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THE ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONING STRATEGIES USED BY LECTURER IN READING CLASS

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Abstract

This study analyses spoken discourse particularly the questioning strategies used by the lecturerduringteaching in Reading class in English Education Program. Questioning has long been used as a teaching tool by teachers and preceptors to assess students' knowledge, promote comprehension, and stimulate critical thinking. This is a descriptive qualitative research using recorded class activity as the data. The unit of analysis is the questioning strategies used by the Reading lecturer. The result shows that during the recording, there are fifteen questions proposed by the lecturer. I consulted to the revised Bloom's taxonomy in the field of cognitive domain to analyze the data. These results can be applied in the classroom and in experiential learning environments particularly in Reading class to enhance student engagement and promote critical thinking and higher-order learning.

Keywords: questioning strategies, reading class, discourse analysis

Introduction

Discourse study is interesting to discuss. The term discourse refers to the language that teachers and students use to communicate with each other in the classroom. In addition, McCarthy (1991) states that discourse analysis is the study of the relationship between language and the contexts where it is used. It examines how sentences in spoken and written language form larger meaningful units in various social contexts ranging from conversation to highly institutionalized forms of talks.

Discourse analysis has been carried out in the classroom. By doing so, we can evaluate output of the teacher and the students, the procedures in the classrooms, and the types of teacher-student relationship (Hatch, 1992). In this research, the area of discourse is on the use of language for communication particularly in proposing questions to the students. Using questions to teach is an age-old practice and has been a cornerstone of education for centuries. Questions are often used to stimulate the recall of prior knowledge, promote comprehension, and build critical-thinking skills. Teachers ask questions to help students uncover what has been learned, to comprehensively explore the subject matter, and to generate discussion and peer-to-peer interaction. Effective questions asked in a psychologically safe learning environment support student learning by probing for understanding, encouraging creativity, stimulating critical thinking, and enhancing confidence.Owens (1976, p. 7) points out, "The use of questions has been shown to be an effective way to increase the learning and retention of written prose in a large number of studies."

The art of asking the right questions at the appropriate time is not innate. Bloom's taxonomy of learning categorizes cognitive levels into several domains. Questions that elicit responses in the knowledge, comprehension, and application domains are frequently considered lower-order questions, while questions in the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation domains are considered higher-order questions. Higher-order questions elicit deeper and critical thinking; therefore, teachers are encouraged to ask questions in these domains. This does not mean that lower-order questions should not be asked. It is appropriate to ask questions to address all cognitive domains as long as the desired learning outcome is kept in mind and

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a good mix of questions is used during each teaching session. Given that the learning objectives in most courses in graduate and professional degree programs are often intended to stimulate high order cognitive processes, one would expect that higher-order questions would prevail during encounters between students and teachers. Unfortunately, observations of classroom-based instructors have repeatedly shown that lower-order questions are far more frequently used.

Several studies have been conducted by researchers. There are some studies explored teacher's questions in Indonesian EFL classrooms. They are Tulung, 2006; Rohmah, 2002; and Arifin, 2012. For example, Tulung (2006) reported that teacher's questions were dominated by display questions. Rohmah (2002) confirmed Tulung's findings by describing that open questions inviting students to think aloud in generating sequences of thought and to explore implications were significantly fewer than closed ones. Most of the teacher's questions checked student's comprehension and required them to recall facts. The most common strategy that teacher use is to repeat questions (Rohmah, 2002). Arifin's findings (2012) on teacher questions in lower secondary school context were similar to Rohmah's and Tulung's findings. He reported that teachers used 66.7% of display questions and 33.3% referential questions. Students' responses were mostly verbal, consisting of a few words or simple sentences.

Meanwhile, the other previous study is "An Analysis of Discourse in the EFL Classroom" written by Hiroko Yoshida. This paper analyses spoken discourse between the teacher and the students in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. The focus of this paper is on the analysis of discourse marker ok, interactional sequences, and speech acts. The analyses revealed that the language used in the classroom contained various functions of interactional sequences and speech acts that are observed in authentic, natural communication, although it lacked of the naturalness in terms of syntax, lexis, and fluency because of the student's low proficiency of English.

The next study entitled EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Classroom Discourse Analysis of a Vocational College and Some Reflections. This paper is written by Liu Xin, Lou Luzheng, and Shi Biru from Zhejiang Medical College, Hangzhou, China. In this paper, the authors try to reveal the present state of EFL classrooms in a vocational college from the angle of classroom discourse analysis, especially the aspect of TT (teacher talk). The result shows some problems existing in the current English teaching. TT still dominates the interaction between the teacher and the students; the language of traditional teacher-controlled classrooms is still in rigid pattern; many teachers prefer to ask display questions rather than referential questions which result to the teachers cannot produce a flow of information from the students and create a more quasi-normal speech.

