

Examining Students' Questioning Strategies in EFL Classroom Interaction.

Masyruha

esse251292@gmail.com

Haryanto Atmowardoyo

haryanto@unm.ac.id

Kisman Salija

kisman.salija@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study on examining students' questioning strategies in EFL classroom interaction is aimed at investigating: (1) the types of students questioning strategies that appeared in the EFL classroom interaction; (2) the levels of students questioning strategies that appeared in the EFL classroom interaction; and (2) the students perceptions regarding to their questions strategies in the EFL classroom interaction. This research employed descriptive qualitative research. It applied purposive random sampling technique in selecting sample. The participants of this research were a class C of third semester English students at Graduate Program of English Education Department in State University of Makassar of academic year 2018/2019. The data were collected by employing video recording and interview. The obtained data was scripted and analyzed based on interactive model of Miles & Huberman, (1994) namely: (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing and verification. The results of this research showed that; (1) the types of students questioning strategies that appeared in the EFL classroom interaction are referential questions and display questions; (2) the level of students' questioning respectively lies out on higher and lower level of cognitive questions which divided into three level; remembering, understanding and applying; (3) each students has different perception regarding the questioning strategies. Some students ask questions because they did not understand the material discussed while the other students ask questions only because the topic is interesting. Furthermore, in asking questions, majority of students write down in their questions first to make sure that their questions is suitable with the topic. Finally, each student has different ways to make sure that the presenter understands regarding their questions.

Keywords: Students' questioning strategies, EFL classroom interaction.

INTRODUCTION

It cannot be denied that the communication that occurs in the EFL classroom among students becomes the integral part in the teaching and learning process. It is because through interaction between students can directly encourage every student to be more active in the classroom. Moreover, it will be easier for teachers to manage the condition of the classroom in which there will be interaction among

students and students and between teacher and students. Without the presence of the positive classroom context, students will not able to learn English positively.

Students need much effort for teachers to create creative teaching method that can engage students to be interested in learning English. It is because English students are expected to have higher achievement in mastering the language skills. In the process of acquiring English as a foreign language, most of them become passive when they are performing the topic. However, students have the essential role in the classroom to be actively engage in the classroom in which they are expected to ask question to the teacher and other students during the learning process.

Several scholars have proved that questioning has essential role in the EFL classroom. According to Zolfaghari, Fathi, & Hashemi (2011) that questioning in teaching activities can encourage recalling, deepen the learning process and comprehension, promote the imagination and problem-solving, satisfy the sense of curiosity and increase the creativity. The presence of questioning also indirectly assists students to be more critical in building their ideas. As Lorsch & Ronkowski (1982) assert that questioning is known as effective helps, that can develop critical thinking skills, reinforce student understanding and correct misunderstanding, as well as provide feedback. It is indicated that questioning has unique skill to encourage students' academic ability especially in understanding other students' explanation about certain topic.

It has been clear that questioning skill can influence students cognitive aspect. Yet, exploring the potentials of students' questions have in affecting their specific aspects are not a simple work. Students especially in EFL context are the students with various abilities and potentially have higher knowledge than teachers are able to expect. Their questioning skill in which represent their ideas also have possibility to transform learning into an ideal condition. However students at the same time have higher anxiety to show their ability in front of other students or their teachers in form of asking questions for instance in the group presentation. As the consequence some of them, even the students who have higher intelligence still kept silence in the end of the presentation where their questions are just the questions which steadily well-kept in their mind.

