CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This first section provides the rationale of why the study necessarily takes place. Its description is started with the background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1   Background of the Study

It is admitted that teacher talk plays a crucial role in language learning since teachers typically have a superior status in the classroom and they control topic discourse and also provide the only live target input that the students are likely to receive (Cullen, 1998, in Farahian & Rezaae, 2012). Teacher talk does not only determine how well teachers conduct their teaching but also guarantees how well students will learn (Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010).

One manifestation of teacher talk is teacher's question (Farahian & Mehrdad, 2012). By questioning, deeper students' understanding and engagement in the classroom can be elicited (Adedoyin, 2010, in Hamiloğlu & Temiz, 2012). In addition, teacher's question is one of prominent tools to observe and determine if learning really takes place in a classroom (Hamiloğlu & Temiz, 2012). More importantly, good questions check for understanding of the basic facts, skills, or ideas in a lesson and then push students to think critically and creatively about what they have learned (Stronge, Tucker, & Hindman, 2004).

Being acknowledged that questioning promotes positive impact on students, extensive research has been done to figure out the influence of questions on students' knowledge, skill, and achievements (e.g Gall, 1984; Almeida, 2010, Tofade et. al, 2013; Abhakorn, 2014; Wright, 2016; Khalk et. al, 2017; Shen & Yodkhumlue, 2013; Katemba & Marie, 2016). Gall (1984) summarized research on teacher's questioning which mainly intended to determine what type of question promoted better achievement on the tests.

Almeida (2010) conducted action research study to promote teachers' questioning awareness. In the same year, Almeida (2010) also investigated questioning patterns and the teaching strategies implemented by three teachers in three different classes. Another qualitative study on teachers' questions is carried out by Tofade et. al (2013) which presents a review of the taxonomy of questions elaborated with questioning-related theories to establish a set of strategies for using questions as a teaching tool effectively.

As well, research on teachers' questions was conducted by Abhakorn (2014). He investigated referential questions used by a Thai English teacher and responses given by students in order to identify the characteristics of questions which may develop or hamper language development. Later, Wright (2016) researched how display and referential questions affect student responses. The data were students' responses which were analyzed according to the length and complexity of them.

More recently, researchers concern about the effect that teacher's question brings to the development of student critical thinking. Khalk, Sheir, and El Nabawy (2012) administered a quantitative research in the form of experimental study. They successfully verified the hypothesis stated that the experimental group who got oral questioning treatment during the lesson gained higher mean score than control group who learned via traditional method on critical thinking test.

Shen and Yodkhumlue (2013) examined the effects of a teacher's questions on the development of critical thinking of college EFL students in one of the universities in China. In Indonesian context, a study similar to Shen and Yodkhumlue's was carried out by Katemba and Marie (2016). They observed 6 English teachers in three Junior High Schools in Bandung. The analysis showed that teachers preferred to pose low order thinking questions than high order thinking (HOT) questions.

Aforementioned paragraphs indicate research on teachers' questions scarcely examined by using Theme system analysis. Theme system analysis is mostly used to analyze formal written texts, such as news (e.g Francis, 1990; Gomez, 1994, Hawes, 2015), students' texts (e.g Xu, 2000; Katrini & Farikah, 2015, Hawes, 2015), and undergraduate thesis (e.g Rahmawati & Kurniawan, 2015; Gunawan & Aziza, 2017; Muroda et. al, 2017).

As indicated in paragraphs above, many studies tend to view questions as individual clauses focusing on sorting them into certain categorization of questions proposed by experts and examining which type of questions are better at facilitating students learning which is indicated by high test's score and long verbal responses. Regarding the significance of teachers' questions as one of strategies in maintaining and structuring classroom interaction, this study emphasizes the analysis of teachers' questions from the perspective of Themes system of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). More specifically, this study aims to provide information how the teachers choose words or phrases as Themes and Rhemes that compose the questions and how they are structured in such a way that make the message being delivered is connected and have a clear focus on facilitating students to build knowledge of the purpose, structure organization, and language features of hortatory exposition text which is set in advance as the learning goal of the lesson.

The Theme system is chosen as the means of the analysis because it contributes to the cohesive development of text (Eggins, 2004, p. 296). A text should be cohesive in order to perform its communicative function (De Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981, as cited in Garing, 2014; Gebhard, 2006, p. 211) and help the text flow and hold together (Knapp & Watkins, 2005, p. 47). Thus, teacher's question as a text should be arranged in such a way to make it cohesive and easy to follow by the students.