The last previous study is Classroom Interaction Strategies Employed by English Teachers at Lower Secondary Schools written by Nunung Suryati, Universitas Negeri Malang. The study involved eighteen teachers from Lower Secondary Schools in Malang. Classroom observation was selected as a method by utilizing Self Evaluation Teacher Talk (SETT). The findings show that the most frequent strategies were initiation response feedback (IRF) patterns, display questions, teacher echo, and extended teacher turns.

Five previous studies above mainly focus on the classroom interaction between teacher and students particularly in spoken interaction in which giving questions is the part of the interaction In my study, I focused on analyzing questioning strategies used by the lecturer in Reading class.

In 1956, Benjamin Bloom along with a group of like-minded educators developed a framework forclassifying educational goals and objectives into a hierarchical structure

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representing different formsand levels of learning. This framework was published as Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectivesand consisted of the following three domains: the Cognitive Domain, the Affective Domain, and the Psychomotor Domain (Anderson et al. 2001). The cognitive domain or knowledge-based domain consists of six levels and encompassing intellectual or thinking skills. The second domain or attitudinal-based domain consists of five levels and encompassing attitudes and values. The third domain or skills-based domain consists of six levels and encompassing physical skills or the performance or actions. Each of these three domains consists of a multi-tiered, hierarchical structure for classifying learning according to increasing levels of complexity.

In 2001, a former student of Bloom's, Lorin Anderson, and a group of cognitive psychologists, curriculum theorists and instructional researchers, and testing and assessment specialists published a revision of Bloom's Taxonomy entitled A Taxonomy for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment. The revision updates the taxonomy for the 21st century, and includes significant changes in terminology and structure. In the revised framework, 'action words' or verbs, instead of nouns, are used to label the six cognitive levels, three of the cognitive levels are renamed, and the top two higher-order cognitive levels are interchanged. The result is a more dynamic model for classifying the intellectual processes used by learners in acquiring and using knowledge. The revised taxonomy identifies the following new levels of cognitive learning (arranged from lower order to higher-order levels of learning): Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating, Creating. Below is the figure showing the sample verbs to use in writing intended learning outcomes that are appropriate for that cognitive level of learning.

Table 1. Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (the cognitive process dimension)

Creating	Can the student create a new product or point of view?	assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, write
Evaluating	Can the student justify a stand or decision?	appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, value, evaluate
Analyzing	Can the student distinguish between parts?	appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, question, test
Applying	Can the student use information in a new way?	choose demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write
Understanding	Can the student explain ideas or concepts?	classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, paraphrase
Remembering	Can the student recall or remember the information?	define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, state

Based on the background of the study above, I have strong desire to answer the research question: "How does lecturer propose questions to engage higher-order thinking of students in Reading class?" The purpose of this study is to analyze the questioning strategies used by the lecturer to engage higher-order thinking of students in Reading class.

Methodology

The participant in this study was one English lecturer of Reading class of English

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Education Program at Purworejo Muhammadiyah University. The data was the transcript of the interaction between the lecturer and the students during five meeting (each meeting lasts for 80 minutes). I recorded the class activity using Digital Video Camera Recorder (Handycam). The unit of analysis is the questioning strategies used by the lecturer in Reading class.The lesson was not specially prepared and the recording was taken under a natural classroom interaction. I found fifty questions proposed by the lecturer then those questions were analyzed using revised Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive domain. The questions are frequently asked in almost the same way from one meeting to the other.

Findings and Discussion

1. Findings

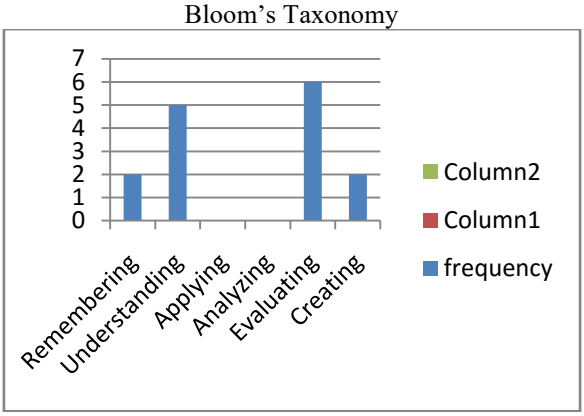
From the analyses, I found fifty questions as follow:

Table 2. Questions Proposed by the Lecturer

Questions	**Categories in Revised Bloom's Taxonomy**
What topic did we discuss? (4 times)	Remembering
Anyone knows what bullying is?	Remembering
Can you explain?(4 times)	understanding
Do you mean the mental development?	Evaluating
Do you agree with her answer? (7 times)	Evaluating
Can you paraphrase paragraph one to help our understanding easier?	understanding
Can you read the sentence aloud from your paraphrase?(3 times)	Creating
Can you elaborate your answer with example or may from part of the article? (2 times)	Creating
Do you think Ika's answer is correct? (3 times)	Evaluating
Now what is the answer for the next question?	Evaluating
Anyone agree?(7 times)	Evaluating
Can you give reason why?(4 times)	understanding
Do you mean 'the solution is to give advice'?	understanding
Is there anything unclear? (6 times)	understanding
Do you think this article is good for us? (5 times)	Evaluating

From the table above, there are 5 questions of Remembering category(10%); 16 questions of Understanding (32%); 24 questions of Evaluating (48%); and 5 questions of Creating (10%). Meanwhile, Applying and Analyzing categories are not practiced by the lecturer in giving question. The finding is also presented in figure below.

