

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study dealing with classroom interaction patterns in an EFL classroom of a senior high school in Bandung. Following the background's section is the statements of the problem addressed in this study to define the purpose of the study. The next section is the objective of the study followed by the scope of the study, significance of the study and ended by clarification of terms.

1.1. Background

Considering its importance as a global language that is used in many fields of life, government has been including English as a subject that is expected to help students to cope with their real life later after graduating from schools and continuing their education to higher levels. Through years of its existence in Indonesian schools, it is believed that English teaching and learning have improved and led students to a better achievement in acquiring English. On the other hand, it is found that formal school graduates gain quite poor English (Lisa and Kamal, 2009: 1). This finding, at least, proves that improvements in the English teaching and learning are needed to make students learn and achieve English better.

It is argued that teaching is a matter of process whereas learning is its goal (Buckley, 1993: 3). When both students and teachers learn, it is considered that teaching is most successful. Therefore, teachers should facilitate and guide students to learn. One of the ways to encourage

students to learn a language in a way which they are interested in it and they interact with it is designing innovative and planned teaching programs. By designing innovative and planned teaching programs, teachers could create interactive teaching and learning processes in which students could learn, interact, and participate actively during the processes of teaching and learning. It is believed that students who actively interact and participate during the processes of teaching and learning will improve their English better.

In Indonesia, however, some problems appear in the processes of teaching and learning English in terms of classroom interactions which are passive and dominated by teachers. A monotonous teaching technique still depicts the teacher's performances, a common phenomenon in classroom practice (Marcellino, 2009). The questions do not lead students to a response of various language expressions. Students are normally passive in class and only respond to the teachers' questions when asked (Marcellino, 2009). Marcellino (2009) argued that there are at least three primary reasons accounting for this class situation. First, the students' previous trainings do not expose this sort of interactive model to them. Second, their cultural values and beliefs somehow do not encourage them to challenge neither their teachers nor their classmates as it may somewhat indicate that they are showing off. Third, the survey shows that their command of English is relatively very poor – lack of vocabularies and expressions as well as mastery of grammar – so as to make them speak Indonesian most of the time in class settings.

Some problems mentioned in the paragraph above might result in an unsatisfactory result of language teaching and learning. The unsatisfactory result of language teaching and learning can actually be varied. One of them can be reflected on the incompetency of the learners in using the target language to communicate or interact with (Nugroho, 2009). This issue appears because

of the fact that the rules of that language are different from those of their own language and due to the fact that Indonesian students learn English as a foreign language not as a first language or a second language. This situation influences the students' behavior during the learning process. The students tend to be passive in foreign language classes since the input they get is limited (Nugroho, 2009). As the result, students encounter difficulties to maintain communication in the target language. This phenomenon reflects a bad image to foreign language teaching and learning in Indonesia which directly results in the questionable quality of English teacher (Nugroho, 2009). Teachers have more roles in determining the achievement of the teaching objectives that is the competency of students in using the target language. Besides, it has been made aware that teachers possess a particular authority to organize their student since the beginning of the learning process (Cullingford, 1995:160).

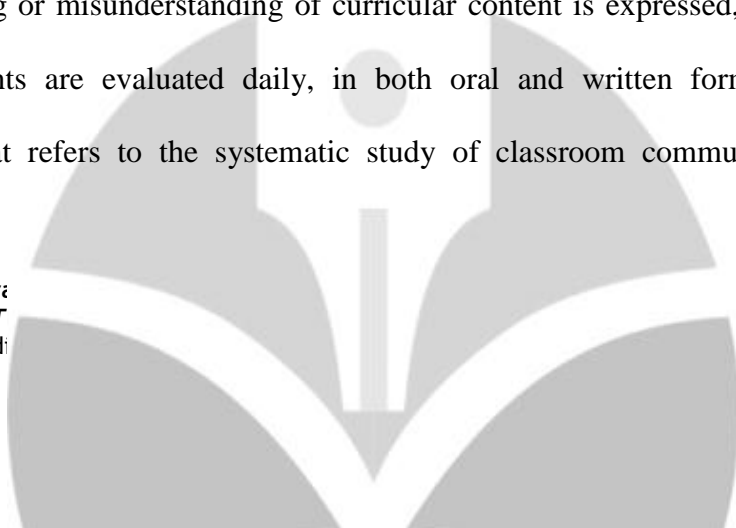
Classroom interaction pattern has long been investigated and it is worth being studied because of their great impact on either facilitating or inhabiting students' language acquisition. Traditional language classroom interaction is usually characterized by a rigid pattern, particularly the acts of teachers in the processes of teaching and learning. Teachers in this case are usually the ones who select and initiate topic for conversation and restrict students' response. Thus, having a look at such phenomena, it is found that teachers still take the most dominant role in the lessons. This is because they think that close and persistent control over the classroom interaction is a precondition for achieving their instructional goals and students' unpredictable responses can be avoided (Edwards and Westgate, 1994).

