CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter discusses the background of the study along with the research questions, aims and significance. It also discusses clarification of terms used in this study as well as the paper organization.

1.1 Background of the Study

Fundamentally, one of the purposes of language teaching is to make the students able to communicate in target language. In Indonesia, where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), classroom may be the only place for students to get the most exposure to the language since they do not use English in their daily life. Therefore, it is expected that teacher can give sufficient experience to the target language during the lesson by encouraging the students to participate and to get involved more.

Language teaching itself can refer to the interactive process between students and teacher or among the students themselves (Flanders, 1960). At this point, interaction becomes an important part in language teaching since the students can learn English through interaction with a teacher and sometimes with their classmates (Spratt et al, 2005). Interaction is a major part of educational practices that is also acknowledged as a major source for language acquisition (Suherdi, 2010; Damhuis and De Blauw, 2008). The interaction that is expected to happen in the classroom is an active interaction between the students and the teacher, where the students and the teacher are interactive. Unfortunately, the expected active interaction desired rarely occurs during teaching and learning process due to the less motivation to participate possessed by the students, especially in Indonesia.

Students in Indonesia are still shy in participating during teaching and learning process. In addition, Husnaini’s (2005) and Stianingrum’s (2010) findings in their studies show the percentage of teacher talk is more than 60%. The percentage shows that teacher mostly dominate the interaction in the classroom. Meanwhile, the students are rarely active and participative in the whole classroom interaction. Teacher’s domination of classroom interaction can discourage the students to participate and speak more in the target language. The students may get exposure to the target language by listening to the teacher’s talk dominating the
interaction, but on the other hand, the students get less experience to use and to apply the exposure they get from the teacher.

One of important roles to play by the teacher in the classroom is as the initiator and sustainer of interaction (Brown, 2001). Regarding this, teacher may differently have their own ways to activate and to initiate the interaction in their classroom. However, the most common way or strategy to initiate the classroom interaction is by asking questions to the students since questioning is one of the best ways to develop teacher’s role as an initiator and sustainer of interaction (Brown, 2001).

The students are expected to actively give responses to the questions being asked to them since every question that the teacher gives to the learners needs an answer or responses from the learners. Then, there will be active interaction and communication established between teacher and students when the students give answer (Sari, 2011; Caesin, 1995). Regarding questioning, Brown (2001) points out that appropriate questioning in an interactive classroom can fulfill a number of different functions, such as giving the student opportunity to produce language comfortably, initiating a chain reaction of student interaction among themselves, and providing students with opportunities to find out what they think by hearing what they say.

Unfortunately, asking questions to the students does not always work in some cases regardless the repertoire of questions that can be applied by the teacher in the classroom. Teacher, sometimes, fails to encourage the students to speak more by answering the questions due to certain circumstances, such as the question that is not understood by the students or the length of the question that is too long. For that reason, it is important to not only look at the type of the questions but also the questioning strategies employed by the teacher since developing a repertoire of questioning strategies is also one of the best ways for teacher to establish and sustain the interactive classroom interaction (Brown, 2001). Questioning strategies may also provide necessary stepping stones for the students to communicate (Brown, 2001).

Teacher, as the initiator and sustainer of interaction in the classroom, can select and apply appropriate questioning strategies in order to encourage the students to be involved in the classroom interaction. There are many types of
questioning strategies that can be applied by the teacher. However, from so many types of questioning strategies applied by a teacher, this study will only be based on typical questioning strategies proposed by Chaudron (1988), Wu (1993), Anwar (2000) and Tsui et al (2004) frameworks. According to the aforementioned frameworks, repetition, rephrasing, simplification, decomposition, probing, exemplification, blank-filling, code switching, and wait-time are the most common strategies used by the teacher to get the desired answer or responses from the students.

Departing from the explanation above, this study is aimed to investigate the questioning strategies applied by the teacher in classroom interaction along with teacher’s and students’ perceptions toward the questioning strategies applied in classroom interaction. A public senior high school in Cimahi is selected to be the site of this study. Then, an English teacher and her 38 students in eleventh grade are selected to be the subjects of this study.

1.2 Research Questions

Departing from the background above, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What are questioning strategies applied by the teacher in classroom interaction?
2. What are teacher’s perceptions toward the questioning strategies applied in classroom interaction?
3. What are students’ perceptions toward the questioning strategies applied by the teacher in classroom interaction?

1.3 Aims of the Study

Given the aforementioned research questions, the main purpose of the study is to investigate the questioning strategies applied by the teacher in classroom interaction along with the teacher’s and students’ perceptions toward the use of questioning strategies in classroom interaction. Teacher’s perceptions are focused on three aspects, namely teacher’s perceptions toward the implementation of questioning strategies, the advantages and disadvantages of questioning strategies and teacher’s considerations in applying questioning strategies. Meanwhile, the
students’ perceptions are focused on the most helpful questioning strategy for the students along with the students’ perceptions toward the implementation of questioning strategies.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study will be limited merely on finding out the questioning strategies applied by the teacher in classroom interaction. In addition, the scope of the study will also be expanded on investigating the teacher’s and the students’ perceptions toward the questioning strategies employed by the teacher in the classrooms. Teacher’s perceptions are focused on three aspects, namely teacher’s perceptions toward the implementation of questioning strategies, the advantages and disadvantages of questioning strategies and teacher’s considerations in applying questioning strategies. Meanwhile, the students’ perceptions are focused on the most helpful questioning strategy for the students along with the students’ perceptions toward the implementation of questioning strategies.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of the study are expected to provide a comprehensive description about the questioning strategies in classroom interaction in order to elicit students’ responses, so that the teacher can trigger the students to be more engaged and be active in the lesson. In addition, it is also expected to give valuable contributions to the English teacher regarding classroom interaction that can be used to cope with problems encountered while encouraging the students to speak more so as to give effective English teaching to the language students.

