

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English words printed on T-shirts can be found everywhere. It emerges in Asian countries. Its applications can be seen on products, on signs, and in any forms of advertisement. English words printed on T-shirts allow consumers to express their beliefs, thoughts, opinions, and interests through the clothes they wear. The mission of the clothing company is to provide customers with clothing that serves a purpose, inviting people to be bold in their beliefs and ultimately, represent who they are. Some people who wear English words printed on T-shirts have no idea what they mean. People who originally do not speak English as their native language unaware of the words printed on their T-shirts. It seems that they do not care whether they understand or not. They just think that it looks cool (Laun, 2011).

Young adults mostly wear a T-shirt for many kinds of activities because the T-shirts make the young adults feel comfortable, simple, and cool. Therefore, the writer entitled her paper: "The Young Adults' Perception of English Language Used on T-shirts ". English is used by some companies to increase sales so many people want to buy them. It is very interesting to know whether language has a

big effect on sales, especially on T-shirt sales. English words printed on T-shirts make users feel they have successfully climbed the social strata and they belong in the higher class. Wearing English words printed on T-shirts gives people such a prestige because English is an international language and nowadays many people are more willing to learn it. Researches show that there are three different words which can connect to each other such as, "English words", "T-shirt", and "sales". This situation leads the writer to come to an idea to do this research. The writer thinks that this topic is interesting. It will be another contribution for people who attempt to conduct a research about clothing and English together, especially on the T-shirts.

Hung et al. (2011) stated that the charm of the prestigious brand is the perception of their good qualities, popular style nowadays, reputation, and the scarcity of the branded goods, so that only a few people have it. In this era, people tend to buy expensive things because it requires a sense of proud. Satisfaction and pride start to emerge because customers can buy goods that not everyone can buy them. It is not only about the function that is important in a product, but also it has a value of prestige that prioritizes the good quality of products.

English language as a powerful language has prestigious status in the society for being famous or recognized internationally because its language is being proudly used by the youth or educated people in order to get good status, good job, good business or good education as well. Because of the popularity of the

English language in Indonesia, people make their wedding or advertisement printed in English. They use English for advertising their business. Even their shop names are in the English language because people consider it a modern language. The English language has become a language of the upper class and educated people in Indonesia. Therefore, English has a good attraction for the Indonesian people. It has become a popular trend in youth to use English in their routine life in order to get esteemed status, power, good job and opportunities with honor in their lives (Sadiq, 2015).

One of the ways used by companies to attract customers is printing English words on T-shirts to make the T-shirts look better. People choose to wear T-shirts with English words printed because they are new, creative and fresh. Fashion is driven by creativity, desire, and aspiration. Consumers want to buy unique items that are expressive, personal to them and reflect their taste and status (Hines & Bruce, 2007). Most people would generally agree that the common purpose of printed language is to convey some sort of message.

1.2 Field of the Study

The field of this study is applied linguistics, which relates to entrepreneurship.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on finding out how English becomes a selling point, especially English words printed on T-shirt.

1.4 Problem Formulation

The writer formulates the problem of the study as follows.

"What is the young adults' perception of printing English words on T-shirts?"

1.5 Objectives of the Study

With regards to the problem mentioned, this research is conducted to achieve the following objective :

