Enhancing Classroom Discourse: The Interplay of Display and Referential Questions in EFL Teaching

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Abstract. This study aims to look into the uses of display and referential question types when teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Two EFL teachers' classroom interactions were carefully observed, and audio-video recorded. The recorded data were then verbatim transcribed. The results show that the combination of display and referential question types not only evaluates students' understanding and stimulates more in-depth thought but also greatly improves the efficacy of classroom discourse moves. The study suggests that the thoughtful employment of these question types might benefit more dynamic classroom interactions in addition to engaging learning environments, fostering comprehensive understanding and critical thinking.

Keywords: display; referential; interaction; moves

1   Introduction

Previous studies on display and referential questions in educational contexts have shed important light on their different functions and effects on student learning. Display questions are acknowledged to be crucial instruments for assessing students' comprehension because of their goal to elicit knowledge or measure comprehension [1]–[7]. These questions frequently function as foundational elements for presenting new ideas and establishing a nurturing educational environment. Empirical studies have demonstrated that the thoughtful use of display questions can augment students' self-confidence and engagement, hence generating a constructive learning environment [8]–[11]

In education, asking questions is crucial for teachers to assess their students' comprehension, promote critical thinking, and encourage active engagement. As such, display and referential questions are two different types of questions that are important in this educational context. Display questions serve as a means of showcasing students' knowledge and frequently confirm that they have understood a particular subject. Conversely, referential questions encourage students to make connections between ideas or consult outside sources; they go beyond simple display [12], [13].

Display questions have the potential in classrooms to assess students' understanding. In this regard, [14] highlighted the value of well-structured display questions in encouraging students to participate actively and feel confident. When teachers raise these questions, students can express their understanding without worrying about being judged, which improves the learning environment.

On the other hand, referential questions elucidate the connections between ideas and motivate students to go beyond. In this respect, [15] and [16] highlighted that referential questions help students develop their critical thinking abilities because they force them to make connections between ideas and apply their knowledge in a variety of contexts. This kind of question fosters a comprehensive grasp of the topic in addition to improving comprehension.

The mutually beneficial relationship between display and referential questions has been studied in recent educational settings. A successful combination of the two question types improves learning outcomes overall. Referential questions raise cognitive engagement by pushing students to think critically and draw connections between different concepts, whereas display questions are the foundation, laying out a baseline of understanding [12], [17], [18].

When examining the subtle dynamics of these questioning strategies in diverse educational settings, a research vacuum becomes apparent when addressing the function of display and referential inquiries in classroom discourse moves. Although previous research studies have recognized the importance of display and referential questions in promoting student involvement and critical thinking, there is a lack of studies that explore the precise functions by which teachers strategically use these questions in the context of classroom discourse. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate how referential and display questions work as essential elements of classroom discourse while considering the variety of contexts in which they are used. This study gap highlights the need for a more thorough analysis to identify the function of these questions in classroom discourse moves, giving teachers knowledge to guide the development of more successful teaching strategies.

2   Method

In order to better understand the function of display and referential questions, this study employed a qualitative approach. It enables a thorough investigation of classroom discourse patterns and instructional strategies. In order to have a rich background for comprehending the use of display and referential questions in real time, observations of classroom interactions between teachers and students were conducted.

Two EFL secondary teachers were systematically observed twice in their classroom-learning process. Referential and display questions were the main emphasis of the observations. Unobtrusive observations were made, focusing on capturing the genuineness and spontaneity of classroom interactions.

In addition, the classroom interactions were audio-visually recorded to guarantee data completeness and accuracy. With the help of this dual-mode data collection technique, it was possible to analyze verbal and nonverbal cues in great detail, which advanced an understanding of the integration of display and referential questions into the instructional discourse.

The gathered data were subjected to a thematic analysis, to detect recurrent themes and patterns concerning the use of display and referential questions. As part of this analysis, the observed instances were coded according to pre-established categories on the questions' type, frequency, and functions. In order to provide a more thorough linguistic examination of the questions asked by the teachers and the responses given by the students, audio-visual recordings were verbatim transcribed. To accurately represent the subtleties of language use, transcription was done according to Jefferson's conventions in 1984 [19].

To characterize the observed occurrences of display and referential questions, qualitative coding was utilized. Iterative processes were used to generate codes, enabling themes based on the observed data. The data gathered from both teachers were analyzed and combined to find similarities and differences in how they used display and referential questions. This

comparative analysis advances knowledge of the ways in which EFL teachers may employ different instructional strategies following discourse moves of classroom interactions.

At this point, using a combination of qualitative analysis approaches, audio-visual recordings, and observational methodologies, this research offers a nuanced investigation of the function of display and referential questions in the observed EFL teachers' classrooms.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

This study explores the nuances of questioning types used in classroom interactions, providing insight into how these educational resources support interactive discourse between teachers and students. As such, display and referential questions are examined as a crucial lens through which teachers advance their students' learning experiences. A quantitative snapshot of the frequency and distribution of display and referential questions of the two EFL teachers (T1 and T2) is given in the table below.

