



**AN ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHER'S QUESTION LEVELS  
IN TEACHING READING OF THE TWELFTH GRADE STUDENTS  
AT SMAN 1 PAKUSARI  
IN THE 2007/2008 ACADEMIC YEAR**

**THESIS**

Presented to Fulfil one of the Requirements to Obtain S-1 Degree  
At the Language and Arts Education Department of  
the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education

Jember University

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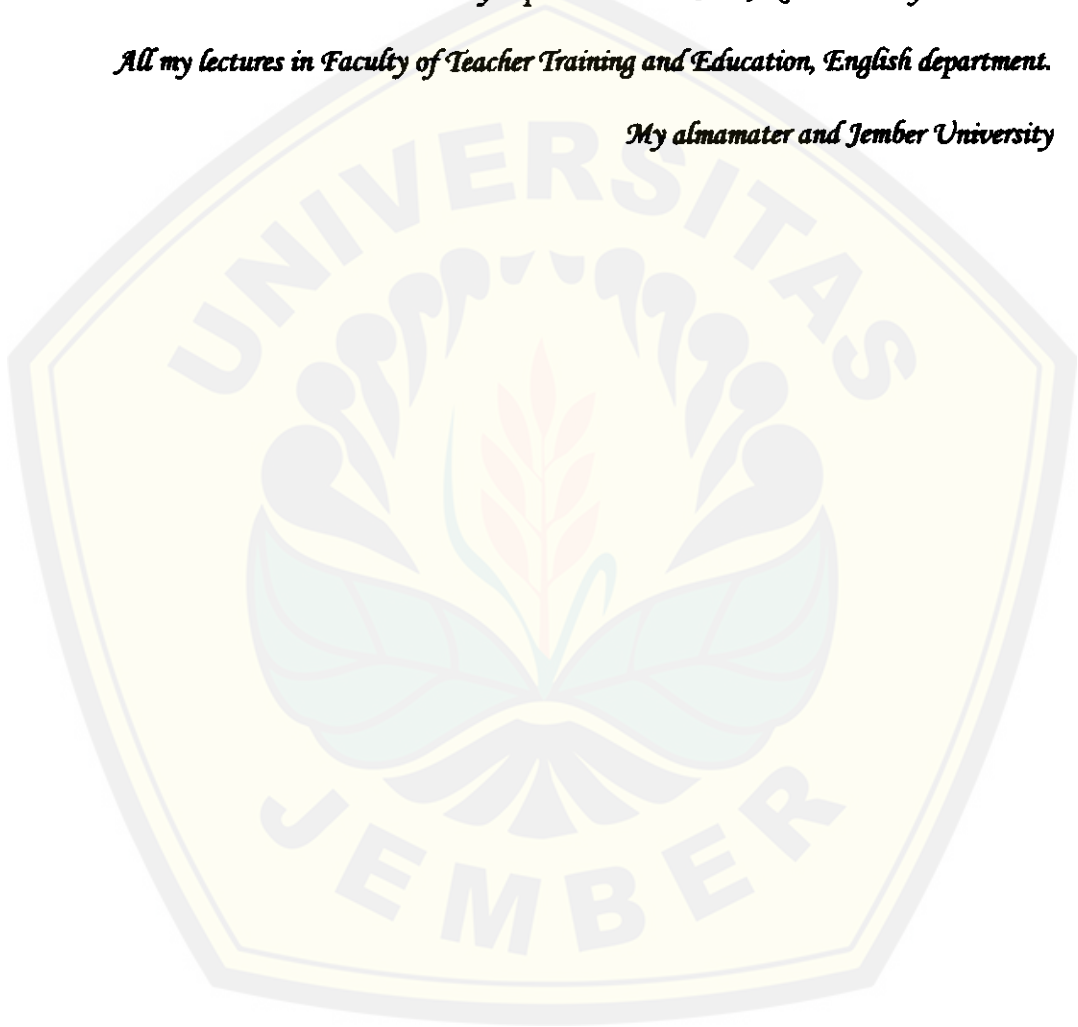
## DEDICATION

*This thesis is honorably dedicated to:*

*My family: my beloved parents, Muslih and Sri Harijayati. A million of thanks for your never-ending love; my sister and my brothers, Susi, mas Agus, Wahyu and Yanuar, and my lovely nephews Wildan Nur Akmal. I love you so much.*

*All my lectures in Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, English department.*

*My almamater and Jember University*



**CONSULTANTS' APPROVAL**

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at the English Education Program, Language & Arts Department,  
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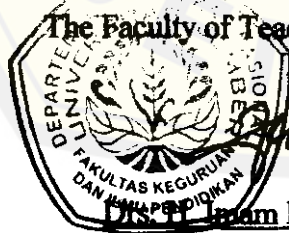
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all I would like to express my greatest gratitude to Allah SWT, who gives me guidance and blessing, so, I can finish writing this thesis.

In relation to the writing and finishing of this thesis, first of all I would like to express the deepest and sincerest thanks to Dra. Zakiyah Tasnim, MA and Dra. Musli Ariani, M.App.Ling who have for their willingness and suggestions to guide me in accomplishing this thesis. Their valuable guidance and contribution to the writing of this thesis are highly appreciated

A million thanks is also addressed to:

1. The Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Jember University
2. The Chairperson of The Language & Arts Department
3. The Chairperson of English Education Programs
4. The examination committee
5. The headmaster and the English teacher of SMA Negeri 1 Pakusari Jember in the 2007/2008 academic year who helped me obtain the research data

Finally, I feel indebted to all of those who gave positive comments for the improvement of this thesis.

Jember, July 2008

The writer

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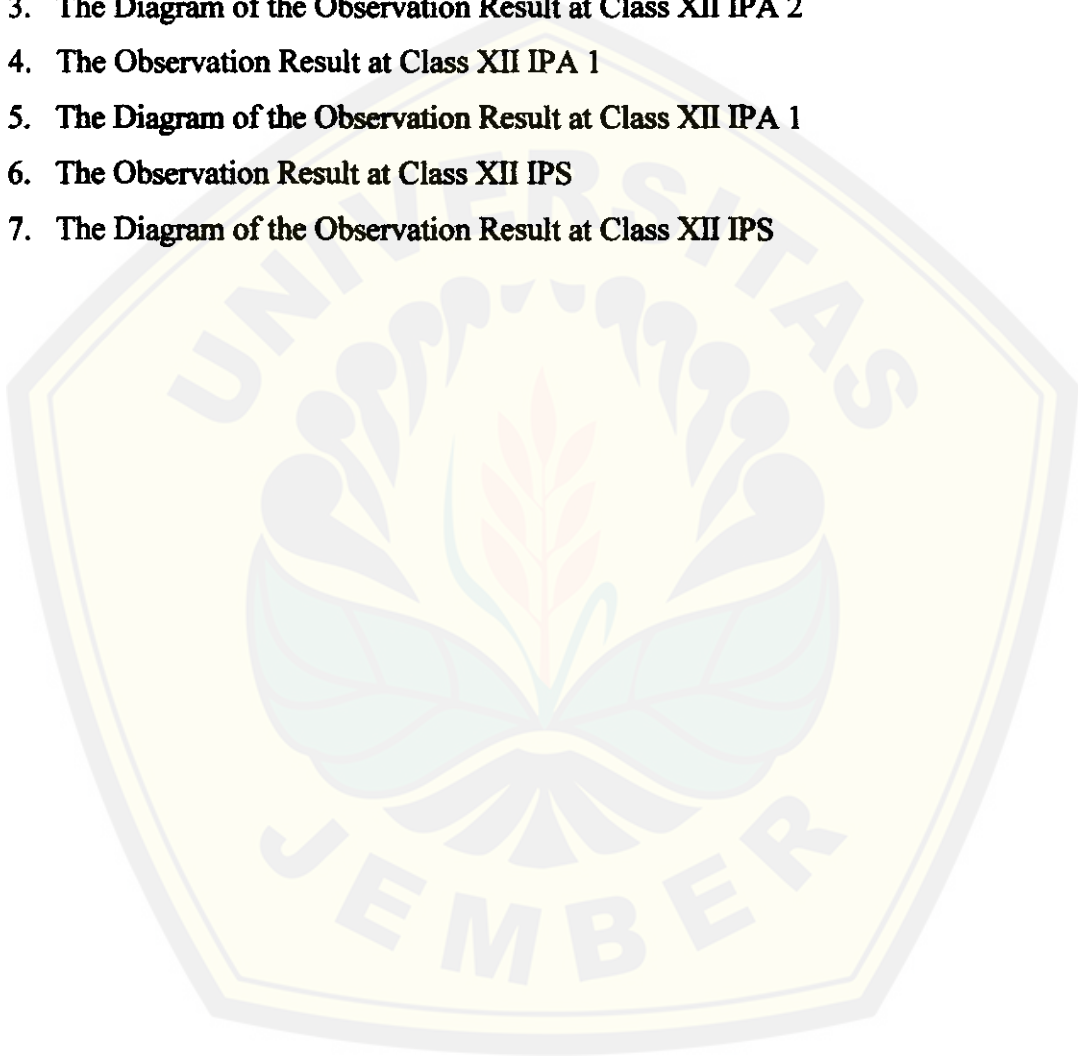
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## SUMMARY

