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## An Analysis of Types of Teacher's Questions in The English Learning Process in Higher Education

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### Abstract

*This research discusses the types of questions lecturers use in the teaching and learning process for the students of the University of Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang. The aim of this research is to identify the types of questions generated by lecturers in classroom interactions. This research was carried out on students majoring in Management. In collecting data, researchers used observation and interviews. Observations are used to see the types of questions used by lecturers in the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, interviews are used to find out why lecturers used the questions in the teaching and learning process. The researcher made observations using an observation checklist, field notes, and a video recorder as tools during the observation. Teacher questions were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman (1995) qualitative data analysis model. The research results show that in the process of learning English in Management classes, teachers predominantly use procedural and convergent types of questions to interact with students. These questions are used to determine the level of students' understanding of the material that has been taught and can help students to recall the material. Using these questions can help students participate actively by responding to these questions. Lecturers do not use divergent types of questions which can increase students' thinking patterns to be more critical in conveying ideas or opinions about something.*

*Keywords: Class Interaction, Teacher's Questions, Teaching And Learning Process*

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## I INTRODUCTION

Interaction is a social relationship between individuals in such a way that the individuals concerned influence each other (Chaplin, 2011). . Teaching and learning

interaction is a reciprocal relationship between teachers (educators) and students (students), in a teaching system. Teaching and learning interactions are an important factor in efforts to

achieve good teaching and learning situations in educational and teaching activities.

Questions are a central part of classroom interaction, where teachers can use questions to assess student performance, promote or facilitate learning, and engage students to participate in classroom activities. Questions can also be considered as a basic tool to investigate how much students have understood. In the teaching and learning process, questions are very important in language acquisition because most of the opportunities for language learners to participate are when they are asked questions.

A teacher is a figure who is always the topic of conversation because a teacher can change something that is meaningless into something that is very valuable and even something that is decisive. Questions as part of the teacher's language in the classroom in the teaching and learning process are something that can change something that is impossible into possible (Cullen, 1998).

Teachers must know the types of questions that have the potential to support students in learning the target language. Teacher questions are not simple and not a meaningful phenomenon but have an important role in parallel processes in the classroom. Therefore, use various types of questions as a strategy for asking students. These questions are expected not only to encourage classroom interaction, but also to encourage students to communicate in real-life environments, to build closer relationships with students, and to help students face difficulties in expressing themselves due to their limited vocabulary.

In general, teachers do not use appropriate types of questions in the teaching and learning process. This means that teachers cannot develop their questions to elevate students' thinking to a higher level during classroom interactions. The results of classroom observations at the University of Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang showed that the teacher only presented simple questions to open the class, check students' understanding of the material, and recall the material that had been presented. During the teaching and learning process, teachers are expected to use English as a medium for transferring knowledge to students. Student responses are only based on question patterns and learning materials. They do not express their ideas and engage in higher-level thinking.

At the end of class, the teacher uses questions to evaluate the material that has been studied to check students understand the material. Questions are a central part of classroom interactions used by teachers to assess student performance, promote or facilitate learning, and engage students to participate in classroom activities (Avdic, Artusson & Hatakka, 2016; Lee, 2006). Apart from that, questions can also be considered as a fundamental tool to investigate how much students have.

In target language learning classes students often do not have the ability to start a conversation or maintain a conversation in the target language. Therefore, teachers must be able to encourage interaction in the classroom, both at the beginning of class and throughout learning. On the other hand, Richard and Lockhard (1994: 185) describe several important things from teacher questions used to interact with students as follows:

- a. Questions stimulate and maintain student interest
- b. Questions encourage students to think and focus on the lesson content
- c. Questions allow teachers to determine students' level of understanding
- d. Questions allow a teacher to elicit specific structures or vocabulary items
- e. They encourage students to participate in lessons

Based on the questions above, it can be concluded that the questions used in the learning process are an important part of the learning process and are one of the teaching methods to achieve teaching goals in class. It is used to promote student learning and engage student participation in classroom activities.

In other words, questions can motivate students to be interested in learning material. Questions help students to review important content in a subject and are also used to control students' social behavior. Different types of questions according to Barnes (Ellis, 1994) include:

1. Regarding factual matters, this type of question begins with the word "what".
2. Inference questions, these questions start with 'How and why'.
3. Questions for communication, these questions are used for communication.

