

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of study, the problem formulation and limitation, the research questions, as well as its benefit, and methodology.

1.1 Background

Language is a vital medium of communication that humans use to communicate with one another. In the world of branding, language plays a crucial role. It helps define the brand and sets it apart from all the others. Language also presents the image of the brand itself. People who play the role of customers learn about a brand through language—the language of product branding, for example, to convey the brand's essence and influence the customer's understanding, memory, attitudes, and actions. Language has the ability to persuade customer's appetite for a commodity in society by associating image ideology with it. Understanding how people use language—what terms and phrases they choose and use unconsciously—will help businessmen be better in understanding the customer's interest and why they act the way they do. Besides, through the usual icons, models, and colour combination of advertisement, language still plays an important role both in catching the eye of the customers and in explaining the qualities of the product. This shows that marketing communication relies much on language (Monigala, 2018).

When it comes to the marketing section, including branding, the use of language seems to be important to attract people. Among other languages, English has become the first choice of language in the marketing world. It can be shown that in many non-speaking English countries, English is widely used for branding neither product names nor store. Mezek's study in 2009 on the influence of English on the local language (Slovene), particularly in the field of economy, finds that 58% of advertisements utilize English while only 23% of street advertisements are in Slovene. To a greater extent, there is a correlation between wealth and English proficiency, which is somewhat reflected in the elements of

branding. The use of English for branding is an indication of the intellectual and international status of marketers or customers (Mezek, 2009).

English has come to be widely used for the specific purpose of branding activities to reach international target groups in various countries, either speaking or non-speaking English countries. In developing countries, researchers show that branding with foreign countries' language affects consumer perception, attitude, evaluation, and perceived value positively (Soto, Mobarec & Friedmann, 2009; Thakor & Levack, 2003; Zhuang et al., 2008). In Indonesia, which is a non-speaking English country, English has also been a branding language for goods promotion. In fact, almost products in Indonesia markets used English for their branding (Fhona & Fidyati, 2018; Husnah, Azizah & Yahya, 2019; Muthmainnah, 2016).

In Indonesia, the food industry is one of industries that is growing rapidly. According to the Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia in 2019, the food and beverage industry is one of the sectors that support the growth of both manufacturing and the national economy in the following years. It has a greater chance to continue to grow remembering food is one of human daily needs. To support the performance of food industry, it should implement several strategies that can persuade potential customers, one of them is by using foreign language to label the products brand.

The use of foreign language to naming a brand, such as for food products, provides a variety of perceptions. It is fascinating to learn about customer's perceptions towards the impacts of English for food probranding in a non-English speaking area. This is also one of the methods for persuading potential customers. Giving a brand in a foreign language to a food product can also affect consumer perceptions and attitudes. Brand in a foreign language itself is an advertising concept, which aims to increase the desire or added value of a product. The strategy of pronouncing or spelling brand names in languages that mimic certain cultures is carried out to influence consumer perceptions and attitudes towards products (Schiffman, 2002).

Having this situation, it was intriguing to learn about customer's perceptions of English for products branding, especially on food, in a non-English speaking area, namely Palembang city. Palembang was chosen because it was one of the best five business cities in Indonesia where massive products are traded (Stephanie, 2021). Hence, it influenced the writer to do this study in order to investigate the impacts of English in food products branding from customer's perception in Palembang.

1.2 Problem Formulation

Based on the background above, the problem formulation of this report is "What is the customers' perception towards the impacts of the use of English for food products branding?".

1.3 Problem Limitation

Due to the time and budget constraints, the writer focused on investigating the customers' perception towards the impacts of English for food products branding in one city in Indonesia, namely Palembang.

1.4 Research Purpose

This study detailed the impacts of English on products branding in Palembang. Therefore, the customers' perception on food products branding in Palembang was deeply investigated under individual in-depth interview.

1.5 Research Benefit

It is expected that the outcomes of this report will contribute to students of English Department at Sriwijaya Polytechnic and people in business field. For the students, they will gain more information regarding insights and knowledge of their expertise in English competency. This relates to the use of English for business branding from linguistic overview. Furthermore, for those who are in business field, this report is projected as a reference for developing Product Branding so they can be better in understanding the customer's interest and why they act the way they do on certain products.