Figure 1. The Frequency of Questions in Revised Bloom's Taxonomy



2. Discussion

Results indicate that among 7 levels in cognitive domain *Evaluating* is the most frequently used by the lecturer. In the other hand, *Applying* and *Analyzing* are not used during the lesson.

a. Remembering

In *Remembering* category, the objective of the instruction is to promote retention of the presented material in much the same form as it was taught. *Remembering* involves retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory. The two associated cognitive processes are recognizing and recalling. The questions proposed by the lecturer are: (1) what topic did we discuss? and (2) anyone knows what bullying is?

In (1) the lecturer asked the students whether they remember the topic being discussed in the previous meeting. This question indicates the process of recalling. And in (2) the lecturer tried to make students search long-term memory for information of

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Bullying which has been the trending topic in news and in the social media. The lecturer hoped that students determine whether that information corresponds to previously learned knowledge, searching for a match.

b. Understanding

In *Understanding* category, the goal of instruction is to promote transfer. Students are said to *Understand* when they are able to construct meaning from instructional messages, including oral, written, and graphic communications, in books, or on computer monitors.

(3) Can you explain?

(6) Can you paraphrase paragraph one to help our understanding easier?

(12) Can you give reason why?

(13) Do you mean 'the solution is to give advice'?

(14) Is there anything unclear?

Students understand when they build connections between the "new" knowledge to be gained and their prior knowledge. Questions (3), (6), (12),(13), (14) make students integrate the incoming knowledge with existing schemas and frameworks. Interpreting in the form of paraphrasing involve converting words to words (question 6). Interpreting occurs when a student is able to convert information from one representational form to another. In question (3), explaining occurs when a student is able to construct and use a cause-and-effect model of a system. The model may be derived from a formal theory or may be grounded in research or experience. From the question, the lecturer hoped the student (Rani) could be able to explain the answer written down in the white board into detail and clear with arguments.

c. Evaluating

Evaluate is defined as making judgments based on criteria and standards. The criteria most often used are quality, effectiveness, efficiency, and consistency. They may be determined by the student or by others. The standards may be either qualitative or quantitative. The category *Evaluate* includes the cognitive processes of checking and critiquing. The former refers to the judgments about the internal consistency.

(4) Do you mean the mental development?

Question (4) shows checking because the lecturer asked the student (Rani) to make sure that the further meaning of 'for their development' is the mental development or psychology development.

The later means the judgments based on external criteria.

(5) Do you agree with her answer?

(9) Do you think Ika's answer is correct?

(10) Now what is the answer for the next question?

(11) Anyone agree?

Questions (5), (9), (10), and (11) involve judging a product or operation based on externally imposed criteria and standards. In critiquing, a student notes the positive and negative features of a product and makes a judgments based on at least partly on those features. The students give critique on whether the answer from Rani is correct based on the features found in the article.

d. Creating

Create involves putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole. The objective of learning is to make students make a new product by mentally recognizing some elements or parts into a pattern or structure not clearly present before.

(7) Can you read the sentence aloud from your paraphrase?

(8) Can you elaborate your answer with example or may from part of the article?

Questions (7) and (8) are the processes coordinated with the student's previous learning experiences. Although create requires creative thinking on the part of the students, this is not completely free

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creative expression unconstrained by the demands of the learning task or situation.

Conclusion

From the analysis, the most dominant categories of cognitive level is *Evaluating* (48%). The questions are proposed 24 times from 50 questions during the class. Remembering category (10%); 16 questions of Understanding (32%); 24 questions of Evaluating (48%); and 5 questions of Creating (10%). Meanwhile, Applying and Analyzing categories are not practiced by the lecturer in giving question.Asking students challenging and thought-provoking questions encourages students to tap their existing mental models and build upon previous knowledge.

Pedagogical Implications

The analysis has implications for both teaching and assessing students in Reading class. On the teaching side, the cognitive processes help students to promote retention of learning as well as to foster transfer of learning. Thus, when the goal of instruction is to promote transfer, objectives should include the cognitive processes associated with *Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate*, and *Create*. However, in the finding there are no questions showing categories of *Apply* and *Analyze*. On the assessment side, the analyses help lecturer broaden her assessment of learning. When the goal of instruction is to promote transfer, assessment tasks should tap cognitive processes that go beyond remembering. The tasks can be supplemented with those that tap the full range of cognitive processes required for transfer of learning.The lecturer has role to facilitate students by giving questions to stimulate the recall of prior knowledge, promote comprehension, and build critical-thinking skills to reach higher-order thinking.

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