Richard and Lockhard (1994: 186) classify teacher questions into three types, namely procedural, convergent and divergent questions.

### 1. Procedural Questions

Procedural questions relate to classroom procedures, routines, and classroom management as opposed to learning content. For example, when the teacher checks student assignments. These questions are used by teachers to ask students, for example:

- a. Do they all carry assignments?
- b. Do you understand how to do the assignment?
- c. How much time do you use?
- d. Do you have problems carrying out tasks?

Procedural questions are designed to get students to focus on the lesson content and facilitate their understanding and encourage class interaction so that students are more active in the teaching and learning process.

### 2. Convergent question

Convergent questions usually encourage students to answer questions that focus on the main topic. Answers to convergent questions are usually based on the material that has been presented. The answer to this question is often just a short answer like YES or NO. This means that teachers do not familiarize students with thinking at a higher level. In general, these types of questions simply expect students to repeat some conventional wisdom. Richard and Lockhard recommend the following questions as convergent questions used by a teacher in an introductory reading lesson focused on the effects of computers.

- a. How many personal computers do you have at home?

- b. Do you use it every day?
- c. What do you use it primarily for?
- d. What other machines do you have in your house?
- e. What are the names of some computer companies?
- f. What is the difference between software and hardware?

### 3. Differential Questions

Divergent questions are the opposite of convergent questions. This type of question encourages students to engage in higher-level thinking, further encouraging students to provide more detailed information so that their responses are not just short answers. In general, divergent questions require students to analyze knowledge and predict different outcomes. A teacher should ask divergent questions after convergent questions as follow-up questions to ask for more detailed information. For example, after the teacher asks the convergent questions above, the teacher continues with divergent questions such as:

- a. What is the impact of computers on society's economy?
- b. How would today's businesses function without computers?
- c. Do you think computers have a negative effect on society?
- d. What is the best way to promote the use of computers in education?

Procedural questions are used as a routine in classroom interactions and to organize the class during the teaching and learning process. Convergent questions are used to encourage students to respond to questions that focus on the content of the lesson, while divergent questions require students to have critical thinking and encourage students to provide more detailed information.

## II RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, researchers identified the types of questions asked by teachers in classroom interactions and described the influence of these questions on student contributions in classroom interactions at University of Putra Indonesia

YPTK Padang University. Researchers use Richard and Lockhard's theory to identify the types of questions teachers use in the English learning process.

### III RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research, as previously explained, is related to the types of questions according to Richard and Lochard (1996). This research data was taken from the teaching and learning process of class VIII students at St. Antonius Padua Leworahang East Flores. All complete data in the transcription of classroom interactions between teachers and students are analyzed and attached in the appendix. A summary of the teacher's questions is presented in the following table:

Type of question	Frequency and percentage of occurrence of the question			
	The first meeting	%	The second meeting	%
Procedural	15	48,38	14	41,47%
Convergent	11	47,82	20	58,82
Divergent	-	-	-	-
Overall	23	100%	34	100%

*Table 2: The Type of Teacher's Questions in Class M2*

Type of question	Frequency and percentage of occurrence of the question			
	The first meeting	%	The second meeting	%
Procedural	13	40,62	7	30,43%
Convergent	19	59,38	16	68,18
Divergent	-	-	-	4,54%
Overall	32	100%	22	100%

Table 1 shows the number of questions teachers ask in the teaching and learning process in class M.1. A total of 23 questions were presented at the first meeting and around 34 questions at the second meeting. The most common types of questions were procedural with a total of 15 questions or around 48.38% at the first meeting and 14 questions or around 41.47% at the second meeting.

The second question was a convergent question with a total of 11 questions or around 47.82% in the first meeting and 58.82% in the second meeting or 20 questions. The teacher did not ask divergent questions in the meeting. It seems that teachers have difficulty creating questions of this type. In the interview, the teacher revealed that the use of divergent questions was based on the learning material. In addition, students need more time to answer the questions.

Meanwhile, Table 4.2 shows that the teacher asked 32 questions at the first meeting, containing 13 procedural questions or around 40.62%, converging with a total of 19 questions or 59.38%. From these data it is known that convergent questions are more dominantly asked by teachers at the first meeting.

At the second meeting, the teacher produced 22 questions. This number consists of

15 convergent questions or around 68.18%, procedural questions 30.43% or 7 questions. The data shows that convergent questions are most dominantly used in classroom interactions. From these data it can be seen that the teacher does not use divergent questions during learning. It seems that teachers have problems using these questions to interact with students.

