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ART OF QUESTIONING OF TEACHERS AND COMPETENCE OF GRADE FIVE LEARNERS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the level of the art of questioning of teachers and the level of the language competence of grade five learners. This study employed the non-experimental descriptive survey research design in investigating the research problem. It is descriptive because the data are presented in quantitative descriptions on the "Art of Questioning of Language Teachers and Competence of Grade Five Learners in English Language. According to (QuestionPro, 2024), this method of research shows merely description of tasks presenting the conditions regarding the nature of the group of persons or class of events that involved procedure of analysis, classification, and measurement. It involves varied information regarding the current or present condition.This study will be conducted in Santa. Cruz South District. The respondents in this study are the 75 Teachers in the research locale and 257 grade five learners computed using Slovins formula from a population of 725 grade five learners. For teacher respondents, universal sampling is used while for grade five learners simple random sampling is used. The teacher respondents will answer the checklist based on the indicators in the downloaded questionnaire.

KEYWORDS: *Art of Questioning, English Language Competence, Grade Five*

INTRODUCTION

The Art of Questioning is a primary instructional process that promotes engagement, critical thinking, and active learning in the classroom. Teachers' skills in asking relevant and effective questions will continue to enhance students' cognitive growth, comprehension, and academic performance. This is especially true with English language learning, where the questioning strategy is independently correlated to learning how to communicate, develop vocabulary, and the think-analytically.

Education's goal is to allow students to construct knowledge through thinking, reason, and comprehension. One of the most powerful teaching strategies that students can promote understanding and learning is through questioning. It was noted that questioning is a way to build on complex conceptualizations, which is also critical thinking (De Sanchez, 2023).

Moreover, Amer (2020) stated that the value of meaningful questions lies in developing children's cognitive and critical thinking abilities. He found that the art of questioning by teachers is important not only in the context of teaching and learning the English language but also in other subjects. Furthermore, the study revealed that this technique is also helpful in teaching Science and the Arts.

Additionally, Johnson's (2021) study emphasizes the importance of cultivating children's artistic abilities. According to his research, teachers can engage children by asking about the ideas behind the artwork, the creative process, the materials used, and their knowledge of the piece.

Asking questions has been revealed to be an effective way to develop reading comprehension in learners, especially when the teachers model good questions and show their learners how to ask their own questions. Asking questions is essential for comprehension, constructing meaning, and authentic learning. Children who are good predictors and good self-questioners are also insightful. This word tickles the mind, suggesting that everything necessary for understanding is in the hands of a good user who asks questions. The teaching tools conveniently placed in the teacher's hands highlight the importance of the art of questioning (Cecil & Piefer, 2021).

Learners are very creative in the way they think and learn. Their power to think critically is the product of curiosity. The learning atmosphere of these learners is an excellent indicator of establishing a teacher-learner rapport. Therefore, one of the most essential qualities of language teachers is their capability to use the art of questioning to engage and collaborate effectively with their students. Thus, teachers must be caring, committed, and ready to ignite the sparks of interest in the students' learning. Language teachers have a broad spectrum of activities for students to engage in, and they have shown an infectious curiosity and love for learning, as well as a questioning approach (Cecil & Piefer, 2021).

Patrick & Urhievwejire (2022) stated that teachers help students develop their sense of direction by encouraging their learners to think critically through questioning. Effective questions require active listening, thoughtful inquiry, and the ability to assess individual thinking and gain deeper insights.

A question is a hint when it is given correctly. Questioning is important for good communication. It is the foundation of effective interactive instruction, and queries must be formulated in a manner that is appropriate for the subject matter, type, and level. In the classroom, the teacher is very often the one who talks, and the students are the ones who listen. Another way to change from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered instruction is by using questions. Skillful questioning plays a crucial role in effective teaching (Griffin, 2022).

Furthermore, students' competence can be enhanced when they are allowed to share their ideas and reflect on their learning. Educators who make learners feel that their ideas are accepted, valued, and thoughtfully considered can significantly enhance students' motivation to learn. Students are encouraged to answer critically crafted questions by the teachers. When students seek to answer questions about their own experiences, they begin to develop genuine learning (Cecil & Pfeifer, 2021).

