## academicresearch Journals

Vol. 7(6), pp. 97-107, December 2019 DOI: 10.14662/IJARER2019.160 Copy © right 2019 Author(s) retain the copyright of this article ISSN: 2360-7866 http://www.academicresearchjournals.org/IJARER/Index.htm

International Journal of Academic Research in Education and Review

Full Length Research

# Pedagogic Practices of Questioning: The Case of an EFL Teacher

## Wubante Mekonnen

Debre Markos University, Ethiopia

Accepted 12 December 2019

Questioning is one of the most essential components of teaching. It is an act of initiating reply. It is also one pedagogic tool that joining both teachers and students. This study explored an EFL teacher's questioning practices in EFL context. This was an exploratory qualitative research. The study used observation and interview to collect data. The data obtained from the themes of observation and interview revealed that an EFL teacher posed various questions from nominated lessons with limited strategies. The finding of the study by referring to the teacher's concept map also showed that display type of question was highly emphasized in all observed classrooms. The study also showed that the teacher's questions were mainly focused on checking understanding. In addition, the responses of all types of questions were generally made up of single words or simple phrases. The teacher's major reason for using display questions was that his students' proficiency seems to be the most influencing factors. Although the proficiency level of students may justify the use of display questions, it is necessary to give equal rooms for asking referential questions to involve students in real communication. Eventually, there should be training on questioning practices for the EFL teacher in order to make his questioning lessons interactive.

Keywords: Teacher Questioning, Types of Questions, Practices

**Cite This Article As**: Wubante M (2019). Pedagogic Practices of Questioning: The Case of an EFL Teacher. Inter. J. Acad. Res. Educ. Rev. 7(6): 97-107

#### INTRODUCTION

Questions are one of the most common forms of interactions between teachers and students in classroom teaching. In order to promote effective teaching and learning questions are one of the techniques that are widely used in ESL/EFL classrooms (Ellis, 2008; Borich, 2004; Richards, 2007). If questions are properly handled and employed, they may facilitate interaction and bring about the necessary changes in the students language proficiency. In this regard, English teachers are expected to develop the skills of asking effective questions (Ozcan, 2010). As questioning is believed to be one of the tools of effective teaching (Kelly, 2002; Yang, 2010), it is increasingly important for teachers to use appropriate questions in their actual classrooms.

An ordinary everyday conversation occurring in real life discourse is organized for various social activities such as requests, proposals, apologies, and appreciations through questioning (Ellis, 2008; Godfrey, 2001; Graesser & Olde, 2003; Fakeye, 2007). People's ability to pose questions not only enables them to make wellstructured naturally occurring conversations, but also helps them to accomplish a number of communicative goals in real life situations (Boaler et al, 2004; Ornstein & Lasley, 2000). Presumed as one of the essential components of oral communicative skill, asking questions might be used as an indication for speakers "to mark their turns as complete" (Yule, 2006:128). Therefore, questioning ability appears to be of substantial import to be acquired by those seeking to learn a language.

Teacher questions have been categorized into display and referential questions. Dalton-Puffer (2007: 96) compares the terms referential and display questions and explains that "referential questions are frequently seen as more 'natural' and expected as to generate student answers that are somehow qualitatively better, more authentic, more involved, longer, and more complex. On the same page, he also adds that "answers to display questions contrary to referential questions are seen as notoriously restricted, quite often consisting of one word". As a result, students do not have any role in the production process. Instead, it is most likely that they repeat the information that is already available.

As can be seen, numerous studies (e.g. Ellis, 2008; Godfrey, 2001; Graesser & Olde, 2003; Fakeye, 2007) of teacher questions in English classes have been carried out, mostly of which demonstrate that teachers make adjustments in their questioning techniques when communicating with their students. In these studies, the focus is frequently on the type of questions being asked. In addition, Ethiopian EFL teacher's questioning practices been under-researched. Moreover, has have experienced as a teacher that generally in most classroom instructions, questioning is not encouraged. Most teaching and learning move around the centrality of the textbook and class teacher that discourage students to be engaged in learning tasks from multiple perspectives. Therefore, the area needs further investigation, and this initiated me to conduct a research. This study aimed to explore the issue from a particular perspective. More specifically, the present study tried to explore the EFL teacher's pedagogic practices on questioning. To this end, for the purpose of this study, it was also believed that case study due to its better control and manageability would provide me with an appropriate tool to analytically probe into the teacher's questioning practices. Thus, the current paper is an exploratory case study which intends to explore the questioning practices of an EFL teacher at Debeza Complete Primary School, Debre Markos, Ethiopia.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### The Concept of Teacher Questioning

