THE ANALYSIS OF QUESTION UNITS IN L2 TEACHER TALK

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Dedication

To Rong, my wife, whose support has been invaluable.

Acknowledgement

I am most grateful to Dr Roger Flavell, my supervisor, for his guidance and encouragement throughout the years. I would like to thank the School of Languages University of Westminster for allowing me to do the field work there and Ms Helen Bremer, Ms Dinny Thorold and Dr Howes for allowing me to observe and record their lessons. Special thanks go to Ms Lillian Chia for her comments on an earlier draft.

ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF QUESTION UNITS IN L2 TEACHER TALK

Asking questions is an essential part of teaching and has been an area of inquiry in educational research for decades. However, the research in teacher's use of questions in L2 context has a much shorter history and the findings are preliminary.

The present study investigates the use of questions by teachers teaching English as a foreign/second language. The main body of the data used in the analysis comes from audio recordings of 40 lessons where a group of Chinese students were taught by three native-speaker teachers of English over a period of ten weeks. The recordings were conducted and transcribed by the author.

One of the main findings is that teachers often ask more than one question in one move. This cluster of questions is termed "question unit", (Q unit for short).

The focus then is directed to what constitutes a Q unit, the relationship between questions in a Q unit and the responses to Q units. The identification of a Q unit apparently involves the length of pause (termed wait-time) between questions asked in one speaking turn.

It is found that the subsequent question(s) in a Q unit are often either repetition or reformulation of the previous Q(s) in the unit. It is also found that, when Q units are taken into consideration in the analysis of response rate (the percentage of questions being responded to), it would change the response rate significantly. It is argued that Q unit as a unit of discourse analysis does not affect the existing discourse analysis models but would add a supplementary but helpful dimension to it.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
L1	First Language
L2	Second/foreign Language
NNS	Non-native Speaker
NS	Native Speaker
Q	Question
R	Response
RF	Reformulation (of a Q)
RP	Repetition (of a Q)
WT	Wait-time

Chapter 1 Theoretical Background

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Chapter 1 Theoretical Background

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I shall first explain what the focus of this study is and how the focus was identified within a large domain of related issues. Secondly, I shall present the general framework in which the research focus is set. This second section includes a literature survey in the following areas: classroom discourse and interaction, review on research in questions (Qs) and questioning in general and in classroom setting in particular. Thirdly, the methodology adopted for this study will be briefly described, which is followed by an overview of the structure of this thesis.

1.2 Identification of the research focus

1.2.1 Rationale for the research

Whether as a learner or a teacher, one cannot fail to recognise that one of the main aspects of classroom interaction is realised by the teacher asking Qs and students responding to them. In my subsequent reading and especially in conducting direct classroom observation, I have realised that teachers' use of Qs is an interesting but complicated area which needs and deserves further investigation. I believe that improved instruction can be achieved on the basis of informed knowledge of what goes on in the classroom. Such knowledge, in turn, can be gained through improved classroom research. I therefore agree with what van Lier (1988) states about classroom research (CR):

> "a principled approach to CR may come closer to 'seeing it as it is', and draw consequences that lead to 'doing it better'." (p237)

In other words, an adequate description is needed prior to explanation and understanding.

Through the literature review, I have found that description of Q functions in foreign/second language (L2) context is inadequate and description of teacher questioning behaviour is lacking in L2 classroom research. I therefore believe that my study will add to the understanding of and research in L2 classroom discourse and interaction.

1.2.2 Scope and focus of the research

When I started to work on the proposal for this study, I was initially interested in classroom discourse and interaction in general. It was not long, however, before I realised that it was too broad an area and that I had to have a narrower focus. The reason is simple: teaching and learning are extremely complex processes involving a large number of factors and interaction of different factors. The research focus was gradually narrowed down to teachers' use of Qs, which is an important part of classroom discourse and interaction.

The present study focuses on certain aspects as opposed to some other aspects in the L2 context, which is clarified in 1.2.2.1 to 1.2.2.5.

1.2.2.1 Setting

This study focuses on the classroom as opposed to daily conversation or other non-academic settings such as informal conversation between native speakers (NSs) and non-native speakers (NNSs) outside the classroom. The classroom has some distinctive features just as some other settings have their own (cf.1.4). The relationship between the teacher and students in a classroom and the objectives of communication, one-way or two-way, transactional or interactional, may be different in many ways from those in other settings. All this together with many other aspects have to be acknowledged and addressed simply because they affect in one way or another the discourse and interaction that occur in the classroom and, subsequently, the interpretation of teachers' use of Qs. On the other hand, however, it should also be acknowledged that despite the differences between settings, classroom discourse and interaction are part of human communication and therefore bear resemblance to that in other settings (cf.1.5).

1.2.2.2 Type of class

This study will focus on the classroom where English as a foreign language or second language is the medium of instruction as well as the content of learning as opposed to classes where English as a foreign language or second language is the medium of instruction but not as the content of learning, such as classes of history and psychology.

1.2.2.3 Type of discourse

This study is mainly concerned with teachers' Qs. Students' Qs will be given some consideration only in relation to teachers' Qs. Similarly, other aspects of teacher talk, such as directives and corrections, will also be examined either in comparison to teacher Qs or as an integrated part which constitutes the context of Qs.

Qs can be in spoken or written forms. Written Qs include textbook Qs, exam/test Qs, etc. This study focuses on teachers' spoken Qs, i.e. the Qs teachers actually utter in the classroom. However, it has to be pointed out that teachers' spoken Qs are sometimes related to written Qs in at least two major ways. In lessons where textbooks are used, teachers sometimes use textbook Qs orally to elicit answers from the students. These Qs must be identified if aspects of questioning such as wait-time are studied (see Chapter 5). On the other hand, if the class is exam-oriented, that is, if the students are to take written exams or tests, some if not all of the Qs that the teacher asks orally in class might be directly or indirectly related to the exams/tests, thus have effect on the students both in

class and in written tests. This is an important factor in the study of the relationship between teachers' Qs and students' achievements as measured in written tests (cf. 1.4).

Qs are asked chiefly for getting responses. It is essential, therefore, that teachers' Qs be studied in conjunction with students' responses as the latter are the immediate outcome of the former. In other words, teachers' Qs as input usually aim at eliciting verbal output from the learners. This study will also look at students' responses, thus treating Qs as part of ongoing interaction rather than isolated utterances.

One important part of speaking is intonation, stress, and other forms of non-linguistic behaviour. The study of spoken Qs will have to include these aspects (4.5).

Speaking as a major part of communication is often, if not always, accompanied by non-verbal behaviour. These non-verbal behaviours include body language of all kinds, such as facial expressions, various forms of gestures, and movements of the body. Apart from accompanying verbal communication, non-verbal acts alone may carry out the communication. Some non-verbal acts do elicit responses just as verbal Qs. This aspect will be included in the study. Equally non-verbal responses are also included (4.6).

1.2.2.4 The teachers

Originally I did intend to conduct the field work in China and investigate the questioning behaviour of Chinese teachers of English in the Chinese context. Due to financial constraints and other considerations, the field work was carried out in the United Kingdom instead. While the learners are Chinese, the teachers are all native speakers of English and experienced ESL/EFL (English as a second/foreign language) teachers.

1.2.2.5 The learners

In L2 classrooms, while the teachers may be native speakers or non-native speakers of the target language, the learners must be non-native speakers of the target language who may come from different first language (L1) background. Two things of immediate concern as far as the present study is concerned are the grouping of students and the target language proficiency of the students.

(a) Homogeneous as opposed to heterogeneous class

The two distinctive types of grouping are homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings. A homogeneous group consists of a group of learners who share a common L1. Students in a heterogeneous group come from different L1 background.

Although the type of grouping of students seems to be more of a concern for any study focusing on learners and does not seem to be an important factor in the study of teachers'

Qs, it is believed that the effect of any Qs addressed to the whole class concerning the L1 or culture of the students differs in a homogeneous and in a heterogeneous class. Such Qs are relevant equally to all the students in a homogeneous class while they are relevant in different ways to a group of heterogeneous students. As a result, such Qs will be responded to, if at all, differently.

Any study of Qs can hardly be separated from responses to them. One apparent difference between the two types of classroom grouping would be the learner's use of L1 in responding to teachers' Qs. Although in a heterogeneous class the learner is often forced to respond in the target language to Qs addressed to him/her, it often happens that when students of the same L1 sit together, they respond in L1 to each other to Qs addressed to the class. It is reasonable to assume that students in a homogeneous class would resort more to their L1 in responses to Qs.

Since I am interested in Chinese learners of English in general and hope to teach English to Chinese learners in future, I chose to observe classes with exclusively Chinese learners whose L1 is also mine as I have little difficulty in not only understanding their responses to teachers' Qs, but also many of their problems in comprehending teachers' Qs (and instruction in general) and the way they respond.

The target group of this study is a group of Chinese students engaged in a one-year programme where they study English language and culture at the University of Westminster, London. They are all speakers of Mandarin though some of them speak different dialects. More information about this target group will be given in Chapter 6.

(b) Students' target language proficiency

The target language proficiency of the learners is another factor to be taken into consideration in grouping students for teaching purpose as well as for conducting research in language teaching or learning. The levels are conventionally categorised into beginners, lower intermediate, intermediate, upper intermediate, and advanced. Although the demarcation is rather relative and often hard to draw, it serves as a general guide to the reader as far as the report on research involving L2 learners is concerned. The target group of this study is a mixed group ranging from lower intermediate to upper intermediate (cf. Chapter 6).

In summary, this study aims to investigate NS teachers' use of spoken Qs in eliciting responses from Chinese learners of English in the L2 classroom.

1.3 Questions and questioning in general

1.3.1 The distinction between questions and questioning

When we ask a Q, it is not only the utterance that we call Q that matters. In other words, when a Q is asked, there is a lot more to it than the Q itself. When we ask a Q, we need to make a decision as to who is the recipient of the Q (if there is more than one listener in the interaction). In a classroom, the teacher has to make such a decision, consciously or unconsciously: is the Q to be directed to the whole class or an individual student? We should also consider whether it is the appropriate time or occasion to ask a Q or Qs. We have to assume that our selected respondent is probably capable and willing to answer the Q if we do not, for example, want to embarrass, challenge or offend him/her. We need to formulate the Q clearly so that the respondent can understand it without difficulty, especially when the respondent does not have adequate mastery of the language in which the Q is posed. Even written Qs in a textbook need to be decided as to where to put them: before the text, or inserted in the middle of it or after it. All this and a lot more deals with the use of Q(s) and is not self-evident if we simply examine a Q as an isolated utterance. These aspects which are related to the use of a Q or Qs but go beyond the Q itself are referred to as Q asking or questioning (see Dillon 1988).

In summary, Qs are mainly concerned with what the speaker says at a particular point in the discourse whereas questioning mainly deals with why and how he asks the Q or Qs.

1.3.2 Research of questions and questioning in other fields

The study of teacher Qs, the primary focus of this thesis, is not and should not be an isolated endeavour. The reason is simple: teachers' use of Qs is a part of teachers' instruction and the Q-R exchanges between teacher and students are a part of classroom interaction, which is in turn a small part of human communication as a whole. Studies on human communication in general, and Qs and questioning in particular, in various fields and disciplines have illuminated similar research in the education field.

Having identified the area of investigation, I shall review the related literature in the following sections of this chapter.

In speech act philosophy, for example, Austin (1962) and Searle (1969, 1975) divided speech into various speech acts and distinguished the locutionary meaning, illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the speech act. Literal meaning was separated from speaker intention and from the effects, intended or otherwise, of the words spoken. The locutionary meaning (i.e. the literal or surface meaning) of a Q may or may not be the same as what the speaker intends it to mean (illocutionary force) and may or may not impart to the hearer the effect that the speaker wants it to have (perlocutionary effect). This happens in classroom as well as in daily conversation.

Malamah-Thomas (1988) distinguishes the content from the intention of teachers' utterances (including Qs) and points out that it is an important distinction necessary for understanding classroom discourse. She uses the Q "What did you do last night?" to illustrate such a distinction. The teacher may ask it for the purpose of socialisation, i.e. she is genuinely interested in the content of the answer, or she may ask it to check whether the student can use the correct past tense of a verb or verbs, hence the form of the language (cf.2.3.2). There is little in the form of an utterance to suggest the intention behind it. An investigation of Qs needs to address the distinction between the form and function.

In anthropology, Goody (1978) pointed out that Qs, like statements, carry both report and command messages. On the one hand, Qs demand a response, and on the other, they convey information. This information function refers to the literal meaning of a Q. Questioning is seen as

> "... [to] bind two people in immediate reciprocity, whether the reciprocity is equal or unequal is marked by the mode of questioning used, and is also a function of the relative status of questioner and respondent." (p23)

As a result, Q asking carries messages about relationships -- about relative status, assertions of status and challenge of status (p39). I believe that Q responding does the same. The fact that in a classroom most of the Qs are asked by teachers and responded by the students precisely serves to illustrate the relative status between the teacher and students (see 1.4 for features of classroom interaction).

Sociologists are interested in how A's speech and B's speech including Qs and responses are related in social encounters. One of their basic concepts is that of an adjacency pair: when an utterance by A is initiated toward B, an utterance is expected from B as a response to A (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974). Thus a Q and what follows it constitute an adjacency pair, which is usually part of a larger exchange unit (cf.1.4).

A Q expects an answer but one does not have to ask a Q to get a response from the other person if one wants the other person to say something. One can terminate one's turn in various ways, such as pause, to yield the turn to the other person, who then will take the floor and say something. In other words, the other speaker is 'made' to respond under the interactional rule. In fact, the use of statements, longer pauses and deliberate silence instead of Qs are advocated among other things as strategies to encourage more students contribution (Dillon 1979, 1987, 1990; see Chapter 5 for more discussion).

None of the above-mentioned works has focused exclusively on Qs or Q-R exchanges, but they have all dealt with this aspect of human communication in different perspectives and thus have shed some light on the nature of classroom questioning.

1.4 Classroom discourse and interaction

As was pointed out earlier (cf.1.3.1) teachers' use of Qs is part of classroom discourse and interaction, which in turn is part of human communication. After briefly looking at some notions regarding human communication and their relevance to the study of classroom Qs, I shall discuss some of the general features of classroom discourse and interaction in this section before focusing on the study of teachers' use of Qs in the next section.

It is generally held that an exchange is a minimal interactive unit, in which an initiation (I) by A is followed obligatorily by a response (R) from B. This minimal structure is therefore presented as [I R]. In conversation analysis, this minimal interactive unit is termed "adjacency pair". Exchanges such as greeting-greeting and question-answer are often cited as examples of this two-part structure. In real life, however, Q-A exchange is rarely an isolated pair, either in naturally occurring conversation or in the classroom. In other words, even when an answer is provided for the initiating question, the exchange just does not end there. A third slot has to be filled.

Suppose A asks B for the time, B tells A the time and then A just walks away without saying anything. A is regarded as rude. What is lacking here is a follow-up (F) of some sort to fill in the third slot, which is not optional, but obligatory. Mishler (1975a) found that 86% of responses to Qs were followed by explicit verbal reactions from the initial questioner which he termed as confirmations. Johnson (1979) pointed out that with the inclusion of non-verbal signalling, it would bring the figure close to 100% (p45). In most cases where initiation is realised by a Q, the basic exchange is a three-part structure [I R F]:

(1) T: What's the time now, Sarah? (Initiation)
P: Half past two. (Response)
T: Thanks. (Evaluation)

In the classroom, the basic exchange pattern is not a two-part sequence either. The teacher asks a question and the student is expected to give an answer. In the third turn, the teacher will acknowledge, evaluate or comment on the answer given by the student. The three-part sequence of teacher initiation, student response, teacher evaluation is the most common pattern of classroom discourse at all grade levels (Cazden 1988). Teachers' initiation is usually realised in question form. All analyses of teacher-led classroom discourse find examples of this pattern:

(2) T: What's the time now, Sarah? (Initiation)
P: Half past two (Response)
T: Right/Good girl. (Evaluation)

Anyone hearing (1) and (2) can recognise that (2), not (1), is the typical classroom talk, not an informal conversation. The Qs and answers in the two sequences are identical. The difference between the two lies in the third part of the three-part exchange, i.e. the first speaker's response to the information provided by B in the response to the Q asked. In the first exchange, A has asked B for some information that he wants to know, (i.e. the time), B provides the information and A thanks B for providing the information. This sequence is typical of ones that we would expect to encounter in our everyday conversation.

The second exchange is quite different from the first. After B has provided the information required of him/her in the Q asked by A, instead of acknowledging it as is the case in the first exchange, A "evaluates" B's reply. The second sequence is typical of ones that we would expect to hear in the classroom or conversations between adults and young children.

The difference in the third part of the sequences is not difficult to explain. Speaker A in (1) did not know the time at the time of asking and wanted to know it. Therefore, he thanks speaker B for providing the information he needed. In (2), speaker A knew the time before asking the Q, and he is therefore in the position to judge whether the information provided in the response by speaker B is correct. Once it is correct, a positive evaluation follows.

When A genuinely seeks information, he would accept any answer and thank the respondent for providing it. In other words, even if the real time is 2:40 instead of 2:30, A would still acknowledge B's reply by thanking him. Even if B does not know the answer, i.e. the time, and apologises for not being able to provide the information wanted, his response will still be acknowledged.

This, however, does not apply to the case where A asks a Q the answer to which is known to him prior to the asking. If the time, actual or pre-set by the teacher, is 2:40 whilst the answer is 2:30, the answerer is unlikely to get a positive evaluation. Likewise, an "I don't know" reply or any apology for not knowing the answer would not be positively evaluated.

It is not inconceivable, however, that the second exchange cited above may occur in daily conversation as illustrated in the following fabricated example:

(3) A: What's the time now, Sarah?

B: 2:30.
A: Very good. We are 10 minutes early.

The "very good" here is not an evaluation of the reply "2:30", i.e. whether the time is correct or the reply is properly uttered, but rather a reaction to it (see 4.6). The fact that it is 10 minutes early means something good on the part of A and/or B.

The functional difference as a distinctive feature in the third turn in the above examples calls for the use of separate terms. The A2 in (1) and (3) may be called confirmation (Mishler 1975b, 1978) or acknowledgement, whilst A2 in (2) is often more specifically termed as evaluation (Johnson 1979). In this thesis, I shall generally adopt the more neutral term 'follow-up' in preference to 'evaluation' because evaluation is just one kind of act that occurs as a follow-up to the previous speaker's response to the initiation. In this thesis I shall use IRF, instead of IRE, for the basic classroom exchange cycle.

In fact, the presence of an evaluation, which comments on a reply to a Q and can be positive or negative, seems to be one of the features that distinguishes conversations that take place in classrooms from those that occur in everyday situations.

It is the norm of classroom practice that the teacher asks Qs whose answers he/she knows and, as a result, the teacher is in the position to 'judge' the responses from the students. As Delamont (1983) points out:

> "As long as knowledge is the exclusive possession of the teacher she has the duty to monitor the versions of that knowledge being acquired by the pupils." (p126)

Because of the unequal command of knowledge being transmitted in the classroom, the teacher-pupil interaction is by and large a one-way communication and non-negotiable (Tsui 1987:336). It is not surprising that example (2) should be recognised as a talk between a parent and a child, where the parent, like the teacher, is most of the time the 'primary knower' (to use Berry's term [1981]) of the information 'requested' by the Q.

What makes the classroom interaction non-negotiable is also due to the unequal status between the teacher and student. The classroom speech event in which the IRF pattern is most obvious is in a teacher-led lesson, in which the teacher controls both the development of a topic and what counts as being relevant to it and who gets a turn to talk (Cazden 1988:30). In such centralised communication (Edwards & Westgate 1994.46), the teacher is the figure of authority. The student normally bids for the opportunity to speak and the teacher nominates the one to take the next turn. A refusal to answer the question would be out of order and an inability to answer is very likely to be negatively evaluated by the

teacher. In real life, by contrast, if one fails to give the time when asked to, it will not be negatively acknowledged.

As some sort of feedback is obligatory in the classroom, students expect their responses to be responded to or usually evaluated by the teacher, a constant lack of which is likely to lead to protest from students (Tsui 1987:339). This, however, does not mean that teachers' evaluation must take place immediately after a student's response. In fact, when the student's answer is incorrect, for instance, the teacher may postpone the evaluation by keeping silent or repeating or rephrasing the Q in order to let the students try again. However, acts such as pausing and/or repetition of the previous Q may suggest a negative evaluation of the response (see Johnson 1979).

Furthermore, the response by the student is evaluated by the teacher in terms of the appropriateness of the propositional content and often the form as well. This is a distinctive feature of L2 classroom which I shall talk more about at a later time.

The evaluation act plays a significant role in classroom discourse. It conveys information to students about the teachers' intention, e.g. the purpose of asking certain Qs, and thus helps students identify the nature of the Qs and in turn supply the desired answers. This will be further discussed in later chapters.

We have thus far established that the minimal exchange in a typical classroom is that of IRF. IRF describes the basic pedagogical purposes of classroom interaction and are labelled as 'moves' (Bellack et al 1966; Sinclair & Coulthard 1975).

Further investigation reveals that the teacher does not stop at the evaluation or comment move. If he does, the interaction loses its flow. In other words, in the third turn of the three-place exchange, there is more to the teachers' follow-up than a mere feedback to the response given by the student. In one breath, it seems, the teacher asks the next question. Take, for instance, an example from Sinclair and Coulthard (1975:21):

(4) T: Can you tell me why do you eat all that food? [1]
P: To keep you strong [2]
T: To keep you strong. Yes. To keep you strong. [3]
Why do you want to be strong?
(where [1], [2] and [3] represent turns.)

In the third turn [3], there are two moves realised by two different acts. One is the feedback to the pupil's response to the initial question, the other is a new initiation which requires a new response, which in turn will be evaluated. The interaction thus goes on and

is referred to as teaching cycles (Bellack et al 1966). The structure of such a chained exchange sequence will be like

I--R--F/I--R--F/I... (where -- represents turn boundary)

This clearly shows that the teacher does not merely take up half of the turns of the teacher-student interaction with the students taking up the other half, but the teacher actually makes more moves than the students. It has been found in studies of classroom discourse that in a traditional teacher-led class, the teacher will speak about two-thirds of the total time. Dillon (1988) reports that in three recitation (i.e. revision) history classes, the teachers end up speaking for 69%, 75% and 90% of the time respectively (p93), an average of 78%. This, however, is not the case in discussion classes where the teachers speak considerably less in proportion compared to that in recitation classes. One can easily imagine that in a less teacher-centred or in a more learner-centred class the structure of teacher-student interaction, and consequently the Q-A sequence, will differ considerably from that in traditional teacher-centred classes. To sum up, classroom interaction has the following features:

1. The teacher is the figure of authority and classroom communication is centralised.

2. The teacher is usually the primary knower of his/her Qs.

3. (In relation to 1 and 2 above) the teacher-student interaction is by and large non-negotiable.

4. An inability to answer is very likely to be negatively evaluated.

5. The response given by the student is to be evaluated or commented on by the teacher.

6. The response by the student is evaluated by the teacher in terms of the appropriateness of the propositional content and often the form as well.

7. The student bids for the turn to speak and the teacher nominates the turn to speak.

8. The teacher usually takes half of the turns and talks more.

9. The patterns of interaction may vary with different types of class or lesson.

The above discussion and the subsequent list of the classroom interaction features are far from being exhaustive. They merely provide a general framework in which teachers' use of Qs is studied.

1.5 Questions and questioning in educational settings

In the previous section (1.4), some general features of classroom discourse were described. It is clear that all the classroom features mentioned in 1.4 are directly related to teacher Qs and questioning behaviour. In this section, I shall review research literature on teachers' use of Qs in general classroom settings before moving on to research in L2 classrooms in the next chapter.

1.5.1 Classroom questions

Teachers' use of Qs in education, in both formal and informal settings, has long attracted the attention of educationists because questioning plays an active role in teaching, learning and testing (Austin 1949).

There is probably no feature of the classroom that cannot be found in settings outside the classroom. That is to say, there is probably no such thing as strictly classroom Qs in that Qs asked in classrooms are so unique that they cannot be found outside classrooms. The reason is simple: teacher talk in a classroom, including the use of Qs, is but part of human interpersonal communication.

However, a classroom is different in a number of ways from other settings such as courtroom hearings, business meetings, academic seminars, family dinners, etc. As far as teacher Qs are concerned, teachers hardly ever make genuine requests for information. This is normal for the classroom but abnormal for everyday life (Delamont 1983:126). As far as questioning behaviour is concerned, cross-questioning, checking up and interrogation are considered rude in everyday life, but they are the staple of classroom life (Delamont 1983:126).

In my previous discussion of the features of classroom interaction (1.4), it was pointed out that there is a significant difference between some of the Qs that teachers ask students in classrooms and the Qs that are asked outside classrooms: the teachers often ask Qs that they know the answers to. This difference, as also reflected in the follow-up of the two types of exchange, has been explained as the difference between asking information-seeking Qs and known-information Qs (Searle 1969; Labov & Fanshel 1978). The manifestation and implication of this difference in the L2 classroom will be discussed in Chapter 2.

When we talk about classroom Qs, we should also ask ourselves: what kind of class is it? Brown and Edmondson (1984) find that the types of teachers' Qs vary in terms of frequency in different subjects, such as maths, history, foreign language. Dillon (1988) compared two history classes which were taught to students of the same school in the same week though by two different teachers. The classes differed in that one was a recitation (i.e. revision) class and the other a discussion class -- two broad types of

classroom interaction. Significant differences were found in the proportion of teacher talk (vs. student talk), Q turns, student participating, rate of exchanges, and average student response. It can thus be speculated that differences of similar kind will be found in different L2 classes, such as reading, speaking and listening, content-based and task-based lessons.

The above initial discussion of teacher Qs clearly demonstrates that teacher Qs should not be studied in isolation, but rather they should be viewed in the context of interaction. It is only in the context of interaction that we can determine the function of a Q, view Q-asking and Q-answering as a process, and see how Qs and responses, Qs and Qs are related. As Dillon (1990) rightly pointed out:

> "Although it is a single place, the classroom is a complex of multiple contexts" (p8)

1.5.2 Areas of research on classroom questions

Research on classroom Qs covers a wide range of issues and aspects which can be summarised under the following four general headings:

1) Classifications
2) Teachers' Qs and students' achievements
3) Questioning techniques
4) Teacher training

1.5.2.1 Classification of questions

A classification system is necessary for empirical studies of Qs, in the same way as observation schemes are needed for investigation of classroom activities.

Research on classroom Qs in the 50s and 60s attempted to classify teachers' Qs according to the educational objectives. The most widely adopted taxonomy on teachers' Qs was that developed on the basis of Bloom and his colleagues' comprehensive work on educational objectives (Bloom et al 1956).

As a somewhat detailed discussion of this taxonomy will be given in Chapter 3, only a brief account of it will be presented here for the purpose of clarifying its relation and relevance to this study.

The major Q categories in Bloom's taxonomy are 'memory/recall', 'comprehension', 'application', 'analysis', 'synthesis', and 'evaluation'.

Bloom et al's taxonomy was later applied to some empirical studies on teachers' Qs on the assumption that it is hierarchical in terms of cognitive difficulty, although such assumption is denied by Bloom et al in their later work. In spite of the fact that it is difficult to claim that question types of a taxonomy are hierarchical in terms of difficulty, it is still a truism that some Qs are more difficult than others as far as the designated answerer is concerned. This is because Q answering involves a complicated process which includes comprehension of the Q, successful retrieval of information needed for providing an appropriate answer and articulation of the answer in a comprehensible manner.

In order to avoid complications, the six types of Qs are put two broad categories i.e. lower cognitive Qs and higher cognitive Qs in various studies of Qs in the L1 classroom. Lower cognitive Qs are Qs requesting simple recall or recognition of factual information previously read or presented by a teacher whilst higher cognitive Qs are those requiring the student to mentally manipulate bits of information previously learned to create or support an answer with logically reasoned evidence (Winne 1979). A similar distinction is also made between recall Qs and thought Qs (3.2.2.1).

One of the problems of classifying Qs is that apart from the fact that there are many factors to a Q being easy or difficult as it is, these factors are also difficult to pin-point and vary in different contexts as well. What may be one type of Q in one context may be another type in another context (Brown & Edmondson 1989). A Q may be a lower cognitive one to some students and a higher cognitive one to others in the same class. A Q requesting synthesis may be reduced to a simple recall Q if the student has read the answer to the Q prior to answering the Q. A student's answer may not even be a reliable criterion for judging the level of a Q because it is not always possible to know whether a student answered a particular Q by using a high-level cognitive process, such as analysis or synthesis, or by using the relatively low level of recall (Gall 1970). A thought Q may be reduced to a recall one when it is put again to the same students. And we must not forget that a Q asked in one language is likely to differ in terms of difficulty to someone who speaks the language as a native language versus to someone who is not so proficient in that language.

Caution must be taken against any hierarchical classification of Qs (like the Bloom's one). Different types of Qs interact and are not necessarily comparable in terms of importance in instruction. Take 'analysis' and 'interpretation' Qs, for example: we analyse when we interpret and we interpret when we analyse (Christenbury & Kelly 1983:5).

There are dozens of different systems for classifying Qs or variations of some major taxonomies. The fact that different systems exist highlights the problem for classifying Qs or adopting any one system.

1.5.2.2 Teachers' questions and students' achievement

There would be limited pedagogic value if teachers' Qs are classified simply for the sake of it. "It is important that teachers' Qs should not be viewed as an end in themselves. They are a means to an end -- producing desired changes in student behaviour" (Gall 1970:718). The 1970s saw a number of pieces of research attempting to examine the relationship between discrete observable teacher questioning practices and student achievement in speech and written performance. The focus was usually on whether the cognitive level of teacher Qs had any effect on student learning outcome. This approach is basically a process-product one, i.e. the teachers' use of Qs as the process and students' learning outcome as the product. The studies have yielded contradictory results.

Winne (1979) critically reviewed 18 experimental and quasi-experimental studies. Each of these studies examined teachers' instructional use of relatively more versus relatively fewer higher cognitive Qs. He concludes that there is no sturdy conclusion which can be offered about the relative effectiveness of teachers' use of higher cognitive Qs for enhancing student achievement (1979:46).

Redfield and Rousseau (1981) synthesised experimental research findings on the relationship between level of teacher questioning and student achievement. Twenty studies on teachers' use of higher cognitive and lower cognitive Qs were reviewed and 18 of the 20 studies were previously used by Winne (1979). The results of the analysis do not support Winne's conclusion that teacher questioning behaviour has no effect on student achievement. Rather, the analysis demonstrates that, regardless of type of study or degree of experimental validity, teachers' predominant use of higher cognitive Qs has a positive effect on student achievement. This overall finding lends support to previous conclusions (e.g. Gall 1970) regarding the importance of teacher questioning behaviour on student achievement.

The contradictory results from different studies and reviews show that teachers' Qs should not be viewed in isolation from other factors which may play an important part in bringing about effects of Qs on students achievement. The subject matter, students' level and background (Gall 1984), the sample size of the experiment (Redfield & Rousseau 1981), whether the Qs are related to the information given in the text being studied (Reynolds and Anderson 1982), etc all should be considered.

The process-product approach to the study of teachers' Qs has its obvious weaknesses. The surface form of a Q -- the word order and choice of words -- does not provide enough information to determine the nature of a Q, e.g. whether it is a higher cognitive Q or a lower cognitive Q. One must consider what came before it in discourse and what rules govern answering the Q (Carlsen 1991:167). Apart from cognitive functions, Qs also perform social functions, e.g. exercising control (Farrar 1986). Qs viewed and classified out of context are inadequate in describing the complexity of teacher Qs. From the sociolinguistic perspective, the two aspects -- interactional patterns and the topic of conversation -- are inseparable (Carlsen 1991:167). On the 'product' end of the paradigm, i.e. the student learning outcome, the process-product perspective deals only with measured achievement in school subjects or immediate production and ignores the broader social and personal goals of education (see Clegg 1987).

While there is a growing body of evidence that demonstrates that appropriate Qs (e.g. to the right level), properly asked (e.g. clearly delivered) contribute to significant improvement in student learning (Brophy & Good 1986, Wilen & Clegg 1986), Dillon has consistently opposed the extensive use of Qs in classroom. Dillon challenges the claim made by many educators that Qs stimulate thinking and argues that using Qs in fact depresses student thought (1978), foils discussion (1985), and induces less student contribution than, for example, using statements (1985, 1991). He has advocated a number of alternatives to the use of Qs including the use of statements and deliberate silence (1981b, 1985, 1990, 1991) (see Chapter 5 for further discussion).

Two salient points arise in this section. One is that teachers' Qs and student achievement is not a simple correlation between one or more types of Q on the one hand and what follows the Qs (Rs) on the other. There are other factors which might affect such correlation.

The second point is that the study of teachers' Qs in L1 context is basically concerned with the cognitive development of pupils. This may not be of immediate concern to L2 research.

1.5.2.3 Questioning techniques

I have already drawn the distinction between Qs and questioning and have argued that questioning is concerned with the use of Qs as opposed to Qs as a linguistic entity (1.3.1). One important aspect concerning the use of Qs is questioning strategies and techniques.

Since questioning strategies will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5, I shall only briefly sum up the main issues in this section as part of the effort to establish the general framework for this research.

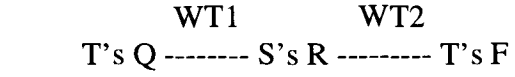
The distribution of Qs in relation to the target respondents, i.e. to the class, group or individuals, has received attention. It is found that such distribution is related to the class content, student level and Q type (Brown & Edmondson 1989; Hamilton & Brady 1991).

It was pointed out in 1.5.2.2 that different types of Q might have different effects on the students. It follows that the appropriate Qs should be used to the right type of student and on the right occasion. This is an issue concerning the distribution of Qs. It has been suggested, for example, that, as a general strategy, teachers should ask lower cognitive Qs in elementary settings and more higher-cognitive Qs to more advanced students (see Wilen 1987 for review). Asking Qs which are well beyond students' capability will probably cause unease and silence and be counter-productive.

Qs are to be answered. But who is going to provide the answer? Should the students be allowed to volunteer or should they bid or wait for the turn to answer? There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. When students are free to choose by themselves whether to volunteer or keep silent, some (more competent ones) may dominate the scene while others (the weak ones) may hardly open their mouth. Teachers should use Qs to distribute participation among the students (Blosser 1973) and keep a balance between volunteer and non-volunteer respondents (Wilen 1987). This is, on the one hand, a matter of distributing Qs and, on the other hand, a revelation of teacher exercising his/her control in the classroom (cf.1.4).

Another major aspect of questioning strategies is teachers' use of wait-time.

In her first work on the subject of wait-time (WT), Rowe (1974a & 1974b) identified two types of pause in the teaching cycle of IRF. WT1 is the pause between the teacher's Q and a student's answer. WT2 is the pause between a student's answer and the teacher' feedback.



It was pointed out that teachers' wait-time was generally too short and increasing both types of wait-time would help increase the quantity and quality of students' participation (Rowe 1974c, 1978, 1986; Swift & Gooding 1983; see Tobin 1987, Carlsen 1991, for review). The fact that teachers' wait-time is generally too short in ESL classrooms was identified by White and Lightbown (1984). They argue that considering that L2 learners have to understand the Q, formulate and express the response in a language that they probably are not proficient in, they need even longer wait-time than NSs (p241) and short wait-time is likely to affect their output.

Research has also found that teachers' wait-time varies in terms of types of Qs (Brown & Edmondson 1989) and in terms of level of students (e.g. high achieving vs. low achieving students) (Brophy & Good 1986). For example, extended wait-time is probably more important and effective in discussion than in other teacher-student exchanges.

I have talked about the importance of teachers' feedback to students' responses both as an obligatory move in the classroom exchange and as an valuable instructional tool (cf. 1.4). Because it is directly related to Qs and responses, teachers' feedback to students' responses is regarded as one of the important aspects of questioning strategy (Gall & Rhody 1987; Wilen 1987). Moore et al (1989) report that increasing teacher praise is a more effective way, than increasing teacher pauses, to increase pupil verbal contribution.

Generally, the teacher should not only acknowledge student responses, but also use various techniques to encourage more contribution from the students. These techniques include the use of praise and follow-up Qs such as probing Qs. Hyman (1979) identified 12 specific probing techniques including Qs asking students to clarify, expand, justify their initial or previous responses.

Strategies are ways of dealing with problems (van Lier 1988:30). One of the major problems teachers constantly face is that students either fail to answer or give the incorrect or undesired answers. Apart from providing the answers himself or extending the wait-time, the teacher may repeat the Q, rephrase the Qs with modifications, narrow the focus of the Q, re-direct the Q (e.g. from a Q addressed to an individual to a Q addressed to the class), etc. (Hargie et al 1987). In L2 classroom, the teacher may use the L1 of the designated respondent(s) to overcome the immediate comprehension problem. I shall call all these strategies repair strategies (cf. 5.5).

Carlsen (1991) reviewed a number of studies on teachers' wait-time and argued that:

> "Wait-time is deemed a teacher behavior despite the fact that its termination is normally effected by a student response. In classroom talk and in class, however, the duration of a pause after any move is controlled by the respondent, not the initiator." (p173)

It seems to me that Carlsen's argument has gone a bit too far. In a classroom the teacher as the chief initiator does exercise the power to terminate wait-time by directing the Q to another student or answering it himself.

The brief review thus far of the study on questioning strategies has shown the following two salient points.

1. There is some relationship between Q type, student type, type of class or class activity on the one hand and questioning strategies such as wait-time and Q distribution on the other.

2. Questioning strategies cover a range of issues. Although they are related to each other in one way or another, some of them are probably more important than others in a given context or to a particular research question.

1.5.2.4 Teacher training

The purpose of any educational research is and should be on the one hand to enhance our understanding of issues that concern the teaching and learning, and on the other hand enlighten those who are engaged in the practice so that improvement can be made. The study on teachers' use of Qs is no exception.

Once a practice is believed to bring about positive learning outcome, it would be recommended that teachers adopt it to improve their teaching.

The first general finding is that most of teachers' Qs are lower cognitive Qs, that is, they have emphasised the memory of facts (1.5.2.2). Gall (1970) reported that about 60% of teachers' Qs require students to recall facts; about 20% require students to think; and the remaining 20% are procedural (p713). Finding of this sort caused some dismay on the part of educators who argue that the primary goal of education, among other things, is to help students think critically and independently.

However, there are a number of reasons why emphasis on facts is necessary. For example, teachers need to ask many factual Qs to bring out the data which students require to answer thought Qs (Gall 1970). Besides, higher cognitive Qs are normally more difficult and complex, which are not necessarily conducive to learning and can sometimes lead to embarrassing silence (Farrar 1986; McNamara 1981).

The low correspondence between the level of teacher Qs and student responses (53%) prompted Mills et al (1980) to suggest that teachers should train their students in the use of the same cognitive classification systems and, perhaps, questioning and discussion methods which the teacher has learned. There are two advantages: a) it provides mutual reinforcement for teachers and students to engage in higher cognitive dialogue, and b) it reduces the length of time for students to fit into the mode of instruction (Mills et al 1980).

Questioning is not the only strategy in instruction. It is part of teachers' endeavour to bring about effective learning. The relative importance of using Qs in a classroom does not suggest that questioning is appropriate for all instructional situations. It is fruitless to question students when they do not have sufficient information or background to respond adequately (Christenbury & Kelly 1983). What is important to know for the teachers is that there is no single type of Q or single questioning technique that is the best regardless of students and context. To take the example of higher cognitive and lower cognitive Qs again, teachers' Qs that require students to think independently and those that require recall of information are both useful but serve different purposes. "The challenge for teachers is to use each type to its best advantage" (Gall 1984:41). Part of teacher training, therefore, is to help teachers develop a repertoire of questioning strategies and tactics and use them according to the educational objectives and situation.

Apart from asking more higher-cognitive Qs, other good questioning skills to be practised by teachers are to redirect Qs to different students so the quality of the answer(s) can be improved, to ask probing Qs which require students to improve or elaborate on their original response (Gall 1970).

There are some supposedly bad questioning behaviours which teachers are discouraged from using. They are repetition of one's own Qs, repetition of students' answers (Gall 1970; Blosser 1973), and answering one's own Qs (Gall 1970).

My immediate response to such prescription of questioning skills is that it may not be appropriate to L2 teaching. My experience both as a L2 learner and L2 teacher tells me that repetition (including that of Qs) is not only a very common practice but also helpful to learners. Clearly the research on teachers' use of Qs in L1 context cannot be readily applied to L2 teaching or L2 teacher training.

1.6 Research questions and tasks

During the literature survey I constantly asked myself two questions: a) what Qs elicit more verbal response from the learners in L2 classrooms? and b) what questioning strategies facilitate this?

The review above has suggested the following general points which I must take into consideration in the study of teachers' Qs:

1) In an empirical study, a Q can only be categorised in the context in which it occurs;

2) The effect(s) of different types of Qs on the respondents may vary with regard to their cognitive level, linguistic competence (in L2 context in particular) and other factors such as type of class and/or activity;

3) The study of teachers' use of Qs cannot be isolated entirely from the responses elicited by the Qs; and

4) The kinds of Qs teachers ask and how they are presented seem to be two interrelated areas. The former is concerned with the forms and functions of Qs and the latter the questioning behaviours and strategies.

Based on the above, I shall set out next to do the following which are related to my research tasks:

1) Identify a classification system of Qs and code the data with it;
2) Collect data for the empirical analysis;
3) Investigate what Qs teachers ask and how Qs function in L2 classroom discourse; and
4) Examine the questioning techniques teachers use when asking Qs.

1.7 The method of investigation

1.7.1 The general approach

The research design including a discussion of research approaches, selection of subjects, etc will be presented in detail in Chapter 6. In this section, only a brief description of the method of inquiry will be given as a guide.

The empirical part of this study consists of an eleven-week non-participating observation of a group of Chinese learners studying English in London. All their lessons during these eleven weeks were audio-recorded.

This study is non-experimental. In other words, the research was conducted in classrooms where teaching and learning took place in their usual way. There was no random selection of subjects, neither in terms of teachers nor learners.

The research is not an ethnographic study of teachers' questioning behaviour. Nor is it an in-depth case study of a particular group of Chinese learners. Categories of Qs were developed before observation took place, though changes were made in the instrument as a result of initial analysis of the transcription of the pilot study.

1.7.2 Source of data

The data used in this study including the numerous examples cited come from three major sources:

a) Direct observation. This includes recordings that I personally conducted, the notes I took as an observer in the classroom, and the transcripts I did from the recordings. This will constitute the main body of the data used in this study.

b) Indirect source. This includes other people's audio and/or visual recordings. In other words, I was not present when the recording was done. Included also in this category are some transcripts done by other researchers.

c) Fabricated examples. For the purpose of illustration, examples which are made up rather than taken from real situations have been used. Some of them are fabricated by myself, and others come from readings of other people's works. The source of some of the examples cited from others, unfortunately, has not been clearly identified in the original works.

The source of data as explained above will be indicated in this thesis.

1.8 Organisation of the thesis

Chapter 1 presents the theoretical background and framework to the study. It includes a review of literature on teachers' Qs in L1 classrooms.

Chapter 2 is a review of research in Qs and questioning in L2 context.

Chapter 3 deals with the forms and functions of Qs. Various classification systems are examined and on the basis of the examination, a system is developed for the classroom observation to be conducted for this research.

In Chapter 4, Qs and questioning are viewed at different levels, and formal or structural connections are established not only between Qs, between Qs and responses, but also between one unit of Q-R exchange and another.

Various questioning strategies are described in Chapter 5 in an attempt to address the question of how teachers use Qs in the interaction with the students.

Chapter 6 describes the research design where different research approaches and methods are discussed and the process of selection, collection and transcription of data is described.
The data collected for the study are analysed in Chapter 7.

In Chapter 8, the findings are interpreted around a few salient issues.

Finally, in Chapter 9, general conclusions are drawn. On the basis of the findings theoretical implications and pedagogic suggestions will be made toward improvement of teachers' use of Qs in L2 classrooms.

Chapter 2 Research in Qs and Questioning in ESL/EFL Context

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Chapter 2 Research in Qs and Questioning in ESL/EFL Context

2.1 Introduction

In 1.5 research on teachers' use of Qs in general educational settings was reviewed. This chapter, however, is devoted to the review of research on teacher Qs and questioning in the L2 context. I shall start by pointing out some of the differences between L1 and L2 classroom discourse in the area of classroom questioning. This is followed by a review of the major works in this field.

2.2 Some differences between the L1 and L2 classroom

In 1.4 it has been pointed out that classroom discourse differs from daily conversation in various ways. In this section, I want to further identify some differences between L1 classrooms and L2 classrooms in relation to teachers' use of Qs.

The L2 class is after all a type of class, hence, sharing common features with other classrooms. These features were outlined in the previous chapter. Although new approaches to language teaching, especially the communicative approach, have brought into classrooms a diversity of class activities with the emphasis on the learner participating in meaningful interaction, teacher-fronted classes are still the normal practice.

In spite of similarities, there are still a number of significant differences between the L1 and L2 classroom. This will be discussed mainly in relation to the area of teachers' Qs and questioning behaviour in the following sections.

2.2.1 Functions of teacher talk and functions of teacher questions

Unlike in L1 classrooms, the language used by the teacher in L2 classroom and/or printed or audio-visual material are both the medium of instruction and the content of study. This is particularly so at lower levels of learners' L2 development. The teachers' use of the target language together with textbooks, etc serves as model of the target language. What is found in L2 classrooms but not in L1 classrooms is that teachers' Qs, and the use of interrogative sentences, may function as models for the students to follow. This, however, is not the case in L1 classrooms. The modelling function of teachers' use of Qs may occur in various situations:

1) In the practice of interrogative sentences, e.g. in drilling exercises, either the teachers' interrogative sentences are imitated, or the students are instructed to produce them for the sake of practising them.

2) Because of the constraints of Qs on the answers teachers' Qs not only elicit the output of target language from the students but also control to a large extent the way or form in which the output is produced.

In one language class [video IOE:J231], for example, where the past progressive tense was being practised, the teacher first described two pictures contrasting the present and past progressive tense. Then he asked two types of Q to engage the students in the practice: Who was doing X? What was he/she doing?

Later on, the students were instructed to formulate such Qs using the past progressive tense. The controlling function of the use of Qs was apparent.

3) At times, when the content rather than the form of Qs is the focus, the teacher may 'ask' Qs simply to demonstrate to the students the sort of Qs students could ask for a particular exercise. In one exercise, for example, the task was to prepare a list of Qs and then interview the neighbouring student with the prepared Qs. The teacher formed a number of Qs which were models for the students to follow.

All these, and no doubt some more, will inevitably have some implications on the research into teachers' use of Qs in L2 classrooms. Firstly, what then should be counted as a Q? Although this depends on what one's definition of a Q is and what the research focus is, a basic distinction must be made between Qs used as models of target language use and Qs asked for answers. This will be further pursued in Chapter 4.

Secondly, because of this modelling function of teachers' use of target language and because of the relatively limited target language proficiency of the learners, repetition in teachers' speech is one of the features of teacher talk in L2 classrooms. It is therefore likely that a L2 teacher may at times repeat his/her Qs for modelling or for clarity. This questioning behaviour will be examined in detail in Chapter 5.

2.2.2 Discourse structure

In 2.2.1 I talked about some of the differences in L1 and L2 classroom discourse. In this section I shall look at the differences in terms of the structure of the discourse.

Johnson (1979), in her study of L1 classroom discussion, claims that she finds no example of the following:

(1)	T:	What's the capital of Columbia? Rosa?	[1]
	S1:	Bogota	[2]
	T:	Maureen?	[3]
	S2:	Bogota.	[4]

Johnson calls move [3] (Teacher: Maureen?) "ungrammatical" in the speech event (p130:note 1). To her, if the answer to the Q is correct, as [2] is, there is no point asking someone else to answer the same Q.

While this kind of exchange may well be odd in daily life and even in a L1 class, it is not uncommon in a L2 class, during drilling and pronunciation exercise for example. The difference lies in the purpose of classroom activity or task which is selected and administered by the teacher. In the example cited above as it happened in L1 classroom, the purpose of a teacher' Q may be to ensure that the students retain the knowledge, in this case, knowing the capital of Columbia. This task is already completed by S1 who has correctly provided the answer to the teachers' Q. Therefore, there is no need to let another student repeat immediately after the correct answer. Of course there are occasions where such an exchange can be "grammatical". For example, seeing that Maureen was not paying attention, the teacher may ask her to repeat the answer to the Q in order to draw her attention back.

In L2 classes, attention and emphasis are often placed on the form of the target language rather than the content. The purpose of a teacher' Q, for example, may be to ensure that students are able to pronounce correctly the word Bogota which contains certain vowels which are being practised. As a result, the exchange will be "grammatical". Thus, discourse acceptability is very much context dependent and the purpose of teachers' elicitation affects the interaction pattern that results (cf. 4.4 for further discussion of patterns).

In the L2 context, both the teacher and students are sometimes the knowers of the information needed to respond to the elicitation. In this case, the teacher does not only know the answer to his/her Q, he/she also knows that the students know the answer to the Q. What is sought is not the truth value of the answer to the Q. In other words, the purpose of the Q then is not to elicit display of knowledge, as is the case with other known-information Qs, but to elicit display of some oral performance of the target language. This is one of the unique features of L2 classroom.

2.2.3 Teachers' questioning behaviour

In terms of questioning strategies, L2 classes also differ from L1 classes. It has been identified as a bad questioning behaviour on the part of the teacher in L1 classes to repeat his/her own Qs and to repeat students' answers to the Qs (Gall 1970; Blosser 1973). In a L2 class, however, both repeating the Q and repeating students' responses are often not only necessary but also beneficial to the learners. This is again a revelation of the L2 classroom feature in that the language is the content of study as well as the medium of instruction.

First of all, teachers' speech in the target language provides input and serves as a model for the learners. As a result, teachers' repetition of the Qs and the answers has the function of providing examples of how interrogative sentences are formed, how Qs are formulated, and modifying or correcting the learner's speech.

Secondly, various studies have found that teachers' repetition (of his/her own utterances) is a feature of teacher talk in language classes (see Chaudron 1988). Teachers' repetition of a Q is a way of ensuring or assisting the learner's comprehension. It can be reasonably assumed that failure in understanding teachers' Qs in L1 classes should be rare.

Thirdly, teachers' repetition, paraphrase or summarisation of students' responses are a very important means of reinforcing the correct production (if the response is correct), and correcting the learner's error (if there is an error or errors in the R). There are, of course, many other issues concerning what, when and how errors should be corrected (see Allwright 1977).

The one aspect of questioning behaviour that I have highlighted here, i.e. teachers' repetition of their Qs, shows that teachers' questioning strategies may vary in L1 and L2 classes. More about questioning strategy will be described in Chapter 5.

2.2.4 Language development as opposed to cognitive development

The differences in functions of Qs, structure of questioning exchanges and questioning behaviour as found in L1 and L2 classes may have resulted from the underlying differences in the nature of the respective classes. One of these underlying differences, I believe, lies in that the L2 class aims at language development of the learners whereas the L1 class aims at cognitive development of the students.

As pointed out earlier (1.5), research on teachers' Qs in L1 classrooms tends to classify teachers' Qs according to the cognitive demand they require on the part of the students, hence the distinction between thought and recall Qs, higher-order and lower-order Qs, etc. (see Chapter 3 for more discussion). It is believed and advocated that thought Qs or higher-order Qs should be increased so as to enhance the cognitive development of the students. It should be noted that nearly all the research on teachers' Qs in L1 situations have investigated a range of students from young children up to students of secondary schools. The focus on cognitive levels of Qs and the concern of their effects in L1 research are in line with the general educational objectives which advocate cognitive development of those being educated, i.e. the young learners. In contrast, very little study has been done about college students or adult students as respondents of Qs in L1 context,

presumably because cognitive development is not the concern for research on L1 adult learners.