A well-trained teacher who asks high-quality questions can significantly enhance students' critical thinking abilities. In this premise, the art of questioning is effective for so many purposes that the teachers must be skilled in its uses. Therefore, effective and practical questions are questions that are powerful and thought-provoking. To increase the emphasis on students' thinking skills, using a lecture involves asking questions in an artistic manner. For this, questioning can stimulate interaction between the teacher and learner. In other words, the student must think critically (Cecil & Pfeifer, 2021).

Accordingly, recent research has identified that the teacher's art of questioning technique has the most significant impact on students to think critically. A study indicates that the degree of a student's competence and critical thinking correlates directly with the complexity of questions the teacher asks. Although developing students' thinking and achieving a high competence level require time, the teacher's questioning technique is the most significant factor (Limbach & Waugh, 2023). In addition, Truong (2024) found that effective teacher questioning enhances students' critical thinking and strengthens their English language skills. This suggests that the way teachers frame and deliver questions can directly influence learners' cognitive and linguistic development.

In the Philippine context, learners who are exposed to diverse questioning strategies demonstrate higher performance in English assessments compared to those instructed through conventional lecture-based approaches. Questions encouraging critical thinking, such as "Why do you think this character acted this way?" or "How would you solve this problem differently?" enable students to practice analyzing and synthesizing information in English. It was emphasized that the frequency and quality of questions posed during English classes positively correlate with learners' ability to comprehend texts and express opinions, both orally and in writing (Ocbian & Ronquillo, 2021).

Several challenges hinder the effective use of questioning to develop English competence. Large class sizes, a common issue in public schools, often limit opportunities for individual learners to respond to questions. According to Bautista (2020), teachers frequently depend on yes/no or recall-based questions as a strategy for managing instructional time. While efficient, this practice may hinder the growth of students' higher-order thinking skills, as it limits opportunities for deeper cognitive engagement.

In addition, the bilingual nature of Philippine education, with Filipino and English as mediums of instruction, can sometimes result in "code-switching," where learners mix languages in their responses. While this may reflect their linguistic reality, it can impede complete immersion in English learning (Rayo et al., 2024).

In the Division of Davao Del Sur, particularly in Schools of Santa Cruz South District, English language competence is a hot topic in higher grade levels as today's learners are a product of modular learning modality; the researcher is motivated to investigate if there is a relationship and influence between the Art of Questioning of Teachers and Competence of grade five learners in English Language of Santa Cruz South District for the school year 2024-2025.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The art of questioning plays a huge role in enhancing the learning experiences of Grade Five students by encouraging critical thinking, engagement, and deeper comprehension. Recent studies emphasize the significance of thoughtfully crafted questions in fostering the cognitive and academic development of young learners. For instance, Alinsunod (2023) examined the questioning behaviors of pre-service elementary English teachers and found that effective questioning serves as a formative assessment tool, helping students develop essential critical thinking skills. In a Grade Five classroom, this could involve questions that guide students to analyze text, make connections, and express their understanding creatively.

Similarly, Wang and Wang (2021) proposed a framework for categorizing questions based on their cognitive demands, which can be adapted to Grade Five contexts to challenge students at appropriate levels. Questions that move beyond simple recall, such as "Why do you think the character made that choice?" or "What would happen

if...?" stimulate higher-order thinking. This approach is particularly valuable in preparing students for more complex academic tasks in higher grades.

Furthermore, questioning strategies have improved students' inferential comprehension skills. Van de Pol, Volman, and Beishuizen (2020) conducted an experimental study demonstrating how targeted questioning can help students connect ideas, thereby improving their reading comprehension. In a Grade Five classroom, this might involve asking questions like, “How does this event connect to something you have experienced?” or “What clues in the story help you understand the character’s feelings?” Similarly, Elda, Apriliaswati, and Rezeki (2022) underscore in their study the positive impact of teachers' scaffolding on students' reading comprehension, particularly in understanding descriptive texts. It found that by providing structured support, teachers can facilitate students' ability to grasp complex language features and enhance overall comprehension skills.

