A STUDY OF TEACHER’S QUESTIONS IN SD FX

MARSUDIRINI 78 SALATIGA

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirement for the Degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan

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LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Tables:

Table 1  The date and the topic of the lesson

Table 2  The theory classified and proposed

Table 3  The percentage and frequency of Teacher’s questions

Figures:

Figure 1  The observational protocol
A study of Teachers’ Questions in SD FX Marsudirini 78 Salatiga

Martha Septiningtyas

Abstract

The study was conducted because the writer aware of the young learners’ characteristics. Teachers often used various types of “teachers’ talk” in the classroom with young learners. The aim of the study was to investigate the types of questions used by an elementary school English teacher. This study was conducted in SD FX Marsudirini Salatiga, the reputable school in Salatiga and has good quality to develop English lesson to the students. The participant is the only English teacher in SD FX Marsudirini Salatiga. In order to get the reliable data classroom observation was conducted. An observation protocol was also used during the observations. The data found were analyzed qualitatively. The aim of this study was to prove whether display and referential questions were the type of questions mostly used by the teacher in the classroom. Different from the result of two previous studies which showed that display and procedural questions were frequently used by the teacher, while referential questions were rarely asked. The reason why procedural questions were the most frequently used was because teacher had to control the students. The learners were considered young, they tended to be busy with their own “activities”, that would disturb the teaching learning process. The other reason was to create the conducive situation in class.

Keyword: teachers’ questions, elementary school.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers play an important role when teaching young learners, because to teach young learners’ teachers have to use certain teaching strategies to consider that the learners are still in young ages. Many teaching experts and researchers such as: Jack C.Richard, Alwright.D, Cazden. C, Klein and Brown believed that teachers’ question has the significant role in teaching learning process especially for young learners. It has been documented that 96% of activities undertaken by teachers when teaching students in the class are questioning (Richard, 1994). Teacher
question is a kind of input provided by a teacher and form an integral part of classroom interaction (Hassan, 2006). Another finding is, in some classrooms over half of the class time is taken up with question and answer exchange (Richard, 1994). Furthermore, in teaching young learner to learn foreign language in this case is English, teacher can use questioning technique as a device to attract student’s attention. In addition, Barnes (2006, p.34) mentions that teachers’ question constitute a primary means of engaging learners’ attention, promoting verbal responses and evaluating learners’ progress. In others words, it means questioning is important in learning process for young English Language learners (YELLS).

The reason why the writer chooses this topic is because the writer wants to know type of questions used by the teacher to teach young English Language learners (YELLS). It is crucial issue because teachers have to use the right type and various types of questions that suit to the young learners. Several studies such as Myhill, Jones & Hopper (2006); Klein (1998) claimed that teachers tend to use certain type of questions those were referential and display questions. It found that in a traditional language classroom display and referential questions are the most common used. According to the analysis of recorded teaching about two teachers in different elementary school. It was found that, mostly the questions were asked by these two teachers were display and referential questions (44, 6% and 41, 1) while open ended questions were only (7,1% and 7,4%).

Brown (1980) stated that display and referential questions are used only to check student understanding. The display question is type of question that teachers
have already known the answer. On the contrary, referential question is when the
teacher wants to know particular information from the students.

In consequence of previous study, the writer doubt whether display and
referential questions are enough to promote the students particularly in English
class. The writer believes that teachers should provide more various types of
questions in order to help increase the students’ progress and avoid the teacher
“dominance”. The writer believes that, it’s better to create “students centered”
instead of “teacher centered” that lead the class become monotone, boring and to
control the students’ behavior.

The aim of this study is to identify whether there are others types of
questions asked by the teacher when she is teaching in the 1st grade of elementary
school. Based on the statement that have already mentioned, this research will be
done in order to answer the following question: What are types of question that the
English teacher asks at SD FX Marsudirini 78 Salatiga. The writer would also
investigate whether the teacher use only display and referential question or she also
uses others types of questions.

It is expected that this study could create teachers’ awareness. However,
the English teacher of SD FX Marsudirini 78 Salatiga will get better understanding
about, what type of question which she should use in order to stimulate the
students, check student’s understanding and do brainstorming in class activity. The
English teacher also can reflect their teaching to see if the questions that they use
are effective or not. Moreover, the advantage for the students such as they can
understand easily and effectively through the questions given by teacher.
Hopefully, this study can motivate teachers and also the student teacher of English teacher from English Department UKSW to develop their understanding about teachers’ question that they can use to teach young learner.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section will discuss about the previous finding and some theories from some experts in teaching field or expert. Basically, teachers’ question is the main part of this chapter.

