**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consists of background, problem statement, objective, significance, and scope of the research.

1. **Background**

English language teaching involves two different contexts, English as Second Language (ESL) and English as Foreign Language (EFL). Second language learning contexts are those in which the classroom target language is readily available out there while foreign language contexts are those in which students do not have ready-made contexts for communication beyond their classroom (Brown, 2001: 116). The accessibility of English outside the classroom creates the difference between these two contexts. Therefore, it’s clearly seen that Indonesian context situates English as a Foreign Language which is undeniably taken as consideration for teaching and learning in classroom.

English as Foreign Language context in Indonesia, most of the English teachers including in university level are non-native speakers. The fact of being non-native speakers puts them in a condition to choose whether or not to use the first language in their teaching. Avoiding the first language and using only English can fulfill the students’ need of target language access as classroom is the students’ main language source. However, they cannot pretend that the first language does not exist, the language that they can use to communicate their thought for the students understand it well.

The arguments for and against the use of first language in foreign language classroom are still debatable issue. Different pedagogical methods with different views on the use of the first language influenced how EFL instruction has changed over time (Bruhlmann, 2012). The teaching methods allowing the first language see that the first language makes the meaning of target language clear while the methods avoiding the first language take this as a way to make the students use the target language communicatively. The Grammar Translation method as the classical method supports the use of first language in classroom. The classes are taught in mother tongue. The meaning of target language is made by translating into students’ native language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000:18). On the other hand, The Direct method came as the first method supporting the only use of target language in classroom and took the popularity of Grammar Translation method. The classroom instruction is conducted exclusively in the target language with no translation between first and target language (Brown, 2001: 21). These two methods are the starting points to the afterward coming methods which support the use of the first language and the dominance use of target language.

In line with the issue, second language acquisition theories also take a role to give sights of first language in the foreign language classroom. Researchers have different arguments for the language choice in some points. For comprehension, the first language in teaching is considered beneficial since it facilitates comprehension for conveying meanings and checking understanding (Cook, 2001). On the other hand, Krashen (1987) insists that students’ first language should not be used in classroom in order to gain optimal exposure of the target language for comprehensible input and proficiency. The next point is when it is believed that students’ native language enhances security, less anxiety (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 101) which can be followed by feeling comfortable to participate, Rolin and Varshney (in Jones, 2010) state that without continuous L2 input, students tend to lose confidence in using L2 and discourage participating in future L2. These opposite arguments also exist for the sake of real communication and time saving. They seem like in vicious circle since every statement has an opponent on the other side.

Furthermore, this language choice dilemma involves the students’ voice. Stern (1992:288) points out the students’ views which indicate most of them feel that their failure to understand the target language is due to insufficient explanation being given in first language. On the other hand, surprisingly some research studies show that most of the students support the use of target language by their teacher in the classroom (Schweers,1999; Tsukamoto, 2012; Barnes and Lock, 2013)

An agreement is yet to reach. The teachers are able to make their own judgment, personal believe or interpretation regarding this issue. Moreover, there is no explicit rule for language choice in foreign language teaching including higher education or university level. The study of teachers’ perception is needed to show where their language choice stands regarding the first language and target language use. Going along with the teachers’ perception, it’s also considered necessary to find out the students’ perception on this issue especially English education students who take English comprehension and proficiency as important things. They have chosen English as their major and studied English for minimum six years since high school. Therefore, the consideration of using target language by the teachers and the students in classroom is more than the other levels of education.

Regarding the explanations above, this research attempts to find out the teachers’ perception of the language choices issue, the reasons for the choice and students’ perception for their sake the choice made. Thus, the researcher conducted a research entitle “University English Teachers and Students’ Perceptions on Language Choices in EFL Classroom”.

1. **Problem Statement**

Considering the ongoing debate over the issue in the background above, it is important to find out the teachers’ perceptions of the language choice to see in which they stand, followed by the reasons for their views applied in the classroom and the students’ perceptions in order to provide the effective English teaching and learning. Therefore, researcher formulated research questions as follows:

1. What were the teachers’ perceptions regarding the teacher and students’ language choices in EFL classroom?
2. What reasons did the teachers give for the language choices they had made in the EFL classroom?
3. What were the students’ perceptions of the teacher and students’ language choices in the EFL classroom?
4. **Objectives of the Research**

In relation to the problem statement above, the objective of the research were to find out:

1. Teachers’ perceptions regarding the teacher and students’ language choices in the EFL classroom
2. The reasons that the teachers gave for the language choices they had made in the EFL classroom
3. The students’ perceptions of the teacher and students’ language choices used in the EFL classroom
4. **Significance of the Research**

Theoretically, this research is expected to be a useful input in teaching-learning process, to broaden our knowledge about language choices related to the role of target language and first language, to provide a reference for the educational institution and teacher to make institutional policy or guidelines for an effective language choice in EFL classroom and for those who want to conduct a research related to this research.

Practically, this research is important for the English teachers to make wise conscious decision for appropriate language choice during the classroom interaction by giving the students maximum explosure to the target language, building their language awareness while at the same time considering the students’ need and the essential role of first language use.

1. **Scope of the Research**

This research is limited to language choice namely Indonesian as the first language and English as the target or the second language used as medium in teaching in a classroom. By discipline, this research is sociolinguistic study which is related to EFL classroom interaction. By content, this research emphasizes on the university teachers and the students’ perceptions of the language choices in the classroom and the reasons given by the teachers regarding the language choice they have made. All of these are related to some general language choice in the classroom issue and specifficly to classroom interaction analysis FLINT (Brown, 2001:170). By activity, this research deals with observation, interview and documentation to gain the objectives of the research. The non-participant observation was done here by entering to the classroom, paying attention with what was happening and filling the observation checklist. The interview was done with semi-structure interview to find out the teachers and students’ perception of language choice used in the classroom. For the teachers, the interview also referred to the record of teaching process for the reasons of language choice they had made. The documentation by recording all the data sources, observation and interview, were done at the same time to strengthen or ensure the data gained.