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Study on EFL Teacher Questions at a University in China: Focusing on Question Types and Questioning Language*

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Considering that teacher questions are crucial input source in EFL setting, this research is a study on teacher questions in university classes in China. The purpose of the study is to find out the frequency of teacher question types and also, the influence of EFL teachers' questioning language, English or Chinese, on students' output in EFL classes. The participants in this study are five university teachers and 168 students in China. The study adopts mixed research methods: quantitative and qualitative methods. Classroom observation and questionnaires are used to collect the data with the help of online software *Questionnaire Star*. Cross-coding analysis was carried out. It is found that questions for comprehension check, display questions, and referential questions are widely used in EFL classrooms in China. Different question types have different functions and advantages, so it is suggested that EFL teachers use appropriate question types with awareness. Also, teacher questions using English results in higher English output from the students compared to questions asked in Chinese. Therefore, it is suggested that more English questions be used in EFL classroom instead of the students` mother tougue. Also, in-service teacher training on teacher questions is recommended.

[teacher question/China/university level/question type/EFL]

* This article is partially from Yu's 2022 PhD dissertation. [Study on Teacher Questions in EFL Setting at University Level in China]

I. INTRODUCTION

Different from natural communication context, in EFL settings, sufficient language input, interactive negotiation and output are conducive to language learning. Under such a premise, EFL researchers should pay attention to what types of questions teachers should ask under what circumstances to optimize the function of Teacher Question(TQ) (Liu, Zhang & Sun, 2015). It is believed that TQ is an important technique in EFL teaching. In many classes, question-and-answer takes up the majority of class time. According to classroom observations, TQ is considered to be one of the most widely used classroom techniques (Kim & Kellough, 1987).

One of the main objectives of EFL teaching is to develop students' language communication skills. As an effective teaching skill, TQ is an important source of language input and a good opportunity for language output, as well as an important way for teachers to lead students to participate in classroom activities (Jia, 2020). Effective classroom question can improve the level of teachers' teaching behavior, increase the number of students' participation in class, promote the communication and interaction between teachers and students, and thus improve students' communicative ability (Liu et al., 2015).

The quality of TQ decides the quality of the EFL class. It is widely believed that the key to good teaching lies in the ability to ask good questions (Brualdi, 1998). In view of the wide applicability and important role of TQ, it has been the focus of language classroom research for many years (Nunan, 1991). TQ stimulates language input and output in EFL classroom. As an important part of classroom discourse, TQ is the main source of students' language input and the main motivation to students' output. TQ in EFL classes can prompt students to express their thoughts and emotions in the target language by answering questions, which is a way to initiate interaction in the classroom interaction process (Liu et al., 2015).

In recent years, the crisis of English majors in Chinese universities has become increasingly prominent due to the fact that the employment level is not high (Xiao, 2020). In the recruitment process, most employers are not satisfied with the comprehensive English ability of the students, especially their oral communication ability (Han & Zhou, 2021). Therefore, it is timely to look into what goes on in English classrooms in China. Influenced by the traditional culture in China, most students are used to being silent in class, trying to listen to their teachers without actively participating in class activities (Jia, 2020). It is thus challenging for English teachers to motivate students' participation for the opportunities of language practice in such EFL settings. Therefore, for improving the quality of teaching, motivating students' participation, and stimulating output in the target language, the researchers chose to look into TQ used at a university in China. To achieve the research purpose, this study was conducted based on the following

research questions:

1. What question types are used by EFL teachers at a university in China?
2. How does Teacher Questioning by using English or Chinese in EFL classroom influence students' response?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Question Types

Researchers have categorized questions in various ways with consideration of questions' different functions and focuses. Long and Sato (1983, p.269) divided teachers' questions into "echoic" (response questions, that is, teachers repeatedly ask the question to ensure learners' understanding) and "epistemic" (cognitive questions, that is, questions used to acquire information) from the perspective of questioning function. These two types are further divided into seven sub-classifications (see Table 1), i.e. Comprehension Check (COM), Clarification Request (CLA) , Confirmation Check (CON), Referential Question (REQ), Display Question (DQ), Expressive Question (EQ), Rhetorical Question (RHQ), and Managerial Question (MQ) (Kong & Li, 2007). For example, "Does everyone understand 'polite'?" is a Comprehension Check Question which functions to ensure students' understanding of a concept or part of the learning unit.

