

Teacher's Questioning Pattern and Strategy in English Language: A Case Study Approach

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Abstract

This study analyzes the questioning patterns and strategies used by English teachers in junior high school classrooms and explores the pedagogical reasons behind their implementation. Employing a qualitative case study approach, data were gathered through classroom observations and in-depth interviews with two English teachers in Karawang. The result revealed that teachers employed three main questioning patterns interrogative (78.33%), imperative (13.33%), and declarative (8.33%) with interrogative patterns being dominant. Six questioning strategies were identified: open-closed questions (28.33%), follow-up questions (21.67%), prompting (18.33%), open-ended questions (11.67%), student-relevant questions (10%), and tag questions (8.33%). These strategies were implemented to check comprehension, stimulate interaction, manage classroom engagement, and promote student confidence. The pedagogical reasons primarily focused on supporting learning outcomes and maintaining effective classroom communication, especially in rural contexts where students lack English exposure. This study highlights purposeful questioning as a key component of interactive English teaching in EFL contexts.

Keywords: Questioning Pattern; Questioning Strategy; Pedagogical Reason; English Classroom; EFL

INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning processes involve the complex transfer of knowledge from educators to learners through various integrated components that require careful orchestration and strategic implementation. In English language classrooms, particularly within EFL contexts, verbal interaction serves as a central and fundamental element in ensuring effective instruction and meaningful learning outcomes. Among the various forms of classroom interaction that facilitate language acquisition, the questioning techniques and patterns employed by teachers hold a particularly significant role in enhancing students' comprehension levels, stimulating active participation in classroom discourse, and supporting the systematic development of their language proficiency across multiple skill areas (Shanmugavelu et al., 2020). The strategic use of questions not only creates opportunities for authentic communication but also establishes a framework for assessing student understanding and guiding instructional decision-making processes. Experienced teachers are generally more inclined than novice educators to maintain effective classroom control and create conducive learning environments, particularly when engaging in complex interactions with students and making critical pedagogical decisions that impact learning outcomes (Ademola et al, 2021). To create truly interactive and engaging classrooms that promote active learning, teachers must skillfully facilitate each step of the instructional process, including encouraging students to engage meaningfully in interactions and actively participate in speaking practice activities that help them master the learning material and develop communicative competence. However, the effectiveness of such interactions is closely and directly linked to the specific types of questioning strategies that

teachers implement, the timing of their delivery, and their alignment with learning objectives. Therefore, developing a comprehensive understanding of questioning patterns and strategies becomes essential for optimizing classroom interactions in English learning environments, particularly within the unique challenges and opportunities presented by Indonesian educational contexts where students often have limited exposure to authentic English communication. Teachers' classroom questioning practices, however, do not always fulfill their intended pedagogical role or achieve the desired learning outcomes that educators envision. In daily teaching situations across various educational settings, several persistent problems continue to emerge questions are frequently asked without receiving meaningful responses from students, or they are posed simply for the sake of asking rather than serving specific instructional purposes. Students often find themselves unfamiliar with the vocabulary used by teachers in their questions, which creates significant barriers to comprehension and makes it extremely difficult for them to understand what is being asked of them. As a result of these communication challenges, students become increasingly reluctant to respond to teacher questions and often remain silent even when questions are directly addressed to them, creating a cycle of reduced participation and missed learning opportunities (Aimah & Purwanto, 2019). This situation highlights the critical need for teachers to develop more effective questioning strategies that consider student linguistic abilities and cultural backgrounds. Previous research studies have extensively explored various aspects of questioning strategies in diverse educational contexts and language learning environments. Nashruddin et al., (2020) conducted comprehensive research and found that teachers employed various questioning strategies with varying degrees of effectiveness, discovering that open/closed questions and knowledge-based questions were used most frequently in classroom interactions, while higher-order thinking questions were less commonly implemented. Building on this foundation, Dilla Adzkiya S, (2020) identified five distinct question types that teachers regularly employ: open-ended questions that encourage elaborate responses, follow-up questions that probe deeper understanding, display questions that check factual knowledge, prompting questions that provide guidance, and probing questions that encourage critical thinking. Furthermore, Farahian & Rezaee, (2020) revealed through detailed classroom analysis that display/closed questions and yes/no questions were most frequently used by teachers, accounting for over 90% of all questioning interactions, while open/referential questions that promote genuine communication and authentic language use were rarely employed in classroom discourse. This current study significantly differs from previous research endeavors by examining both questioning patterns based on syntactic forms and linguistic structures as categorized by Onea & Zimmermann, (2019) and questioning strategies as systematically classified by Xuerong, (2012), thereby providing a more comprehensive and multidimensional analysis of how teachers strategically build effective interactions through purposeful and systematic questioning approaches in EFL contexts. This integrated approach allows for deeper understanding of the relationship between linguistic form and pedagogical function in teacher questioning practices.

