

Questioning strategies analysis: Teachers' Practice and Students' view

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Abstract

This study aimed at finding (1) the types of lecturer's questioning strategies, (2) the perception of the students toward questioning strategies applied by the lecturer on student's learning activities in the class, and (3) the purposes of questioning strategies themselves. The research methodology used was descriptive qualitative with a total sample was 4 of lecturers and 17 of students which were taken by using a convenience sampling technique. The data were gathered by using interviews and qualitative questionnaires. The results showed that there were four types of questions as a questioning strategy that lecturers frequently used. The most frequently used strategy was a probing question and high order question. The other types of questioning strategies applied by the lecturers were factual questions and structuring questions. Regarding students' perceptions, the qualitative questionnaires showed that all of the students said that the questioning strategy was very important especially in guiding thinking, independent thinking, monitoring, and evaluation. Furthermore, the purposes of lecturers asking question to students were to gain attention, checking prior knowledge, checking to understand, enhancing knowledge, experimenting, and encouraging students' thinking. Therefore, it is expected that the lecturers will be aware of the importance of the questioning strategy in learning and encourage students to participate and engage more in effective classroom interaction.

Keywords: Question, questioning strategy, teachers' practice, students' view

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1. Introduction

The ultimate goal of communicative language teaching is to ensure that all the students are capable to communicate in target language. As a foreign language, English subject in Indonesia has been taught in either formal learning or informal learning. Due to this fact, the exposure of students to the target language is limited or taking place only in the classroom interaction.

The expected interaction in the classroom interaction should involve the active participation from both lecturer and student. However, this active participation expected to happen in the language classroom didn't work well as reported by Hadiani (2014) in her study. She confirmed that students in Indonesia in general lack of motivation and tend to be shy to participate in classroom.

Questioning behavior is one of the techniques that teachers generally employ in promoting and creating classroom interactions (Lynch, 1991). The appropriate questioning behavior will surely engage students to participate without feeling intimidated. In addition, the process of questioning requires "classroom interaction and real pupil involvement a good way to be executed successfully" (Gillies, 2004, p.197-213).

Based on the problem above the researchers there were 3 research question: 1. What are the questioning strategies applied by the lecturer in classroom interaction?, 2. What are the student's perceptions of the questioning strategies applied by the lecturer in classroom interaction?, 3. What are the purposes of questioning strategies applied by the lecturer in classroom? With the objectives of the research were to find out teachers' questioning strategies, students' perceptions of questioning strategies applied by the lecturer in classroom interaction, and the purposes of questioning strategies.

2. Literature Review

Rashid and Qaisar (2016) conducted a research on developing critical thinking through questioning strategy among fourth grade students. The population of this research is the fourth-grade elementary school in Lahore, Pakistan. The type of this research is qualitative. In addition, the result reveals that in increasing students' critical thinking, questioning strategy is needed to know the effectiveness in learning and teaching in the class to promote the students' critical thinking.

Moreover, Milawati & Suryati (2019) investigated EFL teacher's oral questioning. The focus of the study is to investigate the preservice teachers' thoughts about teachers' questions in an effective teaching context. This study has employed the qualitative case study approach as a research design. Findings indicate that among the four types of questioning strategies, redirecting was the most frequently used to initiate students' responses and to probe more into students' understanding.

Sujariati, Rahman, & Mahmud (2016) conducted research entitled English teachers' questioning strategies in EFL classroom at SMAN 1 bontomarannu. The population of this research is teachers in SMAN 1 bontomarannu, Gowa. This researcher used qualitative as a research design and discourse analysis as an approach to this research. For collecting the data, they used recording, observation, and interviews to complete their data. The researchers found that teacher using questioning strategy to apply the kind of questions that has been provided by the teacher in different sessions. The result of this research showed that using a questioning strategy gave positive feedback and responses to the students which is applied by the teacher in the EFL class.

