QUESTIONING OF INTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES: A STUDY AND TYPES AND POSSIBLE CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION

[1]Ayah Ahmed Zidan

[1] English Departement Muhammadiyah Surakarta University
ayaahmedzidan1991@gmail.com

Abstract

Learning and teaching of English as a second or foreign language have been a dilemmatic issue in non-English speaking countries where problems of both teaching and learning are inevitable. One common and prevalent aspect of interactive speaking relates to questioning routines. Asking questions, and taking part in questioning sequences in talk, is essential for getting information, contributing ideas, and being actively involved in the environment. Besides, it is one way or another to contribute to the fluency of language use. The current study is in general to highlight how questions, especially referential and display questions, are important in increasing learning in general and interaction in particular in EFL classrooms. The current research is actually a library research. One unit of analysis in the current study consists of all types of information questions that would be described in terms of purpose and grammatical features, adopting Miller's An Introduction to English Syntax. The result of the research are communicative use of the target language makes up only a minor part of typical classroom activities. Most, not all, referential questions create more interaction in the classroom than display questions do. Display questions sometimes cause learners to give a bout five-minute answer but such answer cannot be considered interaction because it is one-way. Display questions outnumbered referential ones, and referential ones produced more classroom interaction.

Keywords: questioning, intructional, classroom

INTRODUCTION

Learning and teaching of English as a second or foreign language have been a dilemmatic issue in non-English speaking countries where problems of both teaching and learning are inevitable. Quite a great number of researches have been done to attempt to overcome the problems, only ending up in another change of the classroom methodology, resulting in new techniques of teaching to help students with the development of English proficiency. It is also argued (Brown, 2001) that in a language class where foreign language learners do not have a great number of tools for initiating and maintaining language, they are often encouraged to ask questions in pairs or in groups which can provide stepping stones for continued interaction. It also fosters cooperation, promotes critical thinking, allows them to become creative and innovative, and enhances their sense of competence and self-worth. Thus, questioning is a very good way to empower the learning process. Teachers use questions to start a discussion as such is called rhetorical questions.

It is also commonly known that studies related to English teaching have showed the need for teachers' questioning, and emphasized how they are important to start communication and how they can help EFL learners to develop their competence in language. "In second language classrooms, where learners often do not have a great number of tools, your questions provide necessary stepping stones to communication" (Brown 1994: 165). Similar remarks have been made in favor of providing feedback, certainly to EFL learners. For example, "Such responsibility means that practically everything you say and do will be noticed" (Brown 1994: 28, and Nunan 1991: 195). In this regard, McDonough and Shaw (1995: 271 – 273) provide more detailed advice as follows:

Evidence also tends to suggest that the questions a teacher asks in the classrooms can be extremely important in helping learners to develop their competence in the language. It is useful to observe if teachers put questions to learners systematically or randomly, how long they wait for a response, and the type of question asked, from that requiring a simple one-word reply to higher order referential questions where learners can provide information which the teacher does not know. Similarly, in the case of feedback and correcting learners, we can observe how and when the teacher does this.

Furthermore, one common and prevalent aspect of interactive speaking relates to questioning routines. Asking questions, and taking part in questioning sequences in talk, is essential for getting information, contributing ideas, and being actively involved in the environment. Besides, it is one way or another to contribute to the fluency of language use.

The current study focuses, depending on previous studies in this field, on Questioning for Instructional Purposes, a Study of Types and Possible Classroom Implmentation.

However, in order to approach the research problems systematically, the grand research question can be reformulated in to the following sub-objectives: To investigate what types of instructional questions are possible for use in developing language skills; and to examine how each type of instructional questions is syntactically constructed to enhance the language use.

RESEARCH METHOD

The current research is actually a library research. Thus the current study is a thorough and comprehensive description of all types of questions likely used for instructional purposes.

To justify the validity of the findings, the researcher had a steady consultation with the supervisor. It was a kind of group discussion (the researcher and the supervisor) to investigate the question(s) in terms of the aim, form, and syntactic structure.