An interesting issue come from Chin (2002) who proposed fifth issues concerning the students' questions in which teachers are expected to be cognizant of. She found that the nature of tasks that teachers set influences the types of students' questions. When students work in groups, asking wonderment questions can stimulate either the questioners themselves or another student to generate answer. The students also do not always ask wonderment questions spontaneously. The last issue is that,

teachers may sometimes feel uncomfortable with the idea of encouraging students to ask questions because they may not know all the answers to the questions. Unfortunately most of the previous research tend to judged the students' questions as a device, which aimed to create environments of respect and positive learning rather than look at the students' questioning strategies in independent perspective. The researcher main concern is, there has to be a project which are able to provide insights into the nature of students' questions in terms of their quality, and finally their impacts to language learning. Given this idea, it is worth also nothing that investigating the students who ask questions to which the teacher responds is more challenging than the teacher presents information and poses questions to which students answer like in a typical classroom setting.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

In this research, the researcher employed a descriptive qualitative method. Qualitative research is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative and visual (i.e., nonnumerical) data to gain insights into a particular phenomenon of interest (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

Qualitative research is concerned with process, rather than simple outcomes or product, qualitative research tends to analyzed data inductively. Qualitative research is research that used to described and analyzed the phenomenon, event social activity, attitude, belief, thinking perception, and people's thinking either in individual or in a group. Then, Nunan & David (1992) suggested that qualitative research advocates the use of qualitative methods, concern with the understanding of human behaviour from the actor's own frame of preference, explanatory, descriptive and process oriented.

Thus, the researcher used this method found out the types of students questioning in classroom presentation and to analyzed the level of questioning strategies posed by students and students in EFL classroom interaction in English Departement as well as their perception regarding their questions.

This research was started with pre-observation class to select of the research as the subject. After determining the subject, the researcher collected the data by observing the students during question session. After observed, the gathered data was identified, classified, and analyzed based on types and level of question that posed by the students' and students'. In the end there was interviewing session to students as regarded to examine their perception.

Site and Participant

This research was conducted at Graduate Program of English Education Department in State University of Makassar of academic year 2018/2019. The subjects were students in the third semester. To determine the subject in this research, the researcher applied purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique is used to determine the subject by considering something or criteria. Silverman (2013) stated that Purposive sampling allows us to choose a subjects because illustrates some feature or process in which we are interested. All the students in Class C were taken as the subjects purposively because they are commonly active in a discussion forum.

Research Instrument

a. Observation

~~Observation~~—The researcher conducted an observation to find out the types of and the level of question that are posed by the students' to ~~another student~~each other. The observation was undertaken by simply watching the participants without bothering their existing routine (non-participant observation). It means that the researcher only watched the situation in the classroom while did video record in the classroom. The researcher observed the discussion in the learning process but she neither interacted nor participated in the classroom. The emphasis during observation was on understanding the natural environment as lived by participants without altering or manipulating it.

b. Interview

Interview was the second major data collection technique. Interview was a purposeful interaction in which one person is trying to obtain information from another. As popular data collection technique in qualitative research, Heigham & Croker (2009)categorized interview in some type, namely structured, open interview structured interviews and semi structured interviews. In this research, the researcher used semi structured interview which consist of open-ended question.

According to Merriam & Tisdell (2009)semi structured interview is the most interviews in qualitative research; thus the interview guide probably contain several specific question that the researcher wants to ask everyone, some or more open-ended questions that could be followed up with probes, and perhaps a list of some areas, topic, and issues that the researcher want to know more.

The open-ended questions was designed to permit the respondents to feel completely free to express their answer as they wished, as detailed and complex, as long or as short as they felt appropriate. These questions were intended to evoke fuller and richer responses and probe deeper.

Interview was focused on the students after class, in this case the researcher interviewed the students concerning their perception regarding their questions. In carrying out this research, the researcher utilized voice note of tape recorder to ensure that the data is recorded and ready to be transcribed.

