



E-ISSN 2528-746X

## Teaching Question Sentences by Using Five Fingers Technique

Rahmi Daniati<sup>\*1,2</sup>, Siti Sarah Fitriani<sup>1</sup>, Diana Achmad<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh

<sup>2</sup>BP2IP, Banda Aceh

*\*Corresponding author: [amidaniati@gmail.com](mailto:amidaniati@gmail.com)*

### Abstract

Grammar has an important role in building good sentences. In learning grammar, the students are usually taught about phrases, clauses, sentences, and also question sentences. To create question sentences, there is a technique that can be used by the students; this is called five fingers technique. Therefore, this research aims to find out whether five fingers technique can improve the students' ability in making question sentences. The study was encouraged by the problems faced by the students in learning question sentences and the need of fun activity in teaching learning process. This study used one group pre-test and post-test design. The sample of the study was class VIII-1 which consisted of 29 students. Random sampling technique was used by the writer to choose the sample. Based on the tests results, where the score of post-test was higher than the score of pre-test, it can be concluded that using five fingers technique which use the fingers as the tool to memorize the types of question sentences (wh-question, yes/no question, positive tag question, negative tag question, and assumption question) can improve the students' ability in making question sentences. Therefore, it is recommended for the teachers to use five fingers technique in teaching question sentences.

*Keywords: Grammar, Question sentences, Five Fingers Technique*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Doof (2006, p.10) stated that students can reveal the meaning in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences to learn grammar. Corder (1988, as cited in Widodo, 2006) said that grammar is taught to furnish the basis for a set of language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Therefore, it is important for students to learn grammar in order to form sentences and also to build a good knowledge about how language works in utterance or speaking and writing properly.

Based on preliminary research, the result shows that the students had problems in making question sentences. It means that they could not understand how to make question sentences because they got difficulties to translate from Indonesian to English, less understanding about auxiliary verb, part of speech (noun, verb, and adjective), and also lack of vocabulary. Therefore, it needs a strategy in order to improve their ability. However, one of the biggest problems that most ESL (English as a Second Language) students face when learning how to ask questions in English is to understand where and how to put the words *do*, *does*, *did*, and other English interrogative expression (Claudio, 2006).

In making question sentences, there should have some key concepts such as mastering vocabulary and tenses form. Hence, the students can make question sentences with a good grammar and structure. Since getting that, many students still face the difficulties in learning and remembering the concepts. Therefore, the writer proposed a strategy that can help students in making question sentences. For that reason, the writer suggested five fingers technique as one of media in teaching question sentences and grammar. Five fingers technique is used as one of the alternative strategies in teaching question sentences. It was found by an acehnese person, Drs. Syuhban Ahmad, MM, who was born on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1959 in Matang Glumpang Dua Aceh. Five fingers technique is taught through the courses and training.

Five fingers technique identics with five questions of our fingers. This technique is formed by the daily habits so the students can easily remember by holding each finger. While the right hand holds each finger of left hand, the brain sends the signal to utterance what they see simultaneously. This technique focuses on stimulus and response between brain and finger. In line with this, Ahmad (2010, p. 3) said that: Fingers can systematically become a powerful guide to brain speed therapy in the process of English speaking learning, the easiest, the best, the fastest and spectacular. The magic power of the right hand when holding every fingers of the left hand is able to arrange words and create the systematic communication sentences, effective, and responsive in a communicative conversation simple and easily understandable.

Furthermore, Ahmad (2010) stated that there are five types of question sentences in five fingers technique which identic to five fingers such as *wh*-question, *yes-no* question, *positive tag* question, *negative tag* question, and *assumption* question. Based on that case, the writer has formulated the research question as: Can five fingers technique improve the students' ability in making question sentences?.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Grammar**

Corder (1988, as cited in Widodo, 2006) stated that grammar is taught to furnish the basis for a set of language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In listening and speaking, grammar plays a crucial part in grasping and expressing spoken language (e.g. expressions) since learning the grammar of a language is considered necessary to acquire the capability of producing

grammatically acceptable utterances in the language (Darsalina, et al. 2016). Grammar deals with the sentence that we combine in a proper way and a proper meaning in order to be a good sentence that has the meaning and usage. (Doof, 2006, p. 10) explained that students can reveal the meaning in the form of phrases, clauses and sentences to learn grammar.