2.1 Types of Question

There are some types of question which defined by Blosser P. E (1975) including:

2.1.1 Probing question

a. Clarifying

For instance:

- Will you please rephrase your statement?
- What, exactly do you mean?
- Could you elaborate on that point?
- What did you mean by the term...?

b. Increasing critical awareness

For instance:

- What are you assuming?
- What are you reason for thinking that is so?
- Is that all there is to it?
- How many questions are we trying to answer here?
- How would an opponent of this point of view respond?

c. Refocusing

For instance:

- If this true, what are the implications for...?
- How does john answer related to ...?
- Can you relate this to ...?
- Let's analyze that answer!

d. Prompting

For instance:

- What the square root of 94?
- What do you know about the square root of 94?

e. Redirecting to another student

For instance:

- What is theme of Hemmingway's Old man's and the sea?
- Can you elaborate on ...answer?

2.1.2 Factual question

a. Simple bit of information

For instance:

- Who was the leader of the free French forces during W.W.II?

- Who is the main character Margaret Mitchell's novel, gone with the wind?
- b. Facts organized into a logical order (sequence of events)
For instance:
 - What are the steps a bill goes through before it becomes a law?
- 2.1.3 Divergent questions
Questions with wrong answer which encourage exploration of possibilities. Required both concrete and abstract thinking to arrive at an appropriate responses.
For instance:
 - What might happen if congress passes law preventing the manufacture and sale of cigarettes in the United States?
 - How would the story have been different if John had been a tall, strong boy instead of disabled?
- 2.1.4 Higher order questions
 - a. Evaluation
For instance:
 - Which of two books do you believe contributed most to an understanding of the Victorian era? Why?
 - b. Inference
For instance:
 - We have examined the qualities these world leaders have in common. What might we conclude, in general, about qualities necessary for leadership? Why?
 - c. Comparison
For instance:
 - Is a mussel the same thing as calm?
 - d. Application
For instance:
 - Can you think of an example to fit this definition?
 - e. Problem solving
For instance:
 - How would you react towards dogs now?
 - Would the type, size, etc., of the dog make any difference as to how you react?
- 2.1.5 Affective questions
Question which elicit expression of attitude, values, or feelings of the student.
For instance:
 - How do you feel about that?
 - Is that important to you?
 - Would you like to ...?
- 2.1.6 Structuring questions
Question related to the setting in which learning is occurring
For instance:
 - Are there any questions?
 - Any further comment?
 - Is the assignment clear?
 - Would you repeat that?

2.2 Types of Classroom Interaction

Classroom interaction will happen by the interaction of the teachers and students. Dagarin (2004) stated that there are participants in classroom interaction, depending on who communicates with whom, as the follows :

2.2.1 Teacher – whole class

Tang (2010) investigated students respond to questions raised by teachers as teaching techniques in creating classroom interactions as applied by most EFL classroom contexts.

2.2.2 Teacher a group of students

This is interaction with each other precisely teachers and students, where teachers create groups of students with the aim of increasing student understanding and anticipation of uncontrolled classroom conditions.

2.2.3 Student – student

This interaction refers to the freedom of students to exchange ideas and information about learning. Therefore, it will provide benefits to students, especially students who do not understand the material provided by the teacher.

2.2.4 Student – teacher

This interaction will ask the response of the teacher as students will give questions to the teacher related to learning that has not been understood.

3. Methodology

This research employed descriptive qualitative research. According to Cresswell (2012, p. 183) “qualitative research is the study of inquiry in which the process relies on text and image data, has unique steps in data analysis, and draws on the diverse designs”. In this case, this research is an attempt to explore in detail the lecturers' questioning strategies and students' perceptions about questioning strategies applied by the lecturers which aim to describe the existing conditions of teacher questioning strategies in classroom interaction. The research participants were four English lecturers at Parahikma Institute of Indonesia and seventeen students of English Education Department by using convenience sampling technique and using interview and questionnaires to collect the data.

4. Findings

The findings of the research discuss two main areas: (1) lecturers’ questioning strategies, (2) students’ perceptions of questioning strategies applied by the lecturers, and (3) the purposes of questioning strategies.

