CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of The Study

Language is used to convey ideas, thoughts, needs, and feelings. To use language in everyday life is as natural as breathing and walking. It happened automatically when people communicate with others. When people undertake communication to achieve its purpose, they must select the language form. Harmer (2001) highlights many variables which affect the choice of language forms namely; setting, participants, gender, channel, and topics. Commonly, setting refers to the situation or place where the conversations take place. It means that people might use different language style and variety in conversation, depends on the situation or place. Then, participants refer to people involved in conversation. It can be in form of spoken (speaking) and written (writing) communcations. Whereas, gender refers to man and woman differences in inflecting when addressing the members of the same or opposite sex in conversation. Channels and topics also affect the selection of language form. Channel refers to the tools used in exchanging the communication while topics refer to areas being discussed in conversation. Those variables determine language process and products.

Code-switching is a sociolinguistic phenomenon and linguistic product of language contact. Nowadays, it is considered as normal and natural products of interaction. It has been existed as a result of language varieties in multilingual and multicultural communities. According to Meisel (1994: 415), code-switching is

the ability to select the language according to the interlocutor, the situational context, the topic of conversation, and so forth.

Based on this definition, it is clear that code-switching generally occurs to draw language varieties among the societies. In English as Foreign Language (EFL) setting, for instance, English teachers not only use English as a medium of instruction in the classroom, but they sometimes also switch the codes or terms to native language to facilitate language learning, manage the class, and express empathy to the students. Particularly, in Indonesia, code-switching is extensively used by English teachers based on the assumption that the students cannot fully comprehend the materials if they only use English. Besides, code-switching could also ease the teachers to give and clarify instructions for classroom activities, to give feedback to students, or to check students' understanding.

Those assumptions come along the difficulties faced by EFL teachers in Indonesia. Since English, in indonesia, is still being foreign language, students have lack of competence in developing four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). If they are not competent enough to listen, speak, read, and write the teaching materials, the transmitting of knowledge in teaching and learning process will progress slowly while the teachers have to chase the target of curriculum in language learning. Referring to this, the teachers in EFL setting, including in Indonesia, tend to switch from English to Bahasa Indonesia or vice versa in order to alleviate the students' apprehension in learning English.

Richards (1985; 43) hinted code-switching in the field of teaching English as foreign language when the situation demands. Simply, he illustrated that EFL teachers switch the codes in their attempts to communicate and accomodate

students' understanding on learning English while students use their own codes to make sense of communicative contribution of learning process of something they still do not understand. In short, code- switching, in learning English, is a means by which language users, in this case, the teachers and the students, may contextualize communication to achieve the goal of curriculum.

In EFL classroom of Grade Nine students, the teachers know English more than the students. The students cannot expand something about the language because they only get models of language from textbooks and teachers. Textbooks can do nothing when the students are difficult to understand English but teachers are really helpful when they face such problem. The teachers are able to give feedbacks, answers to ununderstood questions, and clarification to vague problems when teaching and learning process takes part. That is why there are a lot of teachers did code-switching in the classroom to facilitate learning new language (English). It means that when teaching English, the teachers use Bahasa Indonesia, as well.

The phenomenon of code-switching in foreign language classroom has been an area of interest for some researchers. They came up with different conclusions. Liu Aichun (2003), for example, made a research in EFL classroom in Beijing. He concluded that code-switching represented one of the strategies that EFL teachers often use to accomodate the students' level of foreign language proficiency. Another researcher, Martin (1996) made a research in Grade 4 and 5 of Primary School In Brunai Darussalam. He inferred that code-switching is used to repair trouble or silence in the classroom. Then, Yang (2004) investigated code-switching at secondary school in China. She concluded that code-switching is a

strategy for teachers to adapt to students' English proficiency, teaching goals, and a teacher's role.

So, the process of code-switching in EFL setting has become a widespread phenomenon since many years ago. Typically, in multilingual communities, like Tanjung Balai, code-switching extends to teaching and learning activities. In a certain situation, code-switching occurs naturally; the teachers explain English as the subject by using English and somehow they may switch some codes or terms into Bahasa Indonesia. In the classroom, it is usually found that both teachers and the students are bilingual. They use two languages (English and Bahasa Indonesia) at the same time by switching the codes one to another.

In accordance with such condition, code-switching uttered by EFL teachers of Perguruan Sisingamangaraja in Tanjung Balai was worth investigated in terms of how teachers switch the code, whether they switch the code because of particular reasons, whether they follow some patterns in doing code- switching, or what language is most often used by them when switching the codes; target language (English) or native language (Bahasa Indonesia).

1.2   Problems of The Study

Based on the background above, the problems of the research are briefly formulated as follows:

1. What types of code-switching are uttered by the teachers in teaching English to Grade Nine students of Junior High School?

2. What is the dominant type of teachers' code-switching when teaching English in the classroom?

3. Why does the teacher of Grade Nine of Junior High School switch their language when teaching English?

1.3   Objectives of The Study

Based on the problems formulated above, the objectives of the research are intended to find out:

1. The type of code-switching uttered by teachers when teaching English to Grade Nine of Junior High School

2. The dominant type of code-switching uttered by English teachers of Grade Nine of Junior High School, and

3. The reason why the English teachers of Grade Nine of Junior High School switch the language when teaching.

1.4   Scope of the Study

This study is limited to two languages (English and Bahasa Indonesia) switched one to another or vice versa by two EFL teachers of Grade Nine at Perguruan Sisingamangaraja, Tanjung Balai in the classroom when learning and teaching English take parts. Although there are so many types of code- swiching classified by some linguists, this research only focuses on intra- sentential switching, inter- sentential switching, and emblematic switching uttered by English teacher when teaching English as the subject in the classroom setting in consideration that these types of code-switching possibly occur in EFL teaching.

1.5 Significance of The Study

The findings of this research are expected to be useful theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, this research is expected to give valuable information and contribution to education practitioners, linguistic students, and other researchers related to the theory of code-switching in EFL setting.

Practically, this research is supposed to provide references for English teachers when switching the language. It is very important for them to be selective in choosing the language when doing code- switching. It means that they have to take consideration before doing that. They might have very strong reasons when switching the language. So, the findings of this research, hopefully, can be a guidance for other EFL teachers and these findings, of course, can be expanded in different setting by other researchers.