

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Background of Study**

Education is generally recognized as a cognitive activity and the process of learning knowledge, skills, and habits of a group of people that are passed on from one generation to the next through teaching, research and training in the field of second language education (Othman & Kiely, 2016). Othman (2016) defines teacher cognition as a future or preservice teacher's introspection, belief, and knowledge about lessons, students, and content. Teachers face several challenges in their pursuit of excellence. They need to demonstrate not only subject matter mastery, but also educational, methodological and evaluation skills. If the trainee teacher also decides to obtain an educational degree in an EFL setting, there is an additional hurdle to acquiring language skills close to that of a native speaker (Kfourri, 2013).

Teaching skills is the teacher's educative ability. Educational competence is defined as the knowledge, skills and abilities of a teacher to carry out their duties and obligations properly and responsibly in building good communication with students (Sugihartini et al, 2020). Teacher-Educational ability is a person's educational ability and includes various educational and basic education abilities.

Currently, as a foreign language class, there is widespread interest in teacher questions in English. According to cognitive domain theory, the use of

weak cognitive questions may not encourage students to think critically. Higher cognitive questions require knowledge of processing and can facilitate critical thinking (Shen & Yodkhumlue, 2013). Questions relating to lower cognitive levels usually ask students to recall the information they have obtained and focus on the facts of the information available, while questions relating to higher cognitive levels ask students to think critically to train students' cognitive abilities at a higher level, for example combining facts and ideas with the process of analyzing, evaluating to the stage of creating in the form of giving an assessment of a fact of a lesson (Shen & Yodkhumlue, 2013).

Tenbrik et al. (2011) stated that a typical teacher asks about 1.5 million questions in a classroom over the course of a career. (They are still working on how many of these questions get the right answer). Other educators estimate that teachers ask an average of 30 to 120 questions per hour. Low-level questions are asked more by the teacher than high-level questions. As early as 1912, one of the first large class studies found that about 80% of class discussion consisted of asking, answering, or responding to questions. In fact, simple teaching is a more common teacher strategy. And when teachers develop a pattern of questions, it can become a habit throughout their careers there are all their strengths and weaknesses.

However, many questions are not asked as good questions. Most of the questions the teacher asked were low-level questions. Estimates vary, but research shows that 70 to 95 percent of all teachers have lower cognitive

questions (Taylor et al, 2003). One problem is simply saving on unobtrusive learning and ideas. Studies on higher-order questions are sometimes inconsistent, but there is a growing consensus that higher-order questions increase students' thinking levels and lead to better student achievement. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the utterance or oral questions applied by the teacher especially preservice teachers.

Based on the statement above, the researcher focuses the research on the use of questions levels that are carried out in Language Development Unit at Antasari State Islamic University. Language Development Unit (UPB) lecture were chosen in this study because Language Development Unit is to facilitate students' language skills through vocabulary learning. The Language Development Unit is only used as an additional activity outside of lecture hours, even though language development activities are very important to meet the English language needs of students while they study at university. At the Language Development Unit, all students are divided into several groups which are adjusted according to the students' ability to speak English. Certainly there will be differences in the ability level of students in each class. This would certainly be a challenge for lecturers who teach to adapt their teaching methods to the students being taught. Therefore, the researcher wants to examine the questioning levels used by teachers in classes that are at the intermediate, elementary, and beginner level. From the teaching activities, it would be known whether the teachers in charge use a lower cognitive level or a higher cognitive level in asking questions to students. To prove the teaching

technique, Antasari State Islamic University was chosen as the object of this research.

Therefore, based on the background above, this proposed study attempts to investigate on the teacher questioning levels in Language Development Unit program, which focuses on higher cognitive and lower cognitive which must be applied during the class. More than a century ago, Ross proposed two main research objectives by which research determines whether students can remember and understand what is taught and apply what they have learned. Allah said in surah An-Nahl verse 43 and 44:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رَجَالًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ ۖ فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (٤٣) بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ ۗ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٤٤)

Based on the verse, it explicitly explains that the subjects of education are not only educators or teachers, but also students. Therefore, this verse can be the basis for the development of active student learning theory and the question and answer method in the teaching and learning process. When the teacher is providing guidance and education to students, the student's position is the object, but at the same time, he also acts as the subject. Because the teacher's job is not only to deliver teaching materials to students, but teacher also responsible for generating interest and motivation in students' learning so that they can do their own learning. The theory suggests that teachers should ask students more high-level questions to improve their critical thinking.

While in practice it is more advisable to use low-level questions to assess the extent of students' knowledge of the material presented.

In previous studies, many researchers examined the behavior of teachers when asking questions in the classroom for language teaching. Several studies have also examined the effect of question level on students' critical thinking. However, this study focuses on what level of questions teachers use in Language Development Unit program when teaching in the classroom. The interview questions were designed by the researcher based on the cognitive domain of higher order thinking.

## **B. Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding in this study, the researches give some definitions of the key terms that are important to understand as follows:

### **1. Teachers' Questioning Level**

The levels of questions can be used to measure students' cognitive development. In this study, the teacher refers to the teacher's questions as instructional cues or motivational stimuli for students, to focus their attention, and to help their learning and thinking. Teachers' questioning level is divided into two, namely lower and higher cognitive.

### **2. Language Development Unit Program**

Definitions Language Development Unit is a program that makes it easy for students to learn foreign language vocabulary. In this study, the Language Development Unit is a program that aims to help students improve their English language skills.

### **C. Research Questions**

Based on the background above, the questions of this study that would be discussed are as follows:

1. What are the teachers questioning levels applied in Language Development Unit?
2. How does the teacher apply the question?

### **D. Objectives of Study**

1. To find out the teacher's questioning levels applied in Language Development Unit under investigation.
2. To know the way the teacher applies the question in teaching English.

### **E. Significant of Study**

There are two significant of study in this research, they are theoretical significant and practical significant.

#### 1. Theoretical Significant

This research can be used as a reference for someone who wants to do research on questioning skills especially questioning skills by Language Development Unit teachers.

#### 2. Practical Significant

- a. For students, they will get information related to what level of questions can increase their knowledge and can lead students to engage in critical thinking.

- b. For the teachers, they will gain insight into the teacher's ability to produce a conducive classroom atmosphere to develop students' thinking skills.
- c. To be reference for future research, they will know what level of questions preservice teachers use in asking when they teach and can be used as improvements in the future.