

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. 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, the use of language seems to be important to attract people. The use of foreign language to label a brand provides a variety of perceptions. It is fascinating to learn about customer's perceptions of English for garment products branding in Palembang as 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 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).

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 marketing 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 some areas in Indonesia, as a non-speaking English country, English has also been a marketing language for goods promotion. In fact, almost products (food, electronics, and garments) in Indonesia markets used English for their branding (Fhona & Fidyati, 2018; Husnah, Azizah & Yahya, 2019; Muthmainnah, 2016).

The garment industry has expanded rapidly in recent decades, owing to increase demand for lower-cost clothing and greater variety. Modern garment production and distribution has resulted in the "global assembly line" (Carr, Chen and Tate 2000). Global production and trade are dominated by a small number of corporations. Large retailers, marketers, and manufacturers use decentralized production networks to order goods and provide specifications—often with a single click. Contractor networks are organized in tiers to produce finished goods for foreign buyers. Buyers

dictate what is to be produced, how quickly, and at what cost. People nowadays buy a piece of clothing, wear it a few times, and then discard it. Global competition has also become greater and this affects the perception of customers in choosing and buying products. Clothing design, production, and distribution is the world's largest manufacturing industry.

As foreign language has been the strategy in marketing, it gives a huge impact on the label and advertising, so English dominates the sector of garment and it will be threaten the local language. Having this situation, it was intriguing to learn about customer's perceptions of English for garment product branding in a non-English speaking area, namely Palembang city. Palembang was chosen because it is 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 influences of English toward the customer's perception on garment products branding in Palembang as a non-speaking English area in Indonesia.

1.2. Problem Formulation and Limitation

Based on the background above, the problem in this final report was formulated to investigate the customer's perception on the use of garment products branding in Palembang. Due to the time and budget constraints, this final report was limited in two points: customers' area and garment product itself. First, the customers' area was limited in one of the best trading cities in Indonesia, namely Palembang city. Second, the focus for investigating products was limited into one of most trading type products, namely garment products.

1.3. Purpose

This final report would detail to investigate the customer's perception on the use of garment products branding in Palembang. Therefore, the perception on garment products branding of customers in Palembang was deeply investigated under individual and group interviews. This report would provide insights into garment

products branding in the coming years. The aim was to come up with some responses to the following research question: How the language has a power to influence the customers' perception in buying garment products?

1.4. Benefit

The outcomes of this study are targeted to contribute to:

1. For Students of English Department at Sriwijaya Polytechnic, the writer hopes that 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.
2. For business people, this report is projected as a reference for developing Garment Product Branding so they can be better in understanding the customer's interest and why they act the way they do on certain products.