THE TYPES OF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND THE PURPOSES: A STUDY AT SATYA WACANA CHILDREN CENTER KINDERGARTEN

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan

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112009016

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
SATYA WACANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
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ABSTRACT

There are many teaching techniques proposed by experts as the best. Moreover, the teaching techniques for teaching young learners still remain debatable for years. Lots of research claimed using questions as a part of teacher talk is one of the most essential ones. Teachers’ effective questioning is also underlain on its question types and function. This glimpse inspired this present study to investigate the types and purposes of teachers’ frequently asked questions at Bilingual Kindergarten classes of Satya Wacana Children Center (SWCC), Salatiga. The participants of this study were two teachers of Kindergarten level of SWCC. Ten observations were conducted during semester II/2012-2013 for this descriptive statistic study. Yang’s categorization of question types (2010) was used to identify the teachers’ question types. The number of questions in each question type was calculated and the purposes of questions were analyzed. The results showed that Display and Close-Ended Questions were more frequently used by SWCC Kindergarten teachers rather than Referential, Open-Ended and Yes/No Questions. The results also found out that the purposes of their questions were to elicit information from students, check students’ understanding, engage students to the lesson given, encourage students’ participation, stimulate and/or maintain students’ interest, and manage and/or control the classroom. These findings suggested that it is important for teachers to take into account their skill in questioning and vary their purposeful questions effectively to gain the successful teaching.

Key words: teachers’ questions, question types, frequently asked question, purposes of teachers’ questions, teaching young learners.

INTRODUCTION

In the world of teaching, there are numerous teaching aspects which determine the successful of teaching learning processes. One of the teaching aspects which teachers need to consider about is communication in classrooms. Communication in the classroom is important because teaching is about interaction between teachers and students. How well the teachers
teaching, explaining things in a distinct way or giving activities during the lessons require both teachers and students to interact. For this reason, communication in the classroom puts a great extent for the successful of teaching learning processes.

Communication in the classrooms depends on teacher talk. Richards (1992) as cited in Yan (2006) defines that teachers’ talk is the variety of language which teachers use in the classroom in order to communicate with students in the process of teaching and learning. Besides, Yan (2006) also adds that teacher talk is ‘a kind of communication-based or interaction-based talk.’ Hereby, teacher talk supports a communicative environment in the classrooms.

Teacher talk contributes how well the teachers teach their students. Yafen and Yuqin (2010) state in their study that “The success of teaching depends to a large extent on the way teachers talk and interactions that occur between teachers and students.” Teachers also deliver the knowledge, manage teaching activities and help students practice through teacher talk. Therefore, the objective or goal of teaching can be achieved through teacher talk.

One of features of teacher talk is teachers’ questions. Teachers inevitably ask numerous questions in classrooms. As cited in Szendroi (2010), Nunan (1989) observes that classroom interaction is characterized by the use of questions. Teachers’ questions serve opportunities for teachers and students to have interaction, both related to the knowledge of the lesson or things outside the classroom. In other words, teachers’ questions put great impact for learners’ production. Moreover, questioning is a common technique used by the teachers (Yang, 2010). Teachers elicit new information, test learners’ knowledge, control students’
behavior, engage students’ attention and promote verbal responses through questions (Yang, 2010). As a result, teachers’ questions play important role in classrooms.

Regarding teachers’ questions as an aspect of teacher talk, the use of questions should consider about the level of the students. In teaching children as the students, teachers take into account these young learners’ special characteristics of their learning stages of development. How children learn and develop at kindergarten level whose ages are four to six year-old is specified in Figure 1 as stated in cited in www.onestopenglish.com.

Figure 1: Characteristics of how four to six year old children learn and develop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school or just beginning school</td>
<td>Not used to classroom conventions</td>
<td>Training in class routines e.g. listening to teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited motor skills</td>
<td>Clumsy control of pen / scissors etc.</td>
<td>To develop motor control e.g. colouring, copying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning holistically</td>
<td>Whole child needs stimulation</td>
<td>Opportunities to move, sing, play, explore, touch etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot distinguish between different parts of language</td>
<td>Cannot analyse language</td>
<td>Exposure to chunks of language e.g. chants, stories, classroom language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited reading/writing skills in L1</td>
<td>Introducing reading/writing in English</td>
<td>Lots of listening, speaking activities Fun introduction to English letters and words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See no need to communicate in English</td>
<td>Students use L1 exclusively</td>
<td>Reasons to speak English e.g. games, chants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love stories, fantasy</td>
<td>Bored with many topics</td>
<td>Stories, fantasy, fun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This consideration makes teacher talk in teaching young learners is generally “syntactically simple and repetitive” (Gordon, 2007). It is called as “formulaic routinized patterns” (Gordon, 2007). Here, teachers simplify and utter repetitive language to gain the comprehensibly input of the students. For this reason, recurrent use of questioning is crucially important in teaching young learners. Teachers’ questioning puts greater cognitive demands in children’s minds. Piaget (1970) states that, “Children are active learners and thinkers.”
Therefore, if teachers address questions to their young learners, it stimulates young learners constructing teachers’ knowledge or input actively. Through questioning as teachers’ interaction with young learners also provides their higher order thinking.