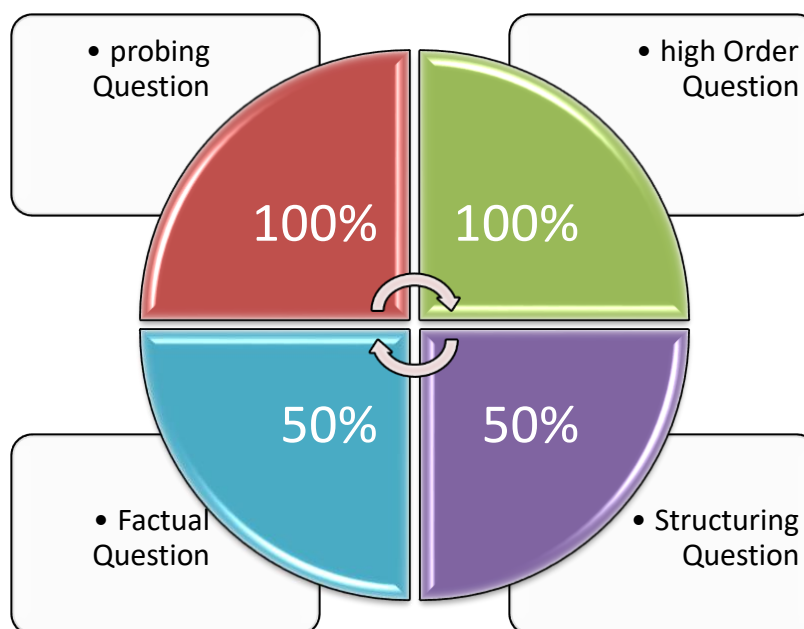
4.1 Teachers’ Questioning Strategies

This part deals with the questioning strategies used by the lecturers based on the interview result. The data was analysed using the questioning strategies model proposed by Blosser P. E (1975) to help the students to think. The types of questions are probing question, factual question, divergent question, high order question, affective question, and structuring question. As the summary of lecturer questioning strategy, the following table is presented.

Table 4.1 lecturers’ questioning strategies

No	Types	Lecturers			
		L1	L2	L3	L4
1	Probing question	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Factual question	✓	✓	-	-
3	Divergent question	-	-	-	-
4	High order question	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Affective question	-	-	-	-
6	Structuring question	✓	-	-	✓

The detail of the above table will be explained in more detail in following findings.



4.1.1 Probing Question

This question refers to clarifying students' understanding, whether students really understand or didn't understand the material provided by the lecturer. The most commonly used questioning strategy is probing questions. All of lecturers (100%) used this strategy noted in the interview. The detail of the above will be explained in more detail in the following transcript.

It depends on what subject i teach, for example, my teaching focus is grammar. Usually, after explaining, I immediately ask the students "do you understand?", "Is it clear", "do you explain again?" and something like that.

(L1, August 11, 2020).

The form of the question refers to various kinds, for example they learn past tense I tell them to make past tense sentences like "he went to the market yesterday" how to say it in English? That's my way of clarifying.

(L2, August 11, 2020)

The form of the question can be in the form of asking yes or no, a question that requires explanation, the form of the question is a kind of affirmation "do you understand the material or not?" if you understand "Can you provide examples like that?, and questions in the form of requests.

(L3, august 10, 2020)

Before students learn, we will ask about learning to what extent their understanding is in order to determine the direction of learning. In addition, in every initial meeting, for example, I have given one of the points of learning material. So the second meeting must be reconfirmed whether the students still remember the previous lesson.

(L4, August 9, 2020)

4.1.2 Factual Question

The strategy is a question that needs answers based on facts. Usually students are given reading materials such as articles, which are then asked by the lecturer according to the facts of the articles they read. This strategy, some of sample (50%) that used questioning strategy is "factual question" from the sample noted in the interview. The detail of the above will be explained in more detail in the following transcript.

For example, subjects that requires me to ask for something like reading an article, such as a discussion. Usually I ask students to ask each other but usually I am the one who asks more often because the students cannot form their own questions. So, when they can't produce questions, I will ask the types of questions I have that are related to the article, for example like "how do you define these terms?" how would you describe this term? " For example, I said what 3 aspects were there, then explained, so a question like that. So it all depends on the material.

(L1, August 11, 2020)

For example, according to this by using this, why do you think? Why can? Then more to explore how they can understand what i have to say. They reworked and developed what they understood from the lesson.

(L2, August 11, 2020)

4.1.3 High order Question

This strategy is very important question that used by lecturers to evaluate learning. High order question was the most frequently used the lecturers noted in the interview. All of lecturers (100%) used questioning strategy at aims to train students' abilities in critical, logical, reflective, creative thinking and evaluated. The detail of the above will be explained in more detail in the following transcript.

