

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) BY THE STUDENTS IN EFL CLASSROOM FKIP UNIVERSITAS HKBP NOMMENSEN PEMATANGSIANTAR

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis-jenis pertanyaan yang digunakan dalam kelas EFL serta mengidentifikasi tujuan pertanyaan tersebut dengan menggunakan aplikasi Telegram dan WhatsApp sebagai wadah interaksi. Penelitian ini dilakukan terhadap mahasiswa EFL di FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. Data dikumpulkan melalui grup Telegram yang melibatkan mahasiswa dan dosen pengampu mata kuliah tersebut. Bentuk interaksi berubah pada setiap pertemuan mingguan. Dari enam belas jenis pertanyaan yang teridentifikasi, pertanyaan yang diawali dengan kata "How" (Bagaimana) merupakan yang paling dominan, dengan frekuensi kemunculan sebanyak 68 kali (37,78%). Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa mahasiswa cenderung mengajukan pertanyaan yang bersifat penjelasan dan analitis, yang menuntut penyaji untuk menguraikan konsep, strategi pengajaran, serta penerapan ESP dalam kehidupan nyata. Jenis pertanyaan terbanyak kedua adalah pertanyaan yang diawali dengan kata "What" (Apa), dengan 33 kemunculan (18,33%), yang menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa sering mencari informasi faktual, klarifikasi, dan penjelasan rinci. Sebaliknya, pertanyaan mengenai frekuensi ("How often") dan orang tertentu ("Who") adalah yang paling jarang muncul, masing-masing hanya satu kali (0,56%), yang mengisyaratkan bahwa pertanyaan tentang frekuensi dan individu spesifik jarang diajukan selama diskusi berlangsung. Pandemi COVID-19 telah mengubah bentuk interaksi di kelas EFL di Indonesia. Oleh karena itu, sangat penting bagi guru dan dosen EFL di Indonesia untuk menganalisis bentuk interaksi terkini dalam lingkungan daring guna memastikan kualitas proses belajar-mengajar.

Kata Kunci: Pertanyaan, EFL, Sering, Kelas, Berulang

Abstract

This research aimed to find out the types of questions employed by the EFL in the classroom of TEFL; to identify the purpose of the questions by using Telegram and Whatts Up application as the framework. This research is conducted among the EFL students at FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. The data was taken via telegram group of the students and lecturers for the subject matter. The type of the interaction changed every week of the meeting. Among the sixteen identified question types, How questions were the most dominant, with 68 occurrences (37.78%). This finding indicates that students predominantly asked explanatory and analytical questions, requiring presenters to elaborate on concepts, teaching strategies, and real-life applications of ESP. The second most frequent type was What questions, with 33 occurrences (18.33%), showing that students frequently sought factual information, clarification, and detailed explanations. In contrast, How often and Who questions were the least frequent, each appearing only once (0.56%), suggesting that questions about frequency and specific individuals were rarely addressed during the discussions. The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed the form of interaction in the EFL classroom in Indonesia. Consequently, it is vital for Indonesian EFL teachers and lecturers to analyse the current form of interaction in online settings to ensure quality teaching and learning.

Keywords: Questions, EFL, frequently, classroom, frequently

INTRODUCTION

Interaction is very important in the EFL class between the lecturers and students for delivering the materials. It helps the students to get more understanding of the subject matter. Language is a way of delivering the messages to the lecturing for delivering the ideas and questions. By interacting to the lecturers, of course the students feel more confident and close to the lecturers in the process of teaching and learning. Mousa and Yahya (2023) explained that interaction between teachers and students are best way to manifest in the classroom process for better understanding of the subject matters. While Siregar and Lismay (2023) also showed the teachers on classroom questioning and information processing show that students need at least four seconds to understand a question, consider the available information, organize an answer, and begin to respond.

