

# Teacher's Strategies for Asking Questions in EFL classroom

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Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Study Programme: Double Major MA Study Programme in English Language and  
Literature – Teaching English as a Foreign Language and Croatian Language and  
Literature

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Supervisor: prof. dr. sc. Višnja Pavičić Takač

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## **1. Introduction**

Questions in general play an essential role in every classroom interaction, but not every question is necessarily beneficial. What is even more critical is how teachers respond to students' answers, whether they are correct, partially correct, or incorrect, or react in the situations when students do not answer at all. The way that teachers react to students' responses can be decisive for further interaction, but also students' comprehension of the inquiring subject. Even if the initial question is well-organized, if students do not answer it (correctly), the expected outcome is not reached. In these cases, teachers apply numerous questioning strategies. When observing such situations, many researchers refer to questioning strategies.

Also, educating teachers on questions is a significant part of the ongoing reform of the Croatian school system. However, as in most of the cases, the teachers are being educated on how to form and ask questions correctly, but what follows the initial questions is again omitted. Hence, this research was conducted to raise awareness of the significance of the teachers' questioning strategies and give valuable insight into the real-life classroom situations. The current research can serve as a tool for self-reflection and self-evaluation to Croatian EFL teachers when it comes to asking questions.

This paper deals with teachers' strategies for asking questions in EFL classrooms. It is divided into two main parts, theoretical and analytical. The first part brings the theoretical overview of the questions in general, depicting their indisputable importance and the functions they serve in classrooms. It also outlines several most popular question classifications, with the emphasis on those closely related to EFL classrooms, as well as the typical three-part question pattern (initiation, response, feedback – I-R-F) with the highlight on situations where this pattern is interrupted. Finally, it addresses the central field of interest for the present research, i.e., questioning strategies. The second part of the paper brings a report on the research on EFL teachers' questioning strategies. The research was carried out in two high schools in Slavonski Brod, Croatia (Grammar School Matija Mesić and Technical School Slavonski Brod) where the researcher observed 20 lessons performed by four teachers in order to examine the questions they ask. The intention was to observe how teachers react when students do not answer their questions immediately. The main aims of the research were to investigate whether teachers make sure that students answer all the questions they ask, and if so, which questioning strategies teachers use to achieve that. Also, it was observed whether teachers use different questioning strategies when students do not answer their question at all, and when students give an answer which is not satisfactory or when the teacher intends to carry on the interaction. The results are analysed



qualitatively and quantitatively. An interpretation and discussion of the results, as well as a note on practical implications close the paper.

## 2. Classroom Questions

This section brings a brief theoretical background on the importance and function of teachers' questions in the classroom, and some of the widely used question classifications, with the specific emphasis on the classifications directly applicable to EFL questions. Next, the typical three-part question pattern is described. Finally, questioning strategies are defined, categorized, and analysed.

### 2.1. Importance and Function of Questions

*Table 1. Dictionary definition of a question*

<b>question</b> , noun
1 A sentence worded or expressed so as to elicit information
1.1 A doubt about the truth or validity of something
1.2 The raising of a doubt about or objection to something
2 A matter requiring resolution or discussion
2.1 A matter or concern depending on or involving a specified condition or thing

(Lexico.com, 2019)

Table 1 outlines the general dictionary definitions of the term 'question'. As can be inferred, these definitions represent the essence of the roles and functions of questions in their general use. However, the present paper focuses on the questions that take place in (EFL) classrooms and aims to show that there is much more complexity to them than one can deduce from the dictionary definition. With the classroom discourse being different from everyday communication, not only do the functions but also the structures of question-answer sequences differ from the questions that occur in typical out-of-class situations (for further explication see Mehan, 1979).

Teachers' questions, without a doubt, take an essential role in every (EFL) classroom, and it is not a surprise that many researchers devoted themselves to the phenomenon of asking questions. The role of questions in a classroom is perhaps the most accurately described by Aschner (1961, as cited in Gall and Rhody, 1987: 23), who even labels teachers as "professional question-askers". Also, many researchers put the emphasis on the complexity of numerous functions the teachers' questions serve. In fact, the act of questioning is believed to be one of the vital language teaching

methods in promoting classroom interaction since “questions are easy to ‘trigger’ thinking, ignite inquiry and establish dialogic relationships” (Ma, 2008: 92-93). In addition, teachers’ questions serve noticeably more functions, such as “initiating discussion, reviewing material, guiding problem solving, diagnosing student abilities, evaluating student preparedness, controlling behavior, stimulating creative or critical thinking, and encouraging contributions, (...) clarifying misconceptions, supporting conceptual development, reinforcing understandings, and asking students to elaborate” (Cunningham, 1987: 69).