So usually i make my students think for themselves, for example a summary might repeat what they read usually questions like "how do you define these terms? Like in your own word define this or like a retell your own word. There are also questions about the article that students read and ask them to list advantages and disadvantages.

(L1, August 11, 2020)

When the level is high it will be different again, for example in the track in language teaching it does not lead to grammar but rather to critical thinking. For example, according to this by using this, why do you think? Why can? Then more to explore how they can understand what i have to say. They reworked and developed what they understood from the lesson. So the critical thinking is developing.

(L2, August 11, 2020)

At the beginning, the lesson is usually to activate knowledge before. So activate previous knowledge to familiarize and introduce topics to students. In the middle, make sure whether the student understands or not, whether the students are involved in the flow of the material or not, and follow the rhythm of learning, to ensure they are engaged. Then at the end it aims to strengthen, whether the students really understand or not from the beginning of the meeting to the end. So the question at the end is to conclude and strengthen.

(L3, August 10, 2020)

I always use questions, because we will conduct a learning evaluation, for example in the first meeting I had to find out my students' initial abilities in order to know the capacity in the students' academic competence. Before students learn, we will ask about learning to what extent their understanding is in order to determine the direction of learning. In addition, in every initial meeting, for example, I have given one of the points of learning material so the second meeting must be reconfirmed whether the students still remember the previous lesson. So I used this strategy questioning to assess and students could assess it.

(L4, August 9, 2020)

4.1.4 Structuring Question

This usually aims to find out whether students understand the material being taught or not. After the lecturer has finished explaining the material being taught, the lecturers asked questions to students. Some of sample (50%) that used this strategy "structuring question" from the sample noted in interview. The detail of the above will be explained in more detail in the following transcript.

Usually, after explaining, i immediately ask the students "do you understand?", "Is it clear", "could you explain again?" and something like that.

(L1, August 11, 2020)

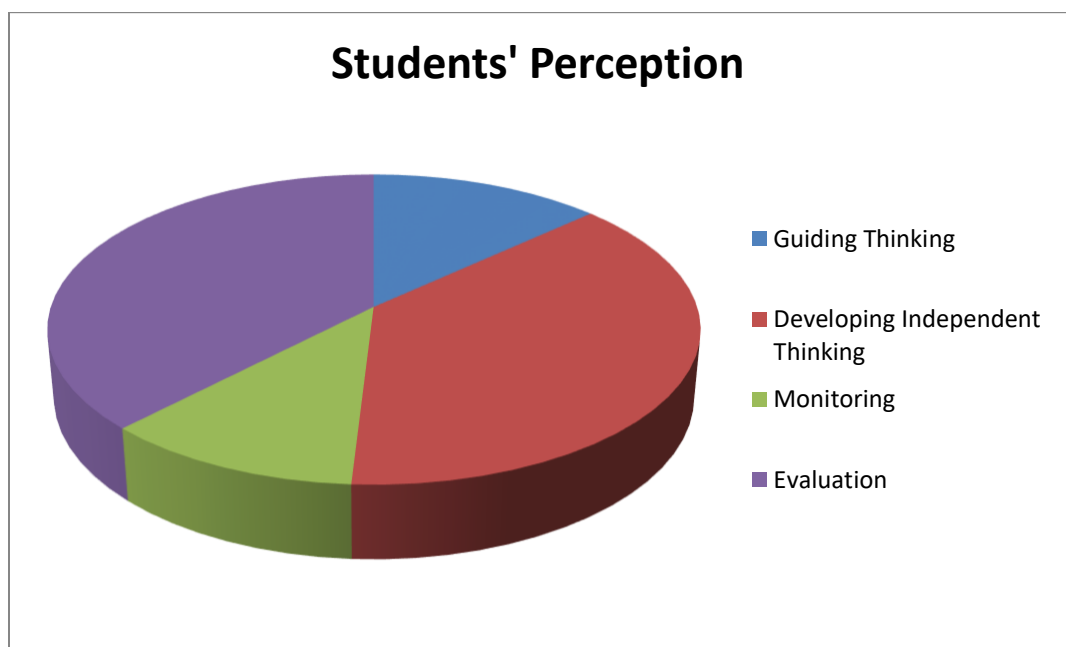
In addition, in every initial meeting, for example, I have given one of the points of learning material so the second meeting must be reconfirmed whether the students still remember the previous lesson. So I used this strategy questioning to assess and students could assess it.