The objective of L2 instruction does not usually aim at cognitive development because, perhaps, it is assumed that adult learners are cognitively mature. The goal, therefore, is to help the learners develop the understanding and proficiency of the target language so as to be able to communicate successfully. This, however, does not suggest that cognitive demand of Qs is not relevant to L2 learners. On the contrary, as I would argue below, it is relevant but, perhaps, in different ways.

The differences between cognitive demand of Qs on the students in L1 and L2 situations can be viewed from the perspective of the responding process.

Gall (1984) points out that a student who responds reflectively to a Q engages in the process of 1) hearing, 2) deciphering, 3) considering information pertinent to the Q, 4) focusing a response, 5) expressing it orally, and perhaps, revising it depending on the teachers' reaction (cf. Wilen 1987: 119).

For L2 students, stages (2), (4) and especially (5) in the responding process are particularly hard. As a result, lower-cognitive Qs, factual/recall Qs, closed Qs or display Qs are easier for foreign language learners especially at lower level at stages (4) and (5). (Various types of Qs will be described in detail in Chapter 3). Since L2 teaching is more concerned with students' production of the target language, it is necessary to lower the cognitive level to facilitate such production. It is probably more so with learners of lower L2 proficiency. The L2 adult learners may well be capable of answering some analysis Qs or evaluative Qs should they be allowed to do so in their native language. The difficulty is to provide the answer in the target language. In this case, the Q is not cognitively challenging as it might be to L1 or L2 pupils. It is the complex language required to answer the thought Q that is hard for low proficiency learners. It is reasonable therefore to hypothesise that there are fewer high cognitive Qs in lower level L2 classes.

The following is a brief summary of some of the features of L2 classroom discourse which are most closely related to teachers' use of Qs:

1. Language is the content of study as well as the medium of instruction. This includes the focus of message form of Qs.
2. Teachers' use of the target language is often the model of the language being studied.
3. More than one language may be used by both NNS or bilingual teachers and especially by learners.

4. Teachers sometimes elicit responses for formal practice.
5. Sometimes both teacher and student are primary knowers in that the teacher knows that the student knows the answer (content). The purpose of the elicitation is to get the student to use the target language.
6. As in pronunciation practice, for example, all the learners may need to have a chance to try to produce the same answer to exactly the same Q.
7. L2 teachers may use various kinds of phonological, syntactic, lexical, discoursal simplifications and modifications when addressing learners.

The above list is not exhaustive and some of the features will be further illustrated in later chapters.

2.2.5 Summary of section 2.2

In this section I have examined the differences between L1 and L2 classes in relation to teachers' use of Qs. I argue that the differences in the nature of the two types of class (2.2.4) inevitably lead to differences in classroom discourse (e.g. the function of teachers' Qs) (2.2.1), discourse structure (e.g. patterns of questioning exchanges) (2.2.2), and teaching strategy (questioning behaviour) (2.2.3). I realise that each of the above areas can be very broad. In light of the above discussion, I shall focus on two areas: (a) what counts as Qs in a L2 class, and (b) how Qs are related formally (i.e. discourse structure) and strategically (i.e. questioning behaviour). I shall narrow the focus down as I review the literature on Qs and questioning in ESL/EFL context in the next section.

2.3 Literature review: studies on questions and questioning in L2 context

In the past 15 years or so, a number of studies have been conducted on the teachers' use of Qs in ESL/EFL context. They shall be reviewed under the following areas:

* Comparison between the use of Qs in NS-NNS informal conversation and in teacher-student interaction in the classroom;
* Distinction between display and referential Qs;
* Echoic Qs and interaction.

2.3.1 Teachers' questions in the classroom versus questions used in NS-NNS dialogues

The fact that teachers predominantly ask known information Qs or test Qs has long been pointed out by researchers in the educational field. The focus of research on classroom Qs, however, has rarely been on whether the Qs are known information Qs or information-seeking Qs, but on the cognitive levels that Qs set on the part of the students (see 1.4 and 1.5). It is a relatively new focus in L2 research to investigate teachers' use of Qs and the effects of the two contrasting types of Qs which are termed as display and referential Qs respectively. Display Qs are Qs to which the teacher knows the answer whereas

referential Qs are those that the teacher does not know the answer to. Several studies done in the 1980s have looked at teachers' use of these two types of Qs and their effects on ESL classroom discourse.

The first of a series of studies on Qs in ESL contexts was done by Long (1981) and subsequently expanded by Long and Sato (1983). Their paper "Classroom Foreigner Talk Discourse: Forms and Functions of Teachers' Questions" has been widely cited not only in studies on teachers' use of Qs but also in general works on classroom discourse and interaction.

Long & Sato (1983) compared, among other things, the types of Qs asked by teachers in class with the types of Qs used by NSs when communicating with L2 speakers in non-classroom contexts. It was found that

> "whereas display Qs predominate in ESL instruction (51% of all Qs teachers posed), and are much more frequent than referential Qs there (51% compared with 21%), they are virtually unknown in informal NS-NNS conversation (the target discourse for most ESL learners)."
>
> (1983:280)

On this evidence, Long & Sato conclude that NS-NNS conversation during second language instruction is a greatly distorted version of its equivalent in the real world (p284).

There are a number of reasons why it should be the case that outside the classroom, virtually all the Qs addressed to students are referential, while in class, the opposite is the case.

1) The predominant use of display Qs characterises unequal status and command of (L2) knowledge and target language proficiency between teachers and students in the classroom (cf. Edwards & Westgate 1994; Chapter 1.4.).

2) The purpose of communication is different. While the classroom interaction is basically transactional and pedagogic, the NS-NNS dialogue outside classrooms is chiefly interactional and social.

The fact that teachers use predominantly display Qs in class while NSs do not outside the class should not surprise L2 practitioners. Furthermore this fact does not and should not automatically suggest that teachers should use mainly referential Qs as NSs do outside the class. Whether the use of display and referential Qs affects the learning of the target

language and, if so, in what ways should be the focus of inquiry. With this I turn to the next section in which we take a close look at the two types of Q.

2.3.2 Display questions versus referential questions

2.3.2.1 Review of the studies on display and referential questions

In recent studies of the use of Qs in EFL context, two major types of Qs, display and referential Qs, and their effects on learners (NNSs) were investigated (Long & Sato 1983; Pica & Long 1986; Brock 1986; White & Lightbown 1984; Banbrook & Skehan 1990, Wintergerst 1994). Before their works are reviewed, their scheme of classifying Qs is discussed.

It was pointed out in Chapter 1 that the teacher is often the primary knower, i.e. they know the answers to the Qs they put to the students. As a result, there is little need for negotiation of information between the questioner, i.e. the teacher, and the respondents, i.e. the students.

Teachers do ask Qs whose answers they do not know. Is there, then, a difference between the answer-known Qs and answer-unknown Qs in relation to their effects on learner production and teacher and learner interaction? This research Q has been, among other things, investigated in the above-mentioned studies. The two types of Qs are thus termed as display and referential Qs. In asking a display Q the teacher is asking for information he/she knows. The learner is requested to "display" his/her knowledge specific to what has been or is being learned. In contrast, when asking a referential Q the teacher is asking for information he/she does not know.

Brock (1986) investigated the effects of referential Qs on ESL classroom discourse. It was an experimental and quantitative research on a small scale. The study was carried out with four experienced ESL teachers. Two of the teachers had been trained to incorporate referential Qs into their classroom instruction, while the other two had not. Each of the teachers taught the same lesson to six different non-native speakers. The lessons were recorded, transcribed and analysed. As expected, the two teachers who had been trained to use referential Qs asked significantly more referential Qs than display Qs (173/194 = 89.3%). The control group teachers who had not been made aware of the difference between referential Qs and display Qs asked more display Qs than referential Qs (117/141 = 83%). It was found that the learners in the treatment groups (in which more referential Qs were asked) gave significantly longer and more syntactically complex responses. The responses were measured by the mean length (in words) of all learner turns, and the logical connectives (e.g. because, yet, so, etc.) used by the learners.

The latest study of teacher Qs in ESL classes is that by Wintergerst (1994). Wintergerst's study covered Qs and responses of both teachers and students. Her data came from the recordings and transcripts of six teachers and twelve lessons. Of the twelve lessons six were grammar lessons (featuring grammar or function) and six were discussion lessons (featuring class materials, readings, or lectures of their choosing). Three grammar lessons and three discussion classes were taught to beginners classes and the other six advanced classes.

Wintergerst (1994) used Fanselow's (1987) Foci for Observing Communications Used in Settings (FOCUS) as the observation system for her study. FOCUS uses the same four move types suggested by Bellack et al (1966), i.e. structuring, soliciting, responding, and reacting. Solicits refer to moves eliciting responses and include Qs, requests, and commands. Wintergerst further categorised Qs according to Fanselow's categorisation of Qs, i.e. present elicit (pe), present query (pq), and present question (p?). Following Fanselow's definition of these Q types, *present elicit* refers to commands, requests, or Qs that display language or other areas of study for their own sake or solicit others to display study for its own sake. Asking Qs one knows the answer to is a common communication of this type. *Present query* refers to commands, requests, or questions that explore reality, seek to solve a problem, or seek new information. *Present question* refers to commands, requests, or questions that do not fit neatly into the sub-categories present elicit or present query. Wintergerst suggests that these three Q types are analogous to Long & Sato's three Q types, namely, present elicit is comparable to display Qs, present query to referential Qs, and present question to echoic Qs (p27).

Two of her purposes of study were: 1) to explore the frequency and types of teacher Qs and student Qs, and 2) to explore the extent to which the length of student responses is affected by different types of teacher and student Qs. Her finding regarding display and referential Qs support that of Brock's (1986). She concluded:

> The findings from the study reported suggest that if teachers want their students to use language more and produced more extended student responses, they should consider solicits with these selected features: wh-Qs, rather than yes/no Qs, either/or Qs, commands/requests; referential Qs (pq), or Qs to which the speaker does not know the answer, rather than Qs which are display or practice Qs; ... (p85)

Long et al's study (1984) failed to support the hypothesis that referential Qs elicit more learner production.

Long et al (1984) randomly assigned six high school teachers to one of three groups: two to an experimental Q treatment group, two to an experimental wait-time group and two to a control (praise feedback) group. The Q treatment group was trained in the use of referential Qs and encouraged to use them. It was found that teachers who have been trained in Q types produced significantly more referential Qs than control teachers following training. However, with referential and control groups combined, referential Qs did not elicit more student speech, as measured by number of turns, utterances, or words per utterance, than display Qs.

The research on the effects of display and referential Qs in terms of whether they enhance learner production or affect interaction patterns is still scarce and inconclusive (see also Nunan 1989a and Nunan1989b).

One possible explanation of the discrepancy in findings between Brock's study and Long et al's study concerning the effects of display and referential Qs in terms of learner production and teacher-student interaction is that the subjects involved in the studies differ significantly in their L2 proficiency. While Brock's subjects were advanced ESL students, Long et al's were what they call 'limited English proficient' children. This is also in line with my own classroom observation experience, that is, that referential Qs seem to generate more learner production from the more advanced students than they do from low level learners. Low proficiency learners are limited in what they can verbally express anyway. It has also been pointed out in the literature review in Chapter 1 that the effects of teachers' Qs on students in terms of eliciting their verbal production is related to students types including their academic level.

There are, however, some possible explanations to the initial finding that referential Qs are likely to stimulate a greater quantity of genuine classroom communication. Nunan (1987) suggests that referential Qs stimulate learners to engage their 'schematic knowledge representations' (p142). His experiment demonstrates that, when learners' interest is engaged, and when they are able to bring their own background schemata into classroom interactions, these can be truly communicative, even with very basic learners (p142). But whether the learners are interested in something or not is largely determined by the topic, which is one of the factors that affect classroom atmosphere, which in turn hinders or facilitates learner production and interaction.

Referential Qs by definition are Qs that the teacher does not know the answers to. Students can usually tell whether this is the case. When the teacher does not know the answer and especially when the students do, the usual unequal status regarding the command of knowledge between the teacher and students changes. This might have some psychological effect on the students.

2.3.2.2 Challenge to the display/referential distinction

The distinction between display and referential Qs seems simple and handy. But in actual classroom observation, it poses problems like any other scheme. In addition to it its theoretical value is also questioned.

2.3.2.2.1 Is the distinction absolute?

The distinction between display and referential Qs may not be as clear-cut as it seems.

First, as an observer, one cannot be always certain whether the teacher knows the answer to a Q or not, thus it is difficult to assign a Q to its appropriate category. Sometimes, one has to wait until the teacher has given a feedback to the response provided by the student, and even this is not necessarily reliable.

Second, instead of being either a display or referential Q, some Qs may be, Banbrook (1987) argues, both display and referential. Consider the following dialogue taken from a lesson where the teacher is talking about keeping fit:

(2) T: Do you jog?
S: No.
T: Good. Are you fit?
S: No.
T: All right. OK. (Banbrook & Skehan 1990:144)

One could say that "Do you jog?" and "Are you fit?" are both referential Qs because the teacher does not know the answer and the student can choose what to say. But judging from the teachers' feedback, we can see that the teacher did not ask the Q "Do you jog?" for information. He is not interested in the content of the answer, but in whether the student had understood the lexical item "jog" and "fit". The Qs may be referential on the surface, but they function as display Qs in eliciting display of linguistic performance from the students. Qs of this nature are regarded as both display and referential Qs (Banbrook & Skehan 1990:144).

The context, i.e. the academic setting, also affects the nature of the interaction. Although the teacher may attempt to engage the students in a meaningful dialogue by asking referential Qs, the learners, as participants of the language game, may follow the "rules" and the general atmosphere, and answer the would-be referential Qs as display Qs (see

Ross & Berwick 1991). Banbrook & Skehan (1990) further comment that it is not inconceivable that a student would still break the IRF (Initiate-Respond-Follow-up) mould here and say, for example, that yes, he was fit because he went swimming every day (p114). It is not inconceivable either that the student may take the most obvious display Qs (e.g. for the practice of interrogative sentences) as referential Qs and respond to them with something unexpected.

2.3.2.2.2 How significant is the distinction?

van Lier (1988) has questioned the value of drawing a distinction between display and referential Qs.

van Lier uses the exemplary teachers' talk recommended by Krashen and Terrell (1983) in their 'Natural Approach' to show that the distinction between display Qs and referential Qs appears to be a perfectly trivial matter in interactional terms.

> "Let's count the number of students with blue eyes. One, two, three, four... Are there any others? (Jim). Oh, of course, we can't forget Jim. Yes, he has blue eyes. Now, who has brown eyes? Does Martha have brown eyes? (Yes). And what color is her hair? (Brown). Is it light brown or dark brown? (Light). Is she wearing a dress today? ..."
>
> (Krashen & Terrell 1983:81)

Apart from the distinction problem mentioned above, van Lier points out "Such Qs have the professed aim of providing comprehensible input, and of encouraging 'early production'" (p222). This aim can be achieved without manipulating the type of Q such as display or referential. He thus suggests that "by and large, what gives such Q series their instructional, typically L2 classroom character is not so much that they are display rather than referential, but that they are made with the aim of eliciting language from the learners" (p222). Whether they are display or referential Qs, "the function of the Q remains the same: to provide input, and to elicit verbal responses" (p223).

van Lier (1988) points out that

> "in activities where the emphasis is on elicitation, a distinction between display and referential Qs may be relatively trivial since the questioner's intention, and the learner's task are identical. Instead, Qs may be classified in terms of their cognitive or interactional value" (p235)

van Lier argues that "what distinguishes instructional Qs from conversational (non-instructional) ones is therefore not their referential or display nature, but rather their eliciting function" (p223).

van Lier goes on to illustrate that in interactional terms, the difference between the following (constructed) elicitation may be minimal:

(3) prompt or cue: T: go to the theatre. yesterday. Martha.
L: Yesterday I went to the theatre.

(4) display Q T: (pointing to a picture) Where did Martha go yesterday?
L: She went to the theatre (yesterday).

(5) referential Q: T: Where did you go yesterday, Martha?
L: (Yesterday) I went to the theatre. (p223)

Although the linguistic form of the response may vary somewhat for different kinds of elicitation (we may add: 'Ask Martha what she did yesterday'; 'Did you stay at home yesterday, Martha?' etc.) the nature of the activity remains essentially the same: a verbal stimulus elicits a verbal response. "To assume therefore that the display Q is a major culprit of didactic (i.e. 'unnatural') discourse is simplistic" (van Lier 1988:223).

2.3.3 Beyond the display/referential distinction

While acknowledging that there is some truth in van Lier's criticism, I find it important to pursue the issue further. Recall what was mentioned earlier (2.3.1): the dominance of display Qs by teachers was found in L2 classrooms in contrast to out-of-class interaction between NSs and NNSs where display Qs are extremely rare (Long & Sato 1983). "This was so even though the lessons were purportedly communicative in orientation" (van Lier 1988:222). This prompted van Lier to ask: "Why would teachers, even if they are convinced of the benefits of meaningful interaction, engage in so much questioning which is so obviously different from ordinary non-instructional discourse?" (p222)

There are perhaps many reasons why teachers use predominantly known-information or display Qs in the classroom. First and foremost, it has much to do with the matter of control: control over content as well as forms of target language use of the learners. Although the use of Qs is not the only means with which the teacher exercises the control, it is at least a common one. In a more language-oriented classroom, the teacher is likely to find it more appropriate to elicit linguistically constrained contributions from the students in order to promote practice of certain aspects of the target language (see Chaudron 1988:127). It is not difficult to imagine that when the teacher asks referential Qs whose

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answers he does not know, the responses from the students are likely to be less predictable, hence less control on the part of the teacher.

In van Lier's constructed examples (i.e. (3), (4) and (5)), the learner would produce similar linguistic responses on all three occasions. The elicitation appears to have the same effect regardless of the type of Q. However, we can easily imagine that it is after the learner's utterance in (5), i.e. the response to the referential Q, and not to the learner's utterances in (3) and (4), that another related exchange or more related exchanges are likely to follow. As a result of that, the interaction would be more a flow of conversation rather than an isolated exchange of Q and A for the sake of practice. To put it in another way, the learner's utterances in (3) and (4) normally terminate the exchange (unless, perhaps, the teacher wants to correct the learner's mistake, e.g. in pronunciation). After the learner's response in (5), it is natural, as expected in natural daily conversation, that the teacher will ask another Q such as 'What did you see?', 'Which one (theatre)?' or 'Did you see a play or an opera?' This, I would argue, is where the interactive value lies.

It is at this point that I would propose another distinction: that of production and interaction. In terms of target language production of the learners, the examples given by van Lier probably would not present much difference. However, when teachers' Qs are referential in nature, it affects the interaction between the teacher and students in that the students are engaged in a more meaningful communication rather than a mechanical exercise.

Whether the use of display Qs in a teacher's elicitation to maintain control is beneficial or counter-productive to the second language development as a whole remains an unsettled issue in spite of the seemingly convincing call for promoting meaningful interaction in the classroom. In decontextualized exchanges, such as those evoked by display elicitation in (3) and (4), it is believed that learners' attention is drawn to the form of the target language and it is hoped that this will be useful to the improvement of their linguistic competence. Once again, we have to come back to the fundamental question: what is the purpose of asking Qs? In fact, the distinction between display and referential Qs based on whether the teacher knows the answer to the Q may fail to address adequately the issue of the communicative purpose of the speaker.

Malamah-Thomas (1988) uses the Q "What did you do last night?" to illustrate the difference in the teacher' intentions regarding the use of the Q. The teacher may ask it for the purpose of socialisation i.e. he/she is genuinely interested in the content of the answer,

or he/she may ask it to check whether the student can use the correct past tense of a verb or verbs, hence the form of the language. Here again, the Q is referential on the surface, but the communicative purpose may vary.

Watt (1996) draws the distinction between display Qs and communication Qs and points out that it is more useful to look at whether the teacher behaves as if he or she knows the answer or not (p101).

Qs, display or referential, also perform other functions, such as to express sarcasm, ridicule, etc. Long (1983c) cited an instance where the teacher, seeing a student yawning, asked him a display Q (Do you wear trousers?) in what seemed to be an attempt to ridicule him. The display and referential distinction is not adequate at all to capture this aspect of communication.

The almost exclusive use of referential Qs in out-of-classroom contexts seems to call for an increased use of referential Qs in the L2 classroom if we want the learners to be prepared for the real world. Furthermore, some initial research such as Brock's has shown that referential Qs generally elicit more learner production and more complex output. In spite of this, it cannot be concluded that referential Qs are to be favoured or should replace display Qs in all contexts to learners of all levels.

The real world is not necessarily the ideal place for adequate acquisition of a second language. Hammerly's (1991) criticism of immersion programme (which often achieves fluency at the cost of accuracy of learner production) deserves serious consideration. Studies (White et al 1991; Spada et al 1993) show that form-focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of communicative interaction can contribute positively to second language development in both the short and long term. Seedhouse (1996) argues that it would be more satisfactory to take an institutional discourse approach, where classroom discourse, such as the IRF cycle and the use of display Qs, is regarded as an institutional variety of discourse, in which interactional elements correspond neatly to institutional goals (p16). If a teacher talks just like any NS outside the class and if the classroom is set to simply resemble the outside world, does it better facilitate the learning process? Widdowson (1990) has this to say:

> "If natural learning was so effective there would be no need for education at all. Classrooms exist to provide opportunities which would otherwise be denied by controlling conditions for learning which would not otherwise take place. Pedagogy presupposes control and control presupposes preconceived ideas. The central question is how this control is to be exercised tactically, tightened, or relaxed so as to facilitate the learning process ... "
>
> (pxiii)

In summary, research into the relative effects of display and referential Qs is still in its initial stages, and only further work will show whether or not it is worth pursuing (Nunan 1989b:30). Obviously both the distinction and the experiment are rather crude because many other factors such as the topic area, the learner's background knowledge, the level of learners will also be operating and thus having an effect (see Nunan 1989b:30-31). As far as research is concerned, Nunan has warned:

> "The real danger, ..., is in attempting to manipulate discrete linguistic features such as question types in isolation from the educational and interactional contexts in which they occur." (p31)

To me, what seems to be more important is the distinction between production and interaction. Whether display or referential Qs bring about more learner production is one thing and which type of Q better facilitate learning of the target language is another. The former is more concerned with the quantity of learning output, whereas the latter the quality. The amount of research done in this area has shown that there is no easy answer.

While I decide to maintain the distinction of display and referential Qs for its potential significance in describing classroom discourse and interaction, I believe that Nunan's warning is a fair one and should be taken into consideration when conducting research into teacher Qs and questioning behaviour in the ESL/EFL classroom.

2.3.4 Echoic questions and interaction

Following my proposed distinction between production of and interaction in the target language, let us look at another major area in the study of teacher Qs in L2 context: that of echoic Qs. Echoic Qs are believed to be indicative of negotiation in interaction between interlocutors.

Various studies on teacher Qs in EFL discourse have followed Long (1981) in his adaptation of Kearsley's (1976) functional taxonomy of Qs (see 3.4.2 for review). One of the four main categories of Qs in their taxonomy is echoic Qs. (The other three types are epistemic, expressive and social control.) Echoic Qs, in Kearsley's definition, are those which ask for the repetition of an utterance or confirmation that an utterance has been interpreted as intended. In their adaptation of the taxonomy, Long & Sato (1983) have subdivided echoic Qs into comprehension checks, clarification requests and confirmation checks. This subdivision allows

> "distinctions to be made among acts whose function reflects (among other things) the direction of information-flow in preceding utterances and, indirectly, the degree to which conversation is negotiated through the modification of its interactional structure." (p275)

Comprehension checks are any expressions designed to establish whether that speaker's preceding utterance has been understood by the interlocutor, e.g. "Alright?", "Does everyone understand 'polite'?".

Clarification requests are any expressions designed to elicit clarification of the interlocutor's preceding utterance, e.g. "What do you mean?", "What?".

Confirmation checks are any expressions designed to elicit confirmation that the previous speaker's utterance has been correctly heard or understood, e.g. "Did you say 'he'"?; "Student: Carefully. --> Teacher: Carefully?".

As far as comprehension is concerned, a comprehension check checks if the listener has understood the speaker's message, whereas confirmation checks allow the speaker to find out if he himself has correctly understood the other person's message by repeating whole or part of what was said or offering his interpretation of what was said. A clarification request also indicates that the questioner has a problem in understanding the other person's message, but unlike confirmation checks, the questioner asks the interlocutor to clarify a particular word or entire message as specified by the request. In other words, the information provider uses comprehension checks while the information recipient uses confirmation checks and clarification requests.

These echoic Qs are similar but not the same as echo Qs which are categorised in grammar books. A discussion of the relationship between the categories 'echo Qs' and 'echoic Qs' described here will be found in 3.4.2.3.

In later studies, the term "echoic Qs" was phased out and these subtypes of Q were referred to as interactional features or moves (Pica 1987) and interactive devices (Early 1985). One consideration for the choice of the term is perhaps that these interactional adjustments could include a whole range of attempts to understand and be understood (Allwright & Bailey 1991) and features other than echoic Qs, such as self-repetition, other-repetition, and expansion, could be included in the process.

Research has shown that there are significantly more comprehension checks in ESL classrooms as compared with L1 classrooms (Early 1985), indicating perhaps the teachers' concern about whether the students can understand his message delivered in a foreign or second language. But both confirmation checks and clarification requests are rare in both the L1 and L2 classroom (Early 1985) but significantly more frequent in NS-NNS informal conversation (Pica & Long 1986), suggesting a lack of negotiation or interaction between the teacher and students in the classroom (Long & Sato 1983; Pica & Long 1986; Pica 1987; Early 1985). This should not be surprising if we recall that this was pointed

out in the discussion on classroom discourse: classroom interaction is by and large non-negotiable (cf.1.4). In other words, it results from the predominantly one-way flow of information in classroom conversation. The lack of negotiation for meaning is also in accordance with the fact that teachers use predominantly display Qs to which they already know the answer. As far as content is concerned, there is little new or unexpected information in students' responses. On the other hand, teachers are usually familiar with learners' errors, both grammatical and lexical, and therefore know what a student is trying to say. I am also speaking from my personal experience. I can understand Chinese learners of English despite their grammatical and/or lexical mistakes in their use of English while some NSs of English cannot. As a result, it is less likely for me to use echoic Qs for negotiating the meaning with Chinese learners unless I deliberately use them as part of the strategy to engage the learners in, say, self-correction of the errors they make.

There are other reasons why there is little need for meaning negotiation in the classroom.

1) The teacher knows the proficiency level of the learners and lowers the difficulty of the input accordingly to ensure maximum comprehension. Various simplifications and modifications are found in teacher talk to serve this purpose (Gaies 1977, 1983; Chaudron 1983, 1988).

2) Students' contributions, usually in the form of responses to teachers' Qs, are already controlled by the nature of the instruction or activity. Even when they are not clear, they are evaluated against teachers' expectations.

3) On the part of the students, they do not have to understand everything to follow what is going on, especially when the instruction including Qs is directed to the class or group rather than to individuals. They can often observe others for clues. They may also avoid seeking help where an appeal for assistance may cause disruption or is considered a sign of incompetence or even challenge (see Pica 1987:12).

4) Both teachers and students may pursue understanding by strategies that may or may not take the form of Qs. In other words, an indication of comprehension problem may take a variety of forms (Gass & Varonis 1985a:160), e.g. a puzzled look on a student's face will prompt the teacher to clarify his/her message.

In summary, the study of echoic Qs can be seen as two-fold. On the one hand, it is suggested that if they are measured for both teacher and students, these types of Qs should contribute to an index of interaction of negotiation in the classroom (Chaudron 1988:131). On the other hand, as the research suggests that these interactional features assist language comprehension and production by engaging students in more meaningful and negotiated

interaction, classroom activities should be designed to facilitate such interaction (Pica 1987, Lynch 1991). Teachers' use of clarification requests, for example, will push the learners to make further efforts to produce comprehensible output which is argued to be beneficial to their target language development (see Swain 1985).

The functions of these types of Qs will be further explored in the next chapter and their interactive values in Chapter 5.

2.4 Summary

L2 classroom is similar to and yet different from L1 classrooms. Major differences most relevant to this study in areas such as Q functions, discourse structure, are discussed. The major research in teacher Qs and questioning in L2 context is reviewed. The two most prominent issues are the distinction between display and referential Qs, and echoic Qs. It is pointed out that such research in L2 context is at the initial stage and little work has been done in the attempt at presenting a synthetic view of the issues involved.

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Chapter 3 Forms and Functions of Questions

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to develop a scheme whereby it can be used for the analysis of the data collected for the present study. In order to achieve this aim I shall review different schemes of classifying Qs developed for both L1 and L2 classroom research and examine both formal and functional aspects of Qs. On the basis of the review a working scheme will be proposed.

3.2 Classroom questions

In this section I shall review some of the major Q types used in the study of classroom discourse.

3.2.1 Cognitive domain

It is only natural that teachers' questioning in the classroom should be related to the objectives of education in general as well as those of the particular lesson being taught.

One of the major early works that links educational objectives and teacher questions is the book Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, edited by B.S. Bloom in 1956. The authors of the book focus on the intellectual aspects of education. Within the cognitive domain, a number of categories of thinking are defined and illustrated by using examples of questions that require students to engage in the specified kind of thinking. The taxonomy of educational objectives in the book has yielded a taxonomy of questions which includes categories like knowledge, comprehension (translation, interpretation), application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Bloom's taxonomy has been elaborated with modifications by Sanders (1966) and Kissock et al (1982). Sanders in his book Classroom Questions uses 'memory' for Bloom's knowledge category. He argues that since the questions in the first category call for the use of memory, memory should be the right term. Sanders deals with translation and interpretation in two separate categories, while Kissock et al follow Bloom's categorisation and treat translation and interpretation as two sub-categories in comprehension.

I shall briefly sum up the taxonomy of questions proposed by the above-mentioned books in line with their possible applications to L2 classrooms.

3.2.1.1 Memory questions

Memory Qs call for memory of facts, information, etc. They involve recall and recognition. They are regarded as lower order Qs because little thinking is needed. Studies show that teachers, especially in primary schools, use far more memory Qs than any other types of Qs. Despite the call by some educators for more use of higher-order Qs (e.g. analysis Qs) to improve the thinking ability of the students, the phenomenon has not changed. It seems to me that the lower the stage of learning, the more memory Qs there are. This is because memory of basic facts and information makes higher-order of thinking possible and perhaps more efficient. Apart from the stage of learning, the nature of a lesson may also play a part in the proportion of memory Qs used. In a history class, for example, historical dates, events and names of places and persons ought to be remembered before analytic exercise is carried out.

In EFL classrooms, the above findings apply. Memory Qs involve recall and recognition of words, sentence patterns, or information about the content of a text, etc. The nature of learning (as opposed to acquiring) another language determines that the learner has to memorise the words, phrases and patterns of the target language in order to use it. The teacher sees the importance of command of vocabulary and makes sure the learners retain the words in their memory. Checking is the order of the day, both in oral and written form. This is particularly true at the early learning stage.

In this study Qs calling for memory and recognition will largely be included in the category of display Qs (cf. 2.3.2 and 3.4.2.2).

3.2.1.2 Comprehension questions

It is one thing to be able to recall, repeat or recognise something, be it a word or an idea. It is quite another to show understanding of it.

Comprehension can be demonstrated or checked in two ways. One is to transmit an idea, etc. into another form: from oral to written, from a graph to words. This is labelled

'translation'. The other way is to put the same idea in a different way yet still maintain the original meaning. This is called 'interpretation'.

All these three terms, comprehension and the two sub-categories of translation and interpretation, used in the taxonomy of Qs under investigation are very confusing if applied to EFL context. These terms, as it happens, have their specific meanings in the use of language and in language teaching and learning. Comprehension Qs refer to Qs designed to check if the learners have understood what is being taught in listening and reading of the material in the target language. Translation is usually used for transmitting words or messages from one language to another in written form while interpretation is translation in spoken form.

Clearly these terms are not suitable for the study of Qs in L2 classrooms. In this study, Qs explicitly checking comprehension will be taken as comprehension checks, a type of echoic Qs (3.4.2.3).

3.2.1.3 Application questions

At the application level, students must decide what previously learned or gathered information he/she should use to solve the problems. In a mathematics class, after having learned how a formula is achieved, the students will be given problems to solve. The solution to the problems depends on the application of the formula. In EFL classes, sentence patterns, verbal or adverbial phrases, grammar points, e.g. tense, are repeated and practised. The learners are asked to follow examples to make up sentences, dialogues, etc. For example, after learning a dialogue for asking the way, the learners are then asked to practise the scenario by using the structures and phrases just learned.

Application Qs are Qs asking the students to apply rules, etc. In other words it is the students, not the questioner, i.e. the teacher, who do the application. The teacher only sets the task. This type of Q is more likely to be display Qs (cf. 2.3.2 and 3.4.2.2).

3.2.1.4 Analysis questions:

Curiosity leads a man to ask 'why'. Why did it happen? What are the reasons? We analyse something by examining the components.

After students have just finished reading or listening to a short story, Qs are asked about, among other things, the relationship of the characters in the story and the belief the characters followed as shown by their actions. These Qs require organised thinking to form good logical conclusions. As abstract thinking like induction and deduction is involved in answering analysis Qs, they are, therefore, regarded as higher-order Qs.

3.2.1.5 Synthesis questions

In contrast to analysing which decomposes something, synthesising requires the opposite skill: to compose, i.e. to put parts together to form something new, for example, "What kind of letter can you (the students) write to the president of the college to complain about the curriculum?".

There is no one correct answer to a synthesis Q. While this is true, some answers may prove more realistic or valuable than others when they are tried or analysed (Kissock et al 1982: 59). In other words, a synthesis Q may result in a variety of answers being given. Therefore it is also an open-ended Q (3.2.2.2).

3.2.1.6 Evaluation questions:

Evaluation Qs require judgements. We are often asked to give our opinions about something: an event, a visit, a person, or past experience. Judgements have to be made. This is done at evaluation level.

Some evaluation Qs seem very easy to answer. They require a statement of opinion or simple evaluation which can be provided by saying yes or no, for example, "Was the film (or novel, lecture, etc.) good?", "Did you like her new dress?". In real life, giving simple yes or no answers to Qs like these will make a conversation dry and hard to continue. In test Qs, if the Qs are in a yes/no interrogative form, they are likely to be followed by a further wh-Q like: 'Do you think the outcome would be different if another approach was adopted? Why or why not?' or 'Give reasons for your answer,' or 'Justify your answer.'

When Qs are put in this way, as test Qs are, they call for thinking at various levels so that adequate judgements can be made. It is these Qs that rank the highest in the cognitive domain of question taxonomy and are likely to be the most difficult ones. Evaluation Qs,

like synthesis Qs, tend to be open-ended in that they accept a range of possible answers (3.2.2.2).

3.2.1.7 Summary

Bloom's taxonomy of Qs is based on a taxonomy of educational objectives, and widely used in the study of Qs in L1 classrooms.

The usual application of Bloom's taxonomy is in the distinction of lower level versus higher level Qs in terms of the cognitive demand involved in answering the Qs. The first two types, i.e. memory and comprehension Qs, are normally regarded as lower order Qs while the other four types are regarded as higher-order Qs. Although the hierarchical order of the six categories is challenged by some studies, the crude distinction between higher and lower level of Qs seems to be generally accepted.

This taxonomy of Qs can only serve as a guide to the teachers rather than something to be followed rigidly. Sometimes it is impossible to tell whether an answer given by the student results from memory or analytic thinking. When asked "What were the causes leading to the event?", which is meant to be an analysis Q, the student may simply answer it by quoting the causes which have been explicitly stated in the book and memorised.

I believe that these Qs can also be found in L2 classrooms. As I have pointed out earlier (2.2) L2 classes are part of formal educational practice, and as a result share the common features of classroom teaching. However, Bloom's taxonomy of Qs was derived from the concern of the cognitive development of pupils. This, as I argued in 2.2.1, is usually not the main concern in L2 teaching. This does not suggest that the cognitive demand of teachers' Qs plays no part in eliciting verbal responses from L2 learners. Higher-order Qs, such as analysis and synthesis Qs, may well be difficult even for adult L2 learners, let alone young L2 learners. It may well be the case that the teachers ask far more lower-order Qs, i.e. memory and comprehension Qs, than higher-order Qs in beginners classes. These can all be interesting areas of investigation in L2 classroom research. The present study, however, will only concentrate on how teachers' Qs are related in different ways with reference to the Q classification system developed for L2 research. I, therefore, shall not adopt Bloom's taxonomy but will refer to it only where relevant.

3.2.2 Other types of classroom questions

In studies on classroom Qs, we often come across terms for contrasting types of Qs. Apart from the distinction between lower level and higher level Qs, based on Bloom's taxonomy (see 3.2.1), there are other contrastive terms like recall and process Qs, open-ended and closed Qs, display and referential Qs, etc. In this section I shall first take a close look at these common distinctions and their underlying concepts before my own scheme of classification is proposed.

3.2.2.1 Recall questions versus process questions

This division of Qs refers to the cognitive activity involved in responding to the Qs. Recall Qs, as the name suggests, involve the simple recall or recognition of information. In this sense, they are of a lower order cognitive nature since they only test the memory of the respondent (Hargie et al 1987:62). Process Qs are so called because they require the respondent to engage in some higher mental process in order to answer them. This may involve giving opinions, justifications or evaluations, analysing or synthesising information, making generalisations, etc. These Qs require the respondent to go beyond the simple recall or recognition of information.

Since early school education aims chiefly at cognitive development, it follows that more process Qs should be aimed at. Researchers in the classroom context found that teachers tend to ask more recall Qs than process Qs. Hargie et al (1987) argue that this result is probably indicative of the examination-oriented curriculum in school, which encourages teachers to emphasise memory skills. This is also the case in foreign language learning, especially at the early stage and in traditional teacher-centred classrooms. This is not surprising because the words (their meanings, spelling, etc.) and grammar rules of the target language are to be memorised before they can be used. Recall Qs are meant to facilitate the memorisation of the elements of the target language.

The demarcation between a recall and a process Q is not as simple as it may seem. The Q "What does the word 'democracy' mean?" is a recall Q if the student remembers the dictionary definition, and it is a process Q if he tries to provide the definition on the basis of his understanding of the word. Or the Q can be both a recall and a process one if the student does not remember exactly the definition he has come across and tries to work

out his own with the help of a vague memory and his understanding. Content-related Qs in classrooms are often of this nature.

This division is not particularly suitable for research on Qs in L2 classrooms with adult learners because, as I argued in Chapter 1, the cognitive difficulty is not the main problem with adult learners. Secondly, in terms of linguistic demand, recall and process Qs could be equally easy or difficult to L2 learners in terms of target language production.

3.2.2.2 Open-ended versus closed questions

The distinction between open (or open-ended) and closed Qs is a common one in the study of Qs in both classroom and non-classroom context.

Kearsley (1976) has equated open-ended Qs to wh-Qs because open Qs are always formed by the use of wh-constructions (p358). The wh-word in the Q proposes a lexical gap for the respondent to fill in. In other words, the proposition in the Q is incomplete and needs to be completed by the respondent.

In contrast, a closed Q offers alternatives explicitly or implicitly contained in the Q. The alternatives can either be yes or no choices, i.e. two polars, or specified choices. The respondent is to choose one of the alternatives as the answer from what has been offered in the Q.

Categorising Qs as open and closed proves to be difficult to justify. Firstly, to use the terms open Qs and closed Qs on the basis of structural characteristics or form, as Kearsley claimed (1976:359), is misleading. The openness of a Q is not necessarily determined by the form of the Q, hence it is not a formal feature. Chaudron (1988) regarded it a semantic, not a syntactic, view to distinguish Qs as open or closed ones.

Secondly, the answer to an open Q does not, as Kearsley claims, "belong to an essentially infinite set of possibilities not specified in the Q" (1976:358). Wh-Qs which on the surface appeared to be open frequently have a very limited number of correct or acceptable answers (Richards 1978:76). Consider, for example, the following two Qs:

(1) Who has ever been a prime minister in Britain?

(2) Who is the Prime Minister in Britain?

(1) may arguably be open to a large set of acceptable answers, whilst (2) permits a very limited number of (if not one) correct or acceptable answers.

Barnes (1969) suggests a third category in the open-closed dimension which he calls the 'pseudo-Q'. A pseudo-Q is one which is apparently open, but used where the teacher is seeking one particular reply. Brown & Edmondon (1989:103) illustrated this nicely with an interesting example.

(3) T: What time do we leave school?

P: 16.00 hours. (not 4 o'clock)

While '4 o'clock' is a perfectly legitimate answer to the Q, one teacher reported that it was only after asking the Q five times with a low-ability group that she got the answer she wanted: '16.00 hours'.

Thirdly, the same Q may be open in one context and closed in another. It may be open to someone and closed to others. In quiz shows, many wh-Qs, i.e. the open Qs in Kearsley taxonomy, are so formed, e.g. with specifying clauses, that they permit one and, very often, only one correct and acceptable answer. The same is true of many classroom Qs. They are content-related and restrained. In the given context, the students have very limited choices. Richards (1978) argues that "freedom of choice (where necessary within the bounds of reason) should be an essential element in criteria for deciding openness" (p76). This "freedom of choice" is determined by various factors: the knowledge of the respondent, the context in which the interaction occurs, etc. Because of the restrictions on respondents, many wh-Qs are of a closed nature. For example, "What's the time now?", "Where were you born?". To the respondent, these Qs are not open to an "infinite set of possibilities not specified in the Q" (Kearsley 1976:358). They are simple identification Qs. Qs like these are included into closed Qs together with yes/no Qs and alternative Qs by Hargie et al (1987) (see also Richards 1978).

Take the Q "Where were you born?" for example. When asked by different people or on different occasions, the same respondent may give different answers to it. To a foreigner, he may just give the name of the country in which he was born. To his countryman, he may name the particular city, town or village. The point is that it is a closed Q on the given occasion. One may argue that the Q permits, in theory, an infinite set of possible

answers. When it is uttered in a classroom to a group of learners, the possible answers are limited. To each individual respondent, however, the Q is a closed one. Along this line of argument, we can see that the openness of a Q can only be decided in relation to the restrictions on the respondent in that particular speech event. For this reason, whether a Q is open-ended or closed is also a pragmatic matter. In a discussion, debate, or interview, yes/no Qs are rarely answered with only yes or no but most likely to be answered with elaboration.

Clearly, there is a distinction between what A intends and what B perceives. And there is a further distinction between what B perceives and with what and how he decides to respond. Many yes/no Qs, such as "Do you like it?", "Will you take the offer?", can be answered by a yes or no. But they are often meant to elicit further explanation or justification. If B decides to give a single word response, either because he is unable or unwilling to give further comment, the Q is responded to as a closed one. In contrast, others may elaborate on the response and thus make the Q, or rather the conversation, open.

3.2.2.3 Convergent versus divergent questions

Another common distinction made in the study of classrooms Qs is that between convergent and divergent Qs. Convergent Qs are similar to the broad sense of closed Qs, which permit only a limited set of correct answers, very often only one. Divergent Qs, in contrast, accepts a number of different answers. In this sense, divergent Qs are the same as open Qs (cf. Pate & Bremer 1967:419).

It should be noted that the polar categorisation looks simple, but is difficult to apply. There is not always a clear demarcation between the categories. Pate & Bremer (1967) suggest a spectrum between the most convergent Qs to the most divergent Qs with a simple recall of one item at one end of the spectrum and concept analysis on the other (p419). Test/essay Qs in written examination tend to be, and be treated as, the most divergent Qs.

The distinction is made, again, in consideration of the cognitive activities involved in answering the Qs. This, however, is not the main concern of L2 studies. The verbal production required of the learners as set forth by Qs is often the focus of L2 studies. A

distinction is thus drawn between Qs asking for specific information and those requesting general information (Naiman et al 1978).

3.2.2.4 Management questions

There is one main category of Qs which distinguishes itself from others in that the purpose of these Qs is to exert authority by maintaining control of the discourse. These Qs are called social control Qs (Kearsley 1976), procedural Qs (Churchill 1978; Stubbs 1983) and managerial Qs (Blosser 1973) or management Qs (Swift & Gooding 1983) in various works. I shall adopt the term management Q in my study.

Kearsley identified two subtypes of what he calls social control Qs. One is "attentional" which allows the questioner to take over the direction of the discourse, such as: "Hey, know what?". The second subtype is labelled "verbosity" Qs which are asked only for the sake of politeness or to sustain conversation, such as cocktail party Qs. An example Q in the classroom close to this "verbosity" type is a Q uttered by the teacher to himself/herself, such as, "Where did I put the second sheet? Ah, here." This self-questioning utterance may be used to avoid silence, and there is no answer expected, though it can be responded to by any student, e.g. "It's over there." or "It's on the floor.".

In Chapter 1, I pointed out that due to unequal status the teacher is an authoritative figure. Such a figure tends to control the direction of the discourse by closing an episode and opening the next one, i.e. marking the discourse boundary. van Lier (1988) points out that Qs like "Any more questions?", "Anything else?" are used (and termed) as pre-closings whereas "All right?", etc. is followed immediately by introductory statements concerning the next episode. These pre-closings indicate to learners that an episode is ready to be closed. Qs of this nature are management Qs.

Much classroom communication centres on organisation and administration, matters necessary to the learning process, but not directly pedagogic in themselves (Malamah-Thomas 1987:15). Teachers ask Qs to make sure that the students are properly engaged: "Can you see clearly?", "Have we got enough handouts?". Teachers ask Qs to facilitate student participation: "Ann, did you want to say something?" or "Anybody like to react to Bob's response?" (Blosser 1973). They sometimes ask Qs to exert authority by

maintaining the order: "What are you laughing at?" can be a discipline Q (Malamah-Thomas 1987:86). Such discipline Qs are rare in classrooms with adult learners. I have recorded only one such instance where the teacher, seeing two students talking to each other while she was talking to the class, asked the two students "Is there any problem?". The students answered "no" and stopped talking.

Management Qs should be distinguished from directives. Directives are utterances which request students to perform tasks including verbal acts like reading aloud. Teachers tend to use interrogative sentences when giving instructions, such as "Will you please move your seats into a circle?". Such common use of interrogatives by teachers for requesting an action is what Brown & Levinson (1978) refer to as "being conventionally indirect".

If an interrogative utterance requires a non-linguistic action rather than a linguistic response, it is regarded and consequently coded as a directive, not a Q, in this study.

In sum, classroom management Qs may perform a wide range of functions whose aim is to ensure the smooth progression of a lesson.

3.2.3 Summary of classroom questions

It should be clear from the review of Q types for L1 classrooms in this chapter and the review of research on teachers' Qs in L1 classrooms in Chapter 1 that the major concern of the researchers is the cognitive demand of teachers' Qs and their effect on the students. This, as I argued earlier, is usually not the concern of L2 researchers.

The distinction made between lower order and higher-order Qs, convergent and divergent Qs, recall and process Qs and closed and open-ended Qs, though all different in their emphasis, suggests that it may be useful to break the continuum from one type of Q to its opposite. There is no doubt, however, that such a simple division can be problematic as well as convenient in its application: it is likely to fail to capture the diversity of functions teachers Qs present and it can be difficult to draw the line between the two types, but at the same time, it may give some general indication of the sort of Qs that teachers use and the effect that teachers' Qs may have on the students.

Having looked at some common categories of classroom Qs, let us examine the categorisation of Qs in some other ways.

3.3 Forms of questions

Grammar books as well as English textbooks classify Qs into either two main types: yes/no Qs and wh-Qs (e.g. Collins Cobuild Grammar 1990) or three main types: yes/no Qs, wh-Qs and alternative Qs (Quirk et al 1985). Yes/no Qs are those which can be answered by 'yes' or 'no', though pragmatically it is often not the case. Wh-Qs are so called because they begin with a 'wh' word, such as 'who', 'when', 'why', 'how', etc. and they cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no'. The third type, the alternative Q, offers choices for the respondent to choose. Each of these types will be further examined in later sections.

This crude division has obvious pedagogic convenience in learning or teaching English: it has its corresponding sentence forms. As Qs are basically realised by interrogative sentences, in traditional grammar-based teaching, learning to ask Qs is reduced to learning interrogative sentences. The inversion of subject and be/have or auxiliary verbs, and the front positioning of wh-words are painstakingly explained and practised.

As a simple guide on a language, the grammatical categorisation based on linguistic forms may serve its purpose. But it is usually divorced from the functions these interrogative sentences realise. And it is the functions that is the focus of most of the research on the use of Qs.

In spite of its simplicity, these formal categories have been used in various pieces of research. One example is the study on the Qs used by American and Israeli mothers to their two-year-old children (Buium 1976). It was found that Israeli mothers used a higher percentage of wh-Qs to their children than their American counterparts. The author claims that yes/no Qs put the major cognitive burden of the verbal interaction on the questioner while wh-Qs place the burden on the hearer.

Various studies on L1 acquisition find adults use significantly more yes/no Qs (including tag Qs) at the early stage of child language exposure. It is certainly my observation that adults ask children primarily yes/no Qs (including tag Qs) in TV and radio interviews.

The explanation seems obvious: to a yes/no Q, the child only needs to indicate a polar decision, e.g. agreement or disagreement, acceptance or refusal. The pressure for linguistic response is little. A nod would suffice for agreement or acceptance.

There are problems with this categorisation of Qs on a formal basis as we will see in the following discussion.

3.3.1 Yes/no questions

Although yes/no Qs are so called in English grammar books and textbooks on the grounds that they can take 'yes' or 'no' as answers, they are almost exclusively treated as a type of sentence: interrogative sentences which involve inversion of the subject and be/have verbs and auxiliaries.

A declarative sentence usually asserts a statement. However, a rising tone at the end of it can turn the statement into a yes/no Q (Crystal 1996:43). A Q thus formed is not an interrogative sentence, but a sentence uttered in the interrogative mood (Collins Cobuild Grammar 1990) and with elicitative force (Stenstrom 1984). It is a Q because it expects an answer and it can be answered by 'yes' or 'no'. This type of Q is called "uninverted Qs" (Long 1981), "intonation Qs" (Stenstrom 1984), "statement Qs" (Salama 1973) and "declarative Qs" (Quirk et al 1985). In some studies of Qs, this type of Q is either not identified as to whether they are counted as Qs, or treated as non-Qs (see various works of Dillon). In this study I shall include this type of Q and call them declarative Qs.

A declarative is taken as a Q when the questioner believes that the addressee is the knower of information related to the topic. Many declarative Qs are not necessarily uttered in rising intonation. This is particularly so when the questioner asks the addressee for confirmation. Utterances of this nature often begin with "you said/mean/have/know..." (Beun 1990). Instances of declaratives used as confirmation-seeking Qs, I believe, are not uncommon in a language classroom where the teacher tends to ask learners for confirmation of whether the learner said or meant what he said.

3.3.2 Tag questions

Tag Qs are normally treated as a sub-category of yes/no Qs because they, too, can be answered by 'yes' or 'no'.

The intonation is salient in the interpretation of tag Qs. Crystal (1996) suggests that when the intonation is rising, the sentence is 'asking'; and when the tone is falling, the sentence is 'telling' (p43). In other words, a tag with a rising intonation is a Q whereas a tag with falling tone is a statement. He gives the following examples.

(1) She's not in, is she/? (I really want to know.)

(2) She's not in, is she\! (I told you so.) (p43)

Note that the punctuation in writing indicates the mood of the utterance. But the interpretation of (1) and (2) (as suggested by Crystal) can only be derived from the context in which the utterances are given. On the other hand, although tags with a falling tone may express more of an assertion than a Q, they still expect a confirming response (Pope 1976:80). Therefore I do not think we can simply conclude that tag Qs with a falling tone are just telling.

Tag Qs are normally treated as consisting of two parts: the first part, a declarative in form, asserts what the speaker assumes, and the second part, the tag, expects the addressee's response to what is assumed in the first part (Stenstrom 1984:51; Quirk et al 1985:811). The expectation is partly realised by intonation, and partly by the interactive rules. A tag with a falling tone like the one in (2) above invites confirmation or acknowledgement of the assumption expressed in the first part and thus requires a verbal response just like declarative Qs discussed in 3.3.1. It is often not just "telling".

