



An Analysis of Types of Questions and Questioning Strategies Used by The English Teacher During the Teaching and Learning Process in SMPN 1 Seririt

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Abstract. Teacher questioning plays an essential role in promoting classroom interaction, assessing students' understanding, and facilitating active learning in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. However, limited studies have simultaneously examined both the types of teacher questions and questioning strategies within the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesian junior high schools. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the types of questions and questioning strategies used by an English teacher during the teaching and learning process at SMPN 1 Seririt. This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study design involving one English teacher who taught three eighth-grade classes. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and video recordings and were analyzed using the interactive model of data analysis. The findings revealed that the teacher employed three types of questions, namely procedural, convergent, and divergent questions, with convergent questions being the most dominant. The teacher also implemented four questioning strategies, including prompting, probing, repeating, and redirecting, to facilitate comprehension, increase classroom participation, and maintain interaction. These findings indicate that effective questioning depends not only on the selection of question types but also on the strategic implementation of questioning techniques. The study implies that balancing convergent and divergent questions, together with appropriate questioning strategies, can better support student-centered learning and promote critical thinking in EFL classrooms under the Merdeka Curriculum.

Keywords: Classroom Interaction; English Teacher; Merdeka Curriculum; Question Types, Questioning Strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is an essential component of the teaching and learning process, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Effective communication enables teachers to deliver instructional content, encourage students' participation, and create meaningful classroom interaction. Since English is learned as a foreign language in Indonesia, students often experience difficulties in understanding teachers' explanations and expressing their ideas. Consequently, teachers need appropriate instructional strategies to facilitate students' comprehension and maintain active classroom participation. One of the most frequently used instructional strategies is teacher questioning, which allows teachers to assess students' understanding, stimulate critical thinking, and promote classroom interaction.

Questioning plays a significant role in creating interactive learning environments. Through questioning, teachers not only evaluate students' knowledge but also encourage them to actively engage in discussions and develop higher-order thinking skills. Previous studies have highlighted that effective questioning strategies increase students' motivation, classroom participation, and learning outcomes (Chin & Osborne, 2008; Cotton, 1988; Yang, 2017). Likewise, questioning has been recognized as an effective pedagogical tool for fostering

interaction between teachers and students while supporting language acquisition in EFL classrooms (Feng, 2013). The flexibility of questioning strategies also enables teachers to adjust their questions according to students' responses and learning needs (Chin, 2007). The importance of questioning strategies becomes increasingly relevant in the implementation of Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes student-centered learning, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and active participation. Within this curriculum, teachers are expected to facilitate learning through meaningful interaction rather than relying solely on one-way instruction. Therefore, selecting appropriate types of questions and applying effective questioning strategies are essential for creating an engaging classroom environment that encourages students to participate actively throughout the learning process. Despite the acknowledged importance of teacher questioning, classroom observations indicate that English teachers still encounter passive classroom situations in which many students hesitate to answer questions, remain silent, or are reluctant to participate in discussions. Such conditions reduce the effectiveness of classroom interaction and contradict the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum. These challenges suggest that the effectiveness of teacher questioning may depend not only on the frequency of questions but also on the types of questions and the questioning strategies employed during instruction. Several previous studies have investigated teacher questioning and questioning strategies in EFL classrooms. However, most studies primarily focus on either the classification of question types or the implementation of questioning strategies separately, while only a limited number of studies examine both aspects simultaneously within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesian junior high schools. Furthermore, there is still limited evidence regarding how English teachers combine different question types with questioning strategies during authentic classroom interaction, particularly in schools that have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum for a relatively longer period. This gap provides an opportunity to explore the relationship between the types of questions used by teachers and the questioning strategies applied during the teaching and learning process. Based on these considerations, this study was conducted at SMPN 1 Seririt, one of the junior high schools that has implemented the Merdeka Curriculum for approximately two years. The study focuses on English teachers in the eighth grade, where classroom interaction and question-and-answer activities are expected to be more dynamic. The objective of this study is to analyze the types of questions used by the English teacher and to identify the questioning strategies employed during the teaching and learning process. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective questioning practices that support active learning and meaningful classroom interaction in EFL contexts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The teaching and learning process is an interactive activity in which teachers facilitate students in acquiring knowledge, developing skills, and achieving learning objectives. Brown (2007) defines teaching as the process of guiding and facilitating learning, while Djamaluddin and Wardana (2019) describe the teaching-learning process as reciprocal interaction between teachers and students to achieve educational goals. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, successful learning depends not only on the delivery of instructional materials but also on the quality of interaction established between teachers and students. Therefore, teachers are required to employ instructional strategies that encourage students to participate actively during classroom activities.