In the teaching and learning process that occurs in the Management class, the teacher implements two types of questions based on the theory of Richard & Lockhard (1994). These types of questions can be described as follows:

#### Finding 1

T : *Finish? (procedural Question ke- 30)*

Ss: *Yes*

T: *Ok. Every group ready? (procedural Question 135)*

Ss : *Yes*

T: *Group two...where is yours? (procedural Question 75)*

Ss : *It's mom*

T : *Make a dialog more than two sentences. Understand? (procedural Question 120)*

Ss : *Yes understand Mr*

T : *Finish? (procedural Question 88)*

Ss : *Not yet sir*

The data in extract 1 is categorized into procedural questions. These questions are presented to check and control student activities in the teaching and learning process. The teacher invites students to focus more on the lesson.

Based on these data, it can be seen that students are able to actively participate in answering questions. They respond by paying attention to the lesson, their responses are in accordance with the pattern of questions. In general, these types of questions require a Yes or No answer.

#### Finding 2

Q : *There are two tasks. Find the meaning or meaning of the text. You understand it? (procedural question 66)*

Ss: *Yes teacher.*

T: *homework all of you. Understand? (procedural Question192)*

Ss : Yes I understand

T : And then I ask you again. Do you understand this material? (procedural Question 47)

SS: Yes. I understand?

The questions above are categorized as procedural questions because they are used by teachers to manage the class. Questions 66 and 92 are used to check students' understanding of instructions to do something. The student's response "Yes teacher and Yes I understand" means they understand the instructions given by the teacher. Next, the 47th question is given to check students' understanding of the instructions for carrying out the task. The teacher uses questions to check students' understanding of the learning material that has been presented. The data revealed that students answered "Yes, I understand" meaning they had understood the material and teacher's instructions.

Apart from that, convergent questions are also dominantly used by teachers in the teaching and learning process. Students are required to answer questions based on the material they have thought about. As an example:

Dewa: do you know the procedure? (17 convergent type question)

Dewa: Procedure is steps

Q : What is the purpose of the text?  
(119 convergent type question)

Ss: To retail the writer's experience to the readers

The questions in the 6th finding are categorized into convergent questions. Students are required to demonstrate sufficient understanding to organize mental material. From these data it can be seen that these questions have an impact on student contributions. Students are able to answer questions based on the lesson topic. In other words, students are able to recall the material that has been presented. They show their understanding in compiling learning materials.

Finding 4

## IV CONCLUSION

In the English learning process in the Management class at University of Putra Indonesia YPTK Padang, the teacher implements types of questions to encourage students to pay

Q: What does the first example mean? Who knows? (98 convergent question)

Rini : Are you sure the sun is hot?

T: Ok... that means you know e.. the second... example two who knows what it means? (105 convergent question)

Ss: Did you know Anton was coming?

Q: Of course. of course. What about you? (115 convergent question)

Ss: What do you think?

Q: What is certain? What is certain? (149 convergent question)

Ss: Sure

Q: Are you sure? What does it mean in Indonesia? What does it mean in Indonesian? (151 convergent question)

Ss: Are you sure?

The questions above encourage students to respond to questions that focus on the main topic of the lesson. The teacher presents these questions to recognize some English vocabulary related to the text. For example, a student's response "Are you sure the sun is hot?" This means that the teacher presents questions to help students remember vocabulary related to certain things.

Based on the findings in the research, it can be concluded that in the English learning process teachers only use two types of questions according to Richard and Lockhard's theory. These types of questions include procedural and convergent questions. The teacher focuses on inviting students to be more active in class interactions and recall the material that has been presented. Teachers do not encourage students to express their ideas about things and engage in higher-level thinking. It seems that teachers have difficulty implementing divergent questions because students' limited ability to use English vocabulary makes them difficult to answer divergent questions. Apart from that, students feel embarrassed to speak English because they are afraid of spelling English words wrong.

attention to the lesson and recall the material that has been presented. In other words, teachers do not produce the types of questions to encourage students to hone higher-level thinking skills. It

seems like the teacher got into trouble for asking questions. Teachers lack the competence to provide a variety of types of questions that are categorized into higher order thinking skills. In other words, this question is classified in the High

Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) category. This means the type of question that can encourage students to think more critically and use creative language in giving opinions about something.



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