First Language Interferences on Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL Students' Linguistic Repertoire in the Process of Advancing their Multilingual Awareness

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Abstract

To be able to communicate smoothly in English needs a lot of courage. This smoothness, of course, is seen as linguistic competence where students can use a language fully into its optimal use in society. In this case, Indonesian EFL students are growing up in social environment where they encounter many ethnic languages as the first language across the archipelago. Therefore, Bahasa Indonesia cannot be seen as the first language. Dealing with this article, the focus of the problem being addressed is the interferences of the first language use toward Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students' linguistic repertoire in the process of advancing the multilingual awareness. Minangkabau is an ethnic community that exists in the province of West Sumatra, Indonesia. To learn some of the particular nuances of how this language interfere the process of learning English as a Foreign Language would be one of the issues discussed in this article. The researcher uses data that are taken from daily interactions happening in the classrooms and outside the classrooms as the examples for the first language interferences. Since the researcher is also a growing up individual in Minangkabau society, therefore, recognizing some of the interferences of this language toward the process of learning English is doable. The argument is that to lead EFL students to have a sense of multilingual awareness would be possible by helping them manage their first language interferences in achieving standardized linguistic repertoire under the guidance of us as their English language educator.

Keywords: First Language Interferences, Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL Students, Linguistic Repertoire, Multilingual Awareness.

"To be bilingual is more than just knowing two different languages. [It is] the ability to communicate with people from more than one linguistic background and thereby from different cultural backgrounds." – Melinda Whong.

Introduction

English is an international language. It is being spoken in the world where many people who come from different cultural and social backgrounds come together and conduct business one another across different circumstances. At least, this notion is what most of us as English educators, teachers, or students believe until today. However, to see this notion deeper into a specific country, the idea underpinning that notion would be somehow different. On the surface, it might be true to say that English is an international language, but in some places in the world, such as Indonesia; it still remains a foreign language. There are quite a few people who even never know about this language. In this case, to discuss about how English is being studied in the world seems to be too broad for this paper. Therefore, this paper is concentrated on discussing some insights on linguistic repertoire that emerges among Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students in the process of improving their multilingual awareness.

As an English instructor for four-year college degree in Indonesia, I find that still most of my students could not speak and write in English as I desire them to do. "An issue which has been extensively discussed in the literature concerns the level of Indonesian learners' EFL

speaking proficiency. A number of reports show that Indonesian learners commonly have not attained a good level of oral English proficiency" (Widiati 278). Consequently, observing naturalistic phenomenon happening around them linguistically and rhetorically becomes the foundation of this research. The view of this paper is geared toward rhetorical standpoint, but the angle to see such point is through uncontrolled linguistic observation in which pedagogical aspects are also considered to achieve such picture of the multilingual awareness among the Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students. Koji Nakamura in his research emphasizes, there is a "…need for raising students' global literacy which includes inter/cross-cultural competence with transcultural and transnational perspective" (64). What Nakamura mentions works in Japan, and that means that the same thought is applicable as well in Indonesia.

One of the nine ideas about language, as mentioned by Harvey A. Daniels, is that "languages are intimately related to the societies and individuals who use them" (Daniels 15). Therefore, most students who study English in Indonesia would somehow consider learning English as a new required-subject to learn at schools due to the look toward English is still foreign, or unfamiliar, for them. Minangkabau language works within the society that has people with Minangkabau background as the dominant people in numbers. All these factors are also connected to social circumstances, characters, and intelligent levels of the people. Suzanne F. Peregoy and Owen F. Boyle mentions that factors that influence second language acquisition are "sociocultural, personality, and cognitive factors" (56). Language works within a community that accepts such language.