One unit of analysis in the current study consists of all types of information questions that would be described in terms of purpose and grammatical features, adopting Miller's An Introduction to English Syntax. The questions were drawn from a prepared text in order to generate questions in relation to what particular type of information is set to be problematic for the students to answer.

Described below are steps to be taken in data collection: the researcher went over several textbooks on questioning, especially information questions which are normally used for instructional purposes even though Yes/No and True/False types of questions are not at all discouraged to be used in Reading Comprehension Classes. The questions were analyzed in terms of the grammatical features.

Library Data Analysis implies activities of describing the types of questions in terms of use and their grammatical features. The analysis was supported by syntactic description in order to clearly describe the sentence construction. The syntactic description that the researcher used is based on traditional grammar of English.

Prior to the establishment of questions, a text on the basis of which the question was made was displayed to ignite the students to find out the required information in response to the questions. Thus in reading comprehension class, it is difficult to differentiate testing reading from teaching reading. Both make use of questions. The former may be in the form of written essay type of test, and or multiple choice mode of testing.

In teaching reading comprehension text, the question of various types is proposed orally by the lecturer. The students are brainstormed to get the correct responses. The lecturer functions as the moderator of reading class discusion. In this type of class activities, the teacher's scaffolding talks are important to develop good rapport with the students so as to minimize communication breakdown.

In the analysis, the proposed questions were all discussed in terms of their nature and use in real teaching situation. The rationales behind the choice of types of questions were also explained. Finally the analysis ended up in some explanation about the grammatical features involved in the construction of questions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Presented below are findings and discussion of the current study, elaborating (1) Comprehension Question, (2) Convergent Questions Vs. Divergent Questions, (3) Text-Based Questions. Each type of question is discussed, employing 'text' followed by example(s) of question(s) and possible response(s) by the students. Some significant grammatical features are also discussed therein.

Comprehension Question

As the name suggests, the aim of the question is to test how students comprehend a particular text upon the reading activities. There are four types of comprehension question, namely (1) overall comprehension (2) details question, (3) direction question, (4) main idea question and (5) inference question.

1. Overall Comprehension Question Below are examples of Overall Comprehension Questions
    a. What is the main idea of this passage?
    b. What do you think is the main idea of this passage?
    c. What does this passage mainly discuss?

This type of question is aimed at checking how the students comprehend the text in general (general comprehension of text). In practice, a teacher may just leave the questions as such and let the students answer orally in in writing. This happens in the teaching situation. The students are brainstormed to get the correct responses.

Syntactically, the above type of question (1) is constructed in the simple present tense, manipulating the copulative verb 'be' (is), inverted to the front of the subject. The question word is 'what' as it asks for information about something. Question 2 above is basically similar to Q1. The difference lies in the

insertion of 'casual interpersonal touch', namely 'do you think'. This type of question raises the flavor of interpersonal communication. Finally Question 3 tries to personalize the subject (this passage). There is therefore a process of personalization.

2. Details Question
    Below are examples of Detail Question
    a. According to paragraph 1, what has happened in some oil producing countries?

This is details question it needs specific answer in the paragraph, so the student must answer with details. So the answer it will be like this : There are not producing as much oil as they used to.

So this kind of question, we as teachers, must say to the students that your answer will be in first or second paragraph so we must give him a specific answer.

In teaching reading comprehension, such a question may be orally asked to arouse the students' interests in the topic. However in testing reading comprehension, such a question may be followed by several optional answers with one correct answer. Thus, this is a multiple choice question. Meanwhile, in terms of syntax, this is a question asking for what the subject has done; so there is no manipulation of the finite verb.

3. Direction Question
    Such a question asks you to find the problem using renewable sources of power? So this is called Direction Question. We are asking to understand how to answer question not to answer the question itself, so this kind of question it will guide or direct the student to know how they can answer the question, that is the appropriate answer . The answer to such a question is that ' They do not supply a continuous flow of energy.' Physically the question may appear as "How would you overcome the problem of using renewable sources of energy?"

