

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on presenting the research background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, research scope, conceptual framework, and previous studies

A. Research Background

This section outlines the background of the study, highlighting the significance of classroom interaction and the role of act structures in shaping these interactions. The study aims to identify the most dominant elicitation and reply act structures in the 7th-grade English classroom, using Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale (1975) as a framework for analysis.

Classroom interaction, as defined by Hall (2011), is referred to as the dynamic exchanges between participants that occur when language is involved. Through these exchanges, a relationship is established between students and teachers, enabling collaboration toward classroom interactions. The dynamics of these exchanges can provide valuable insight into how they contribute to the development of language proficiency, particularly in speaking. In this context, classroom interaction is seen as a stimulus for student language production (Sundari, 2017), with feedback and guidance from teachers playing a role in facilitating the development of linguistic skills.

Speaking, as one of the productive skills, is deemed essential for students to express their ideas in oral communication. According to Djahimo (2018), the conveyance of thoughts is allowed by speaking, enabling students to communicate effectively. Opportunities for practicing and developing speaking skills are provided by classroom interactions, as they help create a space where students engage in spoken communication, contributing to their language development. Given these considerations,

insights into how these interactions occur in the classroom are provided through the analysis of classroom discourse.

One well-established model for examining classroom discourse is Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale (1975). This model provides a systematic framework for analyzing classroom interactions by breaking them down into distinct units, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of how teacher-student exchanges occur. Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale (1975), derived from Halliday's rank scale, categorizes classroom discourse into a hierarchy: lessons, transactions, exchanges, moves, and acts. Each lesson consists of transactions, which are structured exchanges that follow the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) pattern. In this pattern, the teacher initiates with a question (initiation), students respond (response), and the teacher provides feedback (feedback). This structure is further broken down into moves and acts, which represent the smallest units of analysis, aiding in understanding the detailed structure of classroom interaction.

Acts are the lowest-ranking units in Sinclair and Coulthard's model of analysis. In spoken discourse, three primary acts are typically observed: elicitation, directive, and informative. elicitation, in particular, is designed to request a linguistic response (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975, p. 28). While non-verbal responses, such as a raised hand or a nod, may occur, a verbal reply is primarily expected. Given the essential role of elicitation in initiating communication and guiding the flow of classroom discourse, this research aims to investigate how elicitation and reply are manifested in a conventional English classroom, examining whether specific patterns emerge and determining which act structure is more dominant between the two.

Previous research on classroom discourse analysis has explored various aspects of interaction, yet certain gaps remain that this study seeks to address. Bunda (2020) analyzed teacher interactions using Sinclair and Coulthard's model (1975), emphasizing the role of teacher-initiated acts in

shaping discourse. However, the contribution of student interactions was not fully explored, leaving a gap that this study aims to fill by examining both teacher and student roles. Huraerah (2018) focused on teacher dominance through questioning and directing, but did not examine the detailed structure of interactions at the act level. Similarly, Damalewska (2018) explored one-way communication in beginner EFL classrooms, noting frequent code-switching, but this research primarily focused on broad discourse patterns rather than structural analysis. Hasanah (2017) applied Sinclair and Coulthard's model to study various levels of discourse, including Acts, Moves, Exchanges, and Transactions, but act structures were not specifically emphasized. While previous studies emphasize teacher roles or general structural patterns in classroom discourse, this research focuses on examining how elicitation and reply acts occur in a conventional English classroom, investigating whether they form distinct patterns and determining which of the two is more dominant.

Additionally, the linguistic interdependence theory underscores the relationship between first and second language proficiency. Proficiency in a child's first language can significantly aid in acquiring a second language, as students can draw on their native language to understand new linguistic features (Proctor, 2006; Howard, 2014). This theory is particularly relevant for 7th-grade students, who have generally developed a strong foundation in their first language and can utilize this knowledge to facilitate second language acquisition. Classroom environments that promote this interdependence, through activities such as reading, speaking, discussions, and literacy exercises, can significantly enhance second language development (Wan, 2024).

According to Piaget's cognitive development theory, children in this age range have reached a stage where they can engage in more advanced reasoning tasks, enabling them to handle complex cognitive challenges required to master second language components such as grammar and vocabulary (Yadi, 2020). This developmental maturity makes 7th-grade

students an ideal group for studying the dynamics of classroom discourse and how act structures influence their language learning.

This study applies Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale to analyze language interactions in 7th-grade classrooms. By focusing on how different act structures are formed during lessons, especially elicitation and reply, this research will examine their contribution to the overall discourse in English language lessons. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of classroom discourse and how it shapes interactions between teachers and students.

B. Research Questions

The researcher develops two research questions based on the background described above:

1. How are elicitation and reply act structures demonstrated in classroom interaction in the 7th-grade English classroom at Darul Hikam Junior High School?
2. Which act structure between elicitation and reply is most dominant in classroom interaction in the 7th-grade English classroom at Darul Hikam Junior High School?