Table 1. Teachers' questions

No	Ty	T1			T2		
		N	R	NR	N	R	NR
1	D	27	23	4	33	30	3
2	R	7	5	2	11	7	4
3	T	34	28	6	44	37	7

Note: Ty: Type; D: Display; R: Referential; T1: Teacher 1, T2: teacher 2; R: Response; NR: No response; N: Total number per type; N: Total number per type; T: Total

The researcher examined classroom discourse more closely, focusing on the complex relations between referential and display questions that influence the nature of interactions. The following excerpts give an idea of the types of teachers' questions (T1 and T2), used to help their students who are learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Furthermore, display and referential questions are purposefully combined to encourage students to make connections between ideas and participate in deeper cognitive processes. Display questions are intended to evaluate understanding and highlight prior knowledge. Referential questions are incorporated into the questioning strategy in a way that supports deeper comprehension and active engagement by pushing students to go beyond. In this regard, the excerpts excerpt 1 (T1) and excerpt II (T2) provide windows into the questioning functions of the teachers and offer a chance to analyze how these language resources affect the regress and flow of classroom interactions and create an atmosphere that is favorable to meeting learning objectives.

Excerpt 1 (T1)
T : If you apply for a job, what kind of question do you think you have?
S : Salary
T : What kind of approach is it?
   : Is it a communicative approach?
Ss : It is
T : Have you ever experienced that situation?
S : No, I have not. Hopefully, I will have it, Sir

Excerpt 2 (T2)
T   : Which one is the subject and predicate?
S   : John is the subject, and eats is the predicate
T   : What about this one? Which is the head?
Ss   : Girl is the head
T   : Modifier?
Ss   : Tall is the modifier

The extracts indicate the combination of display and referential questioning types. Referential questions direct students to interact with a particular subject and make connections, while display questions aid in identifying knowledge gaps in the class. This combination encourages critical thinking, thorough comprehension, and information application in a holistic learning environment. Teachers can provide an environment where students actively construct meaning and increase comprehension and cognitive skill development by easily combining different types of questions.

4 Discussion

It is essential to comprehend the purpose and function of display and referential questions in classroom discourse to develop effective teaching strategies. An extensive study within the framework of previous research findings is prompted by the data supplied, which shows the frequency of specific question types and student responses (Table 1). This analysis would take into account not just the cognitive side of learning but also the ways in which classroom management, discourse, and questioning techniques support the achievement of learning objectives.

The frequency of display questions appearing in classroom interactions supports the idea that these questions are tools for evaluating students' comprehension or exhibiting knowledge. This result aligns with previous studies that highlighted the function of display questions in enhancing fundamental knowledge and fostering a supportive learning environment [12], [15], [20]. An effective questioning technique can be achieved by using display questions, which also helps create a welcoming environment that motivates students to engage in the learning process.

Furthermore, referential questions are important for fostering critical thinking abilities and motivating students to draw connections between ideas, which is supported by the appearance of referential questions [21]. This change could result from a pedagogical strategy, as suggested by the study of [22] highlighting successful questioning strategies in teaching to increase students' comprehension and create a more participatory and discussion-based learning environment.

In addition, a dynamic and engaging classroom environment that fosters student participation is supported by more responses [23]–[25]. This bolsters the idea that thoughtfully constructed questions foster an engaging dialogue in the classroom where students are motivated to participate. Creating an environment where students feel safe expressing their opinions is crucial to effective classroom management. According to the data, both teachers implement a practical classroom management approach, as seen by the greater quantity of responses. Nonetheless, additional information shown from the data is the necessity of possible effects of teaching style on student involvement in the disparities of the given responses.

The two teachers' different questioning types and the given responses mirror previous findings showing how different teaching strategies affect classroom discourse moves [26] In comparison to Teacher 1, Teacher 2 may have a more participatory teaching strategy based on the greater focus he places on display and referential questions, as well as the higher number of student responses. This comparison highlights how customized questioning techniques shape classroom discourse and management, which in turn affects students' attainment of learning objectives.[27]

In this respect, regarding classroom discourse, a well-rounded instructional technique should include display and referential questions [21], [28]. Another thing found is the observed shift towards more referential questions pointing to an emerging classroom language that fosters critical thinking and student participation. This result is consistent in classroom discourse with suggestions to include various question types to accommodate different learning styles and encourage critical thinking [29]

Developing constructive and engaged classroom interactions is a prerequisite for effective classroom discourse [30]. The study indicates that an effective questioning strategy fosters an atmosphere in which students are motivated to participate actively in the subject matter. This involvement supports the main learning objectives of helping students develop critical thinking abilities and thoroughly comprehend the subject matter.