Teachers’ effective questioning depends on how teachers’ formulate the questions. Questions are various. Questions have different levels and types. To deliver the certain types of questions, teachers need to take into account on the level proficiency of their young learners (Gordon, 2007). Besides, teachers also have different purposes on choosing different types of questions that they address to young learners in the classroom.

A number of studies have been carried out to explore teachers’ question types in EFL classrooms. Yang (2010) documents that English teachers used Display questions commonly rather than to use the Referential ones in the classrooms. The Referential questions were rarely used by the teachers. Farahian & Rezaee (2012) also demonstrate their findings that Close-Ended, Display and Yes/No Questions outnumbered Open and Referential Questions.

Hence, children as young learners and question as an effective tool to achieve successful teaching learning process lead me to carry out a study which is specifically, a study about teachers’ talk: types of questions and teachers’ purposes of the questioning in teaching young learners. In the other words, the purpose of this study is to investigate question types which Kindergarten Teachers frequently ask to their students and identify the purposes of the Kindergarten teachers’ questioning.

The success of a teacher in a particular lesson or in general teaching relies on teachers’ ability to question well (Al-Khataybeh & Al-Ja’freh, 2012). It can be inferred that
acquiring a good questioning is a great importance in the classrooms. Besides, it is essential for teachers to have a good style of questioning. Therefore, through this study, it is hoped that teachers will be aware of the use of questions in classrooms. It is because questions can lead the success of teaching. Besides, questions are functional and purposeful in the classrooms so that teachers can be inspired to vary the questions to their students. Moreover, teachers can use question effectively to improve their teaching quality.

From the explanation above, two research questions have been constructed to achieve the purposes of this study. The research questions are, “What types of questions do teachers use frequently in teaching young learners?” and “What are the purposes of each type of questions that the teachers use?”

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Teachers’ questions are important aspect in the classroom. Al-Khataybeh & Al-Ja’freh (2012) cite that question is a teacher’s weapon which is most effective and motivating in the educational armory. It means that teachers’ question is an important part in education. Besides, “questions play an important role in the processes of teaching and learning because children’s achievements, and their level of engagement, depend on the types of questions teachers formulate and use in a classroom” Kerry (2002) as cited in Tekene (2006).

Question can be classified into several types: 1) Display and Referential questions, 2) Open-Ended and Closed-Ended questions 3) Yes/No questions (Yang, 2010.) The first type of questions are Display and Referential question. Display question is the question which the teachers know the answer. It has one answer, simple response and the answer is within the
classroom context. On the other hand, Referential question is the question which has no right or wrong answer because it invites students to draw answers from their experiences and viewpoints (Ho, 2005). Besides, Referential question is to seek new information. Teachers use Referential questions because they don’t know the answers and let the students to provide the information (Tsui, 1995 as cited in Yang, 2010). Ellins (1994) also adds that Referential Questions are “genuinely information-seeking.”

In Question type 2, Open questions are questions which have more than one acceptable answer while Closed questions are questions which have only one acceptable answer (Nunan & Lamb, 1996 as cited in Yang, 2010). Open-Ended Questions promote students-teacher’s interaction which is not only based on classroom context. As a result, Open-Ended Questions stimulate “… complex and lengthy language output of the students.” (Ho, 2005). In contrast, Close-Ended Questions prompt simple and limited responses. Ho (2005) also adds that sometimes the answer of Close-Ended Questions is one word only.

The next question type is Yes/No questions. These last type of questions are categorized according to “the grammatical form” of the question (Thompson, 1997 as cited in Yang, 2010). This type of question requires short and simple responses in which the students need to answer ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ only (Gabrielatos, 1997). As cited in Yang (2010), Thompson (1997) states that “Yes/No question are normally straightforward to answer”. He also adds that Yes/No question encourage weak learners to respond. Therefore, Yes/No questions are used by the teachers in low level of students’ proficiency. The reason is that teachers try to encourage students to participate in the classroom since these questions are easy for learners to answers as the teachers have already given the context (Farahian & Rezaee, 2012).
To ask referential questions in the classroom are required than to ask display questions. It is because referential questions promote opportunities for learner output so that students are involved more (Szendroi, 2010). Referential questions genuinely seek information whereas display questions are simply display students’ understanding or knowledge. Moreover, in real life, most questions are referential (Lei, 2009). Therefore, referential questions have communicative purpose but display questions have less communicative involvement (Cullen, 1998). Dalton & Puffer (2007) as cited in Farahian & Rezaee (2012) also mention that Referential questions are better, longer, more authentic and more involved. In fact, Display questions inhibit the learners from the opportunities. As a result, students do not have any role in the production process (Dalton & Puffer, 2007 as cited in Farahian & Rezaee, 2012).

In the classroom, teachers ask questions for several purposes. To elicit information from the students is one of the reasons why teacher ask questions during the teaching learning process (Gabrielatos, 1997). Gordon (2007) claims that “. . . questions enable the teacher to make sure his/her input is comprehensible.” By addressing questions to students, teachers have the aim to check students’ understanding or achieve students’ comprehension (Gordon, 2007). Teachers ask questions to remind the previous lesson or students’ knowledge as well. Questions facilitate teachers to test their students’ previous knowledge, recall and recognize something (Raymond, 2004 as cited in Al-Khataybeh & Al-Ja’freh, 2012).

