

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

Claxton (2002, p. 24) stated that today's education should be about building the power of teaching and learning. Questioning has a major role to be one of that power in the teaching-learning process because the types of questions used by teachers can influence their way of thinking. (Willen, 1991). Using questions is one of the strategies that teachers usually use to stimulate students to be more active in class so that the expected class interaction is created. (Lynch, 1991). The kinds of questions that teachers ask can influence the cognitive processes. If a teacher utilizes questions effectively, students will discover that the question is a very valuable learning tool. It is a device through which they can organize their thinking to achieve certain objectives. Questioning provides a ready means of accessing those thoughts and, significantly, of prompting them to go in the desired direction.

Teachers' questions are asked through classroom discourse as part of teacher discussions and teacher-student interactions. Teachers' questions are a distinguishing feature of classroom interaction. Teacher questions are a frequent component of classroom conversations and therefore play an important role in determining the nature of classroom discourse. For this reason, teachers need to plan their questions carefully. This does not mean writing a script that denies creative education. However, that means that teachers need to carefully plan their questions, considering questions that may help them further investigate and

deepen their understanding of stressed concepts.

As questions are a key component of classroom discourse, this suggests that teacher's questions have potential as a psychological tool in mediating students' knowledge construction. According to Gattis (2002:41, as noted by Sujariati, Rahman and Mahmud, 2016) a question is one of the most important tools in guiding and extending students' learning. It can help the teachers develop their own strategies to improve the students' work and thinking. Questions can stimulate students' productive thinking and provide feedback for the teacher about students' understanding. (Chin, 2007).

The practice of productive thinking in academic contexts is often directed at reasoning, understanding, creative thinking, evaluative thinking and decision making. If teachers are to develop such habits of mind, the first need is to know what thoughts are already in a learner's head. For this, teachers need to be asking the right questions that are questions focused on the kinds of thought expected in the classroom. Rismayanti (2018) also stated questioning that is applied in the classroom can increase students' curiosity and students' interest, stimulate their proficiency, and motivate them to learn English better. It can be said that through questioning, the students will be given more chances to think critically and will become the sensitive learners. When teachers ask questions, the assumption is that they (the questions) do something useful and the more questions that are asked, the better they do.

One significant goal of productive thinking is the construction of meaning. Gadamer (1993) suggested, 'Questioning opens up possibilities of meaning' (p. 375). He indicated that teacher used questions for a variety of purposes, from

assessment and monitoring of the learning to organizing and managing the learners. Questioning as strategy has the potential to support students of all ages as they relate facts, construct meanings, satisfy their curiosity, imagine alternative worlds, make decisions, solve problems and build and change their mental models of the world in which they live.

As preliminary data, researcher conducted interview with English teacher at SMK Negeri 1 Binjai. The researcher asked about the interactions that occurred in the classroom, the questions the teacher gave, and also the students' responses. Based on the interviews that researchers have done, it can be found that the teacher gives a lot of questions to students. The questions that the teacher gives are the types of questions that refer to everyday life. However, this question does not make students active in the core of the lesson. Students are only active When at the beginning of the lesson the teacher asks questions about why students should study the material. When entering the core of the lesson, students tend to be passive in responding. This is because the questions the teacher gives do not stimulate students to think productively about the material provided.

Researcher : Do you often ask students questions? And what kind of questions do you usually ask?

Teacher : Before starting the lesson I always ask questions about the lesson. For example, one example of a conditional sentence lesson. Before going into the material, they don't even know the title, I always ask if they ever make assumptions? So, my question is more about real life. If we examine the material in conditional sentences, there are 4 types of sentences. So, it turns out that in life, unwittingly by students they often make assumptions in the form of regret, wish / imagination, ideals, and advice.

Researcher : How do students respond when you ask a question? Do they look enthusiastic when you ask questions?

Teacher : They didn't look very enthusiastic when I asked direct questions about the material, such as the pattern of conditional

sentences. However, sometimes they seem enthusiastic. When I ask questions that involve everyday life like, do you often assume? Have you ever dreamed or imagined? because they finally realized at that time that the teacher gave input about the pattern that far our random way of thinking turned out to have its own pattern and could be studied.

Researcher : Can the questions you give stimulate students' productive thinking?