Procedure of Collecting Data

To collect the data, the researcher firstly relied on observation. Observation was conducted to get the data about types and level questioning strategies used by the students. The data collected by video recording in classroom interaction. The researcher observed the teaching and learning process. During the observation, the researcher acts as an external observer in which did not directly involve in the situation being observed. After conducting the observation, the researcher conducted the face-to-face interview with students. And after all the procedures done, the researcher transcript the data that researcher gets from the video recording and the last, the researcher analyzed the data.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data from the observation and interview, the researcher used some steps which deal with the procedures in analyzing qualitative research data. According to Gay and Mills (2012) the process of analyzing the qualitative research data consists of three steps, namely reading/memorizing, describing and classifying. Therefore, the researcher adopted these steps in order to get the comprehensive and suitable procedures/steps in analyzing the data based on the objectives of the research. Furthermore, these steps are explained as follows:

The data in this research were analyzed through interactive model of Miles & Huberman (1994) namely: (1) data reduction, (2) data display, and (3) conclusion drawing and verification. In the phase of data reduction, the researcher reduced the obtained data by omitting irrelevant data and choosing the needed data, field data collection, selected and classified. This step includes transcribing the utterances of the students particularly their questions during the class. After labeling the types of students' questions, and levels of students questioning strategies, the researcher then displayed all the data. Since this analysis is in interactive fashion, the researcher then moved back and forth from data display to data reduction again, in order to see whether new types of students questioning strategy emerged from the data.

In data display, the researcher organized and compresses assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing. Finally, conclusion drawing and verification involved the researcher in interpretation: drawing meaning from display data. In this period, the researcher tried to understand the data that already exist and then do the verification or selecting data in accordance with what is expected by the researcher or research variable. After categorizing or classifying types of questioning power. This classification of the data was used to recognize their questioning level.

After completing the categorization, the next step of the research is interpreting the data in a brief description. The data is organized, identified, and was ready to be interpreted. The researcher interpreted the data, explains and related to the review of the related literature, previous research findings and related to the result of interview of the students. As the last stage of the research, the researcher concluded the findings based on the research questions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher identified the result of students transcription for four times. The first meeting was conducted on April 4th, 2018 consisted of four students in which a first group conveyed topic about 'language testing and assessment'. The second meeting was conducted on April 11th, 2018 consisted of four students in which group conveyed topic about project assessment, evaluation of test, and portofolio assessment. The third meeting was conducted on April 25th, 2018 consisted of five students in which group conveyed topic about 'writing course materials for the world : a great compromise'.

The fourth meeting was conducted on May 4th, 2018 consisted of five students explain about data collection and materials development. In the presentation's group, the students would conveyed the result of their discussion. After the presentation process ended, every student was given a chance to provide question or comment about topic that has been presented.

At that time, moderator began to open a discussion and then explained more the first group about 'language testing and assessment', the second group about Project assessment, evaluation of test, and portofolio assessment, the third group about 'writing course materials for the world : a great compromise' and the fourth group about data collection and materials development in which every student in group has an opportunity to speak. After finishing their presentation, students were asked to ask some questions about the topic that has been presented. It was found that there were eight students provided question to a first group and their questions are categorized as referential question and display question, there were nine students

provided question to a second group and their questions are categorized as referential and display question, there were two students provided question to the third group their question are categorized as referential question and it was found that there were three students provided question to the fourth group their question are categorized as referential and display question.

Types of Questioning Strategies Used by the Students

Types of Questioning strategies	Sub-categories
Referential Question	To seek new information
	To demand students to think deeper
	To fill in the information gaps
	To share ideas during learning process
Display Question	Clarification request
	Phrasing question clearly
	Question that demand illustration

To find out the types of questioning strategies used by the students, the researcher did the observation by utilizing video-audio recording to get broad descriptions of the types of questioning strategies that happened in the classroom interaction that totally in three meetings.

Referential and display questions are types of questioning strategies according to Wajnryb (1992). Based on the previous analysis, the researcher found that the students in Graduate Program of English Education Department in State University of Makassar of academic 2018/2019 used Referential and display questions. Although two of six types of question emerged in this research and aligned with theory, this research has made a groundbreaking trend and in a way that questioning strategy which mostly used by teacher in the classroom (Wajnryb, 1992), can also be used and appropriated in students-students interactions particularly in discussion session, where basically they were a pre service teacher. This finding to some extent were valued as important reports in which the ideas of students' questioning strategy in the realm of education and particularly on foreign language learning (EFL) has not been examined effectively.

