

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

A startling feature of big cities in Indonesia is the massive commitment to foreign language study that pervades every level of society. This is especially true for English and results in many parents seeking additional tuition for their children on evenings or weekends. Similarly, in the workplace, both companies and employees routinely devote considerable resources to continuing education. For these intentions, many people in Indonesia start to learn English, especially college students, who often combine a genuine enthusiasm for languages with a starkly contrasting absence of method or direction. According to Benson (1991:34):

“Teachers are often unsure [how] to compensate for the mismatch between their students’ memorized chunks of formalized and abstruse English on the one hand, and their abysmal grasp of how the language is actually used on the other. Student motivation to learn also appears to be mixed, often combining a generalized enthusiasm with an uncharacteristic lack of rigor and application.”

Thus it seems that despite their largely positive attitudes toward foreign language study, these students have failed to develop either effective methods, in terms of learning strategies, or direction, in terms of specific and achievable learning goals (Oxford & Shearin, 1994:19). This apparent lack of application leads many teachers to condemn them as unmotivated. Applied linguistics theory, however, recognizes motivation as a major prerequisite for success according to

Naiman et al., Oxford, Tremblay & Gardner, and Van Lier in McClelland (1998:6) making this a key area for intervention by teachers. There is clearly a need for careful description of the students' orientations to the goal of learning a foreign language, so that teachers may build on existing enthusiasm to develop the characteristics of good learners. Unfortunately, previous studies of motivation in Japanese EFL learners are of little help due to the lack of an opposite theoretical framework. This derives from the almost ubiquitous assumption that the motivational indices developed in second language learning contexts are equally applicable to foreign language learning. Stern (1983:16) defines second language learning as a non-native language learnt and used within a country, as opposed to foreign language learning where a non-native language is learnt and used with reference to a speech community outside territorial boundary. The past decade, however, has been marked by many theoretical advances in this area, not least a widespread recognition of important differences between second and foreign language learning situations by Dornyei, Oxford, and Schmidt et al. in McClelland (1998:7). Indeed, Gardner, has long emphasized that all theories of language learning motivation should be adapted to fit the specific socio-cultural context:

**“That the role of attitudes and motivation should be consistent in many different context, and thus a universal in language learning is just too simplistic.”**

**(Gardner, 1988:112)**

Once the exact nature of the learners' orientations toward the goal of learning English have been clarified, we should be in a better position to

hypothesize about which features of specific learning environments are significant for promoting motivated behavior. Ideally, these findings can then be used to inform the design of the syllabus and classroom procedures, so that the needs and interest of the students are better fulfilled by the EFL programs provided.

## **1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

In particular, this study is dealing with the motivations of learning English as Foreign Language. The problem that will be solved in this study is started with the following question:

What are the orientations towards learning English as Foreign Language held by Indonesian college students?

## **1.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study therefore sets out to further investigate the orientations identified in other foreign language learning (FLL) research, by administering assessment scale to a group of Indonesian college students studying EFL. The responses are then subjected to arithmetic mean in order to compare the orientations appearing in the Indonesian EFL students with those identified in other FLL contexts. The main assumption is that, should the outcomes be comparable, then these orientations can be used as the basis of a motivational assessment scale relevant to Indonesian EFL learners. It is also held that a positive comparison will support generalization to other similar EFL contexts.

#### **1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the present study is to contribute to this agenda by assessing the relevance of a number of language learning orientations identified by researchers working exclusively in foreign language learning contexts. Building on the socio-psychological perspectives, first Clement & Kruidenier, and later Dornyei and Clement et al. in McClelland (1998:7) combine to identify seven orientations seem to focus on personal development and interaction with the global community, rather than assimilation with native speakers. The relative strength of these orientations is taken to vary between individuals, and suggests a likely source of personal differences. It thus seems imperative to ensure the relevance of any theoretical constructs to the particular socio-cultural context under consideration.

Discussion of the results follows, and includes both suggestions for future research and commentary on the implications for college EFL teachers in Indonesia.

#### **1.5. SCOPE AND LIMITATION**

To have such discussion with the restricted time given, the writer is going to limit the study only to the orientations to learn English as Foreign Language which motivate the students to learn English language. The writer follows the seven basic orientations of EFL learning by McClelland, those are: 1) Instrumental Orientation, 2) Knowledge Orientation, 3) Travel Orientation, 4) Xenophilic Orientation, 5) Identification Orientation, 6) Socio-Cultural

Orientation, and 7) English Media Orientation. Each orientation still has several limitations of the questions, and it will be discussed in details in chapter 4 or analysis part.

The writer also limits the scope of her study for only 50 students of all Information Engineering's students in Tarumanegara University. The explanation of the respondents will be explained further in chapter 3 or the method part.

## **1.6. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS**

The writer puts some difficult terms in this section to avoid any misinterpretations that may arise. These terms are:

- Attitudes** : “Dispositions to respond favourably or unfavourably” (Ajzen, 1988:4) with a very weak influence on actual behaviour in McClelland (1998:15). Thus attitudes are best seen as learned predispositions, which tend to persist but are often modified by experience (Baker, 1988:114-5).
- Orientations** : “Importance” of learning the other language according Clement et al., Clement & Kruidenier, Dornyei, Gardner, and Tremblay & Gardner in McClelland (1998:15).
- Xenophilic** : The adjective of attraction or admiration of strangers or foreigners or of anything strange (Agnes, 2002:1655).

# CHAPTER II

## LITERATURE REVIEW