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TYPE OF TEACHER'S QUESTION IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM A CASE STUDY AT SMA NEGERI 6 TASIKMALAYA

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ABSTRACT

The role of questioning in teaching and learning process is very important for teachers and students. It is widely accepted that questioning is a basic skill that teachers obliged to have in the classroom. In this reason it is analyzed the teachers use the questions in their teaching learning process.

The objectives in this study are : (1) what are the teacher's understandings about questioning? (2) What types of questions are employed by the teachers in the classroom? (3) What questioning strategies do the teachers use in eliciting student's responses when the questions are not understood? (4) What kinds of responses are elicited by the students to respond to the teacher's question?

This study is a qualitative design, and has focused on two question types: display and referential questions. In categorizing the types of questions used by the teachers, it is adopted the classification of questions proposed by Ellis (2008). To collect the data, two techniques were used; questionnaire and observation. Observation was done during interaction in the teaching and learning process to find out the teacher's understandings about questioning, and the types of questions were employed by the teachers in the classroom, the questioning strategies that the teachers used in eliciting student's responses when the questions were not understood. Those strategies used were classified based on the questioning strategies proposed by Wu (1993) namely rephrasing, simplification, repetition, or decomposition strategy., and the kinds of responses were elicited by the students to respond to the teacher's question and also proposed by Wu (1993: 58) into two categories : (1) restricted and (2) elaboration. A restricted response contains two or more sentences which are linked by various cohesive or coherence devices.

The result showed at least There were four main conclusions from this study. First, although they understand the importance of questioning, the teachers could not apply their understanding in real teaching. Second, teachers use more display questions than referential questions. the use of certain type of questions in classroom teaching, especially display questions, does not automatically elicit student's responses. Third, the teachers have been successful in using the questioning strategies to assist the students' responses when the questions were not understood. Forth, the students' responses are eventually affected by the types of questions addressed by the teachers. To elicit the students' verbal responses, the teachers apply three questioning strategies. Those are repetition, rephrasing, and decomposition techniques. Besides, this study found that the teachers used translation techniques to make the questions more understandable for students to answer

Keywords : *Teacher's Questioning, Type of Question, Question Strategies*

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A. Introduction

Language Classroom communication is one of the most important communication forms occurring in society. The oral interaction which occurs in the classroom has effects to personality, intellectual, and social development of students and teachers alike. All instruction is a matter of communication whether it is delivered orally by a teacher, in writing and visuals in books or other materials, or through various forms of media (Rita C. Richey, James D. Klein, 2010),

The use of questioning in teaching and learning process is very important for teachers and students. It is widely accepted that questioning is a basic skill that teachers obliged to have in the classroom (Gall, 1970 ; Suherdi, 2007). Regarding the importance of questioning for teachers, Suhardi (2007) states that teachers are often considered as "professional question-asker". The skill for formulating questions, he adds, is an important strategy in conducting classroom teaching and learning process.

In classroom, the question used by teachers have many purposes. Through the questions, teachers can make students involved in learning activities and to stimulate the student to think critically and learning more efficiently. Teacher can also use question play in ongoing assessment to assess students' understanding on the materials being learnt (Stinggist, 2006). Therefore teachers should have skill in questioning to maximize the advantages they contribute in the classroom. They need to plan the questions carefully by thinking through possible questions which would guide the students toward further investigation and a deeper understanding of the concepts being stressed

Effective questioning posed by the teachers is believed to be able to focus students' attention to understand lesson content, arouse their curiosity, stimulate their imagination, and motivate them to seek out new knowledge (Nunan, 1990). Besides, questioning is one of the best way to develop teacher's role as an initiator and sustainer of classroom interaction (Nunan, 1999) in short, questioning done skilfully would facilitate students' language acquisition.

In reality, however, it seems that effective questioning does not always happen, even among teachers with considerable experience in teaching. Nunan and Lamb's (1996) research on questioning in language education reveals that over the years, teachers still pose questions in much the same way as always, with most of questions low-level, despite improvement in materials, curricula, and methods of teaching. Teachers tend to pose a series of specific, factual, and low-level question that hardly challenge students to think of answers as they can be readily lifted from text (Moore, 1995: 2). This condition also happens in the teaching and learning process when it was conducted an informal observation in a Senior High School in Tasikmalaya. It seems that the teachers' knowledge on how to pose questions effectively is still limited. On the other hand, the society at large assumes that teachers know how to pose questions effectively because they spend a large part of their time in class posing questions to their students.

