

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter delivers a brief description of the study. It includes the study background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, research framework, and several previous research.

#### **A. Research Background**

The current study aims to analyze classroom interactions, specifically the categories of classroom interaction and the teacher's strategies in teaching English speaking class and building an interactive class in the *Merdeka* Curriculum at a junior high school. The classroom interaction in this study focused on the interaction between teacher and students. This topic is important to be investigated because it plays a crucial role in the language classroom. Knowledge can be constructed through classroom interaction as it provides learners with numerous strategies and opportunities for communicating and receiving data in the process of foreign or second language acquisition (Hatch, 1978; Rivers, 1987; Richards and Lockhart, 1996; Pica, 1996; and Ellis, 1999). Analyzing classroom interaction will help teachers and students solve any challenges they may be facing in the classroom. Therefore, through this study, people will learn the ways English language teachers try to create an interactive speaking class since it contributes to the success of English teaching and learning process.

Interaction is a very important aspect of communicating thoughts, feelings, or ideas among individuals. By interacting with their teacher and classmates, students become more active and communicative. It builds stronger relationships between students and the teacher. Students will be able to learn from one another and obtain performance feedback. Classroom interaction is viewed as an approach to gaining an objective evaluation of interactions between teacher and students in the classroom and to assess the effectiveness of teaching (Tsui, 2008). In speaking class, it is intended as well to improve the performance of students' English communication skills. Thus, investigating classroom interaction assists people in

finding efficient ways of what a teacher should prepare for teaching, evaluating it, exploring the relationship between teaching and learning, and increasing teachers' awareness of the way they teach and consequently enhancing it (Al-Garawi, 2008).

Additionally, speaking is the most significant of the four skills in English learning. It is used as verbal communication to express the feelings and opinions of others (Ahmad, 2016). In speaking, speakers are not only conscious of their ability to communicate but also of how they deliver their message so that others can grasp their ideas. Students learn how to express themselves orally with proper pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar to improve their speaking ability. However, a teacher is expected to engage in appropriate conversations in speaking class to create an enjoyable teaching and learning environment. A teacher's communication style in English speaking with the students has an essential role in how successfully a lesson is taught and delivered to the students.

One of the most important ways to achieve the learning objectives in speaking class is by designing appropriate strategies. It both strategies in teaching speaking and strategies to build an interactive English speaking class. Teaching strategy is the technique selected to provide learning materials to students in a certain learning environment, consisting of designs, variations, and groupings of activities that might transfer learning skills to them (Colombo, 2009). Teachers can choose the appropriate teaching methods that they believe are most effective in achieving learning objectives and improving students' abilities.

Meanwhile, in 2020, Indonesia's Ministry of Education introduced the Curriculum *Merdeka* educational program. It is focused on the development of character, creativity, and critical thinking abilities. The interactions that occur in the *Merdeka* Curriculum focus on student-centeredness. Student-centered learning can be closely linked to active learning. Active learning is any educational strategy that engages students in the learning process (Prince, 2004; Shroff et al., 2021). In a speaking class, teachers are not allowed to dominate the class where they keep talking or asking more questions. The teachers must have their own strategies to make their English speaking class as interactive as possible.

Prior observations have been conducted at an Islamic junior high school in Bandung, Indonesia. It is an educational institution that implements life skills programs including English language proficiency. The programs are intended to enhance students' English speaking ability and support students' practice, particularly in oral presentations. At this school, students are required to speak bilingually, including English in their daily conversations in certain areas such as the office, canteen, and the English classroom. Students actively interact with their teacher and classmates and use English in the class. Moreover, the teacher desires to push and motivate the students to speak English as best as they can. Therefore, investigating this topic is beneficial to see how classroom interactions occur in an English speaking class in this school and the way the teacher engages his students in teaching speaking.

In addition, a certain number of previous research about classroom interaction have been conducted. Fadillah, Ridha, and Juhaidi (2022) analyzed the interaction that occurred in an English class at State Senior High School 3 in Banjarbaru, South Kalimantan. Daar (2020) explored how classroom interaction is applied in speaking classes at SMA Santu Fransiskus Ruteng in Flores. The next research was from Larasaty & Yutinih (2018) aimed to determine the importance of classroom contact in students' speaking skills. Another research by Tsegaw (2019) from Malaysia described the teacher-student interaction at the primary school level in an EFL speaking class. However, the current study has several differences from the previous research. The previous research used the FIAC approach to analyze the data while the current study uses BIAS. In addition, the current research is conducted in a female class at a school located in an Islamic dormitory that has been experiencing the English language proficiency program. Lastly, the participants are specifically implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum while the earlier studies' participants still used Kurikulum 2013 (Kurtilas).

## **B. Research Questions**

According to the explanation above, this study aims at analyzing the following questions:

1. What categories of classroom interactions are evident in the English speaking class in the *Merdeka* Curriculum?
2. What strategies are used by the teacher to build an interactive English speaking class in the *Merdeka* Curriculum?

