CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of several focal points. They are background of the research, statements of problem, aims of the study, significance of the research, scope of the research, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1. Background of the Research

There are two issues triggering this research. The first issue is the importance of classroom interaction. The second issue is about how classroom interaction research in connection with student talk has been conducted

The first issue is about the importance of classroom interaction. In the first place, it has to be clear regarding the definition of interaction. Citing Brown (2001, p.165), interaction in general is defined as thoughts, feelings, or ideas which are exchanged between two or more people causing an effect to one another. Thus, classroom interaction means that the interaction happens in the classroom context with the teacher and students as the interactants.

In regards to its nature, the role of interaction in the language learning is originated from the Socio-Cultural theory echoed by Vygotsky in which says that interaction is the realization of the concept Zone of Proximal Development or ZPD (Saville-troike, 2006, p.111; Pinter, 2009, p.10). In this concept, it is described that through interaction with "knowledgeable partner" such as teacher, learners maybe helped to reach their "potential level" from their "current level" in learning (Pinter, 2009, p.11). In other words, students may enhance their knowledge if they are learning by interacting with people who have more knowledge than they do. The knowledgeable partner might provide the students with meaningful input such as feedback which can add up to students' knowledge.

Furthermore, classroom interaction between teacher and students in the classroom is believed valuable, especially in the language classroom. This argument is supported by Rivers (1987, as cited in Brown, 2001, p.165) who argues that interaction can facilitate students to practice the language skills they have learned in a real situation. Additionally, Brown (2001, p.166) mentions the advantages of interaction in the language classroom. Some of which are firstly interaction can challenge the learners to take risks to produce the target language. Then, the interaction between teacher and students can help the students gain feedbacks as their teacher corrects and/or praises them after they try to interact in the target language (Brown, 2001, p.166). This advantage is similar to Vygotsky's concept which says that the interaction should help the learners to reach their potential level by giving them knowledge about the correct ones. In line with this, Saville-Troike (2006, p.106) also states that interaction can provide language input for the learners to "express meanings which are beyond the current level of their linguistic competence". Besides, a good classroom interaction can encourage the students to communicate with others in a real situation (Yu, 2008, p. 49).

As a result of the arguments related to classroom interaction value, the research aiming at the investigation raised. In the beginning, the research investigating classroom discourse was conducted in 1970 by Flanders, Mehan, and others (Suherdi, 2010, p.10). The research of classroom discourse concerning on classroom interaction was initially conducted by Sinclair and Coulthard in 1975 (McCarthy, 2008, p.77). The research brought about the emergence of IRF (Initation – Response – Follow-up) classroom interaction pattern. Starting from this point, many other researchers used this framework to conduct classroom interaction research.

The second issue that prompts this research is about classroom interaction which particularly spotlights student talk. As it has been stated earlier, classroom interaction comprises teacher and students. Thus, in terms of the participant, there are two types of talk in classroom interaction; teacher talk and student talk.

Relating classroom interaction with the Sinclair & Coulthard framework, Edwards and Mercer (Sunderland, 2001, p.1) saw I-R-F exchange structure as teacher's initiation, followed by students' response, then finally closed by teacher's evaluation which is unavoidable in classroom interaction. However, Sunderland (2001, p.2) argues that it denotes that classroom interaction is dominated by teacher talk. Furthermore, she further suggests since the teacher talk dominates classroom interaction, it does not simply mean that investigating student talk is less significant than teacher talk as the students' achievement in language acquisition are the final purpose of a language learning (Sunderland, 2001, p.2). This is also supported by Suherdi (2010, p.176) who states that by carrying out the analysis of student talk, language teacher may be helped to recognize their students' language quality in the process of learning.

Concerning the issue about how valuable it is to see classroom interaction and the issue about how research on teacher talk has outnumbered student talk research, this present research attempts to fill these gaps. This research attempts to identify classroom interaction focusing on student talk role in exchange structure to investigate students' spoken discourse which occurs in EFL classroom.

1.2. Research Questions

This research is guided by two research questions:

1. Which role of student talk appears the most in classroom interaction?
2. Why does that role (from question 1) become the most frequent role to appear?

1.3. Aims of the Study

This study is conducted to achieve two purposes. Firstly, the purpose of the study is to find out the role of student talk which appear the most in classroom interaction. Secondly, the aim is to investigate the factors influencing student talk's role which occurs the most in the EFL classroom interaction.

1.4. Scope of the Research

The present study is limited into some specifications. Firstly, the research is conducted in a small size EFL classroom which only consists of six students. Secondly, the present research is concerned on student talk albeit the transcription also analyse the teacher talk.