**Teachers’ Questions**

Teacher’s question is one of small part of “teacher talk”. As the previous explanation, teacher talk is when the teacher is talking in the classroom. Whereas, teacher question is when teacher asks some questions to stimulate and check student understanding. Teacher’s question is promoting the students to be more active. In similar fashion, Wajnryb (2007) stresses that teacher talk and teacher question come into being similar each others. Nunan and Lamb (1998) suggest teachers use question “to elicit information, to check understanding and also to control situation in class. In most classrooms, questioning remains the common strategy for eliciting responds from student during the whole class teaching.

According to Mackay Thompson (1968), there are several reasons why questions are commonly used in teaching. Richard and Lockhart (1992) stated the following reasons. The questions stimulate and maintain students’ interest about the topic and promote them to express their idea through answer the questions given by teacher. (p. 185)
Different authors provide various reasons why questioning is so important. The researcher is Yanfen, L & Yuqin, Z (2010) propose two reasons why teachers ask questions in their classroom. First, questions require responses and therefore, they serve as a means of obliging control the progress of the interaction. Second, questions serve as a device to motivate the students, to revise, control, test or assess, explore, explain, encourage students to focus on a particular topic. They can be used to allow the learner to keep participating in the discourse and even modify it so that the language used becomes more comprehensible and personal relevant.” Klein, W (1998). Wajnryb (2007) assert that question can have different purposes for example, socializing, scene setting, and checking vocabulary, checking learning and seeking opinion. Teacher request the information from the students, the effective way to make students talk in class. According to several sources Wajnryb (2007); Klein, W (1998); Richard & Lockhart (1994) question can be divided into the following, referential question and display question.

**Referential questions**

Referential question is question which has no fix answer, the teacher wants to know what the students idea. When teacher seeking information from the students, which is they do not know the answer. The example is, ask student’s opinion about the topic. Teachers don’t know the answer because the answer base on the students point of view. Those are example provided by Wajnryb (1992). Another expert, Chadron (1988) conveys that these questions would increase the productivity of the students and then these questions would likely enrich more meaningful
communication between the teacher and the students. The examples are provided by (Chadron, 1988).

1. “What do you think about your pets?”
2. “Where will you go after school?”

Display question

Display question is a type of question which is used to check the students’ understanding. Question requesting information has already known by the teacher (Klein, 1986). Teacher asked question for comprehension, confirmation or clarification. Check understanding, because the teachers have known the right answers information evaluate student’s comprehension of teacher’s explanation. For example, they already know the answer from the students.

Wajnryb.R (1992) divides the types of questions into others specific type of teacher question such as “yes”/”no question, short answer/ retrieval-style question, open/ended question and non-retrieval, imaginative question. The examples are provided by Wajnryb.R

“Yes”/”No question

“Yes”/”No” question is considering as the easiest question for the students to answer either the answer is yes or no. The teacher asks the question to the students but the students only have 2 choices to answer: yes or no. For example “Have you seen her face before” the students will expect to answer yes if they have seen that face or vice versa. These kinds of questions do not require the students to produce new language.
**Short answer/retrieval-style question**

Short answer/retrieval-style question is type of question that “drives” the student to answer with the right answer according to the teacher expectation. The function of this kind of question is to check their understanding. They can response more natural compare to yes/no question because they will give exactly the answer in the form of short answer. The example is “What did she say about the film?” the answer must be containing in the text. In other word, the students answer base on the text book.

**Open/ended question**

Open/ended question is the type questions that create students to have different answer and there is no right or wrong answer, because it is open question and base on the student’s background knowledge. These questions generally inquire to the child process of thinking, imagining, feeling and understanding. The example is “Whom could he have telephoned?”

**Non-retrieval, imaginative question**

Non-retrieval, imaginative question is a type of question that does not require the learner to retrieve given information but instead call on inferred information.”What do you think the writer was suggesting by making the central character an animal?” is the the example provided by Wajnryb.R (1992). Therefore, the students ask to imagine something does not exist in the text. Something that implicit, so the students have to answer it with their imagination.