Imparting knowledge to a new generation of learners is primarily an interactional activity (Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002). Varieties of educational practices in varying societies are implemented through different ways of organizing interaction (Margutti, 2006; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). However, asking questions has been presumed as one of the most conventionally utilized teaching and learning practices in classroom context (Almeida, 2012; Graesser & Olde, 2003; Margutti, 2006). In other words, "questions and answers are the most prevalent instructional tools in a long standing pedagogic tradition in which the centrality of questions in teaching is widely recognized and which is claimed to have come down all the way from Socrates" (Margutti, 2006: 314).

Questioning is a good technique to be used in teaching. A good question is both answerable and challenging. It will inspire analysis, synthesis, interpretation, and critical thinking. One of the most comprehensive definitions for question is suggested by Cotton (2001). He believes that "a question is any sentence, which has an interrogative form or function". Moreover he asserts that "in classroom settings, teacher questions are defined as instructional cues or stimuli that convey to students the content elements to be learned and directions for what they are to do it" (Cotton, 2001:1). It is also approved that there is a significant relationship between teachers' classroom questioning and student outcomes i.e. achievement, retention, thinking skills, and level of participation. Elder and Paul (2007: 36-7) also indicate that "guestions define tasks and express problems and issues. Answers, on the other hand, often signal a full stop in thought." Thus, it is perceived that why students who usually ask questions in the classroom tend to learn and think better than those who are quiet during the most of class time.

### Types of Questions

Teacher questions have been categorized into referential and display types. According to Gibbons (2003) and Mercer (2000), referential questions on classroom dialogues are considered as an important situational variable that help students produce extended turns of talk and provide a means for instructors and learners to co-construct knowledge. This is to mean that referential questions encourage learners to comprehend and produce target language (L2) that reflects their own thinking and provides opportunities for instructors to assist in those processes (Zohardi, 2014; Rahmah, 2018).

Referential questions potentially elicit responses which merit evaluation, synthesis, and/or analysis. Therefore, giving spontaneous response to referential questions is assumed as a clear indicator of higher achievements in second/foreign language learning (McNeil, 2012; Rahmah, 2018). While teachers are encouraged to use such questions frequently in their classrooms, the literature is replete with instances where English language learners are stifled by referential questions (Shomoossi, 2004; Suk-a-nake, Heaton, Chantrupanth, & Rorex, 2003). For example, Suk-a-nake et al (2003) reported language learners' struggles with referential questions. They collected observation and interview data from Thai university students of varying English proficiency levels with the aim to understand student responses to L2 questions. The results of their study unveiled the point that only students at high English proficiency levels could answer all question types. Low proficiency students ran into different troubles when answering the questions calling for opinions, evaluations, or analyses (i.e., referential questions).

On the other hand, display questions are arguably more practical and useful to enhance the language proficiency of learners with more limited capacities (David, 2007; Richards, 2007; Shomoossi, 2004). One striking case in point was David's (2007as cited in Reza and Ali, 2016:143) study on Nigerian secondary schools to investigate the distribution of display and referential questions and to explore their effects on English as Second Language (ESL) class interactions. The results of his study revealed that display questions significantly outnumbered referential ones in such schools, and that language display questions served learners' developments more noticeably than referential ones. In addition, Lee (2006) suggests that display questions can potentially be central resources which language teachers and students use to organize language lessons and produce language pedagogy.

### **Function of Teacher Questions**

Questioning encourages higher order thinking and forms the basis of enquiry (Almeida, 2012; Graesser & Olde, 2003; Margutti, 2006). Good questioning enhances understanding, as it provides opportunities to explain, clarify, probe, make connections and identify problems and issues. Questioning also encourages dialogue between students and teachers and influences student's use of questioning to promote their own learning. Teachers' effective questions also potentially simulate students' thinking and reasoning (Nicholl & Tracey, 2007; Neri de Souza, 2010), keep them involved in the learning process and activity (Margutti, 2006), and challenge their assumptions and prior knowledge.