However, classrom is a place for teaching and learning process of EFL. This part includes classroom and learning. Sert and Walsh (2013) stated that classrooms are formal place for the lecturer and students to share the idea of the subject matters. For the TEFL, the teachers is an actor to share the knowledge for the students. Renandya (2012) mentioned in his research that the teacher is a person who delivers the information and knowledgde to the students. Rohmah (2002) explained that conversation and instructional exchanges between the teacher and the students are the best contribution of students' skill training. By doing the interaction to the teacher in the classroom, it helps them to learn the subject matters. The teacher creates communicative situation to achieve the curricular objective (Mohtar and Yusoff, 1997).

Interaction is very important in the EFL class between the lecturers and students for delivering the materials. It helps the students to get more understanding of the subject matter. Sunggingwati and Nguyen (2013) recommended the teachers to do interaction with the students in the classroom because it help the understanding of the subject matters. An interaction is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people. Duron et al. (2006) found that questions can be used to stimulate interaction between the teacher and the learners. By giivng questions to the students will invite the learners to respond the subject matters. Authentic questions are importants for the learners in the classroom (Zhang, 2008). The interaction can be questions and anwer in the activity of the teaching and learning EFL classroom. Sharpe (2008) drawn the dialogic classroom is characterized by questions being posed. Sharpe's study, McNeil (2012) said in the research that dialogic approaches to teaching are questions that elicit students' thoughts, reasons, experiences and opinions. Raising the questions to the students will invite the learners to be more critical in thinking. Giving questions can shift classroom discourse toward more constructivist-based practice (Chin, 2007). The previous study that had been done by Purnamasari et al. (2018) and Magfirah et al. (2022) the students are motivated if the learners get rewards and praised from the teacher. Lismay, I. (2021) found the students perception of teachers' basic teaching skills in the english classroom is very important.

By stimulating the learners in EFL can be done through questions. Wong (2010) mentioned giving questions to the learners is an important role in the classroom. This will construct the cognitive knowledge of the learners in the process of teaching and learning English. Duron et al. (2006) figured out that teacher can establish what is already known and extend beyond that to develop ideas and understandings by raising questions. Caram and Davis (2005) explained the teacher raised simple question. It tends to make the learners more easily to undertsand the subject matters in the learning. A question is an utterance which serves as a request for information. Questions are sometimes distinguished from interrogatives, which are the grammatical forms, typically used to express them. Kholisoh, M. N., & Bharati, D. A. L. (2021) said that respondint the teacher in English learning is the best way for the teacher to achieve the learning objective. There are some types of questions: Gabrielatos (1997) divides into genuine question, authentic question and pedagogical question. Genuine questions are sincere inquiries driven by a true desire to learn, understand, or connect. Unlike leading, rhetorical, or sarcastic questions that carry hidden agendas or pre-made conclusions, genuine questions are open-minded and asked without strings attached. An authentic question is a sincere inquiry driven by genuine curiosity. The person asking truly does not know the answer, is open to new perspectives, and is eager to learn from the respondent A pedagogical question is a query used as a teaching strategy rather than a genuine request for information. It is designed to stimulate critical thinking, assess understanding, and encourage students to construct their own knowledge. Farahian and

Rezaee (2012) classified questions into open/closed question, display and referential question, and yes/no question. An open-ended question requires a detailed, elaborated answer rather than a simple "yes," "no," or one-word response. These questions invite the respondent to share thoughts, feelings, and stories in their own words. Display question refers to question given to the students in which the teacher already knows the answer. Referential question refers to question given to the students in which the teacher does not know the answer. Yes/no question requires yes or no answer. Richards and Lockhart (1996) categorized questions into procedural, convergent and divergent question. Procedural question refers to question which deal with classroom routine and procedure. Convergent question refers to question to encourage students to recall information. Divergent question refers to question which involve higher thinking level so that it encourages diverse responses of the students. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) categorized the forms of question into yes/no question, WH-question, and tag question. Yes/no question defines as question for which either yes or no is the expected answer. WH- question refers to question which is used to request specific information. A tag question (or question tag) is a short phrase added to the end of a statement to turn it into a question. It is primarily used to ask for confirmation, check information you believe is true, or prompt the listener to agree with you. In Australia, Sharpe's (2008) study found that modifying Kinds of Questions Making EFL Students Learn: Students' Perception 165 Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature, Vol 4(2), 2019 questions and formulate reasoning support their understanding of the process of historical inquiry. In Philippines, Delima's (2012) research stated The students are more easier to accept the simple questions from the teacher. In China, Yu's (2010) research recommended by interacing in referential question for the learners will stimulate them to study and enjoy in the classroom. It has been found in ESL context.