Further, Theme analysis will determine how the information is structured at the level of clause (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p. 71), while the Theme progression analysis which works at the level of text enables us to understand how the topic of the lesson is maintained and explored. Therefore, information regarding compatibility of what is being discussed and the purpose of teaching is possibly achieved.

So far, two major things have been discussed. First, Theme and Thematic Progression pattern analyses allow us to know the organization of a text is worded to signal how the present part of the message fits in with other parts (Thompson, 2004, p. 141). Second, teachers' questions aid students in connecting concepts, making inferences, increasing awareness, encouraging creative and

imaginative thought, aiding critical thinking processes, and generally helping students explore deeper levels of knowing, thinking, and understanding (Wilen, 1991; Sujariati, Rahman, & Mahmud, 2016).

However, the study which attempts to investigate teachers' questions by using Theme system analysis is rarely conducted in spite of the potential benefits it may bring. Thus, this study attempts to examine teachers' questions by the Theme system analysis of SFL in which it is seen as a text which has structure organization to establish meanings and purposes. Teacher's questions are worth investigating as they have a function of controlling the progress of interaction in order to make the discussion focus on a particular topic (Ellis, 1992). Further, the Theme system fits best in analyzing the structure of information (Bloor & Bloor, 2004) being revealed in teacher's questions as they provide information of how the topic of discussion is realized in the Themes and how the Themes are developed throughout the whole lesson.

More specifically, the investigation covers the classification of types of teachers' questions at the first place as it is helpful during the analysis of the Theme and Thematic Progression. Additionally, this study includes the Theme and Thematic Progression pattern analyses in order to elucidate the topic of the discussion is realized and developed in the chosen Themes and Thematic Progression pattern in teachers' questions associated with the purpose of teaching hortatory exposition text. The analysis also deals with possible impacts of teachers' questions with such Theme and Thematic Progression toward students' understanding of the content, structure organization, and language features of the text.

1.2   Research Questions

This study is designed to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of Theme are realized in questions by the teachers during the teaching of hortatory exposition text?
2. What types of Thematic Progression are realized in the teachers' questions during the teaching of hortatory exposition text?
3. What are pedagogical implications drawn from the trend of Theme and Thematic Progression to the teaching of hortatory exposition text?

1.3   Aims of Study

Being led by three research questions mentioned in the previous subsection, the study aims to:

1. Find out types of Theme realized in the teacher's questions posed during the teaching of hortatory exposition text
2. Find out types of Thematic Progression realized in the teacher's questions during the teaching of hortatory exposition text
3. Explain pedagogical implications drawn from the trend of Theme and Thematic Progression of teachers' questions to the teaching of hortatory exposition text

1.4   Scope of the Study

The coverage of this study is limited to the analysis of questions posed by two teachers, one is assigned as experienced teacher while the other is novice teacher. So, other forms of teacher talk such as giving explanation and command will not be included in the analysis. Also, the questions under investigation are those which are uttered by teachers when the teaching of hortatory exposition text is started. Thus, questions provided before the lesson started, for instance when the teacher organizes the class, will be excluded.

The analysis of the questions will include the analysis of the Theme and Thematic Progression to determine the topic dominates the discussion as well as how the topic is developed. So, the expected findings are dealing with the meaning of chosen Themes and Thematic Progression patterns by considering the context in which such Themes and Thematic Progression patterns occur in the classroom.

Lastly, even though this study involves two teachers from two different research sites, the result will not give any judgment whether one teacher is superior to the other one nor present comparison between the two, instead, describing questions posed by teachers during teaching hortatory exposition text enriched by exploration of their compatibility with the purpose of the teaching of hortatory exposition text.

1.5   Significance of the Study

The results of the proposed research insist on providing some contributions to classroom interaction research in English language teaching, particularly in the teaching of hortatory exposition text, especially in Indonesian context. It is expected this present study is able to reach, at least, three major advantages.

Firstly, the study is expected to contribute to further understanding of teacher's questioning practice (Suggingwati & Nguyen, 2013) during teaching hortatory exposition text in the Indonesian context generally. Secondly, this study will provide practical information on text analysis using Theme system of SFL. After the analysis has been completed, the trend of chosen Theme and Thematic Progression will tell how teachers organize the way their message is worded to help students to gain the knowledge of hortatory exposition text. A better understanding of the ways language construes academic knowledge is important for students and teachers, linguists and language researchers, textbook writers and administrators (Schleppergrell, 2004, p. 23).