Another interesting scene that provokes us to look at how English is being perceived in an EFL social context is that it could be seen as violation toward national identity. A research that was conducted by Nugrahenny T. Zacharias about Indonsian students' eagerness in using English in public spaces indicates that "all of the participants appeared to be fully aware that the use of English in public spaces would project negative identities as Indonesian nationals" (233). Her research suggested that it seems to be widely-known to academicians, especially in Indonesia, to recognize that speaking English in the context of Indonesian EFL surroundings is seen as a boasting personal-speaking style, whereas speaking with local language seems to be accepted. At this point, we can see that there is a slightly -existing turbulence between the uses of first language within a society toward the practice of learning English as a foreign language in Indonesia.

First-Language Interferences

With the sociolinguistic circumstances that influence the process of learning English as a Foreign Language where Minangkabau exists as the first language being used in the province of West Sumatera, Indonesia, then we can see that the first language that the students have within this social atmosphere interferes with the process they acquire English. Although "language interference is one of the current problems in foreign language teaching" (Lekova 320), as English educator we must not forget that what we do in our teaching performance to Indonesian students is basically higher, and even doubled, as opposed to teaching English to students in ENL, ESL, or EIL circle[1].

Furthermore, Erdogan Bada conducted research about Japanese first-language interferences toward learning English in Japan found that "…interference incorporates the tendency of transferring of the rules of the learner's native language to the foreign language-this could either be a second or a third language" (3). Bada's research gives us insights that what EFL students do, in the case of learning English in Japan, is that they put the rules existing in the first language and incorporates those into English. Likewise, this phenomenon is likely to happen in Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students. On the surface, they might learn English through grammar drills, but in their mind, they construct the sentences that they utter or write through what they already have in mind about constructing sentences and ideas in Minangkabau

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[1] ENL stands for English as a Native Language; ESL stands for English as a Second Language; and EIL stands for English as an International Language.

language. In theory, "according to the matter involved there are two types of interference – interlanguage and intralanguage, and two type according to form – implicit and explicit" (Lekova 321). As a result, what happen among Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students is that they face implicit and explicit process of transferring Minangkabau language construction into English. In addition, "…the issue of language interference is directly related to the place attributed to the mother tongue in the foreign language teaching system. Contemporary practice of foreign language teaching proves that with methods ignoring the mother tongue good results cannot be expected" (Lekova 324). We can measure how far our EFL students grasp the millions of English vocabulary and comprehend solidly-composed texts through their ability to reproduce what they read and think in English. Of course, following what Lekova stated, the existence of first language within the linguistic background of the students interferes how English is being perceived and reproduced for their communication.

Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL Students

Geographically speaking, Indonesia has linguistic diversity. Sumatra has 36,455 regional population with 52 regional languages from 726 regional languages. From all total numbers of speakers of indigenous languages in Indonesia, Minangkabau has 6,500,000 speakers from 69.91% of the total population in Indonesia (Riza 113-4). With all these diversity, we can take a line that the local languages being used seem to have constructed their mind-set prior to learning English as a foreign language. For this paper, Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students can be defined as students who have Minangkabau language as their first language and live in the area of the province of West Sumatera in Indonesia. If we skip the ethnic background, it becomes Indonesian EFL students. The term *students* indicates that they are pupils who are learning English in a formal educational institution.

The unique thing of Indonesian EFL students is that they show the attitude of being passive in learning English. The habit of being spoken out-loud rarely stimulates them in using English. "…Indonesian students, exhibit two opposing sets of learner characteristics. The students are described as 'typically passive, shy and/or quiet' learners." (Exley 1). The impact of this behaviour toward learning English is that there is a specific cultural conflict within the psychological body of the students, especially when they try to comprehend the meanings of words in English. On top of that, local languages are not the sole trigger for making English as a foreign language in Indonesia. "The way of communication among people by using language is different in each province. For example, Minangkabau speaker will have a different way in communication with Batak speaker. This characteristic is also different in small area in a region even they have same standard language" (Yandra 186). These differences stimulate how the Indonesian EFL students consider learning English well. The complexity of cultural background existing in each student in an English classroom gives impact on how they use English, Minangkabau, and Bahasa Indonesia interchangeably in the class or outside the class.