METHOD

This study employed a comprehensive qualitative case study design as advocated by (Yin et al., 2018), specifically chosen to investigate questioning patterns and strategies within their natural classroom settings and authentic educational contexts. According to Yin et al., (2018), case study methodology is particularly effective for uncovering detailed, in-depth information about complex educational phenomena and teacher-student interactions when the research seeks to understand "how" and "why" questions in real-world contexts. The investigation was conducted at a carefully selected junior high school in Karawang, Indonesia, involving two experienced

English teachers who met specific selection criteria including minimum five years of teaching experience, advanced academic backgrounds in English education, and demonstrated commitment to interactive teaching approaches. These participants were chosen to ensure diverse perspectives while maintaining direct relevance to the research focus on analyzing teachers' questioning patterns and strategic implementation of questioning techniques in authentic classroom environments. Data collection utilized multiple sophisticated techniques to ensure comprehensive and triangulated data gathering: systematic classroom observations conducted through video recordings that captured all verbal and non-verbal interactions, detailed field notes that documented contextual information and researcher observations, structured observation checklists specifically designed based on (Xuerong, 2012) theoretical framework for identifying questioning types and strategies, and in-depth semi-structured interviews that explored teachers' pedagogical reasoning and reflective practices. The observation checklist systematically identified and categorized questioning types and strategic implementations, while the interview sessions provided crucial insights into teachers' conscious decision-making processes and pedagogical reasoning behind their questioning practices, allowing for deeper understanding of the relationship between theoretical frameworks and practical classroom applications. Data analysis followed rigorous thematic analysis procedures carefully adapted from the established methodological guidelines provided by Braun & Clarke (2006), ensuring systematic and credible interpretation of qualitative data. All transcribed data were systematically coded using consistent symbolic representations: "T" for teacher utterances, "Ss" for student responses, and "I" for interviewer contributions during interview sessions. Questions were methodically categorized according to their structural patterns based on the linguistic framework established by (Onea & Zimmermann, 2019) and their strategic functions based on the pedagogical classification system developed by Xuerong, (2012). Both deductive analytical techniques, which applied existing theoretical frameworks to the data, and inductive approaches, which allowed themes to emerge naturally from the data, were strategically employed to uncover complex patterns, deeper meanings, and multifaceted pedagogical purposes underlying teachers' questioning behavior in authentic classroom contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

1. Questioning Patterns and Their Pedagogical Functions

The comprehensive analysis of classroom interactions revealed three distinct questioning patterns based on sentence structure and linguistic composition, as categorized by Onea & Zimmermann, (2019). These patterns demonstrated teachers' sophisticated understanding of how different syntactic structures serve varied pedagogical functions in EFL contexts. The distribution and frequency of these patterns provide valuable insights into teachers' instructional preferences and their strategic approaches to facilitating meaningful classroom discourse that supports both linguistic development and communicative competence.