Moreover, Brualdi (1998: 2) states that “questioning is one of the most popular modes of teaching” and quotes Morgan and Saxton’s (1991) reasons for asking questions, i.e.:

1. the act of asking questions helps teachers keep students actively involved in lessons
2. while answering questions, students have the opportunity to openly express their ideas and thoughts
3. questioning students enables other students to hear different explanations of the material by their peers
4. asking questions helps teachers to pace their lessons and moderate student behaviour
5. questioning students helps teachers to evaluate student learning and revise their lessons as necessary.

Similarly, Gall and Rhody have compiled the researchers’ findings on the same matter (Gall, 1984; Palinscar and Brown, 1984; Wittrock, 1981), i.e. on why teachers’ questions are beneficial. They list the following (Gall and Rhody, 1987):

1. questions are motivating, and so they keep students on task
2. questions focus the student’s attention on what is to be learned; a teacher’s question is a cue to the student that the information required to answer the question is important
3. questions, especially thought questions, elicit depth of processing (...)
4. questions activate metacognitive processes, (...) students become aware of how well they are mastering the curriculum content and whether they need to study it further
5. questions elicit further practice and rehearsal of the curriculum content
6. if the student answers the question correctly, that is reinforcing, and the teacher may further reinforce the answer by praising or acknowledging it; if the student answers incorrectly, that can prompt the teacher to engage in reteaching
7. students’ mastery of the curriculum is usually assessed by tests that consist of questions; therefore, questions asked during instruction are consistent with the task requirement of tests.

In short, the questions teachers ask “can significantly affect the quantity and quality of student interaction in the lesson” (Brock, as cited in Cullen, 1998: 180). Thus, the importance of teachers’ questions, due to their abounding functions, is indisputable.

## **2.2. Classifications of Questions**

Classification of questions is the domain that has been thoroughly scrutinized, and numerous classifications have been offered by different researchers. Even though not many classification systems are directly related to foreign or second language studies, the questions that EFL teachers ask can also be classified according to other, more general classifications. Some of them should certainly be mentioned, considering their prevalence in the classroom interaction analysis.

Brock (1986: 48) states that in most first language studies, questions are classified in relation to their intellectual or cognitive level, according to Bloom’s (1956) or Gallagher and Aschner’s (1963, as cited in Brock, 1986) hierarchies, where “the intellectual level of questions (is) ranging from those calling for the recognition or recall of factual information, which are at the lowest level of the hierarchy, to those calling for evaluation or judgment, which are at the highest”. She further assumes that “questions at low cognitive levels, asking for factual recall or recognition, are display questions, while questions calling for evaluation or judgment are likely to be referential questions”. Display and referential questions will be further interpreted later in this section. Furthermore, Table 2 presents Gall’s (1979: 708-710) compilation of the classification systems proposed by a number of authors, suggesting that they are very much alike. She concludes, similarly to above mentioned Brock’s conclusion, that the investigated researchers, “usually simplify their data analysis by classifying all teacher questions into just two categories: fact and higher cognitive” where “fact questions require students to recall previously presented information, whereas higher cognitive questions require students to engage in independent thinking” (Gall, 1984: 40).

Table 2. Gall's (1970) overview of question classifications

Author	Classification				
	Recall	Analytic thinking	Creative thinking	Evaluative thinking	Other
Adams (1964)	Memory	Ratiocinative (logical reasoning)	-	Evaluative	Associative, clarifying, neutral
Aschner (1961)	Remembering	Reasoning	Creative thinking	Evaluating	-
Bloom (1956)	Knowledge	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation	Comprehension, application
Garner (1963)	Concrete	Abstract	Creative	-	-
Clements (1964)	Past experience, process recall	-	Planning	Product judgment	Present experience, rule, opening, identification, suggestion, order, acceptance
Guszak (1967)	Recognition, recall	Explanation	Conjecture	Evaluation	Translation Determination of skills abilities (demonstrate), skills demonstration (verbal), example-singular, example-multiple
Pate & Bremer (1967)	Simple recall of one item, recall-choice of multiple items	Principle involved, concept analysis	Divergence	-	Identifying main part & important parts, stating moral judgment, stating judgment based on personal experience, evaluating quality of source material, evaluating adequacy of data
Schreiber (1967)	Recall of facts, arranging facts in sequential order	Making comparisons, identifying supporting facts, drawing conclusions	Speculating on outcomes		Describing situations, defining & clarifying information, using globes, using maps, uncovering information & raising questions for study

