

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Questioning is one of the most regularly employed teaching strategies.¹ It is used by many teachers during their teaching process. They consider that it is an effective tool to build students' understanding and to stimulate them to participate in learning. Thus, almost all teachers ask questions in the class every day to individual students, to small groups, and to the whole class.

Studies relating to EFL (English as Foreign Language) teaching have pointed out the need for teachers' questioning. As Tsui states that in EFL classroom, teachers spend two thirds of the classroom time for lecturing.² They do most of the talking whilst students remain silent. However, the most important factor within any effective language teaching-learning is that students are enabled to do most of the talking.³ It means that students' talking time (STT) should be more dominant than teachers' talking time (TTT). It can be reached when the students participate actively during the lesson. Ozcan states that students' participation can be provoked if the students are productive rather than

¹ Mkandawire Chidongo, Dissertation: *“Teachers’ Questioning Techniques in Mathematics at Grade 11 Level: The Case of Four Selected Secondary Schools in Petauke District”* (Lusaka: The University Of Zambia, 2013), 18.

² Kifle Azerefegn, Thesis: *“A Study on the Types of Teacher Questions and Questioning Strategies”* (Ethiopia: Addis Ababa University Institute of Language Studies, 2008), 7.

³ Seda Ozcan, Thesis: *“The Effects of Asking Referential Questions on the Participation and Oral Production of Lower Level Language Learners in Reading Classes”* (Middle East: Middle East Technical University, 2010), 1.

purely receptive.⁴ Therefore, one popular strategy of facilitating students' participation used by many language teachers is questioning.

Besides, "In foreign language classrooms, where learners often do not have a great number of tools, your questions provide necessary stepping stones to communication".⁵ It can be inferred that in EFL classes, especially in Indonesia, where the target language is seldom used outside the classroom, questioning can be considered as the most powerful device to stimulate students to communicate. Therefore, when the students never speak English, teachers' question can be used to lead, to extend, and to control communication in order to enhance students' exposure to the target language. Furthermore, employing questions in language classrooms also help teachers, to check what students' know and can do, to gain students' attention to the task, to review and revise on what have been learned, and to help in managing classroom.⁶

According to my preliminary research in a microteaching class, ten from twelve pre-service teachers still faced problems in questioning. The most common problem is encouraging classroom participation. Only five percents from the total students in the class were actively involved in answering teachers' questions. While, others were reluctant to made response, even they understand

⁴ Seda Ozcan, Thesis: "*The Effects of Asking Referential Questions on the Participation and Oral Production of Lower Level Language Learners in Reading Classes*" (Middle East: Middle East Technical University, 2010), 1.

⁵ Nunan D, *Language Teaching Methodology: A Text book for Teachers* (Cambridge: Prentice Hall, 1991), 192.

⁶ Brown and Edmondson R, *Classroom Teaching Skills* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 137.

the question, know the answer, and are able to produce the answer. The students prefer to sit quietly and shyly. They are frequently unresponsive and avoid interacting with their teacher. Moreover, students fear to produce words in an activity that demands them to speak up. However, students should be encouraged to use the target language because students' communicative competence is improved through practicing the language for communication.⁷ Actually, the students possibly practice to use the target language, but they are afraid to speak up, so they tend to be quiet. The reason why they do not response their teachers' question is not only because they do not understand the lesson nor know the answer, but also it might be caused by the teachers who still do not master or even not know the skill in questioning.

Pre-service teachers' weaknesses in questioning which are often easily observed in the classrooms are choosing inappropriate technique in designing questions, such as asking too much recall fact that do not engage students in higher-level thinking, and asking general questions, not being focused on what they intend to ask. Additionally, some points in controlling question are not considered in questioning, for instance, if the answers require more time for thought than teachers allow or if the teacher directs the question to only few students. Besides, there are some faults done by them such as phrasing ambiguous questions, asking multiple questions at the same time, and asking

⁷ Kifle Azerefegn, Thesis: "*A Study on the Types of Teacher Questions and Questioning Strategies*" (Ethiopia: Addis Ababa University Institute Of Language Studies, 2008), 8.

loosely worded questions. Those caused students being confused and tended to not willing to answer the questions.

Questioning becomes a powerful teaching tool when employed thoughtfully, but it can be less helpful for the language learning process when poorly employed.⁸ It means that when teachers use questioning effectively in English classes, it can make a significant contribution, such as focusing attention, exercising disciplinary control in the course or an instruction, encouraging students' participation to practice their English proficiency, and evaluating students' progress. Yet, when the questions and the questioning technique are not used effectively by the teachers, they can confuse students and they are less likely to be engaged in English teaching-learning process. As a result, students never practice speaking English in the class. Therefore, in order to be able to ask questions effectively, teachers need to understand and master questioning skill.

Questioning skill is one of pedagogical skill dealing with how teachers formulate and conceptualize questions, how they orally present the questions, how they prompt students' responses and how they process the students' response.⁹ From that definition, questioning skill can be divided into four parts: skills of preparing, designing, controlling, and evaluating.¹⁰ Skill of preparing

⁸ Nunan, D. *Task-based Language Teaching* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 192.

⁹ Lila Mauigoa. "Enhancing Teacher' Questioning Skills to Improve Children's Learning and Thinking in Pacific Island Early Childhood Centres", *New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, 2006, 18.