Having regard to the types of questioning strategy by students during the discussion forum, it was revealed that most of the students' questioning content was based on a rigid pattern or firm formula, they commonly used referential question in order to keep in the learning track. Thus EFL students were still neglect of making some imaginative or various types questions. However as Qashoa (2013)a's study (2013) revealed that this kind of questions which strictly based on content helped students become more involved in classroom interactions.

The most salient categorization in this research which addressed the key findings in this framework is that display finding is not merely considered as comprehension checks (Al-Zahrani & Al-Bargi, 2017)it transformed into a complex form of demanding illustration which allow the addressee to describe the phenomenon. And this question went beyond simple memorization and recollection of material, representing the lowest level of understanding in the cognitive domain. From this evidence, it denied a conception that display questions prevent students from expressing their own ideas and are likely to encourage the repetition of facts or pre-formulated language items (Santiago i Ribas, 2010).

Students' level of questioning strategies

Questions	Types of Question	Level of Questions
<i>Tell me e your main reason why e do you choose or not to choose e multiple choice test?</i>	Referential	Remembering
<i>What happened if the principle is not, satu prinsip itu hilang?</i>	Referential	Understanding
<i>What are the steps and what are indicator?</i>	Referential	Remembering
<i>What is the advantages for portofolio assessment?</i>	Referential	Remembering
<i>Where is the first section to do whether is a process assesment or project assessment ? which one is the first section?</i>	Referential	Remembering
<i>How to measure the validity of multiple choice test and essay test?</i>	Referential	Remembering
<i>How to evaluate project test ? and what are the indicator of good project assessment</i>	Referential	Remembering
<i>How to differentiate it eee between evaluation, test and assesment?</i>	Referential	Understanding
<i>What should that tester do to make that the specification in their eee testing criteria ?</i>	Referential	Remembering
<i>So, could you explain me in simple way based on your own understanding?</i>	Referential	Understanding

<i>What is actually the correlation between writing and professional respect?</i>	Referential	Remembering
<i>Bukan tes?</i>	Display	Remembering
<i>Accountable... accountable means that can be count. Right?</i>	Display	Remembering
<i>Could you give example?</i>	Display	Applying

The level of questioning as mentioned in table consisted of three levels, from *remembering*, *understanding* to *applying*. However, in the lowest level, the *remembering* emerged from the first meeting until the third meeting. It is indicated that Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy level of question that found by the researcher was in level of remembering and it was known as level I. Furthermore, level I also known as low order convergent in which questions require factual recall. In this case, majority students when they were asking questions to the presenter, they intended to know the presentation groups opinion, ideas or thoughts about the topic.

They also asked questions about fundamental facts, terms, and basic concepts of the certain topic. Then, it has been clear that the process of students thinking still on the lowest level of the taxonomy and it was knowledge.

The levels of questioning strategies uttered by the students in teaching and learning process. The detailed explanations in this part answer the second research question stated in chapter I. It indicated that level of students questioning strategies has reached the third level of *applying*, based on Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy level of question.

From the data, it showed that most of the students' questions fall into remembering level. Most of the content of the question can be found in the topic being discussed, so there will be definite answer for each. However this research has made attempt to categorize the level of questions based on Anderson and Krathwohl's Taxonomy (2001) level of question integrated with the types of question suggested by Wajnryb (1992). And it was illustrated that some questions level might vary in accordance to the context, particularly in discussion forum. Referential questions can be categorized either as remembering or understanding level based on the content in the question uttered by the EFL students.

At first question level, the students ask questions which intended to know the presentation groups opinion, ideas or thoughts about the topic. There are two category of questions in this first level, that is the questions which merely

mentioning and ensuring the issue that already mentioned in the discussion and explaining deeper into the issue which strictly based on the topic of the discussion.

The second level of questions, the understanding level emerged in this research showed a pattern that this level of learning is slightly more cognitively demanding than the remembering level learning.