Richard & Lockhart (1994) in their book “Reflective English in Second Language Classroom” also stated the following kinds of teacher question. There
are the others purposes of asking question there are procedural, convergent and divergent question.

**Procedural question**

Procedural question has to do with classroom procedures and routines, and classroom management (Richard and Lockhart 1992). Procedural question are designed to lead students in the lesson, also to facilitate their comprehension and to promote classroom interaction. Further, It is help the students to master the content of the lesson that given by the teacher. For example, the following questions occurred in classroom while teachers were checking that homework had been completed, that instruction for a task was clear given by the teacher. Richard and Lockhart provided some example of this kind of question.

The example:

1. “Did everyone bring their homework?”
2. “How much more time do you need?”
3. “Can you all read what I’ve written on the blackboard?”
4. “Why aren’t you doing your homework?”
5. “Do you all understand what I want you to do?”

Procedural question can be divided into 2 type of question: convergent and divergent question. Both of questions are classified depending on the kind of answer they are design to reach the goal.

**Convergent question**

Convergent question has the main purpose is to stimulate similar students response which focus on a central theme. It is not required students to think something higher level of thinking, just make the student remember of previous material. These responses are often short answer, such as “yes” or “no” or short
statement Weber & Longhi-Chirilin, (2010). For example, the following question is used by the teacher in introducing a vocabulary lesson of computer. In type of question is not required the student to answer with the high level of intelligence but more about recall their memory about the previous material. Before the teacher begins the lesson they will ask questions about some things that related to the computer as the main topic that already discussed. These examples are provided by Klein (1998).

1. “How many of you have a personal computer in your home?”
2. “Do you use it every day?”
3. “What do you mainly use it for?”
4. “What are some other machines that you have in your home?”
5. “What are the names of some computer companies?”
6. “What are the differences between software and hardware?”

**Divergent question**

Divergent question is the opposite of the convergent question. Richard and Lockhart (1992) stated that the purpose of this question is to encourage students to provide their own information rather than to recall previously presented information. For example, after asking the convergent question, the teacher went on to ask divergent questions such as the following:

1. “What the different of vegetable and fruit?”
2. “What are the best ways of plant vegetable?”
3. “How would fruit be cooked?”

It can be concluded from all those explanations that teacher question is the part of big “frame” of teacher talk. Teacher should take more time to question to the students in class. Teacher question is very crucial and important in order to help students master the target language. In the explanation above states that, questioning is the one of the most common teaching technique used by teacher
Nunan (1991). The study about the type of teacher’s question, that tends to be used in the classroom. The questions are depending on the needs and the functions. According to Wajnryb (1992) there are referential and display question. He also add others kind of question such as yes/no question, open/ended, short question and non-retrieval or imaginative question.

THE STUDY

Context of The Research

This study is qualitative research. According to Klein (1998) qualitative research is provide further understanding of a subject and its contextual setting, provide explanation of reasons. This study tried to reveal the types of teachers’ questions that used by English teacher in SD FX. Marsudirini Salatiga. The location is on Margosari Street No 1 Salatiga, Central Java. The writer chose this school because it recognized as a reputable one in Salatiga. The reason why the writer chose the first grade (1st) class in order to know what type of questions used by teacher to teach the youngest level of elementary school. The writer interest to learn more about young learner. The students (young learner), have very limited knowledge about English as their first foreign language. They are the new learner in elementary level how teacher create the good basic of the students knowledge in English skill.

Participant

The participant of this study was a teacher named Dea (pseudonym). She is majoring in English language literature. Maria was selected as a participant,
because she is the only English teacher in SD FX Marsudirini Salatiga. She had been teaching English for Elementary school students for 10 (ten) years and also taught in kindergarten students. She is teaching English from the first grade to the sixth grade, 8 hours a week. For the first grade she teaches only one and half hours a week every Monday and Wednesday.

Data Collection Instrument

This study used observation to collect the reliable data. The writer did six observations from 11th February until 18th March 2013. The writer was as non-participant observer during the observation. The writer used observational protocol to list the teachers’ questions given by teacher. The reason used observation instrument because the writer could get the real situation in class and also to see how students responded to the questions.