(L4, August 9, 2020)

4.2 Students' Perception on the Importance of Questioning Strategies

From seventeen students as samples on qualitative questionnaires, all of sample (100%) said that questioning strategies was very important in learning. Questioning strategies play important roles, by using questioning strategies the student are being able to interact in learning, namely the interaction between lecturers and students, students, and students. Besides that, questioning strategy can improve students' understanding, reach the material goals, to fix what their students need, improve the weakness, measure students' understanding, evaluation, and enhancing students' skills. However, in this current research the researcher categories the important of questioning strategies into 4 parts, 1) guiding thinking, 2) independent thinking, 3) monitoring progress, and 4) evaluate.

The detail will be explained as follows:



4.2.1 Guiding thinking

The questioning strategy also acts as guiding thinking. Some of the students (35%) from the seventeen as sample noted in qualitative questionnaires said that the questioning strategy makes the students more broad-minded and become more critical students in their opinions. Besides that, it is also able to develop students' thinking abilities, helps students to think out of the box, gives good "ideas, increases students' knowledge to critical thinking, and train students' mindset. The detail of the above will be explained in more detail in the following transcript.

In my opinion questioning strategies applied by the lecturers in classroom interaction is quite good for students because they can develop students' thinking abilities and I think the questions from a lecturer are important because they can make us more broad-minded and become more critical students in their opinions.

(S6, August 6, 2020)

It is very important because then as students we can provide good ideas.
(S8, August 6, 2020)

Really essential as it helps us think out of the box and are able to be more confident and so forth.
(S11, August 6, 2020)

Because, in learning process absolutely the teacher will help us to increase our knowledge to critical thinking.
(S13, August 6, 2020)

The more question from the teacher they give to us the most we think out the box and teach us how to critical thinking.
(S14, August 6, 2020)

It is very important, because that way lecturers can train students' mindset.
(S15, August 6, 2020)

4.2.2 Developing Independent Thinking

All of students (100%) from the seventeen students as sample noted in questionnaire said that they were very allowed to think independently with the aim or reason to see students' creativity, increase critical thinking, and make students creative in thinking. The detail of the above will be explained in more detail in the following excerpts.

Strongly agree, because students can develop their own creativity from the answers they put forward.
(S1, August 5, 2020)

Yes, students are trained to be as independent as possible in thinking.
(S2, August 5, 2020)

In my opinion questioning strategies applied by the lecturers in classroom interaction is quite good for students because they can develop students' thinking abilities.
(S3, August 5, 2020)

Think independently could increase our creative thinking by our own answer.
(S5, August 6, 2020)

Yes, it makes us how to think carefully before delivering the speech.
(S12, August 6, 2020)

It is permissible even for forbid students to cheat. Sometimes there are lecturers who do not believe in the work of their students.
(S14, August 6, 2020)

I allowed it because i want other people knows my opinion, and i can express my idea.
(S15, August 6, 2020)

Students are asked to provide answers to their opinions.
(S16, August 6, 2020)

The lecturers freed their students to think independently when dealing with class work while the input from the lecturer only clarified the intent and purpose of the assignment.
(S17, August 6, 2020)

4.2.3 Monitoring

The questioning strategy has an important role in the progress of learning. Some of students (30%) said that the questioning strategy is very important in developing students' thinking abilities, improving students' understanding, and measuring and knowing how far students understand. The detail of the above will be explained in more detail in the following extracts.

In my opinion questioning strategies applied by the lecturers in classroom interaction is quite good for students because they can develop students' thinking abilities.
(S3, August 5, 2020)

- It's so important to improve student understanding about lecture explanation. (S4, August 5, 2020)
- It's very important to measure students' understanding about the lesson. (S9, August 6, 2020)
- Questioning strategy is to build interaction between teachers and students. (S13, August 6, 2020)
- Questioning strategy is to enhance the skills of students. (S14, August 6, 2020)

4.2.4 Evaluation

Evaluation is very important in learning; one of the objectives is to find out whether students really understand the material that given by the lecturers. All of students (100%) said that lecturers' questioning strategies are able to know what their students need, the ability of the students, improve the weakness, provide advices, and evaluation. The following is the detail.