C. Research Purposes

According to the mentioned research questions, this study has three primary purposes:

1. To demonstrate how elicitation and reply act structures are implemented in classroom language interaction in the 7th-grade English classroom at Darul Hikam Junior High School.
2. To reveal which act structure, between elicitation and reply, is most dominant in classroom language interaction in the 7th-grade English classroom at Darul Hikam Junior High School.

D. Research Significance

This part presents the theoretical and practical significance of the study for teachers, students, and future researchers in the context of classroom discourse analysis.

Theoretically, this research demonstrates how Sinclair and Coulthard's rank scale can be applied to analyze classroom discourse, specifically focusing on act structures. Practically, this research gives significance to the following:

1. Teachers

This research is expected to help English teachers improve their understanding of classroom interactions, allowing them to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching methods.

2. Further research

This research is expected to serve as a valuable reference for future studies analyzing classroom discourse using Sinclair and Coulthard's rank scale or other models in similar educational contexts.

E. Research Scope

This section outlines the scope of the study, which examines how elicitation and reply act structures are applied in classroom interactions in different 7th-grade English classrooms at Darul Hikam Junior High School. These classrooms, each taught by a different teacher, will be analyzed using Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale (1975).

The primary objective of this research is twofold: first, to examine how elicitation and reply act structures are applied in classroom language interactions, and second, to identify which of these two act structures is the most dominant in classroom interactions. According to Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale (1975), classroom interactions are categorized into several hierarchical units: Lessons, Transactions, Exchanges, Moves, and Acts. Lessons represent the highest level of interaction, while Acts are the smallest and most fundamental units of analysis. This study specifically investigates elicitation and reply acts, analyzing how these acts function and their prevalence in classroom discourse.

At Darul Hikam Junior High School, 7th-grade students are grouped into distinct classes, each taught by a different instructor. The study focuses on this class, all of which will be observed to explore the dynamics of

classroom discourse. The learning processes in these classes incorporate various teaching methodologies, and students demonstrate varying levels of English proficiency. Despite these differences, all classes aim to foster an inclusive environment where students can engage effectively in classroom interactions.

F. Conceptual Framework

This section presents the conceptual framework for the study, focusing on Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale as the primary analytical model for examining act structures in classroom discourse.

According to Hernawati (2017), a conceptual framework comprehensively represents the research to be undertaken, outlining the methodologies and subjects under investigation. The conceptual framework for this research is illustrated in the schematic graphic below.

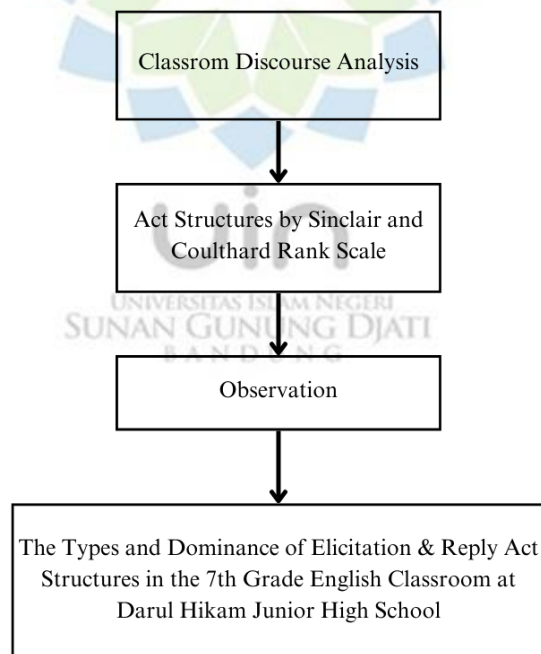


Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework

Classroom discourse, from various theoretical perspectives, refers to the use of language in context, which shapes social interaction and meaning-

making (Suherdi, 2014). This study explores classroom discourse in a 7th-grade English class, focusing on how language influences student engagement and learning outcomes. By utilizing frameworks such as Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this study examines how power dynamics and educational practices are reflected in classroom interactions (Riyanti, 2023; Magfira et al., 2022). The study also distinguishes between spoken and written discourse, including multimodal elements, to assess their impact on learning processes (Nurwahidah et al., 2022; Fadhil, 2024).

Azizah (2022) emphasizes the importance of classroom discourse for language learning, shaping both student engagement and linguistic development. Teacher-student interactions, guided by the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) structure, facilitate comprehension. Effective practices, such as questioning and feedback, help students internalize language and engage collaboratively (Solita et al., 2021; Bardis et al., 2021). In diverse classrooms, translanguaging supports understanding and validates multilingual identities (Yang and Foley, 2024). The transition to digital learning introduces new challenges but enhances interaction through technology (Moorhouse and Kohnke, 2021). Ultimately, effective discourse promotes learner autonomy and critical thinking, emphasizing the significance of adaptive, student-centered teaching (Thao, 2020).

Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale Model (1975) provides a hierarchical framework for classroom discourse, categorizing communication into five levels: lesson, transaction, exchange, move, and act. The IRF structure within this model reveals how teacher-student interactions impact student engagement. Although the model has limitations, such as its rigid structure and focus on teacher-dominated discourse, it remains relevant in both traditional and digital classrooms by offering insights into communication dynamics. Acts, the fundamental building blocks of discourse, consist of single clauses or words, and include types like elicitation and directive. Sinclair and Coulthard identify 22

distinct act types, offering a nuanced understanding of classroom communication and its effects on learning in a 7th-grade English context.

Acts represent the smallest units in Sinclair and Coulthard's system of analysis. Three primary acts are likely to occur in all forms of spoken discourse: elicitation, directive, and informative. elicitation serves the function of requesting a linguistic response. While responses may sometimes be non-verbal, such as a nod or a raised hand, the primary expectation is a verbal reply (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975, p. 28). This study specifically examines how elicitation and reply acts function within classroom discourse, promoting student participation and learning. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for gaining insight into the teaching and learning processes that shape student engagement and language development.

Although Sinclair and Coulthard's Rank Scale identifies 22 distinct act types, this study focuses specifically on elicitation and reply acts. This focus allows for a more in-depth analysis of the dynamics between these two acts, which are seen as central to engaging students in classroom discourse. The choice of communicative activities is considered vital in eliciting student responses. Dialogues that require interaction, such as group discussions or peer tutoring, amplify student participation and language production (Misesani and Lestari, 2018). Additionally, the IRF cycle provides a prominent framework for understanding classroom interaction, outlining how dialogue is initiated by teachers, responded to by students, and followed by feedback from teachers (Li, 2018).

G. Previous Studies

This section presents previous studies related to classroom discourse analysis, highlighting their findings, limitations, and identifying the research gap that this current study aims to address.

Previous research on classroom discourse analysis has explored various aspects of interaction but has overlooked specific gaps that this study intends to fill. Kasmianti (2021) conducted a study on act structures in

classroom interactions within a language course, identifying types such as marker, starter, elicitation, check, directive, informative, and prompt. The study found elicitation to be the most common Act (14.7%) with a total of 652 observed acts. However, the research was confined to a language training context, making it less applicable to traditional classroom environments, such as a 7th-grade English class, where the interaction dynamics may differ significantly. This study expands the scope by examining elicitation and reply act structures in a conventional classroom setting, offering insights into their function across different teaching contexts.

Similarly, Hasanah (2017) employed Sinclair and Coulthard's framework to analyze classroom discourse, focusing on Acts, Moves, Exchanges, and Transactions. While her study explored basic discourse patterns, it did not provide an in-depth analysis of act structures, particularly elicitation and reply. Additionally, Hasanah's study did not address student participation levels, which is the primary focus of this research. The current study aims to investigate how elicitation and reply Acts shape interaction in classrooms with varying participation levels, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of classroom dynamics and student engagement.

Furthermore, Bunda (2020) and Huraerah (2018) studied teacher-initiated actions and teacher dominance in classroom management. While their work focused on how teachers influence discourse through questioning and directive actions, these studies did not explore the structural dimensions of classroom interaction at the Act level. The current study fills this gap by specifically analyzing elicitation and reply act structures, which represent the smallest unit of discourse in Sinclair and Coulthard's model. This study examines how these acts contribute to classroom interactions, focusing on the role they play in shaping the dynamics between teachers and students, particularly in classrooms with varying levels of student engagement.

The current study differentiates itself from previous research by focusing on the application of elicitation and reply act structures in a

conventional 7th-grade English classroom a context that has not been extensively explored in the literature. Previous studies, such as those by Kasmianti (2021) and Hasanah (2017), either concentrated on language training settings or lacked a detailed examination of participation levels. In contrast, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of how these act structures function in a general educational setting, where student engagement can vary significantly. The findings will offer new insights into their role in shaping classroom interaction.

In contrast to previous studies, this research specifically focuses on the analysis of elicitation and reply act structures at the smallest unit of discourse. Unlike Kasmianti (2021), whose research was limited to a language training context, or Hasanah (2017), who did not focus on act structures in-depth, this study expands the scope by examining these acts within a 7th-grade English classroom. The primary aim of this study is to identify how elicitation and reply acts occur in classroom interactions and to determine which of the two acts is most dominant in the 7th-grade English classroom at Darul Hikam Junior High School. By analyzing the occurrence and dominance of these act structures in a real-world educational setting, this study provides new insights into classroom discourse. Furthermore, this research differs from previous studies like those by Bunda (2020) and Huraerah (2018), who focused on teacher-dominated actions, by analyzing the structural dimensions of classroom interaction at the Act level, allowing for a clearer understanding of how these acts shape classroom communication.