

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the background of the study, research question, aim of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

In the latest Indonesian curriculum in which *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Freedom Curriculum), English subject is returned to the timetable as a compulsory subject at the level of primary school after the subject was removed in the previous curriculum. This policy signifies that every primary school in Indonesia should be ready in implementing English subjects in primary school. Nevertheless, several primary schools considered that returning English into the compulsory subject in primary school is quite challenging due to unprepared teacher resources who are not able to teach English to young learners correctly. According to the research by Mutiah et al. (2020), the result discovered that teachers found some difficulties implementing interactive classrooms that engage young learners to participate in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. In addition, this occurred due to lack of educational background in creating a young learners-friendly environment so that it is often found that English teachers tend to do merely lecturing during the learning process. Whereas, classroom interaction between teacher and learners is crucial as it becomes a key component of language acquisition process as it elevates the collaborative work in language classroom (Edstrom, 2015). Moreover, teaching young learners is supposed to involve various learning activities that includes social and cultural interaction as the core of the learning process (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, it is necessary to investigate the interaction between teachers and young learners in EFL classrooms in order to ensure that the objective of English language acquisition could be achieved.

Classroom interaction is defined as the reciprocal verbal communication between teacher and learners to exchange information and knowledge in the classroom (Abdusyukur et al., 2022). Investigating classroom interaction is considered to reveal various results. According to Flanders (1970), the purpose of classroom interaction analysis is to study teaching behavior by keeping track of the series of learning events, to help educators or practitioners to develop and control the teaching behavior, and to describe the way of teaching and its connection to the learning outcomes. It is in line to the importance of classroom interaction in which it managed to enhance learners' problem solving skills (Gan & Balakrishnan, 2017), indirectly can reinforce learners' language store, strengthen their social relationship, and enhance their communication skills (Tsegaw, 2019), and also impressed learners' speaking performance (Kodri, 2018). In addition, Brown (2001) stated that analysis of classroom interaction is used to present a framework to evaluate other teachers in order to improve the way of teaching and assist the teacher to set a learning atmosphere for interactive learning. Considering the value of analyzing classroom interaction, the prior research had investigated this topic using a variety of frameworks, yet the most popular is made by Flanders namely Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS). This framework is widely used due to the simplicity and clear guidelines which are open for adaptation and modification (Abdusyukur et al., 2022).

As a result of using FIACS, prior research yielded similar findings which indicated that teacher talk mostly dominated the EFL classrooms. According to the research conducted by Abdusyukur et al. (2022) relating to the phenomenon of classroom interaction in online settings, the result showed that the teacher tended to dominate the classroom by mostly doing lecturing throughout the lesson. Moreover, some research such as Charisma and Defalni (2019) and Kapoe (2021) yielded the similar result that classroom interaction is still dominated by teachers by asking questions to the learners. Furthermore, Tsegaw (2019) and Nasir et al. (2019) conducted similar research with identical results in which the teacher dominated the classroom interaction by giving directions. In specific, there was also a previous research that investigated classroom interaction in EYL context using FIACS. For instance, Khusna et al. (2022) founded that the most dominant category

of teacher talk was giving direction and instruction. Thus, most results merely showed the dominance of which talk appeared in the classroom, yet there was not any research that specifically explained the flow chart of teaching in the EFL classroom.

As the results of prior research merely showed the dominance of which talk in classroom interaction, this study focused on presenting the dominance of each talk in classroom interaction and also the depiction of how the learning process was conducted through a matrix analysis. The result of this study is used to broaden the field of learning process in EFL classrooms, especially in EYL context. It is in line with Uysal and Yavuz (2015) which suggested that further research is necessary on young learner's learning process in EFL classrooms. Therefore, this study is used to depict a recent situation of classroom interaction in teaching English to young learners in Indonesia and to contribute such valuable feedback for teachers to improve their teaching competencies in order to attain the effective learning outcomes.

1.2 Research Question

The recent research attempts to answer the following question:

- How is the interaction between teacher and young learners in the EFL classroom portrayed using Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS)?