As cited in Al-Khataybeh & Al-Ja’freh 2012, Raymond (2004) also adds that questions also uttered by teachers to stimulate students’ interests. In here, teachers ask questions about students’ personal information about what they like or dislike, their activities, their experiences, and etc. Sharing students’ personal information about personal preferences,
feelings, and experiences create students’ interests to the lesson and create meaningful and rich interaction (Gordon, 2007).

The other reason to asking questions by the teachers is that to engage the students to the activity or teaching learning process. Teachers arouse students’ interests and curiosity. Walsh & Blewitt (2006) cite teachers should be encouraged to engage children’s attention by asking question actively during teaching learning process to stimulate children’s language and literacy. Since young children have great curiosity, teachers’ questioning strategy engages children to focus on the lesson or activity (Gregory & Cahill, 2010).

Teachers use questions also to get students participate in the classroom. Gordon (2007) believes that questioning is an effective strategy that provides interaction opportunities and increase students’ talking time to maximize classroom participation. Brualdi (1998) adds that teachers ask questions to keep their students involved during lessons. Stimulating students to get involved and participated in the classroom through questioning, helps them to express their ideas and thoughts. Accordingly, teachers’ questions not only contribute pupils’ high communicative intent to get the teachers’ attention or permission to either ask questions or to provide information related to teaching and learning context (Yi-fen & Chien-ju, 2009) but also facilitate students higher-order thinking (Tekene, 2006).

Another teachers’ purpose asking questions to the students is related to the classroom management. Questions help teachers to control the classroom especially dealing with the students’ attitudes (Gabrielatos, 1997). Yeh & Chang (2009) also state that teachers often use questions as “Management/Discipline”. Management/Discipline refers to the questions related to management of classroom order or control of pupils’ behavior.
THE STUDY

Context of the Study

The setting of the study is a school for children center, named Satya Wacana Children Center. It is located in the Satya Wacana Christian University campus area, which is in the town of Salatiga, Central Java, Indonesia. The school welcomes two to six-years-old learners. The teachers of this school are all Indonesian, but the learners come from various origins. Some of the learners are Indonesian, Chinese-Indonesian. There is also a learner who is Holland and Australian. To classify the learners, the school has four different classes. It has Twigs class (Preschool A), for students whose ages are two to three years old. Buds class (Preschool B) is the class for students whose ages are three to four years old. The other classes are Blossom (Kindergarten A) which is for four to five-year-old students and Bloomers (Kindergarten B) which is for five to six-year-old students. Specifically, this study focuses on Kindergarten A and Kindergarten B.

In this school, English is not only used as a subject being taught but also as an instructional language. The use of English as the medium instruction gives the learners great opportunities to learn and communicate using English. English Club is an additional class to make the young learners get closer to English.

To conduct the study, I selected Social Study subject. Social Study is a subject that teaches students good and beneficial things for their daily social lives, both laudably characteristics for them to themselves and their surroundings. Being honest, how to be a good friend, saving water and electricity, and saving money in piggy bank are some topics of Social Study classes. The Social Study subject is the suitable subject to get the numerous data of
teachers’ questions. The underlying reason is that in social study classes of Kindergarten A and B, the numbers of questions uttered by the teachers are higher than other classes for instance Science, Art and Craft, or Mathematic.

Participants

This study investigated teachers’ questions at Kindergarten level in Satya Wacana Children Center. Consequently, the participants for this study are one teacher of Kindergarten A (Blossoms) named Miss Shinta Setyaningrum (a pseudonym) and one teacher of Kindergarten B (Bloomers) named Miss Nidya Yunitalia. They are thirty one-year-old teachers. Both of them graduated from English Department of Satya Wacana Christian University and have been the teachers of SWCC Kindergarten level for more than seven years.

Data Collection Instrument

In this study, I used classroom observation as the instrument of data collection. This classroom observation is aimed to achieve the question types that teachers’ address to the students in Social Studies Classes of Kindergarten A and Kindergarten B. The observation duration is based on the length of the classes which is 45 minutes. The amounts of times for me to conduct the study were five times for Kindergarten A class and five times for Kindergarten B as well. To conduct my classroom observations, I used observation protocol (see Figure 2) and also recorded the teaching learning processes by using a digital camera and a voice recording.
Figure 2: Observation Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Teacher’s Questions</th>
<th>Teacher’s question types</th>
<th>In-class occurrences</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Open (O)</td>
<td>Display (D)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Closed (C) question</td>
<td>- Referential (R) question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis Procedure

The procedure of the data analysis in the study is qualitative statistic descriptive. Through the observational protocol I analyzed the type of each teacher’s question. The video from the digital camera and voice recording also helped me to transcribe and complete the details of the data. Then using descriptive statistic, I counted the frequency of the teachers’ question types. Based on that, I would find out the most frequently asked question types by the teachers in Satya Wacana Children Center. The results would be presented in percentage of the frequently question types at Kindergarten A and Kindergarten B.