Methods

The method of the research is a descriptive qualitative research. Owen and Koh (2000: 221) mentioned that Descriptive research is a foundational, non-experimental design used to systematically observe and document the characteristics of a population, situation, or phenomenon. It answers the questions of *what*, *where*, *when*, and *how*, without manipulating variables or establishing cause-and-effect relationships. The purpose of this research is to describe the types of questions raising by the students in the telegram group of the subject matters. Next, the reseacher is to find out the types of responses by the students in the online platform media of teaching and learning process. This research is conducted at FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. The sources of data are the English learners who sit in the subject Introduction to Linguistics. There were 40 student that will be the participants in this research. The location of the research in on Jalan Sangnualuh no 04 Pematangsiantar , FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar.

- (1) Data collection: At this stage, the data is collected from the selected questions by the EFL students in the telegram and WA for the research. The researcher selects and categorizes the relevant questions for the needs of the research.
- (2) Identifying the questions: The researcher will mark and identify the questions which have been sent in the telegram and WA as the media of technology in EFL class of English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
- (3) Categorizing: Next, the reseacher categorize each questions into types and specific purpose of the meaning in the questions. For example WH questions with what, when, how, which, yes/no questions etc and the purpose of the questions (topic, example, theories and subject matters)
- (4) Interpretation: after identifying and categorizing the frequently asked question by the students, the reseachers calculate the percentage of the results in the table and diagram.
- (5) Concluding: the last stage is drawing the conclusion of the types of the questions and purpose in the frequently questions which have been asked by the students in EFL classroom.

Results and Discussion

The following section presents the results of the analysis of the **types of questions** identified in the students' questions during the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) presentation discussion. The percentage data illustrates the distribution of each question type used by the students. Each type of

question demonstrates distinctive characteristics reflected in its frequency of occurrence, providing a comprehensive overview of the questioning patterns employed during the discussion session.

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage of each type of question identified in the data.

Table 1 Frequency and Percentage of Question Types Used by Students during ESP Presentation Discussions

No.	Types of Questions	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	How	68	37.78
2	What	33	18.33
3	Why	14	7.78
4	Do	11	6.11
5	Which	10	5.56
6	Is	10	5.56
7	Can	7	3.89
8	Could	5	2.78
9	To what extent	5	2.78
10	Does	4	2.22
11	Are	3	1.67
12	Would	3	1.67
13	In what ways	3	1.67
14	Should	2	1.11
15	How often	1	0.56
16	Who	1	0.56
Total		180	100.00

From the table, the researcher finds some types of questions that frequently asked by the students in the classroom of EFL. Below are some examples of the questions which were taken from the data:

1. “How” Questions: How questions are the most dominant type, appearing 68 times. This indicates that students tended to ask explanatory and analytical questions, encouraging presenters to explain concepts, processes, reasons, and possible solutions in greater detail. The high frequency suggests that students were more interested in obtaining deeper understanding rather than simple factual information. *-You explained that ESP is designed based on learners’ needs and specific fields, such as business, medicine, and engineering. But in one class, students can have different English levels and different goals. **How** can a teacher make ESP lessons that are still useful for all students?*

*-You said that ESP is closely related to real-life situations and future jobs. However, some students may not have enough experience in the field they are learning. **How** can teachers help students practice real communication in class even if they do not have real work experience yet?*

2. “What” Questions: What questions appear 33 times, making them the second most frequent type. These questions were mainly used to seek factual information, clarification, definitions, and further explanations related to the ESP topics discussed during the presentations.

*-You mentioned that ESP uses authentic materials such as articles, reports, manuals, emails, and real conversations. However, these materials are sometimes too difficult because they contain technical terms and complex language. **What** can teachers do to help students understand these materials more easily without changing their real meaning?*

*-In real classroom situations, **what** do you think usually causes students to feel culture shock during speaking or interaction activities?*

3. “Why” Questions: With 14 occurrences, Why questions demonstrate students' curiosity about reasons, justifications, and underlying principles. These questions required presenters to provide logical explanations rather than brief answers.