1.3 Aim of the Study

Regarding the research question, this study aims at discovering how classroom interaction is portrayed in EFL classrooms, especially between the teacher and young learners. In order to complete the findings, the research is conducted using Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories Systems (FIACS) as the main framework to describe all categories of classroom interaction, including teacher talk, student talk, and silence or confusion. The result of this study assisted English teachers to improve their teaching behaviors in order to maximize the learner's learning ability in the EFL classroom.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is investigating classroom interaction which occurs between EFL teachers and young learners who are in the fifth grade or in the age of eleven to twelve using a framework by Flanders namely Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS). This study is also limited for a private primary school in Bandung which includes English subjects in their educational curriculum since the institution began to establish in 2017. The lesson plan and material are developed by curriculum experts from the institution independently as the position of English subject in primary school had not been included as the compulsory subject in Indonesia educational policy.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is conducted to contribute to the teaching of English as foreign language either theoretically, practically, and professionally. Theoretically, this study becomes an extension to the field of classroom interaction in the EYL context as it shows the portrayal of recent situations. Practically, this study becomes an additional source for teachers, learners, and readers who feel interested in improving learning activities through the analysis of classroom interaction. Professionally, this study becomes positive feedback for the observed classroom and an example for teachers who begin to teach English to young learners in order to create meaningful English learning for young learners.

1.6 Clarification of the Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding in this research, these several terms are clarified as follow:

- **Classroom interaction:** in this study, it refers to a reciprocal verbal communication between teachers and learners in the classroom. Classroom interaction can be analyzed by using a coding system which cooperates with spontaneous verbal communication in order to study patterns of teaching and learning process. This code system usually includes a set of categories,

a procedure for observation and a set of ground rules to process the codes, steps for tabulating data, and suggestion (Flanders, 1970).

- **English Young Learners:** Those are defined as children under the age of 11-12 years who learn English language skills (Pustika, 2021). Meanwhile, this research is limited to investigate the interaction between English teachers and English young learners in the age of nine until eleven years old as it is the regular age range of children who study in the fifth grade of primary school.
- **English for young learners:** This term refers to the subject of English being taught as foreign language to learners who are categorized as children. The way of delivering the subject is through a variation of learning activities that are adjusted to their cognitive, emotional, physical and moral development (Linse & Nunan, 2005).
- **Classroom talk:** it refers to the verbal communication between perpetrators of the classroom which are mainly teachers and learners in order to exchange ideas and information as the process of learning. The transcription of this talk becomes the main source in portraying the interaction that occurred in the classroom.
- **Teacher talk:** it refers to the verbal speech that is uttered by a teacher as an attempt to manage the learning activities. Teacher talk includes seven categories which represent the form of accepting feelings, praising and encouraging, accepting and using students' ideas, asking questions, lecturing, giving directions, and criticizing or justifying authorities (Flanders, 1970).
- **Student talk:** it refers to the verbal speech that is uttered by the students in order to process and comprehend the received learning. Student talk includes two categories which are student talk-response and student talk-initiation (Flanders, 1970).
- **FIACS:** it is the acronym of Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System, it is an analysis system of interaction invented by Ned Flanders in 1970 which aims to study teachers' teaching behaviors, including their interaction with learners in the classroom. Flanders (1970) classified this

system into ten categories of verbal behavior which comprises teacher talk, student talk, and silence or confusion. This system is used to discover the dominance of talk by defining frequencies of each category and the pattern of interaction that appeared in the classroom by the process of encoding the speech and the decoding the linkages of verbal communication.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This study is organized into five chapters and they are briefly described as:

- Chapter I Introduction; this chapter presents a background of the study that will be a fundamental reason why this research is conducted, research questions, aim of the study, scope of the study, significance of study, clarification terms that will mostly be used in this study, and the organization of the paper.
- Chapter II Literature Review; this chapter covers the related theories to the study such as classroom interaction in English as Foreign Language (EFL) context, classroom interaction in English Young Learners (EYL) classroom, comparison between teacher talk and student talk, classroom interaction analysis and theories of Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories Systems (FIACS).
- Chapter III Research Methodology; this chapter explains a clear mechanism and analysis method that are applied in this research to solve the research questions. It begins with the research design, continues to describe the participant and the research site, describes data collection procedure, and lastly data analysis.
- Chapter IV Finding and Discussion; this chapter explains the result of classroom interaction analysis using FIACS which consists of the dominance of classroom interaction, explanation of each aspect which are teacher talk, student talk, and silence with each category and the pattern of classroom interaction.
- Chapter V Conclusions and Recommendations; this chapter explains the conclusions that are withdrawn from the finding and recommendations for future research related to the topic.