# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### Background of the Study

A swift communication is absolutely the basic requirement in this global era. Mastering more than one language is suggested for anyone who wants to be a real global citizen. According to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the use of English as a global language is the indirect benefit from the legacy of former British Empire as well as the rise in influence of the most powerful member of the Empire – the United States of America (USA). In 2004, *The National Geographic* also predicted that there would be an increasing number of people to speak more than one language. Besides Mandarin, which is rapidly increasing in use, English has

become one of the languages that is world-widely

spoken by people around the world as the international

language. The increasing number of English language

learners occurs in not only the outer circle, but also

within the inner circle of English speaking countries, as

described by Smith et al (2006) in the following

statement:

> "In Europe and North America, comprised
> mainly of first- and second-circle countries,
> cultural and linguistic diversity has become
> the norm in urban schools, as illustrated by
> the following statistics: from 1994 to 2004,
> enrollment of English Language Learners
> (ELLs) in US K-12 schools increased 60.8%
> vs. 2.7% growth for non-ELL students3;
> currently, over 10% of K-12 students in the
> US are ELLs; 25% of the school population
> in California are ELLs4; 40% of the school
> population in Amsterdam were born outside
> of the Netherlands; 50% of the school
> population in Toronto and Vancouver are
> ELLs; and 85% of secondary school students
> in the European Union study English."

Many English courses and English as Foreign Language (EFL) classes are formed to supply the demand of English mastery, which is very essential nowadays in order to survive the wave of globalization. Countries within expanding circle perimeter, such as Indonesia, is one of the many affected by the rise of English as Foreign Language (EFL). Based on the latest implemented national curriculum, English is officially being taught starting from the secondary level education. In some private schools and informal education institutions, English is even being taught (at least introduced) for Indonesian younger learners.

Interesting things may happen during ELT processes in an EFL class. Teacher–students interaction in English may sometimes lead to an interesting

phenomena, especially if the teacher is not a native speaker of English, as commonly found in Indonesian EFL classes. Interestingly, these phenomena may occur without being realized by both the English teachers and the students as well (the participants of the interaction). Those phenomena may somehow be identified by using pragmatics study. In an EFL classroom context, both teachers and students have to choose the best utterances in order to maintain the harmony and the flow of the teaching-learning process. The teacher always tries to produce a meaningful utterance when delivering the learning material across the interlocutors (the students), and vice-versa. However; consciously or unconsciously, the utterances they speak are not merely a collection of words; moreover, they contain an action; as Yule (1996,

p.81) describes, "In speaking, people do not only produce words and some grammatical structures; moreover, they also produce an action within their utterances.". Based on Yule's brainstorm stated above, the writer can imply that the action performed within people's utterances is definitely inevitable. The actions contained within the utterances can be studied by a particular linguistics discipline. Speech Acts is considered as a branch of pragmatics discipline which specifies itself in studying some actions within a person's utterance. Austin is the first linguist who states an idea that a language can be used to imply an action, as written by Cummings (1999, p.8), "Austin is the first person who expresses his idea that a language can be used to imply an action through the separation between

constative and performative utterance". Keith (2005, p.

673) describes Austin's basic idea as follows:

> "Austin was convinced that we do not just use language to say things (make statements), but also to do things (perform actions). He formalized this opposition in his so-called performative hypothesis (which he would later abandon) by contrasting two types of utterances: constative utterances, or constatives, and performative utterances, or performatives."

While Austin claims five general classes of

performative utterance; namely verdictives, exercitives,

commissives, behabitives, and expositives (1975: 151,

cited in Keith 2005, p. 674); Searle, another linguist who

criticizes Austin's Speech Acts theory, proposes another

version of performative utterance. They are

representatives, directives, commissives, expressives,

and declarations (1976, cited in Keith 2005, p. 677).

They are in different epithet  but somehow similar in
definition with Austin's classification.  Levinson (1983,
p. 239) explains that the creation of Searle's
classification is merely because of his unsatisfication
toward Austin's classificatory method. Locution and
perlocution, without putting the illocution aside, are
inseparable between one another as they reflect an
ongoing interaction. Locution may occur in form of
questions, orders or commands, requests, caution or
prohibition, and many others. Basically, locution refers
to the stimuli produced by the encoder of a message, it
demands a suitable response. In relation to the locution,
perlocution refers to the response towards the stimuli. It
is produced by the decoder of a message; a good
perlocution should be 'inline' with its locution, it should

meet the response that is expected by the encoder of the message.

