

Socratic Questions Used by the Seventh Semester Students of English Department of FKIP Nommensen in Seminar Class

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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed to know to find out the types of Socratic questions used by the students of seventh semester in English Department of FKIP UHN Medan. This research was conducted by descriptive qualitative where the subject is seventh English Department students in Nommensen University academic year 2019/2020 on Seminar Class and the data is students' questions. This study is designed by descriptive qualitative research. After analyzing questions, it was found that Socratic questions used by the seventh semester of English students in FKIP UHN Medan are questions and clarification, questions that probe purposes, questions that probe assumptions, Question that Probe Information, Reason, Evidence, and Cause, Question about viewpoints or perspectives, Questions that Probe Implication and Consequences, Question about question, Question that Probe Concept, and Questions that probe Inferences and Interpretation. The most dominant is Question that Probe Information, Reason, Evidence, and Cause. It means that the students' ability in making questions in seminar on ELT presentation is still on the level of getting information from the text, less to have capacity to view or to judge things from some other perspectives, less of preparing themselves reading the seminar paper before the presentation starts. The writer assumed that the students lack of reading and need to be taught with interesting treatment especially reading and speaking class. It is hoped for the next researchers to find new treatments in teaching reading and speaking class so that students get more critical thinking.

Keywords: *socratic questions, seminar class, critical thinking*

Introduction

Seminar is generally a form of academic institution, either at a university or offered by a commercial or professional organization. It has the function of bringing together small groups for recurring meetings, focusing each time on some particular subjects, in which everyone present is requested to actively participate.

Seminar course focuses on generating, understanding and practicing the language needed to actively participate in lectures, seminars, or discussion group and also explores how to plan, prepares and present academic content in seminars and via presentations. There will be a particular emphasis on speaking about and presenting one's work, both in small discussion settings and more formal or public contexts.

Socratic seminar is a method to try to understand information by creating a dialogue in class in regards to a specific text. Participants seek deeper understanding of complex ideas in the text through careful listening and rigorously thoughtful dialogue. After examining a text, students pose several questions, primarily open-ended, world connection, universal theme, and literary analysis questions. Such questions allow students to think critically, analyze multiple meanings in texts, and express ideas with clarity and confidence.

The purpose of a Socratic Seminar is to achieve a deeper understanding about the ideas and values in a text. In the seminar, participants systematically question and examine issues and principles related to a particular content, and articulate points-of-view. The group

conversation assists participants in constructing meaning through disciplined analysis, interpretation, listening, and participation.

While the write was teaching in seminar class applying Socratic seminar, she found that some students who have good mark in theory, did not get good mark in practice. Most of the students were not be able to have good presentation, especially in questioning. The technique of Socratic seminars dates back to Socrates, who used questioning to improve his students' reasoning skills thereby leading them to become more rational. Socratic questioning participant's thought (Paul & Elder, 2006).

Socratic seminar is to stimulate critical thinking and to illuminate ideas. It is a form of inquiry and discussion between individuals or group, based on asking and answering questions. In applying Socratic seminar, questions are really needed to stimulate critical thinking of participants. From the type of active process one has the ability to explore questions, evaluate possibilities, and synthesize original ideas, thereby developing critical thinking skills. This condition, then made the writer felt that it needs to conduct this research in order to find out how far the students can apply the Socratic questioning in the seminar class in which the students are making the presentation.

The objectives in this study, to find out the types of Socratic questions used by the students of seventh semester in English Department of FKIP UHN Medan. To find out the most dominant Socratic question type used by students of seventh semester in English department of FKIP UHN Medan.

According to Brewer (2000:55) Socratic Seminar is a method to try to understand information by creating a dialogue in class in regards to a specific text. Participant seek deeper understanding of complex ideas in text though careful listening and rigorously thoughtful dialogue. After examining a text, students pose several kinds of questions, primarily open-ended, world connection, universal theme, and literary analysis questions. Such questions allow students to think critically, analyze multiple meaning in texts, and express ideas with clarity and confidence. In Socratic seminar, students conduct a dialogue. Participant in Socratic seminar respond to one another with respect by

carefully listening instead of interrupting. Students are encouraged to paraphrase and summarize essential elements of another's idea before responding, either in support or disagreement. They feel comfortable to theorize, explore, refute, and propose. They respectfully exchange ideas to stimulate thoughtful interchange of ideas instead of looking to win or find the "right answer."