## **2.2 Types of Question Sentences**

Questions are great conversation starters. Poole (2003, p.9) stated that good questions invite people to open up about themselves and divulge their thoughts and feelings on a wide variety of topics. There are only five kinds of sentences that will be discussed. It is based on five fingers technique which identifies to five questions in five fingers. The types of five question sentences are Wh-question for thumb finger, yes/no question for index finger, positive tag question for middle finger, negative tag question for ring finger, and assumption question for little finger.

Wh-question is basically a content question, as opposed to a 'yes or no' question. It needs more information in the answer. Borsley (1991, as cited in Mukaro, 2012) defines wh-question as a question involving a question word (or a wh-word) of some kind and requires a more specific answer than just 'yes or no'. Yes/no question is a question that can be answered by "yes" or "no" (or their equivalents, such as "yeah" or "nah," and "uh huh" or "huh uh") (Azar and Hagen, 2006). It does not need information in response question.

Tootie and Hoffman (2006) argued that we use the term tag question for the combination of the anchor and tag. There can be reversed polarity (positive-negative or negative-positive) in the anchor clause and the following question tag.

Kimps (2007, as cited in Brasoveanu, et-al, 2014) already noted that tag questions based on positive sentences are markedly different from tag questions based on negative sentences. Unquestionably positive sentences anchor negative tags, while unquestionably negative sentences anchor positive tags.

Kimps (2007, as cited in Tomaselli and Gatt, 2015) stated that the polarity is normally inverted with respect to the anchor, in the attached tag, to give reversed polarity. This can be positive-negative such as "He went, didn't he?" Or negative positive such as "He didn't go, did he?". Assumption question in five fingers techniques is similar to declarative question which devices for making a statement question. It is similar to declarative question with raising intonation (Gunlogson, 2002).

## **2.2 Five Fingers Technique**

Five fingers technique was created by Drs. Syahban Ahmad, MM, who was born on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1959 in Matang Glumpang Dua, Aceh. He is a son of Alm.Nyak Ahmad Lampoh Lawang and Hj. Chadijah Hasan. According to Ahmad (2010, p.3) five fingers is the technique using the fingers as the media to stimulate the reaction of brain. This means, the technique focuses on stimulus and response. While someone holds each finger, the brain sends the signal to utter what he sees simultaneously. This technique is very effective for students who easily forget the materials.

As stated by Cowan (2008) the human mind that can accommodate a limited amount of information in provisionally time. This technique aims to build habitual forming for the students in order to avoid memorization and only focuses on the fingers as guidance and reminder.

### **2.3 Advantages of Teaching Speaking by Using Five Fingers Technique**

Five fingers technique has many important roles in English language teaching, especially in teaching question sentences. Fingers are used to facilitate learning. Riyanto (2010) stated this happen when one tries to remember and arrange the words in a correct structure. So that, student should pay attention to each finger in order to create a sentence based on the finger. This technique encourages students to see their finger than remember the word position. The use of finger plays as stimulation for students when seeing the finger and then they produce speaking as a respond of it. Focusing on the fingers is the crucial point in mastering question sentences. So that, five fingers technique can help students understand question sentences easier.

## **3. METHODS**

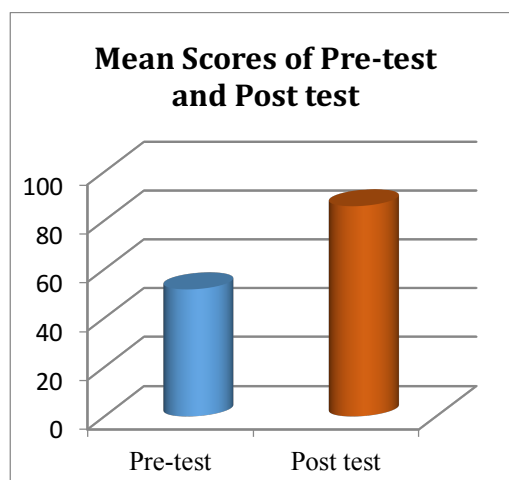
The research used the experimental study with one group pretest-posttest design. According to Gay et al. (2006, p. 251), the one group pre-test and post-test design involves a group that the researcher gave pre-test, treatment and post-test for this group. In this study, the second grade students of MTsN Meuraxa Banda Aceh were taken as the population of this research. The subjects were selected by using random sampling. The sample taken in this study was class VIII-1 which consists of 29 students.