As for classifications that are specific to EFL questions, Čurković-Kalebić (2003: 106-107) lists Barnes' (1969) classification into closed and open-ended questions, Searle's (1969) division into real and exam questions, and Long and Sato's (1983) division into the display and referential questions. She defines closed questions as the ones in which the teacher limits the span of expected answers and the given answer is short and restricted exclusively to the information that was asked for, while open-ended questions are not restrictive and offer students the opportunity to control the nature of the answer, as well as its length. Next, when asking an exam question, the teacher only wants to find out if the student knows the answer about something that the teacher is familiar with, but when asking a real question, the teacher does not know the answer. The last division into the display and referential questions is similar to the previous one: display questions seek for the answer previously known by the teacher, and referential questions solicit the answer that the teacher is not familiar with.

### 2.3. Question Pattern

Classroom interaction is in certain aspects quite distinctive from the usual everyday interaction. One of the aspects in which this difference is obvious is the procedure of asking questions. Even though the researchers offer different terminology, they agree on the form, i.e., on the fixed question pattern. For example, Long (1983: 114) suggests that the pattern consists of a teacher question, student response, and a teacher reaction or evaluation, and Mehan (1979: 286) reports that many researchers have analysed this three-part pattern, where the first part of the sequence is called the 'initiation', the second part the 'reply' and the third part is called the 'evaluation' (as Mehan (1978), (1979), and Shuy and Griffin (1978) define the term) or the 'feedback' (as Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) define it). Mehan presents this pattern graphically as well (Figure 1). Čurković-Kalebić (2003: 83) correspondingly depicts the basic structure of classroom exchanges as "I-R-F".

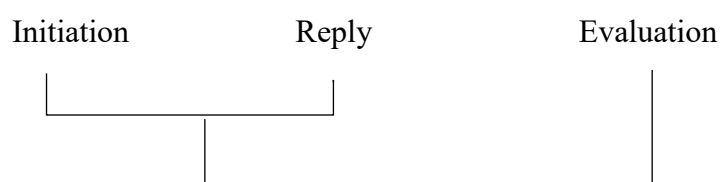


Figure 1. Mehan's (1979: 286) three-part pattern of a classroom interaction sequence

However, quite frequently, the teacher-student interaction is more complex, and the I-R-F pattern is often expanded. As Mehan (1979: 288, 290) indicates, the teachers do not always get the reply they were hoping for – students sometimes answer only partially correctly, while sometimes they answer incorrectly, out of turn, or they do not answer at all – so the teacher has to use

questioning strategies to get to the answer. This process often results in an ‘extended sequence’ of interaction, and an example of such extended sequence is presented in Figure 2.

