DOI 10.36074/logos-28.11.2025.057

QUESTION TYPES IN TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION

Yevhen Chervinko[1]

1. PhD, Associate Professor at the Department of Languages
Ukrainian National Tchaikovsky Music Academy, Kyiv, UKRAINE
ORCID ID: 0000-0002-2567-2773

Teacher-led question-and-answer routines are bound to occur within various teaching settings, in particular teaching foreign languages both for general and special purposes to students of different age ranges at any level of language proficiency. Questions initiated by the teacher serve the overall aim of guiding attention and stimulating thinking. Moreover, they are intended to raise awareness of certain language phenomena or facts referring to a certain area of professional expertise, enhance students' engagement, check the progress at various stages of foreign language instruction, thus contributing to its positive outcomes.

There exist various terms referring to the types of questions led by teachers: eliciting/elicitation questions, display questions, concept checking questions (CCQs), instruction checking questions (ISQs), referential questions, open-ended/divergent/targeted questions, closed(-ended)/convergent questions.

Eliciting/elicitation questions, as the name suggests, are employed during eliciting – drawing out information students might already know instead of providing it to them directly. Since the process of elicitation involves putting display questions (e.g. *"What is the past of the verb "get"?*) [5], which are directed at finding out what learners know or can produce in the target language and eliciting students' prior knowledge [1], it can be concluded that eliciting and display questions refer to the same type of questions. Moreover, the very sequence of asking display questions is referred to as elicitation. Such questions initiate a three-part exchange called IRF (interaction-response-follow-up sequence), during which teachers ask a display question, students answer and then teachers comment on the response (whether it is appropriate or inappropriate) [5].

Speaking about elicitation, it should be borne in mind that it is not to be confused with "dialogic" teaching or scaffolding, also involving questions and

All rights reserved | CC BY-SA 4.0

answers; however, they are aimed at the construction rather than a mere display of knowledge [5].

The underlying aim of concept checking questions (CCQs) is to guide students' understanding of a certain word or grammar item. The advantage of such questions lies in the fact that teachers don't have to resort to translation [5]. For instance, to check how well students understand the grammar phenomenon in *"I visited Paris last summer."*, the teacher can put the following CCQs: *"Did the speaker visit Paris in the future?"*, *"How would you rephrase the sentence using the present tense?"*

On the other hand, instruction checking questions (ICQs) are employed to ascertain whether students understand and can follow the instructions set by their teacher. ICQs are typically short, requiring only a brief response in relation to the given instructions. Such questions are essential within second language classroom settings, as students might not comprehend the instructions properly or be proficient enough to respond by asking a relevant question concerning the instructions [4].

As far as referential (or "real") questions are concerned, they are aimed at finding out the information that is not known to the person asking the question [5]. Furthermore, they may require students to present an opinion, explain or clarify, often focusing on content rather than language and entailing "follow-up" or "probe" questions [1]. For instance, teachers may ask their students: *"Have you ever been to Spain?"* or *"What do you think about .....?"*. It is argued that the quality of class communication, teacher talking quality (TTQ) [2] is enhanced if teachers ask referential questions to a greater extent than display questions as they promote deeper processing as well as allowing for more affordances, i. e. certain properties of the environment that are potentially conducive to the development [5].

Open-ended [1, 3, 5], or divergent [1], targeted [3] questions (*"Tell me about your family"*) increase involvement of students [5] and constitute the best referential questions as they are broad, may presuppose multiple answers and involve a number higher-order thinking skills: inferring, predicting, verifying and summarising, as well as eliciting more language [1].

Convergent [1, 3], closed [1, 5], or closed-ended [3] questions, also common in conventional tests, can be answered from memory; therefore, require little reflection or original thinking and presuppose more narrowly defined answers [1]. Being carefully crafted, such questions target particular aspects of the material mostly by way of binary responses (*"yes"* or *"no"*). The advantage of this type of questions allows teachers to quickly assess students' comprehension or their grasp of a certain concept under discussion, as students are supposed to confirm their knowledge without the need for extensive explanations [3].

All rights reserved | CC BY-SA 4.0

In conclusion, it should be stated that some of the terms overlap in meaning and the latter two types of questions concern the form rather than purpose, therefore, frequently represent CCQs [3]. Furthermore, the employment of these questions types under discussion depends on such factors as the students' proficiency level, the complexity degree of the material taught as well as the overall teaching context.

REFERENCES:

[1] Darn, S., & Çetin, F. (Updated 2025). *Asking questions.* Available at: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/managing-lesson/articles/asking-questions
[2] Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching* (4th ed.). England: Pearson Education.
[3] Mullet, T. (2024). *Concept Checking Questions (CCQs).* Available at: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/concept-checking-questions-ccqs-tom-mullett-kauae
[4] Sanako Blog. (2023, June 20). *CCQs & ICQs: how to ask great questions in your language classes.* Available at: https://sanako.com/ccqs-and-icqs-how-to-ask-great-questions-in-your-language-classroom
[5] Thornbury, S. (2017). *The New A-Z of ELT: A dictionary of terms and concepts.* Macmillan.

All rights reserved | CC BY-SA 4.0