The applying level, in which the higher level of questions that the students can reach, suggested that the questioner was aware of the answer, but she/he still need more clarification from another perspective and decided to make a question where the addressee might present various situations. From this evidence, the interaction that occurs by this question in the classrooms allows students to learn and produce the language in a social process which plays an essential role in evolving learners' cognition and learning improvement.

Students' perception regarding to their questioning strategies in the EFL classroom interaction

The researcher conduct interview to five students to get more information about the perceptions to their questions itself. Before the researcher asked deeply about perceptions to their questions. The researcher intended to get their perception by asking several questions. Semi structured interview was used as instrument in this research.

From the interviews, there are some the students perception such as most students majority have an opportunity to state their opinion after certain group of presentation presented their topics, that majority students did not spontaneously asked question to the presenter in which they firstly write or think a question that could be asked the group presentation and, that majority students have equal perception on the way they asked question in the discussion process. From this data the students are more likely to show higher level of questions as they were concerning more about the quality of their questions. In addition to the finding that was reported by Crompton, Burgin, De Paor, & Gregory (2018) that in a blended learning forum, students are likely to ask higher level questions to even hypothesize with the new information they had gathered after giving freedom to ask. From this idea and in connection with the current finding, the teacher educator should empower students an authority, to ask certain question which matter to the learning process, specifically to language learning.

CONCLUSIONS

This research described the use of questioning strategies in teaching and learning classroom interaction through applying some types of questions and using them in mostly the session of classroom discussion. It was found that the students applied more than one types of questions. Referential question were applied frequently in all session of discussion, aimed to seek new information, to demand students to think deeper, to fill in the information gaps, and to share ideas during learning process. Where another type of question emerged in this research, that is display question mainly used to clarify request, to phrase question clearly, and to demand illustration.

From the types of students questions, most of the questions fall into *remembering* level which were restricted to the topic being discussed, where in *understanding* level, the content of students' questions determined by the quality of their questions. However the students reach the *applying* level of question where she/he still insisted to clarify the issue by asking another perspective which might present various answers. From this evidence, it can be concluded that the types of students questioning do not determine the quality of the question particularly the level of students' question.

The research finding stated regarding the students perception that, some students have different perception regarding the question strategies. However majority students did not spontaneously asked question to the presenter in which they firstly write or think a question that could be asked the group presentation.

REFERENCES

- Al-Zahrani, M. Y., & Al-Bargi, A. (2017). The impact of teacher questioning on creating interaction in EFL: a discourse analysis. *English Language Teaching, 10*(6), 135.
- Chin, C. (2002). Student-generated questions: Encouraging inquisitive minds in learning science. *Teaching and Learning, 23*(1), 59–67.
- Dumteeb, N. (2009). *Teachers' questioning techniques and students' critical thinking skills: English language classroom in the Thai context* (PhD Thesis). Oklahoma State University.
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. W. (2009). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and applications, student value edition*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.
- Heigham, J., & Croker, R. (2009). *Qualitative research in applied linguistics: A practical introduction*. Springer.
- Lorsch, N., & Ronkowski, S. (1982). Teaching tips for TA's: Effective questioning enhances student learning. *Instructional Development, University of California, Santa Barbara*.

- Merriam, S., & Tisdell, E. T. (2009). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. San Fransisco: John Willey & Sons. Inc.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., Huberman, M. A., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. sage.
- Nunan, D., & David, N. (1992). *Research methods in language learning*. Cambridge University Press.
- Qashoa, S. H. (2013). Effects of teacher question types and syntactic structures on EFL classroom interaction. *The International Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(1), 52–62.
- Santiago i Ribas, M. (2010). The effects of teacher talk on students' oral productions.
- Silverman, D. (2013). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*. SAGE Publications Limited.
- Wajnryb, R. (1992). *Classroom observation tasks: A resource book for language teachers and trainers*. Cambridge Teacher Training and Development. Cambridge University Press.
- Zolfaghari, A. R., Fathi, D., & Hashemi, M. (2011). Role of Creative Questioning in the Process of Learning and Teaching. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 30, 2079–2082.