TABLE 1
Types of EFL Teacher Questioning (Long & Sato, 1983; Kong & Li, 2007)

Classification	Sub-classification	Function	Example
Echoic Question	Comprehension Check (COM)	To ensure students' understanding of a concept or unit before the instructor proceeds to new course material	All right? OK? Does everyone understand "polite"?
	Clarification Request (CLA)	To allow a user to ask about some feature (e.g. the meaning or form) of an utterance, or part thereof	What do you mean? I don't understand, what?
	Confirmation Check (CON)	To elicit confirmation of whether its user correctly heard the previous utterance	S: Carefully. T: Carefully? Did you say "he"?
Epistemic Question	Referential Question (REQ)	To instigate genuine communication, thereby facilitating less restricted discourse and promoting	Why didn't you do your homework?

	greater creativity in the classroom	
Display Question (DQ)	To put knowledge or information on public display	What's the opposite of "up" in English?
Expressive Question (EQ)	To present emotional or iconic expressity	It's interesting the different pronunciations we have now, but isn't it?
Rhetorical Question (RHQ)	To be used pragmatically as assertions whose content is the implied answer to the question	Why did I do that? Because...
Managerial Question (MQ)	To manage or control the classroom	Listen carefully, OK?

Among the seven sub-classifications, display question and referential question account for the largest proportion in ESL/EFL teachers' questions, so they are always the focus of researchers' attention (Boyd & Rubin, 2006; Farahian & Rezaee, 2012). Display question refers to the question to which the teacher has known the answer in advance and its main purpose is to check the students' mastery and understanding of the knowledge they have learned, while referential question refers to the questions to which the teacher does not have the answers but tries to seek information from the students (Kong & Li, 2007).

Rodriguez and Schlangen (2004) found that clarification request seems to be a very local phenomenon in TQ. In their corpus 95% of all clarifications target the immediately preceding utterance. This high number might reflect the task-oriented nature of the corpus. Smoleń-Wawrzusiszyn (2006) characterizes expressive question, and states that it belongs to the group of the so-called surface questions. The classification of expressive questions has been conducted on the basis of the methodology of pragmatic questions. In the material under analysis there are three principal types of interrogative sentences: postulative, declarative, and deliberative expressions.

Based on continuous observation and analysis of class notes, Kong and Li (2007) believed that management type questions should be added, such as: "Please turn to Page101, all right?" "Listen carefully, OK?" And so on. This kind of problem is mainly used to manage and control the classroom, so as to make the teaching activities smoothly.

2. Teacher Talk

There are various definitions and functions of teacher talk in EFL classroom. Teachers should have the awareness of using English which is the input to students' learning. Teacher talk refers to the mode of teachers' verbal interaction in the classroom context and is the language used by teachers to organize teaching activities in class. The concept of

teacher talk can refer to the teaching language of teachers in different courses or all classes. However, since this term was first proposed in the field of second language acquisition, teacher's discourse in a narrow sense refers to the target language of teachers in foreign language classes (Chen, 2007).

Teacher talk is a bridge between teachers and students in the classroom (Yang, 2020). The most important function of teacher talk lies in that it is the teaching content, because language itself plays a demonstrative role in the input of the target language, and is the source and important approach of language input required by learners (Wu, 2013). Nunan (1991) points out that teacher talk is not only a tool for engaging and organizing teaching, but also a key to both classroom teaching organization and language acquisition of students as well as an important way of language input.