**An Analysis of the Teacher Question Levels in Teaching Reading of the Twelfth Grade Students at SMAN 1 Pakusari in the 2007/ 2008 Academic Year;** Yulis Dili Darwati, 030210401304; 2008; 31 pages; English Education Program of Language and Arts Department of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Jember University.

Questioning is one of the effective techniques to help students improve their thinking skills. Sadker and Sadker in Cooper (1999: 111) state that the first step to be a good questioner is that a teacher should recognize that questions have different characteristics, serve various functions, and create different levels of thinking. To recognize the different levels of questions, teachers can use a question classification method. Revised Bloom's Taxonomy is one of the classification systems that can be used for clarifying learning objective as well as questions. Pohl (2002) states that the emphases of revised Bloom Taxonomy are: its primary focus is on the taxonomy in use, this means that the revised taxonomy is a more authentic tool for curriculum planning, instructional delivery and assessment. Moreover the revised taxonomy is universal for any disciplines and easily applicable at elementary, secondary, and even tertiary levels. This study is a case study that is intended to investigate the teacher's question levels in teaching reading using question classification method developed by Lorin Anderson which is called Revised Bloom's Taxonomy.

The research was done at SMAN 1 Pakusari. The subject of the research was the twelfth grade teacher at SMAN 1 Pakusari. The data were collected by applying classroom observations, interview, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive quantitative and qualitative.

The results of this study were the frequent question levels used by the teacher in teaching reading were remembering and understanding. Other levels such as

applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating were also used but the frequency was low. Finally, this led to the conclusion that in teaching reading, the teacher used more lower questions (remembering and understanding) rather than the higher ones. The objective of teaching reading for the twelfth grade students is students comprehend meaning of the functional written text and simple essay in the form of narrative, explanation, discussion, and review in the context of daily life and to access knowledge. This means that the twelfth grade students are expected to be able to extract all information and achieve some abilities through reading activities. From this point of view, therefore; the twelfth grade teacher is suggested to increase the use of higher-level questions (analyzing, evaluating, creating).



## I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research background, the research problem, the research objective, operational definition of the terms, and the significance of the research.

### 1.1 Background of the Research

In Indonesia, English is taught as a compulsory subject at Junior and Senior high schools. Based on the 2006 curriculum, one of the goals of teaching English is to develop the communication competency, both spoken and written to reach the level of functional literacy (BSNP, 2006: 307). To reach this goal successfully, teachers are suggested to teach students not only to accumulate knowledge or to memorize facts but also teachers have to lead students to use their thinking skills. Elliot (2000: 297) states that teachers have to help students apply what they have learnt, integrate it with other facts, and then stand back and ask themselves if they can do better action.

In teaching reading, the teacher's job is to help students understand a written text. According to Harmer (2004: 70), reading is an active activity by which readers have to understand what the words mean, understand what the sentences mean, understand the arguments, and work out if they agree with them. This means that in teaching reading teachers should help the students understand not only the information stated in the text but also information behind the text. To do this, teachers need an effective technique to stimulate students' thinking skill so that the teaching of reading will be successful.

One of the effective techniques to help students improve their thinking skills is questioning. Chuska in Eliot (1998: 221) states that questions are critical elements that teachers use to stimulate student thinking. Today, questioning and teaching are related activities. Therefore, to be an effective teacher, someone must be a professional question maker. According to Jackie and Dankert (2001: 23-24), to construct an effective question, there are four criteria that need to be known by the

teachers. The criteria are: 1) cognitive level of question, 2) purpose, 3) content focus, and 4) wording and syntax. From those four criteria, however, cognitive level of question is the first thing that teachers should realize. Sadker and Sadker in Cooper (1999: 111) state that the first step to be a good questioner, a teacher should recognize that questions have different characteristics, serve various functions, and create different levels of thinking. Some questions may only require simple responses, and some others may bring students to go beyond memory and to use their thinking processes in forming an answer. From this point of view, therefore, teachers need to vary the questions in different levels so that students can develop their thinking skill.

To recognize the different levels of questions, teachers can use a question classification (taxonomy) developed by experts. The question classification will help the teacher to be systematic in asking questions because it gives practical system for classifying questions. As it is stated by Hoover (1972: 124) that question classification is merely a tool for recognizing the different types of questions.

Meanwhile, Bo Linn (2006) states two levels of question namely lower-level questions and higher-level questions. Lower-level questions are those that require students to achieve skills of remembering, understanding, and simple application. Higher-level questions are those requiring complex application such as analyzing, evaluating and creating skills. Further he mentions the use of question levels in teaching such as: teachers can use lower level questions for evaluating students' preparation and comprehension, diagnosing students' strengths and weaknesses, and reviewing or summarizing content. Moreover, teacher can use higher-level questions for encouraging students to think more deeply and critically, encouraging discussions, and stimulating students to seek information on their own.

Based on the explanation above, it is interesting to investigate the teacher's question levels. Grellet (1996: 5) states that question levels and question functions are constantly related to develop a particular reading skill. Therefore, the investigation is done to the levels of the teacher's questions in teaching reading. The study used a question classification developed by Lorin Anderson, which is called as revised

Bloom's Taxonomy. The emphases of revised Bloom Taxonomy are: its primary focus is on the taxonomy in use, this means that the revised taxonomy is a more authentic tool for curriculum planning, instructional delivery and assessment. Moreover the revised taxonomy is universal for any disciplines and easily applicable at elementary, secondary, and even tertiary levels (Pohl; 2002). There are six levels in the Taxonomy moving sequentially from the simplest to the most complex, namely: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create.

The research was done at SMAN 1 Pakusari under consideration that there has never been a research on classroom questioning since the school was founded in 2005. Besides, based on the informal interview with the English teacher at SMAN 1 Pakusari, it was known that questioning has been involved in teaching English. He usually uses questions both written and oral questions in order to help students understand the materials and to check students' progress.