Table 1. Distribution of Questioning Patterns

No	Questioning Pattern	Frequency	Percentage
1	Declarative	5	8,33%
2	Imperative	8	13,33%
3	Interrogative	47	78,33%
Total		60	100%

a. Dominance of Interrogative Patterns and Their Subcategories

Interrogative patterns dominated with 47 occurrences (78.33%), reflecting teachers' preference for direct questioning methods that establish clear communicative expectations and facilitate structured learning interactions. This overwhelming preference aligns with traditional pedagogical approaches while demonstrating teachers' understanding of their students' need for explicit guidance in language learning contexts. Within this category, three distinct subcategories emerged with specific pedagogical functions and learning objectives. **WH-Questions (42.55% of interrogative patterns)** served as powerful tools for encouraging detailed responses and promoting higher-order thinking processes. These questions required students to move beyond simple recall toward analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Classroom examples included: "What do you think about this story and why do you feel that way?" (T1, Session 2), "How do you feel when you read this paragraph, and what emotions does it create?" (T2, Session 1), and "Where did the character go in the beginning, and what motivated this decision?" (T1, Session 3). These questions demonstrated teachers' sophisticated understanding of how to scaffold cognitive demands while maintaining accessibility for students with varying proficiency levels. **Yes/No Questions (36.17% of interrogative patterns)** functioned primarily as comprehension checks and confidence-building mechanisms, particularly effective for students who might struggle with more complex response requirements. These binary questions provided immediate feedback opportunities and allowed teachers to gauge understanding quickly while maintaining lesson momentum. Examples included: "Do you understand the meaning of this word clearly?" (T2, Session 1), "Is the main character happy in this part of the story?" (T1, Session 2), and "Can you find the adjective in this sentence easily?" (T2, Session 3). Teachers strategically used these questions to create success experiences that built student confidence before progressing to more challenging linguistic tasks. **Choice Questions (21.28% of interrogative patterns)** represented sophisticated scaffolding techniques that provided support while still requiring student decision-making and analytical thinking. These questions offered predetermined options while encouraging students to justify their selections and demonstrate understanding of underlying grammatical or semantic principles. Examples included: "Is this sentence in past tense or present tense, and how can you tell?" (T1, Session 1), "Should we use 'a' or 'an' before this word, and what rule helps you decide?" (T2, Session 2), and "Does this character seem happy or sad, and what evidence supports your answer?" (T1, Session 3).

b. Strategic Use of Alternative Patterns

Imperative patterns (13.33%) functioned as indirect questions that masked interrogative intentions within directive language structures, creating communicative variety while maintaining clear instructional purposes. These constructions demonstrated teachers' creative approaches to reducing the formal, evaluative atmosphere that traditional questions might create. Examples include "Tell me about your weekend activities and what made them special" (T1, Session 1), "Explain the difference between these two words and when you would use each one" (T2, Session 2), and "Show me how you would use this phrase in a complete sentence" (T1, Session 3). Teachers reported during interviews that imperative patterns often generated more natural, extended responses from students who might otherwise provide minimal answers to direct questions, suggesting that these constructions successfully reduced communication anxiety while maintaining learning objectives. Declarative patterns (8.33%), though least frequent, played crucial roles in creating interactive discourse through implicit questioning that required students to interpret conversational cues and respond appropriately. These patterns demanded higher-level pragmatic competence and cultural understanding of classroom discourse norms.

Examples included: "I wonder what happens next in this story and how the character will solve this problem" (T1, Session 2), "This word seems difficult to pronounce, and I'm curious about the correct way to say it" (T2, Session 1), and "The character appears to be making an important decision that will affect the entire story" (T1, Session 3). These declarative constructions created opportunities for students to demonstrate initiative in communication while developing sensitivity to implicit communicative signals common in authentic English discourse.

2. Questioning Strategies and Their Implementation

Six distinct questioning strategies were identified through systematic analysis, demonstrating teachers' sophisticated repertoire for engaging students, assessing comprehension, and facilitating meaningful learning experiences. These strategies reflect both conscious pedagogical choices and intuitive responses to student needs, creating a complex interplay between theoretical knowledge and practical classroom management skills.