To analyze qualitatively the purposes of teachers’ questioning, I emerged the themes of each purpose of teacher questions. The categorization of the themes 1) to elicit information from the students, 2) check students’ understanding, 3) test their students’ previous knowledge, 4) engage the students to the activity or teaching learning process, 5) encourage
students’ participation, 6) manage or control the classroom, 7) stimulate and/or maintain students’ interest. Once I determined the appropriate purposes of the teachers’ questions, I would categorize teachers’ purposes to the particular themes using color-coding. Finally, the results of the purposes of teacher’s questions used in teaching English would be in form of descriptive.

DISCUSSION

In this part, the analysis of frequently asked question types and the purposes of teachers’ questions are presented. For the teachers’ question types, they are classified into three question types categorization based on Yang (2010). The first categorization is Question Type 1 which consists of Display and Referential Questions. The second one is Question Type 2 which consists of Open-Ended Question and Close-Ended Questions. The last categorization is Question type 3 which is Yes/No Questions. The following table shows the frequency and percentage of each question type which teacher Kindergarten A and teacher Kindergarten B used.

Table 1: The Table of Percentage of Question Type Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kindergarten Level</th>
<th>Types of Question</th>
<th>1 (%)</th>
<th>2 (%)</th>
<th>3 (%)</th>
<th>2 (%)</th>
<th>3 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Display</td>
<td>Referential</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>Yes-No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten A</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>56.45</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>43.54</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>27.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten B</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>50.35</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>49.64</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>35.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>364</td>
<td>53.92</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>46.07</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>30.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 shows the percentage of each question type in which the total questions are 675 questions after conducting observation for ten times in Kindergarten level of SWCC. From Table 1, it is obviously seen that for the first category of question types, Display Questions were more frequently used by the teachers rather than the Referential Questions. There were 364 Display Questions which is 53.92% while Referential Questions only had 311 questions as 46.07%. Although Referential Questions genuinely stimulate greater efforts of students’ language output (Nunan, 1989 as cited in Ozcan, 2010), the result indicated that Display Questions are preferably used by the teachers. The majority of these Display Questions brought about what Thompson (1994) argues as cited in Ozcan (2010) that “Teachers are one of the few professional groups who routinely spend their lives asking questions to which they know the answer, . . .” By this point, it can be derived that instead of uttering Referential Questions for students to express their thoughtful opinions or exchange information, teachers likely obtain short students’ responses and students’ repetitions of knowledge.

For the second category of question types, Close-Ended Questions were dominantly used by the teachers rather than Open-Ended Questions. The Close-Ended Questions covered 68.74% or had 467 questions while Open-Ended Questions only appeared 30.81% or had 208 questions. Moreover, Close-Ended Questions were the most frequently tailored by the teachers among all question types. It can be derived that, even though Open-Ended Questions facilitated students’ answers from their experiences and view points (Ho, 2005), Close-Ended Questions outnumbered Open-Ended Questions. These results revealed that teachers frequently asked questions to get correct answers from what they taught to their students. It means that teachers’ expectation in asking questions were only limited in the lesson.
or material context. Teachers’ Close-Ended Questions restricted students’ response or language production and did not pilot discussion in the classrooms (Farahian & Rezaee, 2012).

Last but not least, Yes/No Questions as the last categorization of question types emerges in 49.25% or existed for 337 questions. Kindergarten students as beginners have low proficiency in language production (Gordon, 2007). Therefore, the way the teachers tailored questions to their students was by using simple questions which only require Yes/No response. Addressing Yes/No Questions to these students are also helpful for them who do not competent enough to talk or think. Besides, teachers could get the answer or response easier by using Yes/No Questions.

From the observation for five times in each Kindergarten A and B level, the findings also documented several purposes of each question type. In the next part, each question type and its purposes will be analyzed.

A. Question Type 1

1. Purposes of Display Questions

1a. to elicit information from students’ knowledge

Display Question is a question type which the teacher knows the answer and the question is asked in order to check whether the students know the answers or not (Tsui, 1995 as cited in Yang, 2000). This question type requires students to display knowledge acquired within the classroom context (Ho, 2005). Therefore, Display Question has a purpose for teachers to elicit information from students’ knowledge related to what they have learnt in the classrooms. This purpose was identified based on the example of Display Question in Extract 1.
Extract 1 is taken from Meeting 1 of Kindergarten A level with a topic Being Honest which had the number of Display Questions 55.45%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic Discussed:</strong> Being Honest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T: Why is his father angry?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vhiskal (a pseudonym): <em>Karena kacamata ayahnya jatuh</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kindergarten A: Observation 1, January 31st 2013)

The teacher asked the question related the story about Being Honest so that she could check whether the students followed her story or not. Meanwhile, one of the students, Vhiskal responded her question, “*Karena kacamata ayahnya jatuh*”. His true answer showed that he paid attention and followed the story. Therefore, it can be concluded that she asked it in order to elicit information from the students (Gabrielatos, 1997).

