

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

English is an international language which is spoken by people all around the world. It is the most used language among language speaker in the world. Therefore, many people are trying to learn how to speak English. On Bright Hub Education Website, written by William Lake (2013), it is stated that learning English is divided into two, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL). EFL means that the school does not use English as their medium of instruction but English is taught in school. On the other hand, ESL means the use of English in the countries as the medium of instruction in education and government although English is not the native language.

EFL learners face more difficult challenges in learning English because their environment is not as helpful as ESL learners. The Ministry of Education in Guyana, stated that “teachers are best known for the role of educating the students that are placed in their care. Beyond that, teachers serve many other roles in the classroom”. Therefore, teachers have to be able to create, manage and handle them. Moreover, Hazari (2014) stated that, “Students learn better when they perceive the learning environment positively”. Several studies show that students’ perceptions are one of the ways to reduce students’ misbehavior. She also stated that, “classroom environments are usually measured in terms of

student or teacher perceptions”. It can be very useful for the teacher to understanding the needs of his students so that he can manage the class easily.

According to Harmer (2007), one of the success indicators in teaching and learning is how teachers manage the classroom effectively. In line with that notion, Harmer and Brown (2007) have proposed three major strategies in managing effective classroom environment which include the seating arrangements. However, several studies have indicated that most teachers neglected the importance of creating a comfortable classroom environment and the arrangement of students’ seats in their teaching preparation.

In addition, the configuration of the seating arrangement can positively or negatively affect students’ performance. Therefore, creating an environment, through the physical layout of the seating arrangement will support the achievement of learning objectives. There are several kinds of seating arrangements that can be used by the teacher to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Harmer (2007) has identified several kinds of seating arrangements such as rows, circle, U-shape, horseshoe, and separate tables seating arrangements that can be suited to the objectives of the lessons. Based on the researcher’s observation, the seating arrangements that are most common in Indonesian Universities are rows, U-shaped, and separate tables seating arrangements.

The private University, in which the writer will conduct the study, has several classes at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. In the speaking

classes, they use two different seating arrangements, which are the rows and the U-shape arrangements. Both of these seating arrangements are considered to be influential to the learning behavior of students within the classroom. According to Weinstein (1979), due to lack of space within a classroom, teachers are generally limited to using the rows and the U-shape seating arrangements. Below are the details of each seating arrangements.

The traditional lecture setup typically consists of rows of fixed seating. Students face the instructor with their backs to one another. This classroom seating arrangement is historically common in colleges and universities, minimizing student-student communication and largely supporting a “sage on the stage” learning environment. The second seating arrangement is a U-shape seating. Desks are arranged in a way that resembles like a U-shape. According to Wengel (1992), in this seating arrangement, there was an elevated amount of talking from students. On the other hand, this seating arrangement allowed the teacher’s lesson to be more engaging for students.

Understanding how seating arrangement affects students and the class makes it possible to recognize a learning situation that is extra beneficial and more conducive to learning for the students. Therefore, in order to create an environment that is conducive for all learners, classroom management has to be taken into consideration.

In this study, the researcher chooses to observe the speaking class in order to understand the students’ perception of the preferable seating arrangement. The

speaking classes also have several different activities for each stages and seating arrangements. Moreover, the researcher selects the row and U shape for the type of the seating arrangement due to several reasons:

- a. The row seating arrangement can minimizes student-student interaction (McCorskey: 1978), so the students cannot frequently talk to each other when teacher is teaching also the noise can be reduced during teaching learning process. However, this also means that interactions between student-student or student-teacher will be hard to accomplish, especially in speaking class.
- b. The U shape seating arrangement works well when the teacher gives an explanation in front of the classroom (Denton: 1992). It also improved the social interaction between students and they tend to ask more questions. These have been proven by Marx, Fuhrer and Hartig research in 1999. However, The U shape seating takes up more room and can only be done in a small populated class. Also, this type of seating arrangement encourages the student-student interaction so that the teacher may has lost respect and make the distraction improved.

1.2 Statement of The Problems

This study is an attempt to know students' perception of classroom management which focuses on the classroom seating arrangement of English Department students. In line with the background that is mentioned above, this study tries to answer the following questions:

1. What are the students' perceptions on the row seating arrangement in the speaking class?
2. What are the students' perceptions on the U-shape seating arrangement in the speaking class?

1.3 Objectives of The Study

Based on the problems mentioned above, the objectives of this study are:

1. To find out the students' perceptions on the row seating arrangement on the teaching and learning process of English Department students in the speaking class.
2. To find out the students' perceptions on the U-shape seating arrangement on the teaching and learning process of English Department students in the speaking class.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used in this study was the theory proposed by Robert J. Marzano. The Dimensions of Learning theory proposed by Robert J. Marzano which contains five thinking styles called "Learning Dimensions". These five dimensions are the result of the way people think during their learning. However, this study only used one of the five dimensions, which is attitudes and perceptions.

The researcher also uses the theory of Classroom management called "The Choice" by Glasser to implement the importance of classroom management. It is the key element for teachers to be able to conduct a conducive

and effective teaching and learning process. The researcher includes the impact of seating arrangement as a part of the classroom management theory.

The last theory that the researcher inserts is the speaking theory. This theory is based on Byrne (1984) and Huebner (1960). Moreover, the researcher explains how the speaking class in the private university looks like and the activities that are conducted.

1.5 The Assumptions

- a. There are different seating arrangements in the speaking classes, which are the U-shaped seating and the row seating.
- b. Speaking subject is compulsory for English Department students.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of The Study

According to TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), Seating arrangements are very important for teaching and learning process in the classroom. They can impact the interaction, atmosphere, and behavior of the classroom. After some considerations, this study determines to examine English department students that had taken Speaking A, B, and C.

The study itself was delimited to studying the perception of seating arrangement by English Department students of a private University. Another limitation is that only two seating arrangements are being analyzed, which are row and U-shape seating arrangements. This is due to the availability of the speaking classes which are being used.

1.7 The Significance of The Study

- a. Generally, this study is significant to give a theoretical description about the importance of seating arrangement in improving the quality of teaching and learning process in speaking class for both teachers and students, especially the English Department students.
- b. The result of the study will provide information which can be transformed for creating a positive learning environment in speaking class.
- c. The result of the study will give an insight that the use of seating arrangements should be taken into account by the teachers in their teaching preparation, especially for speaking class.

1.8 Definition of Key-terms

- a. **Classroom Management.** Classroom management is the orchestration of the learning environment of a group of individuals within a classroom setting. (Encyclopedia of Education)
- b. **Seating Arrangement.** A plan that shows where people should sit. (Merriam-Webster)
- c. **Perception.** Awareness of the elements of environment through physical sensation. (Merriam-Webster)
- d. **Speaking.** An interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997)

1.9 Research Paper Organization

The researcher organizes the research paper as follows:

Chapter I is Introduction. This chapter consists of the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, theoretical framework, assumptions, scope and limitation of the study, significant of the study, definition of key terms, and research paper organization.

Chapter II is a review of related literature. This chapter includes previous studies and theoretical review. It consists of perception theory, classroom management theory, seating arrangements, speaking theory, and speaking class in the English Department.

Chapter III is the research methodology. This chapter covers research design, subject, instrument, and data analysis technique.

Chapter IV is the findings and discussions. This chapter covers the findings of questionnaire analysis, findings of the interview, and discussion of the findings.

Chapter V is the conclusion and suggestions. This chapter includes the conclusions of the research and also suggestion which is given by the researcher.