

Learning Opportunity and EFL Teachers' Questions

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Abstract

As postmethod EFL teaching method was proposed in 1999, ideas on teaching and learning became unthinkable various and dynamic. The views on teachers' questions also changed a lot in postmethod period. The term of learning opportunity bridged teaching and learning in this situation. This article aims to explore the way that an expert teacher, an experienced teacher and a novice teacher provide learning opportunities for the students in their question-answer sequences. A CA approach is used to analyze three teachers' questions based on four different students' first responses: Right Answer, Partly Right Answer, Incomplete Answer and Refusal Answer. The results suggest that the expert teacher can provide more learning opportunities by strengthening students' identities, extending students' contributions, attracting students' involvement and there is an insignificant relation between the type of questions and learning opportunities. It is suggested that EFL teachers can be more aware of the local and dynamic teaching context and promote more negotiation of meaning and students' involvement.

Keywords

Postmethod, Question-Answer Sequence, Learning Opportunity

1. Introduction

In recent years, there have been a variety of teaching methods in EFL education across the world. A new perspective on EFL teaching method emerges, that is, postmethod. Postmethod was initially proposed by Kumaraavadivelu [1]. He pointed out that "such a methods-based teacher education is woefully inadequate to everyday teaching [1]" and "the concept of method has little theoretical validity and even less practical utility [1]". In his following works, he further claimed that creating "the optimal environment necessary for learning to take place [2]" was very important. The term of postmethod is a great challenge as well as a chance to improve teaching.

Comparatively, in the methods-based teacher education, EFL teachers are thought as a blank paper and are expected to accept anything, which inhibits their creative and self-development abilities. In this case, many researches on teachers' questions suggest EFL teachers to use referential questions instead of display questions (e.g., [3]). Some advise EFL teachers to lengthen waiting time after addressing a question to students [4]. It seems that referential questions and more waiting time can lead to effective teaching. Nevertheless, others find out the means of dichotomies such as "display-referential questions" is ineffective in EFL teaching to some degree. In some cases, display questions can also provide more learning opportunities for students [5]. In Hu qing-qiu, Nechson & Chenwei's study, 71% students think themselves that the waiting time after questions are enough [6], which is different from what many researchers posit such as White & Lightbown [4]. These different research results confuse EFL teachers a lot. This phenomenon causes to a rupture between research and teaching practice because teachers do not know which methods they should accept. In this case, a new perspective on EFL teachers' questions is proposed that questioning skills are more important than its categories or its waiting time. Whether the question is effective is decided by teaching context and the wisdom of the teacher [7]. Furthermore, Zou Weicheng [8] points out that EFL teachers should concern about questioning skills rather than questions themselves. For an instance, if the question fits the purpose of teaching; if the question has clear aim; if the question is designed well. All the aforementioned shows that EFL teachers are not blank paper and they have autonomy in postmethod teaching. No doubt that in postmethod period, teaching is more complex and teachers and students are more active. When EFL teachers question in classroom, they should relate their questions to their teaching purposes, students reaction, teaching contexts etc. If they intend to improve the efficiency of their questions, how to create, discover and maintain learning opportunities in questions is the key.