Beyond the above cultural background, of course, EFL students in particular need to be introduced to the culture of the people who speak the language. "…students cannot really master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language exists" (Valencia 152). For example, Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students might know the meaning of the word *kuciang*, but the meaning will be different as in *kuciang aia*. *Kuciang* can be translated into *kucing* in Bahasa Indonesia or *cat* in English. For *kuciang aia*, the phrase cannot be easily translated into Bahasa Indonesia for the meaning of *kucing air* does not exist in Indonesia. *Kuciang aia* in Minangkabau language and *kucing air* in Bahasa Indonesia are totally different, especially in English, *cat water* or *water cat* might not exist. If they exist, then, the cultural meanings would somehow be left out. The point is that the cultural meanings that are embedded and contained in specific words of Minangkabau language are difficult to translate into English. The journey of translating words from Minangkabau into English is beyond measureable. The Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students need to move from Minangkabau structure into Bahasa Indonesia, and then they move to English. Linguistically, this process is a very long one, but their linguistic repertoire improves along the way with their capability to try

and dare to meet challenges in learning how to use English well communicatively. Usually, it does take times.

Linguistic Repertoire

In the process of acquiring English, most Indonesian EFL students face double challenges. They need to move their mind constantly from their first language—Minangkabau—which is also called as their traditional language, into their second language, or Bahasa Indonesia. From this point, they move from Minangkabau language into English as a foreign language. Within this linguistic chain, we can see that interferences from first language exist. The result is that there will be language change, even though the form of the language happens only in syntactical level. For example, "The phenomena of language change that are observed in Italian speech of the second and third generation may be defined on the basis of two processes. The first process is simplification. The second process is transfer. By 'transfer' we mean 'the incorporation of language features from one language to another" (Marzo 1545). Marzo's research clearly tells us that linguistic transfer between one language into another one exists among students whose English is a foreign language for them.

In addition, the phenomenon of linguistic repertoire can be seen through how English is being taught in Indonesia. A research that was conducted by R. Lewis in 1996, revealed that "…for the most part, the students are silent, occasionally completing pronunciation drills or answering comprehension questions on the readings or grammar exercises. Class time is spent copying from the blackboard and translating texts or vocabulary from English to Indonesian." (Exley 3). It is a common belief among English instructors to translate words in English into Bahasa Indonesia in order to help students comprehend the meaning behind the words. The Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students' repertoire somehow changes in relation to how often English words are being encountered to them and in what context they comprehend the meanings of those words.

When we look at how the Indonesian EFL students grow their linguistic repertoire, family background has taken a place interestingly toward the children's earlier linguistic development, although the social environment, such as Minangkabau society, influences such development. "The language children learn does not depend upon any characteristics of their genetic parents but on the language they hear around them at the time they are learning to speak" (Macaulay 391). At this point, linguistic repertoire basically is framed up externally.

The external forms of how the community uses Minangkabau language make the Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students have collections of embedded meanings of different words. This notion is also a form of the rich aspect of linguistic repertoire that is seen from how well a student understands the vocabulary of English. "The vocabulary of a language is not just a collection of words scattered at random throughout the mental landscape. It is at least partly structured, and at various levels" (Cruse 179). The variety of how native speakers of English use English vocabulary in different contexts, and even in different textual genres, triggers the picture of "English is difficult" among Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students. They might read a text with a word *Freedom* in a text, but since they had been given a dictionary to them and believe that the translation of the word in Bahasa Indonesia is *Merdeka*, then automatically, if they find a sentence with the same word, they translate it as *Merdeka*, although the meaning might be relevant with the word *Kebebasan*.

For example:
Freedom from Oppression   *- Kemerdekaan dari Penjajah*
Absolute freedom   *- Kebebasan tak terbatas*

Notice that the same word *Freedom* changes in meaning in Bahasa Indonesia when it is used in different semantic context.