1.5. Significance of the Research

The result of this research is expected to give two contributions; professionally and practically. Profesionally, this study can hopefully be the reference for further research regarding the field of classroom interaction and student talk. Practically, this study is expected to give contribution for pedagogical implication served as consideration for English teachers to have more awareness of the advantages of interaction in the target language and to have more awareness of giving opportunities to students to interact in the target language.

1.6. Research Methodology
This section contains the design of the research, the site and participant, and the collection of the data.

1.6.1. Research Design

The present research employs qualitative method embracing the characteristics of case study to seek the answers of research questions. The reasons why this study uses case study is firstly, a case study tries to seek the "contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 1984, p.23)." This argument matches this study which concerns on student talk in a real classroom in which there is no modification given. Also, a case study employs "multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 1984, p.23)." Matching with that argument, this study uses observation, note-taking, as well as interview to investigate the pattern of student talk.

1.6.2. Site and Participant

As what has been stated before, this study employs case study which requires cases as the base for the research. Thus, this research takes place in one classroom of an English private course in Bandung. The class consists of six students from the elementary level whose age is in the range of 9-12 years old.

1.6.3. Data Collection

The data for this research is obtained using several instruments:

1.6.3.1. Observation

The first instrument employed to accomplish the purposes is classroom observation. The observation is taped using the video-recorder. Time allotment for each meeting is 75 minutes. Since this research concerns on students' language, the speech of the students recorded in the video-tape is transcribed.

1.6.3.2. Field-note

Another instrument applied in this research is field-note. This instrument is conducted along with another instrument which is video-taping. It is taken as the instrument in order to note the things which cannot be recorded by the video-tape. In other words, it functions to give details of what is happening in the classroom. As what is said by Gibson and Brown (2009,p.105), field notes can be used for reminding the researcher of the intriguing features that should be checked on the recording later; as the complement of the more descriptive data; and to record the aspects that cannot be taken from the camera.

1.6.3.3. Interview

The last instrument utilized in obtaining the data is interview. To quote Burgess (1984 as cited in Richards, 2009, p.183), a qualitative interviews are simply described as, 'conversation with a purpose.' This interview is aimed at the teacher as well as the students.

The questions for the teacher were related to teacher's personal information including her teaching experience, teacher's perspective towards interaction in the

classroom between teacher and student, and the classroom interaction that the teacher experienced in the observed classroom. In the other hand, the questions aimed at the students were about their personal information, their interaction in the classroom that they experienced, and their views of classroom interaction as well.

1.6.4. Data Analysis

The data collected is then classified into quantitative data and qualitative data. The quantitative data is those which are obtained through observation, while the qualitative data is the data that is collected through field-noting and interviewing.

The data which have been obtained were then analysed through several steps :

Step 1. Transcribing the video-recording
The results of the video-recording of classroom observation and interview were transcribed into the form of written text. The transcription of classroom observation includes both of teacher talk and student talk.

Step 2. Segmenting the transripts and marking the participants

In this step, the researcher segmented the conversation based on who talks what. In this research, 'T' was used for marking the teacher and 'S' for marking the students. There were six students as the participants of this research; therefore the researcher marked 'S1' up until 'S6' for each student. However, if there were two or more students talk the same utterance in the same time, the researcher marked it as 'Ss'.

Step 3. Identifying the functions of each utterance.
In the third step, the segmented transcripts were classified into slots. One utterance may contain more than one slot for instance when the teacher is lecturing in front of the class, there will be lots of slots.

Step 4. Identifying types of moves and student talk categories

The next step was identifying the types of move in the transcript. Later on, the exchanges were classified using learner language exchange aspect analysis proposed by Suherdi (2010).

Step 5. Calculating frequency of each category

Each category occurred in the transcription was then calculated to answer the first research questions which is the role occurring the most in classroom interaction.

Step 6. Interpreting the data

In this part, the results of the transcription analysis were put together with the result of note-taking and interview to interpret the data as well as answering the second research aim which is to find out the factors influencing the result of the first research question. In this stage, the result was also connected with the research questions and underlying theories.

Step 7. Concluding the data

After interpreting the data, the conclusion were drawn to provide the general view of the research.

To sum up the steps in analysing the data, figure 1.1. is provided.