*-In your opinion, **is** speaking less important than writing in some ESP fields? **Why**?*

*-Assessment in ESP is considered more complex than in general English. **Why** is this the case, and **how** can teachers ensure that assessment remains valid and reliable?*

4. “Do” Questions: Do questions occur 11 times. They were generally used to ask for opinions, confirmation, or agreement regarding specific issues in English for Specific Purposes.

*-**Do** you think authentic materials always help students, or **can** they sometimes make learning harder?*

*-**Do** you feel ESP learning is already relevant to your future career?*

5. “Which” Questions: Which questions appear 10 times, showing that students frequently asked presenters to make comparisons or select the most appropriate option among several alternatives.

*-If instructional time is very limited, **which** language skill should be prioritized in ESP, and why?*

*- If AI tools can generate emails, reports, and technical presentations in perfect English, **which** ESP skills are still essential for humans to master?*

6. “Is” Questions: Is questions also occur 10 times. These questions mainly function to confirm statements, verify information, or ask whether certain situations or concepts are applicable in ESP contexts.

*-**Is** ESP relevant in real life?*

*- **Is** task-based learning (TBL) always effective in ESP contexts, or **are** there situations where it might not work well? Provide justification.*

7. “Can” Questions: With 7 occurrences, Can questions focus on possibility, ability, or capability. Students commonly used these questions to ask whether particular teaching strategies, learning methods, or language skills could be applied effectively.

*-**Can** ESP be effectively taught if learners do not yet have strong foundations in General English?*

8. “Could” Questions: Could questions appear 5 times. These questions were generally expressed politely when requesting explanations, examples, or possible solutions from the presenters.

*- **Could** the best ESP not teach language, but teach how to learn language from original work documents?*

*- **Could** you please provide a case study on "miscommunication" due to incorrect language use?*

9. “To what extent” Questions: The phrase To what extent occurs 5 times, indicating that students attempted to ask more critical and evaluative questions. Rather than asking for simple facts, these questions encouraged presenters to discuss the degree or effectiveness of particular ESP concepts.

*- **To what extent** does the concept of restricted language in ESP limit learners’ overall language development, and **can** it still be considered effective for long-term communication?*

10. “Does” Questions: Does questions appear 4 times, mainly seeking confirmation regarding specific concepts, methods, or situations discussed in the presentations.

*- Considering that “English as a Restricted Language” limits language use to fixed patterns, **to what extent** can this approach hinder learners’ ability to communicate flexibly in unpredictable real-world situations?*

11 “Are” Questions: With 3 occurrences, Are questions were used to verify conditions or situations and to ask whether particular statements were generally true.

*- ESP teaching requires flexibility and creativity. **Are** all teachers sufficiently prepared for this level of adaptability*

12. “Would” Questions: Would questions also occur 3 times. They mainly represented hypothetical situations, allowing presenters to explain possible actions or decisions in certain ESP contexts.

*-You are teaching a class with students from different majors (engineering, economics, healthcare). **Would** you use the same approach for all of them? **Why** or **why not**?*

13. “In what ways” Questions: In what ways appears 3 times. These questions encouraged presenters to explain different approaches, strategies, or methods in greater detail, resulting in more elaborate discussions.

*- **In what ways** can the scarcity of authentic, field-specific learning materials impact the effectiveness of ESP programs, and **how** can educators overcome this challenge to better align teaching with professional language needs?*

*- **In what ways** can speaking skills improve students’ confidence in professional communication?*

14. “Should” Questions: Should questions occur 2 times, reflecting students' interest in recommendations, suggestions, and appropriate actions in ESP teaching and learning.

*-You mentioned that many ESP teachers do not have enough background knowledge about the students’ field, such as medicine, law, business, or engineering. Because of this, teachers may not fully understand the technical terms or real communication used in that field. My question is, **how** can teachers still create meaningful lessons if they are not experts in the students’ future profession? **Should** they work together with subject teachers or professionals from that field?*

15. “How often” Questions: How often appears only once, indicating that questions concerning frequency were rarely raised during the presentations.