Since the question word is 'how', the answer will be a kind of direction—so is this type of question called.

4. Main Idea Question
    a. This paragraph is mostly about ....
    b. What does this paragraph discuss in general?

Unlike asking the topic of a passage, which deals with the entire text, the above questions are dealing with a particular paragraph. So here the main Idea question we use this kind of question to cover the paragraph which means the paragraph talks about what exactly after we finish discussing each point.

There is nothing new with respect to the syntax of such questions. Question 1 is normally used in a multiple choice question. Meanwhile, Question 2 is good for oral or essay type test, or in a brainstorming class.

5. Inference Question
    Look quickly to this passage and try to know:
    a. What is the main idea of this passage?

It's a comprehension question because it starts with Wh - question . So here I want all student read quickly and try to know this passage talks about what.

We can guess that the main idea of this passage to describe how, where and when smart technology will be introduced. This question we call it " Inference question " this kind are decision, conclusion or judgement the reader makes from information in the paragraph.

Convergent question Vs. Divergent question
Sample for Convergent Questions
1. On reflecting over the entirety how many oil does Libya provide until 2011?
2. Which is smaller 1.79 or 0.4?
3. Is Libya a direct producer and distributor in Indonesia ?

The answers to such questions, the students need to find 'facts' from the passage. They cannot simply answer on the basis on 'common sense'.

The second type is divergent question, which is a question with no specific answer, but rather exercises one's ability to think broadly about a certain topic.

So in this type the answer is different from one to another it is an open ended question which t does not include any specific answers. It depends on the student's thinking repertoire.

Sample for Divergent Questions
1. What do you predict will happen with Petroleum and oil in Libya after ten years?
2. What can you tell me about Libya as a rich country?
3. What different ways can we use to let other countries have an oil and Petroleum like Libya?

Thus, the convergent questions is the ability to give the correct answer while the divergent questions is the opposite gives a motivation everyone answer by his/her opinion thinks . Now I will answer this questions to know the way of answer to be clear for all teachers and students. So as we see now that the Convergent questions it needs a intelligent student to answer it , but divergent questions, the answer is different from one to another.

Text-based Questions
1. Factual questions:

This kind of questions are of verifiable answers found on the page text or story. And it responds to questions: who, what, when, where, how? it also requires the reader into deep reading of the text.

Sample Question: Where does the frog go every morning?

Here the answer inside the story , so the students will have to find it in this story , so the answer is "Every morning the frog would hop out of his pond and go to visit his friend who lived in a hole in the side of a tree."

2. Cause/ effect questions:

As we know that the Sentences built using cause and effect usually involve an action that is making something happen and the result of that action. You can usually find sentences built this way by key words and phrases they use: so, since, as a result of, because, therefore. It's also important to note that the cause is usually written before the effect is, but there are rare cases when the effect will be written first. You should realize, however, that no matter what order you present cause and effect in with your sentences, you cannot have an effect happen before a cause.

Sample Question: "Why does the mouse feel delighted in his friend's company unaware that the friend was slowly turning into an enemy ?"

The answer it will start with because the question start with Why , so the answer will be like this : because though he visited the mouse everyday, the mouse on his part, had never made an attempt to visit him.

3. Inference questions:

This kind of questions you can't find the answer directly in the text but you have to found from partial clauses by reading between lines .

Sample for Inference Question "What did the frog do when the mouse tied one end of a string around his own leg ?"

In this kind of questions the answer not clear but the student must focus and try to find the answer between lines. The answer is : "The frog dived deep into the pond."

4. Opinion questions.

When you ask opinion questions in your survey, you are asking the respondents about statements they may or may not agree with. The scales you use and wording will vary based on the type of survey you are conducting.

Sample for Opinion Question: "What do you think about the mouse when try to kill the frog ?"

Here the answer of the question will be different from one to another so one can answer , because the mouse hateful, and the other student share different opinion which is the Mouse doing the this because he loves the frog .