Based on that informal observation related to the way of the teacher poses the question in the teaching and learning process, teacher did not seem to apply many types of questions as well as appropriate questioning strategies in their teaching. They did not give any opportunity to the students to involve in the teaching and learning process. This has brought about a consequence that the teaching and learning process in classroom does not occur as what is expected. Therefore it is important to portray the teacher's activities in the classroom to see whether the way she / he conducts the teaching and learning activity is worth applying in the teaching context.

B. Theoretical Review

1. Review of Related Studies

The first previous research was from Journal of English Language Teaching conducted by Sungho Kim (2016) entitled *An Analysis of Teacher Question Types in InquiryBased Classroom and Traditional Classroom Settings*. This research examined the differences and patterns for three categories between an argument-based inquiry group and a traditional group over the period of the SWH (Science Writing Heuristic) project: (1) teacher talk time, (2) structure of questions (question types), and (3) student responses.

2. Review of Related Theories

1) Definition of Question

In the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, question is defined as a sentence, phrase, or word that asks for information. The definition of question provided in The Longman Dictionary of English is that the question is a command or interrogative expression used to elicit information or a response or to test knowledge. Kathleen Cotton (1986) defines A question is any sentence which has an interrogative form or function. In this study, what is meant by question is a sentence that is used as a functional or speech act label, or an utterance that seeks information (Wu, 1993). In English, questions can be expressed through three linguistic means: 1) Interrogative sentences, for instance. Who belongs to Group 1? 2) Imperative sentences, example. Tell me why. 3) Declarative sentences, instance. That means that your brother is 10 years younger than you (uttered with falling intonation)

2) Types of Questions

a. Display Question

Display questions are questions you ask to see if the person you are speaking to knows the answer. In an ELT classroom, this normally means questions teachers ask learners to see if they understand or remember something.

In classroom display questions are used to test what extent the learners have mastered understood the material taught (Siposova, 2007). Regarding this type of question, he claims that teachers tend to use more display questions at the beginning to introduce the material of teaching, since the children's English proficiency is not developed and they require more practice.

Referring to the use of question in language classroom, display question probably could not be applied to maximize the availability of input, create interaction, and giving sufficient opportunities to practice the target language. This because, as found by Wu (1993), display questions could only elicit students' short and restricted responses. This mean that at the time of answering the display questions, the students have only uttered very limited responses consisting of one or two words only. In other words, the students could only produce the language as what the question required.

Although display questions cannot facilitate students to elicit more elaborative and syntactically more complex responses from the students, this type of question, to certain extent facilitates more interaction in classroom teaching.

b. Referential Question

Referential questions are questions you ask someone because you don't know the answer. In an ELT classroom, this can mean questions teachers ask learners and learners ask each other.

Regarding the referential question, Bernadowski (2006) states that "some believe that asking students higher-level cognitive questions or open question or referential question is one way to improve learning outcomes", the while, Brock (1986) concludes in

one of his studies that “referential question may increase the amount of speaking learners do in the classroom”, and this increase in students output may play a role in a successful second language acquisition. In his study, he found that learners’ responses to their teacher’s referential questions were much longer and more syntactically complex than responses to display questions. He also hypothesized that given referential questions learners will become more proficient if they have the opportunity to produce language utterance meaningfully. Students may often try harder to articulate their thoughts if what they want to convey is important to them. Moreover, if they perceive that their teacher is really interested in finding out the question, the student will probably find the communication to be more relevant. For this, he recommended the English language teachers are better to be trained to use the referential question in their classroom activities.

Godfrey (2001: 174) adds that the use of closed questions is expected to elicit a closed set of responses (for instance. *Where were you born?, Did you sell your house yet?*, In contrast, open questions leave open the nature and length of the response (such as. *What did you do in your trip?*, According to him, the use of tense two questions types influences student’s participation. Being asked closed questions, the students are normally expected to reproduce information or reasoning. On the other hand, open questions help the students to explore the subject and encourage him/her to think aloud. Whereas closed questions encourage passive participation, open questions cause students to take a more active role in the classroom.

3) Importance of Questioning in English Classroom.

Questioning is a common technique used in English language classroom. The goal is to check if the students understand what they have been taught, and to enhance students’ involvement and to promote students creative thinking in classroom interaction. Questioning has been considered as one of the most essential and important techniques during instructional process. Questioning takes most of teachers talk and it has been improved to have a great influence on classroom interaction.

Questioning as general way used by teacher in class, plays an important role in classroom teaching. Lie (2005), for example, claims that by taking advantages of questions taken from text learnt can help teacher to focus students’ attention directly to the material in the text. He, further, claims that these kinds of questions are useful in two reasons: first, it can provide the learners with a purpose in text contact and make the whole activity more interesting and effective, second, we need to know how well our learners are learning, and we can get information conveniently through the results of comprehension tasks.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that questioning plays very important role in foreign language learning. Therefore, teachers should maximize to use it to facilitate students in order that they will be more successful in learning the target language. For this, they should also know what types question can do so.

