CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Since English is regarded as the first foreign language in Indonesia, the needs for learning English also increase. The fact that many people like to study English with the main purpose of gaining communicative ability must be realized by the English teachers as a strong motivator to increase the effectiveness of their strategies to improve the learners' abilities in using the second language inside and outside the classroom. Krashen (1989 : 8) states that people's abilities to use second languages come mostly from what they have acquired, not from what they have learned. It means that the performance in the target language really depends on how good the acquisition is. Besides, acquisition, which refers more to subsconcious process of the mind, can also influence the fluency of communication. Brown (1987 : 188) supports this idea in his statement, "Adults should, therefore, do as much as acquiring as possible in order to achieve communicative fluency." From this sentence, it seems that the process of acquisition is not only crucial for beginner but it should continue up to the intermediate and advance levels; even to people with native-like abilities of the second language.

Based on the facts above, teachers should consider the appropriate condition to gain second language success. The most important condition to develop a good language acquisition is by providing the learners with comprehensible input. Krashen, as quoted by Shoemaker (1991 : 6) says that "people acquire languages by understanding messages - that is by receiving what he calls 'comprehensible input'." Krashen (1985 : 4) also adds that "people acquire second languages only if they obtain comprehensible input and if their affective filters are low enough to allow the input in." Thus, the messages in the target language as the 'input' should be simple, clear, and understandable; and people as

the 'acquirer' should be 'open' to the input. In order to develop a good comprehensible input, teachers should pay attention to Krashen's Input Hypothesis which states that the ideal input is a little beyond the learner's capability (Brown, 1987 : 188). He means that input should contain "i+1" condition; that is when the learner is at stage or level 'i' of competence, the input should be i+1. Thus, input should not be too far beyond the learner's current competence (i+2), or too close to it (i+0).

However, there are several condition that make the learners fail to gain second language success. Krashen (1985 : 43) states that "some second language performers may cease progress simply because they have stopped getting comprehensible input." He explains that this can happen to the students who does not live in the country where the language is spoken, and who has little interaction with native speakers. In Indonesia, students get less of interaction with natives since they began to learn English at school. Most of their English teachers at school are non-native speakers, and this condition makes the students do not feel important to use English to communicate. Besides, the schools do not provide enough tools that can encourage the students to use second language as often as possible. Thus, the students only use English during the time for English lesson and forget it as soon as the lesson finishes. That's why the second language classroom as the formal environment for language acquisition sometimes fails to complete its function as the major source of comprehensible input.

Krashen (1987 : 58) remains us again of the issues that "people have to "live in the country" in order to achieve any real proficiency in a second language, and that the informal real world environment is always crucial to the classroom as a formal environment." It means that learners need the chance to be placed in 'natural atmosphere' and to participate in the interactions as naturalistic learners. But, the problem of learning a foreign language in non-native countries is in providing the natural condition for the learner, especially when they are

faced with people who do not speak the target language. Krashen describes another problem that even if teachers do succeed in bringing their students to the 'i+1' condition for comprehensible input, they still have problems in using the language on the outside. He believes that many teachers still have students who avoid contact with native speakers because they are afraid they will not understand much what is said to them.

To overcome the problem, many foreign language institutions invite some native speakers, besides the non-natives, to teach the target language. It is done with the believes that their presence can encourage learners to converse more in the target language and participate more in real interaction with natives. But as teachers of second language, native speakers also have to realize their duties to deliver comprehensible input in sufficient condition to the learners. It means that they also have to prepare the best strategies to deliver input effectively and efficiently.

Krashen (1987 : 25) says that "... helpful native speakers and teachers will find certain ways to make input comprehensible." Ideally, their strategies will deal more with the control on the quantity and quality of input. Control on the quantity will help the acquirer get more input while control on the quality will help to make input comprehensible. Scarcella, as quoted by Krashen (1987 : 77-78) explains more of those strategies :

> "The quantity category include ways of starting conversations (greetings) and ways of keeping conversations going. The quality of input can be improved by the use of 'back channel clues' that provide the native speaker with evidence that the conversational partner is indeed following that conversation... Finally, there are conversational strategies that avoid incomprehensible input, including ways of changing the subject to something easier or more familiar to the acquirer."

The above strategies can also be used as the tools to help the students get more input. Furthermore, the use of words repetition or giving verbal cues, such as "uhuh" and "yeah" and non-verbal cues, such as head nodding and eye-gazing in conversation can help in controlling the quantity and quality of input.