The teacher's language awareness refers to the teacher's understanding of the whole language and the specific language taught, including knowledge and beliefs (Andrews & SvalBerg, 2017). In a narrow sense, language consciousness refers to grammatical knowledge (explicit and systematic language knowledge); in a broad sense, it includes teachers' perception of language as a whole and their sensitivity to students' language difficulties (Andrews, 2007; Andrews & Svalberg, 2017). Improving teachers' language awareness plays a positive role in improving teaching effectiveness (Svalberg, 2012).

In the comprehensible Input Hypothesis, Krashen (1985) emphasizes that the most basic approach to language acquisition is the understanding of language input, so language teaching should try to increase learners' comprehensible language input. Krashen points out that the so-called comprehensible input firstly refers to the language material that the learners can understand. Secondly, language materials should be slightly higher than learners' language knowledge and ability. English teacher's discourse can provide students with more comprehensible language input on the premise of creating more language input and communicative situations for students. Krashen believes that the ability to use language is acquired through long-term exposure to comprehensible corpus, which is an imperceptible process. However, Krashen only focuses on the discussion of input, but neglects the output. Since the 1980s, many foreign scholars have begun to study the important role of output in second language acquisition (Ellis, 2006).

Swain (1985) proposes the "Output Hypothesis", suggesting that if one wants to learn an accurate and fluent second language, he should consider not only comprehensible input, but also comprehensible output. Later, Swain further elaborates that "output" plays a role of stimulating attention, detecting and metalinguistic functions in second language learning. According to Swain's Output Hypothesis, the functions of output have been summarized and the importance of comprehensible output has been stressed in classroom interaction.

3. Teacher Question

Classroom interaction includes a significant amount of questions asked by the teachers (Brown, 2001). Especially, the act of questioning and answering occurring between teachers and students is much more frequent than any other technique employed in EFL classrooms (Richards, 2003). The amount of the questions identified in the language classrooms provides evidence of the significance of the questioning technique.

As a crucial element of teacher-talk in English classes, TQ is the main teaching behavior that promotes the interaction between teachers and students (Dong, 2019). It is agreed that TQ plays an important role in EFL teaching with its significance and functions.

How to acquire good effects of TQ in ESL and EFL teaching has been researched. In earlier studies, Long and Sato (1983) and White and Lightbown (1984) identified a total of 938 questions in six elementary English as a Second Language classrooms and approximately 200 questions per class period, respectively. Gall (1984) states that over a half classroom talk consists of question-answer exchanges. In consequence, teachers create an atmosphere where learners can express themselves and interact with each other (Walsh, 2013). Hence, teachers' questions cannot be detached from classroom interaction (Vebriyanto, 2015).

In the current English teaching process, there are still many problems worthy of improvement in class questions, such as poor correlation between the questions asked and the classroom theme, the problems are unexpected; the question is not asked properly, so that the answer is not the question or contrary to what you want; the problem itself is not challenging, learning is in a rut, and so on (Hu, 2014).

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

1. Participants

The participants of this study were teachers and students of the English Department at a university in China. This university has over 23,000 students, 440 faculty members and 1,100 staff and offers many courses in Liberal Arts, Management, Education, as well as Science and Engineering.

Purposeful sampling was employed in this study that specifically sought the effects of class questions of EFL teachers. Five teachers out of 80 English teachers were chosen as the target sample based on having five or more years of teaching and high ratings from students' evaluations and that taught larger class sizes. Since this study aimed to look at teacher questions, the researcher wanted to make sure to include experienced teachers with

good ratings so that the results may benefit other less experienced teachers. For research purposes they were named as Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Teacher 3, Teacher 4, and Teacher 5. The information of the participants, including the teachers and the students, is summarized in Table 2 and Table 3.

