

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The demand for providing communicative competence requires language teachers to formulate and manage learning atmosphere that enables the learners to achieve desired objectives. Communicative learning will result from an interactive classroom in which the teacher and learners are actively involved in interaction. Malamah-Thomas (1987 cf. Shomoossi 2004) recommends that interaction will help the learners to attain better learning and give opportunities to rehearse their competence. In attempt to initiate and sustain interaction in classroom, teachers employ questioning behavior which is manifested in types of question and strategies of questioning.

Teacher's question is an effective agent of instruction. Teachers ask questions to direct their learners in the negotiation of meaning through which the learners make use of their background knowledge to comprehend the lesson. As the result, learners can directly be engaged in the learning process. Furthermore, teacher's question can give more space of learning (Tsui et al., 2004) in regard that it challenges the learners to be critical in their responses by applying their background knowledge to explore possible answers. Additionally, Van Lier (1988 cf. Shomoossi 2004 & Nunan 1989) asserts that teachers basically design their questions to produce learner language. It is due to the fact that questions oblige the learners to give their responses (Ellis, 1992 cf. Heaton et al., 2003). Moreover,

practice opportunities are offered along the distribution of the questions in that the learners are given chances to perform their language competence, thereby the learners can shape their learning experience in real schemata through the practice opportunities so that the language learning will be more effective.

Many studies reveal the influence of display and referential questions on the length and complexity of learner's language. It is found that referential question results in longer and more extensive response than display one, as display question merely requires closed responses (Long & Crookes, 1986; Brock, 1986). Conversely, Wu (1993) postulates that display-closed questions yield longer responses than referential-open questions do. His findings are supported by Shomoossi (2004) who reveals that not all referential questions create more interaction in the classroom when he observed forty reading comprehension classes in Tehran Universities. The findings draw common patterns of interaction in western and eastern classrooms and significant roles of cultural factors that lead to the distinctive role of referential and display question in eliciting learner's response.

Beside types of teacher's question, teachers' strategies in delivering their questioning are also worth investigating. Shomoossi's qualitative-quantitative study (2004) reveals that teacher's questioning strategies such as paraphrasing and repeating as well as the turn allocation and talk initiation are crucial in promoting learner language production. Chaudron (1988: 172) insists that questioning strategies is a means of eliciting more or less learner speech. Poor questioning strategies might fall into ineffective language learning as they fail to direct the

learners into the negotiation of meaning as well as elicit the learner language production.

It is apparent that teachers mostly implement questioning behavior for their teaching method. Gall (1970 cf. Heaton et al. 2003) stated that teacher's questions basically underlie most methods of classroom teaching. Furthermore, Suherdi (1994) investigated teacher language in classroom and concluded that teachers tend to benefit questioning behavior for delivering teaching materials. Questioning is presumably the easiest method for teachers. Unfortunately, some teachers could be unaware of the significance of their questioning behavior. Teacher might deliver questions without realizing that their questions will affect on learners' comprehension or most importantly encourage learner language production. Widiyanto and Yumarnamto (2005) reported that Indonesian teachers often fail to stimulate learner language production. It is observed from the fact that the classrooms tend to be quiet and the learners are lack of motivation to speak.

Given to the interesting phenomena of the teacher's question, the present study investigates the teacher's questioning behavior—the types of teacher's question and teacher's questioning strategies—in an EFL classroom. Besides, it attempts to reveal the characteristics of learner language production as the response of the teacher's questions.

1.2. Formulation of the Problem

The present study was conducted to accomplish the following questions.

1. What types of question does the teacher use?
2. What questioning strategies does the teacher employ?
3. How do the learners respond to the teacher's questions, reflected on learners' language production?

1.3. Aims of the Study

Reviewing the underlying problems, this study aims at accomplishing the following points.

1. to identify types of teacher's questions in classroom based on Bloom's taxonomy.
2. to investigate teacher's questioning strategies in the classroom.
3. to reveal learners' responses toward the teacher's questions in terms of verbal language production.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

Reviewing the advantages of teacher's questioning behavior, particularly the types and strategy of teacher's question, the present study is an effort to provide insights concerning formulating good teacher's questioning behavior. It is expected that teachers are able to perform systematic questioning in their classroom by taking into account of what types and strategies of teacher's question considered more effective for creating meaningful learning. Knowledgeable, skillful teachers will

be aware of inappropriate questioning behavior that might yield the failure in promoting effective language learning.

In addition, academicians—such as supervisors and principals—can also take benefit from this study as to give more emphasis on the functions of teachers' questioning behavior in increasing the quality of language learning, particularly in EFL classrooms. Their contribution in raising teachers' awareness is very crucial in developing teachers' competence.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

Teacher's questioning behavior of an English teacher in SMPN 15 Bandung was analyzed and the responses of her first-year learners in four sessions of English lesson in a classroom were examined. The analysis of learners' responses was interrelated to types of teacher's question in order to figure out the contribution of types of teacher's questions on learners' language production. The data were consequently culled from an observation by means of audio-taping. The transcripts of these sessions subsequently become the main data of this study.