The interaction pattern above is likely to minimize students' involvement in the lessons (Walsh, 2002) and inhibit their opportunities to use language for communication (Hasan, 2006).

Teachers should try their very best to strike a balance between “real” communication and teacher’s talk (McCarty, 1991:18). “A good” teacher’s talk means “a little” teacher’s talk because too much talk by the teacher deprives students’ opportunities to speak (Cullen, 1998). Therefore, instead of dominating the whole lesson, teachers should give their students more opportunities to initiate topics for conversation (Mackey, McDonough, Fujii, & Tatsumi, 2001).

Recent studies conducted by Inamullah (2005) found that active classroom interaction has shown great result in improving the learning process especially in stimulating teachers to improve their teaching behavior in order to optimize their student learning. Chiang (2001) also reported that classroom interaction encouraged student’s motivation in the classroom. Rahayu (2007) stated that through classroom interaction which consistently occurred whether among teacher and students or among students themselves, the learning condition becomes more conducive.

It is believed that the basic and fundamental component of the learning process is communication and communication critical component is interaction between the learner and the source of information. As it is stated by Fulford and Sakaguchi (2010), teachers often play an important role in delivering information through the strategies they choose. Cazden (1988, 2001 as cited in Peets, 2010) argued that the importance of effective communication in the classroom cannot be underestimated as it is the medium of interaction, the medium through which understanding or misunderstanding of curricular content is expressed, and the medium through which students are evaluated daily, in both oral and written forms. Therefore, classroom discourse that refers to the systematic study of classroom communication, with its unique



interactional rules and decontextualized language is suggested due to that reason (Cazden, 2001, cited in Peets 2010).

Communication which occurs in a classroom is defined as classroom discourse (Suherdi, 2009: 5). It refers to certain communication routines in social interactions which manifest certain sociopolitical beliefs (Suherdi, 2009: 5). Indeed, classrooms refer to social context (Haryono, 2001) in which obviously there would be social interaction. Since classroom discourse focuses on the study of classroom communication where classroom interactions might appear within it with its patterns, classroom discourse analysis could become an approach in analyzing the patterns of classroom interaction to reveal how teaching and learning processes are conducted in an EFL classroom. For that reason, this study conducted research to investigate classroom interaction patterns in an EFL classroom of a senior high school, a qualitative study in a senior high school in Bandung region. Discourse analysis is believed to be the most appropriate approach in the study of classroom interaction. Discourse analysis maybe simply defined as the analysis of language in context (Suherdi, 2009: 5). One of the approaches in discourse analysis is critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis takes social condition as its main concern (Van Dick 2001, cited in Suherdi 2009: 7). It focuses on understanding the nature power and dominance and how discourse contributes to their production. It concerned with analyzing written text and spoken words to reveal several contexts (Van Dijk 2001, cited in Suherdi 2009). Therefore, this study used classroom discourse analysis as an approach to reveal the patterns of classroom interaction that occurred during the processes of teaching and learning.

1.2. Statements of the Problem

The present study tried to identify patterns of classroom interaction that appear in an EFL classroom and describe how those patterns create the interactions during the teaching and learning processes. Also, the study tried to gain students' responses toward the teaching and learning processes. They were further elaborated in the following research questions.

1. What patterns of classroom interaction appear in the teaching and learning process in an EFL classroom of the senior high school?
2. How do those patterns create the interactions which appear during the teaching and learning processes?
3. How do students respond to the teaching and learning processes?

1.3. The Objectives of the Study

The study investigated classroom interaction patterns in the teaching and learning process in an EFL classroom of a senior high school and gained students' responses to the teaching and learning process. This study tried to reach the following objectives.