According to Wakefield, A. (2008), the main strength of observation is that it provides direct access to the social phenomena under consideration. The writer actually observed and recorded both students and teacher behavior in teaching learning situation process. Furthermore, the writer will easy to analyze the data because the writer realized the context when the questions were given to the students. The context influenced the questions.
Figure 1 observational protocol.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Display</th>
<th>Referential</th>
<th>Procedural</th>
<th>Convergent</th>
<th>Divergent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection Procedures

Firstly, the writer asked the permission to do the observation and record the teacher talk during teaching learning process in the classroom, from the head master of elementary school and also from the teacher who taught first grade class. Once the permission was given, the writer went to the school every Monday and Wednesday to observe the first grade class. The writer did the “piloting” on 4th February 2013, to make sure the recorder worked well to collect the reliable data. After that, the writer tried to list the data and to assure the data were relevant to the study.

The writer observed the class and recorded the spoken interaction especially about teacher question that used from 11th February until 18th March 2013. Each observation lasted for 40-50 minutes. During the observation the writer noted only for the spoken questions that teacher gave to the students. After that the writer would compare the questions which written in the observation protocol and the recording in order to get reliable data that should be collected. This is the table
about when the observations done by the writer and also the topics in each meeting. The date and topic in each meeting can be seen in the table 1.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

The analysis would be in the form of descriptive. However the description was created based on the table that concluded from the data. The transcription would put into table and percentage. After doing the observation and did the recording of the teacher questions in the classroom, the writer would compare the questions which written in the observation protocol and the questions recorded. The writer wrote all the teacher questions that were noted in the classroom, and then data would be analyzed quantitatively.

Firstly, the writer listed the teacher questions in the checklist. Secondly, the writer classified the type of questions based on the checklist and coded the transcript by grouping the similar type of question into the same categories. There were five categories such as: Display, Referential, Convergent, Divergent and also Procedural question. The next categories were yes/no question, short answer, open/ended and imaginative question. Moreover, the writer could count the frequency in percentage of each variable. The transcription will be classified according to the theory reviewed can be seen in table 2.
Table 1: The date and Topic of the lesson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>11&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; February 2013</td>
<td>Kids Toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; February 2013</td>
<td>Animal (Pets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>25&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; February 2013</td>
<td>In the bathroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; March 2013</td>
<td>Food and Drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>11&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; March 2013</td>
<td>In the kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>18&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; March 2013</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Theory classified and proposed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;YES&quot;/&quot;NO&quot; question.</td>
<td>Display question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short answer / retrieval - style question</td>
<td>Referential question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open / Ended question.</td>
<td>Convergent question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative question / Non – retrieval.</td>
<td>Divergent question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Procedural question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FINDING AND ANALYSIS**

In this section the writer will explain the findings and the analysis of the data. More details information about the frequency and the percentage can be seen in the table 3.

*Table 3: The percentage and frequency of Teacher’s questions*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Types of Question</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Referential</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Display</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Convergent</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Divergent</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Procedural</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among those 324 occurrences, table 3 indicates that, procedural question are the most frequently used by the teacher in classroom. It appears for 143 times out of 324 question or 44% of all questions listed. After that, displays questions are 118 occurrences (36%) and 25 (8%) are referential questions. The procedural question is the most frequently used by teacher. There are others types of question with least percentage of infrequently used by teacher such as: convergent, divergent, yes/no questions, short answer and imaginative questions.

From table 3 it could be seen clearly that these findings are different from the previous study done by Myhill, Jones & Hopper (2006); Klein (1998). They state that display and referential questions are the most used by teacher. In this study procedural questions and display questions are the most frequently asked by teacher in the classroom. The writer will explain about several finding discussion about teachers’ questions. Especially about the particular questions that mostly used by teacher and the question that infrequently used. The writer will analyze based on the finding and data during the writer do collecting data directly in the classroom.
Procedural questions

The table 3 shows that teacher mostly used procedural questions compare to the others types of questions to teach the young learner in ESL classroom. This result is different from the previous study, found that display and referential questions are the most frequently used by teacher because procedural has bigger percentages than display question. The data from table 3 indicates that procedural questions are the most frequently used by the teacher in class. It appears for 143 times out of 324 question or 44% of all questions that found.

This is probably because the purpose of procedural questions is to keep the classroom operations moving and to create interaction in the beginning of the class (Barnes, 2006). Furthermore, questioning also prepare the young English learners (YELLS) before they learn about the material (Hassan, 2006).