1b. to check students’ understanding

The Display Question in Extract 2 is taken from Meeting 1 of Kindergarten B which Display questions appeared in 56.36%. In Extract 2 the teacher was giving a lesson about road safety using a worksheet. After that, she asked the students to color the pictures of good thing and put a cross on the pictures of bad thing in the worksheet. While the students were doing that task, the teacher moved around the class to check students’ works. When she saw Noel’s work, she asked that question.
Extract 2

Topic Discussed: Road Safety

T: Look, this man uses a helmet. This one with the hat, which one is good?
Noel (a pseudonym): (points the picture of the man who puts on a helmet)

(Kindergarten B: Observation 1, January 31st 2013)

By looking at Extract 2, it can be concluded that the purpose of the teacher’s display question to Noel is to check student’s understanding (Gordon, 2007). She was checking whether Noel understood the instruction of task and which one the bad or good thing based on the lesson is. Noel responded her question by pointing one of the pictures on the worksheet, He chose the correct one. The display Question in Extract 2 promotes the teachers to check students’ understanding related to lesson or material given. Therefore, the question helps the teacher to know if her input is being understood by the students or not.

1c. to engage and arouse students’ attention to the teaching learning process

Display Questions are not always asked by the teacher to display the knowledge of the lesson given. In fact, teachers might use Display Questions in the beginning of the lesson to engage students to teaching learning process and arouse students’ attention to the lesson that will be given by the teachers. Walsh & Blewitt (2006) mention that teachers tailor questions to their students to engage them to the activity or teaching learning process. Extract 3 shows that purpose of questioning. It is taken from Meeting 3 of Kindergarten B which had the frequency of Display Questions 41.46%.
Extract 3

Topic Discussed: Saving Money in Piggy Bank

T: Coba tepuk sambel gimana? Miss mau lihat.
One of the students: Miss, tepuk sapi.
Ss: Tepuk sambel (clapping their hands) Ulek-ulek (clapping their hands) Huwa-Huwa (Clapping their hands). Then, they were silent and thinking.
T: Terus? Ayo, gimana? Haaa... lupa semua.

(Kindergarten B: Observation 3, February 21st 2013)

The teacher asked the students to do Tepuk Sambal when she wanted to start the class. Tepuk Sambal is a short and simple chant about Sambal. While students are singing the chant, they are clapping their hands. The teacher uttered the question to engage the students to the teaching learning process (Walsh & Blewitt, 2006). She tried to create good atmosphere by asking students to do Tepuk Sambal and prepare the students for the lesson. Besides, the students responded it enthusiastically. All of them did Tepuk Sambal. Some of them smiled and even laughed. Although Tepuk Sambal doesn’t have relation with the lesson of that day which is Saving Money in the Piggy Bank, it did make students enthusiastic to the lesson and more cheerful.

2. Purposes of Referential Questions

2a. to encourage students’ participation to the lesson

Specifically, to seek information from the students that teachers don’t know the answers, Referential Questions has one of purposes which is to
encourage students’ participation to the lesson (Gordon, 2007). She also proposes that when teachers tailor the questions, it gives opportunity to have students-teachers interaction. The example of Referential Question that has a purpose to encourage students’ participation is stated in Extract 1.

**Extract 1**

**Topic Discussed: Being Helpful**

T: Now, who wants to be a helpful kid? *Siapa yang mau jadi anak yang suka membantu?*

Ss: Me…Aku…Saya..

T: Okay.

(Kindergarten A: Observation 4, March 14th 2013)

The questions above were asked by the teacher in Meeting 4 of Kindergarten A with a topic Being Helpful. The frequency of Referential Question in meeting 4 of Kindergarten A is only 41.46%. The teacher’s purpose which is to encourage students’ participation (Gordon, 2007) is underlain on the teacher’s expectation for the students to participate more during her explanation. Before she asked that question’s example, she asked the students, “Is Jojo a good boy?” and “Is Jojo helpful?” However, only a few of the students answered “Yes.” They said it softly. Moreover, the rest of the students were just silent. On the other hand, all of the students responded enthusiastically, said out loud and raised their hands when the teacher asked “Who wants to be a helpful kid?” Those
responds indicate that it was successful for the teacher to participate and pay attention to her explanation again.

2b. to stimulate and/or maintain students’ interest

According to Raymond (2004) as cited in Al-Khataybeh & Al-Ja’freh (2012), teachers use Referential Questions to stimulate and maintain students’ interest. The questions that teachers tailor to them related to their personal information or background knowledge. Those statements are proved in Extract 2. The question in Extract 2 is taken from meeting 4 of Kindergarten B level which had the percentage of Referential Questions in 45.20%.