## **1.2 Problems of the Research**

From the explanation above, the problems formulated are:

1. What levels of question does the twelfth grade teacher use in teaching reading at SMAN 1 Pakusari in the 2007/2008 academic year?
2. How are the levels of question used by the twelfth grade teacher in teaching reading at SMAN 1 Pakusari in the 2007/2008 academic year?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Research**

Based on the research background and the research problem, the objective of the research is to investigate the question levels used by the twelfth grade teacher in teaching reading at SMAN 1 Pakusari in the 2006/2007 academic year.

## **1.4 Operational Definitions**

In order to avoid misunderstanding between the writer and the readers, the terms used in this study that need to be defined operationally are: 1) the levels of the teacher's questions, 2) Revised Bloom's Taxonomy, 3) teaching reading,

#### **1.4.1 The levels of the teacher's questions**

The teacher's questions refer to the classifications of the twelfth grade teacher's questions asked in teaching reading comprehension.

#### **1.4.2 Revised Bloom's Taxonomy**

Revised Bloom's Taxonomy deals with the classifications of questions developed by Lorin Anderson who revised the old Bloom Taxonomy in 1990's. There are six levels of questions moving from the easiest to the most difficult level. The six levels are: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. The first three levels are categorized as lower level and the last three levels are categorized as higher level question.

#### **1.4.3 Teaching Reading**

Teaching reading in this study means teaching the twelfth grade students of SMAN 1 Pakusari to read English texts in order to help them comprehend the texts.

### **1.5 The Significance of The Research**

#### **1.5.1 For the English teachers**

The results of the research are expected to be useful information for the English teachers especially who teach reading comprehension at SMA in order to develop an effective questioning in reading comprehension class.

#### **1.5.2 For other Researchers**

It is also expected that the results of the research could give input for other researchers who want to conduct a further study with the same topic but different design, for example *the correlation between the levels of the teacher's question and the student's reading achievement*.



## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter highlights the related literature to the research. They cover: levels of questions, the application of questions, teaching reading, and teaching reading and levels of questions.

### 2.1 Levels of Questions

In the classroom, questions can be a bridge to create interaction between the teacher and the learner. In asking effective questions, however, teachers need to recognize that questions have different levels of difficulty. Sadker and Sadker in Cooper (1999:111) reveal that the first step in effective questioning is to recognize that questions have distinctive characteristics, serve various functions, and create different levels of thinking. For example: *What is the title of the text?* and *Do you think that "X" is the best title for the text?* The first question seems to be easy because the students only restate the information that they have learned. On the other hand, the students have to give their own idea to answer the second question. In summary, some questions may be in low level because they only require simple responses, and some others may be in high level because they bring students to use their thinking processes in forming an answer.

According to Bo Linn (2006), there are two levels of questions namely lower-level questions and higher-level questions. Lower-level questions are those that require students to achieve skills of knowledge, comprehension, and simple application. Higher-level questions are those requiring complex application such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills. Further he states that lower levels of question are appropriate for: 1) evaluating students' preparation and comprehension, 2) diagnosing students' strengths and weaknesses, 3) reviewing or summarizing content. Meanwhile, higher levels of question are most appropriate for encouraging students to think more deeply and critically, 2) encouraging discussions, 3) stimulating students to seek information on their own.



Based on the explanation above, choosing appropriate levels of questions is one of the important things in effective questioning. Teachers should become aware of the kinds of questions they ask and the kinds of responses those questions elicit. Donald et al (1998: 226) say that teachers must be knowledgeable in the process of framing questions so that they can guide student to use their thinking skills in the most skillful and meaningful manner.

In order to classify the different characteristics and functions of questions, there is a number of conceptual schemes that have been developed by experts. In this study, however; the research used the revised Bloom's Taxonomy for classifying questions.

### **2.1.1 Levels of Questions on Revised Bloom Taxonomy**

Taxonomy of questions is the classifications of questions. Bloom's taxonomy was created by Benyamin Bloom in the 1950's as a means of expressing different kinds of thinking. According to Sadker and Sadker in Cooper (1999: 111), it is the most-well known system for classifying educational objective as well as classroom questions. In the 1990's, the original bloom's taxonomy was revised by Lorin Anderson – a former student of Benyamin Bloom. Now, this new taxonomy is known as revised Bloom taxonomy.

There are some differences between the original and the revised Bloom Taxonomy. Pohl (2002) mentions three main changes in the revised Bloom taxonomy. First, the new levels are expressed as verbs instead of nouns. This change is made with the view that thinking is an action verb. For example the level of analysis is changed become analyze. Second, a number of the roots are changed, for example *knowledge* is changed become *remember*. Third, the order of the last two levels has been reversed, that is *evaluate* proceeds *create*.

In addition, Pohl (2002) also states the emphasis of Revised Bloom Taxonomy as follow:

- a. The primary focus of revised Bloom Taxonomy is on the taxonomy in use, this means that the revised taxonomy is a more authentic tool for curriculum planning, instructional delivery and assessment.
- b. The revised taxonomy is universal. It means that it can be used in any disciplines. The revised taxonomy is also easily applicable at elementary, secondary, and even tertiary levels.

The revised Bloom taxonomy consists of six levels that are served in the form of verbs namely: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. Lorin Anderson has also added two or more specific levels in each main level. A brief explanation is given below (Anderson, 2001: 31-34, Jackie and Dankert, 2005: 30-40).

## **a. Remember**

Remember is the lowest level of question. It requires students to recall or memorize information that has been presented before. It includes terminology, and specific facts such as dates events, people, places, and recall of basic principles and generalization. Remembering questions are distinguished into two types namely recognizing and recalling.

1. *Recognizing* is identifying information from the presented materials or it is locating information in long-term memory.

Examples: *recognize the dates of important event in U.S history*

2. *Recalling* is retrieving relevant information from long-term memory.

Examples: *recall the dates of important event in U.S history*

## **b. Understand**

Questions in understand level ask students to manipulate information that they have learned. Here, they have to construct meaning from instructional messages or

they have to combine data together by rephrasing, giving a description by his/her own words and use it in making comparison.

There are seven categories of understanding questions.

1. *Interpreting*. It is changing from one form of representation to another representation. Here, students are asked to classify, to paraphrase, to represent, or to translate information.

Example: *What does "the man" refer to?*

2. *Exemplifying*. It is illustrating or finding a specific example or illustration of a concept or principle.

Example: *give examples of various artistic painting styles.*

3. *Classifying*. It is classifying or categorizing something into certain categories.

Example: *classify observed or described cases of mental disorders.*

4. *Summarizing*. It is summarizing or abstracting a major point or theme.

Example: *write a short summary of events portrayed on videotape.*

5. *Inferring*. It is drawing a logical conclusion from the presented information.

Example: *in learning foreign language, infer grammatical principles from examples.*

6. *Comparing*. It is constructing or detecting correspondences between ideas or objects.

Example: *What are the similarities and differences between remembering and comprehension questions?*

7. *Explaining*. It is constructing cause and effect models.

Example: *explain the causes of important 18<sup>th</sup> century event in France.*

### **c. Apply**

Applying questions require students to apply a rule or process to a given situation. Students are asked to use information that they have in a new context to solve a problem, to answer a question, or to perform another task. The information

used may be rules, principles, formulas, theories, concepts, or procedures. There are two kinds of applying question namely: executing and implementing.

1. *Executing* is applying a procedure to a familiar task.

Example: *divide one whole number by another number both with multiple digits.*

2. *Implementing* is applying a procedure to an unfamiliar task. It requires understanding of the problem and the solution.

Example: *Based on your knowledge, what statistical procedure is appropriate for the problem?*

#### **d. Analyze**

Analyze questions are higher order questions. These questions require students to think critically. They have to break down material into its constituent parts and to determine the relationship. The purpose is to clarify by discovering hidden meaning and basic structure.