2. Learning Opportunities

In postmethod, teachers' and students' agency is highly emphasized. The dynamic feature in classroom teaching is also concerned greatly. The term of learning opportunity is proposed under such a circumstance. Crabbe [9] [10], Allwright [11], Waring [12] [13] & Anderson [14] all discussed on EFL learning opportunity. Among them, Crabbe makes a complete framework of learning opportunity in EFL teaching from theoretical, cultural and management inquiries [9]. Crabbe also regards learning opportunity as a specific cognitive or metacognitive activity that a learner can engage in that is likely to learning [10]. Waring illustrates the notion of learning opportunity within three paradigms: the cognitive, the sociocultural and the CA approaches [12]. In cognitive approach, input-output mode of language acquisition can provide students more learning opportunities; In sociocultural approach, learning is a process of participation in the target language discourse and learning opportunity can be found in students' engagement in language use [13]; In CA approach, emic is necessary and what participants themselves treat as learning opportunity rather than researchers imposing. Anderson compares learning opportunities with learning outcome in lesson plan. He defines that learning opportunity is a potential act of explicit or implicit learning that may occur during or as a consequence of the lesson [14]. Allwright think it is very necessary to use the term of learning opportunities as a unit of analysis instead of teaching points in teaching planning and this opportunity is neutral, which can be managed and done [11]. From the above, different definitions of learning opportunity has some similar points. For example, learning opportunity appears in activity or act; it may lead to learning but not surely. So engaging in learning activity plays an important role in learning opportunity. Based on it, this article defines learning opportunity from the aspect of teachers' and students' engagement, that is, an opportunity that teachers and students can grasp, discover, create and maintain cooperatively in social activity, which may lead to learning. In this definition, teachers' and students' role in learning activity is very important. Below, a table presents the relation between teacher, student and learning opportunity.

From **Table 1**, teachers and students can both act as the provider of learning opportunity. All of them can discover, create and maintain learning opportunity. However, provision of learning opportunity does not mean take-up of the opportunity. In researchers' eye, some teachers' talk may be a good opportunity, but students miss its availability in reality. Consequently, managing learning opportunities and doing opportunities are different things [14] and teaching practice is the only context in which learning opportunity takes place. Sometimes teachers take students' learning opportunity and transfer it to students; sometimes students take it and increase language knowledge themselves. No matter who recognizes or receives the learning opportunity, the utilizer, or we can call him or her the consumer and the beneficiary, should be the student.

Apart from the agency roles in learning activity, another feature in learning opportunity is worthy noticing,

Table 1. Teachers' and students' engagement and learning opportunity.

Provider	Receiver	Utilizer
Teacher	Student	
Teacher	Student	Student
Student	Student	
Student	Teacher	Student
Student	Student	Student

that is, the quality of various learning opportunities is decided by teaching context and personality. In other words, learning opportunity is a neutral word [9]. We cannot judge it simply by its quantity or a dichotomy approach such as “good” or “bad”. The emphasis is the way to seek, realize, provide and to take and to learn it. It is apparent that teaching context and personality are equally important. For teaching context, owing to the improvisation in classroom, the participants might as well neglect the opportunity frequently. Additionally, there are a variety of factors which may influence the process of teaching. Take classroom environment for example, at least 10 subcategories may change students' learning [15]. So the harbinger of the local context is impossible. For personality, Crabbe said “one cannot assume specific opportunities will elicit the same response from all learners [9]”. Learners' personalities are different. To the same opportunity, some learners can take it and others cannot. So these opportunities are private. Take interaction for example, in EFL teaching researches, interaction is always highly reported in improving teaching. However, some researchers find out some students prefer silence in Asian EFL classroom (e.g., [16]). To put it simple, learning opportunity can take place at any time, but how to take it and learn is in apparent complexity.

3. Data and Method

The data contain 120 minutes of video-taped college English classroom from 3 different classes taught by 3 different teachers in the same university in China, PRC. Each class lasts 40 minutes. Their teaching materials are the same and also they teach the same lesson named *Films and TV Program*. Teacher A, B, and C teach College English in Class A, B and C correspondingly. Class A, B and C's English average scores are similar in the *College Entrance Examination* which organized by National Educational Ministry, that is, 89.2, 90.1 and 88.6. The students' number in Class A, B and C is respectively 29, 30 and 30. The three teachers' individual information is below.

