

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents the introduction of this study. It includes the background of the study, identification of the problems, delimitation of the problem, the research questions, the purposes of the study, and the significances of the study which follows the organization of the study.

Background of the Study

Nowadays, the use of English is increasing. The proficiency of English is not only used in communication but also as a value-added of the ability or the competence of somebody's knowledge. In Indonesia, English is considered as a foreign language. It is categorizing mastery of English as an aspect that is highly considered especially in the fields of education and employment. In line with Latha (2014), English Foreign Language (EFL) is the language learned in order to pass an exam as a required part of one's education or for future employment while working for an organization or business with an international focus. Further, English has been included in the curriculum of Indonesian schools that starts from primary school level to University level. Since English is a compulsory subject and influences in many aspects of fields in Indonesia, teaching English becomes an aspect that must be considered.

However, teaching English as a foreign language is a challenging task even if it has been taught from the primary age of the students from elementary school until university level. It is because the use of English is only applied during

the lesson in the classroom. Especially in senior high school, several studies reveal multiple challenges that are faced by the teacher during teaching English courses. Cheng and Wang (2004) found that the majority of secondary school teachers focus on the target learning of the course based on the textbook rather than the target language. Language teaching, on the other hand, requires teachers teaching students academic as well as personal skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Further, Akbari (2015) stated the major problem shown in the teaching and learning process was the teachers' use of inappropriate teaching methods. Oxford (2001) as cited in Akbari (2015, p.396) found The use of the grammar-translation method leads students to believe that learning English as a subject consists of memorizing a list of words and a set of grammatical rules. Whereas, memorizing a lot of words or English structure is students' weaknesses. Supported by Ivone (2005) "Testing has always been the most difficult and challenging aspect of language teaching". Despite choosing the appropriate assessment, teachers still find it difficult to arrange indicators that are considered as a benchmark to evaluate their students. Safarnavadeh (2004) revealed that because the school authorities and parents believe a good score of summative testing indicates a good quality in students' learning, teachers tend to focus only on summative assessment rather than their performance during every teaching and learning activity.

In addition, Sulistyono (2016) stated the teachers have to deal with large classes, some students who attend the English classes are less motivated to learn the language. Further, Fareh (2010) found some challenges that are inadequate

teaching methodology, students' motivation and English proficiency background, textbook and teaching material, classroom management, and the assessment methods. In the English classroom, teachers not only make an effort to increase students' language skills but also should make their students comprehend the English subject. Li (2009) claimed that language teachers play an important role in the classroom. They have to give clear guidance, instruction, encouragement, and support students to deal with their learning problems and reassure them in performing the task better (as cited in Phon, 2017, p.72).

Departing from the brief explanations above, the researcher had been conducted observation in one of the private Islamic senior high school of Yogyakarta during the internship program. There are two major problems found. First, the limited time allocation for English courses. The course only takes two hours and twice a week. It is difficult for the teacher to gather the explicit material and design an effective learning activity. They have to make sure all the students clearly understand the material. Sometimes, they have to translate it into *Bahasa Indonesia*. In addition, when the teacher tries to organize the student in the group discussion, the class becomes crowded. Some students who did not get the instructions clearly. Thus, this kind of problem is time-consuming and not effective for the course.

Second, not all English students are motivated. Some students fight the boredom while the teacher explains the material in the classroom, the other students talk to their peers and only a few students are paying attention to the teachers' explanation and actively asking or using the target language related to

the topic that they are discussing. The interaction between teacher and students is quite good. Yet, some students become lost in focus because in their spare time they interact with the teacher as their friend. The observation shows that culturally specific factors such as a lack of student participation and students' speaking to one another in *Bahasa Indonesia* are factors that cause teachers' frustration during delivering the subject matter.

To sum up, even in senior high school the English teacher faces a variety of challenges when teaching the English subject and promotes English skills. Therefore, the researcher is interested in exploring the challenges that teachers encountered during teaching English. In addition, this study is intended to look for strategies to overcome their challenges in teaching English.

