Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter discusses learning activities, classroom interaction, and classroom discourse analysis.

2.1 Learning Activities

Learning activity can be described as an interaction between learner and an environment that is carried out in response to a task with intended learning outcome (Beetham, 2004). In classroom, the environment is the learning materials. Later on, the learning materials will be the source of activities for students practice and communicative interaction (Cunningsworth in Richards, 2001). Then, it is teacher's obligation to make students interact with the learning materials. It can be done by customizing it so that students can understand it and providing sufficient opportunity in order for students doing it. In sum, teacher is the designer, organizer, and controller of the learning activities.

2.1.1 Listening Activities

The arrangements of listening activities are needed to teach any skill of listening, both micro and macro skills, that have been mentioned above. Some types of listening activities that can be carried out in the class are non-explicit responses, short responses, longer responses and extended

responses (Ur, 1991). In non-explicit responses activities, students give no response to the activities; however facial expression and body language are often needed to show their participation. The examples of non-explicit response are telling or reading stories, playing songs, playing videos or movies. In short response, students give short response to the activity by performing some actions, for example, obeying instructions, ticking off items, detecting mistakes, writing ticks or crosses. While in longer responses students give full response to the activity, for example, students answer questions, take brief notes, paraphrase, translate, summarize, and fill long gaps. Extended responses activity is combined skills activities (reading, writing and speaking), for example, problem solving and interpretation.

2.1.2   Reading Activities

In country where English is taught as foreign language like in Indonesia, it is easier to find out written source than spoken source. Consequently, teachers teach more reading lessons than listening lessons in English class. However based on the researcher's experience there are more conventional types of reading activities found (i.e. a text followed by comprehension questions), though there are many types of reading activities that can be applied in the class like Ur (1991) offered: pre-question (asking students about general questions referred to the text before reading), do- it yourself question (learners make and answer their

own questions), provide a title (learners suggest a title or alternative title), summarize (learners summarize a text in one or two sentences), continue (learners suggest what might happen next in a story), preface (learners suggest what might happen before in a story), gapped text (learners fill in a gapped text), learners look for how many mistake are in a text, comparison (learners try to find the difference and similarity of two texts that have similar topic), responding (learners discuss how they would response a provocative article or letter), and re- presentation of content (learners re-present the content of a story by drawing, coloring, marking a map, a diagram etc.).

2.1.3   Speaking Activities

Speaking activities in the classroom, according to Ur (1991), could be considered as an effective or successful activity in some certain conditions: when the learners talk a lot in the classroom than the teachers, when certain active learners do not dominate the activity, when the learners are motivated to speak, and when the utterances learners express are relevant and comprehensible to each other. Even though speaking activities in the classroom is an essential component of a language course, it is difficult to design such kind of activities. Ur (1991) stated that the problems that might occur in the speaking activities are learners are often worried of making mistake, afraid of criticism, reluctant to speak foreign language in the classroom and not confident. Learners also tend to use

their mother tongue language and they often think that they have nothing to say. Another problem that often happens is a tendency of some active learners who dominate the conversation while others speak very little or even not at all.

In addition he gave some solutions that the teachers could do to overcome the problems are by using group work or pair work, basing the activity on simple language, using interesting topic and task, giving some instructions or training in discussion skills and keeping students speaking the target language. Moreover drills, dialogue recitation, prepared speech, oral presentation, storytelling, drama, games, interview, discussion, debate, problem solving, decision making, opinion exchange, information gap, jigsaw activities, role play, and simulation could be used as the alternatives of speaking activities (Lazaraton, 2001; Ur, 1991; Harmer, 2002; Kayi, 2006; Brown, 2001; Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; Nunan, 2003; Richards, 2001).