- I think it's very important because of questioning strategies, lecturers will more easily understand their students and easier to fix what their students need. (S5, August 6, 2020)
- Questioning strategies applied by lecturers in the classroom. I think it was very important to the students because the teacher can know about the ability of the students so they can improve the weakness. (S6, August 6, 2020)
- It's very important to measure students' understanding. (S9, August 6, 2020)
- Questioning strategies could be one of the ways to know how far the students understand the subject is. (S10, August 6, 2020)
- Questioning strategies is very important to provide advices and evaluation during the learning. (S11, August 6, 2020)

4.3 The purposes of questioning strategies

Purposes	Description	Teacher
Gaining attention	To encourage student to participate in learning or activities	L3, L4
Checking prior knowledge	To check what student already know about what the lecturer plans to teach	L1, L2, L3, L4
Checking understanding	To check students' understanding of learning or activity undertaken	L1, L2, L3, L4
Enhancing knowledge	To enhance fundamental knowledge related to the teaching topics.	L2
Experimenting	To stimulate student in experiments or testing things out.	L2, L4
Encouraging pupils' thinking	To explain their ideas or thoughts about what they are doing.	L1, L2,

5. Discussion

The discussion of this research presents the interpretation of three findings above including lecturers' questioning strategies, students' perceptions and purposes of questioning strategies.

5.1.1 The lecturers' questioning strategies

The finding of the lecturer questioning strategy from the interview showed that there are four types of questions as a questioning strategy that lecturers used. The most frequently used strategy was probing question and high order question including "is it clear?", "do you understand?", "do you explain again?," "do you understand the material or not?", "how do you define these terms?". The other types of questioning strategy applied by the lecturers were factual question and structuring question, and divergent question and affective question rarely used by the lecturers as noted in interview data.

This result is in line with the research conducted by Blosser P. E (1975) on the types of questioning strategies. Out of six types proposed (probing question, factual question, divergent question, high order question, affective question, and structuring question), there were four types revealed in this study (probing question, factual question, high order question, and structuring question).

In addition, it's also in congruence with Rashid and Qaisar (2016), Milawati and Suryati (2019), Sujariati, Rahman, & Mahmud (2016). They found that questioning strategy is needed to know effectiveness in learning and teaching, promote the students' critical thinking, initiate students' responses, and students' understanding.

5.1.2 Students' perceptions

The finding of students' perceptions from the questionnaires showed that all of the students said that the questioning strategy is very important especially in guiding thinking, developing independent thinking, monitoring progress, and evaluating. This result is in line with the research conducted by Volschenk N (2013). He stated that questioning strategies are really important to guiding thinking, and independent thinking.

Similarly, Uspayanti (2020) explained that it is important to ask questions to students in order to stimulate their desire to ask questions so that they become active in the classroom. Besides, asking questions motivated them in learning process, improved their knowledge and interaction, and the teacher knows what the students didn't know. Therefore, the researcher recommends that it is important for the teachers to encourage students' participation in the classroom by asking appropriate questioning strategies.

5.1.3 The purposes of questioning strategies

The finding of the purposes of the lecturers in asking questions from interview showed that the questions used were aimed at gaining attention, checking prior knowledge, checking students' understanding, enhancing knowledge, experimenting, and encouraging students' thinking.

This is similar to what Cotton (n.d). stated in his research that the purposes of questioning strategies are to develop interest and motivate students to become actively involved in lessons, evaluate students' preparation and check on homework or seatwork completion, develop critical thinking skills and inquiring attitudes, review and summarize previous lessons, and stimulate students to pursue knowledge on their own. Considering the importance of asking questions, it is considered necessary for the lecturers to be aware with strategies applied in the classroom.

6. Conclusion

Based on the result of data analysis and findings in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that:

- a. This study showed that four types of questions: probing question, factual question, high order question, and structuring question. The most frequently used strategy was probing question and

high order question. The other types of questioning strategy applied by the lecturers are factual question and structuring question.

- b. This study showed that all of the students said that the questioning strategy is very important especially in guiding thinking, independent thinking, monitoring progress, and evaluate.
- c. This study showed that, questioning strategies used were aimed at gaining attention, checking prior knowledge, checking to understand, enhancing knowledge, experimenting, and encouraging pupils' thinking.

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