Extract 1

Teacher : “How are you today class?”
Students : “I am fine thank you”
Teacher : “Are you happy today?
Teacher : “Who is sick today?”
Student 1 : “Bagas and Yunus”

Taken from 11 February 2013

The teacher gave these questions in extract 1 in the beginning of the class, to keep the classroom operations moving. “How are you today” is question to initiate students to speak English in the beginning of the class. The questions that the teacher asked as the habit to check student’s attendance list before explain the material the. In the extract 1, teacher asked “who is sick today?” Base on the observation in the class, those questions are always delivered in the beginning of class to check student attendance. The writer finds that teacher uses this kind of
questions to create “starting point” of interaction. In case to prepare the students’
before they learn English. This kind of question also needs to consider that
students learn another language in Javanese lesson. Every Monday before English
lesson, they study Javanese lesson with different teacher. As a consequence,
teacher should help them to distinguish the language contrast between Javanese
and English through asking the routine question in the beginning of class. She
asks the question, the students tend to respond the greeting. The teacher gives the
procedural questions, in purpose for the students to do the routine of simple turn
taking dialog. This kind of activity as a practice of simple dialog, as a result they
can speak in English confidently.

Procedural question are designed to lead students in the lesson, also to
facilitate their comprehension and to promote classroom interaction (Wajnryb,
1994). Further, procedural questions are help the students to master the contents
of the lesson that given by the teacher. The following questions occured in
classroom while teacher was checking that student’s homework had been
completed, that instruction for a task is clear given by the teacher. Extract 2 is the
example of procedural question that delivered by the teacher.

Extract 2

Teacher : “Siapa yang tidak mengerjakan PR?”
Students : “Sudah, Miss.”
Teacher : “Siapa yang mau bertanya?”
Student 2 : “Saya miss,bedanya first sama pertama”.

Taken from 18th February 2013

According to extract 2 it is clear that teacher asks about home work to check
student’s responsibility. Since, students are considered as young learner that
should still be guided so that all tasks can be completed by all students through asking them one by one. Teacher asked whether there is any question about the material or not. In order, to make sure all the students are understand. In fact there was a student who asked about the material which was not clear yet, as a result the teacher could explain the material clearer. Difficult for teachers to think which are not students understand, if students do not ask. It is enough to prove that the procedural important function in the learning process. Procedural question is workable to control the students and do the class management.

Extract 3

Teacher : “Gaby jangan ribut, have you finished?”
Student 3 : “Belum, Miss”.

Taken from 25th February 2013

In extract 3 the teacher used procedural questions which are focused to manage the class. These questions are part of classroom management because there is a genuine control purpose in those questions, base on the analysis those have been made. Through that explanation can be concluded that teacher mostly used procedural question particular short answer/retrieval-style question in order to keep the class situation well manage for example by warned the students are noisy in the classroom. In the extract 3 also indicated that teacher used procedural questions to check students’ progress “have you finished”. The using of procedural questions mean the teacher want to build good relationship with the students and keep the classroom situation become conducive in order to get better situation for teaching and learning activity. Another reason probably, the student is noisy and tries to cheat with her friend. In fact not all students can focus to do
their task if there are in crowded situation around them. The student is helped by
teacher to control their self to keep focus on the lesson. The example can be seen
in the extract 4.

Extract 4

Teacher : “Rizal, mau main di luar atau belajar di kelas?”
Student 4 : “di kelas”.
Teacher : “Deny, are you sleepy? Sudah makan belum?”
Student 5 : “No, I am not miss”.

Taken from 4th March 2013

When teacher noticed that one of her student was “sleepy” she tried to help
him to awake and focus. The writer found that before English class that day, the
students have special activity in school day. They done many activities like sport
and game, “are you sleepy?” were to check whether the students need special
treatment for example he was sick or hungry.

The writer also finds that procedural questions are frequently used by
teacher because she needed to manage the class first since the students are
considered as young learner (1st grade). The another finding related to the
material, the material is given actually simple, short and easy so the teacher deal
with limited material and prefer to use procedural question. For example in the 2
meeting the material was “kid toys”, the teacher only asked about the meaning in
Indonesia and English vice versa. Teacher designed the situation as play ground
so she has to ask many procedural questions to control the class that tend to be
crowded.
Display questions

In table 3 the writer found that display questions have highest percentages point after procedural questions. It emerges 118 times out of 324 or 36% of all questions that listed. Those are display questions can be considered as tools to check students’ understanding (Chadron, 1988). The questions are asked by the teacher being purposeful to direct the student understanding toward the material