2.1.4 Writing Activities

Writing is a specific skill which helps people to put their thoughts into words in a meaningful form through pen and paper. The purpose of writing is expressing idea and conveying a message to the readers (Ur, 1991). Thus, the idea itself seems to be the most important part of the writing activities. Ur (2001) states various types of writing that can be applied in the class, among them are writing a book report, writing a book

review, writing news report, writing a narrative based on pictures, writing letters, writing an article, writing personal story, writing how to do something (instruction sheet), describing people or something, and writing job application. Teachers should know the students' reasons for writing, provide opportunities for students to write, and give helpful and meaningful feedback.

2.1.5   Grammar Activities

Grammar deals with the structure of languages, English grammar with the structure of English, French grammar with the structure of French, etc. Language consists of words, but the way in which these words are modified and joined together to express thoughts and feelings differs from one language to another (Jespersen, 2006).

In grammar, students learn about the composition of words, phrases, and clauses in any given natural language. Grammar is needed in order to produce language in a clearer and more effective manner. Thus, grammar is important to be learnt.

Ur (1991) proposed some learning grammar activities that can be conducted in classroom; they are filling in the blanks, recognizing error, changing tenses, remembering tenses formulas, translating, remembering the changes of verbs, deciding the correct tense in sentence.

2.1.6 Vocabulary Activities

Vocabulary is one of the elements in learning language. As state by Richards and Renandya in Thornbury (2002), vocabulary is the main component of language proficiency and provides much of the basis or how well learners speak, listen, read, and write. Through vocabulary, language learners can apply speaking, listening, writing and reading skill. If grammar is needed in order to produce language in a clearer and more effective manner, then vocabulary is needed in order to produce language itself.

Unluckily, English have many vocabularies that have more than a single word: for example, post office and mother in-law, which are made up of two or three words but express a single meaning. There are also multi-word idioms where the meaning of the phrase cannot be deduced from an analysis of the component words. A useful convention is to cover all such cases by talking about vocabulary 'items' rather than 'words' (Ur, 1991). Therefore there are some points that teacher should teach related to vocabulary: form (pronunciation and spelling), grammar, collocation, aspect of meaning, and word formation. Ur (1991) proposed some learning vocabulary activities that can be conducted in classroom; they are brainstorming round an idea, identifying words we know, matching, writing sentences, dictation, remembering, gap filling, translation, and sentence completion.

2.2 Classroom Interaction

When two or more people or things communicate with or react to each other is simply called interaction (Cambridge Dictionary, 2008). Brown (2001) described interaction as the heart of communication; it is what communication is all about. Interaction occurs as long as people are communicating each other and giving action and receiving the reaction in one another anywhere and anytime, including in the classroom setting. By interacting teacher encourages students' participation, delivers materials, asks question, gives information, gives directions or orders, organizes classroom, and conducts learning activities, whereas students answer questions, share ideas, show understanding, ask questions, and do learning activities (Harmer, 2002). Classroom interaction is not only defined as the interaction between teachers and learners, but also among learners in the classroom (Tsui, 1995).

In short, interaction is an essential part in teaching and learning process. By interacting, teacher does teaching process and students do learning process.

2.2.1 Turns in the Classroom Interaction

Turn-taking is a basic form of organization for conversation (Orestrom, 1983; Roger, Bull, & Smith, 1988; Bailey, Plunkett & Scarpa, 1999; Schegloff, 2000; Bortfeld, Leon, Bloom, Schober, & Brennan, 2001. Turn taking maintains a mutual attention among participants involved in a

conversation, defines their relationship (Wiemann & Knapp, 1999) and the pertinence boundaries related to interaction (Kendon, 1992).

The most familiar turn-taking pattern in social interaction is the selection of the next speaker by the current speaker (e.g. by asking a question, by gazing towards a particular person, by addressing him/her by name) and self-selection (Liddicoat, 2007; Silverman, 1998). Similarly in this study, classroom interaction provides turn-taking which is usually initiated by the teacher through asking question or giving instructions, while students acquire or receive turns by responding to the teacher's questions or instructions, e.g. by raising hands, by answering question (Koole & Berenst, 2008).