The Socratic Circles Socratic method is derived from the name of Socrates, a philosophy that is very well known and influential in the development of critical thinking skills. For centuries, he was admired as a man of integrity and intellect and was considered a critical thinker, because of his critical thinking, his name was enshrined as a Socratic question for critical questions (Redhana, 2012: 352).

According to Copelend (in Afidah, et al, 2012: 5) Socratic circles are student-centered learning methods. The Socratic circle dominant method uses questions in the learning process, these questions will help students to find and develop their own concepts of knowledge according to their abilities. The question and answer process in the Socratic circles method can deepen students' knowledge and encourage students to think divergent. According to Martinis in Yunanti (2016) stated that the Socratic circles method or the so-called seminar method is a learning activity of a group of students to discuss a particular topic, problem. Each seminar group member is required to play an active role, and to them are charged with responsibility for getting solutions to the topics, problems they solve.

Socratic questioning is at the heart of critical thinking and a number of homework problems draw from R.W. Paul's six types of Socratic questions (Paul and Elder, 2005) . They are:

1. Questions for clarification

These questions get students to think more about what they are asking or thinking about, prove the concepts behind their argument, and get them to go deeper.

2. Questions that probe purpose

The questions are intended to ask about things where the purpose of why they said is not clear.

Questions that probe assumptions

These questions make students think about the presuppositions and unquestioned beliefs on which they are founding their argument

3. Questions that probe Information, reasons, evidence and causes

Questions That Probe Information, Reasons, Evidence, and Causes are used to investigate, dig, and find out about information, reasons, evidence and causes of problems or issues being discussed? When students give a rationale for their arguments, dig into that reasoning rather than assuming it is a given.

4. Questions about Viewpoints and Perspectives

Questions about Viewpoints or Perspectives are used to learn how things are viewed or judged and to consider things not only in relative perspective, but also as a whole. Most arguments are given from a particular position. So attack the position. Show that there are other, equally valid, viewpoints.

5. Questions that probe implications and consequences

Questions That Probe Implications and Consequence are used to understand the interferences or deductions and the end result if the inferred action is carried out. The argument a student gives may have logical implications that can be forecast.

6. Questions about the question

Questions about the question are used to find out why the questions was asked, who asked it, and why the question or problem needs to be solved (asks detail about the question). You also can get reflexive about the whole thing, turning the question on itself. Bounce the ball back into their court.

7. Questions that probe conceptual understandings.

Questions that Probe Concept are used to dig detail about main concept, problems, or ideas being discussed.

8. Questions that probe inferences and interpretations

Questions that Probe Inferences and Interpretations are used to dig detail and deeper understanding about inferences, conclusion, opinion, and interpretation about the problem based on the speakers.

Dewey (2001:152) declared that the aim of education is to teach young people to think, and critical thinking is a way to take charge of our thinking. Paul (2006) construes critical thinking as the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improve it, ability to reach sound conclusions based on observation and information. Bayer (1993) described critical thinking as asserting the authenticity, accuracy, and worth of knowledge, claims, beliefs, or arguments. Norris in Philip (2015: 279) maintains that it helps students apply what they already know to evaluate their own thinking. However, our working definition should include the core meaning of the original concepts would be investigated by considering a variety of dimensions.

Smith (2016) stated that socratic helped his students reach a deep level of understanding and thinking through questioning the underlying belief and assumptions. Socratic method of instruction required the students to consider different perspectives and capability in stimulating the students' thinking. Socrates pointed out how educative good and deep questions can be, and how such questions can lead to deeper thought. His method of questioning is known as Socratic questioning and is the best known critical thinking teaching strategy.

Method

This study is conducted by using a qualitative research. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003), Qualitative Methods is a procedure of research that generates descriptive data in the form or written word or spoken and behavior that can be observed.

The subject of this research is the seventh semester students of English Department academic year 2018/2019 which consist of two grups namely grup A and B.

The object of this research is the Socratic questions made by seventh semester students of English Department academic year 2019/2020 on their ability in applying Socratic seminar.

