

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

In general, English is considered as the most important language. People around the world should know English since it has been widely accepted as one of the major languages of the world that is commonly used as a lingua franca. It is obvious that most scientific books, magazines, newspapers, movies, radio broadcasts, lectures, television programs, international letters, etc are written in English. Therefore, millions of people in the world learn English in order to keep up with the challenges and competitions in the workforce.

Crystal (1997: 106) states that English is now the dominant and official language in over 60 countries and is represented in every continent. From this fact, it can be understood that English language is a vital means of communication for millions of people around the world. He also states that most of the scientific, technological and academic information in the world is expressed in English and over 80% of all the information stored in electronic retrieval systems is in English. In the twentieth century, numerous technological inventions and developments, such as telephone, fax, electronic mail, and internet have facilitated the communication among people from all walks of life and the language mostly used is English.

Based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that English as a global language should be well-mastered by all people in the world including

Indonesian people. On the other hand, English has been learnt for a long time in Indonesia. It has been taught in almost all levels of education in state and private institutions from primary up to tertiary levels and currently at the kindergarten where the children sing and learn some English songs and words. But the fact is many students still do not have enough ability in speaking English. They are good in writing, but not in speaking. The problem is caused by the use of English which is not effective and efficient in their daily lives. In contrast, in facing the globalization era, Indonesian future generations should be well-prepared and one preparation is the proficiency in spoken and written English. That is the reason why it is really needed to find effective solution to have young generations who have the standard ability in English language skills wholly namely; 1.) listening, 2.) speaking, 3.) reading and, 4.) writing.

Realizing the fact, Indonesian in this respect, the Minister of Education has found time to time to improve quality of education by the conduction of National Examination with passing score required 5.25 in year 2010. Moreover, the government's intention is preparing qualified future generations in facing the world of tomorrow, in which the mastering of English as an international language should be achieved at the highest standard. The government has been trying to increase the quality of education in Indonesia related to the mastering of English as an international language by having some schools with international standard. Thus, based on the government Constitution No. 20, 2003 of the National Education System Section 50 "The government and/or the regional government will hold at least one unit of education for all levels of education to be

developed as a standard international education". One characteristic of this school is the use of English as a second language in the teaching-learning process. By having it, of course, the students must have a good competence in speaking English even they are forced to use English since they have to use it as second language in the teaching-learning process for some subjects.

International Standard School (ISS), in this case State Senior High School (Sekolah Menengah Atas Negeri: SMAN) I Medan, is a school which uses both international curriculum as well as national curriculum, i.e. The Indonesian Educational Unit Level Curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan 2007). This school has started in 2005 with 28 students. Up to now, it has graduated five school years, 2006 up to 2010. The purpose of this school is to increase the quality of the school itself and also the quality of education in using English as a second language in the teaching-learning process. There are six subjects taught in English. They are (1) English, (2) Biology, (3) Chemistry, (4) Physics, (5) Mathematics, and (6) Business. Moreover, this school also prepares students to be ready to continue their study abroad by acquiring standard of English. Upon graduation, the students will get the General Certificate Education (GCE) which is legalized in every country around the world. On the other hand, the students who do not have such certificate must take part in a training for a year before they continue their study abroad.

English is used in the teaching-learning process. That is the reason why the International Standard School admits students with a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) certification because this test shows the competence

in English. If s/he has a good score in TOEFL with the minimum score 400 and the highest score 600, it means that s/he has good command in English. The TOEFL test is held by an institution called Learning Sinergy Group (LSG), a Consultant Institution in the field of international in Singapore. This institution is a facilitator to provide the international curriculum obtained from Cambridge University in England. It also supervises the application of the international curriculum in the teaching-learning process. Besides, the students also have another test, i.e. social science that concerns general knowledge.

Not only are the students able to speak English, but also the teachers. The International Standard School must have teachers who are able to speak English fluently because they have to use English as a second language during the classroom interaction. Of course, it is not easy to prepare the teachers who are able to teach each subject in English. In this International Standard School, all teachers have international and national standard based on the qualification of a four year Degree Program (Sarjana: (S1)) and Postgraduate (Pascasarjana: (S2)) equivalent to Master of Arts. They are graduated from national universities mainly universities of North Sumatera (State University of Medan and North Sumatera University) and also overseas universities. The teacher who teaches the subject by using English must have international standard that is shown by their good ability in English as a second language since they have to teach in English, while those who do not teach the subject using English have their introduction in English, but the teaching-learning process is wholly done by using Indonesian language. And

for English subject, the teachers are native speakers who have graduated from English Department.