One of the most essential instructional strategies in EFL classrooms is teacher questioning. Questions function as instructional stimuli that help teachers assess students' understanding, maintain classroom interaction, and encourage learners to express their ideas (Critelli, 2013). Richards and Lockhart (1996) explain that teacher questions serve several important purposes, including stimulating students' interest, focusing their attention, checking comprehension, eliciting language use, and promoting classroom participation. Similarly, Brown (2001) argues that questioning provides opportunities for students to communicate, allows teachers to obtain immediate feedback, and encourages learners to develop their thinking by verbalizing their ideas. This study adopts the classification of teacher questions proposed by Richards and Lockhart (1996), which categorizes classroom questions into three types: procedural questions, convergent questions, and divergent questions. Procedural questions are used to organize classroom management and instructional procedures, such as checking students' readiness or giving instructions. Convergent questions require students to recall factual information or provide short, predetermined answers based on previously learned material. In contrast, divergent questions encourage students to produce more elaborate responses, express opinions, analyze problems, and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills. These three categories provide an appropriate framework for examining how teachers use different types of questions during classroom interaction.

Besides question types, this study also focuses on questioning strategies employed by teachers during instruction. Questioning strategies refer to deliberate techniques used by teachers to maximize students' participation and improve learning effectiveness (Nashruddin et al., 2020; Sulaiman, 2021). The present study adopts Wangru's (2016) framework, which identifies four major questioning strategies: prompting, probing, repeating, and redirecting. Prompting involves providing clues or hints to help students formulate correct answers.