In **Table 2**, Teacher A, B and C's main individual information can be seen clearly. The 3 teachers all got Master Degree. Their time in teaching is different. Obviously, Teacher A and B are experienced in EFL teaching according to their career period while Teacher C is a novice. Teacher A and B have taught over 3 subjects related to English while Teacher C taught College English only. Furthermore, Teacher A and B got award in National or Provincial degree while Teacher C got nothing. Because there are a few teachers who can be awarded the first prize in National EFL Teaching Competition, Teacher A can be regarded as an expert. What's more, Teacher A published over 30 articles about EFL teaching, which shows that she has researched more about her teaching. Teacher B got the third prize in Provincial EFL Teaching Competition and also published 22 articles concerned. She can be regarded as an experienced teacher, but not an expert because there are much more third-prize winners in Provincial Competition compared with National Competition. It is obvious that its quality standard is lower. Teacher C entered into this university two years ago. She still works as a novice and survives in EFL teaching career. Although she is an inexperienced teacher, she is very diligent and active. She is ready to participate any competitions if she is qualified. What's more, she voluntarily enrolled in our research when she heard about it.

A CA (Conversation Analysis) approach originated from sociology and took an interpretation analysis in verbal interaction. It emphasizes the quality of the interaction between teacher and student [17]. Two of the key concepts in CA is “turn” and “sequence”. Turn refers to speakers' utterance. Usually a sequence means the termination of one topic discussed among all the speakers initially assigned. Sequence is a two-part turns in ideal way, but in everyday conversation, its turns may have a lot of variety. CA analyze these varieties by an emic perspective. In general, when the teacher questions students, he or she may hope students can be hearers as well

Table 2. Teachers' Individual information.

	Time to be teacher	Education degree	Subjects they ever taught	Prizes they have been awarded
Teacher A (expert)	11 years	Master in Foreign Linguistic	College English, Writing, Intensive Reading, Extensive Reading, Linguistics	Got the first prize in National EFL Teaching Competition and published over 30 articles about EFL teaching
Teacher B (experienced)	8 years	Master in Curriculum and Teaching	College English, Writing, Intensive Writing	Got the third prize in Provincial EFL Teaching Competition and published 22 articles about EFL teaching
Teacher C (novice)	2 years	Master in Foreign Linguistic	College English	Participated in but Got no prize in Provincial EFL Teaching Competition and published over 10 articles about EFL teaching

as respondents. This can be called question-answer sequence. In this sequence, the teacher can test students' learning, encourage students to learn more, relieve students' learning anxiety etc. So, in question-answer sequence there are many learning opportunities. Sometimes, the students may not act as the teacher hoped. In this case, the sequence is not smooth and their turns might be longer and longer. In a word, the quantity of their verbal interaction is not significantly important while it is important for the sequence with "a coordinated entry into the [learning] activity, allowing each party occasions to demonstrate his coordination with the other, a coordination that may be sustained by the parties demonstrating continued speakership or hearer ship [18]". The connotation of sequence in CA is closely tied to personal engagement in activity, which is inline with our definition of learning opportunity. No doubt that CA can "provide evidence of the relationship between teacher language and learning opportunities [19]".

A comparison approach is the other one. Since there is an expert teacher, an experience teacher and a novice teacher, the article aims to compare how learning opportunities take place in their question-answer sequences.

4. Analysis of Data

All the video-taped verbal interaction was transcribed in its entirety. Teacher A, B and C's number of question-answer sequences are identified and recorded: 41; 32 and 34. An initial treatment of the data involves identifying all cases where the learner responds to the teacher. Generally, IRF (Initiate-Respond-Answer) is a typical question-answer sequence in EFL classroom. However, as we said above, there are many variant such as IRFRF (Initiate-Respond-Answer-Respond-Answer), or IRFRFRF (Initiate-Respond-Answer-Respond-Answer-Respond-Answer) etc. In this article, the key of analysis is on the learners' answers because "learning is primarily a personal construct controlled by individual learner [2]", that is, how students responds is important. So, we take the first students' answer as only reference. Applying this broad criterion for learners' answers results into 4 basic categories after collecting all question-answer sequences: Right Answer, Partly Right Answer, Incomplete Answer, Refusal Answer (eg. Silent, Sorry, I don't know, etc.). By the way, "right" or "wrong" in the types depend on teachers' questions. If the attention of the question is not language accuracy, the answer is with perfect content and language mistakes, the answer is "right". Below, there are the number of cases based on 4 different answers by 3 teachers.

