

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents: (1) background, (2) research problems, (3) research objective, and (4) significance of the study.

1.1. Background

In Indonesia, English is learned as a foreign language starting from secondary school to university levels. Thus, English in elementary school is taught as local content. According to Hawanti (2014), the optional subjects offered as one of the subjects of local content is English, thus in the subjects of local content there is no centrally developed curriculum. In short, the education system in Indonesia from the secondary level has prioritized English in formal learning in the scope of education.

As the demand of English in Indonesia is getting higher, there is a proliferation of bilingual education systems. Bilingual is defined as "an educational program that involves the use of two teaching languages at some point in a student's school career" (Nieto, 2000, p. 200). Indonesia views bilingual as media of instruction, multimedia in learning with international standards. Therefore, more and more students are learning English in schools and courses. Bilingual classroom is a teaching and learning process using two languages, namely in the native language and foreign language.

In a broad sense, the term bilingual education referred to the use of two languages as a means of classroom instruction for some selected subjects. The two languages included minor language and the major language. According to Edwards (2010), in

bilingual education, teaching through two languages was a permanent or semi-permanent feature in the classroom. Moreover, Baker and Prys-Jones (1998) added that a bilingual education program refers to a policy of the use of the first language and the target language as a means of classroom instruction of some subjects which included natural sciences, social sciences, mathematics, and humanities. In brief, bilingual education defined as teaching that uses two languages in-class instruction.

Bilingual education aimed at establishing additive bilinguals in the sense that learners achieve two language proficiency, namely the first language and target language or it was directed to substitute the first language to another language. An ancient meaning of bilingual training was given by Anderson and Boyer (1970), bilingual instruction would be guidance in two languages and the utilization of those two languages as mechanisms of guidance for any part, or all, of the school educational program. In terms of the program, bilingual education was constrained by several factors which included the curriculum, teaching methodology, the use of languages used in classroom activities, and the dominance of the number of learners to use a particular language.

In 2006, learning using a bilingual system was implemented at *Rintisan Sekolah Bertaraf International* (RSBI) in Indonesia, with the introduction of an innovation to bring selected Indonesian schools up to an international standard. Based on Fitriati (2015), RSBI was a program formed by The Ministry of National Education (translated as the Pioneer of International Standard Schools). As part of this innovation, these schools were directed to develop English language skills through

English bilingual education in mathematics and science subjects and to promote habitual English use inside the school (Permendiknas Nomor 78, 2009). Added to this, the bilingual class students to some extent were exclusively treated in terms of school facilities, academic issues compared to non-bilingual class students. This drives some opposition parties to take the case into the judicial review of the implementation of the bilingual class program. About this, the Judicial Court came to the agreement that the bilingual class program had to be eradicated because it violated the basic laws of Indonesian Republic Year 1945. In other words, the bilingual class program had been banned to be carried out since January 2013.

But even so, it did not mean that every RSBI program was automatically disbanded. Of course, it was also necessary to have a transition period considering the Constitutional Court's decision came out in the middle of the school year. Even good programs need to be maintained, this also happened at SMP Pusri Palembang. Based on informal interviews sourced from one teacher of SMP Pusri Palembang, it was known that SMP Pusri Palembang previously also implemented the RSBI system, but since 2013 the program was abolished by the government. According to the teacher's statement, the previous RSBI program was considered to provide positive things for the school and should be maintained, SMP Pusri maintained the superior program and was changed to a bilingual class that was actively carried out from grade seven to grade eight. However, to adjust to the national exam, currently the ninth grade in the bilingual class. In particular, science and mathematics subjects are studied in a one-language system so that students feel familiar with the final exam questions from the

government. This will be one of the challenges in a bilingual classroom. In addition, students in the bilingual class are considered quite proficient in English and therefore especially for bilingual classes, a combination curriculum is used (Cambridge curriculum, Oxford curriculum and national curriculum). The instructors in the bilingual class were SMP Pusri teaching staff who have been undergoing seminars and teaching bilingual classes while RSBI was still in force. Of the rest of this RSBI, SMP Pusri maintains a bilingual class that had become an icon of their school's reputation. However, there were several challenges experienced by students and teachers in bilingual classes. The challenges in English and non English subjects of the bilingual school, such as: student had less confident and did not have the courage and the lack of student vocabulary, which was caused by anxiety in practicing English. For teachers in the bilingual class itself, sometimes they had to explain the learning points using Indonesian if there were students who did not understand learning.

Some researchers had conducted a similar study. Firstly, a study conducted by Widiani (2012) found that Bandung Bilingual Boarding School teachers applied controlled, semi-controlled, and free techniques in teaching-learning processes. In addition, other studies conducted by Admiraal, Westhoff, and de Bot (2007) examined the effect of using English as the language of instruction in the first 4 years of secondary education in Dutch on students' language proficiency in English and Dutch, and achievements in subjects taught through English. Compared with the control group in regular secondary education, students attending this bilingual

education showed higher scores for their English proficiency in terms of oral proficiency and reading comprehension.

Based on the theories, preliminary studies, and previous studies above, I was triggered to conduct a research concerning the application of bilingual classes. This research focus on bilingual school students where in the school and classroom environment use two languages, namely native language and foreign language or English. Therefore, it can be concluded that it was important to know what were the challenges in implementing in bilingual classes to improve students' English skills both verbally and in writing and the findings from previous studies took an important role in designing this study conducting research on *The Challenges in Teaching Bilingual Classroom: A Case Study At SMP Pusri Palembang*.

1.2. Research Problem

This study investigated English teaching learning process in bilingual classroom. Thus, the research questions for this study was “what were the teachers’ challenges in teaching learning process at bilingual classrooms at SMP Pusri Palembang?”

1.3. Research Objective

Based on the research problem, the objective of this study was to find out teachers’ challenges in teaching learning process at bilingual classrooms at SMP Pusri Palembang.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study was expected to be able to find out the challenges of the teaching and learning process in bilingual classes at SMP Pusri Palembang. The students were

expected to be more active and confident in learning in bilingual classroom. For teachers, as a variety of considerations in making lesson plans and they may have more experience in dealing with problems related to the teaching learning process in bilingual classroom. This can help to improve English and may also benefit most institutions, educators and parents to handle English and non English bilingual classroom. Furthermore, other researchers can take the advantages of this research as a reference for further studies and if there was as yet an absence of encouraging, different scientists can create it with the goal that comparable research was better and increasingly helpful in now was the ideal time.