Probing encourages students to extend or justify their responses through deeper thinking. Repeating is used when teachers restate questions to ensure comprehension or provide additional thinking time. Redirecting occurs when teachers redirect the same question to other students to broaden participation and stimulate classroom discussion. These strategies enable teachers to maintain meaningful interaction while supporting students with different levels of language proficiency. The implementation of questioning strategies is closely related to the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes student-centered learning, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and active classroom participation. According to Pratikno et al. (2022) and Rahayu et al. (2022), the Merdeka Curriculum encourages students to construct knowledge independently while teachers function primarily as facilitators of learning. Consequently, effective teacher questioning becomes an important instructional practice because it promotes discussion, reflection, problem-solving, and collaborative learning, all of which are consistent with the objectives of the curriculum. Several previous studies have examined teacher questioning in EFL classrooms. Erlinda and Dewi (2014) found that English teachers predominantly used closed and display questions, while open and referential questions generated more detailed student responses. Rosyidah (2018) reported that teachers employed procedural, convergent, and divergent questions, with convergent questions occurring most frequently during classroom interaction. Nasir (2020) investigated questioning strategies and students' responses, revealing that conceptual and structuring questions were more commonly used, whereas probing questions required higher-order thinking and longer response time. Furthermore, Aimah and Purwanto (2021) demonstrated that open-referential and follow-up questioning strategies effectively promoted students' critical literacy. Other studies conducted by Oktaviani (2020), Fikri (2021), and Setyo et al. (2022) also confirmed that questioning strategies contribute significantly to classroom interaction, student engagement, and critical thinking development. Although previous studies have provided valuable insights into teacher questioning, most of them investigated either question types or questioning strategies independently, and many were conducted in senior high schools or higher education settings. Research examining both aspects simultaneously within Indonesian junior high schools implementing the Merdeka Curriculum remains limited. Therefore, this study integrates Richards and Lockhart's (1996) classification of teacher question types with Wangru's (2016) questioning strategy framework to analyze the questioning practices of an English teacher at SMPN 1 Seririt. This integrated perspective is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different types of questions and questioning strategies are applied to support active learning and classroom interaction under the Merdeka Curriculum.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study design to investigate the types of questions and questioning strategies used by an English teacher during the teaching and learning process at SMPN 1 Seririt, Bali. A qualitative case study was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of classroom interaction within its natural setting (Creswell, 2014; Lapan et al., 2012). The subject of the study was one English teacher teaching an eighth-grade class, selected because classroom interaction at this level is considered more dynamic and reflects the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Data were collected through three classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and video recordings. The researcher acted as the primary instrument, supported by an observation checklist adapted from Richards and Lockhart's (1996) classification of question types (procedural, convergent, and divergent) and Wangru's (2016) framework of questioning strategies (prompting, probing, repeating, and redirecting), as well as an interview guide. The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Observation and interview data were first coded and organized according to the research objectives, then presented descriptively to identify patterns in the teacher's use of question types and questioning strategies. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied methodological triangulation by comparing the results obtained from classroom observations, interviews, and video recordings. This triangulation strengthened the credibility of the findings and provided a more comprehensive understanding of the teacher's questioning practices during the teaching and learning process.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study was conducted at SMPN 1 Seririt, Buleleng, Bali, involving one English teacher who taught three eighth-grade classes (VIII I, VIII J, and VIII K). Data were collected through three classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and video recordings. The observation data were analyzed using Richards and Lockhart's (1996) framework of teacher question types, while the interview data were analyzed based on Wangru's (2016) questioning strategies. The findings were validated through methodological triangulation by comparing classroom observation and interview results.

Types of Questions Used by the English Teacher

The classroom observations identified 159 teacher questions distributed into three categories: procedural questions, convergent questions, and divergent questions. Table 1 summarizes the distribution of question types across the three observed classes.

Table 1. Distribution of Teacher Question Types.

Question Type	Frequency	Percentage
Procedural Questions	61	38.4%
Convergent Questions	94	59.1%
Divergent Questions	4	2.5%
Total	159	100%

The findings indicate that convergent questions were the most frequently used, accounting for 94 questions (59.1%), followed by procedural questions with 61 occurrences (38.4%). Only four divergent questions (2.5%) were identified during the three classroom observations. Across all classes, the teacher mainly employed convergent questions to assess students' understanding of grammar topics such as verbs, nouns, and imperative sentences. Procedural questions were used to organize classroom activities, check students' readiness, and maintain classroom interaction, whereas divergent questions were only occasionally used to encourage students to express their opinions or develop more elaborate responses.

Questioning Strategies Used by the English Teacher

The interview results revealed that the teacher implemented all four questioning strategies proposed by Wangru (2016), namely prompting, probing, repeating, and redirecting. Prompting was applied by simplifying questions, giving clues, or translating questions into Indonesian when students had difficulty understanding English instructions. Probing was used through follow-up questions that encouraged students to explain their answers in greater detail. Repeating strategy provided students with additional processing time by restating the questions, while redirecting strategy involved asking the same question to different students to increase classroom participation.

The interview findings were consistent with the classroom observations. The teacher explained that questioning was intentionally used to activate students' prior knowledge, monitor students' comprehension, and maintain two-way communication during classroom interaction. The consistency between observation and interview findings confirms the credibility of the research results.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the English teacher employed all three question types proposed by Richards and Lockhart (1996), namely procedural, convergent, and divergent questions. However, convergent questions were the dominant type across all observed classes.