Instrument is important in doing a research. According to Moleong (2001:192), "instrument is a tool when the researcher using a method. The instruments are used to achieve the accuracy the data and can indicate that the writer

is successful or not in her research. There are many instruments which are used to collect the data. They are test, questionnaires, interview, and observations". Here, the writer chooses recording and observation.

In collecting the data, the researcher uses some techniques:

1. The students applied Socratic seminar when they are presenting their proposal/text.
2. The data were taken by recording the students' oral presentation in Seminar Class taken using Handycam.
3. The writer recorded the activity of seminar in four meetings.
4. To get authentic data, the writer conducted observation and participation as the leader of Socratic seminar.

After getting the data, the steps done by the researcher in analyzing the data can be:

1. The conversation was transcribed.
2. Revealing the data.
3. Identifying the occurrence of Socratic questions.
4. Classifying the types of Socratic questions and finding the dominant question.

Finding and Discussions

Questions of Clarification

1. What is the specific problem in your topic?
2. "As I know there are some students.....". Would you mind explain more about it?
3. How is the way to implement Kinesthetic Learning for Introvert Students?
4. What is the approach that can be used in for introvert to be active in learning process?
5. Do you think by chatting online with foreigners can guarantee students improvement in vocabulary
6. Is it effective to use.....?
7. What kinds of materials that you use in role play?
8. How about.....? Is there any principle to apply role play in learning process?
9. Do you think Role play is suitable to be adopted as a method to improve Speaking skill?
10. What happens with confidence if the students have a problem with their physics How can you solve it?

11. How can you apply your treatment in your teaching?
12. How can the students be easy to improve their vocabulary though song lyric?
13. Could you explain me about Kinesthetic Learning Activities?

The questions above are delivered by the participants where they try to find detail information from further explanation. The participants of Socratic seminar uttered the questions of clarification because there are some missing information about issue being discussed. Furthermore, the participants also asked the presenter to clarify something by question of clarification because the presenter's explanation is not clear enough.

Questions That Probe Purpose

The aim of the question is to probe about the purpose of the concepts being discussed. The participants tried to dig information about the purpose by delivering this type of question. This question is intended to ask about things where the purpose of why they said is not clear. From the four meetings transcripts of Socratic seminar, the write found only two questions that probe purpose, namely:

1. What is your purpose to show the comparison of this?
2. What is hoped from this research?

Questions that probe assumptions

During the application of Socratic seminar, the write found that the students seldom use question that probe assumptions. In meeting1 and meeting 2, the writer did not find this type of question. The students delivered this question in meeting 3 and two questions in meeting 4. They are:

1. Is it too difficult? Why don't you go to focus to specific one like IQ, EQ or SQ?
2. Ok... if they have understood, they must know the topic, how is it?

The questions asked about the presenter's assumptions. The participant tried to state her opinion first, but his target is to probe the presenter's assumption. The question examined whether there are any misleading or false assumptions. The same assumptions about the concepts among the presenters and all participants are very important because it could affect the continuity of Socratic seminar. In question number two, the participant tried to repeat the explanation from the presenter, but

the participant asked the question to probe assumption. By the question, the participant tried to state assumption first, but the end target is to examine the presenter's assumption.

Questions that probe Information, Reason, Evidence, and Causes

Questions that probe Information, Reason, Evidence, and Causes were often used by the students in the application of Socratic seminar. Most of them just used this type of socratic questions. Some of the questions from the four meetings are displayed below.

1. What are the differences between Intelligent student and smart student
2. What is the strength and weakness of kinesthetic?
3. Based on your experience, what are difficulties when you taught reading by using small group discussion?
4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using small group discussion?
5. What is the interest of this technique, as we know that there are?
6. How far can this technique improve the students' skills in.....?
7. Why do you use this text to apply your technique?
8. How do you apply it in your treatment?
9. How is the way to build the students character when they are in school?
10. What are some weaknesses of role play and how is the way of teacher to solve them?
11. What is the difference between formal and Informal in building students character?
12. Which factor is the best if you want to build students self- confidence?
13. What is confidence?
14. How do you apply it in your teaching?