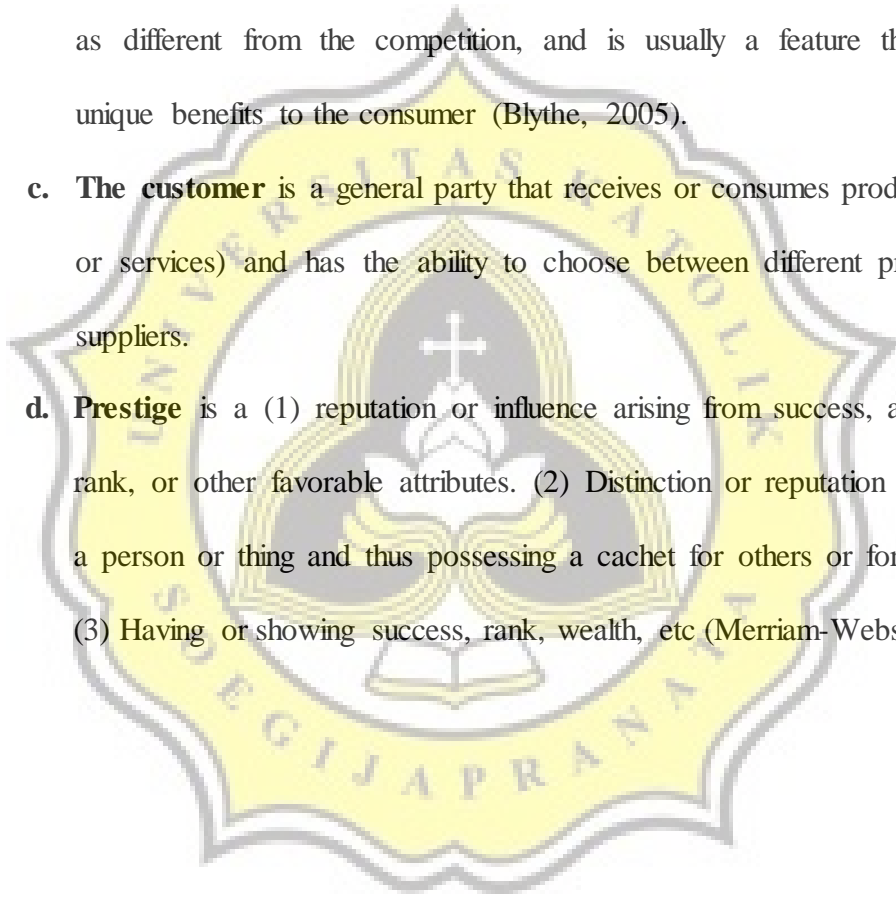
to find out the young adults' perception of printing English words on T-shirts.

1.6 Significance of the Study

By conducting this research, the writer hopes that this research will be able to make people understand that English words printed on T-shirts will be able to be one of the selling points besides the design itself. What is written on the T-shirts might attract potential buyers to buy. The writer explains English as a selling point on T-shirt media, particularly used by many people even though users do not know the meaning of the English words on their T-shirt especially in Indonesia. This can be a reference to the learners who are interested in English as a selling point topic especially to new entrepreneurs who are interested in clothing.

1.7 Definition of Term

- a. **Perception** is the process by which the stimuli are selected, organized, and interpreted (Yakup & Diyarbakirlioglu, 2014).
- b. **Selling point** contains the one feature of the product that most stands out as different from the competition, and is usually a feature that conveys unique benefits to the consumer (Blythe, 2005).
- c. **The customer** is a general party that receives or consumes products (goods or services) and has the ability to choose between different products and suppliers.
- d. **Prestige** is a (1) reputation or influence arising from success, achievement, rank, or other favorable attributes. (2) Distinction or reputation attaching to a person or thing and thus possessing a cachet for others or for the public. (3) Having or showing success, rank, wealth, etc (Merriam-Webster, 2018).



CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are some theories which the writer uses to support the research which is related to the main topic of this research to make the research clear and relevant.

2.1. Perception

In this study, the writer would like to know the young adults' perception of English language printed on T-shirts. According to Démuth (2013), perception is one of the basic ways of meeting reality, and for many people, perception is the reality itself. In the other hand, Munnukka as cited in Kazmi (2012) stated that perception is the first impression that individuals draw on the basis of it , and interpret the information to form a meaningful picture of the world. That is why the writer believed that customers' perception is important because the customer's perception influences the customer's level of satisfaction and their buying and usage decisions (Kazmi, 2012).

2.2. English Language as a Symbol of Prestige

Abilities to speak in a foreign language especially English language will give satisfaction to the speakers because they get much respects, power and status. Speakers who are able to understand the English language would get prestige, honor, or powerful impact to get higher status in comparison to

others. While the use of English words for a brand can be considered to be international. Many companies start to advertise their own brands using English so it can enter their global market (Krauss & Chiu, 2013).

Language, in general, plays a central role in the way how individuals perceive their world; therefore, it shapes the social, political, and economical aspects. English language, being presented as one of the global languages, requires people to understand it (Krauss & Chiu, 2013). English becomes the language for business and the most-socially-accepted means of communication among professionals around the world.