Surprisingly, having linguistic repertoire enriches how the students look at how words work within specific context and are able to take out the meanings of those words as precisely

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as possible without making ambiguous meanings in communication. To reach this stage needs a strong dedication both from the EFL instructor as well as the students, and, of course, supportive environment and useful learning facilities. "The repertoire thus can be seen as a hypothetical structure, which evolves by experiencing language in interaction on a cognitive and on emotional level and is inscribed into corporal memory and embodied as linguistic habitus and which includes traces of hegemonic discourses" (Busch 521). To see the aspect of EFL students' linguistic repertoire; we can view it through how well they can cope with the languages they know and use them communicatively in daily lives. At the end, having a strong understanding of linguistic repertoire as the foundation of grasping the three languages—Minangkabau, Bahasa Indonesia, and English—then, we can simultaneously or extemporaneously introduce them to the verisimilitude of multilingual awareness.

Multilingual Awareness

Moving from the ideas of Minangkabau language as the first language, Bahasa Indonesia as the second language, and English as the third language; we can see that there are three languages that Minangkabu-Indonesian EFL students encounter every day, not to mention that they also meet challenges from Arabic language to comprehend the meaning of lines in Qur'an, especially for students whose religion is Islam. All these nuances bring us to the atmosphere of globalisation. "Globalisation means global, transnational interactions of people, shared cultures, information and technology, education, economy and value systems beyond the cultural divide of West and East, Orient or Occident" (Nakamura 65). In Japan, or in countries where English is being used as the second language, people who speak English tend to absorb variety of languages that are brought from other countries. Those immigrants came to Japan with their languages and so do the foreigners coming to Indonesia. They bring their language with them. This situation creates what we perceive as bilingual. "For most of the world, to be bilingual is the mark of a well-educated person and the advantages of speaking more than one language are valued throughout society." (Whong 114). Whong agrees to the idea that a pupil who can speak languages from different countries indicate a high capacity of intellectualism.

Besides, having a good command of English and being aware of the use of other languages also signify the growth of multilingual awareness. "English, therefore, as the foremost medium of international communication at the present time, is called upon to mediate a whole range of cultural and cross-cultural concepts, to a greater degree than in the past." (Prodromou 39). There seems to be an urgency of having a strong comprehension of English language. This international pressure is a form of life dynamics that we cannot face solely. Not only the language that must be mastered, to have a good multilingual awareness, a student needs to know well the culture of the people who use English in their daily lives. Luke Prodromous emphasizes that "knowledge of the target culture remains an important part of language learning, especially at higher levels" (47). Consequently, teaching English without helping the EFL students know how one word is being used for specific context will make them face many-layers challenges in learning English. For instance, the use of the word *submit* and *give* will be different from the use of *memberikan (beri)* or *menyerahkan (serah)*, especially *maagiah* or *manyarahan* in Minangkabau language. Knowing this kind of distinction illustrates multilingual awareness.

A form of growing multilingual awareness these days among EFL instructor is the idea of English as an international language that is simply known as EIL. Koji Nakamura urges, "As a new paradigm of EIL education in globalization, educators should foster global literacy in the hearts of a new generation which willingly respects individual cultural values and religious faith" (69). To get the essence of multilingual awareness seems to be odd if we never provide the EFL students with learning materials from wide variety of cultures in the world. Ismail Cakir states:

> If language learners are to communicate at a personal level with individuals from
> other cultural backgrounds, they will need not only to understand the cultural
> influences at work in the behaviour of others, but also to recognize the profound

influence patterns of their own culture exert over their thoughts, their activities, and their forms of linguistic expression (156).

We can say that the EFL students already grasp and get the core idea of what it means to learn English when they can communicate with people across different cultures. Therefore, the reasons that make a language become a world language are various, depending on how such language is being perceived.

A language does not become a global language because of its intrinsic structural properties, or because of the size of its vocabulary, or because it has been a vehicle of a great literature in the past, or because it was once associated with a great culture or religion. These are all factors which can motivate someone to learn a language, or course, but none of them alone, or in combination, can ensure a language's world spread (Crystal 699).