## **C. Research Purposes**

Based on the research questions mentioned, the purposes of this study are:

1. To analyze the categories of classroom interaction evident in the English speaking class in the *Merdeka* Curriculum.
2. To explain the strategies used by the teacher to build an interactive English speaking class in the *Merdeka* Curriculum.

## **D. Research Significances**

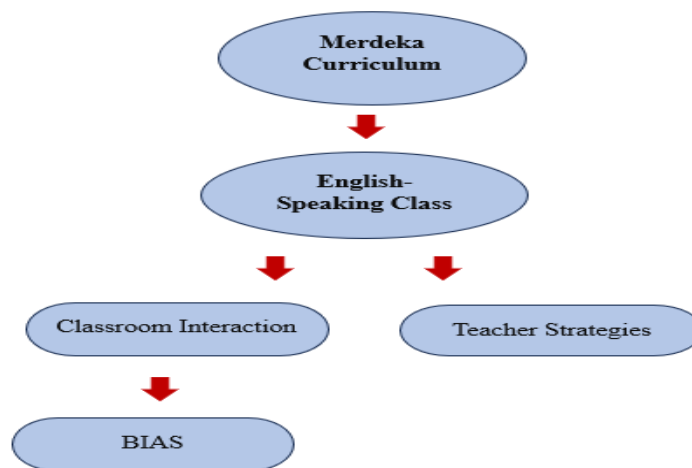
Theoretically, this study can be used as a reference and useful information for people who wish to research classroom interaction, teacher's strategies, and teacher's roles, especially in English speaking class. Practically, this study is intended to help English teachers, in general, to enhance the effectiveness of English teaching activities and help them to recognize better how to build an interactive English speaking class. Then hopefully, the study can be used as a reflection for English teachers so that they can improve their performance in teaching English class.

## **E. Research Scope**

The scope of this study is categories of classroom interaction and teacher's strategies in English speaking class. Furthermore, this study focuses on the 7B class, in the female class of Islamic junior high school that has already implemented the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Brown Interaction Analysis System is used in this study as an approach to analyze the categorization of classroom interaction.

## F. Conceptual Framework

The current study centers on the categories of classroom interaction and teaching strategies in English speaking class using the *Merdeka* curriculum at an Islamic junior high school. Therefore, this conceptual framework is the primary focus of the current study:



**Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework**

Classroom interaction is viewed as a vital component of the teaching-learning process. It is a key aspect of language acquisition in the classroom. Brown (2001:165) said that interaction is the foundation of communication, which is what communication is all about. A classroom is defined as a gathering area for more than two people to learn, with one person serving as a teacher (Tsui, 1995, p.1). In the classroom, students' patterns of thought will be established, attitudes will be developed, and student participation will have an impact on students' self-confidence in their learning (Lasac, 2011). As a result, if the interactions provided by the teacher are meaningful, challenging, and aligned with the students' current understandings, students will immediately engage with the topic and learn the materials effectively. This will result in a good and interactive classroom atmosphere.

Several patterns of classroom interactions are determined by some experts. First of all is teacher-student interaction. This interaction refers to the contact between a teacher and students. Badrul (2001, p.181) explained teacher-student interaction as a setting in which students and teachers communicate. The next is student-student interaction. It refers to interactions among students. Moore (1989) defined student-student interaction as the exchange of ideas either through or without the presence of the teacher (Gonzales, 2016). The last is student-content interaction. It is the students' interaction with the learning materials provided by the teacher. According to Harry (2001, p.20), student-content interaction refers to the interaction between a student and the subject under study. However, this study focused on the interaction between a teacher and students which includes the first pattern of classroom interaction.

In addition, speaking, in the words of Brown (2001), is an interactive process of meaning construction that entails creating, receiving, and processing information. However, language learning is necessary for individuals to enhance their language proficiency in speaking the target language (Barnard et al., 2002). Speaking exercises, such as debates and discussions on preferred subjects, will help students develop their communication skills (Naimat, 2011: 672–673). Therefore, the effectiveness of classroom interactions is crucial in helping students to achieve the learning objectives in English subjects as well as speaking skills.

However, classroom interaction has an important role in the process of teaching and learning as well as teaching and learning English speaking. Radford (2011), cited in Julana (2018) argues that classroom interaction is a key factor in the learning process, as it facilitates the exchange of knowledge and understanding between students. It means that in the context of an English speaking classroom, interaction makes the students brave enough to share knowledge and they can learn from each other related to what the teacher delivers about the materials in the speaking subject. Students become more active and communicative as they connect with their teachers and peers. It strengthens connections between students and

teachers. Students will be able to learn from one another and get performance feedback.

Every student in the *Merdeka* Curriculum is encouraged to participate more actively in their studies. Students are given the flexibility to explain how to study based on what they need rather than passively following the curriculum established by the government (Kemdikbud, 2022). The interactions that occur in the *Merdeka* Curriculum focus on student-centered learning and the use of technology. In a speaking class, students have to be active, supporting their teacher to build an interactive classroom so that they can improve their speaking abilities. Furthermore, the *Merdeka* curriculum policy allows teachers to create an enjoyable learning environment and foster a love of learning in their students, preventing them from feeling overwhelmed by the teacher's lessons (Yusuf & Arfiansyah, 2021).