There must be an action contained in people's (in this case, both students and English teachers) utterances, which can be analyzed by using Speech Acts approaches. Based on the reason elaborated on the previous paragraphs, a research entitled *The Locution and Perlocution in the English Teacher and Students' Classroom Interaction* is worth doing as it is intended to investigate both of the students and English teacher's use of Speech Acts in their interaction in an Indonesian EFL class context. By writing 'Speech Acts', the writer refers to the use of literal meaning of their utterances during the conversation (locution act), as well as the impact to the addressee or interlocutor (perlocution).

**Research Questions**

In relation with the background of the study and title of this thesis, this research tries to answer the following questions:

1. How does the English teacher's locution influence the students' perlocution in their Indonesian EFL classroom interaction?

2. What influences the teacher's locution in the classroom interaction?

**Purposes of the Study**

In line with the research question, this study aims at finding out:

1. How teacher's locution influences students' perlocution in their classroom interaction.

2. The aspects that influence teacher's locution in the classroom interaction.

**Scope and Limitation**

This research is based on Austin's theory of locution and perlocution (Austin, 1962). Some threats toward internal validity may come during observation, when both teacher and student may act unnaturally; meanwhile, during interview, the interviewee may give 'made-up' answers. On the other hand, the threats toward external validity may appear in the finding, which may be slightly different if it is performed in different environment, considering that both teachers and students' characteristics are different in each school / educational institution. In addition, the intended meaning during the conversation (illocution act), for example, the intended

meaning reflected in commanding, thanking and complimenting will not be involved. Furthermore, area covered within especially the first research question will be on verbal communication, while several non-verbal aspects might be inevitably included to support the second research question.

**Research Significance**

This research investigates the way Junior High School students and teacher use Speech Acts expressions during their interaction in the classroom. Since the use of Speech Acts reflects someone's communicative competence, the results of this research are beneficial to understand in depth about the effectiveness of English teacher and student's classroom interaction.

The better and the more effective communication
flows within the classroom, the better the students and
teachers' communication competence; therefore, the
better learning and teaching process can be achieved
during their interaction. The result of this research is
expected to provide an elaboration on how those acts
may connect with each other to form an effective (or
contrary - a poor) 'interaction climate' which may help
( or contrary – demotivate) students to learn and the
teacher to teach English in EFL class.

**Theoretical framework**

This research is based on Austin (1962) Speech
Acts theory, in which both locution and perlocution (also
ilocution) lie. Locution and perlocution are connected

between each other, as the perlocution on the hearer is
the reflection or the result of the locution uttered by the
speaker, as written by Austin (cited in Levinson 1983, p.
236).

**Definition of Key terms**

a**.** Locution can be described as utterance of a sentence
with determinate sense and reference, or according to
Austin, it is the act of 'saying something' in this full
normal sense (Austin, 1962, p.94). In clearer
definition, locution is the act of using words to form
sentence that makes sense in a language with correct
grammar and pronunciation; this act is simply the
utterance we use/speak (Wardhaugh, 2015, p.251).

b. Perlocution is the effects on the audience by means of
   uttering the sentence (Levinson, 1983, p. 236).

c. Interaction is a process whereby two or more people
   engaged in reciprocal actions, it may occur in either
   verbal or non-verbal form, according to Celce-Murcia
   (1987, cited in Nurmasitah, 2010)

d. Classroom Interaction is a kind of interaction which is
   dominated by either teacher's talk and students' talk,
   where both kind of talks have their own dominant
   patterns (Rashidi and Rafieerad, 2010, p.100).

e. Communicative competence is one of the four ELT
   aspects that need to be considered by every language
   learner; besides age, psychological, and linguistic
   aspects (Brown, 2007). Communicative competence

is a sociocultural component that plays a great role in both student's and teacher's ability to receive and transfer new language knowledge and/or skill.

**Assumption**

This study is carried out under the following points of assumption:

1. Both locution and perlocution can be elicited from the teacher and students' talk, respectively.

2. Both locution and perlocution implied within their utterances are analyzable.