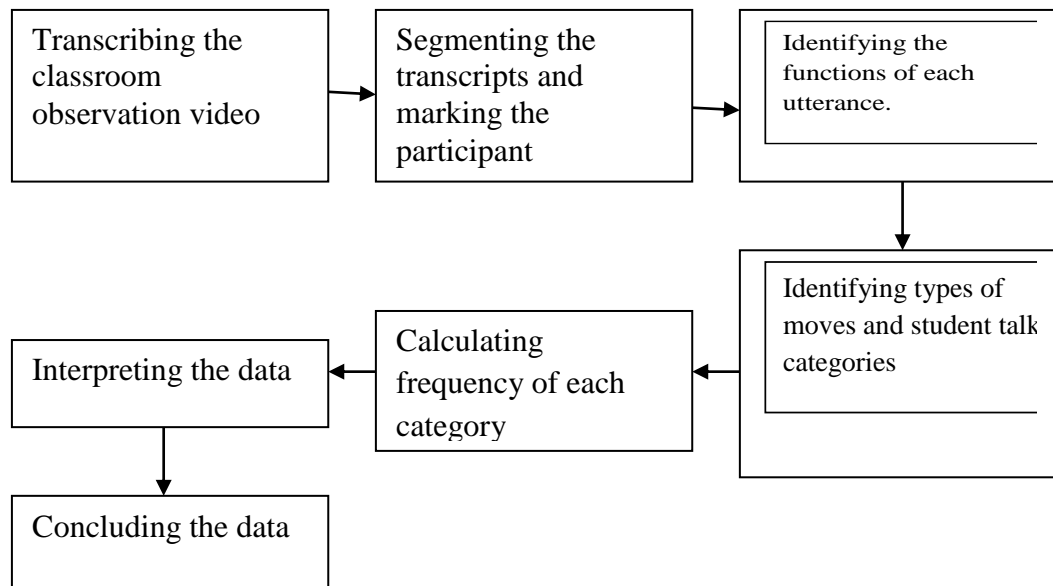Figure 1.1. below made to make the analyzing process clearer.

```
┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐
│ Transcribing the│     │ Segmenting the  │     │ Identifying the │
│ classroom       │────▶│ transcripts and │────▶│ functions of each│
│ observation video│    │ marking the     │     │ utterance.      │
│                 │     │ participant     │     │                 │
└─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘
                                                          │
                                                          ▼
┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐     ┌─────────────────┐
│                 │     │ Calculating     │     │ Identifying types│
│ Interpreting the│◀────│ frequency of each│◀───│ of moves and     │
│ data            │     │ category        │     │ student talk     │
│                 │     │                 │     │ categories      │
└─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘     └─────────────────┘
        │
        ▼
┌─────────────────┐
│                 │
│ Concluding the  │
│ data            │
└─────────────────┘
```

Figure 1.1. The Analysis Process

1.7. Clarification of Terms

To avoid misunderstanding in the research, this section provides some clarifications of terms used in the present research.

1.7.1. Classroom Interaction

According to Brown (2001, p.165) classroom interaction is the collaboration of thoughts, feelings, or ideas which are switched between two or more people causing an effect to one another.

Meanwhile, as far as this study concerns, interaction observed in this research is the interaction between teacher-students, and student-students during learning process inside the classroom.

1.7.2. Student Talk

Student talk is defined as the language production made by the language learners. (Ellis & Barkhuizen as cited in Dyson, 2010).

Meanwhile, in this researh, the student talk particularly refers to the conversation between student-teacher and student-student in the topic which is still related to the lesson.

1.7.3. Teacher Talk

According to Sinclair and Brazil (1982, as cited in Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010, p.77), teacher talk is the language that is used by the teacher spending most of the class time to give directions, explain activities, and check students' understanding.

1.7.4. Role of Student Talk in Exchange Structure

This term is related to the function of student moves within exchange structure in classroom interaction. In this study it specifically determines whether or not the student move is included as receiving or producing position.

1.8. Paper Organization

The present study is reported systematically into five chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter embraces eight points consisting of background triggering the research, research questions, the aims of the study, the significance of the study, the clarification of the terms, and lastly the organization of the paper.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter consists of theoretical framework in connection with the study of classroom interaction, student talk, and the framework underlying the present study.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter exhibits the research instruments employed in the research, how the data collected, who participate in the study, and how the data are analysed.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussions

This chapter points out the result of the research which is drawn by answering the research questions.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Suggestions

This last chapter portrays the conclusion from the whole study about the result of the research which is then followed by the suggestions for further research in the field of classroom interaction especially in student talk.

1.9. Concluding Remark

This chapter describes the background of the study, the statements of problem, aims of the study, the scope of the research, the significance of the research, the clarification of terms, and the organization of the paper.