The facts that every second-language teacher, native or non-native speaker, has to develop certain ways to make the input comprehensible has aroused the writer's interest to conduct this research. In this study, the writer chose to investigate the kinds of input and strategies used by native speaker and non-native speaker to make the input for second language acquisition comprehensible.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

To carry out this study, the writer looks for the answers of the following research questions :

1. What kinds of input are provided by native-speakers and non-native speakers to the students in the classroom?

2. What kinds of strategies are used by native-speakers and non-native speakers to make the input comprehensible?

3. What responses are given by the students during the presentation of each input?

4. Who provide more comprehensible input for the students, native speakers or non-native speakers?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study is made with the purpose of discovering :

1. The kinds of input that are provided by native-speakers and non-native speakers to the students in the classroom.

2. The kinds of strategies that are used by native-speakers and non-native speakers to make the input comprehensible.

3. The responses given by the students during the presentation of each input.

4. Who provide more comprehensible input for the students, native speakers or non-native speakers.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute a further study about teaching strategies by emphasizing on the strategies for making input comprehensible as they become one of the important factors that determine the performance in second language. Besides, the results of this study are expected to provide some additional information for the second language teachers about the possible strategies that can be used to provide comprehensible input in the classroom.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

Being aware of how broad and complex the variables of this study and how limited the time, energy, and funds available, the writer thinks that it was necessary to limit the scope of this study by observing only the kinds of comprehensible input that are provided by native and non-native speakers in the classroom. And since there are many strategies that can be used to improve the teaching of second language, the writer decides to focus this study only on the kinds of strategies used by native and non-native speakers to make input comprehensible.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Krashen's Input Hypothesis as the central part of second language acquisition theory. This hypothesis explains mostly about the relationship between comprehensible input and second language success.

According to Krashen (1987 : 32), there are two necessary conditions that have to be fulfilled in acquiring a second language. The first is the occurrence of comprehensible input or input containing structures that are a little bit beyond the acquirer's current level (I+1). And the second is a low or weak affective filter that will allow the input 'in'. Furthermore, his input hypothesis also predicts that the classroom may become an excellent place for second language acquisition, at least up to the 'intermediate' level since the outside world provides the learners with very little comprehensible input. It means that a classroom teacher plays an important role to make second language success possible to happen. At last, this concept makes a new definition of language teacher : "the effective language teacher is someone who can provide input and help make it comprehensible in a low anxiety situation."

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

There are some key terms that are needed to be explained in order to enable the readers to understand them.

1.7.1 Acquisition

Chomsky, as quoted by Krashen (1985 : 100), defines acquisition as "subconcious process for developing ability in language via the language 'mental organ'."

Krashen (1989 : 8) makes other definition that "acquisition is a subconcious process that is identical to the process used in first language acquisition in all important ways. While acquisition is taking place, the acquirer is not always aware of it, and he or she is not usually aware of its results."

1.7.2 Comprehensible Input

Krashen (1985 : 101) defines comprehensible input as "messages the acquirer is able to understand.

Furthermore, Brown (1987 : 164) states that comprehensible input is "spoken language that is understandable to the learner, or just a little beyond the learner's level of competence.

1.7.3 Language teaching Strategy

Marton (1988 : 2) states that language teaching strategy is defined as "a globally conceived set of pedagogical procedures imposing a definite learning strategy on the learner directly leading to the development competence in the target language."

1.7.4 Native Speaker

What is meant by native speaker here is the native speaker of English. Native speakers of English are defined as " those who learn English as their first language." (Longmann Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1989 : 692).

1.7.5 Non-native Speaker

Contrary to the above definition of native speakers of English, non-native speakers of English can be defined as those who do not learn or use English as their first language.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This research consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. It gives the reader some explanations about the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the theoretical framework, and the definition of key terms.

The second chapter reviews some literatures related to the study : five hypothesis about second language acquisition, the nature of comprehensible input, comprehensible input in second language classroom, and teaching strategies used in providing comprehensible input.

The third chapter explains the methodology used in this research. It includes the research method and research design, the research variables, the subjects, the sampling technique, the instruments, the data collections, and the data analysis plan.

The fourth chapter describes about the results of the investigation and the discussion about the results.

And the final chapter of this research presents the conclusion and suggestion.