Additionally, Kara (2020) investigated the role of scaffolding in improving the quality of questions posed by teachers. For Grade Five, scaffolding might include modeling how to ask thoughtful questions, such as prompting students to think about cause-and-effect relationships or infer meaning from context. The findings suggest that guided practice in questioning strategies can significantly enhance both teachers' and students' engagement and comprehension during lessons.

Finally, research by Li and Zhang (2023) highlights the importance of personalized questioning tailored to individual learners' needs. For Grade Five students, this may involve adjusting the complexity or focus of questions to match their interests or abilities. Such personalization has been found to improve academic performance and foster a greater sense of confidence in students as they navigate challenging subjects. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of teaching Grade Five educators to develop sophisticated questioning techniques. Teachers can enhance student learning by using diverse, scaffolded, and personalized questioning strategies. These approaches promote critical thinking, support individual learning needs, and gradually build students’ understanding. As Alinsunod (2023) highlights, such strategies create engaging and developmentally appropriate learning environments that improve comprehension and foster student growth.

Knowledge questions are a crucial component of the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) curriculum in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. These questions are designed to help students explore the nature, acquisition, and application of knowledge. They are open-ended and often focus on how knowledge is constructed and understood within different areas of expertise and ways of knowing. According to the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), knowledge questions are central to the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course, helping students critically examine the basis of knowledge claims (IBO, 2024).

One of the key characteristics of knowledge questions is that they are general rather than specific in nature. This means that they are not tied to a particular content area or factual inquiry but instead address broader issues about knowledge itself. For example, a knowledge question might ask, "To what extent is scientific knowledge reliable?" rather than "What is the chemical formula for water?" This generality enables knowledge questions to be applied across various contexts, fostering in-depth thinking about the nature of knowledge (Wells, 2021).

In the context of education, knowledge questions are essential for promoting critical thinking and deep reflection. When students explore knowledge questions, they learn to challenge assumptions, assess the reliability of evidence, and understand diverse perspectives. This process helps students develop a more perceptive understanding of knowledge and its limitations. According to van de Lagemaat (2022), knowledge questions help students move beyond memorization and engage in meaningful inquiry, which is essential for lifelong learning.

In the TOK framework, ways of knowing are the methods through which we acquire knowledge. These include perception, reason, emotion, and language. Knowledge questions often explore the strengths and limitations of these ways of knowing. For instance, a knowledge question might ask, "How does emotion influence our understanding of art?" By examining how different ways of knowing contribute to our knowledge, students can develop a more comprehensive understanding of how we come to know what we know (IBO, 2024).

Formulating effective knowledge questions can be a challenging task. It requires an insightful knowledge of the subject matter and the ability to think critically about the nature of knowledge. According to Dombrowski (2022), one of the main challenges is ensuring that the questions are genuinely open-ended and allow for multiple perspectives. Teachers and students must work together to develop questions that are both meaningful and challenging.

Knowledge questions are an essential element of the TOK curriculum, significantly contributing to the growth of critical thinking and reflection. They encourage learners to explore the nature of knowledge, consider multiple perspectives, and engage with ethical issues. By developing and addressing knowledge questions, students can deepen their understanding of the world and become more thoughtful and reflective learners.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the level of the art of questioning of teachers and the level of competence of grade five learners in english language. Specifically, it answered the following sub-problems:

1.What was the level of the art of questioning of the teachers in terms of:
1.1 Knowledge Questions,
1.2 Comprehension Questions,
1.3 Application Questions,
1.4 Evaluation Questions?
2.What was the level of the competence of grade five learners in English language in terms of:
2.1 Factual Questions
2.2 Analytical Questions
2.3 Hypothetical Questions
2.4 Critical Questions
3.Was there a significant relationship between the art of questioning of teachers and competence of the grade five learners in English language?
4.What Domain of Art of Questioning significantly influenced the competence of grade five learners in English language?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a non-experimental descriptive survey research design to investigate the research problem. It is descriptive because the data were presented in quantitative descriptions in the "Art of Questioning of Language Teachers and Competence of Grade Five Learners in English Language. According to QuestionPro (2024), this method of research merely described tasks that present the conditions regarding the nature of the group of persons or class of events, which involve procedures of analysis, classification, and measurement. It involves varied information regarding the current or present condition.