In **Table 3**, Teacher A, B and C propose 23, 22 and 14 question-answer sequences respectively. Teacher A makes the most sequences while Teacher C's is the least. Teacher A gets 13 right answers, which is also the most. Comparing to the other teachers' sequences, this number is about twice. On the number of other types, Teacher A and Teacher B seem to have insignificant number. Teacher C has less. The number is only a reference for our analysis. What is accentuated is how learning opportunities are provided and utilized in the sequences. The following is analysis in details.

Table 3. The number of question-answer sequences on 5 different first-answers.

	Right Answer (type 1)	Partly Right Answer (type 2)	Incomplete Answer (type 3)	Refusal Answer (type 4)	Total Number
Teacher A	13	6	4	0	23
Teacher B	7	3	5	7	22
Teacher C	8	0	1	5	14

Type 1 Right Answer

Type 1 is the most common.

Excerpt 1

Teacher A

Teacher A: Cai Yao? how often do you go to cinema?

S: Once one week or two weeks.

Teacher A: Once one week or two weeks. ok, I think it is too often because you should need more time = you should spend more time on study. And how about others?

Excerpt 2

Teacher B

Teacher B: So what do you do? What do you do to relax yourselves in weekend? Ok, QiShan, what will you do?

S: Watch TV.

Teacher B: Watch TV?

S: Listen to the music.

Teacher B: Listen to the music. Good. She usually stay at home, watch TV, listen to the music, good. How about Liu Yanhong?

Excerpt 3

Teacher C

Teacher C: So how many ways you can remember now? How many ways you can relax yourselves? Such as...?

S: such as: Taking exercises.

Teacher C: Taking exercises, right. And: watching TV or radios. Ok, sit down please, thank you.

The three excerpts happen at the beginning of the class. Their teaching purposes are all to warm up the class and encourage learners to participate rapidly in the lesson *Films and TV Programs* by using different questions which can lead to the topic of films or TV. The sequences are respectively IRF, IRFRF and IRF. All of respondents are assigned and their answers get positive evaluations such as “ok”, “good” and “right”. These evaluations manifest a termination of one question-answer sequence and teachers’ satisfaction with their answers.

The differences are on the teachers’ feedback. As can be seen, all of them repeat students’ answers at first, but then Teacher A makes a further evaluation on students’ frequency to see the film, Teacher B expresses students’ idea in her way and Teacher C just makes an order for the student to sit down. As Hall (1998) said, the subtly differential treatment of learner in IRF may create different learning opportunities (as cited in Waring, 2008) [12]. Additionally, parsing, steering the sequence or intimating the answer in the third turn may influence interaction [20]. In Excerpt 1, Teacher A nurtures and prompt her students’ negotiation of meaning, which is crucial to learning proven by many scholars [21]. Teacher A responds to the content of the answer obviously and makes a suggestion, while the other two teachers respond superficially. In particular, Teacher C adds another answer and makes an instruction of “sitting down”. Note that the main purposes of these excerpts are to warm up the class, what are the 3 different sequencing-closing parts tied to the teaching purposes? Teacher A connects the answer with student’s life, Teacher B makes an alternative statement of the answer on the other side and Teacher C merely repeats the answer and adds more. Apparently, Teacher A makes a closer relation between the student’s mind and the new lesson, which may create a private learning condition. One way of maximizing learning opportunities in the classroom is to seriously “listen” when language learner speak, and build on what they say [2]. Teacher A’s words strengthen the students’ identity and make her get a meaningful learning. Teacher A and B’s evaluations present a combination of the comments on the activity and language accuracy in the answers. So

their feedback is to close a sequence as well as insinuate case closed [12]. However, Teacher C's evaluation is clearly a comment on the answer because after saying "right", she adds "watching TV or radio". In short, on learning spaces, Teacher A can provide more.