Teacher questioning in the classroom contributes to an understanding of how questions can inspire students to respond as part of a teaching sequence (Chin, 2006; Yang, 2010; Cohen et al, 2007; Chin & Osborne, 2008). This is why different scholars (e.g. Almeida, 2012; Chin & Osborne, 2008) consider questioning as a worthwhile activity in teaching and consider it a popular method of questioning as the main pedagogical practice in that it engages students in more cognitively active roles. As Chin (2006:1336) puts, teachers' questions stimulate students to "formulate hypotheses, predict outcomes, brainstorm ideas. generate explanations, make inferences and conclusions, as well as to self-evaluate and reflect on their own thinking." It can be hypothesized

that by questioning, the teacher provides not only conceptual but also linguistic scaffolding. In addition, teachers' questions that elicit information about students' understanding can also be considered as an essential tool for formative assessment.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In this study, the following research questions were addressed:

- 1. How is questioning practiced by an EFL teacher?
- 2. What types of questions are employed by an EFL teacher?
- 3. What functions of teacher's questions are in the teacher's actual classroom?
- 4. What is the teacher's philosophy about questioning?

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Research Design**

The present study was qualitative and used exploratory approach. This was because this study intended to explore an EFL teacher's questioning practices in EFL context.

### Participant

The participant of this study was one EFL teacher at Debeza Complete Elementary School, in Debre Markos, Ethiopia. The sample teacher was selected on the following criteria. One major reason was that the teacher is one of the best experienced in teaching English for more than 20 years. The other reason for choosing that teacher was taking different kinds of trainings like ELIP, CPD and other short trainings on how to teach English that helped him to teach general English and other language items for Grade 8. In addition, the selected teacher (1 male) was qualified in Diploma and he will receive his BED (Bachelor Degree in Education) in one of governmental universities in Ethiopia in the coming year.

#### **Research Setting**

This study was conducted in the second semester of 2019 academic year at Debeza Complete Primary School, Debre Markos, Ethiopia. The course "English for Ethiopia" incorporates the four language skills, speaking, listening, writing, and reading. It is offered every day (from Monday to Friday). Vocabulary and grammar are also integrated in the lessons. This study focused on four lessons (paragraph writing, grammar practice, reading

and listening) that are currently taught by the participant teacher.

#### **Research Procedures**

The participant teacher in the study was asked to participate in a range of observation and interviews aimed at documenting and understanding towards his questioning practices. In conversations with the participant I explained that the purpose of the study was to explore the questioning practices employed by him. He was also asked to suggest some lessons that he considered representative of his questions he employ on his actual classroom, and he was asked his willingness to have his classes observed. For this, the participant in the study agreed to nominate the four lessons that he considered representative (paragraph writing, Grammar practice, Reading and Listening). The teacher was observed four times in a two week period from April 30/2019-May13/2019 using four nominated lessons (paragraph writing, grammar practice, reading and listening) out of a number of tasks provided throughout the semester. After each observation, the teacher was interviewed about the lesson why and how he employed the questions in his actual classroom. Moreover, his questioning philosophies had a high value in order to triangulate the obtained data with the observed nominated lessons.

### **Data Collection**

Two research tools were used to collect data for this study: classroom observation and interview. The classroom observation was conducted in order to explore the questioning practices of an EFL teacher on the basis of the designed checklists (See appendices A &B) relating with his philosophies while employing those questions in his actual classrooms. In addition, the indepth interview was carried out before and after the classroom observation in order to triangulate the obtained data.

### Data Analysis

Having reviewed the literature pertaining to teacher questioning applied in actual EFL classroom context, I organized the observation data about the lessons on the basis of EFL teacher's concept map in asking questions from his various nominated lessons. The lessons (paragraph writing, Grammar practice, Reading and Listening) from Grade 8 Student's Book on pages 171-185 were nominated by the teacher. The interview data from him was used to add some insight into this study and provide further analysis.