¹⁰ Xiaoyan Ma, "The Skills of Teacher's Questioning in English Classes", *International Education Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4, November 2008, 94.

questions refers to how well teachers prepare questions before class. Skill of designing question refers to the proper ways teachers choose in asking question and selecting the types of question. Skill of controlling question refers to how teachers organize the question to get students' response. Skill of evaluating question refers to the manners in which teachers give feedback on students' response. Considering those four components, it can be stated that teachers who have a good questioning skill, they are aware in sequencing questions, directing, probing, increasing wait-time, encouraging students question and so on.

Teachers need to develop questioning skills both theoretical and practical ways. Therefore, educators recognize that teachers need to have expertise in the skill of questioning. Teacher education programs have responsibilities to acquire such skills to pre-service teachers. They need professional development that focuses on developing pre-service teachers' skills in preparing, designing, controlling and evaluating for questioning. Therefore, pre-service teachers should be provided with experience, time, and context to use effectively questioning technique before they are involved in a real teaching practice.

English teacher education department in faculty of education and teacher training at Sunan Ampel State Islamic University is one of department which gives training for English teacher education department. In a sense of acquiring such skills for pre-service teachers, it gives technical knowledge on questioning skill in "Classroom Management" subject so that pre-service teachers acquire this skill.

Taking this into account, the main aim of this study is to look into pre-service teachers' questioning skill. There is similar research on questioning skill done by Lila Mauigoa in 2006.¹¹ She studied about enhancing teachers' questioning skills to improve children's learning and thinking. She found that the participants lacked the skills and knowledge in questioning. This research focused on teacher's questioning skill in designing and controlling questions. Therefore, this research is an attempt along these lines and endeavors to find out pre-service teachers' questioning skill in preparing, designing, controlling, and evaluating questions at sixth semester students of English teacher education department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University, academic year 2013-2014. The writer chooses sixth semester students because they are conducting micro-teaching. This is a special program held by English Education Department for giving pre-service teachers experience in teaching before they are faced with a real classroom. The writer here does not intent to judge the quality of each pre-service teacher, but focusing on their level of questioning skill for understanding what kind of improvement that they should do.

By observing pre-service teachers' questioning skill, the writer really hopes that the result of this research will give such information for the English Education Department, the writer, and the pre-service teachers themselves in having or preparing the second internship within the intention schools.

¹¹ Lila Mauigoa. "Enhancing Teacher' Questioning Skills to Improve Children's Learning and Thinking in Pacific Island Early Childhood Centres", *New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, 2006, 12.

Additionally, the writer hopes that this research can be a source for especially other researchers who want to conduct a research on questioning, and generally for every teacher in conducting teaching process.

B. Research Questions

1. How is the questioning skill of pre-service teachers at English Teacher Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya?
2. What are the faults made by pre-service teachers at English Teacher Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya in formulating questions?

C. Objectives of the Study

The general objectives of this study are:

1. To know the questioning skill of sixth pre-service teachers at English Teacher Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya.
2. To know the faults in formulating questions made by pre-service teachers at English Teacher Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya.

D. Significance of the Study

This research is conducted to know the questioning skill of pre-service teachers at English Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya and to know the faults made by pre-service teachers in questioning.

Besides, having the purpose of this study, the writer reveals the benefits of this study for the faculty, for the pre-service teachers being sample, and for the writer. They are:

1. For the English teacher education department

The writer expects that it will be such information for the faculty especially for the English teacher education department. This result also can be a product from the students' need analysis and can be a consideration for the faculty to make any policies related to the students' questioning skill development.

2. For the pre-service teachers

Knowing that the sample is pre-service teachers, the students of sixth semester who will get the internship program 2, the product of this study will be very beneficial for the students. They will know what the questioning skill is and what the questioning skill aspects are. Besides, for the students being sample, they will know how their questioning skill in order to give insight on what kind of improvement that they should do to develop their questioning skills in language teaching so that they will get ready to join the

internship program 2. In addition, by knowing their faults in formulating questions, they will be aware and try to avoid those faults during the foregoing teaching process.

3. For the writer

Considering that the writer is also the students of English Education Department who will be a teacher, the result of this study will give much benefits to the writer. The writer will know the questioning skill aspects that must be mastered in being a teacher.

Finally this paper is expected to invite other scholars or writers to conduct an organized and comprehensive research with regard to questioning skills.

E. Scope and Limits of the Study

This study will be limited to describe: First, pre-service teachers' questioning skill. There are many aspects that can be used to assess questioning skill. The writer will assess pre-service teachers' questioning skills on four components skills as proposes by Xiaoyan Ma.¹² Second, the faults made by pre-service teachers in formulating questions according to Farrent's classification.¹³

¹² Xiaoyan Ma, "The Skills of Teacher's Questioning in English Classes", *International Education Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4, November 2008, 94.

¹³ Zerihun Mekonnen, Thesis: "*The Nature And Kinds Of Questions Teachers And Students Ask In The English Classrooms Of Secondary Schools*" (Ethiopia: Addis Ababa University, 1995), 23.

F. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the meaning of terms in the study, the writer will define the key term used in this research. It is expected to give the same understanding and interpretation between the writer and the reader. Those are:

1. Pre-service teachers

A pre-service teacher is a student of teacher education program who is conducting peer-teaching in microteaching to develop their teaching competence, especially the pedagogic competence in questioning. In this study, the pre-service teachers are sixth semester students at English Teacher Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University Surabaya, academic year 2013-2014.

2. Questioning Skill

Questioning skill is someone's ability; in this study is pre-service teacher, in formulating and conceptualizing questions, presenting the questions, prompting students' responses and processing the students' response. Thus, the skill of questioning is evaluated through four parts: skills of preparing, designing, controlling, and evaluating for questioning in English classes.