Table 2. Distribution of Questioning Strategies

No	Types of Questioning Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
1	Ask question relevant to students	6	10%
2	Ask open-ended question	7	11.67%
3	Ask follow-up question	13	21.67%
4	Ask tag question	5	8.33%
5	Prompting	11	18.33%
6	Open-closed question	17	28.33%
Total		60	100%

a. Balanced Assessment and Communication Through Open-Closed Questions

Open-closed questions emerged as the most frequent strategy (28.33%), demonstrating teachers' strategic balance between assessment and communicative practice. Closed questions like "What is the past tense of 'go'?" and "How many characters are mentioned in this paragraph?" provided quick comprehension checks and confidence-building opportunities. Open questions such as "What do you think would happen if the character made a different choice?" and "How would you describe your ideal vacation?" encouraged critical thinking and extended discourse practice. This alternation created comprehensive learning experiences addressing both immediate assessment needs and long-term communicative competence development.

Closed Questions for Foundation Building: Teachers employed closed questions strategically to establish foundational knowledge and build student confidence through achievable success experiences. Examples included: "What is the past tense of 'go' in English?" (T2, Session 1), "How many characters are mentioned in this paragraph that we just read?" (T1, Session 2), and "Is this sentence grammatically correct as written?" (T2, Session 3). These questions served essential pedagogical functions: providing immediate comprehension feedback, establishing baseline understanding before advancing to complex concepts, creating positive learning experiences that motivate continued participation, and maintaining appropriate lesson pacing that accommodates diverse learner needs.

Open Questions for Cognitive Development: Teachers alternated closed questions with open questions that encouraged critical thinking, creative expression, and extended discourse practice. Examples included: "What do you think would happen if the character made a completely different choice in this situation?" (T1, Session 2), "How would you describe your ideal vacation, and what activities would make it perfect?" (T2, Session 1), and "Why do you think the author chose to end the story this way rather than with a different conclusion?" (T1, Session 3). These open questions facilitated higher-order thinking processes, encouraged personal expression

and creativity, provided opportunities for extended speaking practice, and developed students' abilities to articulate complex ideas in English. The strategic alternation between closed and open questions created dynamic learning environments where students experienced both the security of structured support and the challenge of creative expression, fostering comprehensive language development that encompasses both accuracy and fluency.

b. Sustained Interaction Through Follow-up Questions

Follow-up questions (21.67%) demonstrated teachers' commitment to deeper exploration and conversational development. Sequential follow-up patterns transformed simple exchanges into meaningful interactions. For example, Teacher 1's sequence: "What did you do yesterday?" → "I went to the market" → "Who did you go with?" → "What did you buy there?" → "How did you feel about the experience?" illustrated how teachers extended basic factual exchanges into sustained conversational practice. Clarification follow-ups like "Can you explain what you mean by that?" and "Could you give me an example?" encouraged students to elaborate their thinking and develop metacognitive awareness.

c. Scaffolding and Support Through Prompting Strategies

Prompting strategies (18.33%) revealed teachers' sensitivity to student needs and commitment to ensuring successful participation. Three types of prompting were observed: linguistic prompting ("The answer starts with the letter 'B'..." and "Remember, we use 'was' or 'were' for past tense..."), conceptual prompting ("Think about what we learned about adjectives yesterday..." and "Remember the story we read about friendship..."), and gestural prompting through non-verbal cues, facial expressions, and visual aids. These scaffolding techniques prevented student frustration while maintaining learning challenges. Teachers provided specific linguistic scaffolding to help students access appropriate vocabulary, grammatical structures, or pronunciation patterns. Examples included: "The answer starts with the letter 'B' and it's something you do in the morning..." (T1, Session 1), "Remember, we use 'was' or 'were' for past tense with different subjects..." (T2, Session 2), and "Think about the '-ing' ending we learned yesterday for continuous actions..." (T1, Session 3). This linguistic support enabled students to participate successfully while developing awareness of English language patterns and structures. Teachers helped students access relevant background knowledge and make connections between new information and previously learned concepts. Examples included: "Think about what we learned about adjectives yesterday and how they describe things..." (T1, Session 3), "Remember the story we read about friendship last week and how it relates to this situation..." (T2, Session 1), and "Consider the discussion we had about family relationships and how it applies here..." (T1, Session 2). These conceptual prompts supported comprehension while reinforcing previously learned material and demonstrating connections across learning experiences. Teachers frequently combined verbal prompts with non-verbal cues, including hand gestures, facial expressions, visual aids, and environmental references to support student understanding and encourage responses. These multimodal approaches acknowledged diverse learning preferences and provided additional scaffolding for students who might struggle with purely verbal instruction.