**Extract 2**

**Topic Discussed:** Cleaning Classroom Environment

T: (Calls one of the students, Hector (a pseudonym) *Kalau ‘Sapu’ bahasa Belandanya apa namanya?*)

Hector: *Bezem*

T: *Bezem. Oh. Ternyata beda-beda lho kalau bahasa Inggrisnya ‘Sapu’ Broom, bahasa Indonesia ‘Sapu lantai. Ada juga yang namanya dalam Belanda, what is it?*  
Hector: *Bezem.*

T: *Ya, Bezem itu sapu.*

(Kindergarten B: Observation 4, April 25th 2013)

That given example was asked when the teacher was giving a lesson about Cleaning Classroom Environment. In the beginning of the lesson, she showed some of cleaning tools in the school for example duster and broom. When
she was showing a broom to the students, she asked that question to Hector, a Dutch-Indonesian student. On the other hand, for the purpose of questioning, it is more about to stimulate students’ interests (Raymond, 2004 as cited in Al-Khataybeh & Al-Ja’freh, 2012). The teacher stimulated Hector and other students’ interests to the lesson by asking that question because others didn’t know the Dutch word of Broom. The teacher added to the students that Broom has other names in other languages. It got them paying attention to Hector’s answer. As a result, they were more likely stimulated and interested to the lesson.

B. Question Type 2

1. Purposes of Open-Ended Questions

1a. to encourage students’ participation

Gordon (2007) states that teachers use Open-Ended Questions to encourage students’ participation during the lesson. When teachers asked students using Open-Ended Questions, students have opportunity to share what they have in their minds easily because the questions have no right or wrong answers. That purpose emerges in some of the questions uttered by teacher in meeting 1 of Kindergarten B level in which the number of Open-Ended Questions is 49.09%. The questions are stated in Extract 1.

**Extract 1**

**Topic Discussed: Road Safety**

T: Look at the boy. *Lihat ada anak laki-laki disini.* What is he doing? *Apa yang dilakukan anak laki-laki ini?*
The teacher uttered the questions above when she taught her students with a topic, Road Safety. She taught her students by showing a worksheet, and asked them to guess what the girl is doing based on the picture. It can be derived that the purpose of the questions is in order to encourage students’ participation (Gordon, 2007) because the teacher allowed and stimulated the students to speak up their minds and participate in giving answers based on their opinions. Besides, although some students gave answers which have no relation with the picture, the teacher didn’t say that they were wrong. She still appreciated them and asked them other opinions. Hence, it can be seen that various responses which the teacher elicited indicate that those questions also promote both teacher and students to have interaction more (Gordon, 2007).
1b. to check students’ understanding

The finding also showed that Open-Ended Questions has a purpose to check students’ understanding as well (Gordon, 2007). This finding was emerged in meeting 2 of Kindergarten B level which Open-Ended Questions covered 54.58%. The questions are stated in Extract 2.

### Extract 2

**Topic Discussed: Save Water and Electricity**

T: So, this is Billy. What about Ben?
Mario (a pseudonym): Ben aku tahu.
T: Mario, what about Ben? What is he doing?
Mario: Matiin kipas angin.
T: How do you know? Tau dari mana, Mario? Siapa yang tahu, kok tahu si Ben ini mau matiin kipas anginnya?
Mario: Soalé itu, soale kelamaan.
T: Soalnya kelamaan, apa lagi?
One of Ss: Nanti masuk angin.
T: Iya, masuk angin. Apa lagi?
Hector: Miss?
T: Iya, Hector.
Hector: Karena ada FFO
T: Iya. Kata Hector, Karena ada FFO, it should be O F F. off. Nahh, seperti itu juga benar Hector, Mario juga benar. . . .

(Kindergarten B: Observation 2, February 6th 2013)

The teacher tailored the questions above when she gave a lesson about Save Water and Electricity. The purpose of question is to check students’
understanding (Gordon, 2007) because the teacher wanted to test students’ understanding of Ben’s picture by relating it to Save Water and Electricity like what the teacher had explained previously. The students themselves responded the questions based on their understanding. It is proved when some of the students gave their responses and told their opinion. Although the questions are asking information related to the worksheet the teacher discussed with the students, the teacher were open-minded and gave them positive respond to their acceptable answers. At the end, although students’ answers are not perfectly true the teacher still appreciated them.

1c. to stimulate and/or maintain students’ interest

Another purpose that emerges in the findings of Open-Ended Questions is that to stimulate students’ interests (Raymond, 2004 as cited in Al-Khataybeh & Al-Ja’frreh, 2012). He proposed that when the teachers asks students about their personal information, especially related their feeling and preferences, it stimulates students’ interests to the lesson or the materials that teachers give to them. This purpose appears in Meeting 3 of Kindergarten B level with the number of Open-Ended Questions percentage 34.14%. It states in Extract 3.

**Extract 3**

**Topic Discussed: Saving Money in Piggy Bank**

T: Kalau uda punya uang banyak, buat apa?
Mario: Buat beli mobil, komputer, bisa bangun rumah.
Noel: Miss, itu. Papahku beli mobil baru,
T: Ohh? Mobil apa?
The example of question above was asked by the teacher when she taught her students about Saving Money in the Piggy Bank. The teacher told the students about the importance of saving money and introduced them to save money in the Piggy Bank. Looking at the purpose of the question, it is inferred that the question is to stimulate students’ interest (Raymond, 2004 as cited in Al-Khataybeh & Al-Ja’freh, 2012). The teacher related the benefit of Saving Money and asked what students’ wants to have if they have a lot of money. It creates students’ interests because they have their own opinion about that. Besides, they gave positive responses and many of them wanted to share their opinion. Moreover, the teacher appreciated students’ answers, especially when they started to tell about their personal information.