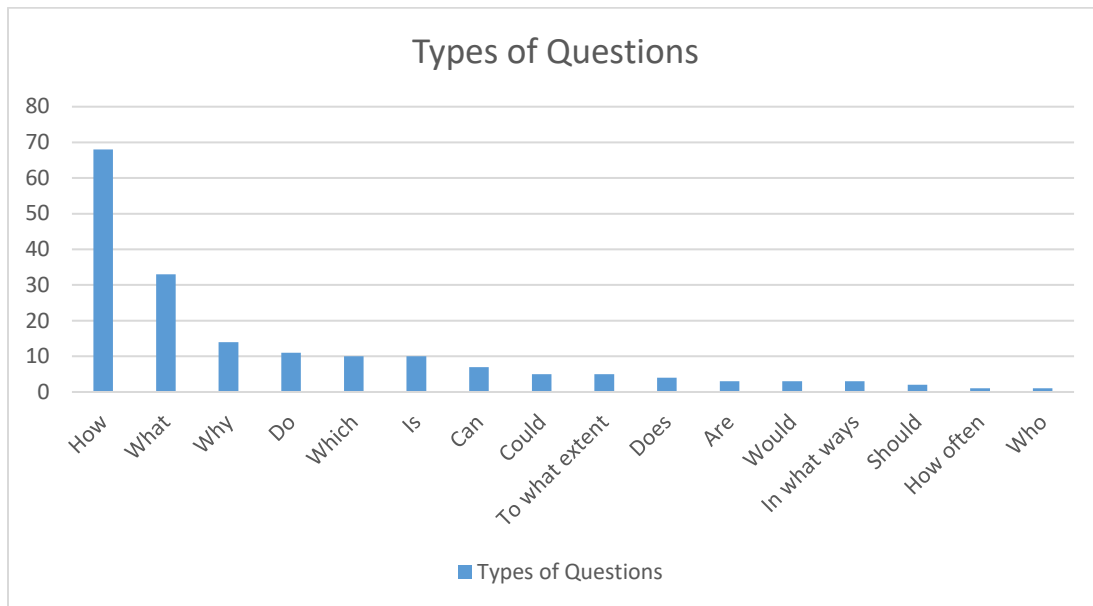
*- Needs analysis is done before teaching, but **how often** should it be updated to remain relevant in rapidly changing professional fields?*

16. “Who” Questions: Who is the least frequent question type, appearing only once. This suggests that identifying specific individuals or groups was not a primary concern during the discussion sessions.

*- From your explanation, you mention that ESP is based on why learners need English, not just what they learn. So imagine two broadcasters: one has perfect grammar but doesn’t understand broadcasting context, and the other has average grammar but understands cues, tone, and live situations. In a sudden breaking news moment, **who** will perform better and **why** could “less perfect English” actually be more effective in this case?*

*- **Why** is English for Specific Purposes (ESP) important for students who want to succeed in their academic studies or future careers?*

Distribution of Question Types in Students' Questions during ESP Presentation Discussions



The results of the types of questions can be divided into 16 : (questions with how, what, why, do, which, is, can, could, to what extent, does, are, would, in what ways, hould, how often, who). How questions are the most dominant type, appearing 68 times. What questions appear 33 times, making them the second most frequent type. These questions were mainly used to seek factual information, clarification, definitions, and further explanations related to the ESP topics discussed during the presentations. Why Questions: With 14 occurrences, Why questions demonstrate students' curiosity about reasons, justifications, and underlying principles. Do questions occur 11 times. Which questions appear 10 times, showing that students frequently asked presenters to make comparisons or select the most appropriate option among several alternatives. Is questions also occur 10 times. These questions mainly function to confirm statements, verify information, or ask whether certain situations or concepts are applicable in ESP contexts. Can Questions: With 7 occurrences. Could questions appear 5 times. To what extent Questions: The phrase To what extent occurs 5 times, indicating that students attempted to ask more critical and evaluative questions. Does questions appear 4 times, mainly seeking confirmation regarding specific concepts, methods, or situations discussed in the presentations. Are Questions: With 3 occurrences. Would questions also occur 3 times. In what ways appears 3 times. These questions encouraged presenters to explain different approaches, strategies, or methods in greater detail, resulting in more elaborate discussions. Should questions occur 2 times. How often appears only once, indicating that questions concerning frequency were rarely raised during the presentations. Who is the least frequent question type, appearing only once. This suggests that identifying specific individuals or groups was not a primary concern during the discussion sessions.

