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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

As the way of communication, Bruce Goldstein (2008) defines language as a system of communication using sounds or symbols that enables us to express our feelings, thoughts, ideas, and experiences. It is used to communicate in both written or spoken forms. Indonesian is the first language in Indonesia and it is used in daily communication. According to Richard and Schmidt (2010) first language is also known as L1, generally a person's mother tongue or the language acquired first. Moreover, first language may refer to the language in which the child feels more comfortable to use it. It means that first language refers to the first and main language that you had learnt when you were a child, in this research the first language refers to Indonesian.

English is widely recognized as an international language. The reasons put English as an international language due to the number of people who speak it. According to Crystal (2003, in Lauder (2008)) in 2000 there were approximately 1.500 million speakers of English worldwide, consisting of around 329 million L1 speakers, 430 million L2 speakers and about 750 million speakers of English as a foreign language.



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As Crystal explains that one in four of the world's populations is able to use English. It shows that English is mostly used by people in the world. Considering the importance of English, the government of Indonesia has involved English as one of the subjects that is taught by the teachers at school as a foreign language. It has been a requirement for passing the national exam. In this case, English as a foreign language (EFL) should be mastered by the students. It is as the challenge for students to practice English in both inside and outside of classroom.

Otherwise, Auerbach (1993, in Sharma (2006)), "the more students are exposed to English, the more quickly they will learn. As they hear and use English, they will internalize it to begin to think in English; the only way they will learn it if they are forced to use it". Furthermore, In classes where learners all share the same first language or national language, teachers need to use a range of options to encourage learners to use the second language (English) as much as possible (Nation, 1997, in Nation (2003)).

Based on the writer's experience in learning English from elementary school until University, the writer found that English teachers used the first language (Indonesian) in teaching English. It was also found in the university when the writer was learning English.

In addition, according to writer's experience as pre-service English teacher while following teaching practice at Islamic Senior High School 1 (MAN 1) Pekanbaru. The writer found that most of the students tended to use



their first language in English classroom and they rarely used English in communication or discussion with friends or teachers. Moreover, teachers also used first language to deliver the materials. For example, the teacher used first language (L1) to convey the meaning of new words. It means there is a gap between theory and reality in which theory suggest to use English as much as possible and teachers still used the first language in teaching English.

Based on the writer's experience above, the writer is interested in studying about the role of the first language in English classroom by understanding it, it can give the new information of what is the condition that made teachers used the first language in teaching English. It is also hoped to appear the positive result for teacher and students in teaching and learning English. Accordingly, the writer carries out the research entitled "*An Analysis of the Role of First Language in Teaching English at MAN 1 Pekanbaru.*"

B. Problem

1. Identification of Problem

Based on the explanation above, the writer identified the problems as follows:

- a. What was the reason of students and teachers to use the first language in English classroom?
- b. What did students think about the teachers who used the first language in English classroom?

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- c. In what context did students and teachers tend to use their first language in English classroom?
- d. How does the first language affect student's achievement in English classroom?

2. Limitation of the Problems

According to identification of the problem, the writer found there are some problems in this research. It is important for the writer to limit the problems that will be studied. Therefore, the writer tries to study about the role of the first language and which circumstances teachers use the first language in teaching English at MAN 1 Pekanbaru.

3. Formulation of the Problem

The writer specifies the problems in the following research question:

- a. Which circumstances do the teachers use the first language in teaching English at MAN 1 Pekanbaru?

C. Objectives and Significances of the Research**1. Objectives of the Research**

- a. To explain about which circumstances the teachers use the first language.

2. Significance of the Research

- a. The purpose of this research is to give a new insight about the role of L1 in English classroom.



- b. This research will help the teachers to understand why and when the students tend to use the first language while learning English in the classroom. By understanding in which context that the students tend to use the first language, as the result this study expectedly beneficial for English teacher who are directly involved in classroom teaching and learning process.

D. Definition of Terms

1. Analysis

According to Richard and Schmidt (2010) analysis means a careful examination of something in order to understand it better. Furthermore Webster also said a series of explanations or observations on something (as an event) It means that analysis is the way in which someone describes a situation or problem, and says what causes it to happen.

2. Role

Based on Richard and Schmidt (2010), role is the way in which someone or something is involved in an activity or situation, and how much influence they have on it. It means that in this thesis how the first language influences English classroom.

3. First Language

Hornby (2003) stated that first language is a person's native language. In addition, Richard and Schmidt (2010) first language is also known as L1, generally a person's mother tongue or the language acquired first. According to Piper (1998, in Aarssen, Badurikova et al (2006))

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children who are acquiring two languages from birth are not really acquiring either as second language, they are acquiring two first languages. It is related to Indonesia where Most of the Indonesians speak two first languages at their environment which are Indonesian and their regional language such as Javanese, Sundanese, Minangese. So, the writer wants to make it clear about the first language used in this research that only refers to Indonesian.

E. Reasons for choosing the title

There are some reasons why the writer is interested in carrying out this research. This research is conducted based on the following reasons

1. The title is relevant to the writer's status as a candidate of English teacher.
2. The title of this research is not yet investigated by other previous researchers.
3. The location of the research facilitates the writer in conducting this research.