There are three kinds of analysis questions as follow:

1. *Differentiating*. It is distinguishing relevant from irrelevant parts or important from unimportant parts of presented materials.

Example: *distinguish between relevant and irrelevant numbers in a mathematical word problem.*

2. *Organizing*. It is finding coherence or outlining elements based on evidences.

Example: *structure evidence in a historical description into evidence for and against a particular historical explanation*

3. *Attributing*. It is determining a point of view or intent underlying the presented materials.

*What is the point of view of the writer writing the book?*

#### **f. Evaluate**

Evaluating questions ask students to be able to use criteria and standard to make judgment about something. It calls for comments, involving judgments,

opinions, personal reaction, and criticisms. Because responses of evaluate question are given on the basis of stated criteria, students can use either objective criteria or personal value. When they use objective criteria, they make their judgment from a given frame of references, so they can give an opinion based on the given information. On the other hand, they may state their judgment based on their personal value.

Evaluation questions are distinguished into two categories as follow:

1. *Checking*. It is detecting consistency or inconsistency or determining the effectiveness of something.

Example: *Do you think women teachers should wear mini skirts in school?*

2. *Critiquing*. It is judging the appropriateness of something.

Example: *Which seem to be the best method to solve the problem?*

## e. Create

Create questions ask students to produce original communications, to make predictions, or to solve a problem. Students have to be able to put elements together to form a coherent or functional whole or to recognize elements into a new pattern. In other words, create questions invite students to use their original idea and creative thinking to predict, to generalize, or to conclude the facts or knowledge they have.

Create questions are distinguished into three categories as follow:

1. *Generating*. It is generalizing alternatives or hypotheses based on criteria.

Example: *generate hypothesis to account an observed phenomenon*

2. *Planning*. It is devising a procedure for accomplishing some tasks.

Example: *How many ways can you draw for solving the problem?*

3. *Producing*. It is constructing or inventing a product.

Example: *Can you create a new narrative paragraph?*

In relation to this study, here is an example of the application of revised bloom's taxonomy in teaching reading.

## Reading text

*School reading texts were also studied. It was found that the major reading series used in almost all public and private schools across the country teach that being a girl means being inferior. In these texts, boys are portrayed as being able to do so many things: they play with bats and balls, they work with chemistry sets, they do magic tricks that amaze their sisters, and they show initiative and independence as they go on trips by themselves and get part time jobs. Girls do things too: they help with the housework, bake cookies and sit and watch their brothers – that is, assuming they are present. In 144 texts studied, there were 881 stories in which the main characters are boys and only 344 in which a girl is the central figure.*

*Nancy Frizer and Myra Sadker, Sexism in school and society*

## Questions in each level on revised Bloom's Taxonomy

### Remember:

- *What do boys do in the school reading text that were studied?*
- *How many texts were analyzed for sexism?*

### Understand:

- *In your own words, compare the portrayal of males and females in school texts?*
- *What is the main idea of this paragraph?*

### Apply:

- *Considering the category description of sexist and nonsexist books that we have studied, how would you classify *Miracles on Maple Hill*?*

### Analyse:

- *Why do you think that girls and boys have been historically portrayed in such a stereotype manner in school texts?*
- *Why do you think educators are concerned with the passive way in which girls are portrayed in textbooks?*

### Evaluate:

- *What is your opinion on the issue of sexist in books?*

### Create:

- *What would your ideal non-sexist book be like?*

(Taken from: IUPUI Center for Teaching and Learning, 2002)

The examples above indicate the application of revised bloom's taxonomy in reading text. It applies the main six categories of revised bloom's taxonomy. It implies that questions can be categorized into certain levels. Thus, this study tries to

classify the teacher's questions in teaching reading by applying the revised bloom's taxonomy. This study uses all categories of revised bloom's taxonomy.

## **2.2 The Application of Questions in the Classroom**

Levels of questions explained in the previous section are the first important step to construct an effective questioning, yet levels of questions is only a small part of effective questioning. Brown (1975: 104) says that teachers should not only be keen on choosing the appropriate levels of questions, but they must also know how to communicate the questions effectively to a group of students.

Dealing with the importance of questioning techniques, James (2006) mentions one of the characteristics of a good questioning technique is that questioning allows teacher to gather information about the level of students' knowledge. This should be an important reason for teachers to use a good questioning technique especially in teaching reading comprehension. In view that comprehension of reading texts involve a variety of skills that can be covered by asking different types of question. Norton (1983: 363) implies that teachers can use certain levels of questions to develop a particular reading skill. Therefore, since the teachers use questions to facilitate teaching and learning process, questioning technique should be a crucial part in effective teaching.

To apply questions in teaching effectively, teachers need to know the way of delivering questions to the students. To increase fluency in asking questions, Brown (1975) has isolated eight elements that will be helpful for teachers to communicate their questions effectively. The eight elements are: clarity and coherence, pausing and pacing, directing and distributing, and, probing and prompting. A brief explanation about those eight elements are as follow:

### **a. Clarity and Coherence**

Clarity means clearness and coherence means logical connection among ideas or the ease and the clearness to be understood (oxford dictionary). Clear and coherent

questions are questions in which its ideas are connected logically so it is clear and easy to be understood by students.

## **b. Pausing and Pacing**

Pausing deals with a short stop after asking a question. Pacing deals with speed in delivering questions.

Pausing is important to give students time to think especially if a teacher asks higher-level questions. In addition, pausing after asking a question will give the non-verbal cues, which tell the teacher whether some students have the answer. A short pause before repeating or rephrasing indicates the teacher is expecting a prompt answer. A long pause indicates the teacher is expecting students to think carefully before answering the questions.

## **c. Directing and Distributing**

In a class, some problems may be faced by teachers such as some students may be active and usually dominate the class while some others are passive. Directing to specific student and distributing the questions around the class can minimize such problems. A teacher should always direct attention at a specific person when he/she asks a question by using the name of pupil, for example: "*Christine, do you...*, rather than, *Do you.....*, or by looking pointedly at one pupil. The pupil the teacher looks at need not be the one that the teacher wants to answer the question. If a question cannot be answered by the first person asked, the teacher can redirect it to another pupil or set of pupils after a pause. It can increase the students' participation. Furthermore, Brown says that skillful directing and distributing involves pupils more closely. They are more likely to participate and enjoy discussion if they know they have a fair share of discussion time.

Another element that needs to be recognized by teachers is probing and prompting. This element is related with the use of question levels in teaching. Probing



technique will help teachers in asking higher-level questions. Meanwhile prompting can help teachers if the students cannot answer the question. Teachers can prompt the students by going back to the lower level of questions.

## d. Probing and Prompting

Prompting means giving hints to help students when they do not give a correct answer or they do not answer the teacher's questions at all. A series of prompting followed by reinforcement will encourage students to be confident in completing an incomplete answer or revise an incorrect one.

Probing deals with directing students to think more deeply about his/her initial answer. Probing questions ask students to provide more support, be clearer, and offer greater specificity or originality. In brief, probing questions ask students to develop the quality of their answer.