Since the unstructured interview questions were based on the teacher's observed classroom instructions, they were used to prompt the teacher for further discussion about his questioning while teaching various lessons (paragraph writing, grammar practice, reading and listening) in his actual classrooms. I also asked him why and how he employed various questions while analyzing the data being observed. Accordingly, the observation results obtained from nominated lessons were organized, categorized and analyzed thematically in this study. The results of transcription of the unstructured interviews were subsequently triangulated and interpreted to draw conclusions. On the whole, the data obtained from observations of the selected lessons and the results of teachers' interviews were analyzed to understand and accurately represent the teacher's experiences as well as his interpretations of those experiences in a particular settina.

## RESULTS

The main purpose of this study was to explore the questioning practices of an EFL teacher in his actual classrooms. In order to achieve this objective, one EFL teacher's questioning practices were observed four times from April 30/2019-May13/2019 at Debeza Complete Primary School, in Debre Markos Town, Ethiopia. In addition, unstructured interview was used for collecting data, and the analysis of the data from these different sources provided the relevant evidences for this research. For this, all observations took place in the working days of the school (Monday-Friday in the morning session). The length of one observation session took 40 minutes. The selected EFL teacher was observed four times individually in his working times (in the morning session) on separated days. In addition, the observed EFL teacher was also interviewed on his various questioning practices in his actual teaching. The result of the interview aimed at providing additional insight on what, why, and how he did things while practicing questioning on nominated lessons.

Before starting my observation, I asked the teacher whether he had any of plans for asking various questions in his actual classroom or not. He responded it positively in that he had plans in order to ask various types of questions in his EFL classes. In order to make the categorization of questions employed by an EFL teacher as explicit as possible, a conceptual map was adapted to provide the whole view (See figure 1). In this map, I displayed the data by presenting two-level categories on the basis of the interview. The first level is the categories about the teacher's concept on his questioning practices. These three categories are named as: types of teacher questions, functions of teacher questions, and modification techniques. The second level categories are those subcategories under each of them, helping to support the first level categories.



#### Theme 1: Data from Classroom Observation

The following table 1 summarizes the questions asked by an EFL teacher in his actual classroom on nominated lessons.

The results of the classroom observation showed that most students in the teacher's classroom seemed more challenged for answering questions in all nominated lessons. Even if the teacher's questions can be responded in a single word, phrase or simple sentence, the students in all observed classrooms were full of silence. I asked the teacher why this situation happened in his observed classrooms. He explained:

Many students in my reading classes were unable to answer questions that require phrases or simple sentences. It is also true that my students' seemed more challenged in their grammar practice class. The same challenges also occurred in giving answers for my questions in paragraph writing and listening classes. This is true in that students have poor backgrounds in generating ideas for answering any of questions. The same problem also appeared in listening in that students could not comprehend some or all parts of the information. From these all situations, I have learnt asking question is not an easy task in that it requires much efforts and hard work. In general, my students are interested on those questions that can be answered shortly (multiple choices, yes/no...). I think such questions may not require any of modification and too much time.

#### **Theme 2: Classifying Questions**

The questions posed by an EFL teacher on his nominated lessons were classified into display and referential on the basis of the response they initiate as follows.

As shown in table 2, the questions posed by an EFL teacher on nominated lessons were almost display type. This implies that the teacher already achieves his objective using such questions. Moreover, the

observation result indicated in table 2 also revealed that students' experiences in answering the questions posed by the teacher in all nominated lessons were limited. This could be one possible reason why the teacher was highly emphasizing on display type of questions.

In addition, I also asked the teacher about his question types. As I observed the teacher's classrooms, he almost used display types of questions while asking questions to his students. The questions in his classes can be answered in a word or phrase. I think such questions alone may not invite students for further oral language production. I asked him to say something on such situation, and he replied:

I am interested in asking display types of questions. The reason is that such question requires short answers that can be easily understood by students in relation to their level and background experience. He also noted that if I asked my students referential questions, they would prefer to keep silent, or switch to their mother tongue instead of trying to speak in English. That is why I am personally interested in asking questions that require short recalls. Asking display types of questions in my classrooms also helps me to encourage my students to notice the sense of the question in a short time. As a result, rather than asking questions that require much time to be answered, it is better to practice display types because such question is related with the level and background experiences of my students. In short, asking a display question makes me to become successful in the overall practices of questioning.