Extract 5

Teacher : “Samuel, mention some kinds of toys?”
Student 6 : “Doll, kite, toy robot and toy car”
Teacher : “Fafa, bahasa inggrisnya petak umpet apa?”
Student 7 : “Hide and seek Miss”

Taken from 18th February 2013

The display questions are asked in this lesson mainly to check the students’ knowledge of the vocabulary item. The example in the extract 5 “Samuel, mention some kinds of toys?” In case, students were still busy with their own activities and sometime loose their focus. The teacher wanted to catch their spirit through the questions. It is also hard for the young learner to understand the material without teacher’s guidance through the questions. In the others hand, the situation in class is almost uncontrolled because the students shout and talk with their friends. The students talk too much to their friends about something that did not relate to the material for example kids program in the television. The teacher uses this type of questions to manage the class become conducive one by giving the display questions direct to the students. There are several reasons why teacher used display question. First, teacher require the right answer base on the text book, it would indicate whether students understand the material well or not. Second,
teacher wants to stimulate the students to speak English in early age. The last, it is easy for the students to evaluate the student’s comprehension since the answer is fixed by the teacher. The preference of the teacher used short answer type of questions because the main point is students understand the material instead of communicative content. It can be clear seen in extract 6 “Gaby bahasa inggrisnya petak umpet apa?” Teachers only emphasizes that students responds to the question correctly rather than asks her about something relate about hide and seek.

Extract 6

Teacher : “Angel, what is book?”
Student 6 : “buku”
Teacher : “Angga, kalo bahasa inggrisnya penghapus apa?”
Student 7 : “Eraser, Miss”

Taken from 18th March 2013

Nunan (1999) emphasizes that display questions are pedagogical purposeless only when they are viewed from the perspective of communication communicative language teaching. It can be seen from extract 6 the writer notices that display question is lack of communication. In others words the communication just “one way” method. The student has limit chance to response more than teacher “expectation”. Even though, display questions are frequent used by the teacher but the point is the information known and no real communication is taking place.

Since, the major purpose is able to practice the language base on the experience rather than text book. Display questions are elicited short answer of three words only compared to the others type of questions. As the result, teacher can produce many display questions in one topic. For example in the extract 5,
teacher could ask “ruler, book, bag, pencil, paper and many more school equipments”. During the observation, the teacher uses display questions also to create lively atmosphere in classroom in order to avoid students’ boredom. The reason why teacher easy to produce many questions, since the materials are already in the books. Similar, to the students’ side, they easy to response since the material are already being taught. Lastly, display questions also influenced the length of the target language produce; mostly the responds are quite “short” or one word responses. For example in extract 6 “buku, erase miss”. Base on the situation there, teacher uses display question to check students’ understanding and manage the class in direct related to the material/topic.

Teacher prefers to use display questions for confirmation and clarification. The examples are can be seen in the extract 7.

Extract 7

Teacher : “hayo tulisanya (pan atau pen)?”
Student 9 : “pan”
Teacher : “Dea, tadi bahasa inggrisnya sendok apa?”
Student 10 : “knife, Miss”
Teacher : “Are you sure? “

Taken from 11th March 2013

Teacher tried to lead the student to clarified students’ respond whether right or wrong. Sometime, students forget the spelling even they remember how to pronounce it so teacher asks them to confirm their answer. In fact, both of them (Mikha and Anggi) made mistake and probably they did not aware. Display questions here help the students to restate their respond, hope that next time they can learn from their mistakes and do not make the same thing.
Referential questions

Table 3 shows that referential questions occur only 25 times or 8% of the total occurrences. As the writer states before that the result of this study is different from the previous finding, Referential question is rarely used by teacher; on the other hand several finding found that referential question is frequently used. This result also contains the idea that teacher just infrequent to ask about particular information from the students, probably she prefers to ask something that she already knew to check her students’ understanding about the material. The result is easy for the teacher to check the correctness. Referential questions, which can have more than one acceptable or correct, answer, however teacher does not know the answer respectively (Wajnryb, 1992). These are some examples of referential question that she asks to the students can be figure out in the extract 8.