The researcher had conducted a preliminary observation to investigate the classroom interaction in one Biology class of the ISS in Medan in SMAN 1 Medan. After having the preliminary observation, the researcher found that this International Standard Class (ISC) is different from the normal class in Indonesia based on its classroom facilities. In this International Standard Class, every learner has her/his private laptop. This class provides an in focus and computer to support the teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, during the teaching-learning process, the researcher found that the teacher conducted elicitation in the teaching-learning process in order to obtain information from the students. Elicitation is a teacher technique which the teacher gets the student to give information rather than giving it to them. In this case, the teacher got brainstorming of the previous learning materials to activate the students' mind or the teacher wanted to know the background knowledge of students or students' schema. After the students' response to the teacher's elicitation, the teacher responses of the students' answer namely feedback. Moreover, when the teacher gave feedback to the students, it needed much more time to explain since the students did not understand much about the teacher's explanation. Otherwise, the teacher did not explain the teaching materials well so that the students are difficult to understand. This can be caused by the teachers and students limited ability in English language that will be discussed more in the term of interlanguage.

Thus, this research is intended to observe very closely how the teacher elicits and provides feedback in English classroom interaction of Biology teaching in the International Standard Class.

### **1.2 Problems of the Study**

The problems of this study are formulated in questions as follows:

1. How does Biology teacher elicit information in the English classroom interaction of Biology teaching?
2. How does Biology teacher provide feedback in the English classroom interaction of Biology teaching?
3. Why does Biology teacher have elicitation and feedback in the teaching-learning process?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

In line with the problems mentioned above, this study is intended to discover:

1. The way Biology teacher elicits information in the English classroom interaction of Biology teaching
2. The way Biology teacher provides feedback in the English classroom interaction of Biology teaching
3. The reasons that Biology teacher applies elicitation and feedback in the teaching-learning process

#### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

In the teaching-learning process, the teacher-student interaction is obvious. Because in every classroom interaction, there should be a two-way communication between teacher-students, students-teacher, and students-students. This research observes the English classroom interaction of Biology teaching in the International Standard Class. Previously, the classroom interaction was done conventionally by having teacher-centered approach, but this approach has long been shifted to student-centered approach where most of the classroom interaction should be occupied by the students where the teacher not only gives all information to the students, but the students must gain information also and be active in class.

In classroom interaction, there must be a communication among the students. Therefore, this research is concerned with the process of communication because in the process of communication there must be elicitation and feedback. Therefore, it is also concerned with the teacher's way to elicit information and teacher's feedback in English classroom interaction of Biology teaching in the International Standard Class. In addition, it is also related to interlanguage as applied by the teacher during the classroom interaction that shows the teacher's ability in English. Moreover, since the research is conducted in science class specifically Biology, the focus of this research is on the teaching of science.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The axiological viewpoint of this study is considered significant if it may provide valuable scientific information, which is theoretically and practically applicable to the development of scientific theory dealing with elicitation and feedback in the teaching-learning process. Through this research, the use of elicitation and feedback will clearly give theoretical contribution of their use in the teaching-learning of science.

Moreover, the research findings, in practical use, are expected to be useful to widen and enrich the teachers' and students' knowledge about International Standard School and are able to distinguish this school with normal school. In addition, the English teachers and also teachers who teach their subject in English will have new references about the elicitation and feedback in the English classroom interaction specifically in Biology teaching so that they will have good elicitation in order to elicit information and providing good feedback to the students during the teaching-learning process.

The findings are also expected to increase the eagerness of students to study at the International Standard School since it is concerned with the improvement of the quality of education. Those who go to that school will be well-prepared by having good quality of education to compete and face the challenges in this globalized era specifically in the workforce. In addition, this school also assists the students to continue their study abroad. But the most important thing in this research is to increase the students' awareness about the important role of English worldwide.