There are other uses of tags that should be noted (cf. Collins Cobuild Grammar 1990). Consider:

(3) I think it is the best thing, don't you?

There are two acts performed in (3). The first part, the main clause, is an act of informing. I shall treat "don't you" as an elicitation act, related to but independent from the first part. Similar instance can be found in (4):

(4) I think it is the best thing. What about you?

Apart from their difference in form, (3) and (4) differ in that (3) appears to seek only confirmation while (4) seems to ask for opinion, though an agreement is expected in both cases.

There are words or phrases in English which function just like tags when used at the end of a statement, such as 'right?', 'yeah?', 'all right?', 'OK?', etc. Stenstrom (1984) has identified them as 'prompters'. Utterances with these tags, like tag Qs, normally seek confirmation or acknowledgement. These prompters do not turn the previous statement into a Q, but serve as confirmation checks (cf. echoic Qs in 3.4.2.3).

In this study tag Qs are generally taken as confirmation seeking Qs, but in some cases they are more than seeking confirmation. As for prompters, they will be identified and taken as confirmation Qs or confirmation checks.

3.3.3 Alternative questions

This type of Q is called alternative Qs in traditional grammar books (Quirk et al 1985) and disjunctive Qs by linguists. Other names are: 'whether Qs' (Belnap et al 1976), 'either/or Qs' (Collins Cobuild Grammar 1990), and 'choice Qs' (Churchill 1978). I shall call them alternative Qs.

Alternative Qs are problematic in terms of categorisation. Quirk et al (1985) treat it as one of the three main types of Qs independent from yes/no Qs and wh-Qs. Collins Cobuild Grammar (1990) includes it in the category of yes/no Qs. Others, on the contrary, treat alternative Qs as one of the major types of Qs which includes yes/no Qs as a subclass (Kartunen 1978; Bauerle 1979) because yes/no Qs can always be expanded to or reduced to alternative Qs (with two polars as alternatives) (Bauerle 1979). To this argument, Bolinger (1978) has cited a number of conversational situations where yes/no Qs are not, cannot, and should not be treated as alternative Qs. If 'or not' is added to a yes/no Q, as Bolinger pointed out, the implications are changed (Bolinger 1978).

Instead of regarding one type as the subclass of the other, yes/no Qs and alternative Qs are capped as two equal subtypes under the terms of "whether Qs" (Belnap et al 1976), "restricted Qs" (Hausser 1978), and "closed Qs" (Kearsley 1976), as opposed to wh-Qs, which they term respectively as "which Qs", "unrestricted Qs", and "open Qs".

Kearsley (1976) argues that yes/no Qs and alternative Qs are two subtypes of closed Qs because 'the answer to a closed Q is from a fixed alternative either explicitly or implicitly contained in the Q' (p358). In practice, the answer to many open Qs, which are realised by wh-Qs, is also from very limited possible choices, as I discussed earlier (3.2.2.2). What is equally true is that the answer to a closed Q may not necessarily be from a fixed alternative contained in the Q, although it is expected to be so.

In this study, a study of Qs in the L2 classroom, I treat alternative Qs as a separate type from yes/no Qs because they require different linguistic responses on the part of the learner. In other words, alternative Qs with two or more choices, as opposed to "or not" added to yes/no Qs, cannot be answered by a simple "yes" or "no".

Another issue that arises with the categorisation of alternative Qs is concerned with how the alternatives are presented. Collins Cobuild Grammar (1990) cites the following example as an instance of their either/or Q:

(5) Will you have whisky, or do you want dinner straight away? (p199)

The immediate Q one may ask is whether (5) is one 'big' either/or Q or two yes/no Qs which, when put together, offer two alternatives for the hearer to choose from.

Another example is related to wh-Qs and can be heard in daily conversation. Consider:

(6) What would you like to have, tea or coffee?

Is (6) a wh-Q or an alternative Q, or both? In a classroom, the teacher may ask: 'Why didn't you do the homework? Tired or busy?'. Quirk et al (1985) regard this type of alternative Qs as "a compound of two separate questions: a wh-question followed by an elliptical alternative question" (p823).

I shall treat Qs like (5) and (6) as single alternative Qs rather than two separate Qs unless there is a long pause between the two parts. This pausing will be discussed in detail in Section 5.6.3.

During my classroom observation and analysis of Qs, and subsequently in daily conversation, I have noticed an interesting type of Q which is related to both alternative Qs and wh-Qs. Look at the following example:

[Talking about travel plans in the vacation.)

(7) T: What would you like to see (Q1)? Do you want to see the sunshine or the scenery or what (Q2)? Because you need a plan.

[PCL:travel]

There are two things worth noting here. Firstly, is Q2 in (7) an alternative Qs or a wh-Q? It seems to me that Q2 is not just an alternative Q offering a finite number of choices. The use of "what" as one of the choices extends the scope of choices to an infinite one, at least in theory. Secondly, Q1 and Q2 clearly form an elicitation unit: not only were they asked without any pause in between, they also addressed the same topic, i.e. the travel plans for the vacation. Q2 further clarifies the sort of things that the questioner means by "what to see" in Q1. In other words, Q2 of this sort directs the respondent to a range of possibilities rather than offering specific options for the respondent to identify or choose from. In this sense, this type of seemingly alternative Q, even if it occurs without the word "what" as a choice, is more a wh-Q than an alternative Q. Although there are not many of such cases in the data, I shall take them as the more general open-ended Qs instead of the traditionally defined alternative Qs. As for the notion of Q unit, it will be extensively discussed in later chapters.

3.3.4 Elliptical questions

Elliptical Qs are common both in daily conversation and in classrooms but rarely discussed in the study of Qs. By elliptical Qs I mean an utterance which functions as a Q but is not a full sentence in form, such as 'Ready?', 'Really?', 'Sure?', etc. Hiz (1978) in his discussion of difficult Qs calls this type of Q short Qs. As they can be answered by 'yes' or 'no', they can be regarded as elliptical yes/no Qs.

What then is the full sentence form of these elliptical Qs? It is perhaps not important whether the utterance "Ready?" is a abbreviated declarative with a rising tone (e.g. You are ready/?) or it is an elliptical interrogative (e.g. Are you ready/?). What is important, however, is whether they function as a yes/no Q or an identifying Q (e.g. wh-Qs).

There are also elliptical wh-Qs, such as "What else?", "Why (not)?", "By whom?". Such Qs can be expanded to a complete sentence only if we know what has been said earlier. In other words, they can be expanded to different sentences in different contexts. For example, in a classroom, the teacher may direct a previously asked Q to another student by saying "And you, John?". Consider the following dialogues.

(8) T: What do you think of it, Ann?
Ann: Awful.
T: And you, John?

(9) T: Do you agree, Ann?
Ann: Yes.
T: And you, John?

Clearly, the second Q "And you, John?" in (8) has the same requirement as the preceding Q, which is a wh-Q calling for an opinion, whereas "And you, John?" in (9) asks for agreement/ denial as proposed by the preceding yes/no Q.

Similarly, utterances like "And?", "Another one?", etc. take on meaning only within the context of the interaction. They may ask for identification of individual person, work, or other object, or they request for another reason, example, cause or outcome. It is the context that signifies to us that the speaker is cutting the Q short and relying on the respondent to fill in the omitted part (Hyman 1979:16).

In fact many echo Qs take such shortened forms (cf. Echo Qs in 3.4.2.3.1). They often are responses to previous utterances and may contain a lot of cross-referentials (Hiz 1978). A question can be abbreviated in form because a conversation or interaction is a flow of information exchange. What is being said is often a continuation of what has been said or what was happening. As a result, the nature of some elliptical Qs can only be identified by examining what has been said earlier.

To trace the preceding Q from which an elliptical Q derives does not only help to identify what type of Q it is, regardless of the classification scheme used, but also enables us to understand the interaction. The student has to do the identification so as to provide appropriate answers.

In my observation and analysis, I find yet another common type of Q. The teacher utters part of a Q and leaves a blank for the student to complete.

(10) T: The first is _____?

(11) T: We call this _____?

In daily conversation this type of Q is found as a type of echo Q requesting partial repetition. In a language class, apart from some genuine echo Qs, this kind of blank-filling Qs are mostly used as display Qs requesting the learners to provide information the teacher already knows.

As the blank in this type of Q can invariably be substituted with "what", it is in fact equivalent to wh-Qs. I shall call this kind of Q "completion Q" simply because in a language classroom it requires the learner to complete the sentence or to provide the missing word.

In this study elliptical Qs will be categorised as either yes/no Qs or wh-Qs in terms of form, and their functions are further categorised accordingly (cf. 3.4).

3.3.5 Embedded questions

Perhaps the most problematic aspect of the formal categorisation of Qs is that of embedded Qs: Qs that take the form of a yes/no interrogative but contain a clause introduced by a wh-word. For example:

(12) Can you tell us why you did it?

(13) Does anyone know where we can find her?

Qs like these can be grammatically answered by 'yes' or 'no', and sometimes they are indeed yes/no Qs requesting a simple answer. But in most cases, neither in real conversation nor in the classroom, are they asked as simple yes/no Qs and, as a result, responded to by 'yes' or 'no' alone. In this study, these Qs will be called embedded wh-Qs and taken as wh-Qs.

3.3.6 Imperative questions

Although imperative sentences tend to realise commands, Qs, i.e. requests for linguistic responses, can be realised by imperative sentences as well as interrogative and

declarative sentences. Examination Qs are more often than not put in imperative sentences, such as "Give the reasons for X.", "Explain the functions of Y". In a classroom the teacher may encourage a student to elaborate on an answer by saying "Tell me something more".

3.3.7 Wh-questions

Last but not least, let us look at wh-Qs, which are not as easy as they may seem to be. A wh-Q contains a wh-word. This simple formal feature does not help us any further. Qs containing wh-words are acquired by children in a roughly hierarchical order, presumably because of their difference in cognitive complexity. Due to the significant differences in functions, they are presented in different order (supposedly hierarchical in terms of difficulty) to the learners of English. Take 'how' Qs for example. The following four Qs vary greatly.

(14) How are you?

(15) How much is it?

(16) How do you play this?

(17) How come I always lose?

It is because of this kind of discrepancy that requires further division of wh-Qs. Stenstrom (1994), for example, puts wh-Qs into two groups: those with *when, where, which* are in a group called specifying Qs and *what, why*, and *how* are in the other called open-ended (see 3.4.1). This, as I shall argue, is not without problems (see 3.4.1).

I have earlier (3.3.4) identified that what I call "completion Qs" function in the same way as wh-Qs and should be categorised as such.

3.3.8 Summary of forms of questions

In this section I have discussed the formal aspects of Qs. Qs can be realised by declarative, imperative, as well as interrogative sentences. Qs also take elliptical forms of a single word or a short phrase. It was noted that the categorisation of Qs on the formal basis was not always straightforward. The mismatch between form and function (e.g. embedded yes/no Qs) suggests that any classification of Qs on the basis of only formal features of utterances should be used with care in the study of Qs and

questioning. This will become even more obvious when functions of Q are examined (3.4).

3.4 Functions of questions

In 3.3 we viewed Qs in their syntactic and/or lexical realisations. In this section I shall examine Qs in terms of their functions.

3.4.1 Functions of questions: Stenstrom's taxonomy

Stenstrom in her study of Qs and answers in English (1984) and spoken interaction (1994) developed a taxonomy which incorporated the forms and functions of Qs.

Similar to the grammatical classification which is based on the Q structure and the kind of answer they are asking for, Stenstrom classified Qs into three types on the same basis:

identification Q, polarity Q and confirmation Q

Identification Qs are typically realised by wh-interrogatives, polarity Qs by interrogatives involving inverted word-order, i.e. yes-no Qs, confirmation Qs by a declarative utterance and a tag, i.e. tag Qs.

Identification Qs, i.e. wh-Qs, are further divided into **specifying** Qs and **open-ended** Qs according to which wh-word is used. Stenstrom claims that while *who, which, where* and *when* ask for specification, *what, why* and *how* have no restrictions on what kind of information and how much information can be expected (1994:93).

In her taxonomy alternative Qs, i.e. interrogatives presenting two or more choices, are included in identification Q, to be more specific, in the sub-category of specifying Q. Those with polarity choices, i.e. in the form of "X or not", are included in polarity Q.

Qs may perform different acts in a conversation depending on what they do and where they appear. For example, when a Q asks the previous speaker to repeat (part of) what was said, the Q realises a specific act called <check> in the interaction.

Stenstrom clearly attempted to combine the forms and functions of Qs. She realised that identification Q as a category is too crude to address the vast differences between all sorts of wh-Qs. However, by allocating wh-Qs into two camps according to what wh-

word is used is too simplistic a move. On the one hand, many *which* and *what* Qs can be either specifying or open-ended.

(18)	What year was it? = When was it?	(specifying/closed)
(19)	What would you do in that situation?	(open-ended)
(20)	Which way should I take?	(specifying/closed)
(21)	Which system would solve this problem?	(open-ended)

On the other hand, this division is similar to the traditional "closed" vs "open-ended" division. It is an issue which cannot be simply resolved by lexical specification.

Another problem with Stenstrom's taxonomy of Qs is her treatment of the traditional alternative Qs. Qs with choices do ask for specifying, but they are different from other wh-Qs in that the information required to specify has been provided whereas the information required to be specified in other wh-Qs has to be provided by the respondent. This is crucial to language learners, hence representing an important area in the study of teachers' Qs and how they elicit learners' responses in L2 context.

According to Stenstrom's definition of a Q, Qs either seek information or seek confirmation, hence, there are two broad types of Qs: information-seeking Qs and confirmation-seeking Qs. Stenstrom (1984) has identified another type: 'acknowledge Q' i.e. those which seek acknowledgement. She claims that requests for acknowledgement are the weakest type of elicitation and invite the addressee to accept what has been suggested or stated (1984:74).

The difference between a confirmation Q and an acknowledgement Q is that a confirmation Q is to establish the continuation or completion of information flow whereas an acknowledgement Q is a brief utterance to check if the present speaker's speech is properly received. An acknowledgement Q is usually realised by a tag or a prompter (e.g. "you know") added after a statement of indefinite length (Stenstrom 1984:74). In other words, a tag or a prompter added to a statement does not necessarily turn the whole utterance into a tag Q (cf. tag Qs in 3.3.2). A tag can function by itself, performing an independent act, e.g. that of <acknowledge>. Sometimes, it is more of an idiosyncratic feature or interactive filler than communicatively necessary.

In conversation statements are often responded to with acknowledgement and comment, which makes the conversation a two-way flow. The difference between acknowledgement Qs and statements that get responded to is that statements as they are do not overtly elicit verbal response whereas acknowledge Qs do.

To sum up, although Stenstrom's taxonomy of Qs aims to cover all types of Qs in terms of their functions in spoken interaction, it is still very much a form-based taxonomy. Amongst other deficiencies mentioned above, her classification does not address the difference between Qs genuinely seeking information and Qs only requesting display of knowledge as is often the case in classroom questioning. As a result it is not readily applicable to the present study. I shall, however, adopt her confirmation Q and acknowledgement Q types and the division between specifying and open-ended Qs.

3.4.2 Functions of questions: Kearsley's taxonomy

Kearsley's taxonomy of Qs is not just another scheme for classifying Qs. It is the basis of the current classification of Qs used in L2 classroom research.

After acknowledging that "there is no single structural form or set of characteristics which describes all types of questions", Kearsley also then attempts to classify Qs from a functional point of view.

Kearsley categorises Qs into four types: epistemic, echoic, expressive and social control.

The social control purposes of Qs are independent of the information content. Such type of Qs includes those "used to exert authority by maintaining control of the discourse", such as "Hey, know what?" (p362) and those asked "to avoid embarrassing silences in conversation and maintain interaction between speakers" (p363). This type of Q is included in the category of management Qs discussed in 3.2.2.4.

Epistemic Qs serve the purpose of acquiring information (p360). They are subdivided into referential and evaluative types. Evaluative Qs are referred to as display Qs in L2 study.

Referential Qs, display Qs and echoic Qs were discussed in Chapter 2 as part of the review of the study of Qs in L2 classrooms. They will be discussed again here to see their relevance to the present research and how they can be applied. But before that, let us look at the category of expressive Qs.

3.4.2.1 Expressive questions

Some Qs are relatively neutral, while others are biased. These biased Qs are used for expressive purpose, i.e. convey attitudinal information to the addressee (Kearsley 1976:362). Kearsley points out that "particular syntactic patterns (and their corresponding intonation patterns) convey different expressive information" (p362). Thus, the following Qs are not neutral:

(22) Are you coming or aren't you?

(23) Aren't you coming?

(24) You ARE coming, aren't you?

(22), in full disjunctive form, usually expresses impatience, while (23), a Q in negative form, typically indicates either surprise or disbelief. Tag Qs like (24) express a state of doubt.

Expressive Qs are similar to what has been termed as conducive (Hudson 1975; Stenstrom 1984), biased (Pope 1976) and positively versus negatively oriented Qs by Quirk et al (1985). While expressive Qs, as defined by Kearsley, stress more on the questioner's intention, they can also be viewed to emphasise the response the questioner expects and desires.

I see these two perspectives of viewing expressive Qs as complementary. It is the attitudinal bias of the speaker expressed in his Q that indicates positive or negative expectations as felt on the part of the respondent. To put it in another way, while expressing a state of doubt, a negative tag Q expects a positive response, and a positive tag expects a negative response. Negative Qs are almost invariably not neutral, and while indicating surprise or disbelief, expect a positive response.

Apart from the formal characteristics of Qs, there are other contextual factors that determine the conduciveness of a Q. The prosodic features, e.g. stress (as in (24)),

intonation, pitch of voice, and some non-verbal characteristics, e.g. facial expressions, are all likely to be indicative of something about the speaker (cf. 4.5). People do not go around to ask Qs. The fact that one asks a Q suggests something more than what the Q itself conveys.

Given that expressiveness is a characteristic across all types of Qs, I would not set it as a separate category, but to note the examples of it where necessary in the analysis.

3.4.2.2 Display versus referential Qs

The distinction between display and referential Qs and the research on these two types of Q were discussed in 2.3.

In the light of the discussion of open and closed Qs (3.2.2.2.), I would like to propose a combination of the concepts of openness of Qs on the one hand, and the referentialness of Qs on the other and this will result in a further division of display and referential Qs into closed and open ones. Long et al (1984), for example, divided referential Qs into open-ended and closed types, but not display Qs.

Chaudron (1988:127) pointed out that while referential Qs may be either open or closed display Qs tend to be closed as the teacher usually has a specific answer in mind. I think that a similar division between open and closed Qs can be extended to display Qs. This is based on the fact that display Qs can also be answered by a one-word answer or an elaborate one. Suppose John, a character in a text, was angry and the causes for his anger were explicit in the text. The teacher may ask the following Qs:

(25) Was John angry?

(26) Why was John angry?

Both Qs are display Qs as the answers to them are known to the teacher. But (25) and (26) apparently set different demands on the part of the learner. While (25) can be answered by "yes" or "no", a proper answer to (26) requires a longer production. I shall refer to Qs like (25) as closed display Qs and Qs like (26) as open display Qs.

One may argue that (26) is still a closed Q because the answer to it is very limited (from a closed set of acceptable answers). I want to emphasise that the concept of openness

concerned here is the openness in choosing an answer. To (26), the answer can be "Because he lost the game", "Because the referee wasn't fair", or "Because he could have done better", etc.

In conclusion, I propose the following categories of Qs: open and closed display, open and closed referential.

There is yet another dimension to be noted, and that is the distinction between pedagogic and non-pedagogic (social/personal) transaction (Malamah-Thomas 1987:15). While classroom transaction is predominantly pedagogic, i.e. pertaining to the objectives of classroom teaching, part of classroom transaction is inevitably related to social and personal aspects. Display Qs are pedagogic Qs by nature whereas referential Qs can be pedagogic or social/personal. When a teacher who knows no Chinese asks for the Chinese translation of an English word with the purpose of letting those who know the English word help those who do not, s/he is asking a pedagogic referential Q. If the teacher asks the same Q when she wants to learn the Chinese equivalent to an English word, she has asked a non-pedagogic referential Q.

3.4.2.3 Echo questions and echoic questions

3.4.2.3.1 Echo Qs

When people fail to hear clearly what has been said previously, (1) they may ask the previous speaker to repeat the message, or (2) they may themselves repeat the part they think they have heard clearly and ask the previous speaker to supply the missing part, or (3) they repeat the whole message and ask the previous speaker to confirm that what was said has been correctly heard or understood. Qs that ask for repetition or confirmation as a way of having the content clarified are called echo Qs.

Echo Qs may take various forms. To ask for repetition of all of what was said, one may say: "Sorry?", "Pardon?", "What did you say?", "What was it?" etc. The same function can be achieved in both declarative and imperative forms, such as "I'm sorry I didn't quite catch you.", or "Say it again.".

For partial repetition, one may repeat part of what was heard or understood clearly and replace the unclear bit with a wh-word.

(27) A: He is a dermatologist.
B: He is a WHAT?

In this case, A is to supply what the wh-word requests so as to complete the message as he would do to wh-Qs uttered in general context.

There is a variation in this type of repetition-seeking echo Qs: that of elliptical Qs. Instead of using a wh-word at the place of uncertainty, the speaker may leave the questioned part blank for the hearer to fill in: "He is _____?". This, though, should be distinguished from the test Qs used in classrooms where the teacher deliberately leaves a sentence unfinished for the student to complete (cf. completion Qs in 3.3.4).

In the situation where one wants to have confirmation that his understanding or hearing of what was said is correct, he may himself repeat the whole utterance or message, often with rising intonation at the end, indicating that his repetition needs confirmation.

(28) A: I didn't like the meal.
B: You didn't like it?

The above echo Qs are examples of what is termed as recapitulatory echo Qs (Quirk et al.1985). The other category of echo Qs is what they call the explicatory echo Q, which asks for the clarification, rather than the repetition, of something just said. It is always a wh-Q and uttered with a falling tone (Quirk et al 1985:837).

(29) A: Take a look at this.
B: Take a look at WHAT?

Explicatory echo Qs can only result from failure of understanding, not that of hearing. Thus, the exchange is a negotiation of meaning. Compare (28) with the following example:

(30) A: I didn't like the meal.
B: You did or didn't like it?

B in (30) did not hear A clearly. His Q asks for clarification, which, unlike an explicatory Q, can be satisfied by B's (partial) repetition. (30) B is both a recapitulatory and an explicatory Q.

To sum up, there are three types of echo Qs discussed here. The recapitulatory echo Qs can be further divided into repetition requests and confirmation checks, while explicatory echo Qs are in fact clarification requests. Repetition requests, confirmation checks and clarification requests are termed echoic Qs in the L2 research on Qs. This will be discussed in the next section.

3.4.2.3.2 Echoic Qs

Various studies on teacher Qs in EFL discourse have followed Long (1981) in his adaptation of Kearsley's (1976) functional taxonomy of Qs. One of the four main categories of Qs in their taxonomy is echoic Qs. Echoic Qs, in Kearsley's definition, are those which ask for the repetition of an utterance or confirmation that an utterance has been interpreted as intended. The type of elicitation is meta-discoursal: they refer to the discourse itself (Tsui 1992:109). The echoic Qs here are basically the same as echo Qs discussed earlier.

In their adaptation of the taxonomy, Long & Sato (1983) have subdivided echo Qs into comprehension checks, clarification requests and confirmation checks.

Comprehension checks are any expressions designed to establish whether that speaker's preceding utterance has been understood by the interlocutor, e.g. "Alright?", "Does everyone understand 'polite'?".

Clarification requests are any expressions designed to elicit clarification of the interlocutor's preceding utterance, e.g. "What do you mean?", "What?".

Confirmation checks are any expressions designed to elicit confirmation that the previous speaker's utterance has been correctly heard or understood, e.g.

(31) Did you say 'he'?

(32) Student: Carefully.
Teacher: Carefully?

3.4.2.3.3 Echo Qs or echoic Qs?

If we compare echo Qs and echoic Qs, the following observations can be made:

1. Either group has a category of confirmation checks. The echo confirmation check is realised by B repeating all or part of A's previous utterance and letting A make the confirmation. The echoic confirmation check, on the other hand, includes not only all echo confirmation check Qs, but also Qs like "Did you say 'he'?", "Is X the word you used?", and probably paraphrase of A's message for confirmation, e.g. "Did you mean to say ...?".

2. Similarly, clarification requests is a category in both echo and echoic groups. The echo clarification request seems to focus on part of, e.g. a certain element of, A's utterance (cf. example (29)), while echoic clarification request may ask for clarification of the whole, e.g. "How do you mean?", as well as part of A's previous utterance.

3. The repetition request of echo Q group is not clearly identified as a type of echoic Q. But it cannot be comfortably included in any of the other echoic types. I therefore propose that it be a separate category.

4. The comprehension check as an echoic type does not function as an echo Q. While an echo Q is a request from the hearer as a result of his failure of hearing or understanding whereas a comprehension check is A asking B whether B has heard or comprehended A correctly.

Sinclair & Coulthard (1975:40) point out that the checking Qs are 'real' Qs, in that for once the teacher doesn't know the answer. While this may be generally true, in L2 classrooms teachers may make deliberate confirmation checks or requests for clarification or repetition as a negative feedback to the learner's target language production.

I shall adopt the three echoic types of Long & Sato's scheme, i.e. clarification request, confirmation check and comprehension checks. I shall add repetition request as a separate type.

3.5 Proposed scheme

I propose the following categories of Qs for the present study:

1. Display
1.1. Closed display
1.2. Open display
2. Referential
2.1. Closed referential
2.2. Open referential
3. Echoic
3.1. Repetition request
3.2. Clarification request
3.3. Confirmation check
3.4. Comprehension check
4. Management

My scheme is different from Long & Sato's, which is based on Kearsley's 1976 taxonomy, in the following respects.

First, I further divided both display and referential Qs into open and closed categories. Although Long et al (1984) did make a distinction between closed referential and open referential Qs, there was no distinction made between open and closed display Qs.

Second, I rejected their expressive category because expressiveness of a Q is more concerned with illocutionary force and may be realised by any type of Q.

Third, I include request for repetition as a type of echoic Q.

Fourth, I believe a separate category is necessary for Qs serving managerial purposes, hence a category of the management Q. This is the adaptation of Kearsley's "social control" category in its application in the classroom context.

The categories in this scheme are not claimed to be always mutually exclusive. Given the fact that Qs and questioning can be multi-functional or multi-dimensional, overlapping across the types is possible. However, I believe that the proposed scheme has covered the major aspects of the EFL classroom discourse and will probably best cope with my data.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed a few major taxonomies of Qs developed from different approaches and different perspectives to discourse or interaction.

The multi-functional and multi-dimensional aspects of questioning make the categories of any Q scheme almost impossible to be mutually exclusive to each other. One solution to this is to double-code the utterances which seem to fit more than one category of a given scheme (Stenstrom 1984). No doubt, either single coding or double coding may be problematic (see Sinclair 1992:84).

In spite of the problems and difficulty in developing an adequate taxonomy, a working scheme is necessary for any empirical study of Qs. While keeping in mind that the fundamental basis of classification is to serve the purpose of the research, I have developed the existing scheme used in other studies of Qs in EFL context and attempted to allow the proposed scheme to capture the main aspects of L2 classroom questioning.

Chapter 4 Questions and questioning exchanges

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Chapter 4 Questions and questioning exchanges

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to further identify the sort of Qs to be included in the analysis of this study. In order to achieve the aim I shall investigate Qs in the interactive dimension as opposed to their grammatical and functional categories discussed in Chapter 3. Firstly, Qs will be studied in relation to other notions such as initiation and elicitation. Secondly, Qs will be viewed in relation to other utterances which are associated with them, especially responses (Rs), in the process of interaction. Finally, the connections between Qs and these other utterances are examined at different levels, i.e. questioning exchanges and questioning sequences.

4.2 Questions and questioning

As was pointed out in Chapters 1 and 3, a Q is a functional category, as opposed to an interrogative sentence which mainly refers to the syntactic property of an utterance. In other words, a Q is an utterance, which may take any syntactic form, whose main function is to elicit a linguistic R.

Questioning or Q asking, on the other hand, is the act of asking a Q or Qs. It is not only concerned with the utterance which we may identify as a Q, but also with the wider context in which the Q is asked. This wider context deals with the way in which people ask Qs, why and how the Q is formulated and expressed as it is, and how a series of Qs are functionally and strategically related to each other, and to the responses which follow them, and how people use Qs to achieve different purposes.

Asking a Q, like uttering anything, indicates something about the speaker. People do not go around asking Qs simply for the sake of it (Stubbs 1983). In other words, when a person asks a Q, he is communicating something in addition to the very Q he asks (Dillon 1986). This additional information regarding the asking of the Q is significant to both the speaker and the respondent and, in certain contexts, to other hearers.

In contexts other than a classroom, questioning may sound rather harsh a term as it is often associated with police interrogation or courtroom questioning. In a classroom, however, questioning refers to the use of Qs for pedagogic purposes, e.g. to use Qs to stimulate

thinking, check comprehension, help the students to produce the target language, etc. The study of questioning is mainly concerned with the strategies (techniques or tactics) related to the use of Qs. This will be further explored in the next chapter. In this chapter, however, I shall mainly talk about the formal or structural components of questioning.

4.3 Questions, requests and directives

Generally speaking a Q is a kind of request, requesting the addressee to provide an answer to it. We may take Qs as special cases of requests (Bach & Harnish 1979).

What distinguishes a Q and a non-Q request is not solely the syntactic form of an utterance, but rather other factors concerning the beliefs of the interlocutors at the time when the utterance is produced and the context in which it is uttered. The set of beliefs are called sincerity conditions (Searle 1969). "Can you play the piano?" can be a genuine Q asking if somebody has the skill to play the instrument, or a request for somebody to play it (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975). The first distinction to make, therefore, is between:

(A) requests for non-verbal action, and

(B) requests for verbal response. (Sinclair & Brazil 1982)

In the study of classroom discourse, request is rarely used as a category. Requests falling into category A are directives while those of B are Qs. This dichotomy does not suggest that Qs are necessarily responded to by verbal responses only and directives are not responded to by verbal responses. Responses and the relationship between Qs and responses will be discussed at length in later sections (4.8). Here I want to examine a little further the relation between Qs and directives by looking at what follows them respectively. To expand on the request Category A, I identify two sub-types:

(A1) requests for immediate action, and

(A2) requests for future action.

Utterances falling into category A1 are normally taken as directives. To these directives, a verbal response is usually present as acknowledgement or compliance, which either precedes or occurs with the designated action. Directives of this type are common in the classroom, especially in activity- or task-oriented classrooms, where, as opposed to just lecturing, management is constantly required.

A verbal response is obligatory after a request for future action (A2), such as "Would you please post the letter for me?". In the classroom, this kind of request is mostly used when

assigning homework. However, when such a request is addressed to the whole class, individual members of the class may not feel it obligatory to respond verbally.

Directives given in interrogative forms are in some studies referred to as managerial Qs, procedural Qs or organisation Qs (see 3.2.2.4). Compare:

(1) You two, go and sit over there.

(2) Can both of you go and sit over there?

While both (1) and (2) function as directives, (2) is a managerial Q whereas (1) is not.

In this study the category 'management Q' does not include directives in interrogative forms. Interrogative directives are still directives, i.e. requesting the addressee to carry out a physical action rather than a linguistic response as a Q does. The management Qs as defined in this study (cf. 3.2.2.4) include Qs like: "Are you ready?", "Have you finished?", etc.

Now let us turn to Category B: requests for verbal response. It was pointed out in Chapter 1 that one of the unique features of a language class is that teacher's speech in a language class serves both as a means of instruction and a model for the students to learn. It is precisely because of this feature that we cannot ignore the part of the teacher discourse in a L2 classroom where the teacher overtly models for the learners to imitate or repeat. These repetition-seeking requests are what I call requests or elicitation for verbal display. This is a particularly common form of discourse in beginners' classes and speaking classes where the teacher may utter a sound, a word, a phrase, or a sentence for the learners to imitate.

I find it essential in the study of language classroom Qs to make a further distinction between:

B1: requests for linguistic responses, and

B2: requests for verbal display.

Typical B2 type requests are the teacher modelling for the students to repeat or imitate.

We may tentatively conclude that there are two types of elicitation which will be represented as follows:

Request for a linguistic response is a question.

Request for verbal display is a non-Q elicitation.

However, it is requests for linguistic responses (B1) that are the focus of various research on teachers' Qs and also the focus of this study.

To sum up what is discussed in this section, we get the following categories:

Category A: requests for non-verbal action:

(A1) requests for immediate action	(+/- verbal R)	(directives)
(A2) Requests for future action	(+ verbal R)	(management Qs)

Category B: requests for verbal responses:

(B1) Requests for linguistic responses	(+/- verbal R)	(Questions)
(B2) Requests for verbal display	(+ verbal R)	(non-Q Elicitations)

4.4 Questions, elicitation and initiation

Two common terms used in the study of classroom discourse are initiation and elicitation. Together with Qs the three terms describe different aspects of discourse. In this section I shall examine these concepts using the model developed for classroom discourse analysis.

4.4.1 Questions and elicitation

According to Sinclair and Coulthard's model elicitation is an interactive act which is intended to evoke a verbal response. However, elicitation, when not clearly defined, may be used as a general term for initiation and Qs as well as an interactive act.

Although eliciting a verbal response is often realised by Qs, it is also realised by other forms including non-verbal acts. When, for example, the teacher instructs the students to practise a particular sound, the teacher will look at a designated student (non-verbal nomination) or call out a student by his/her name (verbal nomination) and the student will perform accordingly (cf. 4.5). Sometimes the teacher refers to textbook Qs by saying "Next" or "Number 6" and the students will respond accordingly. Here neither "next" nor "number 6" are Qs themselves, yet they both represent the corresponding Qs and function as elicitation.

These verbal or non-verbal acts such as nominations are not questioning acts as such, but viewed from an interactive perspective they perform the same function as elicitation does

and are followed by answers to the corresponding Qs. They therefore should be counted as elicitations in the analysis.

4.4.2 Questions and initiation

Following Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) Q is a functional category whereas initiation is an interactive move.

Initiation, as the word suggests, refers to the starting of an exchange. Broadly speaking the first pair-part of any adjacency pair, e.g. greeting-greeting, can be regarded as an initiation. In this sense, initiation should not be equated with Qs.

In classroom discourse, the basic teaching cycle is initiation/responding/follow-up (cf. 1.4). Although initiation tends to be realised by Qs, it can also be realised by non Qs. Mehan (1979) distinguishes three types of initiations: elicitation, informative and directive. Giving instructions, for example, is not asking Qs though it is responded to verbally or non-verbally. I therefore do not equate initiation with Qs. The focus of this study will be on exchanges which are initiated by Qs only.

While initiation may be realised by non-Qs as well as Qs, Qs also appear in non-initiation positions as well as initiation position, eg:

(3)	A1: Do you have coffee?	(Q1)
	B1: Black or white?	(Q2)
	A2: White please.	(A2)
	B2: Okay.	(A1)

In the above example, B1 is a response to A1. It is a Q but not an initiation in the exchange, though it may be argued to be the initiation of the embedded exchange of B1 and A2 (see 4.8.2.2).

Qs also occur in what is normally a follow-up move as in the following example:

(4)	A: Is it 12?	(Q1)
	B: Yes.	(R1)
	A: Is it?	(Q2)
	B: Mmm, 13.	(R2)

Q2 in the above example indicates clearly a negative evaluation of B's answer to Q1. Q2, of course, can also be taken as a re-initiation in this sequence of exchanges. In classroom

discourse such repetition of the initial Q occurring at the follow-up position clearly functions as a negative evaluation of an answer and is not uncommon.

In this section I want to point out two things: first, initiation should not be equated with Qs or vice versa because not all initiations are realised by Qs although they might be responded to. In some studies (e.g. Wintergurst 1994) initiations and Qs are sometimes used interchangeably, which may distort the picture. The second point I want to make is that Qs do not necessarily appear only in initiations. In fact they appear in any move. The issue becomes more complicated when we look at interaction beyond the isolated IRF cycle because some of the turns may well serve a double function, as in (4) above where Q2 is both a feedback to R1 and an initiation to R2. Another argument against such an equation will be developed upon in the next section (4.5).

In this study I shall look at teachers' Qs in the entire lesson regardless of whether they appear in the initiation, responding or follow-up moves, but I will acknowledge, where necessary, their position in the exchange.

4.5 Non-linguistic aspects in questioning

The same sentence may be uttered in quite different ways, conveying different messages and emotions. There is a whole range of non-linguistic features that accompany human communication, from the body posture to the slight raising of the eyebrows, from the pitch of the voice to the speed of speech (Argyle 1972).

The non-linguistic features can be further divided into verbal and non-verbal ones. Intonation, stress, pitch, etc. are all part of the verbal features while facial expressions and body posture are non-verbal ones.

In Kearsley's taxonomy of Q forms which he claims to be exclusive, non-verbal Q is a category as opposed to verbal Qs. The non-verbal Qs in his definition are further divided into overt and covert non-verbal Qs. The former "are questions which serve to elicit a verbal response" (p357) and the latter refer to Qs which people ask themselves internally (p357).

However, non-verbal features often go hand in hand with verbal elicitation, and some non-verbal acts function as elicitation as well as responses and reactions.

Most, if not all, Qs in social interaction including classroom interaction are verbal by nature. While speech is verbal communication, communication does not have to be verbal, nor verbal alone. Like any other utterance, interrogative utterances are accompanied by certain non-linguistic signals. The main types are non-linguistic but verbal ones: intonation and stress, and non-linguistic and non-verbal ones: gesture and facial expressions. I shall examine the issue a little further in the following areas.

4.5.1 Intonation

Rising intonation is one of the key features of interrogative mood (Bolinger 1957). A declarative sentence can be turned into a Q with a rising tone at the end. These Qs are also called intonation Qs. This was discussed in Section 3.3.1.

4.5.2 Stress and focus of the question

Stress plays an important part in spoken language. As far as Qs are concerned, shift of stress on different words in a Q results in different Qs requesting different answers (Hejicova 1983). Although both (5) and (6) may get an identical yes or no as an answer, the respondent is confirming different aspects of the question proposition.

(5) A: Did you go to SCHOOL yesterday?
B: Yes. (confirming the place where B had been to yesterday)

(6) A: Did you go to school YESTERDAY?
B: Yes. (confirming the time of B going to school)

Both intonation (4.5.1) and stress might affect the meaning of Qs of identical form (Hoepelman 1983). This is significant in the analysis of repetition of Qs (5.5.1).

4.5.3 Body and facial expressions

Gestures can serve as clues which help a respondent to answer the Q. The following example was from one of the lessons that I observed:

(7) T: The judges wear ___? [*gesture]
Ss: Wig. [PCL:Legal]

[*Gesture: with the hands stretched to the hair area suggesting something to do with hair rather than clothing.]

Without the gesture, the Q itself would not be clear as to whether it was asking for a type of clothing, or other non-clothing items that people wear. With the gesture "wig" then was the right answer.

Facial expressions convey a lot of information in face-to-face interaction. A direct eye contact at the end of a Q accompanied by a pause is to emphasise to the other person that a Q is being asked and that a response is expected of him (Hargie et al 1987). In a classroom a teacher's direct look at a student after a Q can also serve as nomination of a respondent. Similarly, a puzzled look from a teacher after hearing a student's response may suggest non-comprehension and a request for repetition or clarification, thus functioning as an echoic Q. Teachers should be aware of the non-verbal signalling from students to detect their response or reaction to their Qs (see Morgan & Saxton 1991:91).

4.5.4 Interactive elicitation

A pause at the end of an utterance may indicate the end of the turn thus giving the floor to another speaker.

In a listening activity, students are instructed to listen and verbalise what they have heard. The teacher then may stop playing the recording after a short episode and the students are expected, as instructed, to verbalise what they have just heard. In this case, the stopping of the recording signals the end of the teacher's turn and functions simply as elicitation. Of course, the teacher may ask Qs after any stopping. The point here is that without a verbal elicitation, the stopping itself serves as non-verbal elicitation.

4.5.5 Summary of Section 4.5

The non-linguistic and non-verbal aspects of questioning have been discussed. They concern this study in the following ways:

a) They play a role in identifying Qs and their type;
b) Some non-verbal acts function as elicitation and should be tallied accordingly;
c) Pausing may be indicative of the boundary of exchanges and sometimes function as Qs.

All the above and other non-linguistic and non-verbal elements which accompany questioning and responding will be noted in the collection of data through direct observation and accounted for in the analysis (cf. Chapters 6 & 7).

4.6 Responses

No study of Qs and questioning will be complete without looking at responses that follow the Qs. Apart from some rhetorical Qs, Qs are asked with the intention to engage the listener(s), i.e. potential respondent(s), in some kind of verbal exchange. Because of this, understanding what answers are is a good way to understand what Qs are (Dillon 1986:116). In this section we shall look closely at responses and responding.

4.6.1 Types of responses

4.6.1.1 Response

In its broad sense, a response does not have to follow a Q. It can follow any preceding utterance or any non-verbal stimulation, such as a picture or a scene. In a word, it can be the second pair part of any adjacency pair, such as greeting and greeting, apology and acceptance (cf. Chapter 1). In its narrow sense, a response is what follows a Q. Stenstrom (1984) views response as an utterance coherently related to a preceding Q by grammatical and lexical cohesion (e.g. reference, substitution, ellipsis) and/or prosodic, semantic and pragmatic agreement (see also Dillon 1986:117).

In this study, however, the term response is restricted to utterances and non-verbal expressions that follow Qs. This suggests that all forms of responses that occur after elicitation will be considered. It will include non-verbal elements, such as shaking or nodding the head, facial expressions etc. In fact, the teacher does take into account non-verbal as well as verbal expressions of the students as feedback to his/her instruction including Qs. A puzzled look from a student when hearing a Q will indicate failure of comprehension. Nodding and shaking the head is naturally taken as responses to Qs that require agreement/disagreement or confirmation. There may be, of course, cultural differences. As the target group of this study are Chinese learners, I believe that I am in a good position to judge what they mean if cultural differences are at play. (On a number of occasions in the class which I observed, the teacher failed to understand a learner's answer whilst I did, and asked for repetition or dismissed it as an inappropriate answer.)

Responses that follow Qs may vary a great deal in terms of satisfying the expectation of the questioner or revealing the attitude of the answerer. If we look at the following hypothetical Q and its possible answers, it is not difficult to notice that whilst all of B's utterances are some kind of response to the Q, some are not what we might call answers. I have tried to classify them according to some common categories which I shall discuss in the next few sections.

(8) A: How old is he?

B:	(a) Twenty	(answer)
	(b) As old as Tony.	(indirect answer)
	(c) I don't know.	(reply)
	(d) It's none of your business.	(reaction)
	(e) You know it, surely.	(reply)
	(f) Why do you ask me?	(reaction)
	(g) Who cares?	(reaction)
	(h) Ask Bob.	(reply)
	(i) That's a good question.	(reaction)
	(j) Who is he?	(clarification Q)
	(k) How old is he?	(confirmation Q)

A Q expects an answer, but does not guarantee one. In other words, what follows a Q, excluding rhetorical Qs which do not expect an answer anyway, is not always the answer to it. Dillon (1986) argues that answers and answering are "better thought of as response and responding, for it turns out that, of all the things that people may say and do when asked a Q, the very least is to give an answer" (p116). (8) aims to suggest that to treat whatever follows a Q as an answer seems to be unsatisfactory. It is reasonable thus to make the distinction between answers and non-answer responses, which we shall examine separately in the following sections.

4.6.1.2 Answer

What then is an answer? An answer fulfils the logical or substantive expectation of the solicitation (Johnson 1979:3). It is more closely related to the proposition of the Q. A 'yes' or 'no' or anything that is close to it is regarded as the answer to a yes/no Q. The information contained in the response to a wh-Q which fills the information gap designated by the wh-word is taken as an answer to the wh-Q. While Qs cannot be judged as true or false, answers can. In other words, an answer can be right or wrong depending on whether it supplies the correct information required by the Q. As for other properties of responses, including answers, such as relevance and appropriateness, these will be discussed in a later section (4.6.2).

Answers can be further divided into direct answers and indirect answers. "A direct answer is a piece of language that completely, but just completely, answers the Q" (Belnap & Steel 1976:3).

Answers can be true or false. To the Q 'What is the freezing point of water, in degrees Fahrenheit, under standard conditions?':

(9) The freezing point is 32° F.

(10) The freezing point is O° C.

Both are direct answers, but (9) is a true one to the Q while (10) is not (Belnap 1976).

Although the notion of a direct answer to a Q is basic (Belnap 1976), direct answers following Qs are rare in daily conversation (Belnap 1976; Churchill 1978, Dillon 1986). However, they might occur proportionately more in classrooms where teachers often require the students to give the answers to the Qs rather than any other responses as one might encounter in daily conversation.

An indirect answer to a Q is an answer which provides the information necessary for the questioner to infer the direct answer.

4.6.1.3 Reply and reaction

A response to a Q that does not fulfil the expectation of the Q is a non-answer response, which I term as a reply. One fundamental difference between an answer and a reply is that an answer can be right or wrong and true or false whereas a reply cannot be judged in the same way. In other words, an answer has truth value attached to it while a reply does not.

There is yet another type of reply which we may call reaction. A reaction is an utterance in response to the fact that such a Q is asked or to the manner in which the Q is asked. In other words, a reaction rates (positively or negatively) the Q (Cashin 1995:1).

There is no doubt that responses can be categorised in different ways just as Qs can. In fact a number of categorisations have been identified in different studies (see Dillon 1986; Kaplan 1983; Edmondson 1981). I shall tentatively adopt the simple distinction between

answers and replies (i.e. non answers), both of which are responses to Qs. Most of the time I will use the general term response to refer to both answers and replies.

4.6.2 Other aspects of response

Unlike the L1 classroom, in the L2 classroom responses from the learners are valued in terms of their linguistic realisation, i.e. their phonetic, grammatical, lexical, and semantic correctness or accuracy as well as all other aspects related to responses in the L1 classroom. There are occasions when the grammatical form of responses attracts more attention and evaluation than other aspects, such as whether the response is natural or not. The awareness of this on the part of the learners surely affects their attempt to give the responses and consequently affects their responses. In other words, the learner may be more concerned with the grammatical accuracy when answering the teacher's Qs. The common feature with lower level L2 classes is that the learners are often required to give full-sentence answers which would sound unnatural in daily conversation (see Mhunwas 1987). Sometimes the teacher may have a particular answer in mind and would reject other answers even though they are correct.

Not only can answers be right or wrong, grammatically correct or incorrect, some answers can also be partially correct. Answers to Qs can be grammatically correct but irrelevant or inappropriate. These are no doubt important areas of inquiry for any in-depth study of responses to Qs, but they are not the main concern of this study. These aspects will be noted in later analysis only in relation to how they affect the teacher's use of Qs, especially the repetition and reformulation of Qs. The teacher may repeat the Q to another student even though a correct answer has been given. In this case the teacher is not interested in the answer as such but in letting other students produce the desired piece of the target language. When an answer is wrong, the teacher may either repeat or rephrase the initial Q in order to give the answerer or other students another opportunity. The teacher may repeat a Q if it is grammatically correct but irrelevant or if it answers the Q but is grammatically incorrect. It is also sometimes the case when the answer is both grammatically correct and relevant but it is not what the teacher expects and leads to the repetition of the original Q. In all of the above situations the type of response will affect what the teacher may do in his/her follow-up turn and that is one of the areas that this study tries to investigate.

4.6.3 Summary of 4.6

Various aspects of response are examined. The basic distinction is drawn between answer and reply, both of which are responses to Qs. Other aspects of responses are mentioned and will be noted in later analysis only in relation to how they might affect the follow-up Qs from the teacher. To sum up, responses include:

Response { answer { right / partially right / wrong ; reply (non answers including reaction)

Although any kind of response may occur in a classroom, we may intuitively assume that there is a much higher occurrence of answers, as opposed to non-answer responses, in the classroom. This is because, as was pointed out earlier, when responding to a Q, the respondent normally takes into account the purpose of the questioner. In a classroom, the purpose of the questioner, i.e. the teacher, is usually very straightforward: expecting a direct answer to the Qs and not anything more than that. However, I am not aware of any study that has investigated this area.

4.7 The follow-up move

Having examined data of both face-to-face conversation and telephone conversation, Tsui (1989) argues that a *three-part exchange* is more adequate than an *adjacency pair* as a basic unit of conversational organisation (see also 1.4). She pointed out that the occurrence of the follow-up after replies to questions "is pragmatically motivated (p561)".

It has been pointed out in various studies of classroom discourse that the basic teacher-student exchange in a 'lockstep' class is that of IRF, i.e. Initiation, Response and Follow-up (e.g. Sinclair & Coulthard 1975). I prefer the term Follow-up to Evaluation, which is used in some studies (e.g. Mehan 1979), or Feedback because what occurs in the third turn following the response to the elicitation is not always an evaluation, nor a direct feedback to the response. What is worth pointing out is that what occurs in the teacher's turn after the student's response is often the follow-up (F) move plus the next initiation. It is also not uncommon in teacher talk that the follow-up turn, the turn after the response, is realised by another Q. This is what I shall look at in the next section.

4.8 Questioning exchanges

Having examined Qs and responses in detail separately in the previous sections, I shall investigate in this section what goes beyond the Q-R exchange in a sustained interaction.

4.8.1 Questions and responses

4.8.1.1 Question-response correlation

Different types of Qs pose different requirements on the part of the respondent. As a result there is some cause-effect relation between Qs and responses. How Qs influence responses thus becomes an area of inquiry.

Both L1 and L2 studies on teachers' Qs deal with the effect of teachers' Qs on the students. The students' responses are examined in terms of their quality and quantity, but the focus varies.

In many L1 studies on teachers' Qs, for example, the correlation between the cognitive levels of teachers' Qs and the students' responses that follow the Qs is studied to see whether teachers' higher-order Qs will get corresponding higher-order responses from the students (see 1.5.2 and 3.1.1 for definition and discussion). It is believed that higher-order Qs tend to get more higher-order responses, which is beneficial to the students. The quantity of responses is considered in terms of the number of words.

In L2 research on teachers' Qs the quantity of responses is also considered in terms of the number of words, but more importantly in terms of communication unit and/or the teacher-unit (see Wintergerst 1994). The quality of response, on the other hand, is not clearly stated. As learners' responses are part of their target language production they are generally judged in terms of their grammatical correctness. Qs are basically used to provide opportunities for the learners to produce the target language.

A Q does not only affect what immediately follows it. It may also affect more than one turn after it, hence the pattern of exchange. Some Qs may be satisfied with just one or probably only one answer. Other Qs, on the other hand, clearly call for more than one thing as the response. A Q such as "Can you give us some examples?" calls for more than one example and the examples may come from one respondent or from different ones.

In sum, the Q-R correlation may at least be reflected in two ways: (a) Different types of Q, e.g. display and referential Qs, may have different effects on the quantity and quality of Rs; (b) Different types of Q may affect the pattern of Q-R exchanges in a stretch of discourse (4.8.2).

4.8.1.2 Response rate

Another way in which the effectiveness of teachers' Qs can be measured, as done by some studies on teachers' Qs, is to see what the "response rate" (R rate) they retain is. The response rate is the ratio between (or percentage of) the number of Qs and the number of the responses that follow them.

Formula 1: Response rate = number of responses ÷ number of Qs (%)

A number of studies have measured the correlation between Qs and responses in this manner without addressing some of the crucial problems regarding the Q-R relation.

The first problem is that not all Qs are intended to evoke responses, though all Qs may be responded to. I pointed out earlier (4.3) that some managerial Qs (e.g. requests for immediate action) call for action, and may or may not be responded verbally. Whilst all teachers' Qs and students responses are noted, the focus of this study is on the Qs that are intended to elicit verbal responses and on the responses elicited by these Qs. It follows that both rhetorical Qs and managerial Qs requesting immediate action should not be included.