Extract 8

Teacher : “Alia, what do you like to drink?”
Student 11 : “I like to drink tea.”
Teacher : “Do you like ice tea?”
Student 11 : “Yes, I do”
Teacher : “Gaby, do you know how to serve chiken noodle?”
Student 3 : “I cook it, boiled with hot water”
Teacher : “With whom you cook it?”
Student 3 : “My mother”

Taken from 4th March 2013

Referential questions are given to introduce the students to the topic after that they will familiar about the topic, for example in the extract 8 “Alia, what do you like to drink?”. The purpose is probably to lead the students to think about
related to the topic. Another reason is to make the student become interest to the topic since the topic “food and drink” is good to attract their imagination and interest. According to the example of extract 8 the teacher asked about what was kind of drink that student like, without knew what student would answer. After that, the teacher also asked another question, to find the answer whether she like ice or hot tea. The student answered ice tea, referential questions permits the student to answer base on her idea.

Some of the questions aimed to check student’s perception on the real life (Klein, 1998). The example “ice tea” is her favorite drink so she answered the questions base on the reality or her own idea. Teacher wants to know the information base on the students own information that they have. Since, the topic about food and drink is easy to figure out in their mind as young learner. As a result they can respond referential questions without think the answer in longer time and also enthusiastically.

Base on the example of extract 8, teacher also wants to know how to serve the noodle from the student’s perceptions “Gaby, do you know how to serve chicken noodle. This question is given to the students to know the information from the student. The typical of answer is complex and longer rather than others responds. The problem is beginning if student could not respond it correctly because they do not know the vocabulary to express it. “I cook it, boiled with hot water”. In the 1st grade of elementary school not all student understand word like “cook, boiled and water”. Even more student has to combine the word in to a phrase of target language to express her answer. Furthermore, Gaby the student
who answers the question is the one of the smart student in the class so it is not surprising that she can answer it correctly. In addition, Gaby also responds another questions “my mother”, to answer this questions she has to find the answer base on her idea and after that she has to translate it into English. The composition of than phrase contains possessive noun “my”, this material haven’t given yet. This phrase can prove clearly that referential question elicit more complex respond especially in young learner or YELLS (young English language learner).

Wakefield (2008) states that referential question require elaboration and elicit longer and more complex responses. That is the probably reason why teacher gives that questions to the student that relatively smart to answer it. Furthermore, not all students asked referential question by teacher. As a result, referential question are rarely used by teacher. Base on the observation, teacher seems to require the answer in target language. On the contrary, if the question is asked to another student who can not answer it in target language. The teacher’s goal to introduce the new vocabulary will unsuccessful. This extract 9 will prove that teacher wants to teach new vocabulary through “Gaby’s answer”.

Extract 9

Teacher : “class, tadi jawaban Gaby apa ya? bingung ya? mau tau artinya gak”

Taken from 4th March 2013
After she asked referential questions she wrote the list of word in white board “hot, boiled and water”. Furthermore, she explained the meaning in Indonesia also how to pronounce it correctly. 

This is reason why referential questions are infrequently used by teacher. Since, the student will difficult to answer the questions. Moreover, the result of referential questions are not directly related to the topic for example “food and drink”. The learning indicator is only expect students to know “food and drink” in target language rather than know how to make.

As the writer explains that the students are still young and they were still in the process of recognizing the target language. Furthermore, imaginative question aims the students to answer with their imagination. The next thing was about short answer the student just simple answers “my mother”, it also indicates that she is the one that knows whit whom she cooked, teacher does not know it. Referential questions aim the students to make their own idea easier based on their experiences and background knowledge to answer the questions. Since there were no fix answer to responses these types of questions

The examples in extract 9, the teacher asks about information to the students. Besides these finding that referential questions are rarely asked by teacher, but it is better to ask referential question to the students. As mentioned before that the types of questions are usually determined by the pedagogical purposes of the lesson. Teacher should not only expect the students to answer in target language (English). On the contrary, allow them to answer in mother language (Indonesia) to make them easier to express their own idea. Richard and
Lockhart (1992) state that teacher should design some less controlled but contextualized practice in which they can guide students to give acceptable answer by asking some referential questions. Through this kind of questions student’s second language development can be facilitated. Move to the several finding discussion.

Yes/No question and Short/retrieval questions

This can be clearly seen in the table 1, that yes/no and short/retrieval questions mostly used by teacher in the three particulary discussed types of questions such as procedural, display and referential questions. In the procedural questions asked mostly frequently by teacher is short/retrieval questions is about 36% or 51 of all 143 appearrances. It is interesting why these type of questions are the most frequent used in three type questions that mostly prefered by teacher such as procedural, display and referential.