1. To find out the patterns of classroom interaction that appear in the teaching and learning processes in an EFL classroom of the senior high school. The patterns of classroom interaction would reveal kinds of interaction that happen in the classroom. It would show what pattern of interaction dominates the teaching and learning processes, whether it is teacher→students' interaction or students' interaction;
2. To find out how those patterns create the interactions which appear during the teaching and learning processes. How those patterns create the interaction would determine the success of

the teaching and learning processes that could be seen from whether the students reach the goal of learning or not; and

3. To gain students' responses toward the teaching and learning processes. The responses from the students would reveal how the students react toward the teaching and learning processes, whether they react positively or negatively.

1. 4. The Scope of the Study

The study dealt with classroom interaction patterns that appeared in the teaching and learning processes in an EFL classroom of a senior high school. It much more focuses on observing and finding out the interaction patterns that occurred in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Also, it focused on finding out how the patterns created the interactions which appeared during the process. The analysis used in finding out the patterns is pedagogical microscope study.

1.5. The Significance of the Study

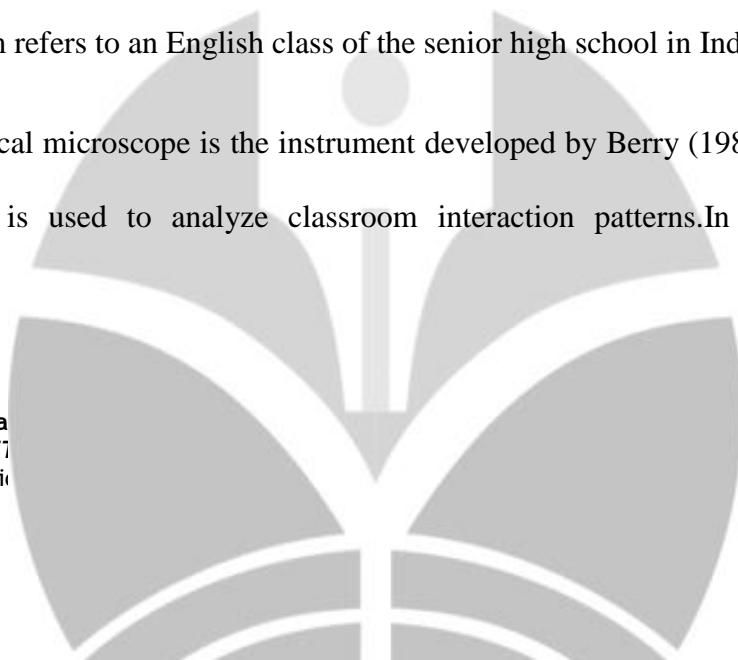
The result of the study is expected to contribute to the related theories, teachers, and students. In term of theoretical significance, the study is intended to support the previous theories on patterns of classroom interaction. In term of teacher significance, the result of the study is expected to give a valuable contribution for English teacher in designing any teaching strategy which is applied in the teaching and learning processes which support the development of an active and interactive classroom interaction. Since it is assumed that students do not get enough and comprehensible English understanding of what they have learned in formal school, the result

of the study is intended to give information for teachers of what classroom interaction patterns appear in an EFL classroom of a senior high school which was analyzed using pedagogical microscope as a tool to find and reveal the interaction. By analyzing the classroom interaction patterns, teachers will have an overview of what happens in an EFL classroom of a senior high school and they can apply the model of teaching applied in that classroom in their own classes. In term of student significance, the result of the study is expected to show students that through games that they enjoy, they could learn English eagerly within an interactive and active teaching and learning atmosphere. They also could improve their English better through an interesting way of teaching and learning.

1.6. Clarification of Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation, some terms in this study are defined as follow.

- Classroom interaction patterns are patterns of interaction that occur in the classroom. In this study, classroom interaction refers to the interaction that occurs in one class of the senior high school where the study was conducted.
- EFL classroom is a class that specifically used for English learning. In this study, EFL classroom refers to an English class of the senior high school in Indonesia.
- Pedagogical microscope is the instrument developed by Berry (1981 cited in Suherdi, 2009: 59) that is used to analyze classroom interaction patterns. In this study, pedagogical



microscope refers to an instrument that is used to analyze the data which is taken from classroom interaction.