

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

As a foreign language, English is compulsory in senior high schools in Indonesia. According to Nordquist (2020), English as a Foreign Language (EFL) describes the study of English in a country where English is not the dominant language. EFL relates to how students learn English in communicating with other English speakers (Harmer, 2010). In the EFL context, successful language learning has two dimensions: what goes on inside and outside the classroom (Richards, 2015). However, language learning in the past had much focus on inside-classroom learning.

Learning in the classroom remains a significant concern of educational research compared to learning outside the classroom (Benson, 2011). At the same time, the drawbacks of classroom-based learning have also been recognized. Classroom learning activities are sometimes monotonous and uncommunicative. Students often feel bored when learning English because they are at school. As Richards (2015) said, there are limitations to learning in the classroom, especially in the context of EFL, such as a test-oriented curriculum, a large number of students, insufficient material, limited time, and the limited ability of teaching staff. Learning activities outside the classroom for real-life communication help overcome classroom limitations (Chanjavanakul, 2017; Chusanachoti, 2009; Murray, 2010).

Teachers must carry out fun activities to help students improve their English skills, including learning outside the classroom. Now, however, there are more opportunities for meaningful and authentic language use than ever because of the internet, technology, media, and the use of English in real-world interactions. One of the advantages of learning methods outside the classroom is that students' insight will increase. Students do not only think about the learning theory in the book. However, they can do that for real.

Regarding language learning; some researcher have noted that language learners must capitalize on the strengths and affordances of various learning contexts to meet their cognitive, social, affective, and identity needs (Stickler & Emke, 2011). Many studies examine how language learners seek opportunities outside of the classroom to enrich and expand their language learning experience (Benson & Reinders, 2011). Given that language learners are simultaneously situated in multiple contexts that can contribute to language learning, a more profound comprehension of learning in institutional settings and social contexts is crucial (Benson, 2009).

Three students from a high school in Tegal City will be selected for this qualitative study. Successful students here score the highest in several English tests conducted by English teachers and actively participate in English classes. Thus, based on the explanation above, this study aims to explore successful student learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.

## **1.2 Reasons for Topic Selection**

There are two dimensions of successful language learning, namely, what goes on inside the classroom and what goes on outside the classroom. Meanwhile, the existing studies have primarily concentrated on students' learning experiences inside the classroom. This limited emphasis on traditional academic activities and learning outcomes contradicts the diverse ways individuals acquire knowledge in different social environments. Thus, this study emphasizes how students perceive their learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

The research problem can be formulated in the following questions:

1. How do successful EFL students perceive their in-class and out-of-class learning?

## **1.4 Research Purposes**

1. To find out the learning experiences of successful EFL students in learning English inside the classroom.
2. To find out the learning experiences of successful EFL students in learning English outside the classroom.

## **1.5 Research Contributions**

Hopefully, the research results will provide a new perspective on successful student learning experiences inside and outside the classroom. By knowing how the students perceive, teachers can maximize students' learning

process both inside and outside the classroom. In addition, this research can contribute to the next researcher who wants to research a similar topic.

## **1.6 Clarification of Relevant Terms**

### **1. Learning in the classroom**

Learning in the classroom means teaching and learning process that happens in the classroom. According to Richards (2015), learning in the classroom has limited time, defective material, and teacher skills, which qualify student learning opportunities in the classroom regarding communication and practice.

### **2. Learning outside the classroom**

Learning outside the classroom means students learn autonomously outside the classroom. According to Wibowo (2010), learning outside the classroom is one way to increase students' learning capacity. Learning outside the classroom is more challenging for students and bridges theory in books and reality in the field. Learning outside the classroom can help students develop their knowledge and social skills.