

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter intended to analyze the positive environment in speaking class of EFL Learners. This section display background, the scope, the research question, the purpose, the significance of the study, and the definition of the critical term of this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

A positive classroom environment is crucial for fostering learning and growth among students. When students feel comfortable, supported, and engaged, they are more likely to participate, ask questions, and take risks in their learning (Pickett & Fraser 2010). Opdenakker and Van Damme (2006) said the teachers play a pivotal role in creating and maintaining a positive classroom environment. Strategies like fostering open communication, setting clear expectations, providing constructive feedback, and celebrating successes contribute significantly to this atmosphere (Opdenakker & Van Damme, 2006). Ultimately, a positive classroom environment sets the stage for students to thrive academically, emotionally, and socially (Khatimah 2021).

Pickett and Fraser (2010) define the classroom environment is indeed a shared perception between students and teachers, and nurturing a positive one has numerous benefits for both learning and student well-being. Motivation is a key factor in shaping this environment, influencing students' focus, persistence, and engagement in their learning (Pickett & Fraser, 2010). Ultimately, a vibrant and effective classroom atmosphere—one characterized by positivity, encouragement,

and support—provides the optimal conditions for students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. (Wilson-Fleming, & Wilson-Younger, 2012).

Many factors may influence a positive classroom environment, one of which is motivation plays an important role in shaping a positive class environment. It serves as a driving force that affects students' behavior, involvement, and commitment to learning. (Sieberer-Negler, 2016). In addition, when students feel supported, involved, and comfortable in their learning environment, it significantly improves their ability to absorb information, interact with materials, and better academic performance. (Pickett & Fraser, 2010).

Martella, Nelson and Marchand-Martella (2003) found that design of a classroom play a significant role in shaping the dynamics between teachers and students and can impact student behavior. A thoughtfully designed classroom can facilitate positive interactions, foster a sense of community, and minimize behavioral challenges (Martella et al., 2003). Opdenakker and Van Damme (2006) studied that teacher's teaching style is a significant indicator of their teaching skills. The teaching style encompasses various aspects of how a teacher delivers instruction, interacts with students, and manages the classroom environment. It reflects their approach to education, the methods they use to impart knowledge, and how they engage with their students (Gultom, Hutauruk & Ginting, 2020). Martella, Nelson and Marchand-Martella (2003) also said the first step that must be a teacher who employs an engaging, inclusive, and effective teaching style tends to create a more stimulating and productive learning environment for their students. The second step is a teacher's teaching style provides insights into their

effectiveness in engaging students, facilitating learning, and managing the classroom (Opdenakker & Van Damme, 2006).

The classroom environment plays a pivotal role in supporting the success of the student learning process, and both teachers and students contribute to shaping this environment (Wilson-Fleming & Wilson-Younger, 2012). When both teachers and students collaborate to create and maintain a supportive classroom environment, it significantly enhances the success of the student learning process (Wilson-Fleming & Wilson-Younger, 2012). Yang and Weber (2019), consistently shows the correlation between the positive class environment and the improvement of students' learning outcomes such as creating a positive environment not only involves physical aspects such as class design but also includes the development of respect culture, support, and involvement of everyone in the learning community. Pada akhirnya, lingkungan kelas positif menetapkan tahap bagi siswa untuk berkembang secara akademis, sosial, dan emosional (Yang & Weber, 2019).

Khatimah (2021) mentions a few methods to create a positive classroom environment include employing an impartial third-party observer for neutral assessment and addressing any instances of misinformation or misconceptions within the classroom setting. Baartman and Brujin (2011) also state the learning process is an interaction between students and their environment so that students gain knowledge through information and skills as a result of the learning process. Their study relates to creating a conducive classroom with disciplined student behavior, making it easier for teachers to manage their students.

The learning environment in the classroom has a considerable influence on improving student learning outcomes. The learning environment is often referred to as the classroom climate. The class climate is a broad construct consisting of students' feelings with other students about the instructor (Barr, 2016). Norton (2008) contends the relationship between class climate and student academic achievement has been well established. The class climate is also one of the best predictors of overall student satisfaction depending on their college (Graham & Gisi, 2000).

Based on the study by Tricket and Moos (1995), a positive classroom environment: (1) has a good relationship, where the teacher supports students and students involved in it; (2) has a clear goal of learning, doing assignments, and opportunities for self-development (self-actualization); and (3) maintain the spirit of learning in the classroom.