Example of probing and prompting:

Teacher : *Would you say that nationalism in Africa is now greater than it was twenty years ago?*

Students : *Greater.*

Teacher : *Yes. Why is greater? (probing)*

Students : *because there are more nations now.*

Teacher : *That's right. There are more nations now and there are more nations because African people wanted to be independent of the Europeans. What has happened in the past twenty years which helped them become independent? (prompting)*

Class : *(silent)*

Teacher : *Well, basically it's because....*

(Brown, 1975 pp. 107)

## 2.3 The Forms of Questions

The forms of question relate to the grammatical forms of the question. To categorize question levels, teacher should recognize the form of the question. Thompson (1997: 99-101) suggests that 'form' is one of the dimensions of analysis in categorizing questions beside 'content and purpose'. Further he explains teachers who already know that in analyzing their own knowledge of English, and in deciding how

to introduce new language to the learners, they need to consider how the new language *is formed*, who refers to, and how, when, and why it is used. In making less vague and comprehensive questions, Chudron (1995: 127-129) also suggests that teachers can make modification on the content and the form of questions. In summary, the form of question will also help the teacher to categorize question.

The following section is the discussion of question forms that are usually used in the classroom. A brief explanation of yes/ no question, question words, and indirect question from Alter (1991) in *Essential English Usage and Grammar book 3&4*.

## • Yes / No Questions

Yes/ No question is questions that expect yes or no answer. Yes or No answers are used for these following questions:

### 1. Questions formed by special finites.

- Example:
- Is it narrative paragraph?
  - Can you see it now?
  - Will there be a match tomorrow?

### 2. Questions formed by adding question-tags.

When a positive statement is changed into a questions with a negative tag, an expected 'Yes' answer is used. When a negative statement is changed into a question with a positive tag, an expected 'No' answer is used.

Example:

Questions	Answers
The dress is wet, isn't it?	Yes, it is
They have finished it, haven't they?	Yes, they have
You can't do it, can you?	No, I can't
He wasn't afraid, was he?	No, he wasn't

### 3. Yes/ No answers are also used to express agreement and disagreement

Example: Mary looks Paul who can answer the question given by the teacher. Then, she says to Yoke, "*He knows the answer*". Yoke replies, "*Yes, of course he does*".

Note: Yoke uses a 'Yes' answer to express **agreement**.

## • Wh- Questions

Wh- questions are begun with a question word. Question words are usually used in questions to seek for information. Question words include: *who, whom, whose, which, when, why, how, where, and what*.

*Who* and *whom* are used for a person, *whose* is used for a possessor, **what** is used for a thing and a person, **which** is used for a thing and a person of a limited number, **when** is used to mean 'at what time', **where** is used for asking a place, **why** is used for asking a reason, **how** is used to mean 'in what way'.

Examples:

- Who writes the text?
- Where does he go?
- Why did she cry?
- Whose pen is this?
- Whom did you met?
- Etc.

## • Indirect Questions

Indirect questions are questions in which there are some changes from the direct questions. These changes are: 1) the question mark in direct questions always disappear in indirect questions, 2) in direct questions, the subject comes after the verb. In indirect questions, we place the subject before the verb.

Example: *Tell me when you are leaving for Singapore.*

## 2.4 Teaching Reading

Reading and comprehension relate one another. As stated by Stovall (1998) that reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. Therefore, teaching reading means helping students comprehend the texts. Grellet (1996: 3) states that comprehension means extracting the required information from a written text as efficiently as possible. According to Hughes (2003:138 – 139), reading comprehension includes some skills. First, the students need to be able to skim a text in order to get main ideas and to establish the structure of the text. Second, the students need to be able to do search reading by which they can quickly find information on a predetermined topic. Third, students need to be able to scan the text for particular bits of information such as: finding specific words or phrases, interpreting topic sentences, outlining logical organization of the text, distinguishing fact and opinion, recognizing writer's attitude and emotion. Fourth, the students need to be able to make inferences such as inferring meaning of unknown words from context and making pragmatic inferences.

In senior high school the teaching reading of grade XII is done in order to achieve the objective of teaching reading stated in the 2006 curriculum for SMA/ MA that is students comprehend meaning of the functional written text and simple essay in the form of narrative, explanation, discussion, and review in the context of daily life and to access knowledge. Based on the objective, students are expected to be able to achieve some abilities through reading activities such as: students are able to find the general and specific information of the written texts, students are able to identify the structure of texts, and students are able to identify the purpose of texts (BSNP, 2006).

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that reading is not a passive skill. Through teaching reading, teachers are suggested to lead students not only understand what is stated in the texts but also what is implied behind the text. As it is noted by Harmer (2004: 70) that through reading activities students are expected to be able to understand what the words mean, see the pictures the words are painting,

understand the arguments, and work out if they agree with them. If students fail this, then they only scratch the surface of the text and they quickly forget it.

## **2.5 Teaching Reading Comprehension and Levels of Questions**

In the previous section it is described that the goal of teaching reading is to help students comprehend written texts. Comprehension of reading texts includes a variety of skills. Thus, to develop those skills teachers need to vary the exercises – both oral and written exercises. A tool that most teachers use is questions. Cotton (2001) states that some of the reasons why teachers use questions in their teaching are: to assess achievement of instructional goals and objective and to develop critical thinking skills.

Since questions are used as the exercises to help students comprehend reading texts, teachers should be skillful in asking questions. Grellet (1996: 5) states that question levels and question functions are constantly related since a given exercise uses a certain level of question, with a certain function to develop a particular reading skill. Therefore, in asking questions, teachers should become aware of the kinds of questions and the kinds of responses those questions elicit.

To help teachers recognize the kinds of questions, Norton (1983: 363) suggests that teachers can use several sources to assure that the questions she/he asks will cover all skills involved in reading comprehension. Teachers can use questions classifications developed by experts in distinguishing a various types and functions of questions. The classifications will help teacher in constructing questions in order to develop the kinds of thinking skills they expect from students.

### III. RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter presents the research methods used in this study. They cover research design, area determination method, research subject, data collection method, and data analysis method.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The research design applied in this study was a case study. Arikunto (1998: 131) defines a case study as a study, which attempts to investigate and observe individuals or unit thoroughly. In this study, a case study was conducted to investigate the levels of question asked by an individual English teacher in teaching reading comprehension at the twelfth grade of SMAN 1 Pakusari.

The procedures of the research were as follows:

1. Determining the research area.
2. Determining the research subject
3. Constructing the research instruments
4. Collecting data.
5. Analyzing the data.
6. Drawing conclusions



#### 3.2 Area Determination Method

The area of this research was determined by applying purposive method. According to Arikunto (1998:117), purposive method is employed by the researcher to decide the research area because of certain purposes or reasons. In this research, the area of the research was SMAN 1 Pakusari. This school was chosen as the research area because of some reasons. The first there has not been any research conducted especially a research on classroom questioning since the school was founded in 2005. Besides, the situation and condition of the school has been known, so it is possible to

have permission to do the research. Moreover, time and fund also became the reason to choose the research area.

### **3.3 Research Subject**

In this study, the subject of the research was an English teacher who taught grade XII at SMAN 1 Pakusari in the 2007/2008 academic years. The twelfth grade teacher was chosen as the research subject because the twelfth grade teacher had hard responsibilities in teaching. The teacher had to prepare the twelfth grade students to face the national examination for senior high school. In addition, the English materials including reading comprehension materials taught at grade XII are more complex and need deeper understanding than the ones taught at grade X and XI. Therefore, teaching English at this level is more challenging.

### **3.4 Data Collection Method**

Fraenkel and Wallen (2000:15) state that data collection method is systematic standard procedures to get the data needed by applying appropriate methods. In this research, the methods used in collecting data were classroom observation and interview.

#### **3.4.1 Observation**

Observation in this research was used to gain the primary data about the teacher's questions in teaching reading. The role of the researcher in this research is as a non-participant observer. Mc Millan (1995) states that as a non participant observer, the researcher does not participate in the situation or process being observed.

