs can be listened to and heard anywhere. Moreover, there are a lot of students have the habit of listening to songs. Listening to song

lyrics for multiple times might enrich students' vocabulary and knowledge. They listen to songs everyday and everywhere, even when they are not at home, for example, in the malls, park, cinemas, streets, etc. The lyrics repetition in songs might help students memorise the structure of a sentence in a correct way. In fact, students' memorising song lyrics is less difficult and faster than learning vocabulary from a book. This might happen because listening to songs are more fun, less intense and boring compared to reading a book. Students could sing or say the lyrics of a song spontaneously correctly anytime. While listening to any popular songs, which are rich of a lot of vocabulary, students might hear a lot of new words which they do not even understand or heard before. One who really likes some particular song will search the meaning of these new words. This way it will enrich their vocabulary knowledge easier and faster.

This means that songs give them motivation in learning English too. Ellis (1994) states that language teachers have already acknowledged the importance of learners' motivation and occasionally explaining their own sense of failure to the students' lack of motivation. In another word, it would be way better if teachers could discover or find the learning technique that would motivate the students more from their point of view. Hence, the students' perceptions play an important role to help teachers to find out what they think about songs so that their perception could be consider later on.

Based on the statements above, the researcher wants to find out students' perceptions on using popular English songs to enrich their vocabulary knowledge.

According to the researcher's personal experience, listening to popular English songs provides the listeners a lot of new words which she could use on her own sentences. Same thing applies to her friends, the researchers admits that those who the researcher know listen to songs have a better vocabulary enrichment. This experience becomes another reason why the researcher is triggered to observe the students perceptions. This way, their perceptions could be considered and discovered too. Singh (1987) claimed that with the help of perception, the needs of various people can be determined, because people's perception is influenced by their needs. In addition, students who are the main subject in this case, have perceptions which need to be known and appreciated too. Students who often listen to popular English songs might never thought that whether the songs enrich their vocabulary or not. Hence, in this research, the researcher tries to get the students' perceptions on the role of popular English songs to their vocabulary enrichment.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In relation to the background above, the main statement of the problem can be concluded as follows:

- What are students' perceptions on the role of popular English songs to their vocabulary enrichment?

There are some minor statements of the problem based on the main problem which are listed below:

- What are students' perceptions on the role of popular English songs in their vocabulary learning strategy?
- What are students' perceptions on the role of popular English songs to their understanding of vocabulary meaning?
- What are students' perceptions on the role of popular English song to their vocabulary pronunciation?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

Based on the statements of problem above, the main objective of the study is as follows:

- To find out students' perceptions on the role of popular English songs to their vocabulary enrichment.

As finding out the main objective of the study, some minor objectives are also to be found as follows:

- To find out students' perceptions on the role of popular English songs in their vocabulary learning strategy.
- To find out students' perceptions on the role of popular English songs to their understanding of vocabulary meaning.
- To find out students' perceptions on the role of popular English song to their vocabulary pronunciation

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This research relies on some main theories which are expected to help the researcher finding out the answers to the statements of the problem. The main

problem questioned in this research is the students' perceptions in popular English songs to their vocabulary enrichment.

Theory of perception that helps the researcher understanding more about its meaning and importance comes from Singh (1987) which says that perception is a subjective process, therefore, different people may perceive the same environment differently based on what particular aspects of the situation they choose to selectively absorb, how they organise this information and the manner in which they interpret it to obtain a grasp of the situation. Therefore, one thing can create so many perceptions to people. Furthermore, to know what other people perceive helps to see their needs or their behaviour.

The research also focuses on the students' vocabulary enrichment and how vocabulary is the main component of English that learners have to learn to master the language well. As a matter of fact, it is agreed by McCarthy (1990) who stated that it is the experience of most language teachers that the single biggest component of any language course is vocabulary. Not to mention, Flohr (2010, p. 2) accentuated that students need to learn vocabulary because otherwise they will not be able to comprehend what they encounter in a text or listen to in a conversation. Some difficulties that students meet might be overcome with some unexpected things around them like songs.

Songs play an important role in language learning. As Gilles, Andre, Dye, & Pfannenstiel (1998) found that with each new song, students learn concepts and word meanings that they will encounter in print. What makes it better is when

they listen to their preferred songs which have bigger probability to be listened more. Murphey (1992) revealed that using students' favourite songs to teach vocabulary created endless opportunities for revision which is fundamental for storing the information in long term memory. Not to mention, popular songs which are on the hits influence students' interests too which brings more benefits since Medina (1993) explicated a wide variety of useful vocabulary items can be acquired through popular songs.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected give benefits to both theories and practice of vocabulary learning.