d. Cultural Responsiveness and Authentic Expression

Student-relevant questions (10%) and open-ended questions (11.67%) demonstrated teachers' efforts to connect learning with students' experiences and encourage authentic

expression. Student-relevant questions like "Have you ever experienced something similar to what the character felt?" and "What traditional games do you play in your village?" validated students' cultural backgrounds and created meaningful connections. Open-ended questions such as "If you could change one thing about your school, what would it be?" and "What advice would you give to someone learning English?" provided opportunities for creative language use and personal expression. Tag questions (8.33%) like "This story is interesting, isn't it?" and "You understand the instruction, don't you?" softened interaction formality and maintained conversational flow. Student-relevant questions acknowledged and validated students' cultural experiences while creating opportunities for authentic sharing and cross-cultural communication. Examples included: "Have you ever experienced something similar to what the character felt in your own family?" (T1, Session 2), "What traditional games do you play in your village that might be similar to this?" (T2, Session 1), "How is the weather described in the story different from or similar to the weather in your hometown?" (T1, Session 3), and "What celebrations in your community remind you of the events in this text?" (T2, Session 2). These questions served multiple functions: validating students' cultural knowledge and experiences, creating opportunities for authentic self-expression, building connections between learning content and personal relevance, and fostering cross-cultural understanding and communication.

e. **Open-ended Questions for Creative Expression**

Teachers provided opportunities for students to express individual perspectives, demonstrate creativity, and engage in authentic communication without predetermined correct answers. Examples included: "If you could change one thing about your school to make it better, what would it be and why?" (T1, Session 2), "Describe what you consider to be a perfect day and what would make it special for you" (T2, Session 1), "What advice would you give to someone who is just beginning to learn English?" (T1, Session 3), and "How do you think technology will change education in the future?" (T2, Session 3). These questions encouraged authentic self-expression, provided opportunities for creative language use, built student confidence in personal communication, and created connections between learning activities and individual interests and aspirations.

f. **Tag Questions for Conversational Flow**

Tag questions (8.33%), though least frequent, played important roles in softening the formality of teacher-student interactions and maintaining natural conversational flow. Examples included: "This story is really interesting, isn't it?" (T1, Session 2), "You understand the instruction clearly, don't you?" (T2, Session 1), "The character made a wise decision, didn't he?" (T1, Session 3), and "Learning English can be challenging sometimes, can't it?" (T2, Session 2). These tag questions functioned to reduce interaction formality and create collaborative atmospheres, encourage agreement and shared understanding between teachers and students, maintain conversational momentum and natural discourse flow, and provide gentle confirmation requests that support rather than threaten student confidence.

3. Teachers' Pedagogical Reasoning and Contextual Adaptations

Comprehensive interview findings revealed multiple interconnected pedagogical purposes underlying teachers' questioning strategies, extending far beyond simple information gathering to encompass complex educational objectives that address both linguistic and sociocultural dimensions of language learning in rural Indonesian contexts. Both participating teachers

