**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter deals with background, research questions, research objectives, research significance, and research scope.

**A. Background**

The use of personal pronouns in interaction to make reference to the speaker, hearer, or both can reflect a complex relationship and understanding of that relationship between all parties involved. Although the pronouns consist of simple words phonetically, the meaning and reference behind them are much more involved (Quirk et al., 1985). When choosing which pronoun a speaker will use to address or refer to the listener, he/she makes an important decision as to how he/she will assert his/her position in the relationship.

One type of the pronouns that is interesting to be discussed is the first person plural pronoun. In English, first person plural pronoun, known as “*we*”, has two functions; as subject of verb and as object of verb. The reference of first-person plural pronoun in writing is commonly easier to identify than in conversation. Pavlidou (2014) suggests that in conversation or in interview, the collective referent of “*we*” can only be retrieved on the basis of utterance and discourse context as well as shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer(s). In other words, when a speaker uses first-person plural pronoun in conversation, he/she has to consider that the hearer(s) understand the context of his/her utterance to be able to identify the exact referent of the pronoun.

The analysis of first-person plural pronoun has been conducted in different domains. Several authors discuss the strategic uses of first-person plural pronoun in political discourse, and many researches focus on analyzing the pronouns’ references in academic discourse such as in scientific journal articles or students’ papers. Also, some other disciplines such as Intercultural Studies and Social Science & Humanity have analyzed the use of the pronoun in several mass media such as Newspaper and TV Shows. The analysis may be varied because the pronouns’ references are also different depending on the communicative contexts in which the pronoun is used.

In classroom discourse, the use of pronouns frequently occurs especially in the teacher-student interaction. When teaching materials, teachers find themselves addressing students continuously. Whether calling on a student to answer a question, negotiating with a student about a question/answer, or simply checking for comprehension, teachers repeatedly use the address pronouns of singular and plural ‘*you*’. However, many teachers also use first-person plural pronoun, “*we*”, when interacting with students. This pronoun has often created ambiguity in the classroom. Usually when a teacher uses pronoun ‘*we’* in conversation, he/she is referring to more than one person including him/herself. The ambiguity might be occurred because the teacher and the students do not share the same knowledge of the actual referent of the pronoun.

Furthermore, the ambiguity of the first person plural pronoun can actually allow the membership of the pronoun “*we*” to include students as they take on the values, vocabulary, and understandings of the pronoun “*we*” that exists in the classroom interaction. Speigelberg (as cited in Roepcke, 1973) claims that the use of the “*we*” uttered in the co-presence of others involves an attempt to influence and transform one's consociates and transform them into associates. In this case, the use of pronoun “*we*” may create a positive relationship between teacher and students.

Based on the interesting information about the influences of using pronoun “*we*” in interaction, the researcher have recently conducted a mini-research about the topic. The research was conducted merely to identify and to analyze the different references and meanings of pronoun “*we*” used by the teachers. The result shows that the use of pronoun “*we*” may reflects different types of relationship between teacher and students. Moreover, the researcher also found that the use of pronoun “*we*” may create ambiguity because the pronoun may have several references and meanings.

Considering the complexity of retrieving the referent of pronoun “*we*”, the researcher will get deeper in exploring and analyzing the different uses of pronoun “*we*” used by teachers in EFL classroom in terms of the meanings and the references behind them. Also, the researcher will examine the reasons of EFL teacher in using pronoun “*we*” when interacting with students. This, hopefully, will give another insight on recognizing the connection between teachers and students in the classroom through the use of pronoun “*we*”.

**B. Research Questions**

Based on the background of the research, the writer formulates the following problem statements:

1. What are the distinct uses of pronoun “*we*” used by EFL teachers in classroom interaction?

2. Why do the EFL teachers use pronoun “*we*” when interacting with students in the classroom?

3. How does the use of pronoun “*we*” by the EFL teachers affect teacher-student relationship?

**C. Research Objectives**

Based on the research question previously, this research aimed:

1. To find out the different uses of pronoun “*we*” used by EFL teachers in classroom interaction

2. To investigate the teacher’s reasons for using pronoun “*we*” in classroom interaction

3. To examine whether the use of pronoun “we” by EFL teachers affects teacher-student relationship

**D. Research Significances**

Since there are only few researchers that focus on analyzing the use of pronoun ‘*we*’ in educational context, the result of the study is expected to give insight on the different references and meanings of pronoun ‘*we*’ that EFL teachers use when interacting with students in the classroom. Besides, this study hopefully can be reference for the teacher to be used in the class as one way to build rapport with students. It is also hoped that the result of this research will become empirical evidence for further related research.

**E. Research Scopes**

This research is limited to the exploration and the analysis of pronoun “*we*” used by EFL teachers in Makassar. It focuses on analyzing the different references and meanings of the pronoun that the teacher might refer to and to examine whether the use of pronoun “*we*” may affect teacher-student relationship. The limitation are by discipline, content, and activity.

In terms of discipline, this research is under the inter-disciplinary of discourse analysis study that related to the pronoun choice used by EFL teachers in classroom interaction. By content, this research will emphasize on teacher’s utterances in using pronoun “we” in the classroom. In other words, the researcher will only focus on analyzing the teacher’s spoken language, not the written one. Moreover, by activity, this research is limited to the use of audio recording, transcribing, and analyzing the pronoun “*we*” used by EFL teachers when interacting with student. The researcher will also conduct interview for the teachers and the students to examine how the use of pronoun “*we*” can affect teacher-student relationship.