TABLE 2
Information of Teachers as Participants

Teacher	Gender	Age	Degree	Course
Teacher 1	Female	45	Master	Intensive Reading
Teacher 2	Female	41	Master	International Business
Teacher 3	Female	34	Master	Business English Writing
Teacher 4	Female	47	Master	English Essay Reading
Teacher 5	Male	50	Doctor	English Essay Reading

TABLE 3
Information of Students as Participants

Class	Student year	Number of students	Female/Male	Teacher
Class 1	2	35	30/5	Teacher 1
Class 2	2	23	23/0	Teacher 2
Class 3	3	52	46/6	Teacher 3
Class 4	2	29	29/0	Teacher 4
Class 5	2	29	29/0	Teacher 5
Total	-	168 students	157/11	5 teachers

As shown in Table 2, the courses looked into were English Essay Reading, Intensive Reading, International Business, and Business English Writing. The teachers were all female except one male teacher. After the teacher participant selection, the students in the classes naturally became student participants. Table 3 shows that the courses were mainly for sophomores except the writing class. There were 157 female students and 11 male students, summing up to 168 students in total. All the students were from the English Department specializing in either ‘English Education’ or ‘Business English’.

2. Data Collecting Methods

To realize the research purpose, a mixed method was adopted. Two kinds of data - classroom observation and student questionnaire - were collected. The data were collected

in fall semester of 2021. As shown in Table 4, classroom observation was recorded three times via audio/video recording. Each class lasted 90 minutes. Therefore, a total of 15 classes were observed. Informal interviews were taken for detailed analysis. Consent was given by all participants. Data collection methods are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4
Data Collecting Methods

Research questions	Data collection methods	Details
RQ1: What question types are used by EFL teachers at a university in China?	- Classroom observation - Questionnaire	- 90 minute class - Observed 3 times for each teacher -student questionnaires (168 students) - teacher questionnaires (5 teachers)
RQ2: How does Teacher Questioning by using English or Chinese in EFL classroom influence students' response?		

Questionnaire assisted the classroom observation for confirming the reliability of the data and acquire more profound understanding of TQ in different EFL classes in a micro-contextual study. Student questionnaires and teacher questionnaires were conducted in order to find out the perceptions on TQ. The reason behind the triangulation was that the strengths of the various data gathering tools would complement each other and offset each method's respective weaknesses (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012).

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, SPSS 26.0 was used to analyze the reliability of the questionnaire results. The Cronbach's α reliability coefficient is the most commonly used reliability coefficient and as shown in Table 5, the higher the reliability coefficient, the more reliable the measurement. George and Mallery (2003, p.231) provided the rules of thumb shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Reliability Criterion

Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability
$\alpha<0.60$	Poor
$0.60<\alpha<0.70$	Questionable
$0.70<\alpha<0.80$	Acceptable
$0.80<\alpha<0.90$	Good
$0.90<\alpha$	Excellent

TABLE 6
Reliability Statistics for Questionnaire

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items	Number of items
Participation	0.861	0.875	3

Opportunity	0.726	0.729	3
Quality	0.858	0.858	3
Input	0.724	0.731	3
Suggestion	0.814	0.836	4
Total	0.908	0.915	16

Table 6 shows the Cronbach's α coefficient value of the questionnaire regarding questions 2 to 17 on participation, opportunity, quality, input, and suggestion. Even though some items in the questionnaire show lower results, it is found that the Cronbach's α coefficient value of the questionnaire as a whole is greater than 0.9, and the Cronbach's α value based on the standardized term is greater than 0.9. This indicates that the quality of the questionnaire is ideal. In summary, the data results in this dissertation pass the reliability test.

3. Data Analysis

Qualitative coding is an integral part of data analysis (Park & Lee, 2010). Sorting data into meaningful categories is essential to sound qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2005). Coding data is the process of reducing raw data into manageable pieces to allow quick retrieval of relevant pieces of information.

In this study, audio/video taping during classroom observation allowed for accurate data transcription. All the raw data collected from the study were analyzed and coded. For example, the question types frequently used in EFL classes, and influence of TQ language on students' English output. The detailed coding procedure was as follows.

The transcription of classroom observation data was conducted and categorized artificially by the researcher. Before the classroom observation recordings were transcribed, the contents for teachers' questions and corresponding answers were sorted and chosen. The question types and amount, the English questions and answers as well as Chinese questions and answers were measured separately.