2. Purposes of Close-Ended Questions

2a. to manage and control the classroom

Particularly, several purposes emerge in Close-Ended Questions in Kindergarten A and B level. The first purpose is that teacher used Close-Ended Questions to manage, control or discipline the students (Yeh & Chang, 2009). This purpose is related to the classroom management of teachers in handling students and managing the materials or lesson that the teachers give to the students. Extract 1
gives the examples of teacher’s using Close-Ended Questions to manage and discipline the students. The examples are taken from meeting 4 of Kindergarten A level in which Close-Ended Questions were highly used by the teacher, as the percentage 84.93%.

Extract 1

**Topic Discussed: Being Helpful**

T: Dion (a pseudonym), are you ready? Dion, sudah siap belum? One. . .

Dion: *(He was noisy but then silent)*

T: Is everyone ready?

Ss: Yes. . .

T: If you are ready, now keep silent. Tentang dulu. No one talks. No one chats.

(Kindergarten A: Observation 4, March 14th 2013)

The questions above were uttered by the teacher when she wanted to start the class. Before she gave the students a lesson about Being Helpful, she asked those questions to make sure if the students were ready to start the class. The question above indicates that the purpose of the question is to manage or control the classroom (Yeh & Chang, 2009). She managed the atmosphere of the class to be calm and silent. Moreover, when there was a student who was still noisy, she disciplined him by counting number one to three and waiting him to be silent. The teacher wanted the students to be ready to another lesson she would give to them, so that when she started the class they would listen and pay attention.
2b. to elicit information from the students

The next purpose that emerges in the finding of Close-Ended Questions is to elicit information from the students (Gabrielatos, 1997). Teachers utter questions related the materials they teach during the lesson. The examples of that purpose presented in Extract 2 are taken from meeting 5 in Kindergarten A level. In that meeting, Close-Ended Questions were highly used by the teacher in 72.40%.

**Extract 2**

**Topic Discussed: How to be a Good Friend**

T: What is library? *Apa itu perpustakaan?*
Ss: Toko
T: What is library?
One of the Ss: Makanan.
T: Library is a place where you can read books and borrow books.

(Kindergarten A: Observation 5, March 21st 2013)

In Example 9, the teacher gave a lesson about How to be a Good Friend. When she was telling a story based on the picture in the worksheet, she asked the students about what a library is. The questions themselves indicate that the purpose of the questions is in order to elicit information from the students (Gabrielatos, 1997). The teacher asked their background knowledge about library. However, students’ answers show that they didn’t know what a library is. In the other words, the students give the wrong answers. Consequently, the teacher clarified and explained what library is to the students.
C. Question Type 3: Purposes of Yes/No Questions

1. to encourage students’ participation

Yes/No Question is a question type based on the grammatical form of the question which the students need to answer ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ only. (Gabrielatos, 1997). This type of question requires short and simple responses. As cited in Yang (2010), Thompson (1997) states that “Yes/No question are normally straight forward to answer”. He also adds that Yes/No question encourage weak learners to respond. One of the purposes of Yes/No Questions which emerges in the results is that Yes/No Questions may be used to encourage students’ participation to the lesson (Gordon, 2007). It is based on example of questions (Extract 1) that existed in Meeting 1 of Kindergarten A level which the Yes/No Question covered 56.36%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic Discussed: Being Honest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T: Can everyone help me . . . Can everyone help me to tell me what the story is about? Can anyone of you come forward here and tell me the story about this picture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vhiskal: (looking at the picture and says) <em>Dimarahin satunya.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T: <em>Vhiskal, bisa bantu Miss?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vhiskal: <em>Bisa.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T: Okay, come forward here.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kindergarten A: Observation 1, January 31st 2013)
Those questions were uttered by the teacher when gave a lesson about Being Honest. She distributed the worksheets to the students. After the students wrote their names in the worksheet, the teacher started to discuss the story of the picture in the worksheet. She could just tell the story directly, but she asked the students to tell the story in front of the class. Accordingly, the questions she uttered are in order to encourage students’ participation (Gordon, 2007). She expected her students to raise their hands and dare to tell the story to their friends. Here, it means that she encouraged students to make them participate to the lesson. Students’ responses to her questions were silent, but there was a student, named Vhiskal who commented the picture. Therefore, she asked him to tell the story and he said ‘Yes’.