As a matter of fact, the English language represents a platform for business relation, especially for standardizing communication and providing a means of connecting each individual and group. Otherwise, they will remain isolated one another. English language unites every person from different countries to be able to communicate with each other. The negative impact of linguistic superiority, however, is substantial and multidimensional. As the English language represents a marker for Western identity, where many people who speak English think that English language is more superior than their own native language (Krauss & Chiu, 2013).

Although a language requires social, political, and economic power in order to be more well-known than others, English language continues to grow in power similarly with an expanding number of speakers. Some scholars explain that language has greater power. Both active and passive use of the

language, oral, and written communication are able to be taken care of. If many people speak English language, the business and marketing sector will become easier because one company can merge with other companies from different countries without language boundaries.

2.3. English Language as a Selling Point

Regardless of the dominant role of English, impacts of other languages still exist. Even if English is most frequently introduced and used as a corporate language, it is not used by native speakers only (Nickerson, 2015). The way English is used as a business language depends on whether it is the employee's mother tongue or not (Rogers & Wright, 1998). In the international business community “English is used by first and second foreign language speakers of English simultaneously” and occasionally together with other languages as well (Nickerson, 2015).

Generally, consumers purchase a brand not only because of its useful characteristics but also because of its particular symbolic meaning. Sirgy (1982) argued that in many cases the motivation to express themselves is the driving force for consumers to purchase goods and services. Baek (2010) confirmed this with research that is conducted to find out the effects of the hedonistic and social aspects of brands, i.e. brand prestige. They found that when buying high self-expressive products such as clothing, the prestige of a brand is a great determining factor because consumers can ‘show off’ with it. Moreover, if the brand uses the English language in their advertisements it

will attract more potential consumers to buy. In other words, a brand using English language usually is more popular and prestigious. Therefore, marketers spend millions on creating and maintaining brand images that are consistent with the symbolic meaning of brands, and also with consumers' self-images as the effectiveness of brand symbolism (Wook. Hong & M. Zinkhan, 1995).

Moreover, whenever the businessman uses English language, it gives a sense of prestigious. The same thing will happen to people who use English as their mother language. It is also necessary for people who use English for business to learn English language properly. Some benefits for people who learn English are: (1) English helps them to understand more about the structures of their own language and (2) the learners get an idea of the kinds of difficulties of non-native English speakers have when using English. Therefore, English, as one of many foreign languages, can be considered as global language skills which offer benefits in various business contexts (Bloch, 1995).

2.4. English for Marketing

People are aware of the fact that English is something which is necessary not only for school, a better job or a higher salary, but also for daily life and better relationship with foreigners (Ferzan & Arikan, 2015). Since English is a global world, it will be better when people use English for marketing. Companies which use English language are able to collaborate or

make a relationship with other companies in other countries. Besides, there are many working companies where language seems to have a significant advantage, such as in travel agencies, advertising or publishing industry, scientific research, media, engineering, politics. Using English at the workplace has effects on an individual level and company level (Charles, 2007).

English has become a language where many people in working situation use. English language usage has also reached consumers. MTV's David Flack claims that English is considered being "cool", particularly among young people (Leech, Leech, & Svartvik, 2002). Therefore, English is the language that is frequently used in many brand names, advertising, and popular media. Many shopping bags and T-shirts have English words printed on them. The usage of the language is not communicative, but emblematic (Leech et al., 2002). Therefore, English words serve as a symbol of a particular quality. A company which uses English words on their products wants to show high quality, so in here, English could be presented as a symbol for prestige. According to many researchers and scholars, the word multilingualism has a good meaning (Holmes, 2008). Multilingualism may express differently in the market, and in advertisements. In some cases, it can be one word, a complete sentence, an entire text, or blocks of texts in an advertisement (Holmes, 2008). For instance, a slogan is possibly in English, or information about a product is in English.

2.5. English Language

According to Katamba (1994) word is a very important aspect in human's life that people cannot take it for granted. With words, people can express their idea and opinion. Therefore, whenever people learn languages, people tend to memorize each word first then start to make sentences from those words. The theory goes the same with English language as an International language. McKay as cited in Acar (2009) stated that as an international language, English is used both in a global sense for international communication between countries and in a local sense as a language of wider communication within multilingual societies. Since English is used as an International communication between countries, it becomes a selling point to the sellers to put English words on their product because it helps the seller to sell their products abroad.