The questionnaires were analyzed with a statistical method to figure out the percentage of students' agreement and the average score of each module of the questions, which helped to conduct a comparison of effectiveness of question types among different EFL classes. The questionnaire data were coded with the assistance of an online statistic system offered by the *Questionnaire Star* software, which was one of the most widely used software for distributing and collecting online questionnaires in China. *Questionnaire Star* software provided a scoring system for the Likert Scale, therefore the average scores could be measured from the students' questionnaires.

A cross-coding analysis allowed for an investigation of data themes and patterns.

Analyzing core data themes, consistent data patterns, and data anomalies prompted relevant conclusions to answer the current research questions. Once the initial coding was done according to the research questions, themes were determined. The coded data were then regrouped into subject categories to ensure there was sufficient evidence to support emergent findings. Yin (2009) believes that this is the best strategy for analyzing case study data. After all data were coded, the results of data analysis were organized into data results.

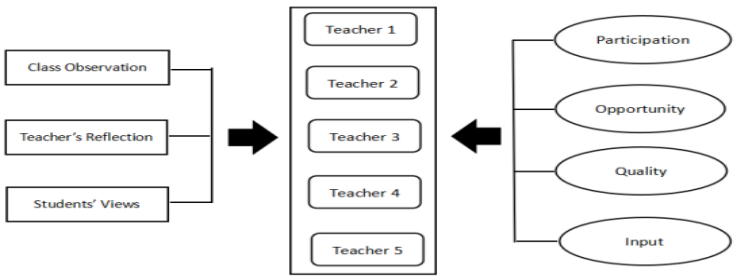
IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Frequency of Question Types in EFL Classroom

Effective questioning should enable students to give a corresponding and complete response and stimulate students' sense of participation (White & Lightbown, 1984). The effectiveness of teachers' question types in EFL classes are usually judged from a few aspects: whether they can encourage students' participation (Finkel, 1999), whether students are offered the opportunity to answer (Man, 2017), whether the questions have high quality, and whether they give enough English input (Tan, 2007).

Based on the above mentioned research of effective questions, four key words were drawn, i.e. participation, opportunity, quality, and input, as the reference to study effects of the five teachers' class questions. The three measures were be adopted in different EFL classes, that is, class observation, teachers' reflection, and student views(see Figure 1). These methods and criteria can reflect why the EFL teachers use those question types in their classes.

FIGURE 1
Methods and Criteria Reflecting the Frequency of Question Types



The five teachers' classes were observed based on the classification of question types in

Table 1, which includes comprehension check, clarification request, confirmation check, rhetorical question, display question, expressive question, rhetorical question, and managerial question. One representative 90-minute class of each teacher was taken for data accounting.

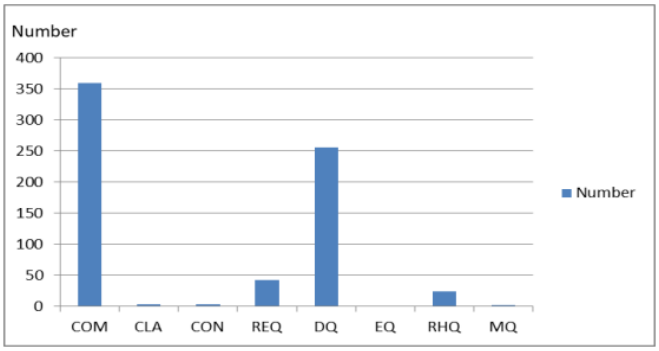
As shown in Table 7, the percentage of the question types are: 51.9% for comprehension check(COM), 0.4% for clarification request(CLA), 0.6% for confirmation check(CON), 6.2% for referential question(REQ), 37.0% for display question(DQ), 0.1% for expressive question(EQ), 3.5% for rhetorical question(RHQ), and 0.3% for managerial question(MQ).