Teacher : I think yes, because once the lesson starts, the teacher gives rationalizations or reasons why the lesson is important. So that this can stimulate them to raise their curiosity that this material is very important. However, when I started teaching and asking questions about the material, many of them tended to be passive in responding and answering my questions

From the interview above, the researcher can conclude before entering class, the teacher rationalizes why the material is important to learn by asking some questions about the material that refers to real life. However, when entering the core of learning, students tend to be passive in responding to teacher questions. The teacher asks questions about the material without paying attention to whether these questions are enough to make students think productively or not. It is not so much the number of questions asked by the teacher that matters but what they do for the learner. A few well-shaped questions that focus on the needs of particular thinking at crucial times are likely to be of more benefit than a hundred questions, scattered like confetti and demanding only the quick recall of facts. Well-shaped questions cannot always be conjured up from thin air but are likely to benefit from forethought and planning.

However, teaching English in Indonesia is a challenging task. In learning English in Indonesian schools, some skills should be mastered by students. Those are speaking, reading, listening, and writing. One of the English skills is reading. Reading skills are very crucial for students to develop other language skills. The

knowledge and experience obtained from reading can make wide intellectual abilities (Aziz et al., 2019). This fact shows that the teaching of reading is important to get attention seriously.

Unfortunately, English teacher still do not have enough competences to choose an appropriate learning strategy to improve students' reading comprehension (Imran et al., 2019). In order to comprehend the text easily, Indonesian students have to think productively. Readers should have a particular purpose in their minds before they interact with text. Many graduates of SMA/MA do not understand English text well. Then, to enable them to understand the descriptive text, teachers can do questioning that can make their thinking be more productive so they can construct understandings about the text. In this case, the teacher is considered as a model, moderator, facilitator of knowledge in the teaching-learning process and this matter is necessary to improve their questioning especially about English reading comprehension.

There were some previous studies that related to this research. The first study was conducted by Astrid et al (2019). In this case, teachers mostly used convergent questions where the question mostly required yes/no and short answers questions. It was also found that there were five reasons why teachers preferred used convergent questions.

Mita Sari (2018) conducted a study about teacher's question that the finding showed that display question (92%) was frequently used by the teacher than a referential question (81%). Erianti et al (2018) also carried out the study that showed the teacher used 13% procedural question, 74 % display question, and 13% referential question. However, the teacher used the types of questions

according to the function of the question type.

Fadlaini (2018) had done the research that was conducted to investigate the types of questions and describe how the teachers employ the questions to encourage students' participation in learning English. The findings show that there were eight salient themes of questioning strategies used by two participants to encourage students' participation in classroom. It appeared from observation and interview. The last, Camilla (2021) carried out the study that the findings demonstrate teachers mostly ask text-dependent questions, although they also include questions that are otherwise text-related in terms of students' prior knowledge and experiences.

Following a brief review of the previous studies, about teachers' questions in the classroom, the researcher will present research about questioning for the particular purpose of encouraging students' productive thinking. In this research, the researcher will explore how questioning can be used to foster students' productive thinking.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on the background, there are two problems on this research:

1. What types of question does teacher use in teaching reading descriptive text?
2. How do the teacher questions improve students' productive thinking in reading descriptive text?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research:

1. To identify what types of questions are used by teachers in teaching reading descriptive text.

2. To find out how the teacher questions improve students' productive thinking in reading descriptive text.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

The study was limited to analyze the types of questions that teachers used in teaching reading and the way teacher questioning improving students' productive thinking in reading. The material is about descriptive text.

1.5 The Significances of the Study

The significances or use values that can be taken from this research include:

1.5.1 Theoretical Aspects

The results of this research inform others about the importance and implementation of teacher questioning to improve students' productive thinking in reading descriptive text. This information is also useful for those who want to research the same subject in the future.

1.5.2 Practical Aspects

Based on practical significance, for the English Teachers, this research may provide a solution to the problems related to students' productive thinking in reading because this research is a way of handling the problems faced by the English teachers in the learning process for descriptive text by using teacher questioning. For the School, the results of this research can be beneficial as strategy of English reading activities. The result also expected to be consideration of students' comprehension in the learning process. For other Researchers, this research is expected to get more information about

teachers' questioning in improving students' productive thinking to enhance their reading comprehension in descriptive text. Hopefully, this research will be the reference to other researchers to make research about teacher questioning or students' productive thinking.