Formula 2: R rate = Rs ÷ Qs that seek Rs (%)

The second problem is that sometimes more than one Q is asked in one move leaving no time in between for the listener to answer. The successive Q (Q2) or Qs (i.e. Q2, Q3, ...) of Q1 may be a repetition or rephrasing of Q1, or it may be another Q requiring a different answer to that for Q1. This must be taken into account when R rate is calculated, hence:

Formula 3: R rate = Rs ÷ Qs or multiple solicits that seek responses (%)

Even though the selection of Qs is refined, the R rate still seems to be a crude indicator of the effectiveness of teachers' use of Qs. For example, "I don't know" is a reply, but not an answer (cf. 4.6.1). If there are many replies of this sort to Qs that elicit desired answers, the R rate may be high, but the questioning cannot be regarded as effective.

In light of the discussion of responses in 4.6, we need to take a closer look at the responses that follow Qs in order to decide whether the Qs have achieved their purpose.

4.8.2 Patterns of questioning exchanges

Although the basic teaching cycle is that of IRF, the teacher-student exchange does not always follow the clear-cut pattern of IRF where there are only three moves and three turns. In fact any of the three moves can be expanded with 'inserted exchange' while the basic IRF remains (see Johnson 1979). On the other hand, studies of conversation outside the classroom have identified some patterns of exchange other than the IRF pattern, which are also found in the classroom (Mishler 1978; Merritt 1976; Stenstrom 1994).

In this section, I shall examine various patterns of elicitation sequences and relate them to the EFL context. I shall concentrate on the formal aspect of the patterns here and will deal with the strategic aspect in the next chapter.

There are three main patterns: chaining, embedding, and extending. I shall discuss them separately.

4.8.2.1 Chaining

Basically, chaining refers to a series of Q-R exchanges where the Qs are asked by the same speaker. It can be crudely illustrated as follows:

Q--R--Q--R--Q--R--...F; *or*

Q--R--(F)Q--R--(F)Q--R--...F.

(where -- represents turn boundary and (F) means that a follow-up may or may not be present. cf.. also 4.7.)

In a chaining sequence, the presence of F move may occur after any answer or before any subsequent Q, but it does not have to be obligatory. In other words, the presence or absence of F move does not affect the pattern of the chaining sequence.

The same chaining sequence may be realised by different Q-R exchanges. The common one is a sequence of different Qs, chiefly on one related topic, each of which is followed by the corresponding response.

Pattern I: Q1--R1--Q2--R2--Q3--R3...F

(11) T: What is 2 and 2? [Q1]
S: Four. [R1]
T: And 2 and 3? [Q2]
S: Five. [R2]
....
T: Very good. [F]

The second chaining pattern very often involves open Qs permitting or calling for different answers to the same Q.

Pattern II: Q1--R1--Q1--R2--Q1--R3...F

(12) T: What do you think of the film, Bob? [Q1]
S1: Boring. [R1]
T: Tom, how about you? [Q2]
R2: I think it's okay. [R2]
... ...
T: Alright. [F]

Open Qs, by definition, allow a divergence of answers (3.2.2.2). Some of them call for more examples, others different reasons for or causes of an event. Qs asking for opinions of the respondents are likely to get different responses from different people. Qs of these kinds are likely to be directed to different respondents for wider participation, though such a pattern may also occur in a one-to-one interaction.

One thing that needs pointing out is that the subsequent Qs in chaining sequence tend to be variations of the initial Q, rather than an exact repetition of it. The subsequent Qs may vary from a nomination by name to a request, realised by a different Q, for further contribution, e.g. "Can you add anything?", "What are some of the other reasons?".

The third sequence involves a series of repeated Qs which elicit the same response. The teacher may direct the same Q to different students. The purpose of so doing is to make sure that the same response to the Q is actually uttered. It has the following pattern:

Pattern III: Q1--R1--Q1--R1--Q1--R1...F

This pattern is perhaps mostly found in some low-level language classes, e.g. pronunciation drills, where the purpose of the elicitation is to ensure the actual articulation of a certain sound or word. The correct response from one student does not represent the mastery of the sound by others.

Like Pattern II the subsequent elicitations after the initial Q are not necessarily realised by the repetition of the Q, but rather minimal nomination such as nodding to a student, calling out the name of the student, etc. [Cf.. distinction between Q and elicitation in 4.4.1.] This could be represented as:

Q1--R1--(F)cue/nomination--R1--(F)cue/nomination--R1 ... F

It was pointed out in 4.5 that non-verbal elicitation in the form of, for example, nomination represents new turns and constitutes part of the "chain" of exchanges. They will be counted and analysed in this study.

4.8.2.2 Embedding

There are occasions where the initial Q is not followed by an answer to the Q as it is expected, but rather a Q from the addressee. Merriett's (1976) study of Qs following Qs in service encounters has yielded some interesting and intriguing results.

Merriett (1976) discovered that many customers' requests for service are often realised in interrogative sentences and are immediately followed by the service people's Qs asking for specification of the service requested.

(13) A: Do you have coffee to go? (Q1)
B: Black or white? (Q2)
A: White please. (R2)
B: Here you are. (R1)

Merriett formulated the sequence as Q1--Q2--R2--R1 where Q2-R2 may be regarded as an embedded exchange between Q1 and R1.

A similar pattern is described as insertion sequence by Schegloff & Sacks (1972), side sequence by Jefferson (1972) and contingency sequence by Johnson (1979).

A more common exchange which follows this embedded pattern and most relevant to language classes and this study is where echo or echoic Qs are involved. (For the discussion of echo and echoic Qs, see 3.4.2.4).

When a listener fails to hear clearly or understand what was just said by a speaker, he may ask for clarification or confirmation of the preceding message. Such a request is normally realised by a Q which is called an echo Q or echoic Q. The initial utterance preceding the echoic Q can be in any form, e.g. imperative or declarative as well as interrogative. If the

initial utterance by A is a Q to B, which is not heard clearly or understood fully by B, B cannot answer the Q unless a clarification, confirmation or repetition is made. While B, the intended answerer of the Q, becomes a questioner, and A, the initial questioner, now becomes the answerer of the echoic Q. After the echoic Q is answered, B is able, hopefully, to answer the initial Q (Q1). Thus, the pattern remains Q1--Q2--R2--R1 or:

(14) A1: Q1 -- the initial Q
B1: Q2 -- the echoic Q
A2: R2 -- the answer to the echoic Q
B2: R1 -- the answer to the initial Q

What is worth pointing out is that when the echoic Qs are repetition requests or clarification requests the turn of A2 would see either a repetition or reformulation of Q1. The answer in B2 would be an answer to both Q1 and Q3 (see (15) below). In this case Q1 has to be repeated or rephrased. The above representation can be modified as:

(15) A1: Q1 ---- the initial Q
B1: Q2 ---- the echoic Q
A2: R2 ---- the answer to the echoic Q
or ***Q3 ---- the repetition or reformulation of Q1***
B2: R1 ---- the answer to the initial Q and Q3

The Q3 in the above modal performs a dual function: it is both a response to Q2 and a Q for an answer. In other words, it is both predicted and predicting (Coulthard & Brazil 1981). In the later chapters of this study I shall look at precisely what happens when such repetition and reformulation of Qs occur.

4.8.2.3 Extending

The third major pattern in exchange is that of an extended sequence. As the name suggests, it is the extended form of the basic IRF form. Both initiation and responding can be extended as shown in the following examples.

1. Extension of initiation

The questioner asks more than one Q of the same thing: the second Q (Q2) (and subsequent Qs) may be an repetition (RP) or reformulation (RF) of the first Q. The pattern is something like:

Q1+RP or RF -- R (to both Qs) -- F

2. Extension of R

To some open Qs, like those calling for multi-examples, there can be more than one response from different respondents following the same Q. The pattern would be:

Q -- R1-- (F) -- R2 -- (F) -- R3 ... -- F

The difference between this pattern and the one in chaining where multiple-example Qs are asked is that there may or may not be any feedback (such as acknowledgement) to the responses in the extended exchange. But there are no cues or nominations after each response because any cue or nomination would constitute a turn or move, thus changing the pattern.

3. Extension of both I move and R move

If the initial questioner asks more than one Q and these Qs are not a repetition or paraphrase of each other (as is the case in the extension of initiation), it follows that there will be more than one response from the respondent(s) addressing the corresponding Qs. As a result, both Initiation and Responding are extended:

Q1/Q2 -- R1/R2 -- F

One may hear in the responding move the respondent saying: "The answer to the first question is .... The answer to your second question is ...".

Whether Q2 and Q3 are repetition or reformulation of Q1, or totally new Qs, is usually reflected in the R move. In the former situation there is usually only one response, which is the response to the extended Q move. In the latter situation where two or more different Qs are involved, there would be two or more responses addressing the corresponding Qs. Thus we may hear "Let me answer the second Q first" or "The answer to your first Q is X". In this case it is an extension of both Q and R moves.

There are, of course, numerous variations to the patterns that I cited above. In longer stretches of discourse, we will see more complicated exchanges. This study, however, does not aim at listing all the possible patterns of elicitation sequences. It only attempts to show how interaction between a teacher and learners may be realised in different ways. A number of issues, such as the cluster of Qs in one move, repetition and reformulation of Qs, different forms of elicitation, etc. will be dealt with in depth in later chapters.

4.9 Summary

In this chapter I have discussed some common notions used in classroom discourse analysis which are related to the study of Qs. These notions include initiation, elicitation, directives and, a more general term, requests. I have basically followed the Sinclair & Coulthard model which has been developed specifically for the study of classroom discourse. At the same time I have also referred to the findings of conversation analysis where turns are the fundamental units of analysis (e.g. the interactive elicitation 4.5.4).

I have also looked at non-linguistic and non-verbal elicitation and argued that non-verbal acts function as Q acts as well as accompanying Q acts. I shall pay attention to this aspect when analysing the data (cf. Chapters 7 and 8).

Qs are further investigated in relation to the responses that follow them. The relation between Qs and responses is examined in terms of their connection in interaction (e.g. the response rate). Some common patterns of Q exchange are presented. In a number of places the repetition and reformulation of Qs are highlighted, providing a focus for further investigation.

The patterns of Q exchange discussed in this chapter are in fact concerned with the formal aspect of discourse and interaction. In the next chapter these exchanges will be examined to see how Qs, especially the repetition and rephrasing of Qs, are used to achieve academic purposes in EFL classrooms. The pedagogic implications will be discussed in Chapter 9.

Chapter 5 Questioning strategies

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Chapter 5 Questioning strategies

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4 I examined the formal aspects of Q asking, i.e. the structural patterns of questioning exchange. In this chapter I shall investigate how Qs are related to each other functionally and strategically. In other words, how Qs are related to each other as they are to achieve communicative purposes, academic or otherwise.

5.2 General strategies

Originally, the term "strategy" refers to military planning. In education, it "refers to a set of teaching actions intended to attain desired outcome" (Walberg & Waxman 1985:5148). Sometimes, the term strategy has been used synonymously with the terms "method", "techniques", "skills" and "tactics". I shall adopt the general definition that "strategies are ways of dealing with problems" (van Lier 1988:30).

There are various methods teachers employ in order to make the lesson successful, whether they are conscious or unconscious of them. These methods are strategies. In this study, attention is focused on the strategies adopted by teachers in their use of Qs in EFL context. For example, when a Q is asked and there is no immediate response, what does the teacher do? Wait in silence, repeat the Q, ask an individual student to answer it or readdress the Q with some modifications? These are strategies teachers use in one way or another.

As far as questioning strategies are concerned, Wilen (1987) in his review of teacher's questioning techniques has identified the following common ones:

1) form the Qs clearly;
2) ask academic Qs, i.e. Qs pertaining to what is being learned;
3) ask more lower-order Qs in elementary settings;
4) ask more higher-order Qs in more advanced level
5) permit students to call-out when answering Qs;
6) increase wait-time after Qs and students' responses;
7) encourage students to respond;
8) keep a balance between volunteer and non-volunteer respondents;
9) correct students' inappropriate responses;
10) use probing Qs to encourage students to elaborate and expand on their responses; and
11) acknowledge and praise students for their responses.

Perrott (1982), for example, has proposed specific techniques a teacher can adopt in order to help pupils to give more complete and thoughtful responses. These techniques include:

1) to pause a little longer,
2) to prompt the pupils,
3) to seek further clarification from the pupils, and
4) to refocus a pupil's response so as to make him elaborate on his initial R.

The techniques cited above are prescribed to teachers of L1 classrooms and may or may not be readily adopted by L2 teachers. After all strategies are the means, not the end. What strategy to take depends on the nature of the problem it aims to solve. As I have already discussed in Chapter 1, L1 and L2 teachers are sometimes faced with different academic tasks in the classroom.

There are no general questioning strategies prescribed to L2 teachers, although it has been proposed that teachers should ask more referential Qs, and wait a little longer for learners to respond (cf. Chapter 2.3.2). There are, however, some general strategies that L2 teachers seem to use when talking to learners. Teachers' use of Qs may also be characterised with such strategies and contain features characteristic of teacher talk (cf. Chapter 1.4). This is one of the areas I shall investigate in this chapter. First I shall look at questioning acts, which are closely related to strategies, and then strategies used at different stages of the questioning process.

5.3 Questioning acts and questioning moves

5.3.1 Questioning acts

In Chapter 4, I reviewed the model of discourse analysis and maintained that exchange, move and act are useful categories relevant to the analysis of Qs and questioning exchanges in this study. While exchange and move are the basic structural components of any interaction, acts are not structural, but functional.

An act signals what the speaker intends or what s/he wants to communicate (Stenstrom 1994). In eliciting an answer the questioner may do a number of things to ensure the success of the exchange. For example, if A is aware that his Q may be too difficult for B, he would help B to respond by providing additional information which would be needed for answering the Q.

(1) T: Do you remember GCSE (0.5), the exam (1.0) which children take at 16 [clue]? (DH6/10)

The clue can either be part of a question as in (1) or a separate sentence before or after the focal Q.

The underlined sentence is part of the Q move which is eliciting a word from the students. It is an instance of the teacher giving a clue to help the learners find the right answer.

Giving clues is a common practice by the teacher in the classroom where the teacher often asks known information Qs and looks for a desired answer.

In other cases, if A knows that the Q he is going to put might be too harsh, he may 'soften' it by asking something related but less harsh first.

(2) A: but you're teaching ... at a grammar school aren't you?
B: yes, yes.
A: well, what do you think about sex education? (Stenstrom 1984:86-87)

In this example, A's first Q simply prepares the way for the second Q which is the main Q whose answer is what A is after. To ask a Q which is intended to lead to another Q is another questioning strategy.

When talking about different acts that go with questioning, it is helpful to establish the notion of focal Q (FQ) (Stenstrom 1984:161). A focal Q is the main Q in a move, an exchange or a sequence of Qs. The same notion is preferred as "nuclear utterance" in French & MacLure (1983) in their study of teachers' Qs. They used "nuclear utterance" in preference to "nuclear Q" because they maintain that sometimes the elicitation is attempted through non-Q forms, such as directives.

Stenstrom (1984) labels the acts that serve the focal Q as *accompanying Q acts*, represented with < >, e.g. <q> for Q act. One or more accompanying Q acts can either occur together with the focal Q in the same move (as in (3) below) or in a separate move (as in (4) below).

If we use FQ for focal Q and <q> for accompanying Q acts, the relationship between FQ and <q> can be illustrated as follows:

(3) <q>-FQ or FQ-<q> (where a single dash refers to utterances in the same move, in this case <q> and FQ are in the same move)

(3a) <q>-FQ: *I hope you don't mind my asking* <q>, but why did you do it (FQ)?

(3b) FQ-<q>: Why did you do it (FQ), *if you don't mind my asking* <q>?

(4) <q>--R--FQ or FQ--R--<q> (where a double dash represents move boundary, ie <q>, response and FQ are all in separate moves)

(4a)	<q>--R--FQ:	A: Can I ask you something	<q>?
		B: Of course.	[R]
		A: Have you ever... ?	(FQ)
(4b)	FQ--R--<q>:	A: Have you ever...?	(FQ)
		B: Not really.	[R]
		A: I asked you this because...	<q>

Using a <q> before a focal Q as in (3a) and (4a) is an act or a strategy called <preface> (Stenstrom 1984) or 'preformulating' (French & MacLure 1983). Using a <q> after a focal Q as in (3b) and (4b) is called <clue>. I shall deal with them separately in the next two sections.

Note that firstly an accompanying Q act is not necessarily a Q itself. Secondly an accompanying Q act does not have to be in the same move where the focal Q is. In other words, it is not an inherent part of Q asking. It is there to help project the focal Q or help the respondent to provide an answer.

The study of Q acts has added another dimension to the notion of Q. It further illustrates the fact that Q asking often consists of more than just utterances we call Qs (cf. 4.2). Part of Q strategies involves the use of these other utterances which may not be Qs but are related to Qs. The study of how Q acts and accompanying Q acts are linked, either formally or functionally, and either within one move or in different moves is one of the areas that this study investigates.

5.3.2 Questioning moves

Following what has been said in 5.3.1. we can thus divide Q moves into two sub-types: those consisting of only one Q utterance and those made up of a focal Q plus one or more additional elements, i.e. accompanying Q acts. I shall call the latter, i.e. the Q move with other Q act(s) in it, an extended Q move. If, however, a Q act or an accompanying Q act which is related to the focal Q appears in a separate move, as in (4a) and (4b), the Q exchange is thus extended into a Q sequence which will be discussed in 5.6.2.

It is worth pointing out that although an initiation move in an IRF cycle is often realised by Qs (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975), there are initiations which are realised by non Qs, e.g. directives, hence an initiation move without a Q in it is not a Q move. A Q move, on the other hand, does not necessarily appear only in the initiation of an IRF cycle. It could happen in either the response move or the feedback move (see 4.4.2). This will result in more complicated exchanges. This study looks at Q moves in the entire teacher talk regardless of its position of occurrence in relation to the IRF cycle.

In the following sections I shall investigate a number of strategies associated with questioning but occurring at different stages of questioning.

5.4 Preformulating

Preformulating here refers to the strategic move where the questioner says something as a preparation for the focal Q (Stenstrom 1994:76). The <q> used in preformulation shall be termed <pre>.

It is problematic to attempt to divide <pre> according to the function or the form, because a <pre> can be realised by almost any utterance including Qs, and may simultaneously perform more than one function in a given context. Take (5) for example:

(5) [Watching a slide show]
T: Can you see the Indian ladies? <q>
What are they wearing? (FQ) (French & MacLure 1983:198)

The <q>, a <pre> here, does a number of things at the same time. It draws the attention of the pupils to the relevant area of experience, hence smooth the channel to put the focal Q. It may also be taken as a directive addressed to the whole class. As a result it does not request a verbal response. Some pupils may respond to it while others may opt to remain quiet.

In this particular slide-watching example cited above in (5), there would be little use for the teacher to ask any Q about the Indian ladies if the pupils could not see clearly or identify the Indian ladies in the slide. In this case, the <pre> in (5) would be a genuine Q functioning as a management Q (cf. 3.2.2.4).

Apart from its attention-calling and/or managerial function, the <pre> has a focusing or narrowing-down effect. It helps to establish as shared knowledge between the teacher and pupils material essential to answer the focal Q. It is likely that there are other people or things apart from the Indian ladies in the picture. The <pre> in (5) is more specific than 'Look at the slide/picture' and as a result has a stronger focusing and narrowing-down effect, which in turn makes the focal Q easier to comprehend and answer.

The <q> + FQ in (3) can be arbitrarily put together to form one Q, something like:

(6) What are the Indian ladies (in the slide) wearing?

One may argue that there are two Qs in (5), taking up two acts, (e.g. <starter> and <elicitation>, to follow Sinclair & Coulthard [1975]), possibly two moves (e.g. [Focusing] and [Opening]), whereas (6) is only one Q. It seems that (6) is to be preferred as it is in accordance with the Gricean principle of quantity (Grice 1975). This may well be true. But the two Qs in (5) make the desired response easier for the pupils to produce and thus serve the purpose of the teacher's Q more efficiently.

In daily life, such focusing before the nuclear utterance is not uncommon. Instead of saying 'The red bike which is the second from the left of the front row is mine.', people would probably start the exchange by orienting the listener, B, to the focus, and saying something like:

(7) A: Can you see the red bike over there? <pre>

The red one, second from the left in the front row? <pre>
B: Yes.
A: It's mine. (Nuclear utterance)
(M. Atkinson, 1986, personal communication.)

In a conversation, a <pre> often functions, among other things, as a face-saving device. By asking if B is free at a certain time before making a request or invitation, A is being indirect in revealing his intention and thus avoids losing face in case of refusal. Stubbs (1983) calls a question such as "Are you free tonight?" a pre-sequence (p117).

In a classroom, however, the situation is different. It is taken for granted that teachers' Qs are to be answered. A refusal or inability to answer is deemed inadequate behaviour on the part of the student. This, however, does not mean there is no such thing as 'face-saving' in the classroom. If a teacher's Qs are constantly not answered either because they are not clear enough, or too difficult or for any other reasons, it does no good for his 'face'. This also explains why teachers' wait-time after Qs tends to be short. Silence might be a challenge on both sides (cf. the discussion on wait-time in 5.6.3).

In sum, the <pre> in (5) in different contexts, or even in the same context, can be introductory, attention-calling, focusing/narrowing-down and/or face-saving. This, of course, has not exhausted the possible functions that <pre> can perform.

Example (5) further illustrates the concept of extended Q move I proposed earlier (4.8.2.3). In this example the accompanying Q act <pre> is a Q itself. The <pre> and the focal Q form one extended Q move which I call Q unit, i.e. more than one Q in a move.

What we have seen in the discussion of preformulation is what a teacher might do to smooth interaction and prevent communication breakdown. In the case of a communication breakdown, e.g. the teacher's Q is not properly delivered or received, the teacher will resort to other strategies. With this we turn to the next section.

5.5 Repair strategies

When communication does break down, e.g. when failure to hear or to comprehend a Q has occurred, something must be done. This applies to the classroom situation as well as daily conversation. Before any action is taken, the underlying problem must be diagnosed. Chuska (1995), for example, has identified 12 common reasons students have for not participating in class and suggested ways in which teachers can overcome the problem such as rephrasing and simplifying the questions, waiting a little longer or asking other students to answer (p22). Here we are looking at specific problems which might arise in the process of Q exchange in the L2 classroom.

In the case of no immediate response, for example, a number of common problems can be the cause: failure to hear the Q, failure to understand the Q, failure to produce the response in the target language even though the Q is comprehended, and in some cases, an unwillingness to answer. Unwillingness to answer may take two forms. The first is an unwillingness to volunteer to provide an answer. This is usually a problem with some of the learners in a class and the teacher tends to solve the problem by nominating the respondent. The other form is an unwillingness to answer because the Q is too personal or offensive, etc. This is rare in a classroom and I shall thus exclude this in the discussion of repair strategies.

Failure to hear the Q is usually easy to detect. If the questioner notices that her Q has not been heard, she would repeat the Q when she is sure that she has the addressee's attention. In most cases the addressee would indicate that he did not catch the Q by using a repetition request (cf. 3.4.2.4), which is also followed by the initial questioner repeating the Q.

Failure of understanding may result from the difficulty of the Q in terms of its content or the level of the language used. In L2 context, the second cause is not uncommon. The lower the learner's proficiency of the target language is, the more likely that the target language itself, rather than the content of the Q, is the cause of comprehension failure. Take the following Q as an example:

(8) What is the theme of the prose?

If the learner does not know the word 'theme' or 'prose', he is unable to answer the Q.

On the other hand, the learner may understand perfectly the Q yet still be unable to answer the Q in the target language. This is the third cause for no answer after a Q, i.e. failure in constructing an answer. In this case there may be a reply, verbal or non-verbal, indicating inability to give an answer (see 4.6.1 for the distinction between answer and reply). The teacher may either rephrase the initial Q or redirect the Q to another student or other students.

In a L2 class where there are a number of students, it is difficult to pinpoint the problem of each student all at once. Some students may not understand the Q, while others may not know how to answer it. Still others would just not volunteer to answer any Q.

Repair does not necessarily or exclusively occur after a breakdown. It can happen within a move, i.e. before a response is given. However, repair within the move differs from repair after a response in that the latter type of repair is consciously employed by the speaker to resolve a "crisis" whereas repair before a response results from the ques-

tioner's realisation that his Q is likely to be difficult for the answerer and needs some amendment.

There are a number of causes for repair within the move. Among others are:

i) A's own error: grammatical mistake or wrong or improper choice of words (e.g. slip of tongue), etc.

ii) A's realisation that the Q may be inappropriate, etc.

Here we assume that the teacher's Q is grammatical and relevant in the first place. This is, of course, in accordance with one of the Grice's felicity conditions, i.e. being relevant. Non-native teachers may make more linguistic errors in their speech, which may or may not cause communication breakdown. Very often, the teacher repairs his Q in the case of ungrammaticality or inappropriateness, among other causes.

Repair after breakdowns is almost invariably realised by repetition (RP) and/or reformulation (RF) of Q1. Other possible tactics such as abandonment is understandably rare with the teachers.

To sum up, the three main causes for repair are as follows:

CAUSES:	CONSEQUENCES:	REPAIR
1) failure to hear	no R; ask for RP	RP
2) failure to comprehend	ask for RP or clarification	RP/RF; provide answer
3) failure in constructing	no R; admitting inability	RF; redirect the Q; provide an answer; giving clue, etc.

In the following sections, I shall discuss in greater detail repetition and reformulation of Qs.

5.5.1 Repetition (RP)

Repetition of the same Q is rare in daily conversation apart from as a remedy for failure of hearing. In certain contexts, RP has very different illocutionary effects. In a courtroom, for example, a RP of a Q may be a challenge to the answerer who fails or hesitates to respond or tries to evade the Q. In a radio quiz, which I listen to quite often, the RP of the same Q is very common. Its main function is to provide extra time for the quiz participant to find the answer. Silence in a radio show can be very uncomfortable.

One can imagine that if Qs are appropriate both to the cognitive level and to the linguistic level of the addressee, they are less likely to be repeated. The RP of the same Q by a

teacher is regarded as a bad questioning behaviour in L1 classrooms (cf. 2.2.3). One aspect of teacher training is to help the teacher avoid repeating his own Qs. It is reported that after receiving training in how to ask Qs more effectively, teachers' self-repetition has reduced (McNamara 1981). The reduction of self-repetition by teachers after training may have resulted from the fact that the Qs are more appropriately put in the first place, thus there is little need for RP, or from overt avoidance of repetition, as repetition is regarded as 'bad', or from the teacher's use of other repair strategies, such as reformulating, which will be looked into in the next section.

Repetition phenomenon is noticed in NS-NNS talk, e.g. L2 teacher talk, but not in NS-NS talk (Prabhakar 1994). RP is found in teacher questioning in EFL classrooms for various reasons. As in a radio quiz show where the presenter asks display Qs, one of the functions of RP in the language classroom is to provide extra time for students to comprehend the Q and/or to search for the right answer. Lack of familiarity of individual word(s) in the Q, the structure of the Q or the topic may challenge the learner's memory, thus requiring longer processing time. To avoid silence, which can be uncomfortable though at the same time providing the extra time needed, the teacher repeats himself.

RP is found to occur both immediately after the initial Q and after a long pause. In the former case, the teacher may well be aware of the difficulty of the Q before he puts it, and repeat it to help the student. In the latter case, i.e. in the case of no immediate response, the teacher assumes (though he may have anticipated) that the Q is either difficult to understand or to answer. At times a student may request the teacher to repeat his/her Q after failing to hear or comprehend the Q. This is an example of using echoic Q (cf. 2.3.4; 3.4.2.3).

To sum up, the three scenarios mentioned above can be represented as follows:

RP within the Q move:	A: Q+RP
	B: R
RP after R:	A: Q
	B: (no R)
	A: RP
RP after R:	A: Q
	B: Request for repetition (echoic Q)
	A: RP

In a unique case in a language classroom, RP sometimes is for nothing else but the practice of the form, i.e. how to ask a certain Q, for example, asking the way, asking for information, etc. In this case it is the form rather than the content that is the model for imitation (cf. 2.2.1).

Repetition is arguably categorised into two types. One is the exact word-for-word RP. Slight changes of intonation contour are ignored unless they present a shift of emphasis which affects the interpretation of the Q (cf. 4.5). I shall label this type of repetition "formal RP".

The other type of RP involves some slight lexical or syntactic variations, which does not result in a change of the proposition of the original Q. For example:

(9) What are the Indian ladies wearing? (watching a slide)
(9a) What are they wearing? (RP)
(9b) The Indian ladies, what are they wearing? (RP)

Both (9a) and (9b) share the proposition with (9). In other words, they mean exactly the same when following (9) as a RP of it. But they are not word-for-word RP of (9). I call this type of RP "propositional RP".

Understandably, formal RPs occur more often after failure of hearing, less, if at all, in the case of comprehension failure. If one does not understand a Q, hearing it again would not help much.

A's response to B's echoic Qs, i.e. request for repetition or clarification, reflects A's judgement of the cause of communication breakdown. He may repeat or rephrase or do both to address the problem. What occurs more often is partial, rather than complete, failure of hearing or understanding, that is, the addressee missed certain element(s) of the previous utterance. This results in calling for partial RP (cf. Churchill 1978; echo Qs in 3.3.2.3.1).

A teacher's repetition may refer to 1) repetition of his own utterances (including Qs), and 2) repetition of students' utterances (Qs and answers). This study focuses on teachers' repetition of their own Qs.

5.5.2 Reformulation (RF)

Repetition is one of the repair strategies. But consider:

(10) How do you find London?
(11) What is your impression of London?

(10) and (11) mean roughly the same. Imagine a situation where a NS asks (10) of a NNS and the NNS does not understand it. The NS then asks (11). Is (11) regarded as a RP of (10)? The asker probably would admit that he has asked the same Q in a different way

rather than two different Qs. This "asking the same Q in a different way" is called rephrasing or reformulation (RF).

One of the ways of helping the respondent who has failed to provide an adequate answer to give a desired one is to rephrase the initial Q. This is often referred to as *prompting* or *probing* in questioning techniques (Derrott 1982; Mehan 1979). In language classrooms, when a teacher's Q is not immediately or correctly responded to, rephrasing the Q is one of the most common practices.

Generally RF is to make the previous Q more specific by cutting down the range of possible answers. In most cases, it ranges from wh-Qs to yes-no Qs, as is reported by Stenstrom (1984:164) and French & MacLure (1983) (see also 8.4).

French & MacLure (1983) have identified several types of RF which are categorised according to the degree to which they make the original Qs more specific, that is, how far they restrict the range of variables (possible answers) (p202).

1. to use more specific lexicon;
2. From wh-questions to neutral yes/no questions;
3. From wh-questions to biased yes/no questions;
4. From wh-questions to alternative questions;
5. From wh-questions to confirmation-seeking questions, e.g. from a neutral yes/no Q to a tag Q.

The use of RF as a repair strategy can be seen as a simplification strategy in communication and will be examined further in Chapter 8.

Like repetition, reformulation can occur either within the same move with the focal Q it serves, or in a separate move, i.e. after the response to the focal Q is given. The representations of RP positioning in Q exchanges also apply to RFs. To repeat here for clarity:

RP/**RF** within the Q move:	A: Q+RP/**RF** B: R
RP/**RF** after R:	A: Q B: (no R) A: RP/**RF**
RP/**RF** after R:	A: Q B: Request for repetition (echoic Q) A: RP/**RF***

(* where A assumes that B's asking for repetition has resulted from failure of comprehension.)

5.5.3 Giving clues

In the case of no response or incorrect answer, together with or instead of reformulating the initial Q, the teacher may add further information to help students to respond. The accompanying Q act that follows a focal Q and provides additional information to the focal Q is an act called <clue>. Using clues to help students to answer Qs is most common in classroom interaction. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) defined clue as an act which is "realised by statement, question, command, or moodless item. It ... functions by providing additional information which helps the pupil to answer the elicitation or comply with the directive." (p41). This strategy resembles giving clues in an informal quiz show, where the quiz master openly offers some clue: "I'll give you a clue. It's something recent.".

The primary function of <clue> is to provide additional information, intended to help the respondent answer the Q. A secondary function seems to be to lead the response in one direction or the other (Stenstrom 1984:167). The <clue> delimits the scope of response, thus making it easier for the respondent to answer. At the same time the answerer is expected to respond on the basis of the information given. He cannot possibly disregard what is said in the <clue> (Stenstrom 1984:167).

Understandably, <clue> is most often used with Qs to which the questioner knows the answer, i.e. display Qs.

5.5.4 Backtrack

Sometimes when there is no response, or the student admits he is unable to construct the answer or the answer is not the correct or desired one, the teacher may draw the learner's attention to what was previously mentioned. This is to establish the necessary shared knowledge upon which the Q is to be comprehended or the answer is to be based. I call this tactic <backtrack>.

At other times the teacher makes sure the concept or word used in the Q is clear enough for the learner to comprehend by eliciting related information contained in the Q as in the following example:

(12) T: What do you leave on the wall (Q1)? You know what a wall is (Q2)?
(White & Lightbown 1984:232)

This is referred to as 'digression' by White & Lightbown (1984), but will be included in the strategy of <backtrack> in this study.

5.5.5 Summary of repair strategies

Repetition and rephrasing are two of the compensation skills in speaking (Bygate 1987). Rephrasing or paraphrasing in particular is a compensatory strategy involving meaning replacement (Fraech & Kasper 1983:52). It is used when the shared knowledge of interlocutors is inadequate and when there is a gap in their linguistic competence as in NS-NNS communication. The latter case is common in a L2 classroom. Pica & Long (1986), for example, find no difference between experienced and inexperienced teachers in their use of self-repetitions (either complete or partial, exact or semantic repetitions).

When talking about the prompting technique used to help the respondent to give the desired response, Hargie et al (1987) listed four tactics: restate, rephrase, review information previously covered, and give a clue which will help to focus attention in the right direction. They are roughly equivalent to the repair strategies used by L2 teachers, i.e. RP, RF, backtrack and giving clue, which I have discussed in this section.

I find it difficult to draw a line between what counts as RP and what counts as RF. In fact there is a continuance from exact word-for-word RP to RF which is only remotely related to the Q to which it refers (Pica & Doughty 1985). Such referential cohesion (Halliday & Hasan 1976) often manifests in the repetition of lexical items or the use of pronouns. In spite of the difficulty a crude division between repetition and rephrasing would help to illustrate how teachers ask more than one Q in a turn and how Qs in a sequence are linked to the response as well as to each other. I shall attempt to examine these repair strategies further in light of my data.

It is also worth noting that repair strategies here refer to Q strategies used to help the respondent to produce the desired answer. This does not follow that the repair strategies discussed above are not used to achieve purposes other than compensation.

5.6 Macro-strategies

Spada & Lyster (1997) discussed what they call macroscopic and microscopic views of L2 classrooms. They point out that macroscopic perspective may describe differences in the communicative orientation of language teaching and to determine whether and how this contributes to differences in L2 learning outcomes (p788). Microscopic approach, in contrast, may describe how teachers deal with a specific problem, such as teachers' reactions to errors and learners' immediate responses (p789).

In the previous sections, I have dealt with Qs occurring in the same move or exchange. The strategies involved, e.g. repetition and reformulation, are localised. In other words,

they are strategies concerned with how a Q is asked to address a problem at a given point. I shall term them micro-strategies.

In the following sections, we shall look at the relationship of Qs beyond the level of exchange. I shall call the strategies involved macro-strategies. While micro-strategies are concerned with certain Qs, macro-strategies, in contrast, are concerned with all Qs. These macro-strategies refer to aspects such as the distribution of Qs in class, sequence of questioning in instruction, and the wait-time in questioning.

5.6.1 Distribution of questions

In almost any class there are students who are more active than others in participation. In other words, some students vie to answer Qs while others avoid answering Qs. Good Q techniques include the ability to distribute Qs around the class (Kerry 1984:4; Wootton 1992). To maintain a balance, teachers should call on non-volunteers as well as volunteers (Blosser 1973), and this involves distribution of Qs. It is concerned with aspects like: 1) whether Qs are addressed to individuals, group or class, and 2) how Qs are distributed among students of mixed ability.

5.6.1.1 Target of question delivery

One of the features of classroom questioning, as distinctive from questioning in most other practices, is that many people are being asked Qs all at once by one other person. The teacher usually throws Qs to the whole class before nominating an answerer. The idea is that when a Q is raised, students are on the alert, trying to work out the answer before he/she is put on the spot to answer it. In other words, they are all recipients of the Q but only the nominated one(s) is the answerer. The ability to provide the correct or desired answer is a sign of competence. Answering Qs is the time for a student to display this ability and for the teacher to evaluate the student. Sometimes students bid for permission to answer; at other times, whoever thinks he has the answer first speaks without the teacher's nomination. What pattern to follow is designated by the teacher.

The statistics of one study (Brown & Edmondson 1989) show that teachers used Qs to the whole class about twice more often than Qs to groups (9/170) and individuals (48/170) put together (113/170) (p112). They also report that the distribution of different types of Qs among classes, individuals and groups suggests there was a slight tendency for the teacher to ask more interpretation Qs of specific individuals, but fewer Qs requiring other forms of thought. In foreign language classes, most of the Qs are recall Qs. Management Qs towards individuals are more frequent than to the whole class (p112).

The study of Q distribution not only tells us something about the teacher's turn allocation strategy (Green et al 1988:37), it may also reveal how the learners behave. The active and

passive learners (Allwright 1988: 245) or what Seliger (1977) calls high-input generators and low-input generators will volunteer to answer Qs addressed to the whole class in very different frequency.

In my data collection I shall note the target of Q delivery, i.e. to whom are the Qs addressed.

5.6.1.2 Questions to students of mixed ability

Learners are different from each other in numerous ways. As far as classroom participation is concerned, a number of factors are more important than others. Among these factors are: motivation, interest, general ability, temperament, and relative proficiency of a student in the class.

In face of Qs, some students want to answer almost every Q (they may be clever, or highly motivated); others appear to avoid responding to any Q (perhaps they are shy, afraid of making mistakes for various reasons, or unable to follow the class) (cf. Kerry 1984:4).

Relying on volunteers to answer Qs is regarded as an undesirable questioning behaviour (Wring 1989:99; Wootten 1992:11). Firstly, some learners never or seldom respond even when they know the answer and are able to provide it. These learners do not seek, but need to be given, the opportunity to practise publicly. Secondly, the comprehension of slow learners needs checking. Usually, if the slower ones understand what is taught, it follows that the quicker ones should have little problem in getting it. The third reason for nominating answerers is to prevent the 'over-active' ones from dominating the participation, which further puts off the slow ones. In a L2 classroom, weak learners need to be given the opportunity to practise the target language. Asking them Qs is a way of engaging them in using the target language.

To target the right students with the right Qs in terms of difficulty is, therefore, an indication of a teacher's questioning skill. I shall identify the individuals to whom the Qs are addressed and who, either as chosen respondents or volunteers have answered the Qs. As was pointed out in 5.5.1.1, this will help present a picture of the questioning behaviour of the teachers and the responding behaviour of the students.

5.6.2 Sequences of questioning

In 4.4, units of classroom discourse were discussed. It was pointed out there that utterances, when analysed in isolation, would present an inadequate picture of the interaction. The same is true here when we examine questioning strategies. An individual Q may have

its own function(s) at a given point, but it may play a different role when viewed together with other Qs in a sequence.

By sequence I mean a series of Q-and-answer exchanges which are thematically related to each other in a discourse. A Q sequence consists of more than one Q exchange.

In Chapter 4, I discussed the formal aspects of questioning exchanges afd some patterns, i.e. chaining, embedding, and extending. Here I shall investigate the functional and strategic relations of questioning sequences.

Brown & Edmondson (1989) asked a group of teachers of different subjects to provide examples of sequences of Qs that they used and the context in which they used them. They then classified the sequences in terms of types of Q and identified eight patterns. These patterns are:

Types	***Description***
1) extending	A string of Qs of the same type and on the same topic
2) extending and lifting	Initial Qs request examples and instances followed by a leap to a different type of Q
3) funnelling	Begins with open Q and proceeds to narrow down to simple deductions or recall or to reasons and problem-solving
4) sowing and reaping	Problem posed, open Qs asked followed by more specific Qs and restatement of initial problem
5) step-by-step up	Begins with evaluation Qs and moves systematically through problem-solving, evaluation or open-ended Qs
step-by-step down	Begins with evaluation Qs and moves systematically through problem-solving towards direct recall
6) nose-dive	Begins with evaluation or problem-solving and then moves straight to simple recall
7) random walk	No discernible pattern in terms of types of Qs or content of Qs (1989:114)

They found that the most common sequence was "extending and lifting".

Their description of the Q patterns is based on their classification for Qs. The five types of Qs are:

Type 1: recall Qs,
Type 2: Qs requesting simple deductions,
Type 3: Qs asking for e.g. giving reasons,
Type 4: Qs requesting problem-solving, and
Type 5: synthesis Qs.

These types supposedly present a hierarchy. For example, 1-1-1. or 3-3-3 would be Pattern 1, extending, etc. All the sequences may be disrupted by management Qs.

Sometimes, the sequences may not be predetermined by the teacher, but influenced by students' responses. The teacher's subsequent Qs after Q1 develop with students' responses taken into account. The Q pattern may be 3-3-3, that is, the three consecutive Qs are of the same level, but the Q-A pattern could be 3-1,3-2,3-3 or 3-2,3-3,3-1. In other words, the level of an answer does not always necessarily match the level of the Q posed.

The notions, such as lifting, presuppose that Qs are hierarchical. I have discussed this issue in Chapter 3 and pointed out then that the level of a Q depends on not only the literary meaning of the Q but also many other factors such as the existing knowledge of the respondent. Although it is difficult to justify that one type of Q is always "higher" in level than another, it is conceivable that some Qs are more difficult than others and there indeed exists an issue of relative difficulty, even within the same type of Q. Therefore these sequences would be applicable to other Q taxonomies. While Qs may be hierarchical, sequences are independent of Q levels.

In a longer stretch of interaction such as teaching a text or conducting a discussion, the teacher may employ two general approaches. She may start by drawing the attention of the students to the theme of the material, the overall structure of the story, or she may begin with simple Qs about some basic facts and specific details, and then lead on to more general Qs. These two distinctively different approaches, though not necessarily distinctively used by teachers, present two possible processes toward discourse comprehension. They are termed top-down and bottom-up approaches respectively (Cook 1988). The activities involved in these two approaches can be represented as:

Top-down: general Q(s) --> specific Qs
Bottom-up: specific Qs --> general Q(s)

The study of Q sequences no doubt is not easy and can be approached at different levels. Since Q sequences are invariably related to topic or episode of talk, they thus can be long or short, and simple or complicated. I shall first examine Qs with immediate cohesion, such as repetition or reformulation of Qs, before attempting to relate to longer stretches of discourse.

5.6.3 Wait-time

The pause between the end of a Q and the start of the response or a teacher's next utterance is called "wait-time", i.e. the teacher waits for some time for the response. It is also referred to as sustaining strategy in the study of questioning behaviour.

Rowe (1974a,1978) has identified two types of wait-time. One is the pause after a teacher's Q and before a student response. The other is the pause after a student's re-

sponse and before a teacher's feedback or next Q. He terms them Wait-time I (WT1) and Wait-time II (WT2) respectively (1974a) (cf. 1.5.2.3).

The wait-time is measured in length, usually in seconds, while its effect on learning is measured in terms of the quantity and quality of students verbal contributions. It is reported that when a teacher's wait-time is significantly prolonged from 1 second to 3-5 seconds, the contributions from students improve in both quantity and quality.

Arnold et al (1974) reported that it took primary school pupils longer to start a response to higher-level Qs. It takes more time to produce the more complex utterances, longer time to start them and longer time to complete them. Naturally if teachers are encouraged to ask more higher-level Qs, they must give students more time to produce responses of corresponding level.

Swift & Gooding (1983) had two groups of teachers of social sciences use the feedback devices (an electronic apparatus similar to a stop-watch) to consciously increase both of their WT1 and WT2. The results were compared with that of two conventional groups. They found that teachers in the experiment groups (those with the feedback devices) waited significantly longer at both WT1 and WT2 (2.62 vs 1.19 and 1.36 vs 0.54) and used a greater number of higher-level Qs, especially those at the evaluative level (cf. 3.2.1 for classification of Qs.) There were more contributions from the students, as measured by length of answers, frequency of volunteered contributions, number of words relevant to the topic, and higher percentage of student talk (Swift & Gooding 1983:729-30). In other words, 'more students talk and students talk more' (Dillon 1984:54).

Although the studies were done in L1 classrooms, it can be hypothesised that it would be the case in L2 classrooms. Adult learners of L2 may spend less time in the thinking process than L1 children but they have to spend more time on putting their thoughts into words in another language.

Most of the studies available on wait-time effect were carried out in L1 context. They range from social science classes to natural science classes, from primary school pupils to college students, and in different countries. In contrast, little has been done in L2 context (see White & Lightbown 1984) and findings inconclusive (Long et al 1984). The difference between L1 and L2 classrooms is crucial: L2 learners need more time to process Qs addressed in L2 and formulate answers in L2. Their command of L2 strongly affects both processes.

To improve the quantity and quality of language learners' production is the ultimate goal in any language teaching. If longer wait-time proves to have a positive effect on learning,

it is worthwhile to be adopted by language teachers. White & Lightbown (1984) reported that teachers' wait-time was too short. However, a few things should be taken into consideration before any generalisation is to be made.

First, the study of wait-time, like that of Q type, must include one vital element, that is, the context in which a Q is asked. The context of a Q includes the discourse leading into the Q, the previous participation of speakers, etc. (Carlsen 1991:161). It follows that thinking time for a student to answer a Q does not simply start from the end of a Q. Very often there are accompanying acts which go with the asking of a Q or Qs (Stenstrom 1984; Section 5.3). For example, the questioner may justify his Q after asking it:

(13) Radio presenter: What's your ideal night out? I ask you this because I want to know something about your taste. (LBC94)

In this example, the Q is not immediately followed by a pause but by another sentence justifying the Q being asked. This is an extended elicitation (5.3.2). Should the wait-time be counted immediately after the Q or at the end of the extended elicitation? It is obviously problematic. On the one hand, the respondent would start searching for an answer once she heard the Q. On the other hand she has to hear out the questioner's additional comment, take it into consideration, and then formulate the response. The additional utterance after the Q can be more than one sentence, making the counting of wait-time more complex.

Second, Qs of different nature set different requirements on learners. The function of management Qs, for example, is to ensure the lesson is going on smoothly and many of them, such as "Can you all see?" or "Is he coming today?", which present no difficulty in either comprehending or responding, tend to get simple and quick confirmation or acknowledgement. Should, then, wait-time be measured for all Qs or only those, e.g. topic-related ones? This is not made clear in any of the studies on teacher Qs and questioning that I have reviewed.

Third, the type of class and activity affects interaction in general. It follows that the comparison of wait-time differences could be more significant in some lessons or activities, say, discussion, than in some other lessons or activities, e.g. revision. Language learners are often encouraged to compete for answers, i.e. the quicker it is to answer the better. In other words, the shorter the pause after the Q, the better the performance is on the part of the learner. Wait-time in this situation is quite another matter. It may be therefore necessary to identify different activities and analyse the wait-time accordingly instead of averaging it across the whole lesson.

Fourth, wait-time is defined as the time between the end of a teacher's Q and the beginning of the response from the student. It is not uncommon for the teacher to ask more than one Q at a time before he stops for a reply as in the following example:

[Talking about holiday plans]

(14) T: What do you want to do? You want the sun or sit on a beach or what? What do you want to do? Because you need a plan. (PCL6:18)

Sometimes the Qs are RP or RF of each other, while at other times they are different Qs. How then should wait-time be counted? What about Qs redirected to different students or repeated after a few exchanges? The wait-time in these cases is much more complex.

Fifth, there are also individual differences among speakers. Some teachers tend to speak fast while others tend to speak slowly. It would be unwise to compare teachers on this particular aspect of questioning behaviour without observing their idiosyncratic feature of speech.

Sixth, sometimes a teacher may ask the students to think carefully before responding.

Last but not least the non-verbal elements in communication both on the part of the questioner and that of a respondent plays a part (cf. 4.5). Sometimes the questioner may appear to be unfinished with his elicitation even though the verbal utterance is finished. The respondent, on the other hand, may start the responding move with facial or body indications before giving the response verbally.

From the above examples we can see that wait-time is not just the time lapse between a Q and its response. While it is helpful to give learners more time to think of or formulate their answer, this does not have to be realised by a long pause. The teacher can repeat or reformulate the Q or give a clue. The study of wait-time has to take into account factors such as those mentioned above before its effect on the students can be considered.

5.6.4 Summary and discussion of macro-strategies

Walberg & Waxman (1985) have made the distinction between strategies and tactics. They point out that:

> "... tactics are the means by which the subject matter of instruction is manipulated and controlled from moment to moment, while strategies are the ways by which the teacher frames or controls the general direction of student behaviour." (p5152)

As the terms strategies and tactics may refer to the same interactional modification devices, I have decided not to adopt such a distinction but refer to strategies used at the two different aspects as micro-strategies and macro-strategies.

Micro-strategies are concerned with what an individual Q or sometimes an elicitation unit does whereas the macro-strategies of questioning deal with strategies and techniques which accompany the use of Qs in a sequence of Qs and beyond. I do not intend to separate the two camps of Q strategies as exclusive to each other. In fact it could be put into another perspective: Qs and questioning can be examined at different levels, e.g. at the local level concerning individual instances and at the global level concerning the connection of instances. The RF of a Q may take place within the same move, thus forming a Q unit; or it may occur after several turns when the teacher returns to the initial focal Q.

The same can be said about repair strategies. Repair strategies, like repetition and reformulation of Qs, are not exclusive for the purpose of repair. They are also used to achieve other purposes such as emphasis (see 8.3.2 for further discussion). Questioning strategies are part of communication strategies which involve the mastery of both verbal and non-verbal strategies and may be called into action for two main reasons: (a) to compensate for breakdowns in communication and (b) to enhance the effectiveness of communication (Canale 1983:10-1). The RP and RF of a Q in the case of no response or wrong response is to compensate for a problem that has occurred while the RP and RF of a Q in the same move may aim to avoid communication breakdown, hence enhancing the effectiveness of communication.

The study of a teacher's wait-time is problematic. On the one hand waiting time is a variable on which teachers do vary in many ways (Allwright 1975). The speed of a teacher's speech, the type of activity the learners are engaged in doing, the type and difficulty of a Q, whether the Q is designated to a respondent, etc. all play a part in determining the wait-time and the study of its effect. Gall & Rhody (1987) see wait-time linked to a teacher's exercise of control. They maintain that the less wait-time, the more control, and the more wait-time the less control. Carlsen (1991) argues that the use of wait-time should not be exclusively regarded as a teacher behaviour because it is so much influenced by the respondents, i.e. the students. Long et al (1984) also suggest:

> "Wait-time is 'interactive' in the sense that its duration depends on <u>both</u> participants in a teacher-student exchange, as well as on other features of that exchange, including the difficulty of the teacher's question. Wait-time will by definition be shorter, not just when a teacher waits less, but when a

student can answer a question, and especially when a student answers quickly -- and vice versa." (pp25-6)

Although this study does not focus on wait-time, it is no doubt an important indicator demarcating boundary of questioning moves, exchanges and sequences, which is one of the areas that this study is intended to investigate.

What I want to demonstrate in this section is that questioning behaviour, like Qs themselves, should be viewed in its context precisely because they are often linked to each other not only formally (Chapter 4) but also functionally and strategically.

5.7 Alternatives to questioning

While almost all the studies on teacher Qs emphasise the importance of and call for improvement of teachers' Qs, a new approach emerged in the late 1970s: alternative to Qs. It was and still is advocated by J.T. Dillon (1978, 1981a, 1981b, 1985, 1991).