TABLE 7
Question Types Used by Five Teachers in EFL University Classes

Question type	Classifi-cation	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4	Teacher 5	Total(%)
Echoic Question	COM	104	75	59	107	14	359(51.9)
	CLA	2	1	-	-	-	3(0.4)
	CON	-	-	4	-	-	4(0.6)
Epistemic Question	REQ	5	12	26	-	-	43(6.2)
	DQ	45	17	94	69	33	256(37)
	EQ	-	-	-	1	-	1(0.1)
	RHQ	-	22	1	1	-	24(3.5)
	MQ	-	-	1	1	-	2(0.3)
Total		156	127	185	179	47	692(100)

In terms of frequency, the type of comprehension check accounts for the largest number among all question types, followed by display question and then referential question, as shown in Figure 2. Meanwhile, expressive question, managerial question, clarification request and confirmation check questions were used only a few times in university EFL classes in China.

FIGURE 2
Frequency of Teacher Question Types in EFL University Classes



2. Influence of EFL Teachers' Questioning Language on Students' Response

The five teachers observed in this study have different habits of using preferred question types in class. In order to find out the answer to the second research question, the teachers' questioning language (English or Chinese) was analyzed.

Table 8 shows that Teacher 4 used 172 English questions, which is the largest number among all the teachers, followed by Teacher 1 who used 143 English questions, and Teacher 3 who used 87 English questions. The least number of English questions is by Teacher 2, with only 28 ones. The amount of time for English questions by teachers differs generally according to the number of questions. With no doubt, Teacher 4's amount of time for English questions is overwhelming, and the next one is Teacher 1. The other three teachers have similar amount of time for English questions though Teacher 2 has the least number of English questions.

It's clear from data shown in Table 8 that Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 tend to ask questions in Chinese, with 99 questions and 535 seconds of input, and 98 questions and 561 seconds of input respectively. Teacher 5 has the least number of Chinese questions with the least Chinese input as well.

TABLE 8
Language Usage in Teacher Questioning in EFL Classes

Teacher	Questions in English			Questions in Chinese		
	Number of Qs	Teacher Talk Time (sec)	Student Talk Time (sec)	Number of Qs	Teacher Talk Time (sec)	Student Talk Time (sec)
Teacher 1	143	766	1440	13	53	60
Teacher 2	28	463	270	99	535	120
Teacher 3	87	386	60	98	561	230
Teacher 4	172	965	720	7	49	5
Teacher 5	45	445	180	2	20	0

As observed, when the teachers ask questions in English, there will be more English output from the students; meanwhile, Chinese questions will result in Chinese output.

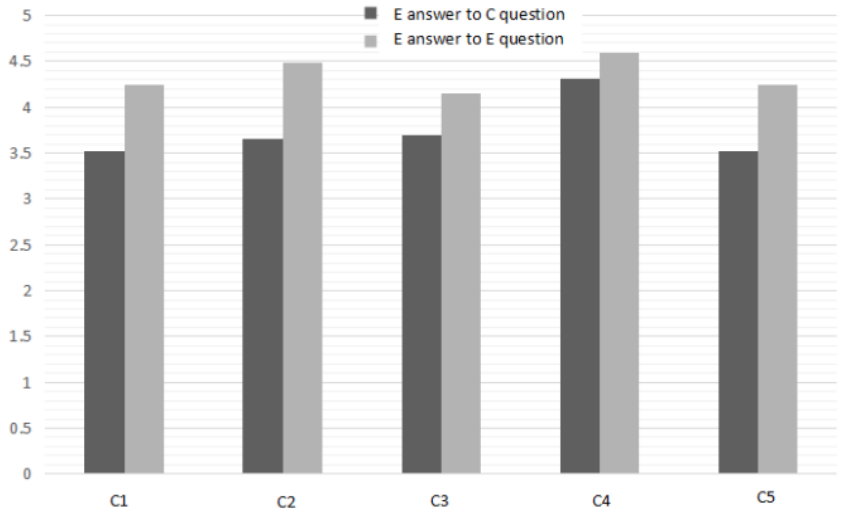
TABLE 9
English Output due to Teacher Questions in English