Meanwhile, interview was also employed to support the interpretation of the findings. The interview was only focused on the teacher as to figure out her rationales of applying questioning strategies and clarifying salient behaviors.

In relation to the procedures of analysis that rely on Suherdi's framework (2007), the present study merely concerns to identify exchanges in the classroom interaction without further analysis of moves. It is due to the effort of suiting the procedures with the objectives of the study.

1.6. Method of Investigation

To accomplish the aims of this study, a careful determination of what methods and participants should be taken into account. Therefore, the subsequent sections will elaborate the design of the study, site and participant, and methods of data collection.

1.6.1 The Design of the Study

The present study employs qualitative approach and descriptive method, as the aims of the study is to reveal the phenomena beyond the process of language teaching and learning. Brumfit and Mitchell (1990: 11) propose that descriptive study can help to unfold what is really going on classroom within which the current practice of how learners do learn, how teachers do teach, and what classrooms do look like, at a particular moment in a particular place can be revealed. Therefore, descriptive method is appropriate for this study as it attempts to investigate the phenomena of teacher's questions in an EFL classroom and its effect on learner language production in natural classroom setting.

1.6.2. Site and Participant

This study was conducted in SMPN 15 Bandung at the second semester. Data were obtained from four sessions of English lesson in an EFL classroom. An English teacher and her first-year learners in a classroom involved in this study as the participants who were selected purposively.

1.6.3. Data Collection

This study employs multiple methods in order to assemble the required data for attaining the aims of the study which comprise of observation, field-notes, and

interview. Observation enables the investigator to gain data from natural setting. Thus, the phenomena of teacher's questioning behavior can be unwrapped. It was conducted via audio-taping in order to figure out verbal interaction in the classroom. However, such recording method is unable to capture non-verbal behaviors that are needed to describe the actual, natural classroom interaction. To counter this problem, field-notes were carried out during classroom observations along with the audio-recording. Furthermore, interview with the teacher is the other method of collecting data. It is supportive to find out the teacher's rationales for applying the questioning strategies in classroom and to clarify some salient behaviors.

The procedures of data collecting are therefore elaborated as follow.

1. Observing classroom interaction by utilizing audio-recording.
2. Transcribing and coding the excerpt of data.
3. Interviewing the teacher to reveal the rationales of employing the questioning behavior and clarifying some salient behaviors.
4. Analyzing and drawing conclusion.

1.7. Data Analysis

The analysis took its consideration on classroom discourse with the focus on teacher talk and learner talk. Suherdi's framework of classroom discourse analysis (2007) was utilized to identify each exchange in the lesson. His framework of analyzing learners' language was also benefited to reveal the contribution of teacher's questions to the production of learners' language.

Identifying types of teacher's questions occupied Bloom's taxonomy of teacher questions which provides six categories of cognitive questions, ranging from display to referential questions. On the other hand, the analysis of questioning strategies relied on those proposed by Chaudron (1988), Wu (1993), Anwar (2000), and Tsui et al. (2004).

1.8. Clarification of Key Terms

Some terms require elaboration for highlighting the focus of the present study. Below are some terms that need to be clarified.

1. *Teacher's Question*

Teacher's question is teacher's basic device for instructional goals so as to focus on learners' attention, boost learner language production, and assess learners' mastery upon the lesson. (Chaudron, 1988: 126)

2. *Teacher's Questioning Behavior*

Teacher's questioning behavior concerns the way a teacher distributes her questions in attempt to promote learner language production and evaluate learners' mastery toward the content of lesson which is occupied by the types of question and the questioning strategies. (Chaudron, 1988:126)

3. *Bloom's Teacher Question*

Six categories of teacher questions that derive from Bloom's taxonomy and serve functions in stimulating cognitive domain, i.e. knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

4. *Teacher's Questioning Strategies*

Strategies utilized by the teacher to elicit verbal responses from the learners (Wu, 1993) which are manifested in modification of question.

5. *Learners' Responses to the Teacher's Questions*

Learners' verbal language as the responses toward the teacher's questions.

1.9. Organization of the Paper

Following is the organization of the paper of this study with the elaborations of each chapter.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the study, formulation of the problem, aims of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study, method of investigation, data analysis, and clarification of terms.

CHAPTER II THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This chapter provides the underlying theories and concepts for the investigation, including some findings of previous related researches that are supportive for this study.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter concerns the methodological framework in carrying out this study, comprising of design of the study, subject of the study, access to the site, data collecting methods, data analysis method, and constructing trustworthiness.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter embraces the findings of the study and the discussion of the findings.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter pays attention on the conclusion of the study and suggestions for further study and pedagogical concern.



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