Type 2 Partly Right Answer

Excerpt 4

Teacher A

Teacher A: What kind of film it belongs to? Ann? (a poster of the film *Painted Skin* on PPT)

S: Frightened film.

Ss: ((noisy))

Teacher A: I know you are very excited, but could you listen to me? ((Teacher A make a glimpse at two students who are talking something)). ok, what kind of movies does it belong? Ann?

S: Frighten (lower voice)

Teacher A: frighten? Yes. What kind of film makes you feel frightened?

S: er...thri-thriller.

Teacher A: Yes, thrillers, horrible film, which can make you frightened, horrible, right? what kind of this? (a poster of the film *Mr. Bean* on PPT)

Excerpt 5

Teacher B

Teacher B: And the last one, the last one. (a poster of the film *War Horse* on PPT)

S1: War.

Teacher B: en, war.

((the class is noisy))

Teacher B: What? then.

S2: Adventure film.

Teacher B: Great!

Both of Teacher A and Teacher B are asking what the type of the films are and their students initially make partly right answers. Then, after giving some cues, the students make perfect answers. Since both of teaching purposes are reached, students have got fairly satisfactory evaluations like "yes" or "no". They both use IRFRFRF moves. In Excerpt 4, Teacher A inserts another turn to persuade other two students to be quiet in order to listen to the answer clearly. So the second feedback from Teacher A is in nature a request of confirmation. The student answers for the second time with the lack of "film" and lower voice. Her second answer reflects her lack of confidence. Then, Teacher A repeats her answer, evaluates positively and continues to ask for a completely right answer with "what kind of film makes you feel frightened". The student answers correctly for the third time. At last, Teacher A agrees with her answer with "Yes", repeat her answer and further the answer with "horrible", and adds that thrillers and horrible films can make you feel frightened". In Excerpt 5, Teacher B's student also replies with a partly right answer "war". Teacher B merely makes a request with "what" using questioning intonation as well as "then". Other students quickly catch the teachers' intention and provide correct answer. It is interesting that in Teacher B's class, the other student take the turn to answer the question.

There is a noteworthy phenomenon that other students participate in the two question-answer sequences. In the Excerpt 4, the other two students are too noisy to affect the teachers' listening. Teacher A interrupt their talking with her authority. In the Excerpt 5, the other student take the turn to answer the question after the teacher makes an incomplete question "what". The excerpts present a situation where the teachers created not only opportunities for a student but also for other students to review the vocabulary of the type of the film. In Excerpt 4, Teacher A manages the learning opportunities to make sure the whole class can hear the respondents clearly. Students' involvement is very crucial on the generation of learning opportunities [2]. In both excerpts, learner' engagement is well maintained.

Type 3 Incomplete Answer

Excerpt 6

Teacher A

Teacher A: Martial arts film, what can we see, what can we see in this martial arts film? (a poster of the film *the IP Man* on PPT)

S1: Fight, they will shoot. (some students make a gesture of shooting)

Teacher A: Yes, ok. martial arts film, in martial arts film, the characters use swords or we can say use some

other traditional weapons, ok, there is often exciting, for example, Chinese Kongfu, people don't use guns to shoot each other, (the teacher makes a gesture of shooting) but use sword to: tofight. ok, (the teacher turns to a student who puts up his hands), Kejing, you have things to tell us?

S2: I think one more thing about the martial arts film. I think there are more love because:

((some students are laughing))

S2: =In action move, there are thousands, thousands of women love one man, thousands of men fall in love with one women.

Ss: ((Most of students are laughing aloud))

Teacher A: Ok, that's true. Because people say love is an eternal thing. Love is an eternal thing in literature works. Ok. Ai qingshi wen xuezuo pin yongheng de zhuti (love is the eternal thing in literature works).

((The class is noisy)).

Teacher A: So, so you can see people fall in love in, also in martial arts film. ok, that's right, thank you. how about this one, comedy, comedy, ok, Lijun. What's the features of the comedy?

