CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief explanation of the whole study. It consists of the background of the study, the questions and purposes of this research, its significance, the research framework, and the previous studies related to this research.

A. Background

This research explores how language learners interact equally with speakers of other languages and demonstrate mutual understanding and acceptance of differences. The main focus of this research is on intercultural communicative competence that comes from interactants interacting with people of different cultures in the classroom. It identifies how to incorporate the intercultural aspect in an EFL class.

By coordinating society into language studies, the idea of intercultural communicative competence has brought culture to the forefront of language education. Intercultural communicative competence has brought culture to the forefront of language education. Byram defines intercultural communicative competence "as the ability to ensure shared understanding by people of different social identities and interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and individualities." (Byram et al. 2002, p. 10).

In addition, Deardorff (2009) defined Intercultural Competence (IC) as the ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills, and attitudes that lead to visible behavior and communication that are effective and appropriate in intercultural interactions.

Meanwhile, misunderstandings often occur when a person communicates with other people from different cultures. The problem, in this case, is that some people use their culture as a parameter to measure other cultures, including intercultural communication in English education classrooms. Cultural differences can lead to prejudice, discrimination, and racism against other cultural groups, so they are

reluctant to approach. Theory appropriate to cultural misunderstandings thus should move away from the dialogue and instead highlight systemic differences. A less normative way of speaking about misunderstanding can be drawn from Niklas Luhmann's theory of autopoietic social systems (Görke and Scholl, 2007).

This study was inspired by the actual conditions of students at the Bandung State Islamic University, especially English Education students who often bullied other students verbally, which tended to lead to acts of discrimation even though they were only joking. For example, a student of English education 7th-semester class 7B from Sukabumi is often ridiculed because his accent is different from Sundanese in general, a classmate who is from Batak is often considered rude and angry even though they have such accents and expressions, and the last example is a classmate who is from Thailand who is often laughed at because his accent sounds funny. Functionalists view people as a system in which all the parts work – or function – together to create society as a whole. They often use the human body as an analogy (Cornerly, 2021).

Previous researchers provided an example that discrimination in education is valid. Hanna and Linden (2009), through the experimental design, the researchers found evidence that teachers discriminate against low-caste children in exam assessments. It is important to note that our study reflects only one element of discrimination in the classroom.

Discrimination may also exist in other forms. Therefore, the researcher provides additional motivation for research to investigate how the treatment of students in the classroom differs based on race, ethnicity, and gender. This study has a gap with similar studies. This study intends to educate students and discover their perception of the importance of intercultural communication. The researcher wants to know how students see the case of cultural differences and how they adapt. The effectiveness of their learning with the differences they feel in a new environment aims for students to accept each other's differences, to minimize the occurrence of acts of discrimination.

In summary, its essence is to help learners go beyond informative communication into developing relationships with other languages and cultures,

demonstrating an awareness of their identity and those they speak. This goal aligns with one of the main innovations of communicative language teaching, namely that learners need the ability to use language in socially and culturally appropriate ways.

B. Research Questions

The problems in the background are formulated into the following questions:
1. What are the students' perceptions of Intercultural Communicative Competence in dealing with Discrimination in EFL classes?
2. What are the effects of cultural differences on students in EFL classes?

C. Research Purposes

The purposes in the background are formulated into the following purposes:
1. To figure out students' perceptions of Intercultural Communicative Competence in dealing with Discrimination in EFL classes.
2. To recognize how the effects of cultural differences on students in the EFL classes.

D. The Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give beneficial contributions practically and theoretically.
1. Practically, this research is significant to the teacher, college students, and researcher.
   a. Teacher

   This research is expected to provide more insight for teachers that Intercultural Communication Competence can be used as a new way of teaching and learning students' verbal and nonverbal communication, mainly how to introduce various cultures through English.
   b. College Students

   This research is expected to make students:
   1) Better at recognizing and performing communication behaviors in various contexts.
   2) Better adapting to a new environment.

3) A better understanding of culture.

c. Researcher

This research can be used as a reference to research-related studies.

2. Theoretically

It is hoped that this research can be used as a reference to conduct other research related to this research. This study will provide more knowledge about Intercultural Communication Competence, primarily cultural awareness, as a way of learning EFL to prevent discrimination of any kind.

E. Research Scope

The scope of this research will involve the class of 2019, which consisted of one class and had studied cross-cultural understanding courses to express their perceptions of intercultural communication that they experienced in class with their peers and their experiences in adapting to new environments. Furthermore, the researcher will be able to process data and find out how intercultural communicative competence occurs in EFL classes dealing with discrimination in the class of 2019.

F. Conceptual Framework

By integrating culture into language studies, the concept of intercultural communicative competence, Byram (1997) has brought culture to the forefront of language education. Byram defines intercultural communicative competence as the ability to ensure shared understanding by people of different social identities and interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and individualities of their own (Byram et al., 2002).

The following section describes Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) as it relates to foreign language teaching. ICC will build on the ICC view of existing FLT theory to elaborate an ICC model capable of informing teaching discussions in EFL classrooms. In any EFL classroom that places intercultural communicative competence at its core.

FL teaching that integrates intercultural dimensions combines the following two objectives:

1. Helping students to acquire the communicative competence needed to

communicate in speaking or writing, formulating what they want to say/write correctly and appropriately.

2. Develop learners' intercultural competence, their ability to ensure shared understanding by people of different social identities and to interact with people as complex human beings with many identities and individualities of their own.

As previously stated, cultural teaching will not be limited to transmitting information about people of the target culture and their general attitudes, as traditional thinking in FL education suggests. On the other hand, according to Byram's and Fantini's model, it has already been discussed; EFL teachers should pay attention to the following goals:

1. To help students see the relationship between their own and other cultures.

2. To encourage their interest and curiosity in the unknowing of seeing themselves through the perspective of others.

3. To help students understand how intercultural interactions occur.

4. To find out whether social identity is part of all interactions.

5. To find out their perceptions of other people and other people's perceptions of them affect the success of communication.

6. To find out more about the people communicating.

To achieve these goals effectively, FL teachers should try to design suitable activities that would prepare FL learners to communicate with open minds with other intercultural speakers and tolerate differences.

G. Previous Study

Several previous studies regarding intercultural communicative competence in the classroom and its methods exist.

First, Galante (2015) research briefly introduces how the notion of communicative competence in ELT has evolved to recognize the importance of the inseparable integration of language and culture. Exploring the cultural and intercultural dimensions of language learning is necessary, in particular, but not exclusively, among speakers of English as a lingua franca. Through these projects, reflection on identity enhances awareness and competence of students' intercultural

communication when using English.

Second, Hanna and Linden (2009), through the experimental design, the researchers found evidence that teachers discriminate against low-caste children in exam assessments. It is important to note that our study reflects only one element of discrimination in the classroom.

Third, in the previous research by Cetinavci (2012), the research results aim to show the world of language teaching in terms of the competencies students are expected to acquire. It is determined that intercultural communicative competence, namely the knowledge, motivation, and skills needed to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures

However, this study has a gap with previous research. This research is almost the same as the above about intercultural communication. Still, this study intends to educate students and determine their perception of the importance of intercultural communication. The researcher wants to know how students see the case and how they adapt. The effectiveness of their learning with the differences they feel in the new environment aims for students to accept each other's differences, to minimize the occurrence of acts of discrimination.