In this study, observation was used to gather data about the use of question levels by the twelve-grade teacher in teaching reading. During the observation, relevant data are written in the researcher's field notes. The researcher used tape recorder in the observation. The purpose of using tape recorder was to check the data resulted from researcher's field notes. The observation was done three times with two

observers for each observation. The first observer was the researcher and the second one was the researcher's colleague. Involving two observers in the observation was intended to get the valid data.

### **3.4.2 Interview**

The interview was conducted with the English teacher of the class XII to obtain the supporting data about the use of question levels and the teaching reading in general. In this study, semi-structured interview was applied. Semi-structured interview was used by preparing a list of questions that was developed while interviewing.

### **3.4.3 Documentation**

Arikunto (1998:236) explains that documentation is used to find the data in the form of notes, transcript, books, newspapers, magazines, daily notes, etc. this research use documents such as curriculum, syllabus and lesson plan to get the supporting data needed.

### **3.5 Data Analysis Method**

Analyzing data is an important step in a research. The data were analyzed by using descriptive quantitative and descriptive qualitative. The steps of data analysis can be described as follow:

1. The data from observation related to the indicator was selected in the form of written up field notes.
2. Coding the field notes based on the coding category of question levels in Revised Bloom's Taxonomy (see appendix 2). After coding the field notes, the result were counted in the form of percentage in order to know the frequency of the use of question levels. The formula used was:

$$E = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$



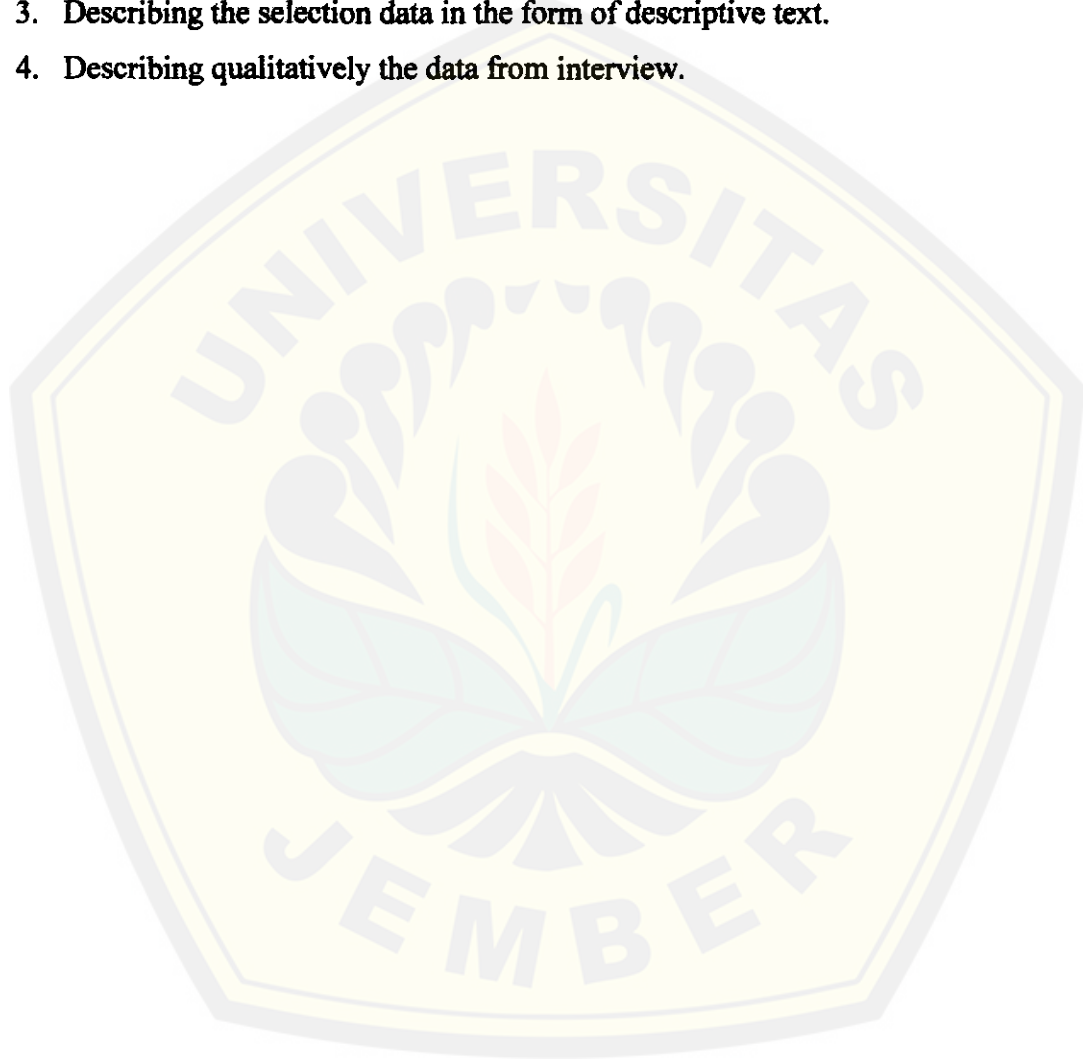
$E$  = the percentage of the teacher's questions of each indicator

$n$  = the total questions of each indicator

$N$  = the total questions asked by the teacher.

(Adapted from Arikunto, 1996: 264)

3. Describing the selection data in the form of descriptive text.
4. Describing qualitatively the data from interview.





#### IV. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is intended to describe and discuss the research results.

#### 4.1 Research Results

The research results covered the results of observation and the results of interview. The results of the research were presented as follows:

##### 4.1.1 Results of Observation

The observation was done three times on 1 to 4 January 2008. The observation was done in XII IPA 1, XII IPA 2, and XII IPS classes.

First observation was done in XII IPA 2 class on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. The data found were as follows:

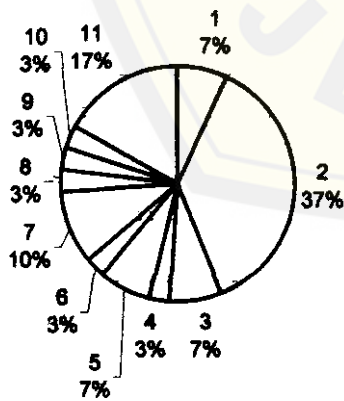
The topic was about a narrative text entitled The Lion and The Mouse. After cross checking the data gathered by two observers and the tape recorder, it was known that during the teaching, the teacher asked 30 questions (see appendix 4). Then, the questions found were classified based on question levels in revised Bloom's taxonomy. The summary of the use of question levels by the teacher can be seen in the following table.

Table 4. 1 Observation result at class XII IPA II

Levels of questions	Total	Percentage
<b>1. Remember</b>		
1.1 Recognizing	2	7
1.2 Recalling	11	37
<b>2. Understand</b>		
2.1 Interpreting	2	7
2.2 Exemplifying		
2.3 Classifying		
2.4 Summarizing	1	3

2.5 Inferring	2	7
2.6 Comparing		
2.7 Explaining		
<b>3. Apply</b>		
3.1 Executing		
3.2 Implementing	1	3
<b>4. Analyze</b>		
4.1 Differentiating		
4.2 Organizing	3	10
4.3 Attributing	1	3
<b>5. Evaluate</b>		
5.1 Checking		
5.2 Critiquing	1	3
<b>6. Create</b>		
6.1 Generating		
6.2 Planning	1	3
6.3 Producing		
<b>Others</b>	5	17

To make clear the data are displayed in the form of pie diagram below:



- 1 =remember- recognizing
- 2 =remember- recalling
- 3 = understand-interpreting
- 4 = understand-summarizing
- 5 = understand-inferring
- 6 = applying-implementing
- 7 = analyzing-organizing
- 8 = analyzing-attributing
- 9 = evaluating-critiquing
- 10 =creating- planning
- 11 = others

From the diagram, it could be reported that 44 % of the questions asked by the teacher were remembering questions. They consisted of 7% for recognizing questions and 37% for recalling questions. In understanding level, it could be reported as follows: 7% for interpreting questions, 3% for summarizing questions and 7% for inferring questions. There were 3% in applying questions. They were for asking the students to implement the procedures that they have learnt. In analyzing level, there were 10% for organizing questions and 3% for attributing question. There were 3% found for evaluating questions that can be categorized as critiquing question At last, there were only 3% of creating questions. The 17% of the other questions were categorized as procedural questions.