#### Theme 3: Function of Teacher Questions

As depicted in tables 1 & 2, it was found that nearly each of the questions that the teacher asked in class served a certain function. Four functions were found: to check learners' understanding; to review the content taught before introducing new topics; to elicit information; to control the classroom. For example, S1, What do you know about it? (to check learners' understanding). A story is an event/incident by someone. (to review the

lable	Table 1: Questions through Observation					
No.	Nominated Lessons	Sample Questions and Responses				
		T: Today I am going to ask you to write a biography about Mamo Woldie. Take out your exercise				
		book and write the following facts on your exercise books:				
		The year he was born.				
		The game he won.				
		The year he moved to Addis Ababa.				
		The year he died.				
		T: Some time later, he asked further questions as follows:				
	<b>D</b>	<b>T</b> : Write a paragraph about Mamo Woldie based on the given facts. Then, he gave about 10 minutes.				
1	Paragraph	T: Continues his question, and ask these questions.				
	Writing	1. Who can read the written paragraph?				
		2. Mamo Woldie				
		The teacher then wanted his students to read their developed paragraphs. Their responses were <b>silence</b> . Finally, the teacher summarizes his lesson by writing the paragraph on the blackboard.				
		<b>T:</b> Begins his class by greeting, and he introduced his daily lesson by saying today's lesson to be				
		about grammar practice. It focuses on making compound sentences from the given pairs of ideas.				
		Look the examples on your textbook on page 185, and make other compound sentences on the				
		basis of the example using who, whose and which.				
		e.g. Jimma is far from Addis Ababa. It is a regional town.				
		<b>Compound:</b> Jimma, which is a regional town, is far from Addis Ababa.				
		T: Do the following in the same way.				
	Grammar	1. Ethiopia is in the horn of Africa. It is a coffee producing country.				
2	Practice	2. The children are hard-working. They are supported by their teacher.				
	Thathou	<b>T</b> : After some time he tried to see the students' answers for the given questions.				
		<b>SS:</b> Most students copied all questions, but still without responses.				
		T: In his reading lesson, the teacher did the following before moving to the reading lesson directly:				
		He told to students to sit in groups of 3 or 4.				
		He also told them to take out the reading lesson on page 182.				
		He again told them to be ready for answering the following questions before starting the main				
		reading.				
		e.g. 1. How many stories do you know?				
		2. Which story was an interesting one to you?				
		3. What makes you to be interested on that story? After some times, he listened to some answers from the students, and he directly moved to the main				
		reading. The title of the reading was "The Hare and the Monkey". Then, he told students to read the				
		passage by giving some minutes. As soon as the students finished their reading, he asked them the				
		following questions.				
		1. What trick did Monkey play on Guinea-pea?				
	De e dire ::	2. Why did Guinea-pea run away?				
3	Reading	<b>T</b> : Now, it is time to you to answer questions 1 and 2.				
		T: I s there anyone who can answer question 1?				
		S1: (No response)				
		<b>S2</b> : (No response)				
		S4: I think (Attempting)				

Table 1: Questions through Observation

#### Table 1: Continues

		<b>T</b> : Begins his class by greeting, and told his students to take out their exercise books, and to look the
		listening activity on page 178. He then told to students by saying today's lesson is listening on the
		topic "A King and a Queen". He said before reading the listening text to you, let me ask you the
		following questions:
		1. What do you know about a king?
		2. What things he does/did?
		3. Do you know what a <b>Queen</b> means?
		Sometime later, the teacher encourages students to have more discussions in groups for 5 minutes
		on the 3 questions above. Then, the teacher read the listening text to students two times, and he
		asked them questions individually as follows:
		T: Can you say one thing from the previous listening?
		S1: (No response)
4	Listening	S2: (No response)
		<b>S3:</b> Uh (Silence)
		T: Who can tell me one thing from the previous listening?
		S6: I listened from the text (Attempting)

Note: T = Teacher, S = Student, S1 = First Student ...