Therefore, it supplies actual information for school administrators and policy makers involved in planning, implementing, and assessing the practice of English teaching especially when teaching texts. Finally, it is hoped that this study will give contribution to the development of teaching hortatory exposition text, at least in the research sites, regarding teacher's questioning that will help students to establish students' understanding of hortatory exposition text

1.6   Clarification of Related Terms

This section presents distinct definition of key terms used in the study to avoid ambiguity, misunderstanding, and misinterpretation of the concepts of the study. They are:

- *Teacher's question* is "any statement, interrogation or affirmation, intended to evoke a feedback" (Almeida, 2010, p. 752). The analysis of teacher questions in this study follows the categorization proposed by (Carter & McCarthy, 2006, pp. 424-433) as follows:

  1. Yes-no questions: these are one of the most common question types. The anticipated response is either *yes* or *no.*
     Example:
     Do you know what a freebie is?

  2. Wh-questions: questions with *what, when, where, which, who(m), whose, why, how* request specific information concerning persons and things, and the circumstances surrounding actions and events (e.g. time, manner, place, etc.). The anticipated response to such questions is not *yes* or *no*, but information which provides the missing content of the *wh*-word.
     Example:
     What adjective would you use to describe someone who says 'hi how are you I'm fine it's nice to meet you'?

  3. Alternative questions: these questions give the answers a choice between two or more items contained in the question which are linked by *or.* Alternative questions may be yes-no interrogatives or wh-interrogatives. An alternative question may offer the recipient the choice of one or all the alternatives.
     Example:
     Is this a word, a phrase, or a clause?

  4. Declarative questions: not all yes-no questions have interrogative form, and a declarative clause may function in context as a question. The intonation is typically rising (↗) (asking for confirmation) or falling (↘) (strongly assuming something).
     Examples:
     S1: (↘)so you're going to be here about quarter past?
     S2: yeah quarter past, twenty past, yeah.
     S1: that's fine

  5. Tag questions: questions may include a tag after a declarative clause. Tag questions are highly interactive in that they may constrain the range of possible or desired responses from the addresses. Some patterns are more constraining than others.
     Example:
     You've worked hard haven't you?

  6. Echo and checking questions: echo questions repeat part of the previous speaker's utterance, usually because some part of it has not been fully understood. They often have declarative word order and a clause-final wh-word.
     Examples:
     S1: He's called Oliver.
     S2: He's called what?
     S1: Oliver

- Experienced teachers are commonly addressed to teachers who have approximately 5 years or more of teaching experience (Rodriguez & McKay, 2010). In addition, they are those who have competencies in monitoring and processing students feedback, integrating instructional goals with knowledge about students and instructional contents, and finally, applying this knowledge when making decision about how to implement and adjust planned instruction to classroom condition and student learning states (Fogarty, Wang & Creek, 1983). However, as the

competencies of the experienced teacher in this study are not confirmed, the experienced teacher and novice teacher is distinguished based on the number of years of teaching. *Experienced teachers* are teachers who have been teaching for 3 years (Bastick, 2002) to 9 years or more (Atay, 2008; Bivona, 2002). Meanwhile, *novice teachers* are those who have less than 2 years of teaching experience (Gatbonton, 2008).

- *Hortatory exposition text* explores one-sided argument (Promwinai, 2010). Its social purpose is to persuade the readers that something in the case is worth doing or not doing (Suherdi, 2013, p. 75) or something should or should not be the case (Gerot & Wignell, 1995, p. 209). This kind of text is structured as follows (Feez & Joyce, 1998b, p. 138, as cited in Emilia, 2005, p. 60):
  - (i) a Thesis which introduces the issue and the writer's point;
  - (ii) a series of Arguments which support the thesis, containing any factual information, evidence, description or explanation which supports the thesis;
  - (iii) a Restatement of the Thesis a stronger and more direct statement of the thesis introduced in the first stage.

1.7   Paper Organization

This paper is arranged within five chapters. The first chapter is Introduction in which the background of the study, problems of the study, aims of the study, the scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of the terms, and paper organization are presented. The second chapter is Theoretical Foundation which presents ground theory of the study and its related theories and research reports that become the base of how the data of the study is scrutinized. The third chapter is Research Methodology which reveals the techniques of how the data are collected and analyzed systematically. The forth chapter is Findings and Discussion that presents the result of the data analysis along with the discussion concerning the implication of the findings toward educational practice. The last chapter is Conclusion and Suggestions in which the whole discussion of the study is wrapped up. It also gives suggestions for further researchers to examine educational issues related to this study more comprehensively.