Using a non-experimental descriptive survey research design to investigate the Art of Questioning and Competence of Grade Five Learners in English Language was appropriate because this design allowed the researcher to observe and describe existing conditions without manipulating variables (Loeb et al., 2022). In this study, the researcher did not intervene or control variables; instead, the researcher documented how learners engage with questioning in language learning and assessed their language competence. Non-experimental research was particularly valuable when exploring natural settings where manipulation or random assignment was not feasible, and it helped identify correlations or patterns without establishing causal relationships.

Additionally, the descriptive survey aspect of this research design allowed the researcher to collect data from a large number of learners through standardized questionnaires. This provided a broad overview of how the art of questioning teachers impacted the competence of grade five learners in English language, reflecting the views and experiences of the participants. The absence of manipulation made it easier to focus on real-world data, enhancing the ecological validity of your findings (Kassiani Nikolopoulou, 2022).

Research Respondents

This study was conducted in the Santa Cruz South District. The respondents included 75 teachers from the research locale and 257 grade five learners, computed using Slovin's formula from a population of 725 grade five learners. Universal sampling was used for the teacher respondents, while simple random sampling was applied to the grade five learners. The teacher respondents completed a checklist based on indicators from the downloaded questionnaire describing their art of questioning, while the grade five learners took the downloaded language test.

On the other hand, the inclusion criteria for selecting the respondents were as follows: For the teachers, they were those teaching grade five during the school year 2024-2025 in the elementary schools within Sta. Cruz South District. They were permanent teachers whose names were found in the Plantilla items. For the learners, they were those enrolled in the school year 2024–2025 in schools within Sta. Cruz South District, and whose names were registered in the Learners Information System (LIS), which could be viewed online throughout the country.

The respondents of the study were distributed across five elementary schools in the Santa Cruz South District. Overall, there were 75 teacher respondents and 257 learner respondents. The distribution of respondents was as follows: Sta. Cruz Central Elementary School had 25 teachers and 115 grade five learners; Agripina Elementary School had 20 teacher respondents and 47 learner respondents; Apolinar Franco Sr. Elementary School involved 18 teacher respondents and 42 learner respondents; Anastacio G. Canda Elementary School had nine teacher respondents and 38 learner respondents; and Matutungan Elementary School included three teacher respondents and 15 learner respondents. Overall, the study covered 75 teacher respondents and 257 learner respondents from these schools.

Research Instrument

This study utilized the researcher's downloaded questionnaire, adapted from "Art of Questioning: An Introduction to Critical Thinking" by Joshua Fitch and the Key English Test. The items and indicators focused on the art of

questioning of teachers and the 20-item language test for grade five learners. The teacher-respondents provided their responses to the items on the checklist while the grade five learners took the test. Since the checklist and the test are downloaded materials, they did not undergo pilot testing.

Data Analysis

The following statistical tools were used in the analysis and interpretation of the responses in this study.

Mean was used to describe the level of art of questioning of teachers and the level of competence of grade five learners in English language. The mean was employed in this research to provide a clear summary of the central tendency of the data, making it easier to understand overall trends.

Pearson r was used to determine the significant relationship between the art of questioning of language teachers and competence of grade five learners in English language. Pearson r is used in research to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. In a study on the "art of questioning of teachers and competence of grade five learners in English Language," it helped determine whether and how strongly teachers' questioning techniques are related to learners' competence.

Regression was used to determine the influence of the art of questioning of teachers on the competence of grade five learners in English language. The study on the "art of questioning of teachers and competence of grade five learners in English Language" helped the researchers analyze how variations in teachers' art of questioning (independent variable) influenced learners' competence in English language (dependent variable).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conclusion

Based on the collective findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

The level of the art of questioning of the teachers in terms of knowledge questions was Very High, level of the art of questioning of the teachers in terms of Comprehension Questions was Very High, level of the art of questioning of the teachers in terms of application questions was Very High, level of the art of questioning of the teachers in terms of evaluation questions wass Very High, Level of competence of grade five learners in english language in terms of factual questions was Very Satisfactory, Level of competence of grade five learners in english language in terms analytical questions was Very Satisfactory, Level of competence of grade five learners in english language in terms hypothetical questions wass Very Satisfactory, Level of competence of grade five learners in english language in terms critical questions was Satisfactory, there was a significant relationship between the art of questioning of teachers and competence of grade five learners in english language. There was a significant influence of art of questioning of teachers on the competence of grade five learners in english language.

