**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides the background, research questions, objective, scope, and significance of the research.

1. **BACKGROUND**

In Indonesia, English is not only taught as a foreign language, but it is also categorized as a compulsory subject in some levels of education. This subject requires plenty of practice, needs cooperation between the teacher and students in class to comply jointly the verbal communication and the teaching-learning procedure. It means that the goal of English subject can be achieved when the communication between the teacher and students is proceeding successfully.

In relation to the English language learning and teaching in the classroom, Richards and Lockhart (1996:37), in their study of teachers' beliefs, found that Hong Kong teachers of English believed their primary role in the classroom was to: (1) provide useful learning experiences, (2) provide a model of correct language use, (3) answer learners' questions, and (4) correct learners' errors. They believed their main role as an English teacher was to (1) help students discover effective approaches to learning, (2) pass on knowledge and skills to their pupils, and (3) adapt teaching approaches to match their students' needs. The kinds of learners they felt did best in their classes were: (1) those who were motivated, (2) those who were active and spoke out, (3) those who were not afraid of making mistakes, and (4) those who could work individually without the teacher's help. It means that the teacher’s roles will affect the quality and quantity of input, output, and interaction in the classroom.

Teacher talk plays a crucial role in language learning since teacher typically has a superior status in the classrooms and she/he controls topics of discourse and also provides the only live target input that students are likely to receive (Cullen, 1998). One manifestation of teacher talk is teacher’s question. As Adedoyin (2010) stated that “teachers’ questions are of significant values for many instructional purposes, eliciting students’ reflection and challenging deeper students understanding and engagement in the classroom”. Richards et al (2004:476) also argued that “the question is used most frequently as a teaching technique to initiate the classroom talk”

In classroom setting, Cotton (2003) claimed that teacher’s questions and students’ answers are considered a powerful teaching approach if they are used to expose contradictions, challenge assumption, and lead to new wisdom and knowledge. A question proposed by teachers can promote students’ learning, participation and thinking, especially critical thinking (Wilen, 1987). Thus, as for the functions of questions, they can be used to check students’ understanding, stimulate students’ thinking, or increase classroom interaction. However, good questioning is a skill of effective teaching which involves a good planning, higher cognitive thinking and creating cognitive improvement in the class. Therefore the investigation on teacher’s questioning behavior has been an important issue in the language classroom.

There have been many research studies which explored teachers’ questioning behavior and presented valuable results for language teaching and learning. Inamullah and Khan (2011); Shen and Yodkhumlue (2011) investigated that the teacher asked more lower-cognitive questions than higher ones. Hamiloglu and Temiz (2012) argued that there is evidence regarding the impact of teachers’ questions on students’ learning. Barjesteh and Moghadam (2014) also examined that the knowledge and comprehension questions were frequently asked by the teacher respectively while it leaves little opportunity for application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation questions. Additionally, Shoomosi (2004) and Behnam (2008) emphasized that display questions were used by the teachers more frequently than referential questions. This difference basically can be understood since each research is hold in different place with different participants. This difference means that the study on teacher’s question or classroom questioning is still worth investigated.

However, those studies mainly focused on the influence of teachers’ questions on classroom interaction or students’ oral output. Few research studies have examined the influence of teachers’ questioning and students’ critical thinking in Indonesia context. It is known that critical thinking is an important ability which contributes to the development of the human being. It helps learners analyze, evaluate, construct their thinking, solving problems and reasoning. According to Facione (1990), critical thinking refers to the process of purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which requires consideration of evidence, context, conceptualizations, methods and criteria. It was designed based on the cognitive domain of Bloom’s taxonomy. Nunan and Lamb (1996) argued that the objectives of teacher questions are to elicit information, to check understanding, and also to control behavior. In short, teacher plays important role to raise effective questions that promote students’ critical thinking.

Based on the preliminary observation, the researcher found that the English teacher in SMA Negeri 1 Tolitoli did not realize about the importance of using appropriate questioning levels and techniques to help the students trying to produce language. The teachers did not realize that their questions would give consequence on students’ critical thinking. Poor questioning makes classroom interaction tend to be boring and students are unmotivated to speak or perform their language production skill. Asking questions in EFL classrooms is not an easy task. It requires knowledge of the levels of questions, techniques and the art of questioning skills. Thus, the researcher encourage to investigate this phenomenon under the title **“Teacher’s Questioning and Students’ Critical Thinking in EFL Classroom Interaction”**

1. **Research Questions**
2. What are the levels of questions used by the teacher in EFL classroom interaction?
3. How does the teacher initiate the questions in EFL classroom interaction?
4. Can teacher’s questions facilitate students’ critical thinking under the investigation? Why or why not?
5. **Objective of the Research**

Relating to the research questions above, the objectives of this research was to examine the levels of questions based on Bloom’s Taxonomy used in EFL classroom interaction, to investigate the teacher’s questioning techniques and to analyze the roles of teacher’s questioning on students’ critical thinking.

1. **Scope of the Research**
2. From discipline aspect, this research as applied under the discipline of discourse analysis. This study was intended to describe, interpret and explain the levels of questions based on Bloom’s Taxonomy used in EFL classroom interaction as well as the teacher’s questioning techniques and the roles of teacher’s questioning on students’ critical thinking. From content aspect, this research focused on all activities in the classroom from the class began until the class ended to monitor the levels of questions and questioning techniques that used by the teacher.
3. From activities aspect, this research took the sample from an English teacher at SMA Negeri 1 Tolitoli. The teacher observed for ninety minutes while teaching English in her classes. The data obtained from classroom observation by using audio recording and it supported by the data of field notes and interview. Then all data analyzed by using discourse analysis.
4. **Significance of the Research**

Description and analysis of teacher questions were used in the learning process resulting from this study was expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefit. Theoretically, the significances of the research were expected to provide information on the use of questions in the process of learning English. Practically, the result of this study will be expected to be useful especially for the teacher and can contribute as a source of information for teacher to plan, organize, and classify level of questions in order to promote students’ critical thinking.

The result of this research was expected to be useful information about the questioning in EFL classroom interaction. Investigating the levels of questions, the teacher’s questioning techniques and the roles of teacher’s questioning on students’ critical thinking were expected to provide new insight into the use of those levels of questions and its function, to encourage the students in order to participate in teaching-learning process, and to promote students critical thinking.

Then, the findings of this research were expected to be another alternative effort of improving students’ competence in learning English communicatively in the basis of classroom activities. Finally, this research was expected to invite other scholars or researchers to conduct an organized and comprehensive research with regard to questioning skills.