emphasized comprehensive assessment as their primary motivation for strategic questioning, recognizing that effective evaluation requires multiple approaches and ongoing monitoring rather than single-point assessments. Teacher 1 articulated this perspective: "I need to know if my students really understand what we're learning at different levels. Sometimes they nod their heads to show agreement, but when I ask specific questions, I can see if they truly comprehend the material or if they're just being polite." This multifaceted assessment approach involved several interconnected dimensions. Immediate comprehension assessment occurred through rapid, strategically placed closed questions that allowed teachers to gauge instant understanding of new vocabulary items, grammatical structures, or reading comprehension elements. This real-time feedback enabled immediate instructional modifications when confusion or misunderstanding was detected, preventing the accumulation of learning gaps that might impede future progress. Deep understanding evaluation employed open-ended and follow-up questions to assess whether students could apply newly acquired knowledge, make meaningful connections between different concepts, demonstrate genuine comprehension beyond surface-level memorization, and transfer learning to novel situations or contexts. Teachers reported that these deeper assessments often revealed surprising gaps in understanding that surface-level questions missed. Individual versus collective assessment involved strategic alternation between addressing individual students and engaging the entire class to ensure both personal accountability and group comprehension monitoring. Teachers noted that individual questioning provided detailed insight into specific student needs, while group responses revealed collective understanding levels and social learning dynamics. Teacher 2 provided detailed insight into the unique challenges of rural efl contexts: "in our rural environment, students are often naturally shy and particularly reluctant to speak English because they have limited exposure to the language outside school. They worry about making mistakes in front of their peers. I deliberately use different types of questions and questioning strategies to encourage them to participate actively rather than remaining silent observers." This engagement motivation encompassed several strategic approaches designed specifically for rural learners. Confidence building through graduated difficulty involved beginning each lesson or interaction sequence with simple, achievable questions that ensured student success before gradually progressing to more challenging linguistic tasks. This scaffolded approach helped students develop confidence through positive experiences while building the linguistic and cognitive foundations necessary for more complex communication tasks. Variety maintenance for sustained interest recognized that rural students, who might have limited exposure to diverse educational experiences, required varied questioning approaches to maintain attention and engagement throughout extended learning sessions. Teachers consciously alternated question types, topics, and interaction patterns to prevent monotony and sustain motivation. Creating psychologically safe learning environments involved careful attention to question construction and classroom atmosphere to minimize embarrassment risks while maximizing opportunities for meaningful participation. Teachers developed sensitive awareness of student comfort levels and adjusted their questioning approaches accordingly. Both teachers strategically incorporated Indonesian language elements into their questioning practices to enhance accessibility and reduce communication barriers that might otherwise prevent student participation. Teacher 1 provided detailed explanation of this approach: "Sometimes I need to use Indonesian to make absolutely sure students understand exactly what I'm asking, especially when dealing with complex concepts or abstract ideas. Once they clearly understand what I'm asking and what kind of response I expect, they can attempt to respond in English with much more confidence and success. Both teachers recognized questioning as a powerful classroom management tool that extended beyond academic objectives to encompass behavioral guidance, attention management, and learning environment optimization. Teacher 2 explained: "Strategic questioning helps me maintain control over classroom pace and keeps students focused on

learning objectives. When I notice attention beginning to wander or students becoming distracted, I can use targeted questions to bring everyone back to the learning task while maintaining positive classroom atmosphere. Strategic Code-Switching Based on Complexity involved careful decisions about when to use English, Indonesian, or combinations of both languages based on question complexity, student proficiency levels, immediate pedagogical objectives, and observed student comfort levels. Teachers developed intuitive sense of when linguistic support was necessary versus when English-only interaction would be beneficial. Scaffolding Understanding Through L1 Support employed Indonesian explanations, clarifications, or contextual information preceding English questions to ensure comprehensive understanding of what was being asked, enabling more successful English responses and reducing anxiety about misunderstanding questions rather than lacking knowledge of answers. Cultural Bridging Through Multilingual Practices honored students' linguistic backgrounds and cultural identities while supporting their English language development journey. Teachers recognized that acknowledging and building upon students' Indonesian language competence created more inclusive learning environments and validated students' existing knowledge as resources for new learning.