In a global context, several studies on classroom environment, particularly in EFL classrooms have been investigated. As learned by Fraser and Fisher (1986) that the focus on the learning environment is the difference in perceptions between students and teachers about the classroom environment that teachers and students like. This learning environment is based on a needs analysis approach, content selection, teaching materials, and learning methods in the classroom that will be carried out by students and teachers (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). It should be a teacher to let students solve their problems to make students look independent (Little, 1990). Little (2003) found that two general arguments support self-directed learning. First, if students engage effectively in learning, learning will likely be more efficient because students can focus on learning or vice versa.

Second, if students are proactively committed to their learning, the motivation problem is solvable. This can make students more independent in class.

Meanwhile, at the national level, there have been several similar studies related to the positive environment in the classroom. Khatimah (2021) argues that a positive classroom environment has been shown to help EFL students improve their learning. This is supported by research from Bima and Adi (2021), which says that the classroom environment is the main factor that drives student learning in the classroom. A positive environment will have a good impact on students and teachers alike. It is suggested that teachers implement a motivational system in the classroom, which is given directly by the teacher to their students so that students are comfortable in the learning process (Nisa, 2014). In comparison, the teacher must also prove that he has good abilities in communication (Bima & Adi, 2021). Nisa's (2014) category suggests teachers apply more 'praise and encouragement' to students' speaking confidence, 'asking questions' to improve their communicative skills and encourage students to use English during speaking.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there have been many research results on the classroom environment, both positive and negative. Fraser (1986) confirms that the classroom environment is a strong determinant of student learning outcomes that should not be ignored by those who wish to increase school effectiveness. Negative classroom environment, such as students' lack of self-confidence resulting in a lack of student-to-student or teacher-to-student involvement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Meanwhile, a positive classroom environment is characterized by students' general attitudes, effective responses and student perceptions (Zahn et al., 1986). The importance of this research is to

build positive relationships between teachers and teachers or students and students during the learning process that takes place in the classroom. So that researchers see that there is still a focus that has not been explored, namely positive environmental aspects in the speaking class because speaking class is a class that is required speak

As stated by Hanifa's research (2018) that some students still have anxiety about speaking in class because of an unsupportive environment, such as bad relationships between teachers, tense class conditions, and topics that are not understood. Related to the hostile environment, emotions in the learning process are significant; if emotions cannot be controlled, a hostile environment will occur because of the tense atmosphere during learning (Li et al., 2018). In addition, Picket and Fraser (2014) stated that the classroom environment involves many relationships between teachers and students or between students and students. Thus, this study focuses on investigating the positive environment in EFL speaking classes because, in speaking classes, students need a positive environment that can help students reduce anxiety in speaking. Two parties, teachers and students, can carry out this positive environment.

Likewise, a positive environment influences the classroom and the learning process. To achieve the learning process, the teacher is expected to create a pleasant learning and teaching atmosphere so that students can be involved in learning. Therefore, the researcher hopes that the results of this study can be used as an illustration for further research.

1.2 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on a type of positive environment in speaking classes of EFL students. This study examines the experiences of EFL students regarding a positive environment during the first semester in speaking classes. Another focus of this research is how the impact of a positive environment influences student learning.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates a research question: "What are the type of positive environment in EFL speaking classroom?"

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research question, the main objective of this study was to investigate the type of positive environment in speaking classes for EFL students in the first semester.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study provides a very important explanation. The results of this study are used as an illustration and a reference for further researchers who are interested in examining type of positive environment in the classroom for EFL students. So, this research provides an overview of EFL students and positive environment in speaking classes during the learning process.

In addition, the findings of this study can provide awareness to EFL teachers or students regarding the positive environment in the classroom,

atmosphere, or learning method. Accordingly, this research is expected to provide insight to EFL teachers or students to create a positive class scope in each learning process to make the class action. Hence, this study is expected to contribute to the world of education, especially in universities that have speaking classes, to create a positive environment in their class.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In this research, several key terms will be described below:

EFL Learners: EFL Learners are students who learn or use English as a second language in their lives. EFL learners usually learn English because of job needs, the goal of getting a scholarship, or other things.

Positive Environment: A positive environment is a comfortable classroom environment created by EFL students and teachers. A good classroom learning environment makes students feel comfortable and motivated when carrying out learning activities. Implementing a positive learning environment in education is impossible without respect, love, and tolerance.

Speaking Class: speaking class is a course that teaches the skills or ability to speak in English to express opinions, comments, or communicate.