The instruments was used in this study was pre-test and post-test. The writer gave each student the test about ten questions of simple present tense which consists of wh-question, yes/no question, positive tag question, negative tag question and assumption question. The test is in the form of written test and multiple choice. The students had to select one best correct answer to complete each item. Regarding to the instrument of data collection, questions score 10 for each correct answer which consists of 10 items.

## **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 The Result of Students' Test**

By computing the mean score, the writer knew the average score of whole respondents or sample. In this study, the writer found that the mean score for pre-test is 51.72 and for post-test is 85.86. The result of the mean scores can be seen in the figure below.



**Figure 1. The mean score of pre-test and post-test**

Based on the mean score in the figure above, it is known that the mean score in the post-test is higher than the mean score of pre-test. It showed the differences between the two means. There are the results of students' score in pre test and post test.

**Table 1. The Score of Pre-test and Post test**

	Students	Pre-Test score (X1)	Post-test score (X2)	X	X <sup>2</sup>
$\Sigma$	N = 29	1500	2490	990	38700
		M <sub>1</sub> = 51.72	M <sub>2</sub> = 85.86	M <sub>3</sub> =34.14	

Table 1 shows that the mean score in the post-test (85.86) is higher than pre-test (51.72). It shows significant difference between the two means. It means that the students' achievement in understanding question sentences has improved after teaching process. Furthermore, the finding of mean score of pre-test between EG and CG present on the following table:

**Table 2. The result of hypothesis testing**

Test	Score	Mean	SD	Difference	T-test	T-table
Pre-test	1500	51.72	38.63	34.14	28.51	1.701
Post-test	2490	85.86				

Table 2 presents the mean score of pre-test was 51.72 and post-test was 85.86. Then, followed by the standard deviation was 38.63. Shortly, Based on the data analysis (Mean, Standard Deviation and T-test) above, the writer found that the critical value with the significance level at 0.05 (5%) and degree of freedom (df

score) 28 is 1.701. The result showed that the value of t- test is higher than the t-critical value of t-table ( $28.51 > 1.701$ ). In other words, the result of the research (T-test) is higher than the score measurement table (T-table). It means that the difference is significant and the hypothesis is accepted. It also indicates that using five fingers technique can improve the students' understanding about question sentences at MTsN Meuraxa Banda Aceh.

In short, the writer concluded that the research hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected. It means that the hypothesis which said the use of five fingers technique can improve the students' ability in making question sentence is accepted.

#### **4.2 Discussion**

The writer conducted a research by using five fingers technique as media to help the students' dealing with their difficulty to memorise question sentences especially for grammar in the form of simple present tense. There are some steps of five fingers technique that writer applied in the teaching question sentences. The findings also indicated that there is an improvement in teaching question sentences by using five finger technique and also can motivated students in learning. The data also showed that the T-test is higher than T-table which means the hypothesis of this research ( $H_a$ ) is accepted. It means that the use of five fingers technique improve the students' ability in learning question sentences of second grade students at MTsN Meuraxa Banda Aceh.

The followings are the reasons why five fingers can improve students' understanding on question sentences especially in the form of simple present tense. Firstly, using five fingers technique can help students in making question sentences and make students easy to memorize the tenses. Since fingers provided as the tool to memorise the structure of question sentences by the students, it would be easy for the students to elaborate the ideas in making question sentences. In line with this, Ahmad (2010, p. 3) states that fingers can systematically become a powerful guide to brain speed therapy in the process of English speaking learning, the easiest, the best, the fastest and spectacular. The magics power of the right hand when holding every fingers of the left hand is able to arrange words and create the systematic communication sentences, effective, and responsive in a communicative conversation simple and easily understandable. So, using five fingers technique in teaching question sentences is effective to help the students dealing the difficulty in making question especially in the form of B (Biasa) simple present tense.

Second, using five fingers technique can make the teaching-learning process to be more fun and interesting for the students. In this case, the writer found that while the teaching process, the students showed their interest and comfortable in learning by using fingers. They also participated actively in the process of learning. It means that many students were interested in using fingers as the part of leaning process, so by using five fingers technique will make the process of learning be more interesting and fun.

