

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is one of the most important global languages to learn, as it is widely used by many countries around the world. Muid (2015) emphasized that with advancements in technology, science, and various discoveries—most of which are published in English as an international language—there is a growing necessity for people to learn English.

In Indonesia, despite being a foreign language, English plays a vital role in everyday life, particularly in the education sector. The Indonesian curriculum requires students to study English from elementary school through university, including vocational high school students (Maili, 2018). These students are now expected to be proficient not only in their vocational skills but also in English language skills to enhance their future career prospects. To develop strong language abilities, especially in English communication, students need to cultivate a positive language attitude (Starks & Paltridge, 1994). However, various challenges can impede the learning of English, arising both before and during the learning process. Some of these factors stem from the students' environment, while others are related to the students themselves, such as motivation and interest.

The factors influencing students' English learning can be divided into two main categories: internal and external factors (Chairunnisa, Apriliaswati, & Rosnija, 2017). Internal factors originate from within the students, while external factors arise from their environment. Both types are crucial for classroom motivation and can be influenced by teachers to some extent. Learning challenges often become apparent through a decline in

academic performance or learning outcomes. Alternatively, these challenges might manifest as behavioral issues, such as shouting in class, teasing peers, frequent absences, or running away from school.

According to Benzing, Chu, and Kara (2009), attitudes towards learning, along with personal beliefs and opinions, greatly affect students' behaviors and outcomes. It has been noted that students with positive attitudes toward language learning are more successful, while negative attitudes can lead to anxiety, decreased cognitive performance, and adverse outcomes (Victori and Lockhart, 1995). The significance of learners' attitudes towards the target language was emphasized by Gardner, Lalonde, and Moorcroft (1985), who stated that positive attitudes are essential for motivation and interest in language acquisition.

Students with a positive attitude towards learning tend to be happy and actively participate in the educational process. In contrast, those with negative attitudes may experience anxiety, which can diminish their enjoyment of learning. This suggests that a negative mindset can hinder success in learning. Padwick (2010) highlights the importance of recognizing students' attitudes to enable teachers to gain a deeper understanding of their learning experiences.

The behavior of students is closely linked to their participation in the classroom. According to Leeas, as cited in Zulfikar, Dahliana, and Sari (2019), participation involves students interacting with both their peers and teachers. Many students do not engage actively in class, and a lack of participation can negatively impact their academic performance. This issue may stem from insufficient motivation. Gardner et al. (1985) explain that motivation encompasses effort, desire, and a positive attitude towards achieving language learning goals. Katesi (1993) found that attitude and motivation play

crucial roles in determining the success or failure of language acquisition. Additionally, Pratama, Zuhri, and Nursyahidah (2020) describe learning as a process of change aimed at achieving desired behaviors, characterized by continuous, conscious, active, functional, positive, and lasting adjustments. In summary, learning involves personal transformation, reflected in behaviors such as habits, knowledge, attitudes, abilities, and skills.

Building on this discussion, the researcher will focus on student behaviors related to learning English, including the types of behaviors observed, factors influencing these behaviors, and strategies employed by EFL teachers to address them. While previous studies have examined student behaviors, there remains a scarcity of research specifically addressing the behaviors of vocational school students when using English in classroom settings. Thus, this study will explore the factors affecting vocational students' English usage and the strategies they employ to overcome challenges in learning the language. The researcher is particularly interested in conducting a study titled "An Analysis of Students' Behaviors in Using English in the Classroom at SMK Negeri 1 Kupang."

1.2 Problem Statement

The research questions are stated in the following:

1. What are the factors that affect the students' behaviors to use English at SMK Negeri 1 Kupang?
2. How do the students solve the problems encountered in EFL class at SMK Negeri 1 Kupang?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

In line with the research questions, the objectives of this research are :

1. To identify the various factors that affects the students' behaviors to use English at SMK Negeri 1 Kupang.
2. To identify the way how the students solve the problems encountered in English learning at SMK Negeri 1 Kupang in 2024

1.4 Significance of the Research

The findings of this research will provide theoretical and practical benefits contribution, as follows:

Theoretically, these findings expand existing theories of students' problem-handling behaviors in learning, especially in learning English, based on EFL students' perceptions in using English during the teaching and learning English. Additionally, this is a reference for further research that intends to find out more about vocational students' behaviors and how they solve the problems in using English.