CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English in Indonesia is more likely taught and learnt only as a foreign language. This means that learning and teaching English occurs mostly in classrooms, rather than during daily communication. According to Sulistiyo (2009) there are several factors creating difficulties for teaching EFL in Indonesia. First, EFL teachers must teach students in large classes, often with more than 50 students. Although the definition of a ‘large’ class in language learning varies (Wright, 2011) this number is not ideal for a language classroom. Second, not all students who attend English classes are motivated. English class occurs for only for approximately two hours per week. Students’ low motivation and minimal English learning hours are obstacle not only for teachers, but also for students as learners.

Nowadays, cooperative learning and students-centered approach are popular and many teachers have applied these learnings in classroom. Ideally, teaching learning process should be based on a student-centered approach where students become more active in the class discussion and the teaching learning process. In a student-centered class, students do not depend on their teacher all the time; wait for instruction; words of approval; correction; advice; or praise, and no one is neglected each other. Moreover, they can communicate with each other (Jones, 2007: 2). It means, a teacher should
create a classroom that can enhance the students’ activity and communicative learning.

Wichadee (2007) cooperative learning is a pedagogical approach that encourages student-student interaction by working in small groups to intensify their learning and reach their intended objective. Considerable research shows that cooperative learning results in higher achievement and more positive relationships among students.

Johnson (2005) adds that cooperative learning is a teaching strategy where students of different levels form small groups to work on activities that will eventually enhance their understanding of the subject. Every student is responsible for his/her learning and of helping other group members learn. Students work together to complete the assignment successfully. He believed that group work has many advantages.

Group work can be an effective method to motivate students, and encourage active learning, develop critical-thinking, and decision-making skills. However, if this learning is run without careful planning, group work can frustrate students and teacher. The most common problems for students using group work in the classroom are an absence of leadership and coordination, an inability to communicate effectively, difficulty defining and assigning tasks, and frustration with setting and achieving group goals. Many teachers have expressed frustration with dividing students into groups, and dealing with student conflicts or disruptive group members.
A number of studies have identified to the use of group work (Baines, Blatchford, and Chowne 2007; Gillies and Boyle 2010 cited in Sharon, 2008). Main concerns amongst teachers are that group work will interrupt or lead to slow coverage of the curriculum and beliefs that children cannot work together and are unable to learn from one another or that it is only the more able that can benefit from group work. Halfhill and Nielsen (2007: 65) note that students do not always appreciate the importance of developing interpersonal skills until later in their careers.

Some problems of grouping in the English class arise. Sometimes students of group fail to communicate with one another. Some students in a group may work with their friends and leave others. Also, the teacher faces the difficulty of grading every group members. Sometimes some of the members of the group do not do the work and some people will not contribute or work together. Not everybody knows what they do, so the group do not work together as well. Students do not always like working in groups, one of them is hard to focus during small group exercise. This is a challenge for the classroom teacher to engage the students in active participation in group work.

The description of how to manage group activities in English classroom becomes a fruitful topic to investigate. Therefore, a research entitled “Teacher’s Challenges in Holding Group Works in EFL Classes” had been conducted.
B. Reason of Choosing Topic

This research will be conducted two reasons for choosing the topic of this research, as follow:

4. Group work is student-centered way of teaching that emphasizes collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork.

5. Group work can be difficult to manage and requires considerable teaching skills.

C. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is only based on English teacher’s point of view in implementing group work. Therefore, the discussion is only focused on the teacher pedagogic practice in implementing group work in the EFL class. The study will not involve the students’ perception in implementing group work in the EFL class.

D. Problem of the Study

The problems that will be answered in this writing is formulated in the following questions as follow:

1. What are the challenges in implementing group work faced by the teachers in EFL class?

2. How do the teachers organize group work in EFL class?
E. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems of the research, the writer formulated the objectives, as follow:

1. To describe the teacher’s challenges in implementing group work in EFL class.
2. To describe how the teacher organize group work in EFL class.

F. Contribution of the Study

1. Theoretical Contribution
   a. The result of the research can be used as the reference to conduct research in EFL class.
   b. The result of the research can be useful for English teacher.

2. Practical Contribution
   a. The result can help the teacher to analyze the challenges faced in the EFL class.
   b. The result can help the students to improve their group work ability in EFL class.
   c. The result of this research can give source learning about interactions in English learning process.