Teacher	Ranking order of T E input	Ranking order of Ss E output	Ss' tendancy to answer Qs in E	Ss' need to benefit from E Qs
Teacher 1	2	1	4.46	4.6
Teacher 2	3	3	4.48	3.91
Teacher 3	5	5	4.15	3.94
Teacher 4	1	2	4.59	4.59
Teacher 5	4	4	4.24	4.41

Based on the results of the students' questionnaire, a conclusion is made on the relations between teachers' English TQ input and students' English output (Table 9). Columns 2 and 3 are the ranking orders of English input and output in the classes based on the data of Table 8. Column 4 shows students' average scores given by *Questionnaire Star* for the tendency to answer teachers' English questions in English language. This is the results of question No. 13 in the students' questionnaire which is "When he/she asks questions in English, you tend to answer in English". Column 5 records students' average score for the question No. 14 in the students' questionnaire which is "You wish there are questions to be asked and answered in English so that you can benefit more".

As shown in Table 9, Teacher 1's class has high ranking orders in both English input and English output. Teacher 5 also has the concept of using English questions to benefit students; meanwhile the small number of questions has led to the low ranking orders of English input and output in class. But the high average scores in Column 4 and 5 illustrate that his students want to speak more in English. Teacher 4 has high ranking orders of English input and output. However, according to the results of the teacher questionnaire, she didn't think English questions can benefit students. Therefore, she didn't have the preference of using English questions in the classroom. Students in Teacher 2's and Teacher 3's classes have the lowest average scores for benefiting from English questions. Accordingly, knowing students' needs when TQ can help improve EFL teaching in terms of student output in the target language.

FIGURE 3
Average Scores for English Answers to Teachers' Chinese Questions vs. English Questions



Some EFL teachers tend to use the mother tongues for a large proportion of class questions, which will usually result in the students' answering questions in the same languages. According to the student questionnaires (Appendix, Q12, 13), the possibility of using English language to answer their teachers' Chinese questions is much lower than that to their English questions. The average scores for the former one versus the latter one are 3.52 (4.46), 3.65 (4.48), 3.69 (4.15), 4.31 (4.59), and 3.52 (4.24) respectively in the five classes (see Figure 3). Therefore, it can be concluded that TQ in English may result in more English output by the students compared to questions made in Chinese.

V. CONCLUSION

This study tried to understand and explain TQ in university EFL classes in China. By applying a mixed researching method, i.e. classroom observation and questionnaire, this study explored frequently asked question types in EFL classrooms and found out the influence of EFL teacher's questioning language on students' response as well as how to use the questions in EFL classroom to facilitate students' response. Research Question 1 aimed to find TQ types and the frequency. The second research question studied the influence of EFL teachers' questioning language, English or Chinese, on students' response. There were a few implications that emerged from these results.

For Research Question 1, it was found that three question types were the most widely

used in EFL classroom, i.e. question for comprehension check, display question, and referential question. Comprehension check could draw students' attention instead of meaningful answers. Display question could well display the contents of textbook; however, too many display questions might result in decreased interest of the students, which is reflected from the average score for "interest" in the student questionnaire. Referential questions are usually more thoughtful that could encourage students' critical thinking, which is shown from the students' response for the third question in the questionnaire.

For Research Question 2, the data showed that with more English input from the teacher, there could be more chances to students' English output. It was found via the student questionnaire that with higher desire to use English, the students seem to perform better in English output.

Implications for actions are aligned with the major findings of this study. The following actions for improving TQ in classrooms need to be considered by EFL teachers to promote educational practices that will benefit all students.

First, teachers should be aware of their question types in EFL classroom. Since different question types have their own functions and advantages as well as drawbacks, balanced question types need to be considered for serving different purposes, such as facilitating teaching procedure (display question), and practicing students' critical thinking (referential question). In order to help students participate fully in English classes and achieve the expected communication purpose, teachers need to adjust the way of asking questions at any time, use these two ways of asking questions interactively in teaching by making full use of their advantages, promote students' participation and improve the efficiency of language communication (Weng, 2008). To motivate students' participation, the TQ can be used in a conversational way.