These findings aligned with the following theories: First is the Socratic Questioning Theory. This theory emphasized the importance of asking deep, thought-provoking questions to stimulate critical thinking. Teachers using Socratic questioning guided learners through a series of open-ended queries, encouraging them to analyze, reflect, and engage in meaningful discourse. This method not only enhanced understanding but also strengthened learners' language competence by promoting structured, logical communication.

Second was Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain. This theory developed by Benjamin Bloom in 1956 and later revised by Anderson and Krathwohl in 2001, classified cognitive skills into hierarchical levels: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Each level corresponded to a specific type of question that stimulated a particular cognitive process. Factual questions aligned with the remembering level. Analytical questions corresponded to analyzing. Hypothetical questions reflected the applying and creating levels. Critical questions fit within the evaluating level. Through well-structured questioning based on Bloom's taxonomy, teachers guided learners to think more deeply, use language more precisely, and communicate more effectively. Thus, the taxonomy not only supported cognitive development but also significantly enhanced learners' linguistic competence in English.

Recommendations

In light of the findings drawn out by the researcher in this study, the following recommendations were offered:

DepEd may emphasize the importance of using questioning techniques that promote critical thinking and meaningful discussions in the classroom. Additionally, DepEd should have provided more training opportunities for teachers, recognizing that there is always room for improvement in the application of all types of questions knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis Teachers were encouraged to move beyond simple recall questions and incorporate open-ended, probing, and reflective questions that challenged learners to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information. By doing so, students were encouraged to articulate their thoughts clearly, improving their language competence through structured reasoning and expression. Additionally, teachers should provide adequate wait time after posing questions, allowing learners to process their thoughts and respond with well-formed answers.

School principals were advised to motivate their teachers to employ stimulating inquiry-based approaches to questioning which would evoke learners' curiosity while deepening understanding. Teachers were also encouraged to move away from low-level recall questioning to more open-ended and higher-order questions requiring analysis, synthesis and evaluation. This development not only fostered critical thinking but also promoted language competence as learners were able to express their thoughts in clear and confident ways.

Teachers were motivated to foster a positive classroom environment in which students would be willing to share their thoughts. This also meant using varied questioning strategies that take into consideration different levels of understanding as well as various language proficiencies. Teachers were instructed to scaffold questions based on learners' levels to guarantee all students were able to engage in conversations. It is imperative that all educators attend specialized instructional training dedicated to improving their questioning skills, as it is an essential part of teaching and learning. Most teachers exhibit proficiency when managing a class, but there is considerable improvement needed when devising purposeful questions that capture students' critical thinking, engagement, and deeper understanding. Participation in professional development activities will not only improve teachers' questioning practices but also enable them to design student-driven learning experiences and adapt to dynamic teaching. In essence, effective questioning enhances instructional practices and greatly supports learners in developing essential skills, heightened confidence, and active involvement in the learning journey.

Moreover, it was equally recommended that Teachers include content-based question generation to ignite interest and understanding at a deeper level. This not only improved critical thinking but also reinforced language skills as students were motivated to articulate their inquiries in well-organized sentences. This approach, in addition to providing a stimulating atmosphere where questioning was done collaboratively, enabled teachers to instill a culture of inquiry that advanced language skills alongside nontrivial dialogue.

Future researchers may conduct further studies on how questioning techniques could be optimized to enhance learners' language competence. Investigating how questioning strategies influenced language use at this developmental stage could have provided valuable insights for improving teaching practices and enhancing language learning outcomes in elementary education. By investigating these aspects, future studies could provide valuable insights into refining teacher questioning practices to foster deeper learning and improved language proficiency among students.

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