

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides an overview of the study by expounding the background of the study, concerning with interference phenomenon in the field of English Foreign Language (EFL). This chapter also formulates research questions, objectives, and significances. Last, the scope of the study is explained as the study limitation.

### **Background**

Indonesian mother tongue behavior highly affects students' foreign language production. The differences of language components, fundamental rules, and cultural backgrounds between those two languages become obstacles in learning process. The confusion of being multilingualism provokes numerous mistakes on their writing. It can be highly detected through the way of selecting the equivalent English lexeme. The high domination of Indonesia language proficiency leads students in the use of inappropriate and unacceptable lexeme.

Naturally, as Indonesian native speakers, students have language behavior that is still dominated by the system of Indonesian language. In most cases of writing, students occasionally forget several English lexemes. Their multilingual minds affect them to adopt features of native language (NL), reconstruct them based on NL lexical system, and then use them mistakenly on their English writing. As a result, the use of "strange feature" fails to encapsulate the actual meaning of the sentence.

Due to the term of multilingualism, the case of NL influence is linguistically known as interference. When students literally use the concept of the first language (L1) into the target language (TL), the negative transfer L1 will intend to cause an error. Arifin (2011, p.94) believes that interference is caused by the use of rules of writing from one language when writing another. For example, in writing English, the EFL learner unconsciously transfers the lexical feature of Indonesia language on the English writing. The strange feature becomes an unacceptable word which has unappropriated meaning in English. Consequently, the sentence sounds unnatural and inappropriate in English.

Current research in the field of multilingualism states that “when interlanguage students are writing in the target language, some of their characteristics show up in their writing” (Bennui, 2008, p.73). Due to the claim, the problem of interference potentially becomes a widespread phenomenon on the writing of English department students. Even if they have an ability in English comprehension, these cases are easily discovered.

As have been found in the preliminary study of this research, there are many mistakes indicated as interference on students’ writing. For example, in datum 1: *translation will \*not visible funny*. The phrase *visible funny* is a literal translation of *terlihat lucu*, and will be more appropriate to be translated as *sound awkward*. In the datum, Indonesian lexical norm is obviously detected by the sense of the meaning which is

inappropriate in English context. Consequently, the sentence is cannot be easily interpreted.

In another case, it is found that students are commonly incorrect through the way of selecting the specific word. They translate the word directly from Indonesia to English without considering the context in the target language. It can be seen on datum 2 “*the students find it hard to prove...*”. The phrase *find it hard* in that sentence refers to “got an obstacle” in Indonesia. The term “find” is a literal translation of “menemukan kesulitan”. The finding illustrates how student’s mental lexicon is still dominated by Indonesian language on the process of lexicalization.

The current facts undeniably prove the importance of observing the existence of lexical interference on students’ writing. This study has examined how lexical interference phenomenon has appeared in English department students. By analyzing students’ English writing, this study is aimed to find out the indication of Indonesian lexical interference. This study also classifies several types of lexical interference in order to specify their characters of occurrences.

This study is conducted in fifth-semester students of English department who have passed all subjects of English language system such as Writing 1-4, Structure, Grammar, Syntax, and etcetera. Regarding this, students have been reliable to be taken as participants.

As an academic writing, the introduction of students' research proposals has been selected as the source of data. This text sufficiently conveys the idea and perception of students due to the topic of research. For this reason, the text will be able to figure out the application of English system deal with the strong influences of Indonesian lexical system.

### **Research Question**

As the negative effect of NL influence, there are many students who are indecisive in selecting the equivalent words to encapsulate their thought. Due to the facts, this study investigates the Indonesian lexical interference phenomenon on students' English writing by following research question:

What are the types of lexical interference on students' English writing?

### **Research Objective**

In line with the research question, this study proposes to investigate the Indonesian lexical interference on students' writing text and classify various types of interference on students' English writing.

### **Delimitation of Study**

This study focuses on English features which are indicated as Indonesian lexical interference. To analyze the data this study only employs the theory of interference as

the starting point of analysis based on sociolinguistics perspective. It is selected because the aim of this research is to investigate the lexical interference phenomenon on English department students as a foreign language learner. Regarding this, the lexical error is not be taken as data sample so that, the theory of lexical errors are not used to analyze lexical interference. This study describes the investigation of lexical interference by analyzing the elements of NL which disturb FL based on interference point of view.

### **Research Significance**

There are some significances of this research. The first, this study observes and proves the existence of lexical interference on students' English writing based on the scientific description. The second, this study intends to visualize the application of students' comprehension in English academic writing. The third, in terms of interference prevention, this study exemplifies the area of lexical interference to help students to overcome the erroneous. The last, this study can be adopted as a reflection of the lecturers' performance in the process of teaching and learning FL due to empowering students' English ability.