No.	Lessons	Questions	Question Type	
				R
		Have you developed a paragraph about Mamo Woldie?	✓	
1	Paragraph	Can you read your paragraph?	✓	
	Writing	Do you know Mamo Woldie?	$\checkmark$	
	Witting	What things he did?		$\checkmark$
		Make compound sentences from the given pairs of ideas.	$\checkmark$	
		What is the compound sentence?	✓	
2	Grammar Practice	Your compound sentence is	✓	
2		Can you write one compound sentence?	$\checkmark$	
		Where is your compound sentence?	$\checkmark$	
		What trick did Monkey play on Guinea-pea?	$\checkmark$	
		Why did Guinea-pea run away?		✓
	Reading	How many stories do you know?	$\checkmark$	
3		Which story was an interesting one to you?	$\checkmark$	
		What makes you to be interested on that story?		$\checkmark$
		What do you know about a king?		$\checkmark$
		What things the King does/did?		✓
		Do you know what a <b>Queen</b> means?	✓	
4	Listening	Can you say one thing from the previous listening?	✓	
		What is the listening text about?		$\checkmark$

## Table 2: Types of Questions

Note: D= Display, R= Referential

content taught before introducing new topics). What's this you can see? (1) (to elicit information). What are you doing there? (to control the classroom). It is possible to say that questions such as "what do you know? Is it right? What is it? ..." are asked in the classroom for checking the students' understanding. The number of questions that invite students for further thinking and

reasoning skills was limited. I also asked the teacher why he focused mostly on questions that help him to check the students' understanding on nominated lessons. He said:

There is no any opportunity for my students in order to practice English outside the classroom. As to me, it is better to ask them questions that require short responses. In addition, the students' limited language proficiency also blocked me not to go beyond by asking them tougher questions. That is why I limit myself to ask questions in order to check the students' understanding. Such questions also help me to cover the content of the lesson on time.

### DISCUSSION

The finding of this study revealed that questioning is one of the most important pedagogic tools for joining the teacher and students. The teacher in his actual classroom also used different types of questions on all nominated lessons (writing, reading, grammar, and listening). This finding is directly related with Almeida (2012), Graesser & Olde (2003), and Margutti 's (2006) ideas in that asking questions has been presumed as one of the most conventionally utilized teaching and learning practices in classroom. In other words, questions and answers are the most prevalent instructional tools in a long standing pedagogic tradition in which the centrality of questions in teaching is widely recognized.

The finding of the current study from observed classrooms revealed that questions posed by an EFL teacher in his actual classroom are display types that are directed from nominated lessons. This finding is directly related with David (2007), Richards (2007), and Shomoossi's (2004) ideas in that they stated display questions are arguably more practical and useful to enhance the language proficiency of learners with more limited capacities. In addition, this result is similar with David's (2007as cited in Reza and Ali, 2016:143) study on Nigerian secondary schools that revealed display questions significantly outnumbered referential ones, and that display questions more noticeably than referential ones.

The result of this study also showed that asking display type questions is highly emphasized by the classroom teacher. The teacher's major reason for using display questions was that his students' proficiency seems to be the most influencing factors. In addition, as I understood from the interview, the proficiency level of students may justify the use of display questions. This finding is related with Lee's (2006) work suggesting that display questions can potentially be central resources which language teachers and students use to organize language lessons and produce language pedagogy. In contrast, the studies by Gibbons (2003); Shomoossi (2004); Suk-a-nake, Heaton, Chantrupanth, Rorex (2003); and McNeil (2012) showed that giving spontaneous response to referential questions is assumed as a clear indicator of higher achievements in second/foreign language learning.

In contrary to the finding of the current study, there are scholars who advocated the superiority of referential question types over display types of questions. For

example, Boyd & Rubin (2002) and Mercer (2000) advocated that referential questions as an important situational variable that help students produce extended turns of talk and provide a means for instructors and learners to co-construct knowledge. This implies that referential questions encourage learners to comprehend and produce target language (L2) that reflects their own thinking and provides opportunities for instructors to assist in those processes. Known as higher level referential questions potentially questions, elicit responses which merit evaluation, synthesis, and/or analysis.

