CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The first chapter represents research background, problem identification, research questions, research objective, research significance, and research scope.

1.1 Research Background

Language is one of the most important things to learn because language is a communication tool that people worldwide in daily life (Jaelani & Zabidi, 2020). Communication happens when someone transmits an idea, information, or feeling to another person or people. Because language, as the tool of communication, is very important, people endeavor to learn it. English is the language of international communication. Therefore, worldwide people would use English when they talk to other people who speak with different mother-tongue. It can be said, English, as the most widely spoken language that connects people around the world, is important to study.

Pragmatics is an important component of language learning (Nicholas, 2015). In addition, Deda (2013) explained pragmatics as a linguistic area that conveys the meaning of utterance through communication. In order to avoid the misunderstanding among the utterer and receiver in communication, it is important to know pragmatics competence. Besides can be defined as the linguistics area that deals with the meaning of the context, pragmatics also means the study of teaching and learning that can be seen from the implementation of language function (Widya, 2017).

Taguchi (2019) stated that learning to communicate appropriately and effectively in English is part of learners' pragmatic competence, which contains the ability to comprehend and produce various communicative acts in context (e.g., thanking, congratulating, and expressing agreement). If the language learner cannot describe the possessing communicative competence in the target language, it means they still do not understand the language's pragmatic norms that contain the role of the social context of the language choice that the speaker makes. One of the most important pragmatics areas that the students should learn is speech acts.

Speech acts is important to understand to make the effective communication. On the other side, Budiasih, Andayani , & Muhammad (2017) said speech acts is essential to understand because communication can be well established between speakers and hearers. That is why it is important to understand speech acts for the foreign language learner. Speech acts function is to facilitate communication and make the communication more effective and run smoothly.

In Indonesia, English is one of the subjects included in Curriculum 2013. In using the Curriculum-2013, the students expected to be more active and able to improve their literacy skills, such as reading and writing skills. As stated by Sudirman (2017), language is one of the factors that has a positive influence in improving students' studying motivation. Besides that, learning English in junior high school is the tool of each student's self-development. The English teaching-learning activity help junior high school students with the aim to train the students and make them able to speak and communicate with certain people who live in

another country in various interests, for instance, learning activities, tourism, business, or just chatting with foreigners.

As observed by the researcher, there were not many EFL students who actively gave respond to the teacher's speech in *SMP N 1 Sukasada*. It can be seen that out of the total number of students inside the classroom, only half of them who replied teacher's speech with speech acts. Besides of that, they also showed the monotonous production of speech acts structure and types.

Previous research had shown impressive studies on Speech Acts that expressed by EFL students. The study conducted by Hiani (2015) showed that in Moroccan, the university students as EFL learners perform speech acts in English language is still overlooked and stuck on embryonic level. This paper studied this issue by investigating fifteen speech acts that are frequently used in daily life conversation. This study used Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) method to collect the instruments. The result showed Moroccan EFL learners still suffer when using the appropriate expressions in performing these functions.

Tan & Farashaiyan (2015) studied Iranian intermediate EFL learners' knowledge of interlanguage pragmatic learning outcomes by producing speech acts of apology, request, and refusal. This study used Discourse Completion Task (DCT) as the instrument of data collection. The collected data showed that Iranian EFL learners utilized more conventional or routinized strategies to perform these speech acts. On the other hand, the research also showed there were not many differences in frequency, shift, and type of speech acts strategies or semantic formulas that utilized in the production of speech acts by Iranian EFL learners in responding to a higher, an equal, and a lower-status person.

The proposed research was similar to the two studies above. From the studies above, no study was conducted about the structure of speech acts, the type of speech acts, and the functions of speech acts upon the conceptualization Leech (1983). Therefore, in the present study, the research focused on describing and analyzing the structure of speech acts, the type of speech acts, and the functions of speech acts expressed by EFL Junior High School Students in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama 1 Sukasada.*

1.2 Problem Identification

The EFL Junior High School students were observed not competent in understanding effective communication competence, especially in expressing speech acts inside the classroom that could be due to some reasons.

Firstly, the effective communicative competence using speech acts is needed in English teaching and learning activity. As conducted by Ilma (2016), speech acts is important to be mastered to avoid the misunderstanding and misinterpretation in their mind. Speech acts can be expressed in various structures, types, and functions. Otherwise, there were so many EFL students who still lack of knowledge about speech acts. Most of them stated speech acts with a monotonous structure and form.

Secondly, one of the reason why students might not understand how to use speech acts is because of the pandemic. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the students were not allowed to go to school. The teacher as a learning communicator in normal learning usually directs the material that has been prepared through communication. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government asked students and teachers to work from home (Nurdin, 2019). Because of the lack of

communication between teachers and students, the students might not be able to use speech acts in the right structure, type, and function properly.

Between the two general reasons above, this proposed research focused on describing and analyzing the structure of speech acts, the type of speech acts, and the functions of speech acts expressed by EFL Junior High School Students.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 What are the structures of speech acts as expressed by the students in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama 1 Sukasada?*

1.3.2 What are the types of speech acts as expressed by the students in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama 1 Sukasada?*

1.3.3 What are the functions of speech acts as in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama 1 Sukasada?*

1.4 Research Objectives

The proposed research's objectives described and analyzed the structure of speech acts, the type of speech acts, and the functions of speech acts that expressed by EFL Junior High School Students in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama 1 Sukasada*.

1.5 Research Significance

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

The current research theoretical significance can be used for EFL teachers in planning and implementing communicative competence in Junior High School, especially in expressing many form of speech acts in daily

activities. Speech acts is the study that is concerned with how those words use to deliver the information and carry out actions.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

a) EFL students will improve their speaking competency, especially in conducting personal, interpersonal, transactional communications with speech acts.

b) EFL teachers will be also benefitted as they could design and develop effective communicative strategies during speaking class using speech acts in *Sekolah Menengah Pertama 1 Sukasada.*

1.6 Research Scope

The school that chosen by the researcher is *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 1 Sukasada*. This Junior High School is located in Sukasada Sub-District, Buleleng District. This subject of the research was seventh grade students who is studying English as Foreign Language (EFL) in their first semester of academic year 2020/2021. Due to pandemic COVID-19, the school limited the learning activities. The learning activities that usually carried out face-to-face is replaced into daring at that time. The objects of this research were focus on the structures of speech acts, the types of speech acts, and the function of speech acts that written by the students in form of descriptive text, procedure text, and recount text.