Although English is already an international language, but the spread of this language in the world can happen due to the level of interests of people in learning this language. Such situation triggers us to see that function of the language is the basic reason behind the spread of the language in the world. Thus, if we need to help our students grow their multilingual awareness, knowing how a language becomes an international language is also necessary. With that in mind, they begin to be able to distinguish using specific words for specific context in communication in sociolinguistic frame of mind. "Understanding the sociolinguistic side of language enables speakers to know what comments are appropriate, how to ask questions during interaction and how to respond nonverbally according to the purpose of the speaking" (Widiati 274). The result of this thought is that the students will be able to prolong their linguistic sense as in line with the urgency of multilingual awareness in global communication.

Research Methodology

To illustrate how Minangkabau language as the first language of Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students interfere the process of learning English, relevant research methodology is needed. For this paper, it is framed within naturalistic observation method. "The observation method involves the researcher in watching, recording, and analysing events of interest" (Blaxter 178). In other words, I interact with the students in the class and in a natural setting, but at the same time I notice interesting data that provoke the existence of first language interference. Moreover, observation method "implies the collection of information by way of investigator's own observation, without interviewing the respondents" (Kothari 17). The students did not know that I focused on looking at their linguistic repertoire, which occurred naturally.

The form of this research is qualitative. It means that it involves linguistic analysis. The angle to see the data is purely from linguistic standpoint that does not solely interpret through the view of teaching analysis. It is actually composed as specific qualitative data. Two of the significant characteristics of qualitative research are that it is "ungeneralizable: single case studies" and it "assumes a dynamic reality". In terms of observation wise, it is naturalistic and uncontrolled (Blaxter 65). In essence, the research that is conducted for this paper is also single case studies that have directive sample from the entire population. The data I write in this paper are taken from classrooms interaction happening in several different subjects that I teach since 2009 in College of Teacher Training and Education, West Sumatera, Indonesia.

Discussion

An insightful way to look at how we teach English in Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL setting is that we tend to use translation approach that had been apparently left and learned from previous generation. "English language instruction in Asia follows what is known as the grammar-translation method" (William 325). We teach English with the means of translating

the words. Accidentally, when the students do not understand the meaning of the word we convey, we sometimes use Minangkabau language as a form of code-switching.

The following list is the data of utterances that are quite common among the students whom I took the data from.

Table 1. List of utterances in Minangkabau, Bahasa Indonesia, and English

No	Utterances		
	Minangkabau	Bahasa Indonesia	English
1	*Busuak ati baulek-ulek*		Smell heart insect insect
2	*Sakik kapalo*		Sick head
3	*Badan sadang ndak lamak*		My body is not delicious
4	*Malu-malu kuciang*		Shy shy cat
5		*Menurut saya,*	According to me,
6	*Kuciang aia*		Water cat
7		*Mohon maaf jika ada yang salah*	Please forgive me if I make mistake…
8		*Demikian saja*	That's all…
9	*Kareh kapalo*		Hard head
10	*Ondeh mandeh…*		Oh my mother,..
11	Bukittinggi		High hill
12	*Mati karancak an*		Dead pretty

As you can see from the above table, utterances in number 1 to 4, 6, and 9 to 12 are utterances that are acceptable to be spoken in Minangkabau language. Their meanings are implicit in Minangkabau culture. For the same numbers, you can see that the English forms of such utterances are not acceptable in English. Grammatical and syntactical wise are beyond the standard English. Meanwhile, for number 5, and 7 to 8, the utterances are framed within the setting of Bahasa Indonesia, but the English forms are acceptable, but the problem is when such expressions can be used. At this point, "learners' awareness about the process of language learning and their ethnic minority background should be considered in the process of foreign language teaching" (Turgut 118). However, as I can see myself, what the students do with the English forms is that they make it in the form of explicit violation of utterances in English. On top of that, the unique thing of such expression is that those "translated utterances in English" from Minangkabau language can only be understood by speakers from Minangkabau language setting.