5. Interpretation questions:

Here the reader has to interpret, not simply comprehend, and the information in the text.

Sample for Interpretation Question: The author say a famous phrase in this story. What is it?

The answer in the text , it doesn't news comprehend, it's in the text . The answer is 'Don't dig too deep a pit for your enemy, you may fall into it yourself'.

6. Personalized questions:

Here we need personal response , so the reader has to act the part of character and give personal feelings.

Sample for Personalized question "What would you have done if you had been frog ?"

It's a personal answer not in the text , but the student is response, so the answer for Example, if I'm a frog I will kill the mouse. Or I will not talk with him anymore.

7. Speculative questions:

The students have to think about things which are not able to be understood, because they are outside the text .

Sample for Speculative **Question "**What do you think will happen to Frog with a mouse after this accident?

The answer is, as the student may think so, such as "I think the frog will stop his talk with the mouse, or the mouse will come and try to apologize".

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

• Communicative use of the target language makes up only a minor part of typical classroom activities. Thus, it is important for the teacher to use the target language to create holistic classroom environment.

• Most, not all, referential questions create more interaction in the classroom than display questions do. Thus, the teacher should adapt the types of questions according to the level of students' English proficiency.

• Display questions sometimes cause learners to give a bout five-minute answer but such answer cannot be considered interaction because it is one-way. Thus, the teacher should vary the communication structure: Teacher-Students to possibly Students-Students.

• Display questions outnumbered referential ones, and referential ones produced more classroom interaction. Thus, the teacher should make a balance distribution of the question types.

REFERENCES

Alan Maley, http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?docid=146548 (acessed, December 12th, 2017)

Allwright, D. and K.M. Bailey. 1990. *Focus on the Language Classroom research for Language teachers. Cambridge*: Cambridge University press.

Banbrook, L & Skehan. 1989. *Classrooms & Display Questions*. London: British Council. ELT DOCS133.

Brock, C. 1986. "The Effects of Referential Questions on ESL Classrooms". TESOL Quarterly: 20,47-59.

Brown, H. D. 1994. *Teaching by Principles*. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall Regents.

Brown, H. D. 2001. *Teaching by principles: an interactive approach to language pedagogy*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

Chaudron, C. 1988. *Second Language Classrooms: Research on teaching and Learning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Erickson, H. L. 2007. *Concept-based curriculum and instruction for the thinking classroom*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Korst, T.J. 1997. "Answer, PleaseAnswer! A Perspective on JapaneseUniversity Students' Silent Responsesto Questions". Japanese Association for Language Teaching Journal: Vol. 19.No.2, pp. 280–282.

Long, M & C. Sato, 1983. Classroom Foreigner Talk Discourse: Forms and Functions of Teachers' Questions. In H. W. Seliger & M. H. Long (Eds.), Classroom oriented research in second languages (pp. 271). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Malamah – Thomas, A. 1987. *Classroom Interaction*. Oxford: oxford University press.

McDonough, J. and Shaw, C. 1995. *Materials and Methods in ELT*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Miller, Jim. 2002. *An Introduction to English Syntax.* Edinburg : Edinburg University Press

Nunan, D. 1991. *Language Teaching Methodology*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Richards, J. C. and Lockheart, Ch. 1996. *Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shirley Shultz Myers and Carie Palmer,http://depts.gallaudet.edu/englishworks/reading/readquest.html (acessed December 16, 2017)

Shomoossi, N. 2004. *The effect of teacher's questioning behavior on EFL classrooms interaction: A classroom research study.* Tehran University: Iran.

Van Lier, L. 1988. *The Classroom & the Language Learner: Ethnography & Second Language Classroom Research*. London: Longman.

Willis, J. 1987. 'Inner and OuterSpoken Discourse in the LanguageClassroom' in Coulthard, M. 1987, pp.1-19. http://iii.cc.kochiu.ac.jp/~nunn/IRAL1.pdf (acessed: December 17, 2017)