Wajnryb (1992) states that yes/no questions are consedered as the easiest question for the students to answer either the answer”yes” or “no”. The example were found in the extract 10 below.

Extract 10

Teacher : “UTS nya hari rabu apa kamis ya?”
Students : “Kamis”
Teacher : “Is that me?”
Students : “Yes, you are”.

Taken from 25th February 2013

The examples are considered as procedural question, it’s happened in the beginning of the class. The teacher checked the schedule for the next test or examination, to make sure that the student notice. They can prepare it well to get
good grade on their test. Base on the observation, they students actually have known that information before. Lastly, this is why yes/no and short/retrieval question are the most frequent in procedural questions since the students just confirm the information teacher given to them.

The function of short/retrieval question is to check students’ understanding (Klein, 1998). Different to yes/no questions, students can response more natural compare to yes/no question because they will give exactly the answer in the form of short answer. Display questions constitute 72% of short/retrieval questions. It’s similar to yes/no questions, they do not initiate long answer when pose to learner. Mostly, the teacher applies the questions to get the learner to be active and to provide weak learners with opportunity to be involved in interaction, which were appears in extract 11.

Extract 11

Teacher  : “In the kitchen artinya apa anak-anak?”
Students : “Di dapur miss”
Teacher  : “Dito kalo “fork” itu apa ya?”
Student 12: “Garpu”.
Teacher  : “Is it a spoon?” (pointing a picture).
Students : “Yes, it is”.
Teacher  : “Is it a knife?”
Students : “No, it is not?”

Taken from 28th February 2013

The answers of these questions are already existed in the text book. The students are interesting to answer the questions since they have already learned it from the previous meeting with same topic for example “in the kitchen”. They might remember some items vocabulary and pictures relate to the “kitchen”. Base on the observations that the writer have done, yes/no questions also used by
teacher to practice grammar section that she already has explained in the previous meeting. Teacher asks student to use the right formula of grammar point “Yes, it is” or “No, it is not”. As a result students learn not only passive or only learn English in written form but also in active form or spoken. Short answer and yes/no question are simple to apply in ESL classroom and students also easy to respond because they just follow the grammar form and the length the answer also short. Yes/no questions and short/retrieval questions mostly find in the procedural and display question both of them are the most frequent used by teacher. As a result, yes/no question and short/retrieval are partaking of biggest portion questions used by teacher.

The purpose of the teacher is to make learners contribute to the classroom interaction. As a young learner level, answering even a simple question with a few English words is of great significant progress. Since, success to answer a question makes them feel like an “active” participant in the classroom interaction. The student also can do appreciate themselves because they can answer the question in target language. This kind of progress is good to improve their confidence to speak English.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the study is to explored the types of questions asked by an elementary English teacher to young learners in ESL classroom. Three types of questions are indentified with different range of occurrences such as procedural,
display and referential questions. The result shows that display and procedural questions are the most frequency used by teacher. In term of producing more target language by young learner and class management, procedural and display questions are seen to be more effective. Because, teacher can easy to control the students through procedural question and display questions direct to the students. Moreover, the students also easy to respond the questions because the answers have been discuss in the book. Furthermore, procedural questions are the most frequent used of all questions found, it is show the influence of the length of material and also time allocation is relative short only 45 minutes.

The results of the present study imply that the questions are influenced by the context or the topic on each meeting. However, teacher should aware more different types of questions to get the interaction go smoothly to avoid the teachers’ dominance in class interaction. Teacher should be provided with more training in developing their questioning techniques. In the future; teacher may avoid asking to many “yes/no” questions which inhibit student’s opportunities to develop their second language skills. Its better the English teacher not only focus on those types of question but also more to adapt the questions to the class situation.

The limitation of this study is an elementary school in Salatiga. There is only one English teacher in that school, the questions found are relatively similar. The finding might be different, if there more than 1 teacher teach the students in class. The limitation also relates to the small number of participant. The results were only applicable to the situations that occurred in the English lesson in that
school. Moreover, other areas can be further explored such as how the young learners respond toward teacher questions. This particular area is important because it is better to know from 2 different perspectives from teacher and students’ aspect, so in the future teacher can evaluate their questions toward student’s responses.

REFERENCES