As asking and answering questions are typical interaction and are expected in most classrooms (Weber & Longhi-Chirlin, 2001). It is typically structured as Initiation-Response-Follow-Up (IRF).

2.2.2 Teacher Talk

Classroom interaction is generally classified into two talks (Flanders, 1970; Couniham, 1998). The first is talk by teacher and the other one by students. According to Brewser (2003) teacher talk is special language that teachers use when addressing language learners for instruction, explanation, giving feedback in the classroom. Harmer (2002) added it used to encourage students' participation, deliver materials, ask question, give information, give directions or orders, organize classroom,

and conduct learning activities. In communicating with students, Richards (2001) proposed that teacher often simplifies s/he speech, giving it many of the characteristics of foreigner talk and other simplified styles of speech addressed to language learners. In addition, teacher carefully selects the words s/he uses according to students' proficiency and level. New words and difficult words are avoided in order the information sent are received by the students successfully.

Other definition comes from Ellis (1994). Teacher talk is claimed as the process which teacher addresses classroom language learners differently from the way teacher addresses other kinds of classroom learners. S/he makes adjustments to both language form and function to facilitate communication. It can be concluded that different classroom activities will make different selections from the possible kinds of language activities including the teacher talk.

2.2.3 Student Talk

Student talk is the second talk of classroom interaction (Flanders, 1970; Couniham, 1998). By doing interaction students are able to answer teacher's questions, share ideas, show understanding, ask questions, and do learning activities (Harmer, 2002). Flanders (1970 in Malamah-Thomas 1987) divided student talk as response (teacher initiates interaction, freedom to express own ideas is limited) initiation (students express their

own ideas, initiate a topic), silence or confusion (pause, short periods of silence, confusion, and incomprehension)

2.3   Classroom Discourse Analysis

The language used by people can be analyzed. The activity of analyzing the language is called discourse analysis. The discourse analysis is committed an investigation of what that language is used for (Brown and Yule, 1983). Discourse analysis can be used to analyze both spoken interaction and written text (Brown, 2001). In classroom discourse analysis the object of the study is the language and the interaction that teacher and students use to communicate and to interact with each other in the classroom.

Therefore, classroom discourse analysis is aimed at developing our understanding about the nature of classroom talk. It presents how teacher and students interact in the classroom and the implication of their talks to develop understanding about language used in classroom interaction. Then findings of classroom discourse analysis can be tool as reflection of pedagogical practices in second or foreign language classroom.

2.3.1   Initiation-Response-Follow Up (IRF)

Halliday (1975) coined the term "learning how to make meaning'. The term has been widely used to state that the essence of learning a language is learning how to communicate meaningfully and learning that meaning is tied inextricably to our social and cultural context (McKay,

2006: 29). When people communicate meaningfully, they are trying to get things done by exchanging information and goods and services. In this case, they are applying the transactional model of communication. On the other hand when they establish a communication to maintain a social relationship, they are applying the interpersonal model of communication. When we are communicating we are trying to get things done and therefore it can be said that we are using a transactional model of communication. The transactional communication occurs in our daily life when we are communicating involves giving and demanding. It includes the exchange of goods and services and the delivery of information (Bailey, 2003).

Halliday (2004) defines four main functions in the exchange; offer, statement, command, and question. Each of those functions is represented in different speech role and commodity. 'Offer' function deals with goods-& services commodity in giving role, 'statement' is represented in the information commodity and giving role, 'command' appears in demanding goods-&-services, and 'question' is present in the exchange of information in demanding role. Those primary speech functions appear in the 'initiation' move which leads to the expectation of 'response' move to appear.

To respond to those functions in the initiation move, the one who responds may accept or reject the offer, undertake or refuse the command, acknowledge or contradict the statement, and answer or disclaim the

statement. Thus, the acceptance, rejection, undertaking, refusal, acknowledgement, contradiction, answer, and disclaimer are speech functions that exist in the response move.