

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Nowadays English has been introduced since elementary school in Indonesia. It seems that Indonesian government is aware of the importance of English in order to provide the younger generations with tools and knowledge to excel not only at school environment but also broader world.

In Indonesia English is regarded as foreign language; where English is not an official language and does not serve as a major language in social interaction. Therefore, the way to acquire the language is different from a country where English as an official language in which the people may learn from various sources be it inside or outside classroom. As for English as foreign language, classroom became the main place where students get exposure since learners have only limited access to the target language outside classroom. Consequently, classroom must play important roles in improving student's ability in English.

One of the important aspects as the main of language exposure in the classroom setting is teacher. The exposures, given by teachers, are not only limited in the form of material but also their utterances that serve as inputs for learners. For several years, the effects of various aspects of teachers' utterances on students' language acquisition have been popular for research.

The study of communication in the classroom when the teacher addressed second language is commonly known as teacher talk (e.g. Krashen 1982, Ellis

1986, Chaudron 1988, Huda 1999). One of the issues that have been examined is speech modification made by teacher. According to Chaudron (1988) teachers tends to modify their speech when talking to learners; the features that are modified including phonology, timing, lexis, syntax, and discourse. In addition, Scarella and Higa (1981 cited in Ellis, 1986) mention that age factor are involved in providing adjustment a child of nonnative speaker receives simpler inputs in a more supportive atmosphere, the adjustment given were shorter utterances, fewer complex grammatical structures and fewer disfluencies and more clarification request.

A number of earlier studies also carried out by some researchers on EFL context related to speech modifications. Huda (1999) found that topic initiating moves, confirmation checks, comprehension checks, clarification requests, self repetition and other repetitions make the topic of interactions comprehensible. In investigating native speaker's speech to the students in Japanese English classroom, Farooq (1998) found that teacher's wait time, pauses and self-repetition are the dominant technique in modifying his speech.

Those previous research shows the importance of teacher's talk in language teaching. It is therefore necessary to research the roles of teacher's talk in the Indonesian context. In relation to this matter, this study would like to observe and find out what does teacher modify their speech on elementary school students. Therefore, speech modifications and the nature strategies used by the teacher will be revealed.

1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The previous research shows that teacher's talk is an important aspect in language teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to research the roles of teacher's talk in the Indonesian context. The study mainly investigates the nature of teacher talk in EFL classroom by adapting and employing classroom discourse analysis in order to find out the characteristics of teacher's speech modifications so that the strength and weaknesses of the teaching learning process will be revealed. Consequently, the results of the study can be inputs in improving the quality of teacher's pedagogical skills. Finally, this study is also expected to enrich the reference of the study of the second language classroom particularly that of employing classroom discourse analysis approach.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study merely covers the teacher's speech modifications conducted in elementary students. However, the study only identified the nature of teacher talk in the form of speech modification (linguistic aspects) and motives behind its modifications, which might happen in the classroom of 5th grade of SD Kartika X-3 Bandung.

1.4 Research Questions

The basis of this study will be summarized into the following research questions.

1. What does teacher modify her speech when talking to elementary school students?
2. What are the reasons behind teacher's speech modification when talking to elementary school students?

1.5 Aims of the Research

Given the research questions, this study was aimed at the following matter:

1. to investigate what does teacher modify her speech when talking to elementary school students; and
2. to identify the reasons behind teacher's speech modification when talking to elementary school students.

1.6 Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature since it was conducted in a natural setting and has aim to describe natural phenomena occurring in such setting. It attempts to look at and describes teacher's speech modifications in an EFL classroom. Merriam (1988 as cited in Creswell, 1994 p. 145) stated that qualitative is descriptive that the research is interested in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words or pictures from natural setting. Otherwise, qualitative study is appropriate in order to gain, identify, and describe the data from natural setting.

1.6.1 Respondent

This study was conducted in SD Kartika X-3 Bandung. A part timer English teacher was taken as a respondent. She was selected to be the respondents of the study on the basis of her beliefs that using English while teaching learning process is important. The fifth grade was chosen by taking a consideration due to their representativeness in terms of their higher English proficiency level compared to another class.

1.6.2 Data collection

Preliminary observation was conducted to give some general information of the research in order to gain information of particular class of interest as the basis of purposive sampling.

Audio-recording was conducted as a technique for capturing verbal interaction between the teacher and the students. The technique was considered as a valuable source of accurate information on pattern of interactional behavior, in this case, teacher speech modification.

The teacher involved in the study was also interviewed concerning her modified speech during the teaching learning process in order to gain a number of clarifications of the result of transcription.

The collected data of the audio recording was transcribed, coded, analyzed and described. The result was synchronized with observation result so the data was valid enough.

1.7 Data Analysis

The data was coded based on Suherdi's classroom discourse framework (2006). The coded data were classified according to Morithoshi's taxonomy of speech modifications adapted from Chaudron (1988 p. 54-56). Therefore, the result of the analysis will assist in seeking the answer to the problems of the research which are to identify of what does the teacher modify her speech and to identify the motives behind teacher's speech modification strategies.

1.8 Clarification of the Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding of the terms used in this study, the following are some key terms:

1. Classroom Discourse

Classroom discourse refers to the language that teachers and students use to communicate with each other in the classroom. Talking or conversation is the medium through which most teaching takes place, so the study of classroom discourse is the study of the process of face-to-face classroom teaching (Ventola, 1982).

2. Teacher Talk

Teacher talk refers to the teacher's language used when addressing second language learners in a classroom setting, with intention to teach the students.

3. Speech Modification Strategies

Speech modification strategies refer to adjustment in teacher speech when talking to learners in order to maintain the meaning or provide comprehensible input.

1.9 Organization of the Paper

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one discusses introduction. It contains background of study, research question, aims of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, scope of study, research method, population and sample, data collection procedure, data analysis, clarification of key terms and organization of the paper.

Chapter two describes the theoretical foundation. It provides theories related, to the topic of speech modification, including teacher talk, speech modification and their features, children characteristics and previous research.

Chapter three describes the methodology employed on this study including research design, research site, respondents, technique of data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter four consists of findings and discussion; in order to answers the research questions that show in chapter one by interpreting and analyzing the data collected.

Chapter five conducts conclusion from the whole chapter on teacher's speech modification strategies and suggestions for further research.