This finding indicates that the teacher primarily focused on checking students' understanding and reinforcing grammatical concepts through questions requiring short and predetermined answers. Such findings support Richards and Lockhart (1996), who argue that convergent questions are effective for assessing students' comprehension and recalling previously learned information. Similarly, Brown (2001) emphasizes that teacher questioning serves as an important instructional tool for monitoring students' learning while maintaining classroom interaction.

The predominance of convergent questions is also consistent with previous studies. Rosyidah (2018) reported that convergent questions were the most frequently used question type during classroom interaction because they enabled teachers to evaluate students' understanding efficiently. Likewise, Nasir (2020) found that students tended to respond more confidently to questions requiring factual recall than to questions demanding analytical thinking. These similarities suggest that EFL teachers commonly rely on convergent questions as an effective strategy for reinforcing students' comprehension before introducing more cognitively demanding tasks.

Although procedural questions were also frequently employed to manage classroom activities and monitor students' readiness, the number of divergent questions remained relatively limited. Divergent questions encourage students to express opinions, analyze ideas, and develop higher-order thinking skills. Therefore, the limited use of this question type suggests that classroom interaction remained predominantly teacher-directed and focused on conceptual understanding rather than exploratory discussion. While this approach effectively supports mastery of basic concepts, increasing the use of divergent questions would better support the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes critical thinking, collaboration, and student-centered learning.

Regarding questioning strategies, the findings reveal that the teacher consciously implemented prompting, probing, repeating, and redirecting throughout the teaching and learning process. Prompting and repeating functioned as scaffolding strategies that helped students understand questions more easily and increased their confidence when responding. Probing encouraged students to elaborate their answers, whereas redirecting promoted broader classroom participation by involving multiple students in the discussion. These findings support Wangru (2016), who argues that effective questioning strategies facilitate students' cognitive engagement and improve classroom interaction. The implementation of these strategies is also consistent with previous empirical studies. Aimah and Purwanto (2021) reported that probing questions effectively promote students' critical literacy by encouraging

them to justify and elaborate their ideas. Similarly, Fikri (2021) found that redirecting questions increased classroom participation by ensuring that learning opportunities were distributed more equally among students. The consistency between the present findings and previous studies indicates that strategic questioning not only facilitates comprehension but also creates a more interactive learning environment. Overall, the findings suggest that effective teacher questioning depends not only on the selection of question types but also on the strategies used to deliver them. The integration of procedural and convergent questions with prompting, probing, repeating, and redirecting strategies successfully supported students' participation and comprehension during classroom interaction. Nevertheless, increasing the use of divergent questions may further promote critical thinking and active learning, thereby aligning classroom practice more closely with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study investigated the types of questions and questioning strategies used by an English teacher during the teaching and learning process at SMPN 1 Seririt. The findings revealed that the teacher employed all three question types proposed by Richards and Lockhart (1996), namely procedural, convergent, and divergent questions, with convergent questions being the most frequently used. This indicates that the teacher primarily emphasized checking students' comprehension and reinforcing their understanding of the lesson content. In addition, the teacher implemented four questioning strategies—prompting, probing, repeating, and redirecting—to facilitate classroom interaction, guide students' responses, and support learning. These findings suggest that questioning functions not only as a tool for assessing students' understanding but also as an instructional strategy that promotes participation and maintains effective classroom communication. However, because this study was conducted with a single English teacher in one junior high school, the findings should be interpreted within this specific context and should not be generalized to other educational settings without further investigation.

Based on these findings, English teachers are encouraged to balance the use of convergent and divergent questions in order to provide greater opportunities for students to develop higher-order thinking skills while maintaining effective classroom interaction. Strategic implementation of questioning techniques, particularly probing and redirecting, may further support the student-centered learning principles promoted by the Merdeka Curriculum. Future studies are recommended to involve a larger number of participants, different educational levels, or multiple schools to obtain broader perspectives on teachers' questioning

practices. Further research may also examine the relationship between questioning strategies and students' critical thinking, classroom engagement, or learning achievement to provide more comprehensive evidence regarding the effectiveness of teacher questioning in English language classrooms.

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