Research Findings

Based on the results, there are 16 types of questions (questions with how, what, why, do, which, is, can, could, to what extent, does, are, would, in what ways, hould, how often, who).from the data analysis. The percentage data illustrates the distribution of each question type used by the students. Each type of question demonstrates distinctive characteristics reflected in its frequency of occurrences. How questions were the most dominant, with 68 occurrences (37.78%). type was What questions, with 33 occurrences (18.33%), showing that students frequently sought factual information, clarification, and detailed explanations. How often and Who questions were the least frequent, each appearing only once (0.56%).

Discussion

This research is conducted among the EFL students at FKIP Universitas HKBP Nommensen Pematangsiantar. The purpose is to find out the types of questions employed by the EFL students in the classroom of TEFL; to identify the purpose of the questions by using Telegram and Whatts Up application as the framework. The data was taken via telegram group of the students and lecturers for the subject matter. Based on the overall analysis, a total of 180 identified question types were found in students' questions during the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) presentation discussions. Among the sixteen identified question types, How questions were the most dominant, with 68 occurrences (37.78%). This finding indicates that students predominantly asked explanatory and analytical questions, requiring presenters to elaborate on concepts, teaching strategies, and real-life applications of ESP. The second most frequent type was What questions, with 33 occurrences (18.33%), showing that students frequently sought factual information, clarification, and detailed explanations. In contrast, How often and Who questions were the least frequent, each appearing only once (0.56%), suggesting that questions about frequency and specific individuals were rarely addressed during the discussions. Overall, the findings reveal that students preferred open-ended question types, particularly How and What, rather than closed-ended yes/no questions. This pattern suggests that the presentation discussions encouraged critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and deeper exploration of ESP concepts rather than simple confirmation or factual responses. Consequently, the dominance of explanatory question types reflects students' active engagement in developing a deeper understanding of English for Specific Purposes. Interaction is very important in the EFL class between the lecturers and students for delivering the materials. It helps the students to get more understanding of the subject matter. Sunggingwati and Nguyen (2013) recommended the teachers to do interaction with the students in the classroom because it help the understanding of the subject matters.

CONCLUSION

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) categorized the forms of question into yes/no question, WH- question, and tag question. Yes/no question defines as question for which either yes or no is the expected answer. The results of the research presents that How questions were the most dominant, with 68 occurrences (37.78%). type was What questions, with 33 occurrences (18.33%), showing that students frequently sought factual information, clarification, and detailed explanations. How often and Who questions were the least frequent, each appearing only once (0.56%). The results of the types of questions can be divided into 16 : (questions with how, what, why, do, which, is, can, could, to what extent, does, are, would, in what ways, hould, how often, who). How questions are the most dominant type, appearing 68 times. WH questions (1) indicate that students tended to ask explanatory and analytical questions, encouraging presenters to explain concepts, processes, reasons, and possible solutions in greater detail. The high frequency suggests that students were more interested in obtaining deeper understanding rather than simple factual information. (2) to seek factual information, clarification, definitions, and further explanations related to the ESP topics discussed during the presentations. (3) required presenters to provide logical explanations rather than brief answers. (4) identifying specific individuals or groups was not a primary concern during the discussion sessions. While yes/no questions intend (1) to ask for opinions, confirmation, or agreement regarding specific issues in English for Specific Purposes. (2) ask for requesting explanations, examples, or possible solutions from the presenters. (3) reflecting students' interest in recommendations, suggestions, and appropriate actions in ESP teaching and learning.

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