The results of the study through the overall themes also showed that teacher question may serve various functions such as checking for understanding, focusing attention, exerting disciplinary control, getting feedback and most important of all, encouraging students to participate. This is why different scholars (Yang, 2010 & Zohardi, 2014) regard questioning as a worthwhile activity in teaching and consider it a popular method of involving students in a lesson and a tool for facilitating student participation.

Questioning encourages higher order thinking and forms the basis of enquiry (Almeida, 2012; Graesser & Olde, 2003; Margutti, 2006). Good questioning enhances understanding, as it provides opportunities to explain, clarify, probe, make connections and identify problems and issues. Questioning also encourages dialogue between students and teachers and influences student's use of questioning to promote their own learning. However, the results of the teacher's practices on his actual questioning classroom showed that all types of questions (display and referential) could not provide opportunities to students in order to explain, clarify, probe, make connections and identify problems and issues.

In general, the questions posed by the teacher in all observed classrooms seemed unfair in that very small number of students were participated in giving answers. However, posing good questions require one's ability not only for making well-structured naturally occurring conversations, but also helps the teacher for accomplishing a number of communicative goals in real life situations (Yule, 2006).

### CONCLUSION

The study focused on teacher's questioning practices in an EFL classroom. Through this exploratory case study, it was found out that display questions outnumbered referential questions. Moreover, the responses of all types of questions were generally made up of single words or simple phrases. The teacher also used limited strategies in modifying and restructuring questions on all nominated lessons. The teacher's major reason for his limitations was that his students' proficiency seems to be the most influencing factors. Although the proficiency level of students may justify the use of display questions and limited strategies in asking questions, the teacher should give equal rooms for asking referential questions to involve students in real communication. This may need his awareness of different techniques in order to employ both display and referential questions in the appropriate context.

### LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The classroom observation was not videoed. If it was videoed, it could be possible to show what was really happening in the teacher's actual classroom particularly on his questioning practices. The limitation came from ethical related issue. Therefore, in order to collect data from observation, I took notes on the basis of my question profile.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is a pleasure to express sincere thanks to Dawit Amogne, Associate Professor, whose professional guidance is of the very highest quality and who has notably influenced my professional endeavor. I will always indebted for his patience, guidance, support, and wealth of knowledge which he has shared me throughout the study.

## REFERENCES

- Almeida, A. P. (2012). Can I Ask a Question? The Importance of Classroom Questioning. Social and Behavioral Sciences, 31-63.
- Boaler, J. & Brodie, K. (2004). The Importance, Nature, and Impact of Teacher Questions. Canada: Toronto.
- Borich, D. G. (2004). Effective Teaching Methods (5th ed.).Texas: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). Teaching by Principles: NY: Pearson Education.
- Brown, G.. & Wragg, E. C. (2001). Questioning in the Primary Schools. London: Rutledge: Falmer.
- Chin, C. (2006). Classroom Interaction in Science: Teacher Questioning and Feedback to Students' Responses. International Journal of Science Education, 28 (11).
- Chin, C., & Osborne, J. (2008). Students' Questions: A Potential Resource for Teaching and Learning Science. Studies in Science Education, 44, 1-39.
- Cotton, K. (2001). Classroom Questioning. North West Regional Educational Laboratory (Online), available
- at: http://www.nrwel.org/scpd/sirs/3/cu5.html.