2. **to manage or control the classroom**

Another purpose of Yes/No Questions is to manage or control the classroom (Yeh & Chang, 2009). This purpose emerges in meeting 3 (Extract 2) of Kindergarten A level which had the number of Yes/No Questions frequency as 55.38%.
Extract 2

Topic Discussed: Food

T: Mendy (a pseudonym), can I have your paper please? (To one of the students, named mendy to submit her work) Mauri (a pseudonym) can you put all of your color pencil in the tray? (To one of the students, Mauri. After she submitted her work, the teacher asked him to put her color pencil in the tray). Can I have your paper please? (to all of the students, she asked them to stop coloring and submit their works because the time was up)

(Kindergarten A: Observation 3, February 21st 2013)

Yes/No Questions above were asked by the teacher when the students were doing their worksheets. After she taught him about food, she distributed the worksheets and instructed the students to color the picture in the worksheets. These Yes/No Questions have a purpose to manage or control the classroom (Yeh & Chang, 2009). The teacher managed and controlled them in doing the worksheets. Once they have finished, she asked them to submit their papers. She also asked one of the students to tidy up her desk, which was to put the color pencil in the tray. Here, it can be seen that instead of using interrogative or giving order directly, she used Yes/No Questions to give instruction to her students. The students also responded her question by obeying what the teacher had asked which were turned in the worksheet to her and put the color pencil in the tray.
CONCLUSION

Since teacher’s questioning is one of the keys to obtain the successful teaching learning process, this study was set out to identify the most frequently types of questions which teachers use and the underlying purposes of teachers’ questions in Kindergarten level, in this case Kindergarten A and B of Satya Wacana Children Center. The categorization of question types is based on Yang (2010) which are (1) Display and Referential Questions (2) Open-Ended and Close-Ended Questions (3) Yes/No Questions.

This study has found out that in Question Type 1, Display Questions (53.92%) were highly uttered by the teachers rather than Referential Questions (46.07%). Meanwhile, in Question Type 2, Close-Ended Questions (68.74%) were more frequently asked rather than Open-Ended Questions (30.81%). Yes/No Questions as the third Question Type appeared almost 50.00% which is 49.25%. Among all, Close-Ended Questions which are categorized in question type 2 are the highest percentage of the most frequent question type with the number of percentage 68.74%. This study has also resulted that generally the purposes of teachers’ questioning are to elicit information from students, check students’ understanding, engage students to the lesson given, encourage students’ participation, stimulate and/or maintain students’ interest, and manage and/or control the classroom.

The results of this study suggest that questions take a tremendous role in achieving a successful teaching learning process. Since children as learners in Kindergarten level have limited competency of vocabulary and thought, in a way teachers giving questions contributes learners’ lengthy language output or responses, and more communicative classrooms. The data analysis also shows that the use of questions in both Kindergarten A and B is high.
Hereby, questions are important in the teaching learning process. This study also proposes that delivering questions is not only beneficial to students at Kindergarten level, but also to students at all level of schools or institutions. It is also recommended that teachers should improve their questioning skill by varying the question types they use without disregarding the level of the students.

Nevertheless, this study was limited to the findings of this study related to the types and purposes of frequently asked questions. For instance, the finding of question types and the purposes will likely different if the study is carried out in other levels of schools such as Elementary schools or Senior High School. In view of that, this study suggests a further research to conduct a similar study in different level of schools and participants using other types and purposes of questions. Hence, the more variety of data can be explored.

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REFERENCES


### APPENDIX A

**Observation Protocol**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Teacher’s Questions</th>
<th>Teacher’s question types</th>
<th>In-class occurrences</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Is that any zebracross here?</td>
<td>C D Yes/no</td>
<td>1x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Adakah zebracross disini?</td>
<td>C D Yes/No</td>
<td>1x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Is the girl doing the wrong thing or good thing?</td>
<td>C D Yes/no</td>
<td>1x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Now, what about this one?</td>
<td>O D -</td>
<td>1x</td>
<td>The teacher asks the students to look another picture and asks them to give opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What is he doing?</td>
<td>O D -</td>
<td>3x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Apa lagi?</td>
<td>O D -</td>
<td>2x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>What else?</td>
<td>O D -</td>
<td>5x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Kira-kira sedang apa sih?</td>
<td>O D -</td>
<td>1x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>What is he doing in the middle of the road?</td>
<td>O D -</td>
<td>1x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Now, is he doing the wrong thing or good thing?</td>
<td>C D Yes/No</td>
<td>1x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Count</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Wrong thing? Why?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>What about this one?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>If you ride bycicle or ride motorcycle, you have to use...what?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Another?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>What should you wear?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Is the boy using helmet or hat?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Is it nice?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>What about this one?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Now, are you ready to do this one?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
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<td>-----</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Harmen namanya mana?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Kevin, do you ready for the new one?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Tadi miss bilang apa tadi?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Can you cross the street and then jumping over the bar?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Is it nice?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>What about this one?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Can you litter the paper there?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>This man uses a helmet, this one with a hat, which one is good?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Is it good or not?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Why Harmen? Kenapa harmen?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
reason about one of the student in the class who was crying. One of the students gives opinion and the teacher let him to comment by asking this question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Correct Answer</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Mau duduk dimana Devina?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Devina, do you want to sit with Jeje or with whom?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Ask one of the student named Devina to sit with whom she wants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Devina, do you want to do like your friends?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Done?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Done, Harmen?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>The teacher asks this question to Harmen related the task done by him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Finished yours?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>The teacher still asks this question to the Harmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Done, Ferna?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>The teacher asks this question to Ferna whether she has finished doing the task or not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Who has finished?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Siapa yang sudah selesai?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Today is Devina’s favorite subject, isn’t it?</td>
<td>C R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Type</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Devina, do you like math? Devina suka matematika?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Devina, what do you like? Devina suka apa?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Finished?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>