

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

English is an international language that is commonly used in the world to communicate with other people from different country. According to Harmer (2004:1), even though English is not the number one langue used as the first language, it has been regarded as a lingua franca: a language used by speaker of other language for communication. Many countries consider English as a foreign language, and Indonesia is one of them.

In learning English, grammar is essential to learn. Without grammar, students will have the difficulty to convey their message to other English speaker. It will also cause the communication breakdown between the speaker and the listener, as stated by Harmer (2004:12). Thus, English Department of Widya Mandala University, under the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, facilitates the English learning experience with a series of grammar class for four semesters: Structure I, II, III, and IV.

As it has been mentioned by Harmer (2004: 70), one of the elements that a language learner requires when learning a new language is the exposure to the target language is one of them. Nowadays, finding language exposure is not an impossible task to accomplish. By using cutting edge gadgets, e.g., computer and the Internet, the possibility is endless; finding news articles in English, for example, can be done just in seconds. Although there are huge possibilities for

students to look for language exposure and study by themselves, there will also be a great chance of finding the language exposure being too difficult for their level. This theory is inline with Stephen Krashen's belief as stated by Harmer (2004: 66): "... the best kind of language that students could be exposed to as 'comprehensible input', that is language which students understand the meaning of, but which is nevertheless slightly above their production level". Thus, students need teachers who have better mastery of the language so that they can adjust the difficulty level of the target language exposure given to the students comprehensively (Harmer 2004: 66). Even if teachers are able to engage students to learn English through various activities in the classroom, it is the students' motivation to learn that matter the most; Quoted from Scrivener (2005:18): "As a teacher, I cannot learn for my students. Only they can do that. What I can do is help create the conditions in which they might be able to learn."

Tsui Bik-may (1985:7) believes that anything that happens during the input session is important since the classroom is the place where students can get the target language exposures from teachers. Teaching is not merely transferring information from one's mind to another; it also involves interactions since teachers working with groups of people called students. Therefore, teacher talk and student talk, a form of interaction between teacher and students during the learning process, are to the meaningful one; this will also include the questions addressed by the teacher to students.

Language teachers ask a lot of questions to students during the learning process in the classroom as proposed by Wanjryb (2009). Sinclair and Courlthard

(1975), as mentioned by Wanjryb (2009) that question is one of the most common types of utterances in the classroom which has many purposes, such as socializing, checking vocabulary, and learning or seeking opinion. Nevertheless, producing good utterances of questions is not an easy task for teachers; comprehensible questions require proper planning, higher cognitive thinking and creating cognitive improvement in the class, as stated by Hamiloğlu and Termiz (2012). Thus, when questions addressed are not understood by students at the first place in the classroom, teachers modify their questions in order to get the students' responses. This particular process is important partially to help the students comprehend the teachers' questions and in the end they are able to give the teacher the appropriate responses.

According to Chaudron (1999), there are 4 types of questions modification: Repeating or Rephrasing, narrowing, Rephrasing with alternative or 'Or-Choice' questions, and Wait-Time, which are the main focus of this study.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

- How many times do the lecturers use Repeating or Rephrasing and what are some possible reasons?
- How many times do the lecturers use Narrowing and what are some possible reasons?
- How many times do the lecturers use Rephrasing with alternative or 'Or-Choice' questions and what are some possible reasons?

- How many times do the lectures use Wait-Time and what are some possible reasons?

1.3 The Significance of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to analyze how many types of teachers' questions modification used and what are the possible reasons in one session. This study is expected to aid the teachers to vary their question modification technique for the improvement of the next meetings.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

1.4.1 Types of Questions

Wajnryb (2009) stated, based on Sinclair and Coulthard that teachers give a lot of questions which has multiple purposes, such as socializing, checking vocabulary, and learning or seeking opinion.

1.4.2 Question Modification.

This study uses Chaudron's questions modifications (1999). Question modification happens whenever the question addressed by the teachers is not directly responded by the students. There are 4 types of modification in questions: repeating or rephrasing, narrowing, Rephrasing with alternative or 'Or-Choice' questions, and 'Wait-Time'.

1.5 Limitation and Scope

The scope is Structure II class year 2014/2015. It is limited in teachers' question modification. This study investigates all Structure II classes in 3 meetings with 3 different lecturers. A comparison of how the question modification used among the lecturers is made. Seating arrangement and students' ability are disregarded.

1.6 Definition of key terms

- a. Classroom verbal interaction: the process of transferring feelings, thoughts, ideas during the learning process between teacher to students, students to teacher, and student to student.
- b. Teacher Talk: the language that the teacher uses when addressing language learners in the classroom.
- c. Teacher Questions: questions addressed by the teacher during the lesson whose purpose is to facilitate the teaching-learning process in the classroom
- d. Structure II: the second series of four series of English grammar subjects in English Department which discusses English tenses and other sentence constructions.