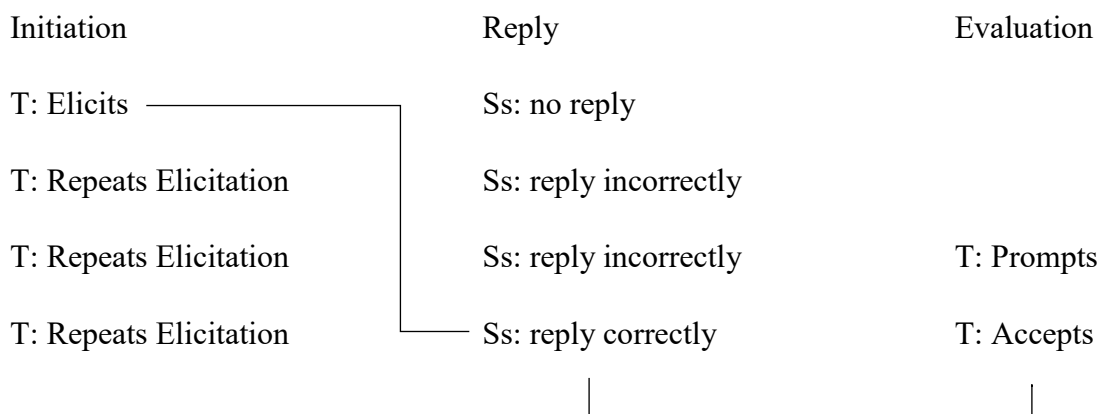


Figure 2. Mehan's (1979: 290) extended sequence pattern example

Similar to that, Čurković-Kalebić (2003: 82) offers two scenarios of re-initiation. Firstly, in re-initiation (i) teacher does not receive the answer, so he or she repeats or rephrases the question, and Čurković-Kalebić displays the structure as I R Ib R F, where Ib is the re-initiation. On the other hand, in re-initiation (ii) student provides an incorrect answer, and the teacher redirects the question to another student, and in this case, the teacher is expected to offer a feedback/evaluation, while re-initiation can, but does not have to appear. This structure is presented as I R F (Ib) R F. In relation to that procedure, it is important to highlight that, as Ma (2008: 97) suggests, the way in which teachers handle students' responses is an important aspect of classroom interaction, since it defines the effect of the interaction. These findings can especially be applied to the cases where the original initiation is not (accurately) responded to. Wilen (1987: 125-126) addresses this situation, saying that “effective teachers encourage students to respond in some way to each question asked” considering that by encouraging students to provide answers to all the question teachers make it clear that they expect the students to actively participate in the interaction. In encouraging students to respond to their questions, teachers are using various questioning strategies, which are to be more detailly discussed in the next section.

#### 2.4. Questioning Strategies

As it has already been mentioned, when teachers do not receive the student's response to the question straightaway, or when the provided response is not complete, the basic I-R-F pattern is interrupted, and teachers employ questioning strategies. The role of the questioning strategies is not negligible, and their use and the convenient selection is perhaps even more important than the formulation of the initial question. Even if the initial question is well-formulated, if the students

do not offer any responses, it cannot be considered successful – what is important in such cases is that the teachers employ the right questioning strategies, and make an effort to lead the students to answer their questions. Many researchers have pointed out the various strategies that teachers use. For example, Mehan (1979: 288) notices that when students do not answer at all, or answer incorrectly, teachers tend to repeat the elicitation until they obtain the expected reply, or to reduce the complexity of the initial question. Also, Bloom (1956: 29) states that “almost everyone has had the experience of being unable to answer a question involving recall when question is stated in one form, and then having little difficulty in remembering the necessary information when the question is restated in another form”. Correspondingly, Wilen (1987: 128-129) claims that when students answer incorrectly, teachers should rephrase the questions, give students more clues, but also that teachers should probe students’ answers for students to clarify or extend their answers, or to support their opinions. Moreover, Brulhart (1986: 36) suggests that in the situations when one student does not answer a question, the same question can be redirected to another student until the appropriate response is received. However, in most of the sources, strategies for asking questions are not systematically categorised.

Still, there are two comprehensive and rather related classifications of questioning strategies – Cole and Chan’s (1987, as cited in Čurković-Kalebić, 2003: 108-109), and Wu’s (1993, as cited in Fitriati, et al., 2017: 219). The classifications are displayed in Table 3. In the first column, the displayed categories include Cole and Chan’s exact repeating or the rephrasing of the initial question (i.e., the initial question is to some extent expressed differently, but the teacher is still asking for the same information); teachers’ providing of additional information related to the subject to lead students to the answer; asking supplementary questions related to the same subject when the question is not correctly or completely answered; redirecting the same question to other students until the answer is obtained; and changing the level of cognitive demand – after students do not answer a higher cognitive level question, the teacher asks for a less complex resolution. Wu’s categories are displayed in the second column, and one can notice that some of the categories are identical to Cole and Chan’s, namely rephrasing and repetition; simplification can also be compared to the changing the level of cognitive demand, as the teacher asks for less complex response; decomposition refers to decomposing the initial question to two or more derived questions – the teacher asks several, presumably less complicated questions to lead students to answer the initial, more perplexing question; and probing can be related to Cole and Chan’s asking supplementary questions, where the teachers lead the students to answer the initial, not entirely or correctly answered question by the use of more accompanying questions. Furthermore,



Fitriati et al. (2017) introduce Martin’s (2005) ‘response slot’ as another questioning strategy, where the teacher expects the student to continue his or her unfinished sentence.

*Table 3. Questioning strategies*

<b>Cole and Chan (1987)</b>	<b>Wu (1993)</b>
repeating	rephrasing
rephrasing	simplification
providing additional information	repetition
asking supplementary questions	decomposition
redirecting	probing
changing the level of cognitive demand	

Questioning strategies from Table 3 were used as a basis for the analysis of the observed lessons in the present study.

### **3. Report on the Research of Teachers' Strategies for Asking Questions**

In this part of the paper, the results of the research on teachers' strategies for asking questions in EFL classrooms in two Croatian high schools are presented.