Dillon argues that instead of fostering learning, questioning depresses thought (1978) and inhibits participation in discussion (1984). It is more so in discussion classes (1985). He points out that questioning very often intimidates students and puts them into receptive, thus passive, learning. He has conducted a few experiments on the effects that Qs and non-Qs have on learning (Dillon 1982c). The results show that students' responses on average are shorter after Qs than after non-Qs (e.g. statements) and they tend to get shorter after consecutive Qs. (Response after Q2 is shorter than that after Q1, and response after Q3, if any, is shorter than that after Q2, and so on.) Dillon proposes that at the juncture where a student has ostensibly finished speaking, i.e. at WT2, the teacher may, instead of asking another Q, choose to:

1) Make a deliberate statement (for example, give an opinion).
2) Make a reflective restatement (give a summary of what the student has said).
3) Describe his or her state of mind ("I'm sorry. I 'm not quite getting your point.").
4) Invite the student to elaborate ("I'd like to hear more of your views on that").
5) Encourage the student to ask a Q.
6) Encourage other students to ask a Q.
7) Maintain deliberate, appreciative silence (until the student resumes or another S enters into the discussion). (1984:54-5)

Now let us take a closer look at these alternatives.

Dillon's proposed alternatives to Qs seem to be prescribed to teachers conducting discussions. When giving his/her opinion in a discussion as the first alternative suggests, the teacher should be careful not to let his/her teacher status impose views on the students. The teacher should be regarded more as a discussion participant rather than its leader.

Alternative 2 is actually a statement functioning as confirmation elicitation. This was discussed in 3.3.1, where such a statement was categorised as declarative Q because it is a B-event utterance, i.e. stating something the addressee knows (see Labov & Fanshel 1977). Such declarative Qs are often realised by Q markers such as "so", "you mean", etc.

If the teacher is genuinely perplexed at what a student says and describes his/her state of mind as Dillon has suggested in Alternative 3, then it is a clarification request (3.4.2.3). As a probing Q technique in teaching, the teacher does not have to be perplexed to ask for clarification. The so-called genuine Qs would be referential Qs in L2 context.

Alternative 4 is an overt probing tactic, i.e. to encourage students to expand on or elaborate their previously stated point. Again Dillon seems to suggest that when using this probing Q technique, a teacher should avoid using an interrogative request.

Encouraging students to ask Qs as suggested in Alternatives 5 and 6 has a totally different function from the other alternatives, and it is not quite closely related to this study as the other alternatives are. I therefore will not expand on them.

Alternative 7 suggests the use of pausing at the WT2 position. This was discussed in 5.6.3. What is worth pointing out is that during such appreciative silence, often deliberate, the teacher would usually use her facial expression, e.g. eye contact to encourage the responding student or others to carry on. It is not and must not be accompanied by an expressionless face, which will for sure confuse the students. In fact, such deliberate silence may be part of the use of non-verbal elicitation (see 4.5).

Dillon does not totally reject using Qs, i.e. Qs in interrogative form. He recommends that the teacher ask a Q only when he/she is perplexed and needs and wants to know the answer. He calls Qs asked at this point 'perplexity Qs'. These 'perplexity Qs' are what is generally called genuine or real Qs: Qs that sincerely seek information, or referential Qs in L2 research.

Dillon concludes that when used together, these perplexity Qs and the various alternatives should foster students' cognitive, affective, and expressive processes during discussion (1984:55).

These so-called alternative tactics are prescribed 1) to L1 teachers and 2) for discussion lessons. The essence of the approach, it seems to me, is to suggest that the teacher should act more like a discussion participant, not a leader. As a result, the pattern of exchanges in a discussion would be question-response-reaction-reaction-feedback instead of straight question-response-feedback/question (Dillon 1988, 1990, & 1994).

Dillon's approach to the analysis of Qs and the alternatives is somewhat ambiguous. What he is trying to contrast is Qs in interrogative form and Qs in declarative form which he regards as statements or non-Qs. Declarative sentences are identified and counted as Qs in most studies on teacher Qs. The arbitrary division of Qs and non-Qs is not so much significant as the difference in terms of eliciting force, which does usually have its formal realisations. The contrast between Qs and non-Qs in various studies of Dillon's is, perhaps, better illustrated, not in two extremes, i.e. either Q or not Q, but in a continuum: from utterances with strong eliciting force to those with least eliciting force or from Qs requesting identification to Qs requesting acknowledgement (cf. 3.4.1; Stenstrom 1984). A Q, after all, is a functional category rather than a formal one. We may conclude Dillon's finding in another way: the weaker the eliciting force of a Q is, the better its effect is on eliciting contributions from the students.

5.8 Summary

Following the investigation in Chapter 4 of how Qs are related formally, Qs are further examined in this chapter for their functional and strategic relations.

First, it is pointed out that questioning involves more than just Q utterances. Different elements which help project a Q are identified as Q acts, which may join the Q to form an elicitation unit.

Second, Qs in different moves or turns may also be related functionally and strategically in one way or another. I have discussed a few questioning strategies identified with the pedagogic context in which they function.

I have made the distinction between micro- and macro-strategies. The former refers to questioning strategies concerned with the immediate context while the latter are those strategies associated with overall questioning behaviour. The distinction is a recognition of different ways in which questioning can be viewed. It also serves as a pointer for further inquiry.

Chapter 6 Research Design and Data Collection

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6.6 Summary

Chapter 6 Research Design and Data Collection

6.1 Introduction

Empirical research requires a corpus of data and the data can be collected in various ways. In this chapter, various research methodologies and instruments will be reviewed and the appropriate method and instrument will be identified for the present study.

6.2 Research methodology in general

The nature of research and the methodology applied interact. On the one hand, it is acknowledged that there is no "best" method because each method has its strengths and limits in relation to the purpose and nature of research. On the other hand, it is reasonable to believe that one method may be more appropriate than another for a particular piece of research. While acknowledging that each method has its strengths and limits, it is the job of the researcher to find the one that would best serve the purpose of the research being undertaken.

EFL research is part of educational research which in turn is part of research in the domain of the social sciences. It draws inspiration from other disciplines. In fact, a lot of research done in the ever-increasing field of EFL/ESL adopt and very often modify or develop methodologies used in research whose focus is not on teaching or learning a foreign language.

There are basically only a few general methodologies used across disciplines.

6.2.1 Experimental research

The first type of research is experimental research which is most popular in natural sciences, where the variables are relatively easier to control as compared with those in social sciences. Once the variables in the input end are identified, alterations (often slight ones) are made and the results at the output end are detected and compared with the results gained without alterations. This is extremely hard, if not impossible, in the case of language learning and teaching where the variables are so active and varied that it is difficult to identify, let alone control, them. This, however, does not suggest that experimental research is altogether irrelevant in the field of language learning and teaching.

Brock (1986), for example, randomly selected six ESL teachers and 24 ESL students. Three of the teachers were instructed to use more referential Qs while the other three were not. Students' responses (Rs) were analysed to see if the display and referential Qs had any effect on the students in terms of the quantity and quality in their responses (cf. 2.3.2).

Experiments can also be carried out to investigate questioning strategies. Take wait-time for example. Teachers can be instructed to extend their wait-time and its effect on the students can be measured in terms of the quantity and quality of their responses.

The validity of any experimental study depends very much on the control of variables and random sampling of subjects. This, however, does not suit my research questions (see 1.6) as I was more interested in presenting a general picture of a teacher's use of Qs rather than any discrete feature(s), and it was not practical for me to have a random selection of either the teachers or the students.

6.2.2 Case study

Another methodology is called case study, where the researcher, unlike the experimenter, typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit, e.g. a teacher, learner, educational institution, etc. The purpose of such observation is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the features of the unit (Cohen & Manion 1989:125). The results of the findings of a case study are usually illustrative rather than readily generalisable. For a case study usually qualitative data are collected with the aim of an in-depth analysis.

Since the target group I have chosen for my research is in some ways special, I have seriously considered the case study approach.

The target group has several distinct features:

1) It is a homogeneous group.
2) It is a homogeneous group of learners studying in the country of the target language (English is a foreign language to them, but a second language during their one-year stay in U.K.)

3) The range of English proficiency in this small group is wider than that in usual language classes (in the University of Westminster School of Languages).

Given these features, I could, for example, investigate the characteristics of this group of Chinese learners, such as their use of L1 in classroom, their communicative strategies in interacting with the teachers, how they make use of the opportunities provided by the wider community outside the classroom, etc.

These features provide grounds for comparative studies. I could:

1) compare this homogeneous group of learners with one or more other homogeneous (not necessarily Chinese) or heterogeneous groups of learners,
2) compare the differences between the same teachers teaching this group and other heterogeneous groups or groups with similar English proficiency.

However, as my research interest is in the teacher's elicitations in relation to Chinese learners' responses, I have focused on the teachers' use of Qs in general and to use this target group for a descriptive study rather than investigate the features of such a group of Chinese learners in particular or compare it with any other group. Besides, I believe that a combination of both qualitative and quantitative analysis is more suited to the understanding of classroom interaction. I therefore decided not to carry out case study research but to take into account the special features of the target group and acknowledge them in the analysis.

6.2.3 Survey study

Research concerning public opinion or attitude on a larger scale is carried out in what is called survey study. The common practice is to use interviews and questionnaires and involve a significantly large number of people. In ESL/EFL research, both interviews and questionnaires are used as supplementary support to the analysis, if not used solely for a piece of research on classroom questions.

Pate & Bremer (1967) asked 190 elementary school teachers to each provide reasons for asking Qs ("What are the three important purposes of teachers' questions to pupils?"). Based on the replies from the teachers, they identified 14 purposes and ranked them according to frequency (p418). The ranking may or may not match the actual occurrence of those teachers' use of Qs in the classroom, but it provides interesting information from the teachers' point of view.

Brown & Edmondson (1989) asked a sample of teachers (36 from five schools and representing all subject areas) to provide a set of five Qs they had asked in a lesson that day, and then to provide the reasons for asking them. They identified eleven reasons for teachers asking specific Qs (p101). Based on the survey, they discovered some differences in the use of different types of Q among subjects.

The number of the subjects in the present study was too small for the survey method to have any statistical significance. The background information about the students and teachers involved in the study could be relatively easily obtained through informal contact with them (see 6.5.2).

6.3 Classroom observation

The most relevant methodologies to the present study of classroom discourse and interaction are those used for classroom observation. First and foremost, classroom observation should aim to accurately and objectively capture the events of the classroom. It should not depend merely on the impression of the observer (Allwright 1988). In other words, it is basically concerned with describing what is actually going on in the classroom.

Both objectivity and accuracy in research are hard to achieve due to practical limitations, such as lack of resources and time, and the limitations of the researcher(s), such as experience and personal interest. This should not prevent us from striving for relative, if not absolute, objectivity and accuracy.

The two particularly relevant approaches are systematic observation and ethnographic observation.

6.3.1 Systematic observation

Classroom-centred research focuses on what is going on in the classroom as distinct from **inputs** to the classroom (e.g. syllabus, teaching material) and **outputs** (e.g. learner achievement score) (Allwright 1983). The three aspects, i.e. inputs, processes, and outputs, are closely related. The syllabus and teaching material as inputs influence, if not totally determine, the processes (i.e. the actual teaching, pedagogic activities, etc.); the inputs and processes have a direct bearing on learner achievement. If the achievement score is very poor, it may indicate that the inputs or processes or both do not work, or that the tests from which the achievement score derives fail to reveal the achievement, if there is any.

The 1960s and 1970s saw a shift of attention in classroom research from input to interaction (Gaies 1983) and from prescription to description, from techniques to process (Allwright 1983).

Pioneering work in "content" classroom research by Flanders (1970), Bellack et al (1966), Wright & Nuthall (1970), etc. aimed at classroom interaction in general, but not specifically for the second/foreign language situation.

Flanders saw classroom interaction in terms of a limited set of teaching acts. He developed ten categories for coding classroom activities, with one for teachers' Qs. [Asking rhetorical Qs falls within "lecturing" category.] Bellack et al saw classroom interaction more as a social "game", bound by convention, and consisting of an implicitly agreed set of "moves" by all participants, rather than a set of teaching acts (see Allwright 1988). They maintain that the basic classroom pattern consists of four pedagogic moves: structuring, soliciting, responding, and reacting. Soliciting is generally realised by Qs and can be a move taken by both the teacher and students. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) combined the studies of Bellack et al and Flanders and developed a model for classroom discourse analysis consisting of both moves and acts (cf. Chapter 4).

Although the research referred to above and the instruments developed from them were concerned with language use in the classroom, they were not specifically designed for language use in language classrooms. When used for the language classroom, modifications have to be made to take into account the features of the language classroom

where, for example, the language is the medium as well as the content, and more than one language may be used (see Allwright 1983). In low-level classes a lot of repetition takes place, which is one of the unique features of a language classroom (2.2).

Classroom activities are dynamic processes of interaction between the teacher and the learners, and among the learners. The interaction is characterised by certain features that distinguish a classroom from other settings and one classroom from another (cf. 1.4). The behaviour of the teacher and learners who are participants in the interaction is the target of observation.

Two instruments are used for interaction analysis. One is the category system, and the other, the sign system.

The category system consists of a list of (mostly verbal) behaviours, such as directing, responding, evaluating, etc. The list is prepared or adopted by the observer before the actual observation takes place. The behaviours, either those of the teachers or the learners or both, are coded according to the categories, tallied and later analysed.

The sign system differs from the category system in the coding process. Instead of coding elements of behaviour as individual items, as the category system does, it takes the class as an ongoing process during which behaviours occur. Thus, the behaviour is coded in a spectrum of time, say, every 3 or 5 seconds as a unit.

The fundamental difference between the two instruments lies in their focus. The category system sees the interaction as a **chain of events**, behaviours and utterances as **products**, whereas the sign system views the interaction as a **process** going on over time. This difference inevitably determines the way of sampling. One is called event-sampling, the other time-sampling.

Before this system-based approach is further discussed in line with the present study, some attention should be directed to ethnographic observation, which is another major approach.

6.3.2 Ethnographic observation

This approach originated from research in anthropology. It was later adopted and developed in educational research as well as other disciplines. The fundamental difference between ethnographic observation and systematic observation is that the researcher in the former approach does not set out, in theory at least, with hypotheses to test while the researcher in the latter approach has preconceived notions as to the variables to be studied and hypotheses to be tested (Long 1983b). We may say that ethnographic observation is hypotheses generating whereas systematic observation aims at hypotheses testing. This, however, does not mean that the researcher taking the ethnographic approach has little knowledge about the target of observation and has no clear idea as to what to observe prior to the observation (Watson-Gegeo 1988).

6.3.3 Discussion

Apart from reading some articles and books on research methodology, I also attended a number of training workshops and seminars at the Institute of Education London University. These workshops and seminars covered a range of research approaches. Through discussion and some hands-on practice I became more familiar with various practices and instruments used in research. That helped me a great deal carry out my empirical work.

In general, systematic observation, which uses various interaction analysis systems, code surface behaviour, and so may miss the communicative value of remarks. This is partly due to their use of low-inference categories (Long 1983b). The low-inference categories record relatively obvious behaviours such as speaking, responding, use of gesture, whereas high-inference categories aim to capture attitudes which accompany the overt behavioural acts, such as teachers' use of praise, encouragement, or criticism. The high-inference categories therefore are more subjective as they depend heavily on the observer's personal judgement and understanding of the situation.

Interaction analysis is mainly of a descriptive nature. Many instruments focus heavily on what the teacher says (i.e. input) and what he does (part of the process), but neglects how he speaks or acts (Long 1983b). It is how he speaks or acts that is perhaps more significant in terms of facilitating the learning. My research on teachers' questioning strategies is an attempt to address this issue.

While interaction analysis is more suitable to quantitative study, ethnographic observation is better suited for qualitative study. Another characteristic of ethnographic study is that it is more appropriate for the researcher who is not very familiar with the target of study, e.g. a special group of learners or a new environment. As I am more familiar with language classroom activities and with Chinese learners, an ethnographic observation would seem to me a less appropriate alternative.

Given that my study focuses on teachers' use of Qs and Qs can be classified into categories (cf. Chapter 3), I therefore think that the category system is the more appropriate instrument for the present study.

I have pointed out in Chapter 3 that, although the categories I shall use for this study are mutually exclusive in general, I accept that there are times when overlapping might occur. This is because even if the categories are mutually exclusive, an utterance or any act of behaviour can at the same time play more than one role. In this case, should one act or utterance be "capped" with more than one category? As I believe utterances can be, though not always are, multi-functional, I shall use multiple coding wherever necessary.

Coding involves decision, which is not at all easy and simple. With this concern, I turn to discussing an important issue in conducting classroom observation: the perspective of observation.

6.4 Perspectives of observation

No utterance is completely context free in terms of meaning or function (Hatch 1992:121). A Q expects an answer. In any social interaction, where there is a questioner, there is at least a respondent. In philosophical or theoretical linguistic study of Qs, a Q can be examined on its own or with imaginary responses. In a sociological perspective, a Q is part of an exchange involving a minimum of two participants (cf. 1.3.2). In a classroom, a Q, either from the teacher or from any student, has a number of recipients, though some Qs are intended for or directed to an individual respondent. As a result, there are at least two channels through which a Q can be interpreted: that of the questioner and that of the respondent. As a researcher or observer of classroom interaction, what stance should one take?

It can be assumed that most of the time, the intended message of a Q (or any other utterance) is correctly perceived by the listener, but this is not always the case. For one reason or another, a mismatch between the intended meaning and the perceived meaning occurs and calls for negotiation of the meaning. Sinclair & Coulthard (1975:29-30) cited an example from a lesson where the teacher plays a recording in which someone speaks with a "posh" accent, which evokes some laughter from the pupils. The teacher then asks: "What are you laughing at?" in an attempt to draw the attention of the pupils to their attitude to accent. The Q was intended to serve an instructional purpose. To this Q, however, a pupil responded: "Nothing.". Apparently, the pupil took the Q as an expression of reproach of his/her laughing. From the pupil's point of view, the same Q could be understood as a management Q used to assert the authority of the teacher and maintain classroom control. The pupil's reading of the teacher's Q is clear once a response is given. But the teacher's intention is not clear until we hear the teacher's feedback to the pupil's response. In other words, there are times when the intended meaning can only be confirmed or judged when the third part of the exchange is completed (cf. 1.4). Of course it is always possible that A would let B carry on with the misinterpretation without bothering to correct it. This, as I have observed and experienced, happens more frequently in conversation between NSs and NNSs where misunderstanding easily occurs due to the linguistic or social incompetence on the part of the NNSs.

Judging a Q from the perspective of either the speaker or the listener can be problematic in research or observation. It can be difficult for an "outsider" to pinpoint the intended meaning of a speaker. Only the speaker him/herself knows it. On the other hand, a Q may be perceived differently by different listeners, who in turn may or may not reveal in their response how they actually perceived the Q. A language learner may not be able to respond appropriately even when he/she correctly understands the Q.

As I will mainly investigate teachers' use of Qs I shall basically follow the teacher's intention and try to categorise teacher behaviours from the teacher's perspective. Misunderstanding by the students regarding the teacher's intended meanings will be noted.

6.5 Data collection: procedures and problems

6.5.1 Some initial problems

One problem with coding Qs is that the real nature of the Q sometimes cannot be identified until the response is given (interpretation of the Q as the learner sees it), and even until the teacher gives the feedback or reaction to the student's response (interpretation of the Q as the teacher originally intended). On-the-spot coding is thus difficult to implement. Besides, I am only interested in this study in the ways teachers ask Qs as well as the Qs they ask. Therefore, I will not adopt on-the-spot coding.

Data collection for classroom research, with or without on-the-spot coding, is usually conducted with audio or video recording, and each has its own strengths and limits.

Audio-recording is relatively easy to do, but it fails to capture a lot of the non-verbal aspects of interaction such as facial expressions, and nodding as a signal to nominate someone to answer a Q. When seeing a puzzled look or head shaking, the teacher will know that his/her Q is not going to be answered. He may rephrase the Q or use other strategies (cf. Chapter 5). A Q may be addressed to an individual, a group or the whole class. Audio-recording alone will on occasions fail to capture all this. Long (1983) cited an example of a teacher asking a Q of a student who yawned. Whether the Q, "Do you wear trousers?", was to arouse the interest of the bored student, or to make fun of him so as to "punish" him was not easy to identify, but the audio-recording alone would miss this interesting aspect of classroom interaction.

Although video-recording more or less resolves this problem by recording verbal as well as non-verbal aspects of communication, it is often felt to be an intruder by the participants of the interaction, and thus affects the performance of the participants concerned. The single-angle viewing of the video camera makes it impossible to record the whole picture of the classroom interaction. A movable camera would be too distracting.

As I decided to observe the classes of the target group for a whole term (10 weeks), I felt that it was most practical to do audio-recording.

One common practice as a remedy to the limitation of audio-recording is for the researcher to take notes while doing the "real time" recording. The researcher should focus his attention on the non-verbal aspects of the interaction, such as non-verbal signals

to nominate answerers, Qs that are addressed to the whole class, the group or an individual (although this may often be explicit through verbal means). From my experience of the pilot study, I have learned to concentrate on some of the aspects that audio-recording may fail to capture, such as the non-verbal indications of the teacher in nominating the respondents.

A researcher can also let others do the recording or even use other people's written transcription of the recording. I believe that for an analysis of classroom interaction rather than simply classroom discourse, it is essential for the researcher to do "real time" observation with the aid of audio- or video-recording. I have, however, made use of some audio or visual recordings, and transcriptions done by other people for other research, which will be indicated following each quotation.

In some studies (on teacher Qs), parts of lessons were recorded and subsequently analysed. Pica and Long (1986), for example, let the teachers record any 10 minutes of their lessons whereas Early (1985) recorded 30 or 45 minutes of lessons simply because that was the normal length of a tape. I do not think it is adequate to simply record a section of a lesson for the analysis of classroom discourse.

A lesson usually consists of episodes. There are different interaction types, planned as well as unplanned discourse within a lesson (cf. van Lier 1988). For example, at the beginning or the end of a lesson, the teacher usually asks the students something that is not related to the (planned) content of the lesson. In these episodes, the teacher mainly asks referential Qs whose purpose is socialising rather than academic (cf. 2.3.2). It is more important to record the whole lesson for the study of repetition and reformulation of Qs and the answers to the repeated Qs. I therefore think it is essential that the entire lesson should be recorded so that distortion can be minimised and a more general picture of classroom interaction can be presented.

6.5.2 The target group

6.5.2.1 The subjects (1): the students

In Chapter 1, I have identified three main considerations concerning the selection of target learners for this study: they should be learners of English, native speakers of Mandarin

Chinese, and form a homogeneous class. Ideally they should be of similar English proficiency.

Such a target group of learners were found at the University of Westminster (formerly known as the Polytechnic of Central London) School of Languages (UWSL). UWSL has a Chinese Section. Most of the BA Students of Chinese usually spend their third year of study in the People's Republic of China. As part of the exchange programme established between UWSL and the Education Commission of China, every year a group of Chinese students come to study English language and culture for a year at UWSL. The number of students range from ten to fifteen. There were ten in the group selected for this study.

Seven of the ten students began to learn English at secondary school level and three at university level. Four of them had had some experience learning a second foreign language: Japanese or Russian. All except for one had had some intensive English language training for a period ranging from two weeks to nine months before coming to the U.K.

One problem with this group is the wide range of their English proficiency. Among the ten students two are upper intermediate, one is post-beginner and the rest are intermediate and lower intermediate. The categorisation of their profiiciency was based on my observation and their pre-course test.

Among the students there are three female and seven male students and they are all in their late 20s and early 30s.

6.5.2.2 The subjects (2): the teachers:

There were three teachers, one male and two female, teaching the target group. They are all native speakers of English and all experienced ESL/EFL teachers and they all had taught similar groups of Chinese students prior to this one.

6.5.3 The pilot study

The students have four 2-hour sessions of English a week, which makes eight hours of instruction each week. Two teachers each teach one session per week while the third teacher teaches two sessions. According to the 1992-1993 academic calendar of UWSL

there are 11 weeks in the autumn term, 12 weeks in the spring term and 10 weeks in the summer term. The students arrived on 11th of October 1992 and started lessons in the third week of the autumn term.

As it was a group of mixed proficiency, it took a few sessions for each teacher to decide what textbooks would best suit the students as a group. Likewise, it took a few weeks for the students to adapt to the teaching as well as to their new environment.

I therefore decided to follow the course in its second term when the classes would then take the planned course with all participants accustomed to it.

A pilot study was conducted in the last two weeks of the autumn term with the purpose of making sure that the class was indeed suitable for the research. I told the teachers whose lessons I intended to observe, that I was interested in classroom discourse and interaction in general with special reference to Chinese learners of English. I did not specify my focused interest in teachers' use of Qs for fear that that might cause some conscious or unconscious change in their speech (or questioning behaviour). The teachers and students were informed of my forthcoming attendance and I told the teachers that I would remain a non-participant observer.

As I hardly knew the teachers and the students, I did not record the lessons in the first week of the pilot study for fear that it might cause some unease to both the teachers and, especially, the students. As I got to know them better during the first week and with their permission, I recorded the four sessions of the second week.

The initial analysis of the recordings suggested that, as far as the research was concerned, the classes were satisfactory. They were first and foremost language classes, and there was plenty of interaction between the teachers and the students which saw frequent use of Qs and elicitation in all the lessons.

As I pointed out in the previous section, there are some limitations in using audio-recording alone and in order to remedy it, I took notes during the actual observation paying special attention to the following two aspects:

1) non-verbal aspect: non-verbal elicitation and responses;

2) target of Q delivery: Qs to individuals, group or class.

I found the field notes very useful when listening to the recording again for transcription and analysis.

6.5.4 Procedure of data collection

Starting from the first week of the spring term, I recorded every session in succession for ten weeks.

There were three exceptional cases:

1) One of the teachers missed two sessions due to illness. I therefore recorded two more lessons of hers in Week 11 so as to obtain the same number of lessons from all the teachers.

2) Two of the teachers swapped their lessons once because one of them happened to have another engagement at the time of one of her usual classes.

3) A session of one of the teachers was cancelled because the students had an organised a sightseeing tour, and this session was made up as a four-hour session in the following week.

6.5.5 Selection of recording

When the students were engaged in individual, pair or group work, the teacher would walk around to talk to individuals, pairs or groups, and some of the speech in the interaction between the teacher and the individuals/pairs/groups was too weak to be recorded clearly for transcription.

It is obvious that teachers' attendance to individuals or pairs is very unevenly distributed. While acknowledging that this might be an interesting area for research, I have decided to concentrate on teachers' Qs to the class, group(s) and individuals which can be heard by the class. I shall therefore exclude teacher-individual and teacher-pair interaction.

6.6 Summary

Different methods are suited for different purposes and types of research. In the first half of this chapter I have discussed a few options of research methods in relation to my research objectives. In summary, the present study

1) is non-experimental;
2) involves direct non-participant classroom observation;
3) uses audio-recording as the main means of collecting data.
4) uses field notes as supplementary data.

In the second half of this chapter I reported my data collection. This includes the selection of subjects, the pilot study, and the collection of the main body of the data.

Chapter 7 Analysis of Data

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Chapter 7 Analysis of Data

7.1 Introduction

The field work was completed smoothly. The transcribing of the recordings, in contrast, was not so easy. Not only was it extremely time-consuming, it also opened up a number of issues which both fascinated me and troubled me. Although I had narrowed the research task to the investigation of Q types and questioning strategies (cf. 1.6), the data provided me with many areas of inquiry related to the proposed research task. It took me a very long time to settle down with a specific focus.

In this chapter, I shall analyse the data in light of the issues discussed in earlier chapters.

7.2 Identification of focus of inquiry

7.2.1 Selection of data for analysis

There are altogether 44 recorded lessons. Four of them were recorded during the second week of the pilot study which was conducted a few weeks earlier than the main field work (6.5.3). The other 40 lessons were recorded consecutively during the same term.

Due to occasional technical problems and other unforeseeable factors, some of the recordings are less clear than others, which affected the quality of the transcription. I first listened to them all and identified their quality. Then I decided to transcribe the ones with good quality. I took two things into consideration while making the selection. First, I tried to select the sessions which took place during the same week, i.e. four sessions taught by three different teachers in the same week. I thought that the same events during the time might be referred to by different teachers, hence it would be interesting to see how the students responded to Qs about the same events asked by different teachers in different lessons. For example, Qs about an organised visit that all the students participated or how the students spent their Christmas holiday. The second consideration was to select the number of sessions which represent the proportion of teaching done by different teachers. Whilst two of the teachers taught the same number of hours a week the third one taught twice the number of hours. As a result, I selected ten lessons from Teacher A and five lessons from each of Teacher B and Teacher C. The final total selected for the analysis is 20 lessons.

The 20 lessons are all transcribed and labelled as follows:

HB2a, HB2b, HB4a, HB4b, HB8a, HB8b, HB10a, HB11a, HB12a, HB12b, DT2, DT4, DT6, DT8, DT10, DH2, DH4, DH6, DH9, and DH12.

Whilst the data for analysis come from the above 20 transcriptions, the examples cited as illustrations may come from lessons other than these 20 selected ones.

7.2.2 Coding of the data

All the Qs are coded in terms of their:

Form: yes/no Qs, wh-Qs, alternative Qs, etc (cf. 3.3);

Function: display, referential, management, etc (cf. 3.4);

Target of delivery (i.e. who they are addressed to): to the class or an individual (5.6.1);

Wait-time (between Q and R): (measured with a stopwatch) (cf. 5.6.3);

The respondent: the student(s) who responded the Q (represented with a personal letter); and,

The type of response: answer, reply or no response (cf. 4.6).

7.2.3 Identification of focus of inquiry

When I was transcribing the lessons, especially when I was coding the Qs and responses, one feature that struck me was that some of the teachers' Qs were uttered in a cluster before the teacher paused for an answer. This was a recurring phenomenon with all the teachers in all the lessons. I further noticed that the Qs which appeared in these clusters tended to be thematically related to each other with most of the subsequent Q(s) being either a repetition or a rephrasing of the previous Q. It occurred to me that in terms of research value, if we take into consideration these Q clusters it would affect the way the response rate (R rate) is calculated. (The R rate is the percentage or ratio between the number of Qs and the number of Qs being responded to (4.8.1.2)). I also recalled in my literature review that this area of inquiry had been little researched. I therefore decided to look more closely into this area.

7.3 Definition of a Q unit

I have termed such question clusters referred to above **Q units**. Q units in the discourse are first and foremost a phenomenon which is formally identifiable, although this is not always straightforward. My definition of a Q unit is as follows:

> *A Q unit consists of at least two consecutive Qs without a response (R), verbal or non-verbal, or a significant pause in between.*
> *(In other words, two or more Qs uttered in one move form a Q unit.)*

This definition is a formal one. It is not based on what function a cluster of Qs plays in the discourse. The Qs in a unit may or may not have the same function (cf. 7.5) and they may or may not be thematically related (cf. 7.6).

Three points need some clarification: consecutive Qs, the non-verbal response and the significant pause.

By consecutive, I do not mean two Qs with one following the other with absolutely nothing in between. There are instances where there is, for example, a clue which is inserted between two Qs and meant to help the addressee answer the Qs (see the discussion of giving clues in 5.5.3). If such an insertion between two Qs within one move is considered too long, it will be noted.

In 4.5 I have discussed non-verbal responses. It was pointed out then that non-verbal responses are as valid as verbal responses. Non-verbal responses are especially important at times where verbal responses are not present. It should be noted, however, that it is sometimes very difficult to pinpoint the start of some of the non-verbal responses such as those manifested in facial expressions. I did my best to identify the non-verbal responses in the observation and have coded them accordingly.

The wait-time issue has already been discussed extensively in 1.5.2.3 and 5.6.3. I believe that a long pause between two Qs should be regarded as a no-response move. Based on my observation of the lessons and study of the recordings I find that a pause of 1.5 to 2 seconds is significant in most of the classroom discourse. After two seconds the teacher assumes that the students may, for example, have difficulty in answering the Q. S/he would break the silence by repeating or reformulating the previous Q, giving a clue or giving the answer. I pointed out in 5.6.3 that the speed of a teacher's speech should be taken into account when examining the effect of the wait-time. This point is relevant in deciding what counts as a "significant pause". One of the teachers in this study speaks considerably more slowly than the other teachers, therefore the pause regarded as significant in his discourse is accordingly longer than that of the other teachers. Again based on my experience in the observation I have decided that the significant pause with two of the three teachers is at the lower end of the 1.5-2 second pause while the significant pause for the third teacher who speaks more slowly is at the upper end of the interval.

7.4 The occurrence of Q units

7.4.1 Percentage of Qs in Q units

The occurrence of Qs in units is not accidental. In fact it is quite significant as shown in Table 7.1 on next page.

From the table we can see that Qs appearing in units in the selected lessons take up from 24.9% to 52.3% of all Qs, with the average being 37.7%. The variations among the teachers in this and other aspects will be presented in 8.5.

7.4.2 The size of Q units

The number of Qs in a unit varies from two to six with the majority having two Qs as shown in Table 7.2 on the next page.

Table 7.2 shows that most of the Q units consist of two Qs (74.9%). It is obvious that as the size of the unit increases, the number of such units decreases.

7.5 Types of Q units: functional

One way of looking at the functions of Q units is to see how the unit as a whole functions in the discourse. Along this line of inquiry Q units can be further divided into categories according to the function of the Qs involved. In 3.5 I have discussed various types of Qs. Following the Q taxonomy that I have adopted in 3.5 we get corresponding types of Q units: display Q units, referential Q units, echoic Q units, management Q units. There are, of course, units where the Qs involved function differently. These units are termed as mixed units.

Table 7.3 is a summary of the functions of the Q units in the data. The table shows that display Q units take up 39.1% of the total Q units. This is in line with the overall percentage of display Qs in the data. The table also shows that most (83.4%) of the Qs in Q units perform the same function.

There are two features concerning mixed units. First, most mixed units consist of more than two Qs. In other words, the more Qs a unit contains, the more likely it is that the Qs in a unit have different functions. Second, some mixed Qs have a predominant function. In other words, it is often the case that two of the three or three of the four Qs in the same unit have

Table 7.1: % of Qs in Q units

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total	
Total no. of Qs	185	186	131	290	104	225	119	127	311	297	236	245	155	329	161	135	213	151	152	151	3903	
No. of Qs in units	58	59	47	147	42	56	51	43	110	78	113	111	47	172	59	57	67	62	44	47	1470	
%	31.4	31.7	35.9	50.7	40.4	24.9	42.9	33.9	35.4	26.3	47.9	45.3	30.3	52.3	36.6	42.2	31.5	41.1	29.0	31.1	37.7	

Table 7.2: Size of Q units

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total	%
No. of Q units	25	27	21	63	18	31	22	23	45	37	42	44	20	62	25	21	27	25	20	20	618	100
No. of 2-Q units	18	24	17	47	14	29	17	19	34	33	25	32	15	39	18	14	19	15	18	16	463	74.9
No. of 3-Q units	6	3	3	11	3	1	3	4	6	4	12	7	3	15	5	4	4	8	1	3	106	17.2
No. of 4-Q units	1	0	1	3	0	1	2	0	3	0	4	3	2	5	2	2	3	1	0	1	34	5.5
No. of 5-Q+	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	3	0	1	1	1	1	0	15	2.4

Table 7.3: Functions of Q units

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	T2	T4	H2	H4	H12	Total	%
Display	9	13	6	25	2	11	11	20	14	8	15	7	141	39.1
Referential	4	4	6	21	9	13	6	7	18	5	2	7	102	28.3
Echoic	1	2	1	1	0	0	2	2	3	2	2	2	18	5.0
Management	2	4	3	3	3	1	0	5	2	2	0	2	27	7.5
Mixed	8	1	4	13	4	6	3	8*	6	2	4	1	60	16.6
Other types	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	4	1	13	3.6
Total	25	27	21	63	18	31	22	42	44	21	27	20	361	100.1

the same function, making the whole unit perform the function of what most of the Qs in the unit perform.

7.6 Relations of questions within Q units

7.6.1 The thematic dimension

Having looked at Q units as independent entities let us now turn to investigating whether and how the Qs in a unit are related to each other. A crude, but nevertheless useful, distinction is between Qs which are thematically related and Qs which are not thematically related.

7.6.1.1 Thematically related questions in Q units

Thematically related Qs refers to Qs that address the same local or immediate topic or theme. This involves Qs which range from a word-for-word repetition (RP) to a reformulation (RF) of the previous Q(s) (cf. 5.5.1 and 5.5.2).

(1) [Talking about Chinese horoscope]

T: What about the mouse (Q1)? What about the mouse (Q2)? [DT10/19kl]

(2) T: So what about the play (Q1)? I haven't seen it. ... What was your impression (Q2)? [DH12/1h/2a]

In the first example, Q2 is a word-for-word repetition of Q1. In example (2), Q2 is a reformulation of Q1. The reasons why some Qs get repeated or reformulated are discussed in 8.3.2.

Thematically related Qs are not always a RP or a RF of the previous Q. Some subsequent Qs are so much narrower or broader than the previous Q in the same unit that they are not considered as RFs any more. Look at the next example:

(3) T: Now, 72 and 75 we did, didn't we (Q1)? Do you remember in line 15 (Q2)? It is the advertisement?

S: yes. [DH12/8fg]

In this example, Q2 is neither a RP nor a RF of Q1 but functions similarly as Q1 as a reminder of what was done in the previous lesson, hence the two Qs are thematically related.

Table 7.4: Q units with thematically related Qs

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total
Total units	25	27	21	63	18	31	22	23	45	37	42	44	20	62	25	21	27	25	20	20	618
Related units	24	25	21	61	17	30	19	22	45	33	36	43	18	61	25	16	26	24	19	20	585
%	96.0	92.6	100	96.8	94.4	96.8	86.4	95.7	100	89.2	85.7	97.7	90.0	98.4	100	76.2	96.3	96.0	95.0	100	94.7

Table 7.5: Q units with repetitions and reformulations of Qs

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total
Total units	25	27	21	63	18	31	22	23	45	37	42	44	20	62	25	21	27	25	20	20	618
Units with RP/RF	10	17	12	30	10	13	13	10	33	19	22	29	11	37	10	10	13	8	9	8	324
%	40.0	63.0	57.1	47.6	55.6	41.9	59.1	43.5	73.3	51.4	52.4	65.9	55.0	59.7.	40.0	47.6	48.1	32.0	45.0	40.0	52.4

Table 7.6: Q units with thematically unrelated Qs

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total
Total units	25	27	21	63	18	31	22	23	45	37	42	44	20	62	25	21	27	25	20	20	617
Q1 + Qx	1	1	0	1	1	1	3	1	0	4	5	1	0	1	0	5	0	0	1	0	26
%	4.0	3.7	0	1.6	5.6	3.2	13.6	4.3	0	10.8	11.9	2.3	0	1.6	0	23.8	0	0	5.0	0	4.2

It is found in the data that most of the Q units (94.7%) contain Qs that are thematically related as shown in Table 7.4.

It is also found that amongst the Q units containing thematically related Qs most of them involve RPs and/or RFs in them. Table 7.5 shows that 331 out of 618 Q units (i.e. 53.6% of total Q units) involve either RP and/or RF. There are units where more than one RP and/or RF are involved. A more in-depth analysis of RPs and RFs will be dealt with in 8.3.

7.6.1.2 Thematically unrelated questions in Q units

Tables 4 and 5 have already shown that most of Q units containing Qs which are thematically related. There are, however, consecutive Qs in a unit which are not thematically related to each other as shown in (4):

(4) T: How can we describe the two types of skirt (Q1)? [to a student] Can you see (Q2)? [HB2A/20bc]

In the example above, Q1 and Q2 talk about quite different things. Q1 asks the students if they know how to describe or the terms for the two types of skirt mentioned in the text. Q2, on the other hand, is a management Q (cf. 3.2.2.4) asking if the students could find the relevant page in the book.

As Table 7.6 shows, Q units with thematically unrelated Qs are rare. They only take up 4.2% of all Q units.

7.6.2 The strategic dimension

Most of the consecutive Qs are in one way or another related to the previous Q or Qs, but this relation is manifested in quite different ways. Recall that in 5.5.2 I reviewed the sequences of questioning identified by Brown & Edmondson (1989). The sequences mentioned there refer to exchanges in a longer stretch of discourse, therefore are not directly applicable to Qs in a Q unit. However, the strategic relations between Qs can be similar. I have identified six kinds of relationship between Qs in Q units in my data analysis. They are levelling, narrowing, uplifting, extending, backtracking, and shifting. Let me illustrate each of these strategic relations.

Levelling: Q2 is the same as or very similar to Q1 in form, content and function.

(5) T: Do you know almanac? Do you know the word? [DH12/1bc]

Narrowing: Q2 is more specific than Q1 in terms of the answer expected.

(6) T: What about the theatre? Did you like it? [DH12/2ij]

Uplifting: Q2 requests justification, reasoning, etc.

(7) T: Do you know that word 'fickle' (Q1)? Can anyone explain that word or maybe give the opposite (Q2)? [DT2/8fg]

Extending: Q2 (Q3 in the following example) is a follow-up Q of Q1.

(8) T: Did you not write it down (Q1)? embroidery, yes (Q2)? Do you all know the word (Q3)? [HB2b/12ab]

Sometimes when the students fail to provide an answer, the teacher may ask a Q to find out if the grounding for being able to answer the Q is there. This type of questioning strategy is thus termed as <backtrack> (5.4.4). This sometimes occurs after the teacher has uttered a Q and before an answer has been given.

(9) T: [seeing a student looking up words in a dictionary]
Are these words in the dictionary (Q1)? Is it an English-Chinese dictionary (Q2)? [DH12/6de]

Shifting: Q2 starts a different aspect of the same topic.

(10) T: Is it [alcoholism] not much of a problem with the young people (Q1)?
... What is the main drink in China (Q2)? [DT4/3bc]

Table 7.7, a summary of such instances in the data, shows that more than half (51.7%) of the subsequent Qs in Q units are of levelling type. Nearly one in four subsequent Qs (23.4%) are of the narrowing type.

All instances of such strategic relationship between Qs in Q units in the data are presented in the appendix on page 224.

Table 7.7 Strategic relationship between Qs in Q units

Relations	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	DT2	DT4	DT6	DT8	DT10	DH2	DH4	DH6	DH9	DH12	Total	%
Levelling	21	20	14	47	12	15	15	17	30	21	36	24	19	53	12	19	16	15	11	8	425	51.7
Narrowing	2	5	7	19	3	3	10	3	17	10	15	24	4	23	11	7	8	8	4	9	192	23.4
Uplifting	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	11	0.13
Extending	7	2	2	13	7	7	0	6	11	3	6	9	2	7	9	1	3	11	4	2	122	14.8
Backtracking	2	2	1	3	1	5	3	0	5	3	4	3	1	4	1	4	2	3	2	6	55	6.7
Shifting	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	3	2	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	17	0.21
Total instances	32	30	25	84	24	31	28	27	63	40	64	65	28	91	34	31	30	48	22	25	822	97%

7.7 Q units and responses

7.7.1 Q units and response rate

Since the primary purpose of asking a Q is to get an answer, it is natural that we expect an answer to our Qs, although there are times when this is not the case, e.g. when we ask a rhetorical Q. The teacher is mainly the questioner in the classroom. In a language classroom the teacher hopes that by asking Qs she may get the students to practise and learn the target language. Students' responses to Qs are instances of their target language production. Therefore Qs and responses is an important area to investigate how the teacher facilitates learning in the classroom. Various issues regarding the relation between Qs and responses were discussed in Chapter 4. In this chapter we look at how the notion of Q unit affects the analysis of Qs and responses.

First we may want to find out how many of teachers' Qs are answered. This is what is usually called the response rate (R rate). The R rate refers to the percentage (or ratio) between the number of Qs and the number of Qs that get answered (4.8.1.2).

If the R rate is thus defined, it is then easy to calculate the R rate of any discourse where there are Qs and responses. The R rate of the lessons in this study is shown in Table 7.8.

If the conclusion is that on average 66.7% of the Qs were answered by the students, as it is shown in Table 7.8, it is evident that as many as 33.3% of the Qs were not answered. The impression one gets is that the learners did not answer a third of the Qs asked by the teachers. This can be a very negative impression about the teacher-learner interaction in a class. (This was the impression that I had when I was reading some research findings with similarly low R rate (cf. 8.2.3)). As far as the lessons that I observed are concerned, the reality was certainly not as gloomy as portrayed by Table 7.8. If we look closer at the data, we find that many Qs are simply "unanswerable" because there was no time for the learner(s) to answer or they were not meant to be answered immediately after they were uttered. When Qs are uttered together with virtually no pause in between they form what I term Q units. A Q unit of this kind should be treated as one entity. As a result the R rate should be redefined accordingly. With this we turn to the next section.

7.7.2 Q units and responses

In order to present a fairer picture of what is going on in a language classroom in terms of teachers' Qs and the subsequent responses, i.e. to take into account Q units rather than just number of Qs, the R rate is redefined as :

> *The percentage or ratio between the number of Qs/Q units and the number of Qs/Q units that get answered.* (The Qs/Q units refers to individual Qs which are not in units and the number of Q units.) (cf. R rate Formula 3 in Section 4.8.1.2.).

With this new definition the R rate of the lessons in the data has changed considerably (see Table 7.9).

If we compare Table 7.8 and Table 7.9, the difference is evident: the R rate is much higher when Q units are taken into account (66.7% vs 85.1%) and the R rate of 85.1% is much closer to the real situation. I say 'closer to the real situation' because some of the single Qs are also 'unanswerable' either because there is no pause or the pause after them is too short, or the students were instructed not to answer them. (In one instance, the teacher gave the class a vocabulary test where she asked the class to write down the answers to the Qs. The answers then were non-verbal and the Qs are regarded answered.) This seems to me to be an important factor but no study that I have reviewed has pointed out this.

The next question that we ask is that since there is more than one Q in a Q unit, which Q or Qs in a Q unit get answered? In other words, which Q or Qs in a Q unit does the addressee tend to answer?

Stenstrom (1994) has pointed out that in the case of two or more Qs uttered together it is usually the last Q that gets answered (if it gets answered at all).

It should be pointed out that in cases where RP is present and in many cases where RF is present, the answer to the last Q of the unit is the answer to the whole unit, i.e. the answer to all the Qs in the unit. That is to say, one answer satisfies all the Qs. In these cases, to say that only the last Q gets answered does not mean much. It is when two or more Qs in a unit require different answers that it is meaningful to examine which Q or Qs is/are satisfied by the answer. Those Q units which did not get answered should be and are excluded in the analysis.

Table 7.8: R rate: Qs and Rs

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total
Total no. of Qs	185	186	131	290	104	225	119	127	311	297	236	245	155	329	161	135	213	151	152	151	3903
Qs responded by Ss	117	138	89	176	62	170	77	82	203	232	120	165	122	215	108	76	150	91	104	108	2605
Qs answered by Ts	3	2	0	4	0	1	2	2	1	4	8	3	4	3	4	2	4	10	2	4	63
R rate in %	63.2	74.2	67.9	60.7	59.6	75.6	64.7	64.6	65.3	78.1	50.8	67.3	78.2	67.4	67.1	56.3	73.2	60.3	68.4	71.5	66.7

Table 7.9: R rate: Qs/Q units and Rs

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total
No. of Qs/Q units	152	155	105	210	80	200	90	107	246	256	165	178	128	232	118	99	173	114	128	124	3060
Answered by Ss	117	138	89	176	62	170	77	82	203	232	120	165	122	215	108	76	150	91	104	108	2605
R rate %	77.0	89.0	84.8	83.8	77.5	85.0	85.6	76.6	82.5	90.6	72.7	92.7	95.3	92.7	91.5	76.8	86.7	79.8	81.3	87.1	85.1

Table 7.10: Rs to Qs in units

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total	%
Q units	2	2	4	7	3	2	9	5	4	5	5	9	3	14	10	2	3	7	5	2	103	
R to latter Q(s)	2	2	4	7	3	2	8	5	4	5	5	9	2	14	9	1	2	3	5	2	94	91.3

Table 7.10 shows the number of units requiring different answers and having only the last Q answered. It shows that as high as 91.3% of the Q units where Qs in them requiring different answers see the last Q get answered, and this confirms Stenstrom's claim that it is the last Q of a Q cluster that tends to be answered.

7.8 Sequences: questions and Q units in the discourse

7.8.1 Q sequence

In this section I shall examine Qs and Q units in a wider context: that of a sequence. A sequence, as a category in discourse analysis, refers to a series of exchanges which are closely related to a local theme (cf. 5.6.2). As one of the ranks in discourse analysis it is above the rank of move and below that of transaction.

A sequence is usually clearly identifiable, but sometimes it can be difficult. This is because the connection between exchanges is not always strong enough to suggest clear boundaries. Sometimes a speaker returns to a topic or theme after some kind of diversion which can be long or short. It is also possible that a small sequence is embedded in a larger one. In spite of all this, sequences involving Q exchanges provide an interesting area for inquiry.

My definition of a Q sequence is as follows:

> *A Q sequence contains a series of Qs or Q units which are separated by responses but related to a local theme or topic.*
>
> *A minimum Q sequence consists of two thematically-related Qs or Q units with a response, verbal or non-verbal, or a significant pause in between.*

A minimum Q sequence can be represented as: **Q1-R-Q2** where Q1 and Q2 can be Q units.

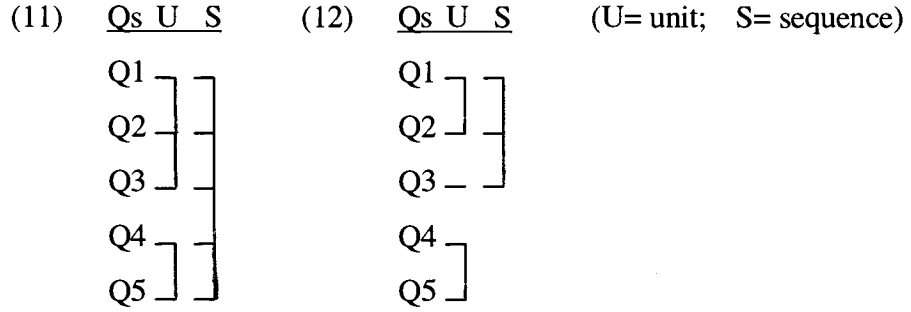
A minimum Q sequence contains two Qs with a response in between. Either Q or both Qs in a sequence can be a Q unit. In the response slot, there does not have to be an overt answer or reply. When no verbal response is present there must be a sufficiently long pause for the questioner to decide whether or not to repeat or reformulate the Q. That long pause is regarded as a move with a non-verbal response (see also 7.3).

In the next section we shall look at Q sequences a little further.

7.8.2 The relation between Q units and Q sequences

Q unit and Q sequence are not at the same level. While a Q unit is at the level of move a Q sequence occurs above the level of exchange. There are a minimum of three moves in a sequence. Both a minimum Q unit and a minimum Q sequence may contain only two Qs. The essential difference between the two is that there is a response or a significant pause between the two Qs in a Q sequence but not in a Q unit.

Although a Q unit can be on its own it can also be part of a Q sequence . The relation between Q units and Q sequences can be illustrated as follows:



In (11), Qs 1 to 3 are in one unit while Qs 4 and 5 are in another unit. Unit 1 is followed by a response or a long pause. But Unit 1 and Unit 2 are linked thematically to each other, hence representing a sequence.

In (12), Q1 and Q2 are in one unit and Qs 4 and 5 in another. The two Q units are not related. Q3, however, is a follow-up Q of Qs 1 and 2, hence Qs 1 to 3 form a sequence.

7.8.3 Types of Q sequencing

Question sequencing has also been briefly discussed in 4.8. It was pointed out then that the types of sequencing are very similar to those of relations of Qs in Q units.

Here is a summary of the main types of Q sequencing that I have identified in my data:

Levelling:	repeating the same or a similar Q (cf. RP/RF)
Extending:	asking a follow-up Q (addressing the response to Q1)
Uplifting:	asking a probing Q or a more general Q
Narrowing:	asking a Q requesting more specific information for an answer

Backtracking: finding out if the respondent has sufficient knowledge, etc. to answer the Q.

These types of sequencing are further illustrated below.

1) Levelling: the subsequent Q is at the same level as the previous one(s). It is mostly realised by RPs.