4) Functions of Questions

The first function of questions is as diagnostic tool, classroom questions allow the teacher to glimpse into the minds of students to find out not only what they know or don’t know but also how they think about a topic. Such questions as *What do you think about this picture?*, and *Do you like living in clean environment?*, given at the beginning of classroom activities on environment belong to the questions functions as diagnostic tool.

The second function of questions is the instructional functions. It means that questions can be used as a technique to facilitate learners to learn the news knowledge in the learning process. Questions provide the practice and feedback essential for the development. Questions alert students to the information in a lesson. Questions are also valuable in the learning of integrated bodies of knowledge. Toward this goal, questions can

be used to review previously learned material to establish a knowledge base for the new material to be learned. In addition, as the new material is being developed, questions can be used to clarify relationship within the content being discussed. Such questions as what is the purpose of narrative text? and what is the answer of question number three? posed to test students' understandings on the material being learnt are grouped into the questions to play instructional function.

5) Questioning Strategy

Questioning strategies refer to strategies use to elicit verbal response from students. To get responses from students, teachers use many ways to promote students' involvement in teaching and learning process in the classroom. From the purpose of this study, questioning strategies used by teacher was adopted from Wu (1993: 55) as follows: 1. Rephrasing, 2. Simplification, 3. Repetition, 4. Decomposition

6) Classroom Interaction and Questioning

For foreign language learners, classroom is the primary forum for them to use and experience the target language (Chavez, 2006: 1). In the teacher-dominated language classroom, the interaction pattern generally follows the initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF). In this pattern teachers initiate the classroom interaction by asking questions.

In classroom the teacher is also the language initiator and the one who can generate the opportunities for the learners to practice the target language (Harmer, 2007). When the teacher gives a question to a student to respond, he/she actual gives an opportunity to the student to practice using the target language (Swain, 2007). At this end the initiation from the teacher serves as the input of the target language, 'students' performance in the language is the output of language and the feedback from the teacher enhances learner's acquisition of language.

A foreign language classroom that can facilitate learners' language learning should have the following features: 1) providing optimal comprehensible input for learners through classroom communication. Both teachers and learners make an effort to make their speed comprehended by using communicative strategies; 2) providing opportunities for learners to communicate in the target language and enable them to learn the target language through meaningful use of it; 3) negotiation of meaning is encouraged. Teachers are expected to initiate learners to reorganize their language by using interactional modifications when problems occur in communication (Tan, 2007: 87).

3. Research Method

1) Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, embracing the characteristics of case study. A case study was chosen for several reasons. First, this design is usually used as an attempt to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and its meaning for those involved (Merriam, 1998: 3). In this case the situation of teaching English in Senior High School. Second, a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (here is the teacher questioning) within its real-life context, the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and multiples sources of evidence are used to enhance to construct validity of the study.

Qualitative study also attempts to identify unanticipated phenomena and influences, and generates new grounded theories about the latter. In other words, qualitative research provides rich narrative descriptions. It attempts to understand the process by which events and actions take place. Qualitative methods look for the process through which behavior (Alwasilah, 2002).

2) Research Site

The research was conducted at SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya. The reasons for choosing this school as a place of research were that of its practicality and accessibility (Kvale, 1996: 481) and it was familiar with the condition of the school since he had ever taught there for sixteen years before. In addition, it was relatively easy to conduct the research because it was not found any difficulties in getting permission from school on gaining the data needed.

3) Research Participants

The participants of the present study were two English teachers and 152 students of SMAN 6 Tasikmalaya. The two teachers were chosen to be research participants based on accessibility. They were recommended to participate in the study by the headmaster of the selected school. They were willing to participate in this research and to have their class observed. Both teachers graduated from strata I of English Department from a local university. They had been teaching English at that school for twenty five years. Both teachers taught in grade ten and eleven. In the present study they were coded as Teacher A and Teacher B. Both teachers are female.

4) Data Collection Techniques

a. Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is the main technique of collecting data for this study. It is intended to gain the data about the types of questions as well as the strategy used by teachers and also to gain the data about the students' responses in the classroom on teachers' questions. Three observation sessions were conducted for each teacher for a month. In this case, it was acted as a non participant observer. It was used an audiotape to record what actually happens in the classroom concerning the teacher's questions and the students' responses and made field notes to gain unrecorded data.