The participants tried to ask more detail information that she/he has not got from the presenters' explanation. The questions probe the information about the concepts used, the questions probe information in the form of examples. The examples are needed to prove some opinions view. The questions are used by what questions. They are pure questions asking information needed to get clear understanding. The participants delivered the questions not only because of she wanted to emphasize, but also wanted to get some important information about problems being discussed. Why and How

questions are also used in this type. The purpose of the questions is to investigate, dig, and find out about the causes. In the questions, the speakers wanted to dig about concepts and the causes.

The Questions that Probe Implication and Consequences

The purpose of this question is to understand the inferences or deduction and the end result if the inferred action is carried out. The participants asked the question to find out about the result of the application which has been applied by the presenters. For example:

1. Is it successful?
2. How is about the result?
3. When did you do it, do you get your target?
4. How is about the result that you got?

Question about question

This type of question is seldom used by the students in the application of Socratic seminar done by the seventh semester of English students of FKIP UHN Medan. The question is asked by the presenter, such as:

1. I don't get what you asked? Could you repeat, please?
2. What is your question?
3. Is there any questions?

Question that Probe Concept

This type of question was often used in the application of Socratic seminar by seventh semester of English students of FKIP UHN Medan. Most of them were interested to ask about the concept, problems, ideas being discussed. Question that probe concepts can enlarge and improve the ideas among the participants in a Socratic seminar. The followings are the examples of questions that probe concepts given by the participants.

1. What method did you use to improve your students' comprehension in reading?
2. So, how did you ask them?
3. What is the method you use to apply your theory in teaching your students?
4. What kinds of problem do you have in your research?
5. Did you ask your students questions? Did your student answer it well?
6. How do you handle the Introvert and Extrovert student in your class?

Questions that probe Inferences and Interpretation

This type of question is not often used by the students. There is only a few question that probe inferences and interpretation, such as What do you think if the teacher already gave advices but all the students don't hear and do the bad things continually.....? How do you solve if the students? Can you solve the speaking skill problem for introvert students? The questions are used to dig detail and deeper understanding about inferences, conclusion, opinion, decision, and the interpretation about the problem based on speaker. The participants asked the questions to get understanding based on the speaker. The participant asked the questions in order to get understanding based on presenters 'interpretation. It is very important so that the basic view about the concepts discussed could be same. It could avoid misleading.

Questions about viewpoints or perspective

1. How do think about introvert students. Are they stupid or smart?

Table 1
Questions Used by The Seventh Semester
Students in Seminar on ELT

N	Types of Question	Meetings				Total	%
		1	2	3	4		
1	Questions of Clarification	4	5	2	2	13	29
2	Questions that probe Purposes	-	-	-	1	1	2
3	Questions that probe assumptions	-	-	1	1	2	9
4	Question that Probe Information, Reason, Evidence, and Cause	6	5	2	2	15	33
5	Question about viewpoints or perspectives	-	1	-	-	-	2
6	The Questions that Probe Implication	2	1	1	-	4	9

and Consequences

7	Question about question	-	1	1	-	2	4
8	Question that Probe Concept	1	2	2	1	6	13
9	Questions that probe Inferences and Interpretation	-	1	1	1	3	7

Conclusion

Based on findings, it can be concluded that the students' ability in making questions in seminar on ELT presentation is still on the level of getting information from the text. The students or participants are less to have capacity to view or to judge things from some other perspectives. They do not prepare themselves reading the seminar paper before the presentation starts. They commonly used questions that probe information, reason, evidence, and cause during application of Socratic seminar. The writer assumed that the students lack of reading, so they do not have large knowledge to analyze, improve, and conclude problems based on some viewpoints or perspectives.

Some suggestions are offered by the writer as below:

1. To enable students making more questions about view points or perspectives, the students are suggested to read more. Reading may influence critical thinking. It helps students to deliver all kinds of Socratic questionings.
2. The seminar paper should be shared to the participants before Socratic seminar is started because text is one of the elements of Socratic seminar.
3. The participants should know and understand about the problems or issues discussed before Socratic Seminar is held in order to enable to explore complex ideas, to get the truth of things, to open up issues and problems, to analyze concepts, and to distinguish what we know from what we do not know.
5. It is hoped for the next researchers to find more models, approaches, methods to be applied in reading or speaking class so that the students can be critically in delivering questioning and thinking logically.

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