(13) T: What was the second thing? (Q1)
Ss: *jing tai lan.* Cloisonné.
T: [to student P] P, what was it? (Q2)
P: Cloisonné. HB2b/20ab]

Q2 in the above example is a RP of Q1. The teacher repeated the previous Q because she wanted Student P to practise the word.

2) Extending: the subsequent Q is a follow-up Q of the previous one. Once the correct answer is given, a follow-up Q would move the conversation forward.

(14) T: How do you pronounce it in Chinese? (Q1)
Ss: *jing tai lan.*
T: So you don't use this word [cloisonné] when you are at home. (Q2)
H: We just say *jing tai lan.* [HB2b/14ab]

3) Uplifting: the subsequent Q asks for reasoning, connection, justification, etc. in relation to the previous Q. This type of Q is often termed as a probing Q.

(15) T: [to student L] Did you know it? (Q1)
L: [nods]
T: Can you explain? (Q2) [DH2/13cd]

4) Narrowing: when the respondent is unable to answer the Q because it is difficult for him either in terms of the language involved or the concept or both, the teacher will often "help him out" by making the Q easier. This is often achieved by means of simplification and modification (see 8.4).

(16) T: How did our two first victims feel? (Q1)
G: What?
T: Did you find that difficult? (Q2)
M: Not difficult [HB2b/4j/5a]

In the above example, Q2 is more specific than Q1.

Both uplifting and narrowing often involve reformulation of Qs which has already been dealt with in 5.5.2 as a questioning strategy.

5) Backtracking: the subsequent Q tries to establish if the respondent is able to answer the previous Q.

(17) T: We had it a couple of weeks ago. Can you remember how to pronounce it? (Q1)
Ss: [2.5'' pause]
T: Nobody remembered? (Q2) [HB10a/3i/4a]

Q sequencing was discussed in 5.6.2 as part of questioning strategies. In fact the relation between Qs in a Q sequence is similar to that of a Q unit. Q sequences are usually more complex than Q units because of the involvement of responses. If the strategic relation between Qs in a Q unit is covert, it is overt in the case of Q sequences where subsequent Qs must address the response or the absence of a response (Stenstrom 1984).

7.9 Summary

A Q unit is defined as a cluster of Qs uttered in one move without a response, verbal or non-verbal, or a significant pause between any two consecutive Qs involved. If there is a significant pause, e.g. more than 1.5-2 seconds, it is regarded as an indication of no response in the response move. The subsequent Q is then taken as a remedy or repair Q, hence counted as a Q in a different move making the exchange a Q sequence. This can be represented as follows:

Q unit	Q Move	Q1 + Q2 ...
	Q Move 1	Q1 (or Q unit 1)
Q sequence	R Move	R or no R (i.e. pause of 1.5-2 seconds)
	Q Move 2	Q2 (or Q unit 2)

When Q units are taken into account, it changes the R rate, i.e. the percentage between Qs that get responded and the total number of Qs. None of the studies I have reviewed on classroom Qs has clearly indicated this in their analysis.

In this chapter I have also examined the relation between Qs within a unit. The relation is approached from thematic and strategic dimensions.

It is found in my data that around 37.7% of the Qs appear in Q units. The initial analysis of the data shows little teacher and class variation in terms of the ratio between the number of Qs and the Qs in Q units. This suggests that Qs uttered in units may be a common practice in a language class.

In the next chapter I shall investigate further some of the salient points raised in this chapter such as repetition and reformulation of Qs, simplification of Qs, etc.

Chapter 8 Interpretation of Data

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8.6 Summary

Chapter 8 Interpretation of Data

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall investigate further some of the findings that the data of this study have revealed.

8.2 The notion of Q unit and its significance

The analysis of data in Chapter 7 has focused on the features of what I term Q units. The notion of Q units is not entirely novel because clusters of Qs in speech as a phenomenon has already been noted in some studies (Mishler 1975a; Wintergerst 1994; Green et al 1988) although such studies are few and none has dealt with it in detail. In this section I shall discuss the value of such a notion and compare my definition and understanding with that of some other studies.

8.2.1 The pause

I reviewed and discussed the studies on wait-time in Section 5.6.3 and gave my explanation on what I meant by a significant pause in the definition of a Q unit in Section 7.3. Here I shall look at the issue a little further.

8.2.1.1 Does the pause matter?

Brown and Yule (1983) recognise the effect of pause in spoken discourse and suggest that extended and long pauses of 3.2 seconds might be proposed as unit boundaries (p163). Whether it should be 3.2 seconds or any other length of time is another issue (see 8.2.1.2). What is significant is that pausing is part of speech, hence following speech conventions and conveying messages just as words and other non-linguistic features do.

Wintergerst (1994) uses the category of "multiple solicits" in her study of ELT classroom interaction. This category is close to my category of Q unit. But she defines "multiple solicits" as "all the solicits in one speaking turn" (p27), i.e. not taking pauses into account.

A similar notion to my Q unit is referred to in Green et al (1988) as scaffolding, i.e. two or more Qs asked without time for student to respond. They did not, however, mention how they treated pauses, especially short pauses, between Qs.

Does the pause between Qs in the same speaking turn matter? I believe it does. Let us look at the example below:

(1) T. ... now, if someone said to you "do you want to visit Little Venice?" what would that be (Q1)? what's Little Venice [0.5] in London (Q2)? [1.5] well, what is Venice (Q3)? where is Venice (Q4)?
SS: Italy. [HB10A/ijk(]

After Q2 the teacher waited for 1.5 seconds without getting an answer. She assumed that the students were not able to answer the Qs (Q1 and Q2) and asked a "backtrack" Q (5.5.4; 7.8.3) to see if the students had the background knowledge to answer the previous Qs. It would be unusual (though not improbable) for the teacher or anyone to ask Q2 and Q3 successively without a pause in between. This is because Q3 is not a logical continuum of Q2 in this case. Besides the discourse marker "well " clearly indicates a shift of focus. As a result, in my analysis the above excerpt contains two Q units: Q1 and Q2 forming one Q unit, and Q3 and Q4 the other (see 7.8.2 for comparison between Q units and Q sequences).

8.2.1.2 How long should the pause be?

The complexity of the wait-time issue was discussed in Section 5.6.3. One of the difficulties of grouping Qs into units is the variation of individual speakers in terms of the speed of their speech. I think it is reasonable to take this into consideration and vary what counts as the significant pause accordingly. I therefore do not think that the extended and long pauses of 3.2 seconds that Brown & Yule (1983:163) proposed as unit boundaries could be readily adopted as the length to mark Q unit boundaries in this study.

Long et al (1984) divided wait-time into long and short pauses with three seconds as the demarking length. White and Lightbown (1984) reported that the average wait-time for the combined samples (seven ESL lessons) was 2.1 seconds (based on total wait-time divided by total number of Qs) (p229). In their study seven lessons from three teachers were analysed. The wait-times of the three teachers were 1.35, 1.5 and 3.23 seconds respectively (p230: Table 2). One teacher's wait-times were more than twice as long as those of the other teachers. We do not know whether this teacher exercised on purpose long wait-times after Qs or s/he simply spoke more slowly than others resulting in longer wait-times than others. If it was the latter case clearly the wait-time used for marking his or her Q units should vary accordingly.

Unlike other grammatical or discourse categories where concrete words and structures can be isolated and counted, it is difficult and perhaps not practical to decide on a particular

length of time, e.g. 1.6 seconds, as the dividing time for unit boundaries. Based on my observation of the lessons recorded for this study and subsequently transcribing them, I propose a range of 1.5-2.0 seconds as a significant pause which I believe is reasonable for handling the data of this study. The pause may be short if there is an immediate non-verbal signal amongst the students suggesting that they did not understand the Q or did not know the answer, or it may be long if the teacher clearly shows through non-verbal means that s/he has not yet finished the elicitation.

8.2.1.3 Ignoring the pauses?

If pauses between Qs are not taken into account and a Q unit is thus defined as all Qs in a speaking turn (Wintergerst 1994), there will be more Q units and some Q units will have to be expanded. There will be more units because some Q clusters uttered in one turn with a long pause in between would be treated as Q units. Some Q units will be expanded for the same reason. A good example is that of (1) cited in 8.2.1.1. Instead of being counted as two two-Q units, the four Qs in (1) would be regarded as forming one four-Q unit.

The following table shows what happens if pauses between Qs are ignored in the data of this study:

Table 8.1: Additional Q units and Qs

Additional units	49
Expanded units	40
Additional Qs	135

If pauses between Qs are not considered, there would be 49 more Q units in the data, and 40 Q units would be expanded. Sometimes two Q units might be joined up to form one bigger Q unit.

With the total number of Q units being 618 (cf. Table 7.2 in 7.4.2), this addition of 92 units will increase the total by 7.93%. With the total number of Qs in units being 1470 this addition of 135 Qs will increase the proportion of Qs in Q units against the total number of Qs by 3.42% to 41.12% (instead of 37.7% as shown in Table 7.1).

The above calculation merely shows the differences it might make, although not necessarily significant, if the pause is not taken into account. I hope this will serve as a reminder when

reading the findings of other studies where the pause between Qs in Q clusters is ignored. As for how Q units affect response rate it deserves further investigation.

8.2.2 Response rate

In 7.7, I discussed the notion of response rate and pointed out that when Q units are taken into account it would significantly change the response rate (cf. Table 7.8 in 7.7.1 & Table 7.9 in 7.7.2).

White and Lightbown (1984) used the notion "no-response rate", i.e. the number of Qs which did not receive responses in all the Qs. They reported that "in the seven transcripts analysed, teachers asked 1,387 questions, ... 41% of these questions received no response" (p229). The no-response rate is thus 41%. Alternatively the response rate is 59%. Their figure is not very far from mine (66.7%), presented in Table 7.8 in 7.7.2, where the Q units were not considered in the calculation.

I would like to cite one example from White & Lightbown (1984) for illustration.

(2)

Teacher:	He went to work by taxi, o.k. Next picture, picture number 5. What does picture number 5 represent? Paul? (2.3)
Paul:	Office...
Teacher:	Office ... o.k., his work. Uh, uh, what do you have on the wall? (1.2) What do you have on the wall? (1.1) You know what a wall is? (0.6)
Josee:	Yes.
Teacher:	Yes? (0.2) No? (0.3) Look here. (0.2)
Class:	Yes.
Teacher:	Look here. (0.2) Josee, do you have a wall here in this class? (0.6)
Josee:	Yes.
Teacher:	Where? (2.5)
Josee:	Uh...
Teacher:	that? (0.9) (points to ceilings)
Josee:	Not that, uh, this. (Points to walls)
Teacher:	All that, all that. That's one wall, right? (0.7) How many walls do we have in this class? (1.6)
Josee:	Four.
Teacher	Four walls, o.k. The walls. The walls, o.k. and what's that here? (1.1) (Pounds on the floor with pointer)
Class:	Floor.
Teacher:	The floor ... And what's that there? (0.5)
Class:	Ceiling.
Teacher:	How do you spell ceiling? Yes, Lucie? (0.7)
Lucie:	C-E-I-L-I-N-G.
Teacher:	That's good. C-E-I-L-I-N-G. (writes ceiling on board) Ceiling. o.k., the ceiling, the floor, the four walls ... Now, what do we have now, uh- in the picture? (0.4) You have a wall. It's a dark wall ... what do you have on the wall? (1.9) What do you have on the wall? (1.6)

What do you have on the wall? (2.5) What do you have on the wall? (2.9) (Draws clock.) What do you have on the wall? (0.4) what do you have on the wall? (0.5) What's here? (0.4) (points to drawing of clock) What do you have on the wall? Chrisitiane. (0.4)

Christiane: A clock.

(White & Lightbown 1984:231)

In the above excerpt, which was the transcript of part of an English language lesson, there are 23 questions with the wait-time ranging from 0.2 to 2.9 seconds with the average being 1.59 seconds. There are 11 responses to these 23 Qs. The response rate is 47%. A closer look at the data reveals that 13 of the 23 Qs form five Q units with the wait-time being less than 1.5 seconds between Qs (or 15 Qs form six Q units with the wait-time being less than 2.0 seconds between Qs).

When the Q units are taken into account, i.e. 11 responses to 15 Qs/Q units, the response rate is changed from 47% to 70.3%, an increase of 23.3%. It can be assumed that if Q units are counted as a whole rather than as single Qs on their own it may significantly change the no-response rate (or the response rate) in White and Lightbown's study.

Another example of response rate was cited by Mishler (1975a) where he reported that 85.4% of all Qs were responded to (pp37-8). Mishler (1975a) did not indicate whether the pauses were considered. The overall R rate of 85.4% is very close to mine of 85.1% where pauses and Q units have been considered (see Table 7.9 in 7.7.2).

8.2.3 Is the notion of Q unit applicable?

In this section I shall investigate whether the notion of Q units is applicable to lessons or forms of discourse other than the ones collected from the fieldwork for this research.

The occurrence of Qs in units is not accidental. Table 7.1 in 7.4.1 shows that between 24.9% and 52.3% of the Qs asked by the teachers in the study are in Q units with the average being 37.7%. The fact that more than one Q is uttered in one move is neither unique in my data nor in classroom discourse in general. Q units as defined in this study also appear in other forms of spoken discourse. In TV and radio interviews or conversation, for example, the occurrence of Q units is not uncommon though the proportion may vary. For comparative purposes I tallied the occurrence of Q units in other EFL lessons (Table 8.2).

Table 8.2: Q units in other language classes

Lessons	PCL/C	PCL/D	PCL/6	PCL/8	Total	%
Total no. of Qs	81	52	97	188	418	
No. of Qs in Q units	44	24	66	36	170	
% of Qs in Q units	54.3	46.2	68.0	19.2	40.67	

The lessons in Table 8.2 were recorded and observed by myself. The learners were a group of Chinese in another year's exchange programme with similar background to those in the target group of this study. They were taught by two native ESL/EFL teachers who did not teach the target group of this study.

Compared with the results of my findings regarding the percentage of Qs in Q units, the average 40.67% in Table 8.2 is close to the 37.7% in Table 7.1 in 7.4.1, although the variation between lessons is greater in Table 8.2 (19.2% vs. 68%) than it is (24.9% vs. 52.3%) in Table 7.1. Table 8.2 shows that Q units are also found in classes other than the ones observed for this study.

8.3 Repetitions (RPs) and reformulations (RFs) of questions

I have chosen RPs and RFs of Qs as an area for further investigation for three main reasons. First, it is one of the prominent features that the data of this study have shown. Second, they are closely related to Q units, the focus of this study. Third, this area has great research potential which I shall elaborate on in Chapter 9.

8.3.1 Repetitions and reformulations in Q units

Repetition is obvious in teacher talk to L2 learners (see study by Wesche & Ready 1985; Gass & Varonis 1985b). This is also reflected in teachers' use of Qs in the data of this study. In 5.5 it was pointed out that using RPs and RFs is one of the questioning strategies that the teacher adopts in response to students' responses. There is little study into this particular questioning strategy in ESL/EFL context, and to my knowledge none deals with RPs and RFs of Qs in the same move.

White and Lightbown (1984) pointed out that "when the initial question was not answered immediately, teachers went on to as many as nine repetitions or rephrasings of the question" (pp229-30). Clearly their RPs and RFs go beyond the level of Q units. But the fact that teachers repeat or rephrase their Qs is relevant to the issue of Q units.

Table 7.5 in 7.6.1.1 shows that 52.4% of the Q units involve RPs and/or RFs. This suggests that when the teachers ask consecutive Qs in a cluster, more than half of the time they repeat and/or rephrase the previous Q(s). In the selected date for this study RPs and RFs make up 26.4% of the total number of Qs in Q units.

White and Lightbown (1984) reported that in the overall study, repetitions (including rephrasings) made up 64% of the total number of Qs (p231). Compared with the percentage of 15.7% (RPs and RFs in all Qs) in my data, I find the proportion of RP/RF in their findings very high. They did not elaborate on what they regarded as repetition and rephrasing. The lessons in their study were all low-level (beginners' level) language classes (see (2), the example cited in their study). That might be the reason for the higher proportion of RPs and RFs in their data.

8.3.2 Reasons for repetitions and reformulations

Studies on L2 teaching have shown that repetitions and rephrasings are two of the features of teacher talk (see 5.5). RPs and RFs of teachers' Qs lend further evidence to the phenomenon.

White and Lightbown (1984) cited an instance where the teacher repeated and rephrased the same question nine times (see (2) cited earlier) and conceded that they found it hard to understand why the teacher did that (p231). In spite of the incredibly high percentage of RPs and RFs (64% of the total Qs) they offered no explanations as to why teachers did repeat or rephrase their Qs.

Wintergerst (1994) offered a few possible explanations for the occurrence of the what she calls "multiple solicits":

> 1) [It] may be that teachers manoeuvre students with multiple solicits to achieve their desired response.
> 2) [It] may be that an added illustration or question may encourage students to think of other possible answers.
> 3) [It] may be that teachers feel the need to move on because students did not generate an answer.
> 4) [It] may be that teachers, in an attempt to elicit a student response, introduce a yes/no question alternative rather than their initial wh-question to elicit an answer. (pp76-7)

Wintergerst proposed that "the multiple solicit lends itself to any of these possibilities" (p77). She then went on to give more possible reasons for the multiple solicits and concluded:

> "Whether the teacher is showing her nervousness, exploring the topic verbally, giving the student more time for information processing, offering two opportunities to get it right, or putting the student under twice the pressure, the multiple solicit not only produces different effects in different circumstances but it also generates more teacher talk than the norm."
>
> (pp76-7)

While acknowledging that the possibilities offered by Wintergerst are relevant to this study, I have to point out that the difference between our definitions does affect how one sees the reasons for RPs and RFs. The third reason given by her, for example, does not apply to the Q unit as defined in this study because when the teacher detects that there is no answer from the students his RP or RF is counted in his new speaking turn. It inevitably takes some time for the teacher to decide that there is no answer coming and to decide to repeat or rephrase the Q.

Why teachers repeat and rephrase their Qs is a complex issue partly because there are many possibilities and partly because the researcher can only interpret what s/he observes. It may bring about the usual mismatch of intention and interpretation (Widdowson 1990:108). In spite of it we strive for an approximation which we hope justifies our effort.

I have identified in my data a number of what appear to be the common reasons why teachers repeat and reformulate their Qs.

1) For emphasis

The teacher repeats or rephrases a Q in order to stress a point, to encourage students to respond, etc.

(3) [Commenting on students' pronunciation errors]

T: Now let's try to help to learn from each other. Now what's going wrong (Q1)? You tell me (Q2). What's going wrong (Q3)? [HB2/16ghi]

(4) [Asking for a volunteer to do the recording first]

T: Who would like to be first (Q1)? Who wants to be first (Q2)? [HB2/4fg]

2) Assuming the Q is difficult

When the teacher realises that a Q (Q1) is difficult for the students to answer, s/he tends to help the students out by making the subsequent Q (Q2) easier to answer.

(5) [Talking about identical twins.]

T. so are the 12 parts equal to the sum (Q1)? or in other words are they the same

as the sum or are they greater or are they less than the sum (Q2)?
S: same [HB10A/8]

3) Narrowing down

What the teacher commonly does in face of a difficult Q is that she tries to reformulate the previous Q in order that Q2 is more specific in terms of the information required for an answer or narrow down the Q in terms of the scope for the desired answer.

(6) T: Give me the word (Q1). Can you give me the collective noun (Q2)?
[DH2/8ab]

In the instance cited in (6) the teacher went on to ask another two Qs and in addition gave a clue to help the students. The word that the teacher was expecting was congregation, a word which he rightly assumed was unfamiliar to the Chinese learners.

4) For clarity

The teacher repeats or rephrases Q1 to make it clearer for the learner to answer. This differs from reason Number 2 (assuming Q is difficult) in that Q2 for clarity is not necessarily narrower or more specific than Q1.

(7) T: You are talking about gene rather than genius. [Teacher writes the two words on the board.] What are you talking about (Q1)? Which one (Q2)?
[HB10A/5]

Q2 here is narrower or more specific than Q1. But the teacher rephrased the Q not because Q1 was difficult for the student to answer. The teacher meant to ask the student which of the two words the student had actually uttered as the student's pronunciation was not clear enough to make the distinction.

5) Clue Q

In some cases Q2 helps the respondent to answer Q1 by providing guidance or a clue as shown in the next example:

(8) [on the pronunciation of Alexandra Palace]
T: How would you say it (Q1)? [1.0] Where does the stress shift (Q2)?
[HB10A/3de]

6) After inserted message

Having asked a Q the teacher sometimes finds it necessary to add something. The additional utterance(s) may be short or long. After the additional utterance, the teacher repeats or rephrases the previous Q to refocus the students' attention on what had been asked.

(9) T: What was the second thing (Q1)? [1.0] [pointing at the board] that was the embroidery. What was the second thing (Q2)? [HB2/12ij]

7) To another student or others

A Q to an individual student may be repeated to another student or to the class as whole. Similarly, a Q to the class may be repeated to an individual student. In both cases, reformulation might be involved.

8) Others

The above are some common reasons. There are also some uncommon reasons why the teachers repeat or rephrase their Qs. For example:

(10) T: What did he buy (Q1)? What did he recommend to buy (Q2)? [HB2B/5gh]

The Qs above were asked after the teacher played a piece of recording in which the speaker recommended tourists buy three locally produced products. It was obvious that the first Q was not a true Q because the speaker in the recording did not buy anything himself. The teacher realised it and immediately asked another Q to correct herself. I call this <u>self correction</u>.

[The interesting thing about this example is that I came across it when I started to work on the reasons for RPs and RFs. I speculated that there would be more examples of this kind, i.e. self correction. But it turned out that there were only a few cases of self correction. I realised that the teachers in the study were experienced native English teachers. If I were to study non-native English teachers' questioning behaviour I would perhaps find more instances of self-correction.]

I have put the instances of such uncommon or unusual RPs and RFs in the category under <u>Others</u> together with those for which I could not identify any reasonable explanation.

I should make it clear that these reasons are not all mutually exclusive categories. In other words some of the Qs may have been repeated or rephrased because of more than one reason. The categorisation was done to the best of my understanding of the context in which the RPs and RFs occurred.

Table 8.3. Reasons for RPs and RFs

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b3	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Sub-total	Total
1. Emphasis	2-2*	1-1	5-1	3-4	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-2	0-0	1-3	4-3	0-0	8-0	0-0	2-2	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-1	26-21	47
2. Q difficult	0-0	1-3	0-0	1-3	0-1	1-2	0-0	0-0	0-0	1-0	0-3	1-8	0-2	0-6	0-2	0-0	1-2	0-0	0-1	0-3	6-36	42
3. Narrowing	0-0	0-1	0-0	0-2	0-0	0-1	0-6	0-0	0-10	0-3	0-9	0-4	0-0	0-3	0-0	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-3	0-43	43
4. For clarity	3-5	2-0	6-0	1-17	2-3	2-4	2-4	4-1	1-14	0-6	1-6	0-14	1-4	1-20	5-3	1-0	2-0	0-7	0-5	1-1	35-114	149
5. Clue Qs	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-1	0-0	1-3	0-3	0-0	0-0	0-0	1-7	8
6. After interruption	0-2	0-1	0-0	1-0	1-1	0-1	0-1	1-0	6-0	2-2	6-0	3-1	0-1	2-4	0-0	1-1	2-1	1-2	2-1	2-0	30-9	39
7. To other S(s)	2-2	1-0	0-0	1-0	2-1	0-0	0-0	3-2	1-0	0-1	2-0	0-2	1-1	1-1	0-0	1-3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	15-13	28
8. Others	0-0	0-2	0-0	0-0	0-0	1-1	0-0	0-0	5-2	1-3	0-0	0-0	1-2	1-0	0-0	0-0	0-1	0-0	1-0	0-0	10-11	21
Sub-total	7-11	5-8	11-1	7-26	5-7	4-9	2-11	8-3	13-28	4-15	10-21	8-32	3-10	13-35	5-5	6-10	5-8	1-9	3-7	4-7	123-264	387
Total	18	13	12	33	12	13	13	11	41	19	31	40	13	48	10	16	13	10	10	11	387	

*The figures in the cells are RPs-RFs, with the number of RPs before the hyphen and the number of RFs after the hyphen.

Table 8.3 shows what appears to be the reasons for the RPs and RFs in the selected transcripts. The table shows that more than a third (38.5%) (149 out of 387) of the RPs and RFs occurred because the teachers tried to make the previous Q clear or clearer to the learners. One may wonder how repetitions of the same Q make what is being repeated clearer. The need to repeat the Q may arise in a number of situations. For example, when Q1 was uttered there was noise or distraction, or certain students were not attentive.

Assuming Q is difficult together with narrowing and clue Qs comes up as the second most common reason for RPs and RFs, taking up nearly 22% of the total.

8.4 Simplification in Q units

Another area which I would like to look into is that of simplification in Q units. Unlike the topic of RPs and RFs which is a prominent feature of the data, simplification is not on the surface. But like the topic of RPs and RFs, the theme of simplification also offers great research potential and pedagogic implications.

Simplification is one of the communication strategies (Bialystok 1990). The native speaker's use of 'simplified register' in her interaction with the non-native speakers is one of the strategies in L2 teacher talk (Prabhakar 1994:157). Ross (1992) has found that in oral proficiency interviews native speaker interviewers ask 'accommodative questions' which see grammatical simplification and lexical simplification. The interviewer modifies the syntactic or semantic structure of an utterance so as to facilitate comprehension and chooses what is assumed to be a simpler form of a word or phrase which the interviewer believes the interviewee is unable to comprehend (p177).

Table 7.5 in Section 7.6.1.1 shows that a large proportion of subsequent Qs in Q units are RPs and RFs, representing the same level of elicitation (70%). A closer look at the data reveals that many RFs tend to be simpler than their previous Q for the learner to answer (cf. narrowing in 8.3.2). Many thematically related RFs fall in this area.

In Chapter 3 it was pointed out that identification Qs (mostly wh-Qs) were generally more difficult to answer than polarity Qs (i.e. yes/no Qs) which in turn have stronger eliciting force than confirmation Qs (Stenstrom 1984:152). This line of argument is applied here when examining the simplification of Qs within Q units.

Identification Qs, mainly in the form of wh-Qs, do not all pose the same difficulty. The linguistic demand of wh-Qs varies a great deal. Stenstrom (1994) has further divided wh-Qs into open-ended Qs and specifying Qs. Open-ended Qs tend to contain why, how, and what, whereas specifying Qs tend to contain which, where, and when. In Chapter 3 I pointed out that it was not the wh-word alone that determines the openness of a wh-Q. I have followed this argument in the analysis and have taken it into consideration when using wh-Qs or any other Qs to illustrate strategic shift in Q units.

When examining reformulations of Qs as a questioning strategy, I reviewed the types of RF proposed by French & McClure (1983) (cf. 5.5.2). For convenience, I repeat them here:

1. Lexical or semantic simplification
2. From wh-questions to neutral yes/no questions
3. From wh-questions to biased yes/no questions
4. From wh-questions to alternative questions
5. From wh-questions to confirmation-seeking questions

These types of RF, as French & McClure argue, aim to make the answering easier for the students. They involve linguistic and/or cognitive simplification.

Following French & McClure (1983) I propose the following categories for the analysis of simplification in teachers' use of Qs.

8.4.1 From wh-questions to yes/no questions or alternative questions

The most obvious narrowing feature is found in the shift from a wh-Q to a yes/no Q or an alternative Q. I have identified 34 instances of simplification in 29 Q units. (Some Q units contain more than one instance of simplification.) Ten out of the 34 instances see the change from a wh-Q to a yes/no Q or an alternative Q.

(11) [Talking about the activity they just did.]

T: OK. alright everybody. What did you think about that (Q1)? Did you all enjoy it (Q2)?
SS: yes/enjoy it/very much. [HB2/20hi]

(12) T: ... you know where it is (Q1)? Which part of London (Q2)? Is it in the north, or south, /or (Q3)?
Sss: /North. [HB2/6cde]

8.4.2 From open-ended questions to specifying questions

A number of simplification instances involving wh-Qs suggest the shift from open-ended Qs to specifying Qs as manifested in the change of wh-words:

(13) T: "it's time you washed them." okay. ... Can anyone give any explanation of why we use past tense here (Q1)? Or what in English you might call it (Q2)? [DT2/2jk]

Q2 in the above example reduces the linguistic demand compared to Q1 which requires an explanation of a grammatical point. This does not suggest that Q2 is necessarily easier to answer than Q1. If one has no idea what the term is for the grammatical phenomenon in question Q2 can be equally difficult to answer.

One sub-type of this wh-Q to wh-Q shift involves a wh-Q and a completion Q which also requires a more specified piece of information, hence an identification Q in nature (3.2.4).

(14) T: If we use the word point, ... what do we have to use after the word "point" (Q1)? There is no point ___ (Q2)?
S: No point on. [DT2/3hi]

A completion Q might be slightly easier than its wh-word version for a learner to answer because it maintains the sentence order required for constructing the answer.

8.4.3 From yes/no questions to confirmation questions

Although both a yes/no Q and a confirmation Q accept yes or no as an answer, the two types of Q differ slightly in terms of the eliciting force. In other words, while yes/no Qs tend to be neutral, confirmation Qs usually favours one or the other answer (see 3.3.1).

(15) T: Is there anything you want to ask about either of these notices (Q1)? You are clear/ (Q2)?
Ss: Yeh/yes. [HB2b/2fg]

The eliciting force of Q2 is slightly weaker than that of Q1. The bias that the questioner expects an affirmative answer is manifested in the form of the Q.

8.4.4 Lexical or semantic simplification

In the following Q unit both Qs are yes/no Qs. But one is clearly more specific than the other:

(16) T: Do you know the collective noun (Q1)? ... Do you know what we call people who sit in church (Q2)? [DH2/8ce]

Both Qs are yes/no Qs in form, but both function as identification Qs in that the teacher expected the word he had in mind rather than simply a yes or no answer. Q2 is more specific

because it contains more information which might help the students to provide the desired word. In this instance the narrowing effect has little to do with the form but rather what is contained in the Q.

There are instances where the reformulated Q requires more concrete items for an answer than the previous Q(s):

(17) T: What does the season of autumn symbolise (Q1)? What does the season of autumn kind of mean (Q2)? [1.0] What happens in autumn (Q3)? [DT2/9cde]

There are two instances of simplification in this example. The first one is a lexical one: from symbolise to mean. The second instance is what I call abstract-to-concrete simplification. Talking about what autumn symbolises or means is far more abstract than describing what happens in autumn.

8.4.5 Others

While we try to avoid using too many categories, there always seem to be instances which do not quite fit any category. Such instances are put into a separate category "other". Take (18) for example:

(18) [about the use of the definite article]
T: and it was not qualified (Q1)? wasn't it THE rich people in the 1990s or in something or other (Q2)? [DT2/5ff]

Both Qs in the example are confirmation Qs. Q2 was more specific in that it further identified the specific grammatical element in question for the student to confirm (or deny).

Table 8.4 in next page sums up the change of form in the process of simplification.

8.4.6 Discussion

Table 8.4 shows that 45.2% of simplification undergoes formal shift from wh-Qs to yes/no Qs or choice Qs. Another 26.7% of simplification involves shift from one wh-word to another resulting in an open-ended Q becoming a less open-ended Q or a specifying Q.

It has to be pointed out that the formal analysis, although a common practice in studies on Qs, only reveals certain aspects of simplification. The examples and some explanations also suggest the distinction between linguistic and cognitive simplification (Chaudron 1983). A good example is (17) which sees two instances of simplification: the first (Q1 to Q2) is a

Table 8.4: Simplification

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total	%
Wh-Qs to yes/no Qs & choice Qs	2	2	5	5	2	0	5	2	4	9	1	4	1	3	7	2	1	3	1	5	66	45.2
Open Qs to specifying Qs	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	3	1	9	3	2	9	0	2	0	3	1	1	39	26.7
yes/no Qs to confirmation Qs	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1.4
Lexical/semantic simplification	1	1	0	4	1	2	0	0	3	0	0	4	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	20	13.7
Others	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	3	2	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	2	19	13.0
Total	5	5	5	9	4	4	8	3	11	10	13	13	4	19	9	6	1	7	2	8	146	100

lexical or semantic one (basically a linguistic one), while the second (Qs 1 & 2 to Q3) is a cognitive one.

The simplification found in Q units is in accordance with Stenstrom's proposed relation of Q form and Q function from the most Q-like (specifying Qs) to the least Q-like elicitations (Qs requesting acknowledgement) (1984:152) (see also 3.4.1).

8.5 Teacher variations

In this section let us examine whether and how the teachers differ in their use of Qs. Let us use T1, T2 and T3 for the three teachers respectively.

Q units were found in all three teachers' speech. The frequency of their Qs occurring in Q units is shown in Table 8.5. The variation between T1 and T3 is very small (0.5%) but T2 has nearly 10% more of her Qs in Q units than the other two teachers. This suggests that although Q units may be common in teacher discourse, the individual difference among teachers may be significant.

Table 8.5 Percentage of Qs in Q units

	T1	T2	T3	Total
Total number of Qs	1975	1126	802	3903
Qs in Q units	691	502	277	1470
%	35.0%	44.6%	34.5%	37.7%

In terms of the size of the Q units among the three teachers (Table 8.6), in spite of some differences it follows the general trend that "as the size of the unit increases, the number of such units decreases" (7.4.2).

Table 8.6 Size of Q units

	T1	%	T2	%	T3	%	Total	%
No. of Q units	312		193		113		618	
No. of 2-Q units	252	80.8	129	66.8	82	72.6	460	74.9
No. of 3-Q units	44	14.1	42	21.8	20	17.7	106	17.2
No. of 4-Q units	11	3.5	16	8.3	8	7.1	38	5.5
No. of 5-Q+ units	5	1.6	6	3.1	4	3.5	14	2.4

Next let us look at the R rate amongst the three teachers. The difference among the teachers in the R rate without considering the Q units is fairly small (see Table 8.7). The adjusted R rate, i.e. with Q units taken into account, the difference remains fairly small (see Table 8.8), although T2's R rate increased by 24.1% compared with 16% and 16.9% in the other two teachers. This can be partly explained by the fact that more of T2's Q units involve more than two Qs (cf. Table 8.6).

Table 8.7 R rate: Qs and Rs

	T1	T2	T3	Total
No. of Qs	1975	1126	802	1903
Answered by Ss	1346	730	529	2605
R rate %	68.1%	64.8%	66.0%	66.7%

Table 8.8 R rate: Qs/Q units and Rs

	T1	T2	T3	Total
No. of Qs/Q units	1601	821	638	3060
Answered by Ss	1346	730	529	2605
R rate %	84.1%	88.9%	82.9%	85.1%

The use of RPs and RFs is common with all three teachers. Table 8.9 shows that out of the total Qs in Q units by the three teachers 26.9%, 28.4% and 21.7% respectively are RPs and RFs.

Table 8.9 RPs and RFs in Q units

	HB	DT	DH	Total
Total Qs in Q units	691	590	277	1470
No. of RPs and RFs	186	142	60	388
%	26.9	28.4	21.7	25.7

In sum, the variations among the teachers have presented no surprises in the areas highlighted in the analysis. However, it is obvious that the sample for this study is very small and this limitation and others will be discussed in Chapter 9.

8.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have further discussed the notion of Q unit and maintained that it is a useful notion in classroom discourse analysis. The analysis clearly shows that the exclusion of Q units would greatly affect the response rate. I also contend that the notion of Q unit could be extended to the study of other features in teacher talk, such as directives and responses.

The in-depth study of Q units has revealed that the most common features found amongst Qs in Q units are repetition and reformulation of Qs. I have identified several reasons for teachers repeating or reformulating their Qs. It has also been found that one of the underlying features concerning the use of RP and RF is that of simplification, which is in accordance with features of teacher talk in L2 classrooms.

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Chapter 9 General Conclusions and Theoretical Implications

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall first summarise the main points of this study and draw some conclusions. Then I shall relate the findings of this study to the theories reviewed and discussed in earlier chapters. This will be followed by suggestions for further research. Although the findings of this study are not directly related to improving classroom practice and I do not view it as the task of the present study to go into classroom applications, I shall talk about some pedagogic implications which the findings of the research have suggested.

9.2 Summary and conclusions

9.2.1 Where does this study stand?

Question asking and answering is part of interpersonal communication. As an area of inquiry it is studied in various contexts, such as courtrooms, classrooms or daily conversation. Questions and questioning are also studied in different disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, and linguistics. In teaching it is studied in the context of primary schools, secondary schools, science lessons, L2 as well as L1 classes. This study has investigated teachers' use of Qs in L2 classrooms. The following diagram shows the position of this study in its relation with other disciplines and contexts.

(1) INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Directing	Responding	**Questioning**	Requesting	etc.
Philosophy	Psychology	**Education**	Linguistics	etc.
Doctor/patient	Courtroom	**Classroom**	Interviews	etc.
L1 classes	Art lessons	**L2 classes**	Science classes	etc.
Ss' responses	Ts' evaluation	**Ts' Qs**	Q classification	etc.

9.2.2 Areas of inquiry

This study is centred on teachers' use of Qs. But this subject matter has been approached in different angles or perspectives. This study has covered a range of issues from Qs to Q units, and from Q exchanges to Q sequences. Sections 9.2.2.1 – 9.2.2.4 give a brief summary of these areas.

9.2.2.1 Questions

I started the project with the focus on Q utterances. It was during the actual transcribing of the recordings that it became more and more apparent to me that questioning involves more than just Q utterances. In addition to Qs as linguistic utterances there are many instances where elicitation as an interactive act does not involve Q utterances. So the first distinction to make is that between Qs as linguistic utterances and elicitation as an interactive act which may or may not involve Qs. This is the distinction made between Q as a situational category and elicitation as an interactive category in Sinclair & Coulthard's model (Chapter 4).

The second distinction is between elicitation for imitation and repetition (e.g. many in pronunciation practice) and elicitation realised by Qs eliciting a linguistic answer. In this study the former type, which I call non-Q elicitation, is excluded. Such a distinction has not been made clear in some studies of teachers Qs.

9.2.2.2 Q units

I view a Q unit as a kind of extended Q move. A Q move is like a paragraph in a piece of writing. A paragraph may have just one word, or one sentence or an indefinite number of sentences. A Q move may contain just one Q utterance. In addition to the Q it may contain other accompanying acts, such as <clue> or <nomination>. In other cases, there are more than one Q in the move, which then forms a Q unit. This can be represented as follows:

(2)
Q move----Q (single Q)
Q + accompanying act(s)
Q1 + Q2 ... (**Q unit**)

Q unit then became the focus of investigation after the initial analysis of the data (see Chapter 7). The issues around Q units such as repetition and reformulation of Qs will be reviewed later in separate sections.

9.2.2.3 Q exchanges

The basic teaching cycle of initiation/response/follow-up (IRF) exchange is not necessarily a Q exchange. It is when the initiation is realised by a Q or Q unit that the IRF exchange becomes a Q exchange. In other words, a Q exchange is a specific case of IRF exchange. An echoic Q may occur in the position of the R move or the F move resulting in an extended exchange or a Q sequence. This study has mainly dealt with Q exchanges in the classroom as revealed in the data.

9.2.2.4 Q sequences

A minimum Q sequence contains at least two Qs or Q units with Response 1 (R1) in between and Q2 responded to by Response 2 (R2) which is followed by a follow-up (F). It can be formally represented as follows:

(3) Q1/Q-Unit 1 -- R1 -- Q2/Q-Unit 2 -- R2 – F (where -- represents turn boundary)

9.2.2.5 Summary

The following diagram shows where the **Q unit** lies in the existing description of classroom discourse.

(4) Q sequence
- Q Exchange 1
  - Q move - Q or **Q unit** ± accompanying act(s)
  - R move
  - (F move)
- Q Exchange 2
  - Q move - Q or **Q unit** ± accompanying act(s)
  - R move
  - (F move)
- Q Exchange 3

... ...

9.3 Limitations of this study

I think it is necessary to point out the limitations of this study before talking about its theoretical implications and making any claims (9.4).

First and foremost this study was carried out on a small scale. There were three teachers and ten learners. This inevitably limits the statistical significance of the data.

In spite of the small scale I want to emphasise the research validity of the selected target group. It was pointed out in Chapter 6 that the target group, a homogeneous group of Chinese learners, came to the UK on an exchange programme with the University of Westminster (formerly Polytechnic of Central London). The exchange programme was established in 1986 and had been going on non-stop for ten years. As far as I know the programme will continue in the future in Britain even though it may not necessarily be in the University of Westminster. The size of the group has always been from 10 to 15 students and there has always been three to four teachers, many of whom have taught many groups over the years. In short the present study is perfectly repeatable.

The second limitation of this study was the omission of some Qs asked by the teachers in the teacher-group, teacher-pair and teacher-individual interaction. This was mainly due to technical reasons. As a result, I concentrated on teachers' Qs addressed to the class, groups, pairs or individuals which could be heard by the entire class. It is likely that the frequency of Q units and indeed the types of Qs and Q units may be different in these different types of interaction from those which occurred in predominantly teacher-class interaction.

The third limitation is that there is not much comparison with other types of classes, such as beginners and advanced classes. I have, however, compared the teachers' use of Q units in my data with that of some other teachers teaching a different group and a different type of lesson. The results, reported and compared in 8.2.3, show that Q units are not something unique only in the data collected for this study.

9.4 Theoretical implications

The diagram in 9.1.2.5 shows that Q unit as a unit of discourse analysis has not altered the existing description of classroom discourse. It is, however, an extension to what we know about the model. Similarly other findings also offer some insight into our knowledge of what is going on in a classroom. I shall discuss a few in the following sections.

9.4.1 Q units

Q unit as a linguistic phenomenon has been identified in some studies. Wintergerst (1994), for example, talks about multiple solicits and the response to it. But no study to my knowledge has dealt with the relationship between Qs in a Q unit and its significance in

discourse analysis, typically in the analysis of response rate (8.2.2).

The notion of Q unit does not affect the model for discourse analysis. The basic IRF exchange, as identified to be the most common exchange in classrooms, would remain intact. In other words, where I (the initiation) is realised by a Q, it can also be realised by more than one Q at the same time, i.e. a Q unit and the pattern of the exchange remains the same. The exchange may be represented as:

(5) Q/Q unit -- R/R unit -- F.

(where a R unit refers to more than one answer to the Qs in the initiation)

Q unit as a unit of analysis does affect the response rate (8.2.2), one of the indicators of effectiveness of questioning. I am not suggesting that higher response rate alone is necessarily indicative of more effective questioning. Whether it is so depends on the purpose of the questioning series and the type of activity undertaken.

The notion of Q unit can also be applied to other functions of classroom discourse such as directing and responding. Multiple directives may occur in one move, forming a directive unit. Similarly one may answer different Qs in one responding move and the move may then be regarded as a response unit. The directives or responses involved in the units may also be strategically related as the Qs are in Q units.

9.4.2 Q sequences

Like the notions of RP and RF which are applicable to RPs and RFs beyond the unit level, strategic shifts between Qs which I have discussed in relation to Qs in Q units can also be applied to Qs beyond unit level, i.e. in sequences. In fact similar questioning strategies were first suggested in studies on questioning strategies and questioning sequences in L1 classrooms (5.6.2). I have applied them to the study of Q units.

While the Qs in a Q sequence are thematically related by definition, there are times when some Qs or even exchanges in a sequence may refer to something beyond the current topic. It is also possible that a small sequence may be embedded in a larger one.

I shall talk in more details about how Q sequences might be investigated in future research

in 9.5.5.

9.4.3 Wait-time

In this study wait-time has been applied mainly as a boundary marker of Q units. If the pause between two Qs is more than 1.5 to 2 seconds long, the Qs are then not grouped together as a Q unit. The chief evidence for this is that when the pause is significantly long (i.e. 1.5-2 seconds) the teacher tends to infer from the silence that the students cannot immediately provide the answer. S/he then tends to repeat or reformulate the Q. The pause in this case is thus regarded as a no-response move. How then should this be reflected in the model for discourse analysis?

The discourse analysis model proposed by Stenstrom (1994) has included both the act-move-exchange model developed by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) and the turn-shifting model used in conversation analysis.

A turn is defined as "everything the current speaker says before the next speaker takes over" (Stenstrom 1994:4). In her 1984 work Stenstrom talks about the differences between moves and turns:

> Moves are interactive elements in the structure of exchanges. A turn is what a speaker says as long as he holds the floor, i.e. as long as there is no speaker-shift. A move, on the other hand, is what the speaker does in a turn, and he can do more than one thing in the same turn; one turn can for example consist of an R move immediately followed by a Q move. (1984:83)

To combine the discourse analysis model and conversation analysis model we can describe classroom Q exchanges and Q sequences as follows:

(6)	T:	Q1/Q unit	Q move 1	Turn 1
	S:	R1	R move 1	Turn 2
	T:	F1 + Q2	F move 1 + Q move 2	Turn 3
	S:	R2	R move 2	Turn 4
	T:	F2	F move 2 (+ Q move 3)	Turn 5

As we can see in the above definition and description of turns and moves, there is no account for the pause concerning Q-R exchange in the classroom interaction as highlighted in this study. After the teacher has put the Q to the student s/he yields the turn to the respondent, the students. The pause indicates the end of his/her turn. It is when there is no

immediate response that the teacher would take up the turn again, which represents a new turn. What is between the two teacher's turns is what I call the no-response move or no-response turn. This can be illustrated in Stenstrom's model quoted above. Let me reproduce the model with the addition of my findings highlighted.

(7)	T:	Q1/Q unit	Q move 1	Turn 1
	S:	**-R (pause)**	**no-R move**	Turn 2
	T:	RP/RF of Q1 *(or* Q2)	Q move 2	Turn 3
	S:	R1 *(or* R2)	R move 2	Turn 4
	T:	F1	F move 2 (+ Q move 3)	Turn 5

Turn 2 in the above Q sequence is physically there (evidenced by a time lapse). It is simply not fulfilled with an expected linguistic response.

Whilst I am suggesting that the pause should be accounted for in a discourse analysis theory I would like to reiterate that I have not suggested a specific length for the boundary marker for any other research or analysis apart from the present one. That is an area worthy of further investigation (cf. 9.4.2).

9.4.4 Repetition and reformulation of Qs

An easy way for me to demonstrate the theoretical implications of the study of RP and RF is to repeat the model in (7) with the RP and RF highlighted:

(8)	T:	Q1/Q unit	Q move 1	Turn 1
	S:	-R (pause)	no-R move	Turn 2
	T:	**RP/RF of Q1** *(or* Q2)	Q move 2	Turn 3
	S:	R1 *(or* R2)	R move 2	Turn 4
	T:	F1	F move 2 (+ Q move 3)	Turn 5

Like Q units, RP and RF does not necessarily alter the discourse pattern. It does, however, affect the discourse content, i.e. if the teacher repeats or rephrases Q1 in Q move 2, Turn 3, the student would provide R1 in Turn 4 to Qs asked in both Q move 1 and Q move 2 instead of providing R1 in Turn 2 to Q1 in Turn 1.

9.5 Suggestions for further research

Any piece of research will inevitably touch upon a range of related issues, some very closely, others remotely. Although a PhD research is a huge task for any individual, due to constraints of all sorts it can only deal with a limited domain within the vast scope that it has been faced with. This study is no exception. There are a number of issues I have come across that I could have researched into if the focus of inquiry was on something else rather than Q unit. For example, I could have looked at how forms and functions of Qs are related and interact, or how teachers use Qs to exercise control over the classroom interaction and learner target language output. (These and many others could well be my future research tasks.) In this section, however, I shall only focus on a few aspects that are immediately linked to the findings of this study.

9.5.1 The application of the notion of Q unit

As I mentioned in the previous section, Q unit can also be applied to other classroom discourse functions such as directives, responses, etc. The following are some examples (where D stands for Directive):

(9) T: Will you stand up please and find a new partner [D1]? Would you stand up and find a new partner [D2]? ... [HB4a/16fg]

(10) T: ... would you like to begin [D1]? Read the first one for us, "an intercity train" [D2] [HB11a16j]

(11) T: Shall we have a look then at the exercise that I asked you to prepare [D1]? Page 27. ... Can you put up your hands if you are number 16 [D2]? [HB11a/6de]

In (9) we see repetition of the directive. (10) presents an example of reformulation of the directive. In (11) there are two different directives requesting different actions. (9) - (11) are all *directive units* where more than one directive is uttered in the same move.

Similarly the notion could be applied to the study of response. When there are two more Qs in the same move requesting different answers, we hear people say "The answer to you first question is ... . The answer to your second is ... " (see *extending exchange* in 4.8.2.3). The answers in one R move could be viewed as forming an R unit.

9.5.2 Pauses or wait-time

One of the difficulties of grouping Qs into units is the variation of individual speakers in

terms of the speed of their speech. Unlike other grammatical or discourse categories where concrete words and structures can be isolated and counted, pauses in interaction have not only individual differences but also cultural differences. Murata (1991) reports that the pause among native Japanese speakers is longer than that among native English speakers. The study of wait-time of NNS teachers may have to address this possible cultural difference.

Another area of inquiry might be to examine the difference in wait-time between NS teachers and NNS teachers (e.g. Chinese teachers of English).

Similarly the pausing of learners before answering Qs may be studied to see a) how fast individual learners answer Qs as one element in establishing a learner's performance profile, and b) how fast learners generally answer certain type(s) of Q to see, for example, the difficulty of the type(s) of Q.

While acknowledging the importance of the effect of pausing, it is not difficult to imagine the problem it might create for conducting a large-scale quantitative study involving a large number of teachers. Variations amongst individuals in terms of speed of speech, and consequently the pausing after Qs and/or responses, must be observed.

The study of wait-time might be limited if the lessons are only audio-recorded. Many non-verbal elements which may function as elicitation or suggest responses to Qs might be missed. Although video-recording does not guarantee capturing everything it is preferred to audio-recording when studying wait-time.

It is also important to distinguish the effect of pausing on different types of Qs. Instead of criticising teachers for not pausing long enough and calling on them to increase their wait-time generally after Qs (wait-time 1) or after the students responses (wait-time 2), it would be more helpful to identify certain types of Qs for such practice. Intuitively we may suggest that teachers should wait longer for responses after difficult Qs, difficult from the learner's point of view. But difficulty of Qs depends on a range of factors. In spite of this there might be some general suggestions. The experiments done by Akiyama et al (1979) showed that (1) statements were considerably harder to verify than Qs and (2) negative statements were

harder than negative Qs (although affirmative Qs and statements did not differ in difficulty (p365)). It is hoped that future studies would address more specifically the issue of wait-time after different types of Q.

9.5.3 Repetition and reformulation of questions

In this study I have examined RPs and RFs of Qs in Q units (5.5.1; 5.5.2; 7.6.1.1 & 8.3). RPs and RFs also occur beyond Q units, i.e. after response is given or, in other words, in sequences. The reasons for repeating and rephrasing Qs after the response is given are very often different from those for RPs and RFs within Q units. This is because RPs and RFs after the responses (or in some cases no responses) have taken the responses (or no responses) into consideration.

In 5.5 I talked about communication breakdowns and repair strategies. It was pointed out there that RPs and RFs of Qs could result from communication breakdowns such as failure of hearing, failure of comprehension, and sometimes no response (see also *significant pausing* in 7.3 and 8.2.1).

When a response is given, it may be unclear, incorrect, partially correct, irrelevant, and so on (4.6.1). The teacher may repeat or rephrase the initial Q in hope that the respondent would improve the answer. In such cases, the RP of the initial Q can be seen as a negative feedback to the response.

Sometimes when the correct answer is given by one student the teacher may repeat the Q to let another student or other students answer the same Q. Qs requesting more than one example or asking for personal opinion may be repeated as a result.

A Q may also be repeated when the initial Q is followed by an echoic Q (or other disruptions) from the student. In such cases, the teacher may repeat or rephrase the initial Q. I label this reason for the RP or RF as "interruption", interruption between the initial Q and the RP or RF of it.

The following table lists the reasons which I have identified for the occurrence of RPs and RFs in sequences in some selected transcripts.