In relation to the study program of English Education, this study is expected to contribute a positive impact for English teaching models, particularly for the better and the more effective questioning strategies.

1.6 Research Methodology

1.6.1 Design

In relation to the research questions above, this research will use qualitative method embracing the characteristics of case study research. The qualitative
method is applied in order to investigate more on the real process or emphasize on the natural setting.

By applying qualitative study, the data will be collected, coded, and classified into some categories. The data will be collected through two different instruments namely classroom observation and interview. The data collected will be coded and labelled by using IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow up) coding system proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). Then, the data will be analyzed using some related frameworks, such as Wu’s framework, Tsui et al, Anwar, and Chaudron’s framework. Those frameworks will be further discussed in chapter II. The use of those frameworks are intended to acquire and to discuss some findings before it arrives to a final conclusion of the study.

1.6.2 Subjects of the Study

An English teacher and her students in eleventh grade from a public senior high school in Cimahi serve as the subjects of this research. The teacher is chosen as she uses English in most of her classroom language. Hence, the teacher and her classes taught are considered to be the potential participants to investigate the effective questioning strategies in eliciting students’ responses, to find out the teacher’s perceptions of the effective questioning strategies applied in their classrooms, and also to investigate the students’ perceptions toward the questioning strategies applied by the teacher.

1.6.3 Data Collection

There are two kinds of data that will be gained in this study. They are field notes and interview notes. Field notes are gained through classroom observation, while interview notes are collected through interview.

- Classroom observation

The observation will be equipped by video recording. Video recording is employed to get the details of teacher’s questioning strategies in eliciting students’ responses and students’ responses toward the questions given by the teacher that are not covered through direct observation.

The primary data will be collected through this process of observation. The result from video recording will be in the form of transcriptions of each question
and questioning strategies applied, and also students’ responses toward the questions and questioning strategies given by the teacher. After being transcribed, the data collected through classroom observation will be coded using IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow up) system proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) then to be further analyzed and discussed using Wu’s framework, Tsui et al, Anwar, and Chaudron’s framework. The frameworks are further explained in chapter II.

- Interview

In order to support the data gained from classroom observation, an interview is also conducted in this study. This instrument is employed to investigate teacher’s the students’ perceptions of the questioning strategies employed by the teacher in the classroom interaction.

The data gained from this instrument will be in the form of interview notes. The interview will be a semi-structured interview in which the participants will be asked some questions dealing with the questioning strategies applied by teacher in the classroom. The teacher and some of her students will be the interviewee. The students involved in this interview process are selected based on their level of participation during teaching-learning process. The interview process will be recorded by audio recorder to create an interview transcription. The classroom observation and interview will be conducted several times in order to get the more detailed description of questioning strategies that are effective in eliciting students’ responses as well as the teacher’s and the students’ perceptions of the questioning strategies applied by the teacher in the classroom.

1.6.4 Data Analysis

The data are collected from classroom observation and interview. In addition, classroom observation will be equipped by video-recording. The data collected from both instruments will be analyzed through several steps in order to answer the research questions stated beforehand.

The data taken from video recording will be analyzed to find out what kind of questioning strategies that are used by the teacher and are effective to elicit students’ responses. Therefore, the transcription from the video recording will be firstly explored and coded by using IRF (Initiate-Response-Follow up) coding system by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). The IRF structure is employed for coding
and labelling the teacher’s and students’ utterances during the whole process of teaching and learning. It is expected that by using IRF coding system, the transcription can be easier and clearer to be analyzed.

After being coded, the transcription will be analyzed, classified and categorized using some related frameworks such as Wu’s framework, Tsui et al., Anwar, and Chaudron’s framework. It is expected that from this analysis, the study can investigate the questioning strategies applied by the teacher in eliciting and gaining students’ responses.

Meanwhile, the data taken from interview is an interview transcription. The transcription will also be explored and coded to acquire teacher’s and students’ inner thoughts toward the questioning strategies applied in classroom interaction. Finally, the data gained through interview is also expected to be able to validate the previous data collected from classroom observation.

1.7 Clarification of Terms

In order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding, some terms are clarified as follows:

1.7.1 Teacher’s Questions

Questions asked by the teacher during the teaching-learning process as one of the best ways to encourage the students to be involved in the process. It is also a way to initiate interaction between teacher and students in order to give opportunities to the students to produce language as well as giving the opportunities to find out their own self-discovery (Brown, 2001: 169-171). In addition, Chaudron (1988) defines teacher’s question as the basic tool for teacher to achieve instructional goals as well as to focus on learners’ attention, to boost learner language production and to assess learners’ mastery upon the lesson.

1.7.2 Teacher’s Questioning Strategies

Teacher’s questioning strategies refer to the strategies employed by the teacher in giving questions to the students in order to elicit information needed and also to gain the students’ responses during teaching and
learning process in classroom interaction. It also refers to the teacher’s strategies to elicit verbal responses from the students which are manifested in modification of question (Wu, 1993).

1.7.3 **Classroom Interaction**

Classroom interaction can be defined as the whole interactions occurring inside the classroom between teacher and students or among the students themselves. Flanders includes teacher talk and students talk as two important parts in the classroom interaction.