Excerpt 7

Teacher B

Teacher B: What is the type of this film? (a poster of film *Let's the Bullets Fly* on PPT)

Ss: Martial arts film

Teacher B: Martial arts film, and?

Ss: (3.0)

Teacher B: The opposite of tragedy.

Ss: (3.0)

Teacher B: Beiju de fan mianshishen me? (what is the opposite of tragedy)

Ss: Xiju ((some students answer in English *Comedy*))

Teacher B: Yes.

Excerpt 8

Teacher C

Teacher C: What about this?

S: Action movie.

Teacher C: Yes, we can call it action movie and adventure movie, ok? Please read after me, martial arts film, martial arts film.

Incomplete answers often occur in the referential questions, so are the above question-answer sequences. In Excerpt 6, 7 and 8, all of teachers are not satisfactory with students' first answer. They provide some signals in the first feedback. Teacher A says "or we can say use some other traditional weapon", "for example, Chinese-Kongfu, people don't use guns to shoot each other, (the teacher makes a gesture of shooting) but use sword to: to fight. ok". Then, the teacher assigns the turn to S2 who wants to take it. After hearing S2's answer, the teacher agrees with his answer and strengthen the evaluation "that's true...". The new information is added. Compared with Excerpt 6, Excerpt 7 is rather short. In Excerpt 7, it is a practice of the new words of the types of films. Teacher B presents various films on PPT to help students to review. After hearing the first response, Teacher C wants more information about the film. Students fall into silence and the teacher makes cue. Still the students fall into silence and the teacher has no hesitation to repeat the cue in Chinese. Finally, the students answer as the teacher hoped, but some in Chinese, some in English. Excerpt 8 is the shortest. Teacher C compensates students' answer directly.

Excerpt 6 is IRFR (interrupt) RFRF, Excerpt 7 is IRFRFRF while Excerpt 8 is IRF. Excerpt 6 is to stimulate the students to speak more about a film and Excerpt 7 aims to stimulate the students to describe a film's type a lot. There is a same teaching aim that more students communicate more and use more vocabulary. In both excerpts, other students also engage in speaking task. However, the students in Excerpt 6 mainly take the role of warm up the hot phenomenon by laughing. Fortunately, S2 is not interrupted by laughter. Students' laughter at least project their understanding on S2 words. Understanding is a form of participation. In this way, the words S2 provided are understandable language input to the class clearly. Comparatively, in Excerpt 7, Teacher B assigns the turn to the whole class at first. However, when the teacher signals that their answers are incomplete, students are silent. Teacher B has to give them a clear cue in Mandarin after twice tries in the end. Excerpt 8 is IRF. Teacher C makes a concise evaluation and adds more information for the students. There is no negotiation of meaning, which is seen as one crucial factor for learning.

Type 4 Refusal Answer

Excerpt 9

Teacher B

Teacher B: Ok, please answer me question, so that I can give one, one more student a prize.ok,now.nobody?
(3.0) Wu Hanpei, who stars in it? (a poster of the film *Aliens* on PPT)

S: (10.0 silent)

Teacher B: who stars in it? It's a boy and an alien creature stars in it.

S:/ei:::/

Teacher B: yeah, /ei:::/, /'eɪliən/,aliens,sit down please. A boy and an alien creature stars in it.

Excerpt 10

Teacher C

Teacher C: Yes, so who's he? Who she plays the role of?((the teacher turns to one student)

S: (6.0 silent)

Teacher C: /mi:::/

S:/mi:::/

Teacher C: Michelle::

S: ((8.0 silent)).

Teacher C: You can't read it, so, sit down please. Now, class, plead read it after me. Michelle Yeoh.