Table 9.1: Reasons for RP and RF in sequences

	B2a	B2b	B4a	B4b-	B8a	B8b	B10a	B11a	B12a	B12b	T2	T4	T6	T8	T10	H2	H4	H6	H9	H12	Total	%
Failure to hear	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1.0
Failure to understand	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	1.6
No response	0	2	0	3	2	2	1	2	3	2	4	2	2	2	4	4	1	3	1	0	40	21.2
R not clear	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	2.7
R not correct	1	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	2	1	2	2	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	20	10.9
For desired answer	4	3	2	6	0	9	0	0	3	3	1	4	3	8	1	1	0	2	2	2	54	28.6
For emphasis	0	3	1	2	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	6.4
To other student(s)	1	2	3	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	9	1	1	1	0	1	0	26	13.8
After interruption	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	2	0	16	8.6
Others	1	2	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	11	5.8
Total	8	19	7	13	6	16	8	3	8	10	9	13	9	29	7	9	3	5	6	2	189	100.6

The further study of RPs and RFs could be part of the investigation of Q sequence (9.5.5) as well as on their own.

Any study of students' responses to Qs or students target language production ought to take into account the occurrence of RPs and RFs of teachers' Qs. This is because RPs and RFs of teachers' Qs affect the quality and quantity of learners' responses, hence their language production. In this study I have not looked at students responses in depth. The data do suggest, however, that the learners responses may improve in terms of both quantity and quality when they answer the same Q again. Such repetition or reformulation of Q may occur either immediately after the answer is given or after a few turns or even in a different lesson. The example that struck me during my data collection was that different teachers in different lessons asked the same students about their Christmas holiday and the students gave the same account of their experience but their answers were both longer and grammatically more accurate as they were corrected by the previous teacher. This, no doubt, is a fascinating area of investigation and may have significant pedagogic implication.

The implication of this on research is obvious: when aiming to look at learners' responses to teachers' Qs the researcher should avoid recording part of a lesson for data analysis and/or interpreting the date based only on part of a lesson (see also 9.5.8).

Another pedagogic as well as research implication of RPs and RFs of Qs is that the wait-time between a teacher's Q and the student's answer to some Qs could be shorter if the same Qs are repeated or rephrased. For example, some Qs may have been answered but may be repeated for other students to give the same or similar answer (often as practice of the target language).

9.5.4 Question-response correlation

In this study the Q-R relationship has mainly been looked at in terms of whether responses to Q units would affect the response rate. Q-R relationship can be examined in other areas.

Research on teachers' Qs in both L1 and L2 context has tried to see how teachers' Qs can elicit better responses from the students, better in terms of quantity (e.g. number of words) and quality (e.g. cognitive level or grammatical accuracy). While I acknowledge that this is one way of looking at the effectiveness of questioning, I can anticipate a number of problems in this approach.

Firstly, the use of verbal (overt) responses as a measurement for the effectiveness of questioning can be unreliable for several reasons.

1) Some students may know the answer, yet are unwilling and/or unable to verbalise it.
2) The volunteer (or the nominated respondent) may not be representative, i.e. he knows while others don't, or he doesn't know while others do.
3) Nominating respondent is different from permitting volunteers when considering the effect of teachers' Qs in stimulating responses from the students. To some extent, nomination suggests coercion of turn allocation.
4) A number of students may be (over) active and tend to respond more than others do. The presence or absence of these students obviously affects the response rate and other parameters for the effectiveness of questioning.

The second problematic area is concerned with the fact that the purpose of teachers' questioning and its effect are closely related to the nature of the class:

1) Is the lesson language-oriented or content-based?
2) Does the use of Qs aim at language production in general or simply desired responses?
3) Is the teacher interested in learners' target language production or participation and involvement in the interaction?
4) Is the use of Qs associated with reading or oral practice? In a reading lesson, the effects of comprehension Qs, for example, may not result in overt expression. The Qs may aim at directing the attention of the learners to some aspects in the reading or helping the learners comprehend e.g. the ideas or personal relations in the passage. These objectives can be achieved without any verbal expressions on the part of the learners. In an oral

class, on the other hand, there is this problem of students being unable rather than unwilling to speak which I have mentioned earlier (see 5.5 on repair strategies).

5) Is the lesson exam-oriented or not? With the exam looming ahead, teachers' Qs as part of the instruction will probably be geared to preparing the students for the exam Qs.

The questions raised above need to be addressed in the study of teachers' Qs and the effects on students' responses. Although the present study has not dealt with these issues directly I was made more aware of them during the data collection and analysis. I hope that future researchers will be aware of them in their inquiry in this area.

9.5.5 Q sequences

In Chapter 5 I drew the distinction between micro- and macro-strategies. The study of Q sequences tends to be within the domain of macro-strategies as it tends to deal with longer stretches of discourse.

The notion of sequencing is not new either in discourse analysis and conversation analysis. Sinclair et al (1975) have identified a category between the category of an exchange and that of a lesson which they have termed *transaction.* A sequence is illustrated in Sinclair & Brazil (1982) as "a set of exchanges, with a beginning, middle, and end", e.g. formed by a number of similar Qs, or repetitive commands, or anything that participants recognise as forming a topic (p52). Green et al (1988) in their study of classroom discourse structure argue that a series of thematically tied interaction units form what they call *instructional sequence units*, which in turn tie together pedagogically to form *lesson phase units* (e.g. introduce and discuss animals, listen to the story, discuss story) (p20). Brown & Wragg (1993) report that out of more than 1,000 questions analysed, 53 per cent stood alone and 47 per cent were part of a sequence of two or more questions (pp22-23).

The categories cited from other studies in the above paragraph, when applied, may not necessarily refer to the same chunk of discourse. What is in common is that they all recognise the cohesive or thematic connection of one exchange to another or a series of exchanges in the discourse. For the sake of argument I call it *sequence.*

Sequences represent a complex category and deserve further inquiry, which is beyond this

study. There are different types or levels of Q sequencing similar to the strategic relations between Qs discussed in relation to Q units. They are levelling, extending, uplifting, narrowing and shifting. There may be other types of sequence in addition to the ones I have identified. Furthermore, each type can be further studied. Let me illustrate this with an examples.

(12)

T:	Number six, number six, six, six, six. Where is the man? Where is he? Where is he? Where is he? Manon.	Turn 1
S:	(doesn't answer)	Turn 2
T:	Where is he? Is he at home?	Turn 3
S:	No.	Turn 4
T:	Where is he?	Turn 5
S:	(doesn't answer)	Turn 6
T:	Is he at school?	Turn 7
S:	No.	Turn 8
T:	No, where is he?	Turn 9
S:	He uh...	Turn 10
T:	Is he at work? At the office?	Turn 11
S:	Yes.	Turn 12
T:	O.K. Where is he?	Turn 13
S:	At the office.	Turn 14
T:	O.K., he is at the office, o.k.	Turn 15

(White & Lightbown 1984:235-6)

The seven teacher-student exchanges in (12) are all centred on one Q: "where is he?". These Q exchanges form what I call a *Q sequence*. In this particular example the teacher is looking for one answer, i.e. "He is at the office". There are similar Q sequences where the same Q may be repeated for different answers.

Incidentally in (12) we see three Q units (Turns 1, 3, and 11) which contain four Qs, two Qs and two Qs respectively, three instances of narrowing realised by using yes-no Qs following a wh-Q (Turns 3, 7 and 11) (cf. 8.4.1). The general questioning strategy is that of levelling (cf. 7.7.3).

In order to drive home one particular focal Q, a number of questioning acts may be used so as to prepare the way for the focal Q (5.3). For example, if the focal Q the teacher has in mind is 'what is the theme of the prose?', which is a general or synthesis Q (3.2.1), he may ask a number of specific Qs to help the students understand the theme of the prose. These specific Qs, which are proper Qs in their own right but serve as accompanying Qs in a given

context, can only be identified when viewed in the context taken as a whole, i.e. in a Q sequence.

In 9.5.3 I have looked at RPs and RFs which occur outside Q units, i.e. in sequences, as well as within them. I have pointed out that RPs and RFs in Q sequences often result from different reasons. This is no doubt an interesting area for further study.

9.5.6 Learners' questions

It is not surprising when one of the findings of this study shows that learners' Qs are rare in comparison with teachers' Qs. Shuy (1988) in her study of L2 classroom discourse reported that 97% of the total of initiations were made by teachers and only 3% by students (p119). In my data the teachers asked a total of 3,903 Qs while the students asked 145 Qs. To put it in another way, of all the Qs (by both the teachers and students) in the selected lessons the teachers' Qs take up 96.3% with the students' Qs taking up 3.7%. Of the 145 students' Qs 45 were asked of their fellow students. Their Qs to the teachers take up only 2.56%.

A number of factors may contribute to this fact. First, the unequal status of speakers affects interaction in some way. In a classroom, the teacher is the authority. He controls the turn allocation most of the time, with himself on the one side and the rest of the class on the other (1.4). Although they are given the opportunity to ask Qs, the students are mostly there to answer Qs. Student Qs are largely confined to requests for permission to do things or requests for clarification.

One obvious cause for the unequal status between teachers and students is the significantly unequal command of knowledge in terms of the subject matter under study. In addition to this, in language classrooms this 'inequality' lies in the substantial difference in competence of the target language.

Another cause for the unequal status might be the age gap between teacher and student . This is more the case in classes where the learners are young. Age difference certainly has some effect on teacher-learner interaction. Yet another cause might be the social status of teachers. In Chinese culture where teachers are to be respected to the point of commanding obedience, questioning from the students might be regarded as a challenge to the authority,

i.e. the teacher. Although this is changing, especially at college level, it is still a commonly-recognised problem in Chinese education. Therefore, the study of Chinese L2 learners, especially their questioning behaviour has to take this into consideration.

As there is no comparative study on learners of a similar set-up, i.e. a homogeneous group of another L1 taught by the same teachers, I cannot claim that the cultural and educational background of the target group has played any part in terms of the response rate and the proportion of students' Qs. That can be an area of inquiry for further study. The individual disparity among the members of the target group in responding to Qs in terms of volunteering to answer Qs as well as the quantity and quality of responses is evident. This, I believe, is common in any classroom setting.

Teachers' Qs are far greater in number than Qs asked by students put together. As a result, studies are mostly on teacher's Qs and questioning on the one hand, and students' responses and responding on the other. Another aspect is on teachers' feedback on or evaluation of students' responses. The fact that there is little study on students' Qs suggests such an imbalance of classroom interaction. There have been calls for more learners' Qs in L2 teaching (e.g. Lynch 1991). As more and more task-based classroom activities and learner-centred approaches are introduced and practised we may see a higher incidence of learners' Qs and subsequently research on them.

Although I did initially intend to include in this study the analysis of Chinese learners' responses to Qs I ended up with studying the teachers' Qs only. I did, however, look at learners' Q units briefly.

Students' Qs are few compared to teachers' Qs. Q units are even rarer in students' Qs. There are 145 Qs asked by the students in the selected lessons used for the analysis in this study and only 5 Q units with 11 Qs in them. They take up only 7.5% of the total of students' Qs. The Qs in Q units from the teachers, in contrast, takes up 37.7% of their total Qs. In her study of both teacher and student Qs Wintergerst (1994) found that the teachers asked a total of 176 of what she called multiple solicits and the students asked 19 (p49). In my data there are 618 Q units from the teachers and 5 from the students.

9.5.7 From responses to Qs: an alternative approach

Studies of Q-R relations or correlation tend to go from Qs to responses in that the categories of Qs are classified before the responses are identified and analysed. There is some credit to the approach. After all, most Qs are asked for responses and they come before responses. However, there are occasions when the Q-R relation is not that of an adjacent pair. Speaker A's Q can be followed by a Q from speaker B. B's Q is a response to A's Q only in the broad sense of the word response (cf. 3.4.2.3 on echoic Qs and 5.6.2 on questioning sequences).

A different approach to the study of Qs and Q-R relation might be helpful. Instead of looking from Qs to responses, it may be beneficial to start from learners' responses to teachers' Qs. In other words, if we "ignore" the types of Qs for the moment and just examine the responses, especially those relatively long and complex responses from the learners, we can then try to trace what Qs (or utterances) have successfully evoked these responses. This will give us some idea about learners' production from a different angle. After all the main goal of language-based lessons is to engage the learners in producing the target language in meaningful as well as grammatical utterances.

9.5.8 Data collection in empirical research

In 4.5. I talked about the non-verbal aspect of questioning. In the data collected for this study there are 24 instances of non-verbal elicitations. Similarly there are also a number of non-verbal responses. The implication for research on classroom questioning and responding is apparent: the researcher cannot and should not rely entirely on recording for data and subsequently statistics as recording alone without on-site observation and notes would easily miss some of non-verbal communication.

I also pointed out in 6.5.1 and 9.5.3 that the whole lesson should be recorded rather than simply a section of it when collecting data for the investigation of teachers questions and learners responses. There are two arguments for this to be important. Firstly, a lesson usually consists of different events or transactions which involve different types of interaction. van Lier (1988) has listed four major types, i.e. telling, instructing (eliciting), talking and drilling (p156) and pointed out that these interaction types may result in different interaction

patterns. In the lessons that I observed and recorded I have noticed that at the beginning and the end of a lesson the teacher tends to engage with the learners in a brief conversation of an everyday-life nature. The teachers' Qs in these episodes tend to be genuine or referential Qs as expected in an everyday conversation outside classroom. Recording only a section of a lesson may not present an accurate picture of the types of Qs that the teacher asks.

The second argument for recording the whole lesson comes from the study of repetition and reformulation of Qs and the responses to them. In 9.5.3 I pointed out that repetition and reformulation of Qs may take place in different turns as well as within the same turn. They may even occur in different lessons by different teachers and might affect the quality and quantity of students responses and the wait-time. It is therefore important to record the entire lesson and preferably lessons conducted consecutively if the focus of the study is on the repetition and reformulation of teachers Qs, the quantity and quality of students responses and wait-time.

9.6 Pedagogic suggestions

The focus of this study is to investigate a particular phenomenon in L2 teacher talk, i.e. their use of Q units. This research was not problem-driven in that it would address any specific problem in language teaching or learning in L2 classrooms. However, I would like to make a couple suggestions in light of the findings of this study.

9.6.1 Suggestions for teacher training

Although a piece of classroom-based research does not have to aim to solve a particular problem in the classroom, the ultimate aim of classroom-based research in general is to help improve teaching and learning. Whether a research finding would directly or indirectly influence teachers or teaching does not depend on the researcher's claim or suggestion but on how the teachers (or sometimes learners) view it and apply it.

Take Flanders' (1970) observation system for example. It may be applied in different ways and bring about different results. Bailey (1975) reports that "The practitioners of interaction analysis consistently agree that the Flanders system does not judge, interpret, or tell a teacher how to improve his teaching. It is simply one way of looking at teaching; only the teacher can place a value on what he does." (p337). However, doing interaction analysis by

either pre-service or in-service teachers has yielded positive results. Moskowitz (1968), for example, cited generally positive evaluation of their own performance from the teachers who have tried the FLint (Foreign Language interaction) system which was developed from Flanders system.

I hope this study may help teachers raise their awareness of how they use Qs in classrooms.

9.6.2 Wait-time

In both L1 and L2 research on teachers' Qs it is pointed out that teachers' wait-time after Qs is not long enough. But how long should it be? Three seconds or four seconds or more? There is no mention of it in any study to my knowledge. I think that the suggestion for teachers to extend their wait-times ought to be followed by a caution: teachers should be aware of their own normal wait-time before attempting any change rather than go for the set target of, say, 3 or 4 seconds.

I have suggested in the previous section that further research should help identify the type of Q whose effect would be enhanced with prolonged wait-time. In light of such research finding, wait-time should be exercised in relation to certain types of Q or the difficulty of Qs rather than followed rigidly after all Qs.

9.6.3 Formulation of questions

I have examined at length repetition and reformulation of Qs and the reasons for the teachers doing so. What I cannot categorically conclude is whether or not such use has pedagogic advantage in the L2 classroom. However, it should be clear to L2 teachers that for L2 learners, the target language used by teachers serves a double function: it conveys the subject matter to be learned and it provides an important source of the input that learners need in order to learn the language. "Speech becomes usable as input for language learning only when it has been produced with the learners' linguistic needs and limitations in mind (Fillmore 1982). Although the double function of target language use by teachers cannot often be separated, it is desirable that, regardless of which function is at work, Qs should be formulated with clarity which aims at ensuring comprehension on the part of the learner and guiding the learner to respond.

9.7 Summary of Chapter 9

In this chapter I first summarised and illustrated the main points of this research which are listed below:

- Q units are a common phenomenon in the data collected for this study and they may be common in other L2 classrooms.
- The Q unit as a unit of analysis does not alter the existing discourse analysis model.
- When taken into account in data analysis, Q units do affect response rate.
- The two key features involved in the analysis of Q units are pausing between Qs as a boundary marker between Q units, and repetition and reformulation of Qs.

I have also made a number of suggestions for research in the same or related areas.

- The notion of Q unit may be applied to the investigation of other aspects of L2 teacher talk.
- The study of repetition and reformulation of Qs could be extended beyond Q units, i.e. in Q sequences, and larger speech events.
- The study of wait-time or pausing associated with questioning requires consideration of more factors other than simply the time lapse.

The pedagogic applications are beyond the scope of this study. However, I did make some pedagogic suggestions (9.6). I believe that the suggestions for further research in 9.5, if pursued, would yield more pedagogic implications for improving classroom practice.

9.8 Concluding remarks

In this study I have looked at L2 teachers' use of Qs with the focus on Q units in teacher discourse. Existing theories on either discourse analysis or conversation analysis are inadequate to offer a clear description of or explanation for Q unit as a phenomenon and as a notion of linguistic analysis. There has also been little research done in this area. I hope this study has added to the understanding of and research in L2 classroom discourse.

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Appendix: Examples of strategic relationship between Qs in Q units

Transcription symbols:

Examples	***Explanation***
DH12-1bc-L:	Code of example(s)
[ ]	Author's observation notes/comments
[1.5]	Length of pause in seconds
Sss:	Number of students responding to elicitation
...	Utterances omitted
xxx	Unclear utterances
/ (before ?)	Rising intonation
\ (before ?)	Falling intonation
[b:-] or [b:*words*]	Teacher writes words on the board
words in italics [L1]	Utterances in students' L1
__?	Completion question (cf. 3.3.4)

- Some of student responses are presented for reference.
- Each participant in the class is represented by a letter with T representing the teacher
- Questions are marked with ? mark. Where elicitation was not in any interrogative form or with a rising intonation it is coded with (Q2), etc.

Levelling

HB2A-2cd-L
T: does everybody have some money? anybody have the correct money, the right money?
S: the correct money.

HB2A-2gh-L
T: who is next? who is the next one?
S: [action]

HB2A-2ijk-LL
T: is that [the change] right? is that correct? yes/^? marvellous...

HB2A-5ab-L
T: so, what's the situation? [1'] what's the situation? [1'] ...

HB2A-5def-LL
T: who do you think they are? any ideas? who are the men?...

HB2A-15gh-L
T: shall we start here? yeh/?

HB2A-17def-LL
T: did everybody manage to do it? [looking around] yeh/? yeh/?
Ss: [nod]/yes

HB2A-19fgh-LL
T: what is it? It's a kind of __ ? a more common name is ___ ? a scarf
Ss: scarf

HB2A-20cd-L
T: [drawing on the board] Can you [N] tell us? this is called a __?
N: fork

HB2A-23de-L
T: it's nearby. Oxford St. Oxford St.... what would you buy there? anybody know?
M: shoes.

HB2A-23fg-L
T: yes, you can. what else? what else?
Ss: xxxx

HB2A-25bc-L
T: Dolcis? anyone?
Ss: Dolcis

HB2A-26cd-L
T: again(Q1). sorry, I can't hear(Q2).
S: coat

HB2A-27ab-L
T: and the next? [-wt] she went to two shops and what was the next one?
S: Boots

HB2A-27klm-LL
T: Habitat and another shop? another one? Habitat and __?
M: furniture

HB2A-30fg-L
T: ...are there any Qs? [1.] Is that clear? [1.] what I'll do, I will ask the technician...

HB2B-1i2a-L
T. would you like to have this? this gives you a little map with directions. would you like to have that?
Ss: yeah.

HB2B-3ab-L
T: do you remember a few weeks ago I said that we would record you on the tape recorder and then we listen to you? do you remember?
Ssss: [laugh/smile]

HB2B-4fg-L
T: who would like to be first? Who wants to be first?
M: let me try

HB2B-5gh-L
T: Now, what did he buy? what did he recommend to buy?
Ssss: writing brush x 5.

HB2B-10de-L
T: could you understand? everybody?

HB2B-10fg-L
T: the speech clear/? was the speech clear\?
M: chopsticks [misunderstanding T's Q]

HB2B-10hi-L
T: now, what did he buy? what did he buy?
Ss: chopstick/ pair/ a pair of chopsticks.

HB2B-11de- L
T: and the last thing? what was the last thing?
S: it's a /ware/ the/ the /war/.

HB2B-12ij-L
T: what was the second thing? [1.] that was the embroidery [pointing the board] what was the second thing?
R: bamboo ware

HB2B-13ef-L
T: now, what was the third thing? what was her third thing?
Sss: peanut/peanut cake

HB2B-16ghi-LL
T: now let's try to help to learn from each other. now what's going wrong? You tell me(Q2)(?) What was going wrong?
Ssss: silk/...

HB2B-16jk-L
T: no. I want you to tell me what's going wrong(Q1). So now let's have 8 Ts. so what's going wrong?
R: [to J] please try again.

HB2B-18ab-L
T: is it right/? that's what you said? "I'm annoyed".
H: yes

HB2B-18def-LL
T: next one? number two? what did he buy?
Ss: silk

HB2B-18jk-L
T: yes. silk. can we hear again? [b:-] [to N] can we hear 'silk'?
N: silk.

HB2B-18lm-L
T: next? what was the next?
H: brokerages

HB2B-19ef-L
T: right. so what did he buy? [.5] what did he get?
Sss: pure silk ware/ silk

HB2B-20bc-L
T: yes/. P, what was it? what did he buy, the second thing? [2.]

HB4A-1hi-L
T: if you can't hear what somebody says, what do you say? [1.] if you can't hear or you don't understand, what do you say?
M: I'm afraid I can't xx

HB4A-1jj-L
T: Again(Q1). try again(Q2).
M: I'm afraid I can't xx

HB4A-2bb-L
T: more, continue.
S: I beg your pardon.

HB4A-2de-L
T: what else can you say, if you don't understand? Other ways?
G: could you slowly, could you say slowly?

HB4A-3ab-L
T: any more? can you think of any more? [4.]

HB4A-4aa-L
T: is everyone clear of what the aim of the game is? it's a kind of game, ... yes? [-R]

HB4A-4hii-LL
T: do we have problem? Is it moving? moving? [to group]

HB4A-8ef-L
T: now. what was the message here? you tell me. [1.5] what was the message from or what was the message from our student here?
Sss: x x

HB4A-9fg-L
T: what was it? [1.] what did you get?
J: yeh, yeh. Jan 15, at 10

HB4A-10jk-L
T: let's hear, let's hear his message(Q1). [1.5] what have you got?
Sss: [talking]

HB4A-11gh-L
T: what can you learn about that, about that exercise? obviously we had a problem here. what did you learn?

HB4A-12ab-L
T: can you just remind me which students are no.12? can you just put your hands up? no.12.

HB4A-15bc-L
T: ok. well done. ... let's check. ...P, now you started by saying "do you sell a bicycle?" tense. can you correct it? anybody? [2.5] no.

HB4B-1de-L

T: right. now, the word to eavesdrop. what, what do you think that means? to eavesdrop? [2.]

HB4B-2gh-L
T: anybody got any idea, [.5] how it's going to work? [.5] how are you going to understand the conversations? [2.] any ideas, X?
R: I just gave you example Mr Z had a telephone call from China. and I stayed in bed and overhear ..

HB4B-2lm-L
T: *{has anybody else overheard a conversation recently? [2.]}* anybody(Q1)?. that is a good example. [1.5] anybody(Q2)? [1.] ok. I'm sure...

HB4B-2nopq-LLL
T: ... curious. curious, anybody? [b:-] to be curious/? curiosity/? do you know the meaning? [2.]
M: carrect

HB4B-3cd-L
T: [b:-] no. anybody help? do you recognise this word? I don't recognise it.
M: maybe wrong spelling

HB4B-3hh-L
T: clear/? yeah/? [-R]

HB4B-4fgh-LL
T: ... now, where do you have manager then? what sort of place that has a manager? J, what sort of place has a manager?
S: shop.

HB4B-5bc-L
T. right. can you hear, by the way? can you hear clearly everybody? please tell me if it's either too loud or too soft. [-R]

HB4B-6efg-LL
T. it's a car number. so who is he ringing? [1.5] guess (Q2). now you have to guess(Q3). [3.]

HB4B-6klm-LL
T: if you have a car, you have to send it regularly, where do you send it? where does it, where do you take it? [.5] to be looked after? where would you be able to take it? ...

HB4B-8hi-L
T: what do you think? how much?
M: 15/50

HB4B-9eg-L
T: ...would you like to continue? what happened in the end?
H: he understand that there may be a mistake, and so, but he

HB4B-10hi-L
T: what do you call on the front of the car where you see the number? what do you call it?

HB4B-10qr-L

T: [was he] working class, middle class, upper class? any guesses?
Sss: middle; maybe middle; upper

HB4B-10ss-L
T: … now what does 'ghastly' mean? [1.] anybody? ghastly. ... means terribly or dreadful. ...

HB4B-11ccd-LL
T: got anything? anybody? P, have you got anything this time?
P: somebody phoned home. the lady is Mary Smith

HB4B-11fg-L
T: yes. right. Continue(Q1). can't stop there. let's have more(Q2).
P: so somebody want to speak to Mr Smith.

HB4B-13fg-L
T: [stop] what's her attitude now? what did she feel now?
H: maybe that man said sorry and she said it was very easy to make a mistake. [repetition of the recording as R]

HB4B-13ij-L
T: [stop] turn to your partner straight away and see if they've got anything. what could they be talking about? what might they be discussing about? [4.] any ideas? I think this is the most difficult one so far.
Ss: yes.

HB4B-14ij-L
T: you think he is receiving it. ok. [to S] you think he is making. anybody else? any feeling?
S: making

HB4B-15ij-L
T: he had read it 3 times. so what is his attitude? you can tell immediately. how does he feel?
H: impatient

HB4B-15lm-L
T: good. what is the x? what is the object that he is trying to get to work? it's suction pump switch. ... I'm not sure.

HB4B-15nn-L
T: what would you have a suction pump switch? anybody?

HB4B-15pr-L
T: connected to __? … pump is connected to what?
Sss: x x

HB4B-16def-LL
T: what is X sitting next to? what are you sitting next to? [students look puzzled] what's it behind you?
G: central heating

HB4B-16ij-L
T: [stop] now this is a common mistake. [b:-] what does I stand for? answer?
Sss: "what do you mean?" [repetition of what was heard]

HB4B-16ln-L
T: [b:-] what does 'I' stand for? … so what does 'I' stand for?
Q: x x

HB4B-17lm-L
T: yeah. so P, can you give us some idea? who do you think he is talking to?
P: I think he was talking to, the speaker talking to someone who can't, who can't let his wife know.

HB4B-18ef-L
T: can anyone help? can anybody help?
R: a man receive a phone call

HB4B-19cd-L
T: have you got anything to start? anything at all?
H: I think they talk about, can't decide xx. the woman cannot send the children. and the woman want him do it.

HB4B-20ab-L
T: who is she talking to? shall we establish again?
S: Peter

HB4B-20cd-L
T: Peter, yeah. she is talking to Peter. and who is Peter? Probably __?
M: Peter

HB4B-20jk-L
T: [stop] what's her attitude in the end? how does she feel about it?
Sss: xx

HB4B-20mn-L
T: sorry, again(Q1). could you say it again?.
G: this couple want to divorce.

HB4B-21ab-L
T: all right. good. ...I know that for some of you they are very difficult. I hope you don't feel too tired. do you feel tired after one and half hours of listening? do you feel tired?
G: interesting

HB4B-22bb-L
T: better. now. do you know the meaning? everyone?
R/S: yeah

HB4B-23ab-L
T: look at the box here.... first question. does it go left to right, or right to left? so does the code go from left to right or from right to left? we must decide. ...

HB4B-23fg-L
T: yes. have you got ten? [1.] have you actually got ten numbers?
M: zero

HB4B-24hii-LL

T: any Qs or is that clear? is that clear? yes?
[Ss: yes.]

HB8A-1fg-L
T: what happens then when a car is clamped? what happens to it? [1.5]

HB8A-1hi-L
T: do you know to clamp? the verb/? anybody? [2.]
L: [shook head]

HB8A-2cd-L
T: it's north, north of London. do you know what sort of air traffic it has? why do you want to go to Luton Airport? [2.] mainly holidays. holiday traffic. ...

HB8A-3ab-L
T: [b:Whipsnade] do you know this place? do you recognise it? [1.5]

HB8A-4cde-LL
T: can you remember what safari means? [1.] we did have this before Xmas. what does it mean? [1.] M, do you remember the meaning of safari? [1.5]

HB8A-4ijk-LL
T: yeah. what's a cave? ... what's a cave? J, do you know what a cave is?

HB8A-4no-L
Hellfire Cave. what's the opposite of hell? [1.5] opposite of hell?
M: x

HB8A-8de-L
T: can anybody help? how do you pronounce that?
Ssss: Wharf

HB8A-13aa-L
T: [to group] are you ready? are you ready?

HB8A-15bc-L
T: ... rather than taking some pictures, what's more usual for pictures? take some __?
G: photos

HB8B-5ef-L
T: do you have in China? do you have Planetarium?
Ssss: yes; in Beijing.

HB8B-6jk-L
T: where is it? anybody know?
M: [to J] you guess, you guess

HB8B-8de-L
T: what other big stores do you know? what other names?
R: Harrodes

HB8B-14fg-L
what do famous people like kings do at competitions? can you guess?

L: the king like to watch ...

HB8B-15hi-L
T: what's anarchy? [b:-] anybody know?
H: without government.

HB8B-16ij-L
T: no. he has twin daughters. I see. were they identical? are they identical?
R: they have same face

HB8B-17de-L
T: now, why were they separated? very important political reasons. remember it was 1900. ... now, why would they have been separated?
M: the country must not have two king.

HB8B-17gh-L
T: ...genetic make-up. now, genetic make-up/? what does that mean? genetic.
Sss: *yi chuan [L1]*

HB8B-17ij-L
T: ...(genetic determination) so how can we explain that? how can we explain all this?
R: God's willing.

HB8B-18de-L
T: who is the other person? who is the other person?
S: it's a woman.

HB8B-18fg-L
T: well done. yes. good. first name? what's his first name?
H: Abraham.

HB8B-20abc-LL
T: ... now, what's an astrologer? [1.5] what is an astrologer? astrologer, second stress. [1.5] Anybody know? [1.5] it's a very ancient, very old belief which ...
Sss: ah. yes; yes

HB8B-21de-L
T: who by? who killed him?
Sss: x xx

HB8B-22ghL
T: [to M] do you have difficulty with the words? M, do you have difficulty with the words?
M: Sheriff

HB10A-2cd-L
T: where is the main stress [for Elm Park]? [1.] where is the main stress?
G: park

HB10A-3fg-L
T: ... now what about this one? [b:Greenwick] would you try that?
P/Ss: [try]

HB10A-4bb-L
T: ... we discussed it in relation to the London Planetarium. yes/? you have found out, L, you knew how much it would cost. remember/? [.5] have you visited it?
P: no. it is very expensive

HB10A-4kl-L
T: well, what is Venice? Where is Venice?
Sss: Italy

HB10A-8cd-L
T: is it for road or for rail? [1.] do you know\? [2.] road. road.

HB10A-8lm-L
T: so are the 12 parts equal to the sum? or in other words are they the same as the sum or are they greater or are they less than the sum?
H: same

HB10A-9cdef-LLL
T: can you try again? I'm not quite sure what you mean. try again (Q2). it's a difficult concept. try to explain (Q3).
J. lot of gene.

HB10A-9jk-L
T: Y, did you have any feelings for the title there? did you get any responsive thought for the title? ...
Y: [shook head]

HB10A-10bc-L
T: good. now, who is John Locke? [1.0] John Locke? [1.5] famous English philosopher.
...

HB10A-20cd-L
T: what language is that, 'a talula rasa'? what language is "a talula rasa"? Latin.

HB10A-21hij-LL
T: so what sort of area would Plymouth be? M, any idea? what is it like, this area? [3.]

HB10A-22bc-L
T: are you doing lots of written work for Donald? Dr. Haws? any written homework?
L: for Dinny.

HB11A-3cd-L
T: can you read my writing? sorry. not very clear. [1.] anybody recognise it?
M: [read]

HB11A-5cde-LL
T: yeah/ en, what part of London is it in? what area? [1.] anybody?
R: near x

HB11A-6ab-L
T: what is it? what is Trocadero?
R: it's a shopping centre and a place for amusement

HB11A-8gg-L
T: let's hear your plan (Q1). P, can we hear yours?

HB11A-9cde-LL
T: [b:16:00] if you read that, what do you say? [1.5] how do read that? how do you say it?
J: 16 x R: 4pm

HB11A-9ij-L
T: [b:17:05] how would I say that, J? how would I say that?
J: seventeen five.

HB11A-9ll-L
T: [Board: T writes oh for 0] is it clear? 17 oh? ...
M: yeah

HB11A-10bc-L
T: ... what about [b:16:30] this one, P? what do you think of this one?
P: half past 16

HB11A-12ab-L
T: in the evening. yeah. which is simpler? which one is more complicated? [1.5] this is simpler.
Sss: this is simpler

HB11A-12de-L
T: about perhaps 10/^? after 10? [1.5] 9 is still evening.
R: yes. x x

HB11A-15jk-L
T: yes/^? you know what I mean when I talk about context (Q2). the situation of the conversation.
Ss: yes

HB11A-16ab-L
T: [b:0:02] what's that? what's zero o 2?
Ss: zero o 2

HB11A-16eef-LL
T: well, where is it? anybody? M, where is it? ...
M: in the early morning

HB11A-16gh-L
T: ... is that clear? is that all right?
Q: yes.

HB12A-1ab-L
T: is Zhang coming today\? is Zhang coming/?
R: I suppose he is on the way.

HB12A-1ef-L
T: OK. how are you all everybody? How are you/?
Sss: fine [x5]

HB12A-1hi-L
T: what, what happened last night? what was it last night?
R: we went to the Royal Festival Hall and enjoyed a concert.

HB12A-2cd-L
T: and then, what else happened? there was piano music. what else?

HB12A-3klm-LL
T: what else was recommended? next subject/? the next programme rather/?
L: x x

HB12A-3ef-L
T: and as well? there are two types, two sports. H, what was the next one?[4.]
H: it's the ITV

HB12A-4gh-L
T: and the last programme, P? last programme?
P: On channel 4, Hamlet

HB12A-5de-L
T: well. what ARE the organisations of MI5, the CIA and the KGB? what are they?

HB12A-6de-L
T: now what about world in action? anybody got any information for that?
H: investigation in industry.

HB12A-9gh-L
T: [stop] what did she say? [-wt] what's her comment?
Sss: rather than me

HB12A-9mno-LL
T: so, can you guess the meaning? what does it mean? P? what do you think?
P: I think the lady maybe like to join them.

HB12A-10ab-L
T: would she like to join them or not? [negative evaluation] if she says this, do you imagine she wants to join them or she doesn't want to join them?
P: she want join them [failed to detect]

HB12A-11ef-L
T: again (Q1). sorry, I missed that (Q2).
G: 360 angle

HB12A-12ef-L
T: H, can you explain? can you try to explain? it's difficult this one. so we ...
H: allegory is something. I'm not sure. but I think it's something like consist or assemble.

HB12A-14de-L
T: does everyone understand allegory? Sss: [nod]
T: yes/? maybe/?
H: shall we say 'metaphor'?

HB12A-15cd-L

T: cast of __? ... cast of ___?

HB12A-15gh-L
T: and what's the opposite of well-known? the opposite? [2.] [-R] little known [b: --] so, let's see if you can hear that.

HB12A-15kl-L
T: at the bottom of page 31. 'what happened at the end?' [textbook Q]. bottom of p31. the next page. 'what happened at the end?' have a look at that and we'll read it together. xx

HB12A-16ij-L
T: what, where, what's a vicarage? anybody? ...

HB12A-17def-LL
T: now, how are we going to make a decision between the two? Enn, H, what do you know about Murder in the Vicarage? Tell us what we've got here, the information.

HB12A-18cd-L
T: you've heard the word 'worker'. There are two meanings of this key word. so you've heard that key word. Are there any more key words? say what you've heard (Q2).
H/L: calculate

HB12A-19ced-LL
T: you know what bees do. they go from flower to flower to flower. what are they looking for when they go to the flower? do you know the name? what are they looking for?
Sss: hua1 fen3, hua1 mi4 [L1], honey

HB12A-20de-L
T: how many? how many?
H: 15/50? thousand

HB12A-20op-L
T: what are they describing? it will continue to be unsettled. we want to know what it is (Q2).

HB12A-21fg-L
T: patch, yes. what sort of patch? plural patches [b:-] what sort of patches?
J: freezing

HB12A-26bb-L
T: [look around] no? no/?
M: difficult. difficult to say who is/

HB12B-3cd-L
T: [explain the saying] ... cast off... you know what it means? this word/?
R: cast off, to cast off? to throw it

HB12B-3ij-L
now, were you, were you able to finish the chart? [-wt] [textbook exercise about favourites] have you been able to finish them?
R: some of them

HB12B-7ab-L

T: can you describe that English service to me, M? do you know what it is?
M: that's a progra, progra/ R: /programme.

HB12B-7fg-L
yes. and is it on everyday? is it on everyday?
Ss: yes
M: not every day

HB12B-10ab-L
T: could we have some other favourite TV shows from China? P, we haven't heard from you. what is your favourite programme in China?

HB12B-12hi-L
T: OK. what about some other famous, favourite Chinese television shows? H, anything you enjoy? [2.5] particularly?
H: I suppose just this programme is very famous.

HB12B-13fg-L
T: there are different programmes. what about for you two [to G/M] what are the favourite programmes?
G: I like the Beijing TV programme for 'we meet tonight'.

HB12B-17cd-L
T: what year was it? ... what year is it? the drama.
R: Ah. x

HB12B-26ab-L
this comprehensive school. now. which political party do you think was in favour of this move? [-wt] if you think the Labour party in England is broadly left and Conservative party is broadly right. which party would be in favour of the comprehensive system?
Sss: Labour

HB12B-26ik-L
when were they born? that was important for us to have a, have an idea of them historically, ... when were they born?
Sss: yeh, 1930, 1040

HB12B-27kl-L
T: now anything? any details about what happened?
S: x R: no, bring some toys

HB12B-28ab-L
T: was that possible? was that possible?
R: impossible. impossible.

HB12B-30fh-L
T: ... where is the Lake District? ... know where it is?

HB12B-30ij-L
T: good. what was special about that holiday? what could she remember?
H: had breakfast with his parents.

HB12B-31ii-L

T: what does it mean? could you explain to us? M doesn't understand.
L: hai4 xiu1[L1]

HB12B-32bc-L
T: what did she teach? subject. do you know the subject?
G: math, math

HB12B-32ef-L
T: why didn't she like her? why didn't she like her?
L: /not patience

HB12B-33ghi-LL
T: [b:-] now, what's teddy? what's a teddy, do you know? Y, do you know what a teddy is?
Y: a bear

HB12B-37gh-L
T: yes. yes. she calls herself [b:-] a bit of a goody-goody. so what's a goody-goody? what's a goody-goody?
M: bright H: nice

HB12B-38de-L
T: ... enjoy the sunshine. what are you going to do? [-wt] any plans for the weekend?
S: enjoy the sunshine

DT2-3cd-L
T: 70. "Roberta didn't like ... but he is soon __? he is soon __?
S: B. L: got used to

DT2-4cf-L
T: By the middle of the next century, several distant planets__? [1.].... anybody?
Ss: C.

DT2-5bc-L
T: wait a minute, say it again (Q1). why is ___?
G: yeh [didn't catch the Q]

DT2-5jk-L
T let's try it. anyone? any other?
R: C.

DT2-6ghi-LL
T: 85. "... it gave himmm __?, I mean the meaning here is it revealed the truth... do you know that one? it gave him __?
S: over

DT2-7ef-L
T: ... Do you have any thoughts about that one\? [1.5] do you have any thoughts about that one/?
Y: [shook head].

DT2-8ij-L

T: I just want to say. have any of you visited in London, have you visited the Museum of London? it's near St. Paul's Cathedral. Has any of you visited it? [.5] well the Museum ...

DT2-9efe-LL
T: what happens in autumn? [1.5] anybody? what happens in autumn or in winter?
J: fall.

DT2-10aa-L
T: 94. ...what would you say for 94? Archaeologists are especially __ [3.]
S: A.

DT2-11de-L
T: Let's see. Q, is it yours? I know I've got your name. Is this yours?
Q: yeh.

DT2-11fghi-LLL
T: I know this one is yours. was it about the ... boy? was that your passage from the newspaper? was it? it is yours?
Q: yes.

DT2-12j13ab-LL
T: the next one... if you watch me, I'm tearing the paper, and I'm tearing it in __? we had it... but the gloves simply broke up. can you remember the word? her gloves were in __?.

DT2-13cd-L
T: next one, what do we call it when you get hit and you get hit, and it goes blue, and then green, and then purple? that's no.3. what do you call it?

DT2-14bc-L
T: can you remember the verb? he said [slowly] I'm not __?

DT2-14de-L
T: ... can you give the word in English schools when we divide the children into groups. you have A something, and B something? ... we can use it as a noun and a verb. the class can be ___?
Ss: [murmuring 'stream']

DT2-14gg-L
T: ... can you give me another word for lack? ... so just write down the meaning of lack.

DT2-14hij-LL
T: and at the end, ... can you remember what he did to his pronunciation? he did change his pronunciation a little. can you remember the verb? he says in fact I only __? maybe that one is too difficult he said he softened it. ...

DT2-15mn-L
T: the machine was jammed up. what does that mean? the machines __?
L: the machines struck

DT2-16def-LL
T: the next one is ... "he might slacken off", which means he might __ ? … he might __? slacken off __? he might relax....

DT2-16gh-L
T: Can anyone remember the verb there? he said 'I'm not __'? well, he said I'm not made out for ...

DT2-16ijk-LL
T: grin/? [eliciting meaning] grin/? what does it mean?
L: laugh. .

DT2-16mn-L
T: did anyone get that one about what he did with his accent? he said I only __? [1.] toned down,...

DT2-17de-L
T: and, that was the end, wasn't it? was that the last one?
L: the last one.

DT2-17ghij-LLL
T: well, I don't know. the question of learning vocabulary. ... do any of you have any good ideas which might help the others about learning vocabulary? I mean... does anyone have any other tips or pieces of advice about any particular techniques? Y, do you have any particular techniques?/
L: /it's most problem

DT2-18efg-LL
T: what's the problem for the children [1.5] in an Asian family? [1.] I mean the parents... but what about the children? what's the problem for the children?
M. two situations

DT4-6ce-L
T: progressively? ... progressively?
H: increasingly

DT4-9ef-L
T: ... let's take another situation. if you telephone an office at 9 o'clock in the morning and there is no answer, what might you observe? what might you conclude?

DT4-10cd-L
T: I'll just read you some little situations, and then, is it OK? is that OK for everybody?
Sss: nod/yes

DT4-10ij-L
T: which one? he __?
S: must be out

DT4-11ce-L
T: sorry? ... sorry, I didn't hear you (Q2).

DT4-11gh12abLLL
T: if you are at a theatre, and at the end of the play, there is little clapping, very little, what would you say? what could you conclude? [1.] anybody? what could you say?

DT4-12cd-L

T: so you go to the theatre and at the end of the play there is very little clapping, you could say the audience __? [1.5] the audience __?
M: are not very interested

DT4-12gh-L
T: they can't have enjoyed the play very much. what about the opposite? there is a lot of clapping at the end. so what would you conclude? [2.]
G: play must be wonderful.

DT4-13bc-L
T: you __? [1.] [repeat the situation] you __?
Ssss: you must leave/lost, left,

DT4-13de-L
T: ... you see somebody yawning. [repeat the situation] so you say she __? try, try to make the example with both. if you see somebody yawning, you could say __?
J: she must have be ill

DT4-13fg-L
T: she must have what? she must __?
J: she must fall ill

DT4-14bc-L
T: what did he say about the difference between the written account and the television account? J, can you tell us.
J: he think newspaper give full report on ...

DT4-14hi-L
T: impact on the reader. ... why? why does he think the written account is more powerful than the television? ...

DT4-15abc-LL
T: "the passive majority is slightly conditioned". is that OK/^ the word conditioned? because it's very difficult to think of a synonym. it's a bit like brainwashing, not exactly strong. is that ok, that bit\? ...

DT4-15ij-L
T: I want to hear from someone who hasn't spoken. Q, what about you? what would you say about some of the differences?
Q: I think in China television advertise, advertisement is less than British TV.

DT4-16cd-L
T: ... is it because the Chinese authorities want to keep a low level of violence? is it, is it because there is control on the /level of violence.
Q: I think in China information office check some film or video more

DT4-16jk-L
T: and again, do you think the violent videos, are they controlled? I mean do you think there are probably fewer violent videos on sale or for hire in China than here.
H: not really

DT4-17cdef-LLL

T: ... are there any things that you like very much about British TV and on the other hand you don't like and that you think are bad? any other observations about British TV? X, what about you? what's your opinion about British TV?

DT4-21ab-L
T: G, where was it? where was it?
G: I went to Bastenstock.

DT6-1f2a-L
T. shall I suggest Tuesday morning or Tuesday afternoon either before your class or after your class? shall I suggest that?
R: after class is better

DT6-3bc-L
T. is my writing big enough? is my writing okay?
Ss: yeh/yeh

DT6-4no-L
T. so which did you think? A,B,C,D?
Ssss: C.D.

DT6-5ab-L
T. I think D. because...does everyone agree there? yes/?

DT6-5lm-L
T. ...ok. then what else? then he buys __?
R: 69

DT6-7cd-L
T. what about 5? he was __?
Ssss: A.D.

DT6-7lm-LL
T. ok. ...so good __? how would it go on? so good __?
Ss: was

DT6-9de-L
T. ...G, try that one. such -__? the same verb. you just keep the same verb. such __?
Sss: /was

DT6-11bc-L
T. ... 'straight'. what do you think 'straight' means in this fashion? in this context\? ... straight/?
R: not very good.

DT6-11de-L
T. can you give me any of the possible reasons that he gave there why he became a criminal? can anyone give any of the reasons? H?
H: the main reason is he hate the authority

DT6-11hi-L
T. what does he say about the environment? he says "..." can you remember anything he said about the environment?

H: full of poverty, stealing

DT6-12jk-L
T. any Qs/? OK/?

DT6-12n13a-L
T. can anybody give another word with the same meaning? he says "...to defy authority", to defy?
H: to fight against

DT6-13jk-L
T. when he came back which two things did he begin selling? stealing and selling? [1.] he began selling /clothing
Sss: clothing coupons and petrol

DT6-14abc-LL
T. how did he break into flats? G, can you tell me how did he break into flats? [1.5] L, can you tell me? [1.5]

DT6-15ghi-LL
T. what is the dawn? what is the dawn? literally what's the meaning of the dawn?
H: before the day time

DT8-3bb-L
T: they used to __? [1.] they used to __?
M: cook

DT8-3no4a-LL
T: what about question form and what about the negative form for this particular structure? what about the question form? .... what about the negative form? [3.] they are, I mean...

DT8-4bc-L
T: ... you can use "used". can anybody tell me how we would use it? H, could you tell me how we would use it?
H: first sentence they used to have candles. we can say they used to not have candles.

DT8-4defg-LLL
T: can you try and find a few more examples thinking of life in China 150 years ago? Can you find any more examples of different ways that people used to live, different things they used to use, different things they used to do, [1.] different jobs they used to do,[1.] different ways of dressing, [1.] ways of eating? can you think of any more examples? [1.5] what people used to do? [5.5]

DT8-5ef-L
T: Y, would you say about that, what I was saying about the negative in the question? do you think you hear negative questions much often used?
Y: no.

DT8-5hi-L
T: this is the question. "what do you find in Indian food?" I'm just going to put a few things on the board. what do you find in Indian food?
M: /koru/

DT8-6hi-L
G: I went to India.
T: did you\? did you\? because I also went to India. ...

DT8-6mno-LL
T: ... so you can say "at first I find all these things [on board] strange, but gradually __?" can you go on? "gradually I___?"
Sssss: I get used to/ I'm/ used to

DT8-7fg-L
T: are you sure? please ask. is there a problem?
X: [-R]

DT8-8gh-L
T: ok. can you just say "now I have got used to the sales woman checking the notes"? can you just say that? I've got used to
R: yeah. now I've got used to /sales woman checking the /notes

DT8-9lm-L
T: in China, is it the same queue you have to form? is it the same in China if you wait, do people form a regular queue? ...

DT8-11bc-L
T: 9:25. and what does the young man on the left look like? what does he look like?
M: guilt

DT8-11ijk-LL
T: landlord? landlord? R, did you say landlord?
R: yeah.

DT8-12cd-L
T: can we begin? can we begin?
M: ok.

DT8-12hij-LL
T: the boss __? say it again? the boss __?
J: the boss stand

DT8-13efg-LL
T: can anyone think of anything else the boss might have said? can you think of anything? that was good. but can you think of anything that the boss might have said?
H: you mean the boss said to the young boy. oh, sth else?

DT8-14bc-L
T: to try his luck. good. you could say he was feeling __? what did he feel?
R: very sad.

DT8-14cd-L
T: R, do you want to go on? or do you, N?
R: I want to say one more thing.

DT8-14gh-L
T: what might that person be called? can anyone think of a name for the man in the bottom?

L: staff

DT8-17ed-L
T: that's fine. anything else\? anything else? ok.

DT8-17fgh-LL
T: ok. now, who can do the last one? what about G and X? can you just do the last one without any preparation? the young man - [knock]
Sss: knock

DT8-18cd-L
T: the opposite of polite? he had been very __?
G: surprise

DT8-18fghi-LLL
T: ... what about her expression in no.11? how would you describe her expression? [1.5] she was __? [1.] what's her expression? [2.] no/?
M: angry.

DT8-19mn-L
T: and if you'd like to come, do you have in your house where you are living do you have a tape recorder? [1.] do you have a cassette recorder?
Ssss: yes

DT8-20fg-L
T: could you give me an example of severe measure/? [1.] I mean the managers are worried, ... severe measures/?
L: strict measures

DT8-21abc-LL
T: ok. what do you think that? what does it suggest? don't look at any more. most people don't steal food, they steal clothes, books and records. what does that, what does that piece of information suggest? [1.] about stealing.
M: the high price

DT8-21de-L
T: which? which are essential?
L/S: clothes

DT8-21lm-L
T: supermarkets in London, are they organised in the same way as supermarkets in China? is the, what we call the layout, the organisation of the shop, the shelves, the displays, is it very much the same in China?
Ssss: yes. R: no exactly

DT8-22ab-L
T: Tescos and Sainsbury's, is that more or less the same in China? [1.5] is it, London's Tescos and Sainsbury's, is it more or less the same in China?
R: not quite same

DT8-23de-L
T: do you know the opposite of lenient? the opposite of lenient? [1

DT8-23ij-L
T: I mean here, there is such pressure on people to buy, buy and buy. for example, [ads on TV and supermarkets]. is it the same in China? is it the same pressure?
Sss: yes/ the same

DT8-23kl-L
T: do you have any information about shoplifting in China? about shoplifting from supermarkets for example? from shops\
Sss: very difficult.

DT8-24ab-L
T: have you got it? see where I am?
R: where?

DT8-24de-L
T: ... so, what's the meaning of tolerant here? "it's been fairly tolerant with shoplifters". you could say it's been fairly __? [1.5] lenient.
Ss: lenient

DT8-25hi-L
T: if he decided to give a deterrent sentence to a shoplifter, what do you think it might be? [1.5] a deterrent sentence. a deterrent sentence is the complete opposite of a lenient sentence. so what do you think?