- Dalton-Puffer, C. (2007). Discourse in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) Classrooms. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- David, F. (2007). Teacher Questioning Behavior and ESL Classroom Interaction. Humanity and Social Sciences Journal, 2 (2), 127-131.
- Ellis, R. (2008). The Study of Second Language Acquisition (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fakeye, D. (2007). Teachers' Questioning Behaviors and ESL Classroom Interaction Pattern. Humanities and Social Sciences Journal. 2 (2), 127-131
- Gibbons, P. (2003). Mediating Language Learning, TESOL Quarterly, 37(2): 247-273.
- Godfrey, K. A. (2001). Teacher Questioning Techniques, Student Responses and Critical Thinking. Master's Thesis. Retrieved May 2019 from <u>http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED459609</u>.
- Graesser, A., & Olde, C. (2003). How Does One Know whether a Person Understands a Device? Journal of Educational Psychology, 95, 524-536.
- Kerry, T. (2002). Explaining and Questioning. London: Nelson Thornes.
- Kumpulainen, K., & Wray, D. (2002). Classroom Interaction and Social Learning. New Jersey: Rutledge.
- Lee, Y. (2008). Yes-No Questions in the Third-turn Position: Pedagogical Discourse Processes. 45, 237-262.
- Majid, F. & Mehrdad, R. (2012). A Case Study of an EFL Teacher's Type of Questions: Available on Online at <u>www.sciencedirect.com</u>.
- Margutti, P. (2006). Are You Human Beings? Order and Knowledge Construction through Questioning in Primary Classroom Interaction. Linguistics and Education, 17, 313-346.
- Martin, N. (2003). Questioning Styles. Mathematics Teaching, 184, 18-19.
- McNeil, L. (2012). Using Talk to Scaffold Referential Questions for English Language Learners. Teaching and Teacher Education, 28 (3), 396-404.
- Mercer, N. (2000).Words and Minds: How We Use Language to Think Together. London: Rutledge.
- Mercer, N., & Littleton, K. (2007). Dialogue and the Development of Children's Thinking: A Sociocultural Approach. London: Rutledge.
- Minstry of Education. (2003). English for Ethiopia: Student Textbook (Grade 8): MA Publishers Ltd.
- Minstry of Education. (2003). English for Ethiopia: Grade 8 Teacher Guide: MA Publishers Ltd.
- Nicholl, H. M., & Tracey, C. (2007). Questioning: A Tool in the Nurse Educator's Kit. Nurse Education in Practice, 7 (5), 285-292.
- Ornstein, A. C., & Lasley, T. J. (2000). Strategies for Effective Teaching. Boston, USA: McGraw Hill.
- Ozcan, S. (2010). The Effect of Asking Referential Questions on the Participation and Oral Production of Lower Level Language Learners in Reading Classes.

Unpublished MA Thesis. Middle East Technical University.

- Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2007). Critical Thinking: The Art of Socratic Questioning, Part I. Journal of Developmental Education; Pro Quest Education Journals, 31(1), 36-37
- Reza, R. & Ali, S. (2016). Instructors' and Learners' Questioning. The Journal of Teaching Language Skills. Yasouj University.
- Rahman, Z. (2018). An Analysis of Teacher's Display Questions and Referential Question. Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Jambi University.
- Richards, J.C. (2007). From Reader to Reading Teacher: Issues and Strategies for Second Language Classrooms. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Shomossi, N. (2004). The Effects of Teachers' Questioning Behavior on EFL Classroom Interaction: A Classroom Research Study. The Reading Matrix 4 (2).
- Suk-a-nake, R., Heaton, S. L., Chantrupanth, D., & Rorex, P. D. (2003). Thai University EFL Learners' Oral Responses to Various Spoken Question Types. Second Language Learning and Teaching, 12, 19-31.
- Willis, D., & Willis, J. (2007). Doing Task-based Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Yang, C. (2010). Teacher Questions in Second Language Classrooms: An Investigation of Three Case Studies. Asian EFL Journal, 12 (1), 181-201.
- Yule, G. (2006). The Study of Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zohrabi, M. et al. (2014). Teachers' Use of Display vs. Referential Questions. Educational Journal, V.3, No.2.

## Appendices

## **Appendix A: Question Profile**

• The main purpose of this observation checklist is to collect data for questions posed by an EFL teacher and the related answers given by students on the nominated lessons.

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Duration: \_\_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Questions and Students' Responses					
No.	Lessons	April 28, 2019	May 6, 2019	May 10, 2019	May 13, 2019
1	Paragraph Writing				
2	Grammar Practice				
3	Reading				
4	Listening				

### **Appendix B: Types of Questions**

• The purpose of this checklist is to classify questions collected from the classroom observation.

No.	Lessons	Questions	Type of Question	
			Display	Referential
1	Paragraph			
	Writing			
2	Grammar			
	Practice			
3	Reading			
4	Listening			