After the three sessions of each teacher activities in teaching and learning process were recorded, then transcribed the recorded data, made categorization, and analyzed all the collected data.

b. Questionnaire

Questionnaire used in this research consisted of seven items containing close and open-ended question (see appendix 2). This questionnaire was written in *Bahasa Indonesia* in order to make the respondents understand. Therefore, the data which reflected the respondents' understanding on questioning could be gained. Questionnaire was distributed all of the three sessions of lesson finished.

Of the seven items, four items (1, 2, 3, and 6) were open-ended questions. These items were used to gain the information which reflects the teachers' understandings on the importance of questioning in classroom teaching. Item 4 was a close question. It was used to gain the data on the frequency of using certain types of questions. Items 5 and 7 were open-ended and close question respectively. These items were used to get the data on what questioning strategies used by the teachers whenever their questions were not understood by the students.

The process of data analysis comprises arranging, organizing, categorizing, and interpreting. The data analysis was conducted over the study. The analysis and interpretations were based on the data from questionnaire and observations.

Data from questionnaire was analyzed based on the responses given by the two teachers. This analysis was used to answer the first research question namely the question about what the teachers' understandings on the issue of questioning.

Data from classroom observations were analyzed based on the transcription of each observation session and the field more of each. In each transcription there were three

codes utilized. The three codes were T for teacher, S for student. SS from class. In addition, the teacher questions were identified by the existence of question mark (?).

In categorizing the types of questions used by the teachers, it is adopted the classification of questions proposed by Ellis (1994: 588). They were display questions and referential questions categories. This analysis was used to answer the second research questions concerning the type of questions used by teachers in teaching-learning process in the classroom.

To answer the third research question about questioning strategy used by the teachers when the questions are not understood by students, it is also analyzed the transcription. Those strategies used were classified based on the questioning strategies proposed by Wu (1993) namely *rephrasing, simplification, repetition, or decomposition* strategy.

To answer the fourth research question relating to the students' responses, it analyzes the responses provided by the students whenever question addressed to them. On the purpose of categorizing those responses, it is adopted the classification of students' responses proposed by Wu (1993: 58) into two categories : (1) restricted and (2) elaboration. A restricted response contains two or more sentences which are linked by various cohesive or coherence devices.

5) Data Analysis

The process of data analysis comprises arranging, organizing, categorizing, and interpreting. The data analysis was conducted over the study. The analysis and interpretations were based on the data from questionnaire and observations.

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C. Research finding and Discussions

1. Teacher's Understanding about Questioning

To get the answer of the questions, it is distributed a written questionnaire which consists of seven items to reveal teachers' understandings on the use of question in teaching.

The first item is intended to ask the participants to give their opinions on the purpose of asking question in classroom teaching. For this item Teacher A stated that she used question to mencari informasi dari siswa tentang apa yang telah diketahui (find out information about what part of the material have been understood). teacher B stated that she asked questions to (mengetahui). Apakah siswa yang ditanya itu mengetahui apa yang ditanyakan (to know whether or not the students know what they ask to). From this statement, can be concluded that giving questions in front of the class has been perceived by the teachers for merely testing the students' achievement on the material or the topic they are taught.

The second item is designed to reveal teachers' understandings on the function of questioning in classroom teaching. For this item, Teacher A stated that the functions of questioning in classroom teaching is to mengaktifkan siswa di kelas, membiasakan siswa untuk berbicara bahasa inggris di kelas, untuk mengecek apakah siswa sudah memahami apa yang telah diajarkan. To this teacher, the functions of question in classroom were to

facilitate students to participate, to provide opportunity for students to practice speaking, and to check students' understandings on the lesson. Meanwhile, Teacher B stated that the questioning functions to mengarahkan perhatian siswa kepada apa yang akan diajarkan dan untuk mengetahui apakah siswa itu masih ingat apa yang telah diajarkan. The statement means that the functions of questioning in classroom teaching were to raise students' interest to the material of teaching and to recall students memory on what they have been taught. In summary, what they have understood on the function of questions in classroom teaching were accordance with the functions of question proposed by Ma (2008: 93), namely diagnostic, instructional, and motivational functions.

The third item is used to reveal teachers' understandings on the reasons of having questioning skill in classroom. For this item, Teacher A argued that dengan bertanya makan akan terjadi interaksi. In her view, skillful questioning can facilitate classroom interaction. In Teacher B's understanding skill questioning is part of teaching technique.