By and large, teachers' question types (T1 and T2) in Table 1 show clear patterns in classroom discourse moves. Overall, the analysis indicates that both teachers successfully employ display and referential questions, promoting lively classroom interactions. The data emphasize how important it is to modify questioning strategies to boost student engagement, evaluate basic knowledge, and foster deeper comprehension. The observed discrepancies between T1 and T2 could result from different teaching approaches, student backgrounds, or types of questions asked in the two different classrooms.

Concerning the excerpts (Excerpt 1), the teacher poses a display question to the students, enquiring about the types of questions they may face in a job interview. This question evaluates the student's level of understanding of the subject matter. The teacher next asked the students to identify the kind of approach that is being used, specifically asking if it is a communicative method, using a referential question. The students affirmatively respond, demonstrating that they have understood the presented approach.

The teacher then asked the students about their experience with a job application scenario by combining a display question with a referential one. This question has two purposes: it evaluates the student's practical grasp of the subject and invites them to provide personal insights. In response, the student adds to the classroom's conversational flow by affirming their lack of prior experience and expressing hope for future interactions.

The teacher strategically used display and referential questions to promote active student participation in classroom discourse moves. These question types work together to provide a dynamic learning environment that links abstract ideas to real-world contexts. The students' responses show that they have understood the material and are willing to share personal experiences, which helps to create a collaborative and participatory learning environment. The discourse as a whole demonstrates successful teaching techniques meant to assess comprehension, promote engagement, and produce a stimulating learning environment of classroom discourse moves.

In the meantime, in excerpt 2, the teacher evaluates the students' comprehension of sentence structure through a well-planned set of discourse moves. T2 starts with a display question and asks the learner to determine the subject and predicate to create a baseline evaluation. Then, a referential question is posed, which changes the emphasis to identifying the

language component referred to as the "head." The student successfully answers, demonstrating both an understanding of fundamental sentence structure and the capacity to use this understanding to pinpoint particular sentence pieces. This discourse moves illustrates a useful teaching technique that goes from a broad assessment to a more in-depth study, promoting a deeper comprehension of language concepts [31].

Furthermore, in the employment of display questions, the students are entrusted with recognizing the subject and predicate. T2 adds a reference question to this foundational examination, concentrating on the idea of a "modifier." In response, the student correctly recognizes "Tall" as the modifier, successfully applying the idea in the given context. This question type evaluates the student's understanding of sentence structure while simultaneously promoting the application of grammatical knowledge in real-world situations. Referential questions and display questions work well together to provide an engaging- learning environment where students actively participate in language analysis.

At this point, the association between display and referential types of questioning and classroom discourse moves becomes especially clear. The purpose of display questions is to gauge students' prior knowledge or to let peers and the teacher see their thinking. Discourse moves in response to display questions can include giving feedback, supplying further information, or helping students clear up any misunderstandings. By taking these steps, students are guaranteed to understand the fundamentals of learning. Conversely, referential questions point students to particular information or content and frequently encourage them to consult the course materials or their personal experiences. Afterwards, referential questions can be used to guide discourse by having students reference sources, connect ideas to real-world situations, or work together to solve problems. This question pushes students to draw connections between various facts and fosters a deeper comprehension of the subject [12].

Thus, a detailed understanding of the dynamics of classroom discourse can be gained from the data shown in the table and extracts. The data (Table 1) emphasize the value of using various questioning strategies to keep students interested through the given responses. The analysis of the extracts, on the other hand, demonstrates the teachers' skillful discourse moves from basic evaluations to more in-depth analysis. Balanced question types are essential in creating an engaging and dynamic learning environment. The discovered dissimilarities between the two teachers could indicate distinct pedagogical approaches, even more underscoring the intricacies of classroom dynamics. In the end, the information encourages contemplation on the complex interactions that occur in the classroom between questioning types, participation, and learning objectives.

5 Conclusion

The data analysis provides a good comprehension of the role of display and referential questions in classroom interactions. The results are consistent with well-established educational theories and highlight the significance of using a variety of question types in a balanced way to create a stimulating and productive learning environment. By highlighting the necessity for teachers to modify their questioning types to support a variety of cognitive skills and enhance student learning outcomes, this study adds to the continuing perspectives about the effective teaching-learning process. Incorporating efficacious questioning strategies within the wider context of classroom discourse is crucial in establishing a conducive learning environment.

Although the given data provides insightful information, it is important to recognize its limitations. The study does not go into the particulars of the questions raised or the qualitative

features of the responses. Further investigations may deal with the efficaciousness of distinct question types in promoting enduring retention and utilization of information. Furthermore, examining the direct influence of questioning strategies on particular learning outcomes would offer a more thorough comprehension of their efficacy in accomplishing learning objectives.

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