Afterward, strategies are essential in the language learning process (Ellis, 2005, p. 42). In speaking class, English teachers need to design appropriate strategies both strategies in teaching speaking and strategies to create an interactive class. As claimed by Reiser and Dick (1996), teachers have a range of instructional strategies that can be used to achieve their teaching and learning objectives. Several strategies for building interactive classroom interactions are Asking Questions (David, 2007), Body Language (Gregersen, 2005), Topic (Dagarin, 2005), Cooperative Learning (Kalantari, 2009), and Building Positive Relationships with Students (Hamre & Pianta, 2006). Therefore, various strategies in teaching speaking are Direct Method (Rivers, 1968), Modeling (Coleman, 2020), Drilling (Thornbury, 2002), Role-Playing (Goh, 2007), Picture Describing (Brandon, 2012), Language Game (Chen, 2002), Group Discussion (Killen, 1996), Presentation (Richards, 2001), Storytelling (Dujmovic, 2006), Information Gap (Harmer, 2007), and Singing Song (Jamalus, 1975).

A good classroom interaction will lead to an interactive classroom. Interactive means that the teacher and the students are mutually active and communicative when they speak to each other. The term interactive learning is used to define as a classroom environment that allows for meaningful interaction

between students-teacher, and student-student (Brown, 2007). Therefore, Gebhard (1996) proposes five components that can aid in creating an interactive classroom:

1. Reduction teacher-centered classroom.
2. An appreciation for an individual's uniqueness.
3. Opportunities for students to express themselves in meaningful ways.
4. Chances for students to negotiate meaning with each other (student) and the teacher.
5. Choices, related to what students say and how they say it.

In this current study, Brown's Interaction Analysis System (BIAS) by Brown (1975) is used to analyze the categories of classroom interactions that occur in the speaking class. BIAS is a rather straightforward descriptive framework for analyzing verbal interaction in the classroom. The theory categorizes the interaction in the classroom into seven categories. The three categories are for the teacher talk, two categories for the pupils talk, one category for silence, and one category for unclassifiable behavior.

### **G. Previous Studies**

Fadillah, Ridha, and Juhaidi (2022) analyzed the interaction that occurred in an English class at State Senior High School 3 in Banjarbaru, South Kalimantan. The research subjects were the English teacher and the students in Class 11. The research sample was selected through purposive sampling. Flanders Interaction Analysis Category was used as an observation guide and interviews were conducted in the classroom to obtain data. The results show that there was two-way communication in English class between the teacher and the students. The results indicated that teacher-talk was 42.79%, student-talk was 53.79%, and silence or confusion was 3.40%. It demonstrates that students are the center of the process of English learning and that they take an active role in the process of learning English. Meanwhile, the current study uses the Brown Interaction Analysis System as an approach to analyze the interaction that occurs in the classroom and is conducted in an Islamic junior high school.



The following previous research by Daar (2020) aimed to determine how classroom interaction is applied in speaking classes at SMA Santu Fransiskus Ruteng in Flores. It combined mixed methods and employed a phenomenological approach. The study employed random sampling, with 45 students selected as samples. The research was primarily gathered through interviews, observation, and recording for the qualitative research method. Participants in the interviews were an English teacher and four students chosen on purpose. According to the research, there was only one part of classroom interaction that was typically classified as having a high degree of implementation: response and asking questions. Feelings of acceptance, compliments or encouragement, and ideas used at the acceptance implementation. Giving directions, critiques, or justification for authority was at the middle level. Meanwhile, most initiations were at a low level. Different from the research that implemented mixed methods, the current study specifically attempts descriptive qualitative research design.

Another research about classroom interaction was conducted by Larasaty & Yutinih (2018). The research aimed to determine the importance of classroom contact in students' speaking skills. The research used case studies with qualitative research design. The data was collected via triangulation tools, observation, a questionnaire, and an interview transcript. According to the findings, 92% of students understand the important role of classroom interactions in their speaking abilities, 56% of them require their teacher to be a mentor, and 24% must be encouraged to participate and talk in class. Students require more chances to communicate with their teacher since 68% of them support student-teacher interaction. However, the current study differs from the research based on the data collection. The research implemented a questionnaire as one of the instruments, meanwhile, the current study does not implement it.

A study carried out by Tsegaw (2019) from Malaysia described the teacher-student interaction at the primary school level in an EFL-speaking class. It also explored how individuals interacted and determined the scope of interactional actions and quantities. The research used the FIACS approach, as well as qualitative descriptive research. The data was mostly evaluated using qualitative/Latent

content analysis. A convenience sample was used to choose the targeted schools, while purposive selection was utilized for identifying English teachers. Interviews, observation, and document analysis were also created as key instruments of the data collection. The findings from the research revealed that the interaction was still dominated by the teachers, and the speaking skills input and technique had no positive effect on the students' speaking performance. Thus, these data demonstrated that teachers were incapable of applying appropriate language classroom and delivering formative feedback, respectively, which were essential in improving student language development. Therefore, the current study employs BIAS as the approach for analyzing the data.