Excerpt 9 and 10 is IRFRF and IRFRFRF and the teachers assign the turn to a certain student. Their students meet the hedges in the second turn. Teacher B waits for her about 10 seconds and gives up. After Teacher B first and foremost provides another information, the student tries once but just saying one syllable. The teacher then evaluates her positively and makes a completion. In Excerpt 10, the student cannot provide an answer and is silent for 6 seconds. Teacher C gives her an initial of the pronunciation. The student imitates it but cannot provide further contribution. The teacher does not provide a cue to stimulate the student any more, instead, answer the question by herself directly. In the last turn, Teacher C makes a clear evaluation on the student's response that "you can't read it". Then, she requires the whole class to follow her to read the word. Surely, both of the teachers try to push the students involve into the activities. Owing to the different natures of the students' difficulties, Teacher A and Teacher B take different approaches. For Teacher A, she makes a profile of the film because the student might not be sure about who starts in the film *Aliens*. For Teacher B, she provides part of pronunciation of who one actress plays the role of. Both of their teaching decisions are improvised and finally correct answers are produced by the teachers. As can be seen, both of the students try to answer the questions and failed at last. In the process of learning, both of the students employ modeling method to enhance their knowledge.

5. Results, Discussion and Implication

Because not all types can be found in all teachers' transcriptions, the following results concluded are based on present data and the aforementioned analysis.

The first result is that expert teacher may create more learning opportunities for students compared to the other two teachers. Even if their teaching points are similar, Teacher A can involve the students into more language input and extend the students' contribution to the classroom interaction. For example, in Type 3, Teacher A says "ok, there is often exciting, for example, Chinese Kongfu, people don't use guns to shoot each other, but use sword...". Teacher A has a context-sensitive feeling about the students' answers as well as other students' gesture. The teacher's feedback urges the students' negotiation of meaning and involvement in language use. Additionally, her students' participation form in teaching is more varied than other teachers' class. To put it simply, her students can make gesture of "shooting", put up their hands, and laugh in Teacher A's class. Comparatively, the other two teachers' class engagement is a bit less. Take novice teacher for example in Type 3, Teacher C just makes a positive assessment on the student's answer and hurries to add new information to the students.

The second result is that there is an insignificant relation between the type of questions and learning opportunities. Even if some scholars put forward this point in the past, they did not provide a strong evidence. In the above analysis, it is easily found that the questions' types are similar such as how often-, what-, who-, how many and other special questions. The key is that how do the teachers react to students' different answers. In Type 1, the three teachers use special questions like how often-, what-, how many-. Their students answer all correctly. However, the teachers create different learning opportunities for them. Teacher A confirms the stu-

dent's answer in positive way by using "ok", then naturally identify the student's identity as a busy school learner and evaluates further by using "I think it is too often because you should need more time = you should spend more time on study". In this way, the teacher strengthens the student's identity and persuades her to study hard. Learning is not an independent social activity. Actually, it is also an investment (Norton, 2000: 10-11, as cited from Kumaravadivelu, 2003: 48 [2]). When their words are seriously listened, the learning opportunities are also maximized. Teacher B also confirms the student's answer and stimulates the student to communicate more. At last, she identifies the student's habitual life "she usually stay at home, watch TV, listen to the music". Nonetheless, it is just the teacher's guess about the student's routine because there might be more other relaxing ways for the students which are not spoken out. Teacher C seems to get the answers in anxiety compared with the two other teachers. So she ends the question in a simple and concise way, that is, "right. And: watching TV or radios. Ok".

In sum, the data suggest different teachers create and recreate different learning opportunities for the students. Expert teacher can provide more learning space for the students by the way of strengthening their identity, enhance their involvement and lengthen their contribution. Experienced teacher and novice teacher can do less. In particular, novice Teacher C neglects the learning space a lot.

It is suggested that, on one hand, teachers can be more aware of the dynamic context such as the students' gesture, contribution and so on. With context sensibility is one of important qualities of expert teachers. On the other hand, some strategies can be utilized on teachers' feedback to the students' reply, such as strengthening the students' identities. In order to foster the awareness of verbal interaction, teachers should keep a reflection habit. Although learning in learning opportunities is mainly on the side of the learner, teachers' learning can also happen in the process of the students' learning if they are context-sensitive enough. This sensitivity needs continually reflection on teaching practice.

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