Identification of the Problems

Based on the review of several researchers and the experiences of the researcher during the internship program. There were four major problems found. First, the teaching material based on the school textbook is mostly comprehensive and difficult to understand by the student. From the topic in their English textbook, students have to memorize and understand the meaning of the topic. Students should also improve their English skills at the same time. It is a bit difficult for them because of students' limited background knowledge of English. It challenges the teacher to arrange and deliver the material easily to be understood.

Second, the limited time of the English course. For one meeting, the English course was only 90 minutes. It is for brainstorming the topic, the main activities such as deliver the material, and the following exercise. However, the problem was not all the students easily get the point of the material presented. The teacher should repeat the explanation, sometimes they have to use *Bahasa Indonesia*. Especially for listening and speaking activity, students need repetition until they understand and fluently using English. So, the teacher must accurately manage the time for teaching and learning activities.

Third, the teacher has to deal with the classroom size. The average number of students is 30. The size of the classroom affects the teaching process either it will be enjoyable or become crowded. The size of the classroom makes it difficult for teachers to monitor students' behavior one by one during the teaching and learning process. Some students were able to focus on the material and complete the exercises, while others lost interest in the English subject or became easily bored following the classroom activities.

Fourth, design the assessment that is suitable for the student's needs and that is one of the challenges for the teacher. The ability of each student to master the subject matter varies. Also, students should be fluent in English even though they are still struggling to master the English skills. Choosing appropriate assessment can be challenging because teachers must consider not only how to assess four language skills and grammar, but also how to encourage students to practice what they have learned. By having that experience, the researcher sums up that those challenges interfere with teaching and learning activities in the classroom.

Delimitation of the Problem

This study focused on investigating the challenges and identifying strategies faced by an English teacher of senior high school. The researcher assumes that the participants have more information about various challenges during teaching English either teacher or students. The study was conducted in one of the private Islamic senior high school in Yogyakarta. The data for this study was gathered through individual interviews, which was a qualitative study. Following that, the descriptive qualitative research design was used in this study.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to find the challenges and strategies faced by English teachers at one of the private Islamic senior high school in Yogyakarta. The questions addressed in this study are:

1. What are the challenges in teaching English faced by English teachers at Private Islamic Senior High School of Yogyakarta?
2. What are the strategies used by English teachers at Private Islamic Senior High School of Yogyakarta to overcome the challenges in teaching English?

Purposes of the Research

Based on the research questions, this study has the purposes of the research. First, this study was to identify the challenges faced by the English teacher of one private Islamic senior high school of Yogyakarta while teaching English. Second, the study was to identify the strategies used by English teacher

at one of the private Islamic senior high school of Yogyakarta to overcome their challenges in teaching English.

Significances of the Research

The result of the study is expected to be useful for:

Students. This study will be able to help the students who are currently in an internship program to broaden their knowledge about a challenge in teaching and learning English. The finding of the study can help students to evaluate their learning strategy to handle the challenges that might happen in the classes and improve their English learning. Students themselves are also prospective teachers. Thus, the results of the research can become the basis for them to address which aspect they should develop when they are about to teach their students.

English teachers. The study's findings will help teachers gain more information to create effective teaching materials and develop their teaching methodology that is appropriate to the objectives of their teaching. Also, the result of the study is useful to overcome the challenges. So, they can prepare the activities that can decrease the teaching problems.

Other researchers. The researcher expected that this study can be used by the other researchers as references to conduct their study related to challenges in teaching English. Hopefully, the finding of this study can support their understanding related to the topic. Further, the researcher expects that the study can guide the other researcher to broaden their research topic to specific English teaching skills.

Organization of the Chapter

This study consists of five chapters. Each chapter consists of several points. The first chapter explains the background of the study, the identification of the problem, the research questions, the purposes of the study, the significance of the study, and followed by the outline of the study. The second chapter elaborates the literature review, review of related studies, and conceptual framework. The third chapter presents the research methodology which consists of research design, research setting, and participants, an instrument of the research, data collection method, as well as data analysis. The fourth chapter describes research findings gathered by the researcher as well as its discussion. The last chapter presents the conclusion of the research and the recommendation.