Second, more use of the target language in EFL classrooms should be encouraged. To encourage students to have more English output, teachers should try to input more English in questioning, and encourage the students to speak in English or give some requirement on the usage of the target language. According to this study, most students wish to receive more English input and they have higher desire to use English to answer the teachers' English questions than Chinese questions. Teachers' language awareness will not only increase the proportion of English language to be used in teaching, but also greatly encourage the students' English output. English expressing ability is one of the most important evaluation criteria in EFL classes. In other words, teachers' language awareness should be promoted. The teacher's language awareness refers to the teacher's understanding of the whole language and the specific language taught, including knowledge and beliefs (Andrews & Svalberg, 2017). EFL teachers' workshops can focus on teacher questioning, question types and questions using the target language that could

be helpful for the students. In Sim's 2015 study, it was found that through intensive in-service teacher training, EFL teachers may have considerable impact on the teachers' perceptions including changes in development of linguistic competency and could develop new knowledge. Therefore, in-service teacher training may include notions of TQ and the effects of TQ in the EFL classroom.

Third, knowing students' needs on TQ can also help EFL teaching. According to the current study, it is clear from the comparative data of teachers and students that sometimes students do not view the effects of class questions the same as their teachers. In some cases, the teachers are over confident but they are not aware that their students' interest is decreasing due to the improper use of question types or the way of raising class questions, such as limited wait-time, or unequal chances to the silent students. In other cases, the teachers may get discouraged by the students' learning situation and have biased and passive judgement on themselves. Meanwhile, the fact might be just the opposite from the students' perspective. Therefore, to have an objective judgement of the class questions can help teachers adjust their methods in teaching and also benefit the students with their maintained interest in learning. It can be achieved from informal interviews or a formal questionnaire among the students.

The research of TQ in EFL classroom may contribute to EFL teaching, especially by providing reference for English major teachers to improve their teaching quality. It also benefits all college students with improved questioning methods and skills by the teachers in their teaching practice.

TQ can be influenced by different factors in various teaching contexts, among which a few factors were ignored due to the specific focus for this study, such as effects among different EFL courses, gender of both teachers and students (Mahmoud, 2020), and teaching experience (Winarta & Tahrun, 2021), which could be influential on TQ. Therefore, the future studies can concentrate on how TQ is influenced by the teaching experience and the gender of the teachers/students in EFL classes.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire for Students

Thank you very much for participating in the "Teacher Question" questionnaire about Professor _____'s _____ course, which is designed to support my academic research, namely, Teacher Questioning in EFL classes, and to provide reference for English major teachers to improve teaching quality. Thank you very much for taking the time to share your opinion. We will conduct an anonymous survey and hope you can answer the following questions objectively. The survey data will only be used for research purposes and will be kept confidential. Please rest assured. Thank you again for your support and cooperation!

Likert scale questions are used for questions 1~17 with numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 indicating "strongly disagree, disagree, average, agree, strongly agree" respectively.

1. Generally speaking, asking questions in his/her class has good effect.
2. You are interested in his/her questions.
3. You will take the initiative to answer his/her questions.
4. You will think actively about his/her questions.
5. He/She always offers equal opportunities to all students while asking questions.

6. Questions cover a large proportion of time in the class.
7. His/Her questions are clearly expressed and easily understood.
8. His/Her questions are moderate in difficulty.
9. He/She often asks thoughtful questions in class.
10. He/She rarely answers his/her own questions in class.
11. She/He rarely asks questions in Chinese.
12. When he/she asks questions in Chinese, you tend to answer in English.
13. When he/she asks questions in English, you tend to answer in English.
14. You wish there are questions to be asked and answered in English so that you can benefit more.
15. You wish the questions are thoughtful.
16. You wish there are questions not based on the textbook.
17. You wish there are questions to be asked and answered through software out of class.
18. What else do you suggest on Professor _____'s class questions?

Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Tertiary

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