1.5.1 Theoretically

This research is conducted based on all theories related to perception, vocabulary, language learning, popular songs, English acquisition, etc. Some theories show the relation between the use and importance of popular songs towards language acquisition. Thus, the results of the study are expected to give good supports to all the theories elaborated.

Furthermore, the results are also expected to answer the research objective which is to find out the perceptions of the students on the role of popular English songs to their vocabulary enrichment.

1.5.2 Practically

The outcomes of this research are expected to be beneficial for both students and teachers. It is hoped to encourage the students to use popular English

songs as one of the ways to enrich their vocabulary. Not to mention, the perceptions of the students is expected to give teachers ideas to use popular English songs as one the techniques to teach vocabulary in the classroom.

1.6 Limitation and Scope

The focus of this research is on finding out students' perceptions on the role of popular English songs to their vocabulary enrichment. The researcher has decided to limit the subjects of the study for high school students of a private school in Surabaya. The school uses the curriculum of 2013 and adopted the Global Assessment Certificate (GAC) for some of the students in 2016. It is an internationally recognised university preparation program for students whose English is not their first language. A limitation was made for grade 12 due to the school's authorisation which obliged the last year students to focus only on national examination in the next few months. Therefore, grade 10 and 11 are the only participants in this study which involve 100 students.

The research involves a questionnaire answering and several individual interviews to some students. The questionnaire are likely be given to the whole students in four classes and around 10% of the participants are interviewed privately. This way the researcher is able to assume perceptions clearly.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

This research has some key terms which are briefly explained in order to avoid misunderstanding in their meaning.

1.7.1 Perception

According to Reitz (1989), perception includes all those processes by which an individual receives information about his environment—seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling. The study of these perpetual processes shows that their functioning is affected by three classes of variables—the objects or events being perceived, the environment in which perception occurs and the individual doing the perceiving. Thus, perception is the way people perceive and interpret information based on their sensual experiences.

1.7.2 Vocabulary

Richards (2002:255) points that vocabulary is the core component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis for how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Thus, vocabulary means a set of words that plays a very important role that learners need to learn in order to master English well.

1.7.3 Song

Wikipedia defines song as a single (and often standalone) work of music that is typically intended to be sung by the human voice with distinct and fixed pitches and patterns using sound and silence and a variety of forms that often include the repetition of sections. Thus, a song is a work of music with set of words that is called lyrics sung along with rhythm and melody.

1.7.4 Popular Song

Frith, Straw, and Street (2001:pp. 95–105) claims that pop music is a genre of popular music that originated in its modern form in the United States and

United Kingdom during the mid-1950s. In addition, the term "pop song" was first used in 1926, in the sense of a piece of music "having popular appeal" (Simpson and Weiner, 1989).

What the researcher means by popular song is songs which have the genre of pop music and are or had been on hits before. Any songs with other genres such as, jazz, rap, blues, etc are not included in term of "popular song" in this research. As a matter of fact, Hatch and Millward (1987) agrees on defining pop music as "a body of music which is distinguishable from popular, jazz, and folk musics". Hence, all songs with the genre of pop and are on the hits or had been on the hits are the ones that are described as popular song in this research.

Some examples of popular English songs are such as songs by Charlie Puth entitled One Call Away, Shallow by Lady Gaga, and Say Something by Justin Timberlake. These songs have the genre of pop music and have a popular appeal which made them recognised by the listeners.

1.7.5 Questionnaire

According to Babbie (1990:377), a questionnaire is defined as a document containing questions and other types of items designed to solicit information appropriate to analysis. Based on the definition, in this research, questionnaire becomes one of the instruments, consists of statements with five options of agreement, which helps the researcher to gather the data needed from the participants.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

This research consists of five chapters. Chapter one is the introduction chapter which talks about background of the problem, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, limitation and scope, definition of key terms, and the organisation of the study.

In the chapter two, review of related literature chapter, the related literature explains all the main theories that are used in this research. Furthermore, all the previous studies related to this research that had been conducted before are listed too.

Chapter three talks about the research methodology used to gather the data for this research. It explains about the research design, population and sample, instruments that are used, the procedure of data collection, and the technique of data analysis.

Chapter four presents the findings and discussion. All the data that have been collected and processed is discussed to finally come to some findings. The findings are the answers to the research questions in chapter one.

Chapter five presents the conclusion. It consists of an overall conclusion of the research and some recommendations or suggestions given based on the findings of the research.