

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a comprehensive description of the research. It comprises the background, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significance of the study.

#### **1.1 Background**

The ultimate goal of teaching is essentially gaining students' understanding of the instructions given by the teachers, specifically in terms of teaching materials. This understanding will help students obtain professionalism in the future since they are equipped with various skills that support their learning success (Valenzeno et al., 2003). In this respect, Felder & Brent (2005) argue that regardless of the students' interest, one aim of instruction should equip them with skills related to each category of learning style in order to function effectively as professionals. Moreover, the students' understanding is required in English courses, because good teaching mainly involves learning about students' understanding and how they teach it (Ramsden, 2003). A teacher has to prove the students' understanding which may be challenging, since the students may say they understand the material delivered, but in fact, they do not. As a result, teachers should find another way of teaching in order to gain students' understanding.

The use of teachers' hand gestures is expected to help the teacher, especially when delivering English course material in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom. Students are capturing the hand movements that are produced by the teachers and maintaining their attention since the speech is linked with the

environment (Alibali, Young, et al., 2013). In this regard, the 3rd-grade students in one of the Junior High Schools in Tasikmalaya once experienced that material delivered by the teacher was easier to understand when it was accompanied by hand gestures. Other than that, a teacher from one of the boarding schools in Tasikmalaya states that using hand gestures while teaching-learning process contributes to the students' engagement and it stimulates them to play an active role in class. Thus, students and teachers are connected through non-verbal communication, and students have two opportunities to comprehend messages delivered which are expressed in both speech and hand gesture (Valenzeno et al., 2003). The phenomena shows that oral language can affect students' comprehension as the teacher delivers material. Many factors could influence their comprehension while learning, for instance, the way a teacher delivers the instruction by using non-verbal communication (Valenzeno et al., 2003). This indicates that the development of hand gestures can improve their understanding of the lesson.

Hand gestures are a part of the language and communicative competence of multimodality. A multimodal approach shows how the teacher delivers the material and constructs meaning from a variety of perspectives. Hand gestures have been discovered to conduct linguistic activities such as conveying referential content to textual statements and distributing information across both modalities based on the spatial and visual aspects of the interaction (Gullberg et al., 2008). Alibali et al., (2013) stated that teachers shall obtain the appropriate education of gestures to enhance the instructional communication during the class meeting by increasing ideas multi-modally at the same time (i.e., utilizing both voice and hand gesture)

and employing simultaneous hand gestures to linked ideas. In addition, as the study conducted by Lim (2017) showed that the multimodal classroom theory acknowledges that the utilization of multiple linguistic features by instructors enhances the classroom students' experiences. This statement demonstrates that teachers' hand gestures can be an effective strategy for assisting students' learning. Due to these reasons, the teacher ought to understand the multimodality of its hand gestures.

Previous studies have shown that the use of hand gestures could facilitate learners' comprehension of Mathematics teaching material and indeed, teachers do some hand gestures in classroom settings (Flevaris & Perry, 2001). In addition, the result of previous research conducted by Valenzano et al., (2003) in the mathematics course of elementary school, showed that students are dealing with some problems and eventually they obtain the solutions by watching and imitating teacher's hand gestures (cited in Wagner Cook & Goldin-Meadow, 2006). This actively demonstrates that hand gestures produced by teachers could convey any purpose in face to face interactions (Kendon, 1994). However, there is less study focusing on the teachers' hand gestures while delivering English teaching material. To fill this gap, the present study focuses on hand gestures produced by an English teacher when delivering English teaching materials. Therefore this research needed to be carried out.

## 1.2 Formulation of the Problem

A research question addressed to the present study is “What gestures do the English teacher’s use when delivering English teaching materials?”

## 1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding about the terms set out in this study, the researcher provides some definitions related to the study, as follows:

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|--------------------------------|--|
| 3.1 Teacher’s Hand Gestures    | : Teacher’s hand gestures are the non-verbal communication produced primarily by an English teacher to help her deliver the teaching materials.  |
| 3.2 English Teaching Materials | : English teaching materials are both the theory and practical resources that a teacher uses effectively in teaching to aid the achievement of desired educational objectives. The English teaching material should be information that can advise the student about the target language, directing them in implementing the language. |
| 3.3 Multimodal Perspective     | : Multimodal perspective is a theoretical framework to interpret a teacher’s   |

gestures while delivering the English teaching materials.

#### **1.4 Aim of the Study**

The present research aims to investigate the gestures used by the teacher to deliver English teaching materials.

#### **1.5 Significances of the Study**

**1.5.1 Theoretical use:** This research will expand the theory of hand gestures used by the teacher to deliver English teaching materials.

**1.5.2 Empirical use:** This research will give an empirical lens of using hand gestures while delivering English teaching materials.

**1.5.3 Practical use:** This research provides the information to the readers of using hand gestures in delivering English teaching materials.