The above data reveal that an idea about language for children's level is that "children learn their native language swiftly, efficiently, and largely without instruction" (Daniels 4). Besides, "the child's first speech community is ordinarily his family. The child learns whatever kind of language the family speaks – or more precisely, whatever kind of language it speaks to him" (Roberts 374). When they encounter words in English, they perceive those words through Minangkabau frame of mind. For them, it is something that they cannot handle because they were born in a community that already has a language and culturally-embedded meanings contained in words. The obvious thing that we need to look at right now in teaching English to EFL students is to see how far our own cultural judgment influences the process of language acquisition happening in the minds of our students. "…as teachers we need to look closely at ourselves to discover how our own culturally ingrained attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and communication styles play out in our teaching and affect our students' learning" (Peregoy 830). The utterances that the students make in those table indicate that they already know that idiomatic utterances in Minangkabau language cannot literally be translated into English; therefore, what they do is that they transform the utterances literally to get the sense of linguistic jokes or fun utterances to speak out in Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL classrooms.

Spoken and Written Expressions from Minangkabau into English Language

The language transfer from Minangkabau into English is paradoxical. It is complex in its own terms. Consequently, the EFL students constantly face challenges in moving meanings that they have in mind from their first language they learn into English. In other words, the most difficult stage they do is when they come into composing in English at pragmatic terms. Jenny Thomas states that "…pragmatics as meaning in interaction" (22). Since these students are taught in grammar-translation method, then the thing that they do is using English in a stiff mode, which is quite distinct from being called as communicative.

Essentially, the main target that we reach is to enable them to speak and write in English well, and at the same time they can learn by themselves with good level of reading and listening skills in English. The truth is, "spoken language is more fundamental than written languages; it appeared before written language in the general revolution of human beings, children acquire it before they learn to read and write and all the societies with a known history had spoken language before they had meaning" (Miller 671). The key to see EFL students' successfulness in acquiring English is in their ability to speak the language. Speaking takes spontaneous form than writing.

When we teach EFL students with the idea that speaking well is required, then we already engage them to the conversation that having an ability to communicate well is a sign of increasing language awareness. They might live in Minangkabau community, but they still can use English well. This result is what we—as the Indonesian EFL instructors—wish to see. Their first language remains in their mind, while at the same time they can use English interchangeable in interacting with people coming from around the world. "Language cannot be separated completely from the culture in which it is deeply embedded. Any listening to the utterances of native speakers, any reading of original texts, any examination of pictures of native speakers engaged in natural activities will introduce cultural elements into the classroom" (Cakir 157). Moving from Minangkabau language into English language is a high task for them to do. There will be countless errors and certain fossilized mistakes that they have, but those things cannot be seen as language deficiency.

The following expression is found on Facebook. It was shared by one of my students. Apparently, my students like the picture. It says,
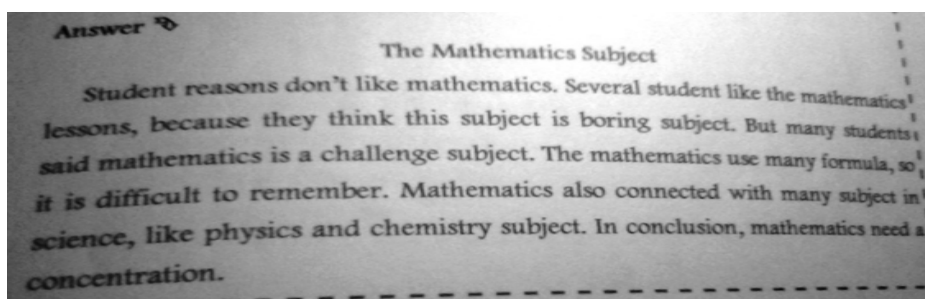
> *Terkadang saya binguang, kenapa ada orang yang selalu menggaduh hidup saya?? Saya gag amuh cari2 lawan tapi mereka selalu membikin saya emosi. Hmm lama lama saya Lampang juga muncung dia lagi nah!! Saya calik2 padahal hidup nya saja alun benar, tapi kerjanya menggaduh saya aja* ☹ - (shared by Muhammad Ilham).

