Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research questions, the purposes of the study, the scope of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1   Background of the Study

This study aimed at identifying learning activities in English teaching and learning process as reflected in teacher's and students' turns in the classroom interaction. The interactions were recorded and then transcribed to present the teacher's and the students' utterances. The utterances were then identified by using the application of Initiation - Response – Follow-up (IRF). The initiations, the responses and the follow-ups were then further classified to reveal kinds of learning activities that mostly conducted in the English teaching and learning process.

Before a teacher is in front of his/her students doing teaching process, s/he should consider carefully what s/he is going to teach. Lesson planning enables the teacher to realize how much the students have learned and how much is still ahead to be learned. More specifically, planning lesson is an important and useful teaching practice because it makes the teacher ready to cope with whatever happens, keeps the teacher on track and helps the teacher to organize his/her teaching (Abdallah: 2011). According to Harmer (2002), in arranging lesson plan a teacher should

consider a number of essential elements such as language level of students, their likely levels of motivation, learning style differences, and educational and cultural backgrounds. These four factors furthermore will determine activities, language, skills, and contents by which they will do, practice, improve, and achieve in learning process.

Activity is a work to achieve an aim (Cambridge Dictionary, 2008). Brown (2001) defined activity as virtually anything that learners do in the classroom. Thus, learning activities are activities designed by teacher as the guide in a classroom to create a condition of learning. The condition of learning can be created by the teacher in an English classroom by customizing the target language s/he uses so that the students can understand it and providing sufficient opportunity to the target language application in order for the students to practice it. Therefore, besides planning for the activities, the teacher tends to be the conductor or controller of the classroom talk/interaction: s/he sets the topics, orchestrates the responses, determines when and who contributes, and provides proper feedbacks. In consequence, the teacher tends to talk much more than the students (Myhill, Jones, & Hopper, 2006). Interaction occurs as long as people are communicating each other and giving action and receiving the reaction in one another anywhere and anytime (Brown, 2001), including in the classroom setting. In other words, interaction is an essential part in teaching and learning process.

Classroom interaction stresses on the participation every individual in the teaching and learning process (Wells, 1999 in Kumpulainen and Wray, 2002). The successful classroom interaction will determine the successful of learning language and it depends on how teacher and students take part in the interaction. Halliday specifically mentioned the part as turns (1975).

Learning activities in teaching and learning process can be easily identified through many ways such as identifying lesson plan that teacher has arranged, collecting questionnaires from students, interviewing teachers, and doing classroom observation, as have been done by Marina (2010) and Iswari (2011) in their researches. Classroom interaction as the core of teaching and learning process is worth to be analyzed to reveal classroom learning activities and therefore this research identified learning activities in the classroom interaction.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, the research question that could be formulated is: How are learning activities represented in teacher's and students' turns? To help writer in answering the question, below are two sub-questions proposed:

1. What types of learning activities represented in teacher's and students' turns?

2. What types of learning activities are dominantly represented in teacher's and students' turns?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe how learning activities represented in teacher's and students' turns. The description deals with the learning activities and the learning activities dominantly represented in teacher's and students' turns.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on learning activities represented in the teacher's and the students' interactions in the English teaching and learning process.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study significantly built teachers' language awareness especially the language used in classroom interaction. By considering the language used in classroom, it is expected for the teachers to be able to communicate efficiently in conducting the learning activities in the classroom.