DT8-26fg-L
T: which kind of political party would he belong to? [.5] which political party would he support? [1.5] ...

DT8-26kk-L
T: nnn, not in the middle. radical/? [1.] radical/?

DT8-26nop-LL
T: ...? who would like to be the lawyer for the prosecution? the lawyer attacking. and who would like to be the lawyer for the defending? [1.] who would like to be the lawyer attacking? ...

DT8-27ab-L
T: who is going to be the lawyer for the defence? who is going to be no.3, the lawyer for the defence? ...

DT8-27gh-L
T: what about L? could you be no.7? ...

DT8-27mn-L
T: who is going to be, P, could you be the manager or X could you be the manager of the store? one or the other of you?...

DT10-3cd-L
T: what do we mean when we talk about Public Schools? what do we mean?
Ssss: private/ national/ opposite

DT10-3gh-L

T: was it in one of the talks or was it from DH or HB? [1.] did you come across that with DH or HB or /was it me?

DT10-4ab-L
T: do you know what percentage of children in Britain go to private schools? go to fee-paying, private schools. you know what percentage?
G: 5.

DT10-4ij-L
T: ... How many MPs are there in England? can you tell me how many members of the Parliament in Westminster? it's something like 630.... [no R]

DT10-12de-L
T: after education, shall we look at workers and workless? look at the people with jobs and the people without jobs. shall we look at that one?
Ss: yes. OK

DT10-14def-LL
T: what does it mean "showing off"? anybody? L, can you explain "showing off"?
L: only in Chinese

DT10-15cf-L
T: who would like to talk... anybody?
S: x x x

DT10-17ef-L
T: yes. I wondered what was the reason from the beginning (Q1). why these 12 animals were chosen? ...

DT10-18gh-L
T: ok. I've got it. ... what is the characteristic of a snake? what is the characteristic of a snake?

DT10-19kl-L
T: what about the mouse? what about the mouse?
J: mouse thief

DT10-20ab-L
T: and lamb? lamb?
R: lamb.

DH2-2bc-L
T: and what happened? [1.]It's good for your English. Tell me what happened.[2]

DH2-3efgh-LLL
T: can you think of a general word we would say? [.5] I don't want the name of actual thing. I mean there are special words, which, you know, we would only use in church. What would you say? [0.5] or did, you saw the rector of the university. he also, I assume, was wearing, [.5] what? think of a word.
L. guang [gown]

DH2-3kl-L

T: whereas the word I would use for priests would be robes. do you know it? do you know robes/?
[Ss shaking heads]

DH2-4ab-L
T: no/? Robes, I think, almost always in plural. you know robes.
S: no

DH2-4jk-L
T: it's very strange spelling. [seeing L attempt to pronounce] try it. [to L] try.
Ss: chrus/ kaus

DH2-5cc-L
T: I'll put it on the board. did you know it? a choir? because the spelling will surprise you. [T writing on board]

DH2-8cd-L
T: do you know the collective noun? do you know that? ...

DH2-9abc-LL
T: a group of people at football match, at the football match. [1.5] what do we call them. people who are watching football. not audience in a theatre. not congregation, that's in church. 20 thousand people watching football. who are they? [2.]

DH2-10cde-LL
T: the archbishop of__? of __?

DH2-10hi-L
T: ... it's not 100 percent final, is it? do you know?

DH2-12cef-LL
T: [looking around] yes/? no/? yes/?
Ssss: [nod/shake heads]

DH2-13aa-L
T: what? say it.
H: that's great.

DH2-13bc-L
T: No.3. I don't know if you know the phrase 'the odds against it'. did you know it?
L. [nod]

DH2-14ab-L
T: any other words anywhere? ... any other words?

DH4-1ef-L
T: yes. ... last year. we had about 13/? was it more?
L/Ss: more/yes

DH4-2fgi-LLL
T: [exercise Q] It was not my favourite opera but I did enjoy the __? what did we say? ... the __?
R: dress.

DH4-3ab-L
T: can somebody explain it? [to H] you tell us what it means, an auction? I know /x
H: /to sell something by...

DH4-3de-L
T: say it(Q1). what did you say?
G: [smile]

DH4-5jk-L
T: no.10. we can have all sorts of answers, can't we\? ... we can have more than three, can't we\?
R: director.

DH4-6cd-L
T: now, instruments. do you play any? [1.5] string, wind, keyboard. play any instruments?
Ss: no.

DH4-7hi-L
T: play with the __? the __ [gesture]?
S: bow

DH4-8jk-L
T: ... compelling? compel?
R: force

DH4-8l9a-L
T: suppose I say "it's a very compelling film", do you know what I mean\? can you think what I mean? compel means to force. to make you do something.

DH4-9ii-L
T: second rate? second rate meaning?
M: not first rate.

DH4-9pqr-LL
T: revolting? revolting?

DH4-10cdef-LL
T: revolting, you feel__? [1.] can you give me a word? I felt __?

DH6-3cd-L
T: haven't they told you about the examinations and system? no/? I thought people have given you information about the system in an English school.
Ssss: yes. yeah.

DH6-3ef-L
T: what's no.2? which languages can you speak? now, first of all /in two
Ssss: Chinese

DH6-3ij-L
T: so what could we have for games? [1.5] what do we know? [1.5]

DH6-4ab-L

T: well, what's the difference between game and sport? ... what's the different between game and sport?
R: it's dif. I think T: /I think

DH6-6def-LL
T: now, no.7 "How do you come to class?" how did you express this? what did you put? you need a phrase.
R: we come to class by bus

DH6-6hi-L
T: what would you say? "where do you prefer to spend the holidays?" [textbook questions]
G: park.

DH6-6kl-L
T: what about if you say sea? you'd like to spend your holidays, what's the expression?
S: seaside

DH6-9abcd-LL
T: "what do you think was the main cause of pollution?" [textbook Q] now, here I don't know whether you have an article or not. what could you write? the main cause of the pollution is what?

DH6-9ef-L
T: yes. I wonder if you know the phrase for the smoke and smell of petrol from cars. do you know the word? petrol __?
Sss: petrol

DH6-10cde-L
T:... can you think of some that have "the" in English? [1.] France is not the France. ...there are some countries where we say "the". can you think of some examples? you don't say the China, you say China. ...
L: people say China, the full name, the People's Republic of China.

DH6-10ij-L
T: the British Isles. have you heard of that/ the British Isles? no/? [1.] I think I've said this before. ... the USSR

DH6-11hh-L
T: "normally have an acute sense of" __? hearing or the hearing?
R: sense of the hearing

DH6-14eg-L
T: did you get those? ... is it clear the last one?
L: "golfers are /the attractive

DH9-1ab-L
T: ... where would you generally use 'consume'? [1.] "he consumed --?" [4.]

DH9-1de-L
T: suppose I say 'he consumes -'? what, for example? [2.5] [-R]

DH9-3cd-L

T: complaint about the goods should be made to the seller, not the __? [1.5] remember the three?

DH9-3hj-L
T: right. creator? … creator of __?
J: producer, producer

DH9-4bb-L
T: no. do you know the saying? [1.5] ... somebody is always right [1.5], there is one word actually (Q2).
R: the customer

DH9-5aa-L
T: no. 21. [read] transaction? [1.5] transaction? every purchase made.
J. deal

DH9-6bc-L
T: no. [to L] do you? do you think English food is tasteless?
L: yeh

DH9-8ij-L
T: do you know the fast xxx? x, do you know the name?
Ss: no.

DH9-9cd-L
T: what's the different? [1.5] what would you answer? you get something very different.

DH9-12cc-L
T: what would we have? obviously if we had a most traditional English dinner, what would we have for the main course?
G. beef

DH9-12de-L
T: we have roast beef. now. what would you begin with at the beginning? what would you have?
S: wine

DH12-1bc-L
T: you don't know the name Whitaker. Whitaker is the name of an editor or producer. do you know Almanac? do you know the word?
Ss: Almanac

DH12-3bc-L
T: [to H] you liked it, did you? you preferred it?
H: because the player get together with the -

DH12-6fg-L
T: do you know the verb to 'recite'? the verb underneath. [1.5] do you know the verb to 'recite'?
Ss: recite.: speech song

DH12-10ef-L
T: ... what does "it's" refer to? [read] what does "it's" refer to? [1.5]

DH12-11fg-L
T: 'had I seen him', have you learned that? [1.5] you haven't heard the 'should' one\?
Ss: yes. [meaning no]

DH12-12kl.-L
T: ah, can you give the word x? if it had not been __? [3.]
G: a readable book.

DH12-15abc-LL
T: [can you think of a different word this time? something that means although or but. can you think of something else? can you think of something for a change?
J: and [not heard]

Narrowing

HB2A-5bc-N
T: what's the situation? [1'] where are we?

HB2A-27cd-N
T: [stop] right. did you get any more? [1.5.] no.6, the shop?
S: Debraham.

HB2B-2fg-N
T: is there anything you want to ask about either of those notices? you are clear/^?
Sss: yeah

HB2B-3hi-N
T: [to class] how are we? are we nearly ready?

HB2B-13kl-N
T: what was it? [1.] first of all?
Ss: [Rs] (precious) xxx

HB2B-20de-N
T: well done. ... what was it? that was the type of the mammal, but what was the article, that he suggested?
Ss: souvenir [not noticed by T]

HB2B-20hi-N
T: OK. alright everybody. what did you think about that? [1.5] did you all enjoy it?
Ssss: yes/enjoy it, very

HB4A-3kl-N
T: what was the word? was it village?
Sss: yes; village.

HB4A-5de-N
T: [to Q/group] what are you waiting here? are we still passing?
Ss: yes.

HB4A-7gh-N
T: what was it? was it correct?

H: not correct. miss something

HB4A-9ab-N
T: how far did it get? did it get here?
Sss: yes

HB4A-10de-N
T: there's quite a few blockages in the message. yes, right. ok. now. do we have, we have 1,2,3,4, yes. what about the message here? how far did it get?
Sss: no, no. [laugh] here

HB4A-11hi-N
T: what did you learn? anything interesting?

HB4A-14ab-N
T: then, L, you said, "I don't got so much money". can you correct that? not 'got', I don't __(Q2)? he wanted 50. you said "no, I don't got so much money".
R: I haven't got

HB4B-6mn-N
T: where would you be able to take it? to a __?
S: garage

HB4B-7abc-NN
T: good. so what does MOT stand for? [b:- Ministry of -?] guess?
J: opposition [?]

HB4B-10ij-N
T: what do you call it? the number __?[1.5] plate.
Ss: plate

HB4B-10kl-N
T: just you tell me what were the important clues for us for that conversation? let's check again. what are the clues? [2.5]

HB4B-10nopq-NNN
T: oh. by the way, any ideas of what type of person who is speaking? What class? could you tell it at all by his accent, the way he is speaking, style of speaking? [1.] working class, middle class, upper class?

HB4B-11kl-N
T: yes. good. what was her attitude? was she pleased, happy, angry, shocked?
Ss: both shocked and angry. Q: at first angry. later think it's important

HB4B-12de-N
T: [stop] so what's her attitude? now she is getting __?
Ssss: angry.

HB4B-13op-N
T: now. what do you think, the rest of you? is he in his home or is he at work?
Ss: at work

HB4B-14bc-N

T: what are they talking about? could they be talking about job?
Q: one man, I think, want to do something another man phone, called, told him something how can he do these things, some different x

HB4B-14de-N
T: ok. well done. there is something about instruction, isn't there\? ... anybody got anything else?
L: speaking, he want speaking to the man, his x is not working. something wrong

HB4B-14kl-N
T: you think he is making. anything about his attitude? is he happy or irritated, upset?
M: he is making a call, because he don't understand something right x. telephone sb. to tell him.

HB4B-15efg-NN
T: if you, what do you need when you start working with a difficult computer? what do you need in the beginning? you need a book of --?
S: instruction

HB4B-17jk-N
T: ... from intonation, the way he is speaking, so who is he talking to? is it personal or public?
Sss: [giggled]

HB4B-18ab-N
T: yes. just careful with the grammatical construction. I know what you mean. can you make the grammatical construction better? he was talking to -? ...

HB4B-24lm-N
T: are you going to celebrate? are you going to have a party?
Ssss: yes. P: there is a party

HB8A-4fg-N
T: we have to go on safari. where do you go on safari? which part of the world? [2.]
Africa.

HB8A-3ef-N
T: now, next one [b:Knebworth House] [to M] why do you put this? do you know it?
M: Knebworth [He misunderstood the Q]

HB8A-1bc-N
T: ... I have to put more money (in the metre). if I don't, what would happen? do you know what would happen if I don't?
P: maybe you pay a lot of money to the policeman

HB8B-13bc-N
T: what did they notice? what did they see immediately? [1.5]

HB8B-15fg-N
T: the area of politics. a political belief. so what does an anarchist believe in? [1.5] what type of society? [1.] related to anarchy.

HB8B-22ab-N

T: he freed slaves. what did Kennedy do? [1.5] the black people in America were not slaves but they were -? [1.] segregated.

HB10A-3de-N
T:... then how would you say it? [1.] where does the stress shift?
G: AleXAN

HB10A-4ef-N
T: now, why would you need to know Warwick Avenue, P? any particular reason?
P: no

HB10A-5cde-N
T: [laugh] can someone help? how do you do the first one? J, try.
J: [read]

HB10A-6cde-NN
T: you know where it is? what part of London? is it in north, or south?
Sss: north

HB10A-8bc-N
T: right. what sort of tunnel is it? is it for road or for rail? [1.]

HB10A-8gh-N
T: ... what does that actually mean? [1.] could you give me another word rather than sum? s-u-m/
H/J: whole

HB10A-9gh-N
T: you are talking about gene rather than genius. [b:-] what are you talking about? which one?
J: the first one

HB10A-17de-N
T: ok. now what about the rest of the group? L, anything you want to add?
L: I think, I am not sure parts are greater than the sum. for this article. ...

HB10A-21ef-N
T: why would you have the word 'mouth'? [.5] in those places. mouth of what?
M: Thames River

HB11A-5jk-N
T: can anybody help? where is the main stress?
Sss: road

HB11A-12cd-N
T: night starts what? about perhaps 10/^?

HB11A-15ab-N
T: how do you do that? so you do by later afternoon and early evening(Q2).
Ssss: early evening

HB12A-2de-N
T: what else? or was it just piano?

R: dual of violin, violin

HB12A-3gh-N
T: would you like to remind me which were the programmes that he recommended. first of all, what was the first programme? [3.] anybody?
G: documentary

HB12A-4ijk-NN
T: very fast....what have you got? got anything at all to add to subjects x x? anything for the first time? the documentary MI5?
P: about history

HB12A-5ef-N
T: what are they? what type of organisations?
H: it's a special organisation, especially to investigate or special object, objectives.

HB12A-5gg-N
T: yes? to investigate whom?
R: the royal family

HB12A-6ii-N
T: Scotland. good. yes/? who were the teams?
R: teachers and students

HB12A-7cd-N
T: anything, can you tell me anything about High Plain Drifter? What was special about High Plain Drifter?
R: 1972

HB12A-8ij-N
T: yes. what, what do you have? what sort of food?
Ss: powder/ powder milk...

HB12A-15def-NN
T: cast of ___? well if it were famous people, how, what, what could be another way, using the word 'to know', to describe famous people? there could be __?[4] another word for famous x x. using the word 'to know'.
H: remarkable.

HB12A-17ij-N
T: P, could you tell us a little more about the type of books that she writes? are they frightening murders or are they enjoyable stories?
Ss: the last one

HB12A-19gh-N
T: that's what they produce. yes. so, how do they produce it? they collect __?
Sss: powder

HB12A-20fg-N
T: fifty thousand, yeh. and where are they? 50,000 workers in each __? [1.] hive.
G: honeycomb.

HB12A-20jk-N

T: Ennn. why, why did you think that? is it American or British?
S: British

HB12A-22ij-N
T: now, you have to guess. you've got to finish the programme. what could it be? what could the car be fuelled by?
J: a new car will be found

HB12A-1op-N
T: who played the piano? a man or a woman?
Sss: (a) woman

HB12B-6ab-N
T: so when you see an English or American reporter, how is it presented? do you have, do you see physically the American journalist and then do you hear the Chinese voice or have /subtitles.
L: /usually just the picture, just the picture [T: yeh] happened in different country. [T: yeh] and report, the announcement, the announcer is Chinese people.

HB12B-16ab-N
T: ... what about the ones you've seen here in Britain? while you've been here which ones do you like?
H: Horizon

HB12B-17bc-N
T: what year was it? it's not present day, is it/?

HB12B-18bc-N
T: now, what do you mean? do you mean people who can sleep or people who can't?
L: can't, can't [sound like American English.]

HB12B-21bc-N
Li, can you remember when you started the school? what time of the year it was when you were a little girl?
L: yes, x

HB12B-21de-N
T: what time of year? /was it spring or summer or autumn?
L: /Oh, what time of year? summer

HB12B-27gh-N
how did he feel about it? did he enjoy it?
H: yes. S: seaside

HB12B-28fg-N
good. and anything else about him at school? was he a bright S?
Ss: yes H: he is bright student.

HB12B-29ef-N
T: why didn't he like him? what did Mr. G do?
L: he took it out school. [?]

HB12B-34lm-N

T: what was the word we had on Tuesday? was it 'amazing'? [2.5]

DT2-2ijk-NN
T: "it's time you washed them". OK. can anybody tell me what sort of grammar issue is here? because some of you have done a lot of language and a lot of grammar and others not so much. enn [1.5] can anyone give any explanation of why we use past tense here? or what in English you might call it? [3.] [no R]

DT2-3hi-N
T: if we use the word 'point' ... but what do we have to use after the word 'point'? There is no point __?
M. no point ON

DT2-5ff-N
T: and it was not qualified (Q1). wasn't the rich people in the 1990s or in something or other?
G: difference.

DT2-7cd-N
T: Y, what do you think about that one? do you have any /x x
L: /I think ...

DT2-7hij-NN
T: what about 90? if we had D, what would we need? he was charged ___?
M: on

DT2-9cd-N
T: ...What does the season of autumn symbolise? what does the season of autumn kind of mean?

DT2-10hi-N
T: yes. and what do you think of the last one? the author's tone in this text? this is a sort of

DT2-15ab-N
T: the next one,... she got fatter.... what verb do we use? it's a verb and preposition. the opposite is you lose weight. what is the opposite to lose weight? ...

DT2-18hij-NN
T: can you give any examples? what about their speech, for example? how will their speech be different from their parents?
L: they speak regional/

DT2-18l-19a-N
T: ... what did she say is the biggest, probably the biggest social problem for Asian, young Asian girls? [1.5] can you remember? [1.] what is their biggest social problem, I mean ... the Asian girls, what is their problem?
L. met the, met the boyfriends

DT2-18de-N
T: how could you sum up that particular problem? what's the problem for the children [1.5] in an Asian family?

DT2-19eg-N

T: ...what about the Asian parents... sometimes parents will __? [4.]

DT4-3ab-N
T: Let me just ask in China as well, would you say that alcohol is more of a problem with the younger people or older people? is it not much of a problem with the young people?

DT4-4ef-N
T: [deliberate sneeze] what's that? it's a symptom of a __, [1.5] of a cold. ok.
S: cold

DT4-6ab-N
T: is it OK? basically OK?
Ss: nod/OK

DT4-9ab-N
T: ...I want to practise today just something quite simple, and that is, if you see a man in a street with a white stick, what do you know? I mean, what might you say, if you see someone with a white stick in a street?
R: never see.

DT4-9fg-N
T: ... what might you conclude? [1.5] if you telephone an office at 9 o'clock in the morning and there is no answer. can you make a sentence using 'must' or 'can't'?
M: must be out

DT4-11cd-N
T: sorry? it __?

DT4-12bcd-NN
T what could you say? can you try and make a response using audience? so you go to the theatre and at the end of the play there is very little clapping, you could say the audience __?

DT4-13ab-N
T: ok. I got off the train, and I find that I haven't got my bag. so what could you say? you __? [1.]

DT4-14ef-N
T: ok. I'm not happy about the word information ... can anyone add to that? he also said that the newspaper is more __?
H: violent

DT4-14gg-N
T: more violent. more detailed. and it makes more, do you remember the expression? it makes more __? [1.5] impact.
Ss: impact

DT4-14lm-N
T: you could use one word. you could, can anyone think of one word? he says it's partly because of the __? [2.] editing. ok/?

DT4-15ij-N
T: ... I wanted to ask you last week. what is your opinion of British TV compared to TV in China? what, are there some big differences between the British TV and TV in China?

DT4-16bc-N
T: why do you think that is? I mean is it because the Chinese authorities want to keep a low level of violence? ...

DT4-16ef-N
T: ok. that's interesting. Are you talking there about violence in entertainment and in news bulletins or both areas? would you say that's true in both areas?
Ss: both

DT4-17bc-N
T: any other observations you have about TV in Britain? I mean are there any things that you like very much about British TV and on the other hand you don't like and that you think are bad? ...

DT4-19ab-N
T: ok. all right. any, anything else? I mean any observations for sport programmes on sport or religion or anything else, or travel?

DT4-21ef-N
T: what did you do? I mean did you visit some places?
G: no. I just ...

DT4-22ab-N
T: G, did they have family more or less your age? do they have some children of your sort of age?
G: yah. my host has 3 son.

DT4-22fg-N
T: G, what did the father do? what was his father's job you discovered?
G: his job is building ...

DT4-24de-N
T: good. ... what about somebody else? what about R?

DT4-24jk-N
T: X, you tell me something? [Ssss laughed] can you tell me something about the family?
X. the family a couple

DT4-24mn-N
T: did they live right in the middle of Brighton or did they live a bit outside? I mean were you in the middle of the town?
Q: no. outside.

DT4-24pq-N
T: X, what did you, tell me what did you, was it nice? was it nice country?
X: [nod]

DT6-6de-N
T: there is a mistake in it. ... so __? [1.5] do you think it's right or wrong? somebody asked/
L: /cheaply

DT6-12mn-N
T: ok. ... what about the verb 'to defy'? can anybody, can anybody give another word with the same meaning?

DT6-14cd-N
T. L, can you tell me [how he broke into flats]? [1.5] he used to use a __?
Ss: rope

DT6-15op-N
T. ... what does it mean, "a punch-up"? a bit of a __?
M: meeting

DT8-2ab-N
T: can you give me some examples in answer to the questions on the board? ... so who could give me a sentence using 'used to'? using "used to", and the sort of prompts I put on the board.

DT8-2ef-N
maybe I haven't made it clear. so I can do the first one. or maybe somebody else can do the first one. how did people used to live 100 years ago? you could say they used to ... instead of __?
M/Ss: watch TV

DT8-2gh-N
T: what about another one? I mean you can just invent examples. ... they __?
M: travel by foot

DT8-2lm-N
T: ok. you said by trains. when did train first start in China? because I think in England it first started around 1840, but only just. is it about the same time or a bit later?
R/G/Ss: a bit later; in 20th century; this century

DT8-3ab-N
T: can you give me one with this? [b: how did people used to cook?] they used to __?

DT8-3cd-N
T: I mean what is different from today? they used to cook -?
M: on fire

DT8-3ef-N
T: gas or electricity. ok. can you think of one here to the beginning part of this sentence? "instead of watching TV in the evenings, for example, they __?
R: they used to sleep

DT8-3jk-N
T: P, could you give me one here? they used to __?
P: used to –

DT8-6cd-N
T: ... can you think of any other things that might seem strange? I mean probably I went to India and if you went to India different things might seem strange, but can you think of anything else if you went to India?
Ss: cover

DT8-9ijk-NN
T: ok. can anyone think of anything else? enn. what about when you want to catch a bus? in China, is it the same queue you have to form?

DT8-11ef-N
T: ...so what do we call that? he is __?
R: in a hurry

DT8-13cd-N
T: you are fired. ok. ... don't forget to keep it in the past. do you want to add anything else? [1.] nothing else?

DT8-16ef-N
T: can you describe the people at the queue x? at the front of the queue, there was -
M/Ss: there was a gentleman.

DT8-18bc-N
T: no, no. what's the word? the opposite of polite? ...

DT8-18rs-N
T: so, what about picture 12? M, what do you think she said in picture 12?
M: she very angry. she said "you recognise me?".

DT8-19ab-N
T: good. ok. anything else she maybe said\? get out. you are the __?
G: you look smart but you are rude, rude man.

DT8-23ab-N
T: what did you say? not from -
R: save their money

DT8-26ijN
T: which political party would he support? would he be on the left, or the right or the middle? politically
H: middle [guessing]

DT8-26pq-N
T: who would like to be the lawyer attacking? [1.5] G, would you be the lawyer attacking?
G: yes

DT8-27fg-N
T: who's going to be the witness for the defence, because there is a witness for the defence. ... what about L? ...

DT8-27bc-N
T: who is going to be no.3, the lawyer for the defence? so, H, will you be the young boy?
H: ok

DT8-27no-N
T: ...one or the other of you? [to X] would you like to be the manager?
X: [nod]

DT10-5ab-N
T: is it the same in China? I mean if you live in Beijing and you have about 3 schools near you. [R: yeh] can you study the examination results of the schools? [R:yeh] can the parents/
R: /yes. according to the score of the Ss, the pupil.

DT10-5ef-N
T: what I want to know is is that information public? is it available for parents to look at /school result?
R:/no

DT10-5gh-N
T: but does the, who decides? I mean does the parent decide?
R: not parents.

DT10-5ij-N
T: ... what do you think about that? do you think it's a good idea that the parent, for example, can go to the public library and look at a list of all the local schools and the exam results?
R: in China, the parents immediately check the result. ...

DT10-9de-N
T. I mean what happens in China? are you completely free to study whatever you want?

DT10-12bc-N
T: [list of chapters/topics] which are the subjects that you specially interested in? scientists and engineers, cities and regions. would you be interested in looking at the rest of Britain? Parliament, elections. [2.5] well you can tell me later.

DT10-15ef-N
T:. J, what about you? have you got something in particular? it could be anything to do with, I said a series of events, or a character, ...

DT10-15gh-N
T: horse. what's the next one? the monkey? [Sss: monkey]
J: horse, tiger, cow.

DT10-18ef-N
T: let me look at your list again, where is your list? is it your list or H's list?
R: no, no. his list.

DT10-18h19a-N
T: what is the characteristic of a snake? [1.5] because in Europe, especially in Greece, the characteristic of a snake is supposed to be intelligent. is it the same in China?
R: no.

DT10-19ef-N
T: what? you love eating?
Ssss: [laugh]

DH2-2cd-N
T:. Tell me what happened. wasn't there, so I don't know what happened. Who, eh, who was in charge [2'] of the ceremony? [2.]
Ss: [attempt to say something]

DH2-4gg-N
T: what did you say? an anthem? yes. good.

DH2-6cc-N
T: who were they? boys?
G: yes. boys.

DH2-8ab-N
T: right. just two more words... you said when everybody was seated. give me the word (Q1). can you give me the collective noun?

DH2-8de-N
T: do you know that? when you have one word to mean a collection of people or things, what, do you know what we call people who sit in church? not the choir, not the priests, like you, who were seated there.

DH2-10bc-N
T: there is the second Archbishop, who is not ... do you know him? the archbishop of__?

DH2-13kl-N
T: any Qs on these? some of them are difficult [2.] any Qs on any of the words?
S: x

DH4-2no-N
T: [text] ...sculpture by X fetched one million pounds at something last year(Q1). what do you think?
H: auction

DH4-5gh-N
T: ... do you know anything about it? [1.5] you could have paintings, but he was more famous for one particular type, I wonder if you knew it (Q2). [3.]

DH4-9rs-N
T: revolting? what's the synonym of revolting? come on.
P: maybe something you hate. something hated.

DH4-10bc-N
T: yes. very, very bad. yes. but in what way? revolting, you feel__?. [1.]

DH4-10ef-N
T: can you give me a word? I felt __? dis__?
S: disgusting

DH4-11ab-N
T: remarkable? that's clear, isn't\?
P: famous

DH4-14de-N
T: now, the other "put off" is in no.3. ...what's this one? can you put "put off" in? try this one.

DH4-14hi-N

T: why do you say keep? you mean 'put'?
L: put, put. sorry

DH6-2cd-N
T: ... what else would you say? other subjects? science?
M: chemist

DH6-2fg-N
T: what else? is it all you learnt at schools?
L: drawing

DH6-4ee-N
T: games are different, yes. I think. what about football? games?
Ssss: football, sport

DH6-6jk-N
T: now, what about others? what about if you say sea?

DH6-7ab-N
T: ... oh. what about if you like the mountains? [1.5] the mountains. what is the expression in English. "I like to go-"
R: climb mountains

DH6-16bb-N
T: I mentioned and Dinny mentioned to you, do you remember GCSE? [.5] the exam which children take at 16? ...
H: general certificate

DH6-17cd-N
T: what did you say? GP?
J: GP

DH6-9ij-N
T: "which is the dirtiest river you have seen?" well I don't know. the Thames?
Ss: no

DH9-2bc-N
T: which ones did we do? 16,17, and 18? [2.]

DH9-2de-N
I forget where we ended. did we, we went through 16, 17? did I go through 17?

DH9-3ab-N
T: what about the other two? patron and purchaser. I think they are different. patron __?
L: somebody gave money to a school or something.

DH9-8ef-N
T: that's right. how long is that? a month?
Ssss: a month

DH12-1hi-N
T: so what about the play? was it very difficult?

DH12-12ab-N
I haven't seen it [the play]. what was your impression? very difficult?
Sss: yes.

DH12-2gh-N
T: say it again (Q1). Gorden is his play (Q2).
G: yah, yah.

DH12-2ij-N
T: what about the theatre? did you like it? /it's very small
Sss: /very small G: like pit, p-i-t

DH12-4cd-N
T: I didn't know she was married to him. how do you pronounce it? Fu Chong?
Sss: yes; Fu Chong

DH12-6kl-N
T: in where? America or in Britain?
R: I suppose Germany. some of them

DH12-10cd-N
T: untrue, not true. I think that's better. or can you give me another one? (...) mis-__?
R: mistake

DH12-10fg-N
T: ... what does "it's" refer to? [1.5] the effectiveness of __?
Sss: AST [read]

DH12-12ij-N
T: no. all right....then you can say if it had not been, what do you have to say? ... if it had not been ___[4]

Uplifting

HB2B-8gh-Up
T: yes/? do you know the meaning?
Ss: yes.

HB4A-7cd-Up
T: all right. now, let's find out, if we go round. do we have H's message here? does anybody know the message?
Ssss: yah, yah

DT2-8fg-Up
T: Do you know that word 'fickle'? can anyone explain that word or maybe give the opposite? [.5] fickle means...

DT4-6gh-Up
T: [read] ... another word? can you explain disregard?
S: not care

DT4-6cd-Up

T: progressively? could you explain it in another way? ...

DT4-6gh-Up
T: [read] ... another word? can you explain disregard?
S: not care

DT4-6ij-Up
T: deteriorate. and another word for deteriorate? can you explain it, deteriorate?
M: get down

DT8-18pq-Up.
T: know revenge? what does it mean, H?
H: she was ignored by the young man.

DT8-20ef-Up
T: the shopkeepers, ... think that severe measures are essential. severe/? could you give me an example of severe measure/? ...

DT8-24fgh-Up
T: to prosecute/? can you explain prosecute? [1.5] prosecute. it is/
R: /to send...

DT10-6cd-Up
T: ... but coming from China, what have you noticed? I mean upper class, middle class, working class and lots and lots classes in between. how does, how do your observations in England compare with China's on that subject of social economic class. [2.5]

Extending

HB2A-5fg-E
T: ... who are the men? what do they want/?

HB2A-13ab-E
T: does the tag go up or come down? which, which, which is it here, for meaning?

HB2A-15bb-E
T: OK/? are there any difficult, any difficult words?
M: piper

HB2A-15cc-E
T: yeh/? you use it to smoke. right/^?

HB2A-15dd-E
T: OK? who are they?
Ss: couple.

HB2A-15fg-E
T: [looking around] ready to go through/? shall we start here?

HB2A-20aa-E
T: yeah/? how can we describe the two types of skirt?

HB2B-3cd-E
T: remember the homework on page 9? can you all see the blue book?
[SS finding the page]

HB2B-12ab-E
T: embroidery. yes/^? do you all know that word?
Ss: [trying to pronounce it]

HB4A-8de-E
T: shall we try now? [1.] now. what was the message here?

HB4A-16ab-E
T: all right. now, ...the second conversation ... you are selling something, correct? so do we have six no.12s? [2.] can you put up your hands if you are no.12? [counting] ...

HB4B-3ij-E
T: [stop] have you got anything? [1.] what's going on?
R: first of all, the person who phone another made a mistake. dial wrong number.

HB4B-4de-E
T: so is it possibly a public, what we call a public conversation rather than a private\? so he might be ringing some, what?
L: the manager

HB4B-6op-E
T: yes, good. to a garage. ...MOT. do you all know MOT? and what an MOT test is? no. [to R who said yes.] can you explain?
R: every year, the owner of the car must send to garage to check. ...

HB4B-10cc-E
T: was the manager there? did he speak to the manager?
Q: because I think this man's car not in the garage.

HB4B-10efg-E
T: ... but is the manager there? P, do you think? does he get to speak to him?
P: no

HB4B-10nop-E
T: oh. by the way, any ideas of what type of person who is speaking? what class?

HB4B-11bc-E
T: so it's not, is it\? it's personal. yeah. got anything? ...

HB4B-15oqr-EE
T: yeah. pump? connected to -? ... what does it drive?

HB4B-16bc-E
T: what does water make xx a suction pump switch? [1.] what sort of system does it make you think of? I may be wrong....
H: xx

HB4B-16lm-E
T: [b:-] what does 'I' stand for? what does it mean?

HB4B-18bc-E
T: can you make the grammatical construction better? he was talking to -? [to L] would you like to continue?
L: he was talking to [2.5] his, his M: girl friend

HB4B-22cd-E
T: what does it mean? well, guess(Q2). look at the sentence.
R: translate

HB8A-1ef-E
T: ... I could get it clamped. [b:-] you know what that is? [1.] what happens then when a car is clamped? ...

HB8A-3hij-EE
[b:Hatfield] do you know this? do you know where it is? [1] near London. has anybody been to it?
P: yes, I have.

HB8A-4kl-E
T: J, do you know what a cave is? [1.] where do you find a cave?
L: in a mountain

HB8A-5ab-E
T: ok. now, why do you want to visit those places in England? what are they famous for? [2.] any idea?
L: Stonehenge, there is a lot stone, from ancient time.

HB8A-11bc-E
T: all right. now, are you clear about those? are there any you would like to check before we do the exercise? [6.]

HB8A-12jk-E
T: is it everybody? [1.] do you know what I mean when I say /i-n-g?
S: /i-n-g

HB8B-3hh-E
T: yes? what's it like?
S: horrid

HB8B-4ef-E
T: and what language is that, really? what nationality was she? she wasn't English.
Sss: French

HB8B-5gh-E
in Beijing? have you been to see it?
Ss: in Beijing

HB8B-6hi-E
T: where is Selfridges? J, why would we want to go to Selfidges?
J: [smile]

HB8B-15de-E

T: no. not necessarily. what type of a person is an anarchist? what area are we talking? [1.5]

HB8B-16fg-E
T: no. do you know any identical twins? do you have friends who know any twins?
R: [about twin he knows] I have a classmate in Beijing and we both studied in university.

HB8B-21ij-E
T: people say he was too revolutionary. do you remember from your history, your knowledge of American history, he started to make reform? especially do you know in what area? [2.] in relation to the black people in America. ...

HB11A-2bc-E
T: you don't know where to sit, do you\? P, why don't you want to sit there? [against the window]
P: I don't know. [didn't seem to understand the Q]

HB11A-7lm-E
T: ... can we turn around and share some the arrangements? J, are you ready?
J: yes [laughed]

HB11A-8cd-E
T: M, would you like to start off then and tell us what do you think your plans are going to be? and if you [to class] don't agree would you like to interrupt and discuss?
Sss: yes

HB11A-11de-E
T: are you ready everyone? let's go through. M, first then, how are we going to say this one then in 24-hr clock?
M: seventeen ten

HB11A-15fg-E
T: well, that depends on the context. because if you imagine most people would get up, what, 7? do you imagine? what time do you get up [.5] here in London?
Ssss: 7, 8

HB11A-15hi-E
T: if you, some get up at 11. ... you see what I mean. so the context is there. the context is very important. you understand what I mean by context, don't you, M?
M: context. I'm not. yes.

HB12A-1mno-EE
R: very, very nice
T: was it? eh, do you know what they played? who played the piano? ...

HB12A-6abc-EE
T: yes. so find out what type of police they are (Q1). we want to find out what type of police and what these stand for and what's particularly important about the history (Q2). as J said 'amazing' programme. so why, so why is it amazing?

HB12A-6gh-E

T: no. there is one, one word which describes the type of industry. [2.] food and drink industry is an example. anything else? right. what about the next one then? Watch Your Steps.
J: Scotland

HB12A-9lm-E
T: have you heard that before? so, can you guess the meaning?

HB12A-10hi-E
T: yes. l-i-v-e. live coverage. [board] what does it mean? can you guess? [1.5] from 'alive' [3.]
R: this x x with today. Today is budget day, budget day today.

HB12A-11gh-E
T: yes.... is it all right, M? do you see the difference? [-R]

HB12A-13cd-E
T: what do you think? can you tell, can you tell me the story?

HB12A-19bc-E
T: does anybody know the words from your general knowledge? you know what bees do. they go from flower to flower to flower. what are they looking for when they go to the flower? ...

HB12A-25ab-E
T: how did you find that? hard work or easy?
M: not easy

HB12B-1fg-E
T: ... we haven't seen Q for a whole week, have we\? has he missed all his classes this week?
R: no. come on Thursday

HB12B-2ef-E
T: M, have you done it? have I got your homework here?
M: yes. not brought here.

HB12B-30kl-E
T: what was special for breakfast? what did they have?
Ss: [whisper] fish.

DT2-6kk-E
T: P, did you try this one? try it (Q2).
P: [read]

DT2-9de-E
T: ... what does the season of autumn kind of mean? [1.] what happens in autumn? [1.5]

DT2-11tuv-EE
T: are you sure/? you haven't got one/? could you try to do one next week?
X: yes

DT2-14kl-E

T: the next one,....a passage about the night nurse, remember? in the hospital.... what do you call that kind of work when you work for certain part of the day.

DT2-15bc-E
T: what is the opposite to lose weight? what verb and preposition do we use with the weight?

DT4-3cd-E
T: what is the main drink in China? what is the cheapest, usual alcoholic drink?
S: x

DT4-1h2a-E
T: ... ok. the other thing is did you see K today? you have a list of events from her, haven't you\?
Ss: no.

DT4-3kl-E
T: and what about in China? I mean in England we have pubs. you drink at home or you drink in a pub. but in China, ... can you drink all day or just certain time of the day?
R: all day.

DT4-14jk-E
T: X, can you remember that one? X, can you tell me? [2.]

DT4-17ij-E
T: do you, have you watched any TV for children? I mean I wonder if in China, is there a great deal of TV for children?
Sss: yes. yes.

DT4-17ij-E
T: do you, have you watched any TV for children? I mean I wonder if in China, is there a great deal of TV for children?
Sss: yes. yes.

DT4-19bc-E
T: any observations for sport programmes on sport or religion or anything else, or travel? [1.] do you watch it quite a lot in the evening?
Sss: yes, yeh. very much

DT4-22de-E
T: is he? the same as you or not as good?
G: sometimes I win, sometimes

DT4-24ef-E
T: what about R? where did you go?
R. We go to Brighton.

DT6-1ab-E
T. ... shall I cancel or postpone the plan to meet Kathy? would that be better?
Ss: yes

DT6-13ef-E
T. In Chinese do you call it black market? in Chinese/? or do you have another, do you use the adjective black?

Ss: yes [nod]

DT8-11no-E
T: the secretary. and what are the two secretaries look like? what expression have they got?
J: surprised

DT8-14fg-E
T: ok. and can anybody, in picture 4, can you tell me what job the man sitting behind the desk is doing? what might that person be called? ...

DT8-18kl-E
T: do you think she looked angry? I think maybe in no.11 she looked __? [2.] what do you think? H: sarcastic

DT8-21jk-E
T: supermarkets, by the way in London when you go shopping for food, do you go to the big supermarkets like Sainsbury's, or do you go a lot to Chinese shops? where do you go shopping when you have to go shopping for food?
Sssss: [shop names]

DT8-25ij-E
T: so what do you think? could you give an example of a deterrent sentence?
M: punish, the £1000

DT8-26mn-E
T: shall we choose the others [roles] now? who would like to be the lawyer for the prosecution? ...

DT8-27hi-E
T: could you be no.7? you defend H. ok/?

DT10-4fg-E
T: let me ask you a question. what do you think about this system of education of private and state? I mean from your reading, from your talking, have you come to the conclusion that's unimportant or it doesn't matter because the percentage is so small?
S: no.

DT10-6ab-E
T: ... let me ask you a question about that. you've been living in England for 5 months. what's your feeling? what is your impression about the class system in England? [2.]

DT10-6fg7a-EE
T: ... but I wondered in what ways in England you see it, and in what ways if I go to China. in what ways would I see it, if I spend 6 months in China? I mean, for example, in London with housing, are you very aware of different types of housing? and in China would that be not so obvious? [3.]
R: yeh. China also got class system. you know Beijing University and Qinghua University are first class...

DT10-9bcd-EE
T: let me ask you about China. and in China is there a very big effort by the government to train many, many people in computers and technology in this age? because in England, well this is always a problem.... In China, when you finish school, and you want to go to

university, can you choose completely what subject you study? or can the government say no, you can't study literature, because we already have too many people studying literature, or you can't study music because we need you to study computers. I mean what happens in China? ...

DT10-15cd-E
T: who would like to talk? maybe something else. J, what about you?

DT10-17bcd-EE
T: OK. I want to ask J. you said "I belong to that animal". is it how you say it in Chinese? I mean how did it develop that a particular year is associated with a particular animal? do you know how it began?
R: Chinese new year, only Chinese new year began to the end of x

DH2-14fg-E
T: will you try to write for me a report of, let me think, how many words? 250? longer if you wish.

DH4-2qrs-E
T: [to others] yes/? at auction/? [-R]

DH4-16ab-E
T: no.11. ... do you know what it means? it's not so common. can anybody try?
G: [read the answer]

DH4-16ef-E
T: is it in the dictionary? perhaps it's too unusual. may I just see if it is in it? there it is. ...

DH6-2bc-E
T: ... what else would you say? other subjects?

DH6-3k4a-E
well, what's the difference between game and sport? difficult, wasn't it? [1.]

DH6-5bcd-EE
T: "what are your hobbies?" [textbook Q] now, are there any articles? what could you do as a hobby? spare time occupation?
J: listen to music

DH6-9cd-E
T: the main cause of the pollution is what? it could be different answers, couldn't it\?
H: industrial

DH6-11ab-E
T: ... let's look at the rest of the page underneath. now, did you look at B? [-R] it's the same exercise. do you put the article in or not? [1.5] let me just do the first three orally and then try them.

DH6-12cc-E
T: shall I go through them? are you ready?
Ss: ready

DH6-13hij-EE

T: I say THE if there is a vowel, I say 'the' if there isn't it. yes/? did you learn that way? THE elderly, and the radio. did you learn the pronunciation?
Sss: yes.

DH6-14ijk-EE
T: right. to end this. some initials. have you done these? [.5] and what do they stand for? if you see letters, for instance, ... EEC/?
Sssss: [all sorts of Rs]

DH9-3hi-E
T: right. creator? how would you use it?

DH9-7fg-E
T: ...do you find a lot of sweet things? you don't mind that(?).
Ss: no.

DH9-9de-E
T: what's the different? ... I want an English breakfast, what would you get?
Sssss: butter, bacon, egg, bread, juice, chips.

DH9-16ab-E
T: ... party political broadcast. ...(an MP died, hence a new local election) do you know it? did you read it? [-R]

DH12-5ab-E
T: don't you? do you want me to give you a music lesson?
Ssss: yes. [laugh]

DH12-1i2a-E
T: was it [the play] very difficult? The Gift of Gorden. yeh, I haven't seen it. what was your impression?

Backtracking

HB2A-25hi-B
T: [stop] so, that was very, very quick. how many interviews were there? did you get it? [3.]

HB2A-29ef-B
T: and what accent was that? [1.5] anybody recognise? [-wt] not British English. [2.]

HB2B-10dg-B
T: could you understand? ... was the speech clear\?
M: chopsticks [misunderstanding T's Q]

HB2B-11ij12a-BB
T: what, what type? did anybody get it? did you not write it down?

HB4A-3ij-BB
T: much better. we had this last week, didn't we? we had the same problem on Friday. can you remember? It was J. what was the word?

HB4B-17cd-B

T: now, do you know good grief? [1.] have you heard that before?
S: no.

HB4B-8de-B
T: the cost. [1.5] all right. that's good. you've got that part of it. do you and your partner, did you get anything about the money? [1.5] remember he was shocked, wasn't he\? he asked the price. ...and he was very shocked.
G: maybe his car is in good condition, his car.

HB4B-15no-B
T: what would you have a suction pump switch? … what's a switch?
Ss: switch on, switch off.

HB8A-4hi-B
T: yeah. what's a cave? [b:-] do you know?

HB8B-10bc-B
T: so what is stranger than a fiction? [1.5] do you all understand 'fiction'?
R: yeh. [.1] novel

HB8B-11bc-B
T: now, is Victorio a man's name or a woman's name, do you think? [1.] can you guess?
S: a woman's name.

HB8B-15gh-B
T: what type of society? [1.] related to anarchy. [b:-] what's anarchy? [b:-] ...

HB8B-18jk-B
T: ...are you ready? do you understand?

HB8B-25ab-B
T: do you believe it does? have you seen it?

HB10A-4gh-B
T: do you, have any of you been to the Warwick Avenue tube station? it's near Maida Vale. do you know Maida Vale rd.? [2.] it's also near Little Venice?

HB10A-4ij-B
T: [b:-] now, if someone said to you "do you want to visit Little Venice?" what would that be? what's Little Venice [.5] in London? [1.5]

HB10A-6bc-B
T: yes. ...have you visited Highgate? [1.0] you know where it is? ...

HB12A-5hi-B
T: well, what does MI5 stand for? Did you get what they mean? [-R] right. when we listen again try to find why MI5/
R: /administration, is it?

HB12A-7jk-B
T: cast? do you know cast? so see if you can find something about the cast.

HB12A-9kl-B

T: yes. do you know that expression? have you heard that before?

HB12A-13de-B
T: can you tell, can you tell me the story? P, do you understand allegory?
P: yes

HB12A-15bc-B
T: cast of __? are you getting something there? ...

HB12B-26ij-B
T: when were they born? that was important for us to have a, have an idea of them historically, so do you remember?

HB12B-30fg-B
T: ... where is the Lake District? you know the Lake District?

HB12B-32jk-B
T: on the last day. [b:-] so what did they do? something special which made her cry, right/?
M: yeh

DT2-11rs-B
T: and X, did you do it? Have you got a newspaper article?
X: no.

DT2-13de-B
T: what do you call it? ... you get hit... you know what I mean?

DT2-16cd-B
T: the next one is ... "he might slacken off", which means he might __ ? do you remember?

DT2-19ef-B
T: ...what about the Asian parents? the writer talks about the different attitude of some Asian parents from others. can anyone remember about that?

DT4-14ij-B
T: why does he think the written account is more powerful than the television? X, can you remember that one?

DT4-16gh-B
T: there is less violence. ok. and is it also true in videos which you can buy in video shops? do many, many people in China have videos?
Sss: yes.

DT4-19jk-B
T: Y, what do you think of soup operas? do you watch them, the soup operas/?
Y: no.

DT6-15fg-B
T. not exactly, H. "it dawned on me"? [1.] what is the dawn?

DT8-1de-B

T: have you had a good check? have you had enough time to check? ok. let me collect in your homework. ...

DT8-23ef-B
T: the opposite of lenient? [1.] what does it mean to be lenient?
H: generous

DT8-23hi-B
T: well, I wanted to ask you, in China are, is there as much advertising like that in China as in England? I mean here, there is such pressure on people to buy, buy and buy. for example, [ads on TV and supermarkets]. is it the same in China?
Sss: yes/ the same

DT8-26kl-B
T: radical/[eliciting word meaning]? no/? radical would be on the left.

DT10-17fg-B
T: why these 12 animals were chosen? do you have any idea?
M: [to R] who decided?

DH2-10ef-B
T: [looking around] of__ [eliciting a word]? No/? York.
S. York

DH2-12abc-BB
T: maybe you have looked at it. did you find it difficult? have you looked at it? [looking around] yes/?

DH2-13op-B
T: no. it's not a fish. ... do you know crocodile? have you found it?
Ss: the skin...

DH4-2gh-B
T: ... what did we say? do you remember?

DH4-9rs-B
T: revolting? yes/?

DH6-14cd-B
T: did you get that? shall I repeat that? "he is a ..."
Ss: [read the answer with the teacher]

DH6-14ef-B
T: did you get those? do you want me to repeat? ...

DH6-3jk-B
T: what do we know [what are games]? [1.5] well, what's the difference between game and sport?

DH9-3cd-B
T: complaint about the goods should be made to the seller, not the __? [1.5] remember the three?

DH9-8gh-B
T: do you know the name in English? Ramadan is the most x one. do you know this one, the one we've just said?
P. *[L1] kai zhai jie*

DH12-6de-B
T: [see G look at dictionary] are these words in the dictionary? is it English-Chinese dictionary? [went to look] yes... (reciticity)

DH12-7ab-B
T: who is that? did you give me the name?
R: musicians

DH12-7ef-B
T: was it the last one? I thought ... we did that one, I think, didn't we?
R: which one?

DH12-8fg-B
T: now, 52 and 75 we did, didn't we\? it, do you remember in line 15? ...
R: yes.

DH12-12hi-B
T: no. all right....then you can say if it had not been, what do you have to say? can you see?

DH12-14ab-B
T: what about no.2? [read]... you know instalment?
S: yeh

Shfting

HB4B-3fg-S
T: ... what the topic of the conversation is? [task Qs requesting delayed R] are there any Qs before we start? [2.5]

HB4B-8bc-S
T: that's the end of the conversation, isn't it\? the discussion about money is at the end of this. did you remember anything about the money, which came earlier?
M: the cost

HB8A-13ij-S
T: can I interrupt? have you visited the river at night?
G: yes. but not on a boat.

HB8B-19ab-S
T: .. shall we start from your group? would you like to tell us what you've got? if you don't agree.
H: [report to class] we found 5 coincidence.

HB11A-8hi-S
T: [see Sss whisper to P] what's going on? ready?
P: [report]

HB12B-27bc-S
T: so what have we got for Jack? for his first holiday away from home.[1.5] how old was he?
Sss: 10 years.

HB12B-29hi-S
T: well, [b:-] we need to find his name, yeh/? ... and we need to know what did he [the teacher in the story] do? because he did something, he did something to the child. what about his [the student in the story] last day at school? [3.]
M: no idea

HB12B-34ab-S
T: was he bright? what happened to him at school?

DT2-13ij-S
T: the next one... immune from. what's the meaning of immune? [repeat]... and immune also has a medical meaning. you can also put that down. the same basic meaning. immune. I've forgotten what number that is. is that number__?
Ss. six.

DT2-15hi-S
T: ... her enthusiasm is wavering. wasn't it. wasn't it the next one?
Ss. nh.

DT4-3bc-S
T: is it [alcoholism] not much of a problem with the young people? ... what is the main drink in China?

DT8-24kl-S
T: Any Qs, or is that clear? [.5] have you noticed in your local supermarkets, have you noticed any other tactics to catch shoplifters?
M: no.

DH9-7ij-S
T: what are the meals? I know it's a different subject, but I want... if you fast, you eat very little food. you know this?
Sss: yes

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