This study indicated that the majority of the students had a positive attitude toward the use of five fingers to learn question sentences. Moreover, it was found

that the students participated actively in the learning process. Finally, the study also proved that the technique improved the students' score with their average score increased from 51.72 (0-100 scale) prior to the teaching-learning process to 85.86 at the end of the treatment. Both of the average scores showed that the use of five fingers technique can improve the students' ability in making question sentences, especially in the form of B (Biasa) simple present tense.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Regarding to the research results and discussions, this study concluded some conclusions which got after conducted the research. The result of this study also showed that the use of five fingers technique in teaching question sentences is effective because it can help the students to create the question sentences and increase their memorizing about tenses especially in the form of B (Biasa) simple present tense. Furthermore, after using five fingers technique in teaching question sentences, the students' ability in making question sentences is improve in each aspect. The students could organize the question sentences based on the sequence of fingers. They also used the fingers as guidance to remind the types of question sentences.

It can be concluded that there were some factors that improved students' ability in making question sentences which had been taught by using five fingers technique. First, fingers constructed the students' idea for making question sentences and make it as direction to remind the structure of question types. Second, using five fingers technique can make the students feel comfortable and interesting in learning. In short, the use of five fingers technique in the classroom can improve students' achievement.

Related to the effectiveness of the use of five fingers technique in teaching question sentences, it is suggested to the English teachers to use five fingers technique in teaching question sentences. Five fingers technique can help the teacher teach question sentences more easily, because five fingers technique itself identics to five questions of question sentences. By using five fingers technique, the students can easily make question by following each function of fingers. It can also be more interesting and fun for them. In addition to this, the teachers should know the principles and rules of applying five fingers technique so that they can use it in appropriate ways. Furthermore, to the students who are in the learning process, should have more practice in using fingers to memorize the types of question sentences. By practice a lot, it will help them to deal with difficulty.

To the next writers who are interested in using five fingers technique in their researches, it is suggested that they carry out research on other tenses, for example present future tense or simple past tense. In that tenses, the teacher can ask the students to make question sentences based on the verb, noun, or adjective words given. It is also suggested that they carry out research on other language skills, for example speaking. In speaking, the teacher can ask the students to speak each other in making complete sentences. In addition, the researcher hopes that the result of this research can be used as reference related to question sentences and grammar.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmad, S. (2010). *Magic Five Fingers for English Conversation*. Bireun: Aliansi Penulis Bireun (ALIBI).
- Azar, B.S., & Hagen, S.A. (2006). *Basic English Grammar Third Edition*. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Brasoveanu, A., De Clercq, K., Farkas, D., & Roelofsen, F. (2014). Question tags and sentential negativity. *Lingua*, 14 (5,) 173-193.
- Claudio, A. M. (2006). 1-2-3-4-5 An Easy Way to Make Questions in English (yes/no & information questions), Retrieved November 10, 2015 from <http://www1.uprh.edu/animun/module%201-2-3-4-5.doc>.
- Cowan, N. (2008). What are the differences between long-term, short-term, and working memory? *Progress in Brain Research*, 16 (9), 323-338.
- Darsalina, L., Syama'un, A. & Sari, D.F. (2016). The Application of Comic Strips in Teaching Vocabulary. *Research in English and Education (READ)*, 1 (2), 137-145.
- Doof. (2006). *Teach English: A training course for teachers (14th ed.)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. (2006). *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application (8th ed)*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Gunlogson, C. (2002). Declarative questions. In *Semantics and Linguistic Theory*, 12, 124-143.
- Mukaro, L. (2012). Wh-questions in Shona. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(1), 220-236.
- Poole, G. (2003). *The Complete Book of Questions*. Michigan: Zondervan.
- Riyanto, A. (2010, October 3). Review of The Five Fingers Method For English Teaching. [Blog]. Retrieved December 4, 2015 from <http://agusreductionasthelastdefence.blogspot.co.id/2010/10/five-fingers-method.html?1>
- Tomaselli, M.V. & Gatt, A. (2015). Italian Tag Questions and Their Conversational Functions. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 84 (1), 54-82.
- Tottie, G. & Hoffmann, S. (2006). Tag Question in British and American English. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 34 (4), 283-311.
- Widodo, H. P. (2006). Approaches and procedures for teaching grammar. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 5 (1), 122-141.