Second observation was done in XII IPA 1 class on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008. The data found were as follows:

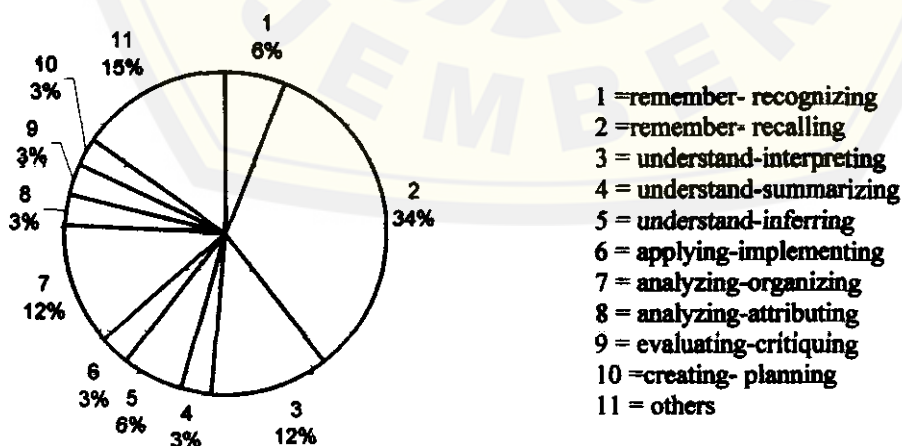
The topic was about a narrative paragraph entitled The Lion and The Mouse. After cross checking the data gathered by two observers and the tape recorder, it was identified that the teacher asked 33 questions in the second observation (see appendix 4). Afterward, the questions were categorized based on the question levels in revised Bloom's taxonomy. The levels of question used by the teacher in teaching reading were summarized in the following table.

**Table 4.2 The observation result at class XII IPA 1**

Levels of questions	Total	Percentage
<b>1. Remember</b>		
1.1 Recognizing	2	6
1.2 Recalling	10	30
<b>2. Understand</b>		
2.1 Interpreting	4	12
2.2 Exemplifying		
2.3 Classifying		
2.4 Summarizing	1	3
2.5 Inferring	2	6

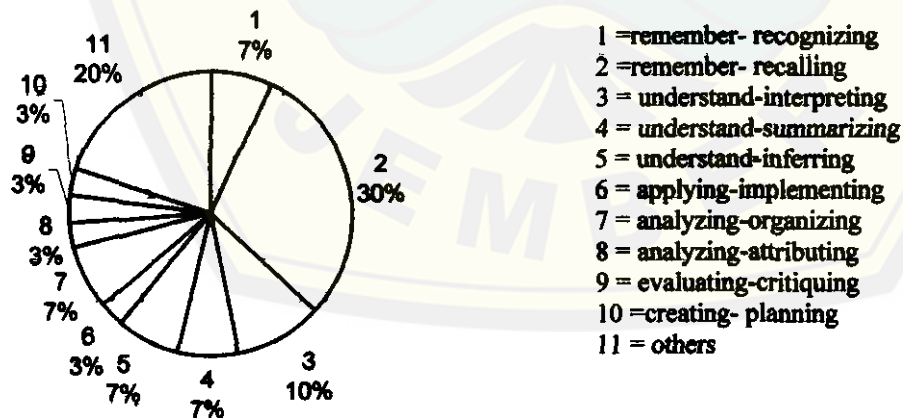
2.6 Comparing		
2.7 Explaining		
<b>3. Apply</b>		
3.1 Executing		
3.2 Implementing	1	3
<b>4. Analyze</b>		
4.1 Differentiating		
4.2 Organizing	4	12
4.3 Attributing	1	3
<b>5. Evaluate</b>		
5.1 Checking		
5.2 Critiquing	2	6
<b>6. Create</b>		
6.1 Generating		
6.2 Planning	1	3
6.3 Producing		
<b>Others</b>	5	15

To make clear the data are displayed in the form of pie diagram below:



2.7 Explaining		
<b>3. Apply</b>		
3.1 Executing		
3.2 Implementing	1	3
<b>4. Analyze</b>		
4.1 Differentiating		
4.2 Organizing		
4.3 Attributing	2	7
<b>5. Evaluate</b>		
5.1 Checking	1	3
5.2 Critiquing	1	3
<b>6. Create</b>		
6.1 Generating		
6.2 Planning	1	3
6.3 Producing		
<b>Others</b>	6	20

To make clear the data are displayed in the form of pie diagram below:

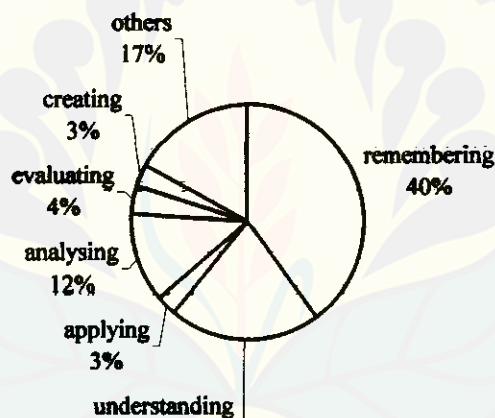


The diagram shows that 37% of the total questions asked were remembering questions. They included 7% for recognizing questions and 30% for recalling

questions. Understanding questions asked were 24%. They involved 10% for interpreting questions, 7% for summarizing questions, and 7 % for inferring questions. There were 3% of the questions identified in application level. They were implementing questions. Meanwhile, the higher level questions identified were 7% for analyzing questions that could be categorized as attributing questions. Evaluating questions found were 6%. There were 3% for checking questions and 3 % for critiquing questions. The questions categorized as creating questions were 3%. The 20% of the other questions were categorized as procedural questions.

Above all, it can be seen the average frequency of the use of question levels by the teacher as displayed in the following diagram.

The Average Frequency of the Use of Question Levels



The diagram shows that the use of question levels by the teacher in teaching reading were 40% for remembering, 21% for understanding, 3% for applying, 12 % for analysing, 4% for evaluating, and 3% for creating level.

#### 4.1.2 Results of Interview.

Based on the interview with the English teacher who teaches class XII at SMA 1 Pakusari, it was known that questions used by the teacher during the teaching of reading was to check students' comprehension of text and to help the students get deeper understanding of the text. He usually uses questions that were provided in book then he developed the questions. The frequent types of question asked were lower questions (remembering, understanding, and applying, which its answer was in

the text). Further he said that he often asked higher questions in order to make the students understand the text deeply. However, the students were mostly silent. To overcome such situation the teacher usually came back to give lower level questions.

### **4.2.3 The Result of Documentation**

The documents used in this study were curriculum and syllabus for SMA. From the documents, it was reported that the standard competency for reading is students comprehend meaning of the functional written text and simple essay in the form of narrative, explanation, discussion, and review in the context of daily life and to access knowledge. The basic competencies of the standard competency above were: 1) students respond meaning in the functional written text fluently and accurately in the context of daily life and to access knowledge, 2) students respond meaning and rhetorical steps in the written text in the form of narrative, explanation, and discussion (curriculum 2006 for SMA/MA). From the competencies stated in the curriculum, it can be inferred that senior high school students are expected to be able to access all information and understand the rhetorical steps of the written text.