The forth item consist of consist of seven sub-items with five options to choose (*always, often, sometimes, seldom, and never*). Sub-item one was provided to get data on teachers' understandings on comprehension check. Sub-item two was about clarification request, sub-item three was about confirmation check, sub-item four was about referential question, sub-item five was about display question, sub-item six was about expressive question, and sub-item seven was about rhetoric question.

The fifth item of the questionnaire was used to gain the data on the technique applied by the two teachers when their questions were not understood by the students. Teacher B answered that whenever she found her questions were unanswerable she would repeat the question, give the additional clarification, and translate the question into *Bahasa Indonesia*. Teacher A, in solving the similar problem would translate the question into *Bahasa Indonesia* and repeat the question in a more slowly rate of utterance.

After analyzing all items in the questionnaire, it was found that both teachers were aware that questioning is very important in teaching. They understand that the questions are used to text to what extent the students have understood the material of teaching. They also understand that questions have several function; motivational, instructional, and diagnostic functions. It was also found that they applied many types of questions in their class, but they preferred to use display to referential questions. In their understandings, they used many strategies to make the questions more understandable when the questions were not understood by the students. The techniques were repetition and translation.

2. Types of Teacher Questions

After calculate the observation data score it was found that those two teachers used more display questions than referential ones. The following table shows the number of those types of questions used by the two teachers during their classroom teaching during the observation carried out

Table I.
Table Number of Questions Used in Each Observation

Teachers	Observations	Display questions	Referential questions
Teacher A	I	32	20
	II	49	25
	III	37	20
Teacher B	IV	20	7
	V	41	8

	VI	51	28
Total		230	108

As the table shows those two teachers used display questions around thirty to forty times in each observation, except in observation IV. Teacher B used only 20 display questions in her classroom activities.

In summary the number and the percentage of display and referential questions used during the six times observation can be seen in the following table.

Table 2.
Frequency of Display and Referential Questions and the Percentage in the total sum

Teachers	Display questions		Referential questions	
	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Teacher A</i>	118	64,48	65	35,52
<i>Teacher B</i>	112	72,26	43	27,74
<i>Total</i>	230	68,05	108	31,95

The use of display and referential question shown in the table reveals that the two teachers have the same understanding on the use of question in teaching. They used questions just for testing the students' knowledge on the material being taught. Consequently, the responses elicited from the students are dominated by short answers only as those questions require the students to display what material of teaching they have understood. this means that they are not able to produce other language production if they do not know the answer of questions.

3. Questioning Strategies

In relation to the third research question, it was analyzed the transcripts of the two teachers from all sessions of observation to identify what questioning strategies they used. It was found that both of them used similar strategies when their questions did not generate response from the students. Types and number of each strategy are presented in the following table.

Table 3.
Frequency of the questioning strategies used by the two teachers

Teacher	Repetition	Rephrasing	Simplification	Decomposition
A	42	9	0	3
B	23	7	0	7

The questioning strategies can be seen that the two observed teachers used two types of questions, display and referential questions when they conducting teaching-learning process in EFL classroom. Both teachers, however, used display questions more frequent than the later ones. In asking questions, the two teachers were found to translate the question into Indonesian language to help students better understand and gave response on the questions. In addition, they also used repetition, rephrasing, and decomposing strategies overcome the problem of "no answer" whenever the questions directed to the students. Types of questions used and questioning strategies employed in classroom communication, later affect the types and the quality of response given by the students when they were addressed questions by their teachers.

4. **Kinds of Responses are Elicited by the Students to Respond to the Teachers' Questions**

it was found that the students' responses were generally characterized answers regardless type of questions addressed were generated also but very limited number.

When the teachers wanted to test the students' understanding or knowledge about the material by their display questions, the students would display their responses based on their understanding and knowledge they have about the material

D. Conclusion

There are four conclusions that can be drawn from this study. First, in terms of teachers' understandings about questioning, the teachers do not understand about the questioning comprehensively. their understandings are only in the case of the importance of questioning in teaching, however, they could not apply their understanding in real teaching. In this context, the two teachers can not maximize the use of classroom questioning in facilitating their students to acquire more input and opportunity to practice using the language being learnt (Swain, 2007). Second, the use of certain type of questions in classroom teaching, especially referential questions, does not automatically elicit students' elaborative responses as what has been suggested by Brock (1986: 242). This might be caused by the quality of the referential questions used by the teachers. The two teachers as found during the observation, used referential questions to elicit students' answers concerning the non-related materials at the beginning of the teaching and learning activities. Third, in the term of questioning strategies, the teachers have been successful to assist the students' to elicit responses. The last, the students' responses are eventually effected by the types of questions addressed by the teachers. Conversely, the elaborative response will be provided by the students if they are given referential questions by their teacher.

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