For speakers of Minangkabau language, they can detect that the words *binguang, menggaduh, amuh, membikin, lampang, muncung,* and *calik2* are words that exist in Minangkabau language. For speakers of other traditional languages in other islands in Indonesia, they might perhaps face confusion for what they mean. The above datum clearly depicts that even in the process of writing Bahasa Indonesia, sometimes, interferences from the first language comes to its existence for the purpose of being funny. At this point, we can see that "culture and language are fundamental human rights; it is our right and duty to preserve and develop them" (Riza 116). The meaning of the word *amuh* in Minangkabau is probably the same with *mau* in Bahasa Indonesia. If this phenomenon happens between Minangkabau language with Bahasa Indonesia language, of course, the same form of phenomenon can happen as well between Minangkabau and English and between Bahasa Indonesia and English.

In terms of writing, "while L2 students obviously need an understanding of appropriate grammar and vocabulary when learning to write in English, writing is obviously not only these things" (Hyland 6). It means that the ability to write in English well needs more than just the mastery of English grammar. The core aspect to be seen is what they students have in their mind when they compose in English.

The following writing was taken from Maidha Fiqrah's assignment. She took my Writing 1 course. The course was designed to guide the students in composing a well-composed paragraph academically.

> **The Mathematics Subject**
>
> Student reasons don't like mathematics. Several student like the mathematics lessons, because they think this subject is boring subject. But many students said mathematics is a challenge subject. The mathematics use many formula, so it is difficult to remember. Mathematics also connected with many subject in science, like physics and chemistry subject. In conclusion, mathematics need a concentration.

From Fiqrah's writing, we can see that grammatical errors and irrelevant use of words exist in her writing. Since she took Writing 1 course at the beginning of her education at university degree, therefore, her linguistic repertoire in English is still growing. Compared to her seniors who had studied for three years, Fiqrah's writing shows a significant improvement. She knew what she wrote, but she was lack of technical matters, especially grammar and spelling. What we can see at this point is that such errors happen due to complexity of language circumstances in her mind. When she composed this paragraph, she composed it in Bahasa Indonesia within her mind. As a result, what comes up in her writing is that many structure of Bahasa Indonesia appears, such as *many students*, *many formula*, and *many subject*. Her ability to distinguish which nouns that have plural forms and which nouns that show singular meaning is the stage where such errors can happen due to first language interference. It does not mean that she has deficiency. It was just that she wrote in English, but she framed in Bahasa Indonesia and Minangkabau.

Conclusion

To see the linguistic circumstances happening between first language and a foreign language that is being studied by Minangkabau-Indonesian EFL students cannot be separated from understanding the position of each of these languages in the minds of the students. The real situation that happens in Indonesia today is that many traditional languages become extinct. Putting English in a corner and it is blamed as the factor of this condition is not a wise attitude. There are many factors that influence this situation could happen. Of course, when we look at how slow EFL students improve their linguistic as well as rhetoric ability in using English is basically a normal condition, especially in a place where many languages already exist long before their existence is real. Besides,

> Within Indonesia, and globally, we are currently experiencing a massive and rapid loss of language and culture. In particular, the languages and cultures of communities with very few speakers have practically no chance of survival beyond the end of six century and many will disappear much sooner, perhaps within the next 10 to 20 years (Riza 114-5).

On top of that, "…bilingual teachers need additional abilities and understandings-in particular, proficiency in Language $\neq$ 2, and sociocultural understandings of the groups who speak Language $\neq$ 2" (Garcia 398). Understanding the sociocultural aspect of English is an important thing to consider for EFL instructor. One of the ways to introduce this aspect to the students is through works that are written or created by English-speaking people, such as movies or literature. Essentially, utterances that exist in Minangkabau language cannot be easily translated into English. This linguistic barrier is the reasons of why quite many students face challenges in learning English. However, the solution still exists when we always try to introduce materials from English-speaking communities to help EFL students grow their own multilingual awareness through the expansion of their linguistic repertoire communicatively.

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