Discussion

1. Questioning Patterns Used by the Teacher

The dominance of interrogative patterns (78.33%) in this study aligns with previous research findings while revealing important pedagogical implications for EFL contexts. This overwhelming preference for direct questioning reflects teachers' strategic approach to classroom management and learning facilitation in environments where students have limited English exposure. The high frequency of interrogative patterns supports assertion that direct questioning serves as a fundamental tool for maintaining classroom discourse and ensuring comprehensible input in second language learning contexts. The distribution within interrogative subcategories reveals sophisticated pedagogical awareness. The prevalence of WH-questions (42.55% of interrogatives) demonstrates teachers' commitment to promoting higher-order thinking skills, aligning with Bloom's (1956) taxonomy of educational objectives.. This finding contrasts with (Farahian & Rezaee, 2020) observation that display questions dominate EFL classrooms, suggesting that these teachers have developed more cognitively demanding questioning practices. The substantial use of WH-questions indicates teachers' understanding that meaningful language learning requires students to engage in complex cognitive processes rather than simple recall tasks. The strategic implementation of Yes/No questions (36.17% of interrogatives) serves crucial scaffolding functions, particularly important in rural EFL contexts where student confidence levels may be low. These questions function as what Vygotsky (1978) termed "zone of proximal development" activities, providing accessible entry points that gradually build toward more complex linguistic tasks. The teachers' conscious use of these questions for confidence-building demonstrates pedagogical sensitivity to their students' psychological and linguistic needs. Choice questions (21.28% of interrogatives) represent sophisticated scaffolding techniques that bridge the gap between closed and open questioning. This strategy reflects teachers' understanding of gradual release of responsibility, providing support while maintaining cognitive challenge. The implementation of choice questions demonstrates awareness of Long's (1996) interaction hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of meaningful negotiation in second language acquisition. The limited use of imperative (13.33%) and declarative patterns (8.33%) reveals both opportunities and constraints in these EFL contexts. While these patterns offer potential for creating more naturalistic discourse, their infrequent use may reflect teachers' concerns about student comprehension levels and the need for explicit instruction in foreign language environments.

However, when employed, these patterns successfully reduced formality and encouraged more natural student responses, suggesting potential for expanded implementation as student proficiency develops.

2. Questioning Strategies Through Types of Questions

The predominance of open-closed questioning strategies (28.33%) reflects a sophisticated understanding of balanced instruction that addresses both assessment and communication needs. This strategic alternation demonstrates teachers' awareness of the dual purposes of classroom questioning: monitoring comprehension and facilitating language practice. The balanced implementation supports Cotton's (2001) recommendation for varied questioning approaches that serve different instructional objectives within single lessons. The frequency of follow-up questions (21.67%) indicates teachers' commitment to sustained interaction and deeper exploration of topics. The implementation of follow-up questions demonstrates teachers' understanding that language learning requires extended practice opportunities rather than brief, isolated exchanges. The substantial use of prompting strategies (18.33%) reveals teachers' sensitivity to student needs and commitment to inclusive participation. This finding supports Wells' (1993) argument for responsive teaching that adapts to student performance in real-time. The variety of prompting techniques—linguistic, conceptual, and gestural—demonstrates multimodal awareness that acknowledges diverse learning preferences and provides multiple pathways to success.

The moderate implementation of open-ended questions (11.67%) reflects both the potential and challenges of encouraging creative expression in EFL contexts. While these questions promote authentic communication, their limited frequency may indicate teacher concerns about student linguistic readiness or time constraints within structured curricula. However, when implemented, these questions successfully generated meaningful student expression and personal connection to learning content.

Student-relevant questions (10%) and tag questions (8.33%), though less frequent, played important roles in creating culturally responsive and conversationally natural classroom environments. The implementation of student-relevant questions demonstrates awareness of culturally sustaining pedagogy, which emphasizes the importance of connecting academic content to students' lived experiences. Tag questions, while infrequent, successfully reduced interaction formality and created more natural conversational flow.