### **4.2 Discussion**

The research Results showed that during the teaching of reading comprehension the English teacher asked 30 questions in the first and the third observation and 33 questions in the second observation. The majority of questions asked by the teacher during the teaching of reading comprehension were remembering and understanding questions. Questions in the levels of applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating were rarely asked. This result was relevant to the result of interview that the teacher commonly asked questions in which its answers were in the text. It meant that the questions asked were in lower level (remembering and understanding). This result also seemed to go along with Donald et.al (1998) who say that classroom recitation is almost always oriented toward remembering and understanding level. Furthermore, the use of remembering and understanding questions seemed to be appropriate because the teacher's purpose of asking questions



was for checking students' comprehension. In relation to the idea, Boo-Linh (2000) states that lower level questions (remembering and understanding) are appropriate for evaluating students' preparation and comprehension. Further, remembering and understanding questions could be used to help students answer the higher-level question. Sadker and Sadker (1999) state that lower question is fundamental for higher level thinking. For example:

1. *What is the moral message from the text? (analysis-attributing)*
2. *Coba perhatikan par 2, bagaimana sikap lion pada mouse?(remember-recalling)*
3. *Then what did the mouse do when the lion was trapped?(remembering-recalling)* See appendix 4

The questions above were asked in sequence by the teacher in this research. The first question asked the students analyze the story. They had to find the value of the story. The teacher used the questions 2 and 3 to help students answer the first question. This meant that lower level questions were important for higher-level thinking.

Meanwhile, higher-level questions (analyzing, evaluating, creating) used by the teacher in this research were for encouraging students to think more deeply and critically, and stimulating students to seek information on their own. This seemed relevant with the expected competencies stated in the curriculum. Students should be able to access all information in the written text.

Finally, the explanation above let to the conclusion that the twelfth grade teacher used more questions in the level of remembering and understanding, in order to check students' understanding. Questions in other levels such as analyzing, evaluating, and creating were still found although the number was low. They were used to encouraging the students to think more deeply.



## V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents conclusion of the research and suggestions. The suggestions are given to English teacher, and other researchers.

### 5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of observation, it could be concluded that the question levels used by the English teacher in teaching reading of the twelfth grade students at SMAN 1 Pakusari in average were 40% for remembering, 21% for understanding, 3% for applying, 12 % for analyzing, 4% for evaluating, and 3% for creating level. This finding meant that the frequent levels used by the teacher were remembering and understanding (lower level). The lower levels (remembering, understanding) questions mostly used by the teacher in order to check students comprehension, while the higher levels (analyzing, evaluating, creating) questions were used to help students get deeper understanding about the text.

### 5.2 Suggestions

Some suggestions are given to the English teacher, and other researchers.

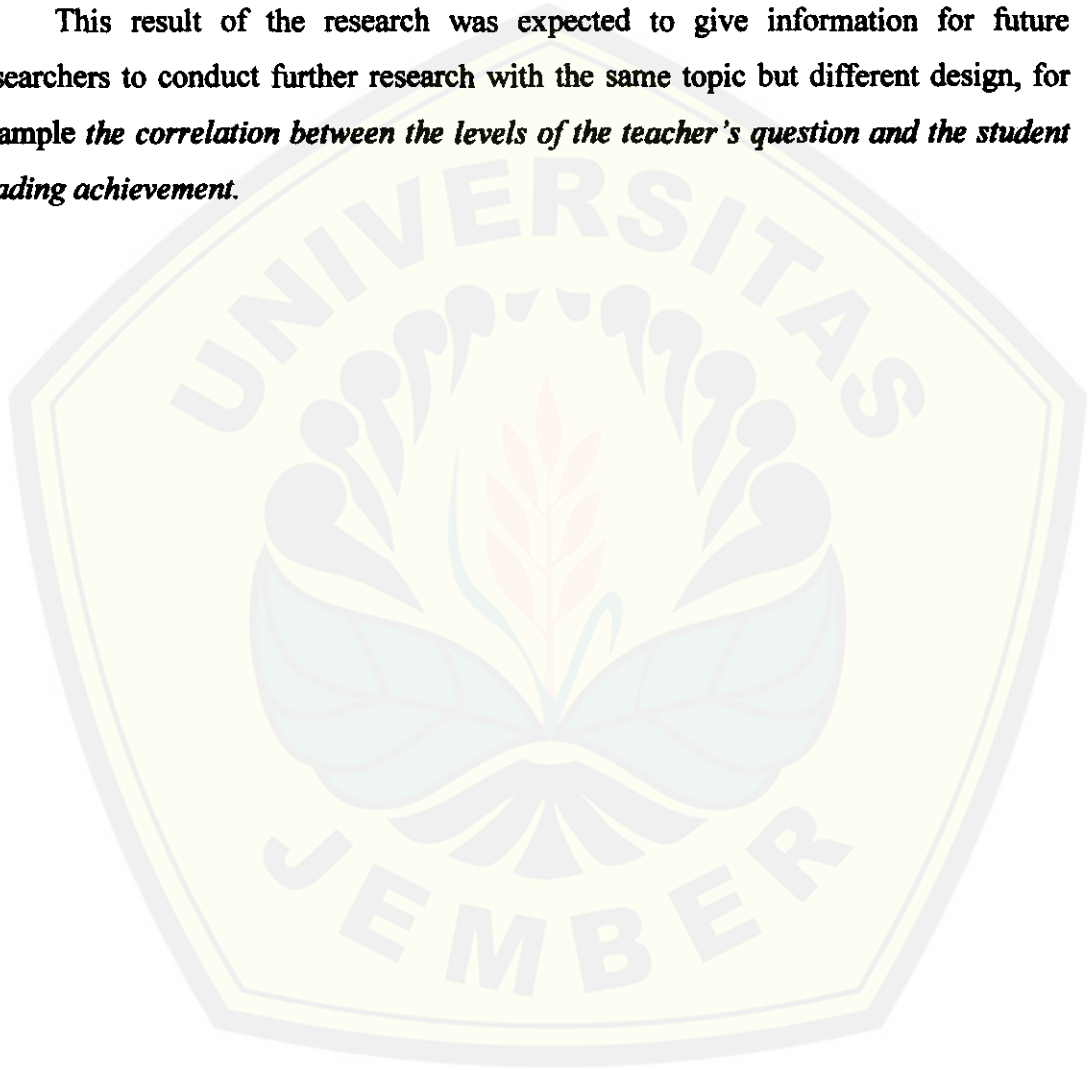
#### a. The English Teacher

The English teacher especially the twelfth grade teacher at SMAN 1 Pakusari is suggested to increase the use of higher-level questions (analyzing, evaluating, and creating). Related to the objective of teaching reading at the twelfth grade is that students comprehend meaning of the functional written text and simple essay in the form of narrative, explanation, discussion, and review in the context of daily life and to access knowledge. This means that the twelfth grade students are expected to be able to extract all information and achieve some abilities through reading activities. Therefore, the use of higher levels questions is important to help students achieve the goal of teaching and learning. Cotton (1998) suggests the use of higher-level questions in teaching should be above 20%. There are some advantages of higher-

level questions as follow: it can encourage students to think more deeply and critically, it can encourage discussions, and it can also stimulate students to seek information on their own.

b. The Other researchers

This result of the research was expected to give information for future researchers to conduct further research with the same topic but different design, for example *the correlation between the levels of the teacher's question and the student reading achievement.*



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