3. Pedagogical Reasons for Using Questions

Comprehensive interview findings revealed multiple interconnected pedagogical purposes underlying teachers' questioning strategies, extending far beyond simple information gathering to encompass complex educational objectives that address both linguistic and sociocultural dimensions of language learning in rural Indonesian contexts. Both participating teachers emphasized comprehensive assessment as their primary motivation for strategic questioning, recognizing that effective evaluation requires multiple approaches and ongoing monitoring rather than single-point assessments. Teacher 1 articulated this perspective: "I need to know if my students really understand what we're learning at different levels. Sometimes they nod their heads to show agreement, but when I ask specific questions, I can see if they truly comprehend the material or if they're just being polite." This multifaceted assessment approach involved several interconnected dimensions. Immediate comprehension assessment occurred through rapid, strategically placed closed questions that allowed teachers to gauge instant understanding of new vocabulary items, grammatical structures, or reading comprehension elements. This real-time feedback enabled immediate instructional modifications when confusion or misunderstanding was detected, preventing the accumulation of learning gaps that might impede future progress. Deep understanding evaluation employed open-ended and follow-up

questions to assess whether students could apply newly acquired knowledge, make meaningful connections between different concepts, demonstrate genuine comprehension beyond surface-level memorization, and transfer learning to novel situations or contexts. Teacher 2 provided detailed insight into the unique challenges of rural EFL contexts: "In our rural environment, students are often naturally shy and particularly reluctant to speak English because they have limited exposure to the language outside school. They worry about making mistakes in front of their peers. I deliberately use different types of questions and questioning strategies to encourage them to participate actively rather than remaining silent observers." This engagement motivation encompassed several strategic approaches designed specifically for rural learners. The strategic bilingual approach employed by both participating teachers demonstrates remarkable cultural sensitivity, pedagogical awareness, and professional adaptability in responding to students' specific linguistic limitations and cultural backgrounds. Teachers strategically incorporated Indonesian language elements into their questioning practices to enhance accessibility and reduce communication barriers that might otherwise prevent student participation.

CONCLUSION

This comprehensive research study reveals that EFL teachers in junior high school contexts strategically employ diverse and sophisticated questioning patterns and strategies to achieve multiple, interconnected pedagogical objectives that extend far beyond simple information gathering or comprehension checking. The overwhelming dominance of interrogative patterns, accounting for 78.33% of all observed questioning instances, combined with the frequent implementation of open-closed questions representing 28.33% of all strategic approaches, clearly demonstrates teachers' strong preference for direct, structured questioning approaches that effectively balance essential assessment needs with valuable communicative practice opportunities. This strategic balance ensures that students receive both the immediate feedback they need for confidence building and the extended practice opportunities they require for meaningful language development and communicative competence growth. The sophisticated integration of declarative, imperative, and interrogative patterns with six distinct and purposeful questioning strategies creates a comprehensive and multifaceted instructional framework that successfully addresses diverse learning needs, accommodates various proficiency levels, and provides multiple pathways for student engagement and participation. Teachers' carefully considered pedagogical reasoning reflects their deep and nuanced understanding of questioning as an absolutely essential tool for systematic comprehension checking, sustained engagement maintenance, strategic vocabulary development, and the creation of supportive learning environments that encourage risk-taking and authentic language use, particularly crucial considerations in rural EFL contexts where students often face unique challenges and limitations. The strategic bilingual approach employed by both participating teachers demonstrates remarkable cultural sensitivity, pedagogical awareness, and professional adaptability in responding to students' specific linguistic limitations and cultural backgrounds. This research contributes significantly to the existing EFL literature by providing comprehensive, detailed analysis of questioning practices and their underlying pedagogical foundations within the specific context of Indonesian junior high school environments, where teachers must navigate complex challenges including limited resources, diverse student backgrounds, and varying levels of English exposure and motivation. Future research endeavors should systematically investigate the measurable effectiveness of specific questioning strategies on concrete language skill development outcomes, explore questioning practices across different proficiency levels and age groups, examine the long-term impact of strategic questioning on student motivation and engagement, and analyze questioning practices across

various cultural contexts to develop more universally applicable pedagogical frameworks. Additionally, researchers should consider examining the relationship between teacher training in questioning techniques and actual classroom implementation, as well as investigating how technology integration might enhance or transform traditional questioning practices in modern EFL environments.

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