#### **3.1. Aims**

As it has been previously mentioned in the first part of the paper, according to Wilen (1987), one of the good teachers' qualities is the ability to elicit students' answer to each question they ask, so the present research focuses on the question as to what extent teachers make an effort to get the answers to their questions, and the strategies they use to achieve that. Therefore, the main research questions are:

- Do teachers lead students to answer all questions?
- Which questioning strategies do teachers use to lead students to provide answers to the questions?
- Which questioning strategies do teachers use when they do not receive an answer at all, when they receive an unsatisfactory answer or an answer that needs to be further discussed?

Hence, the main aims of this paper are:

- to determine whether teachers make sure that students answer all the questions they ask;
- to determine which questioning strategies teachers use to solicit students' answers;
- to detect if the teachers' questioning strategies differ when students do not provide an answer to the initial question or provide an inadequate answer.

#### **3.2. Participants**

The research was conducted in two high schools in Slavonski Brod, in Croatia – Matija Mesić Grammar School and Technical School Slavonski Brod. In Matija Mesić Grammar School nine lessons taught by three English teachers were observed. All of the teachers are female, speak Croatian as their first language, and teach English as a foreign language. When it comes to students, the sample consisted of 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup>-year students whose first language is Croatian and who learn English as a foreign language. More precisely, the researcher observed five lessons with the first teacher and two lessons with the second and third teacher. Moreover, four of those lessons were taught to 1<sup>st</sup> year students (9<sup>th</sup> year of studying English as a first foreign language), three lessons to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students (for two classes this was the 11<sup>th</sup> year of studying English as a first foreign language, one class was studying English as a second foreign language, and their first

foreign language was German), and two lessons to 4<sup>th</sup> year students (12<sup>th</sup> year of studying English as a first foreign language). In Technical School Slavonski Brod, 11 lessons in total were observed, and they were all taught by a single teacher who speaks Croatian as a first language and teaches English as a foreign language. In this school, the sample consisted of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup>-year students whose first language is Croatian and who learn English as a foreign language. Out of those 11 lessons, three lessons were taught to 1<sup>st</sup> year students (9<sup>th</sup> year of studying English as a first foreign language), five lessons to 2<sup>nd</sup> year students (10<sup>th</sup> year of studying English as a first foreign language), and three lessons to 4<sup>th</sup> year students (for two classes this was the 12<sup>th</sup> year of studying English as a first foreign language, and one class was studying English as a second foreign language and German as a first foreign language). To summarize, the research was conducted with four female English teachers from two high schools in Slavonski Brod, and a total of 20 lessons was observed, with the students who learn English for nine, ten, eleven and twelve years, mostly as their first foreign language.

### **3.3. Procedure**

This research was done primarily as qualitative, descriptive research, but quantitative data were used to complement the findings. The study was carried out in two parts. The first part of the research, in Matija Mesić Grammar School, was done during December 2017. In agreement with three teachers, the researcher observed nine different lessons. The lessons were not explicitly chosen, but the teachers suggested particular dates and times, and the researcher attended the suggested lessons. The teachers had not adjusted their lessons to fit the research, but the lessons were performed as they would usually be. The lessons were observed and recorded at the same time. Later, all the questions asked by teachers were extracted and listed. Afterwards, the researcher repeated the process in another high school, Technical School Slavonski Brod. That part of the research was done from October 2018 to February 2019 when 11 classes from a single teacher were observed and transcribed.

After the observation, the audio-recorded lessons were adjusted by means of the computer software *Audacity* and all of the teachers' questions were extracted. What the analysis focused on was the manner in which teachers react to the situations when they do not get an (acceptable) response to their initial question, i.e., if teachers lead students to answer every question asked, and when they do, which questioning strategies they use. The researcher adapted the previously mentioned Cole and Chan's (1987) and Wu's (1993) categorizations, and the final categories that were examined were:

## 1. **repetition**

**1.A** – teacher’s question or part of a teacher’s question is repeated

**1.B** – teacher repeats students’ answers or sections of students’ answers; if it is correct as a sort of feedback, to encourage students to continue speaking; if it is incorrect, the teacher encourages students to correct themselves

2. **rephrasing** – teacher’s question is expressed in another way

3. **simplification** – (can be linked to Cole & Chan’s **changing the level of cognitive demand**) – the question is rephrased in a way that the situation is simplified

4. **decomposition** – the initial question is decomposed into two or more parts

5. **probing/asking supplementary questions** – the initial question is followed up by one or more additional questions

6. **providing additional information** – the teacher helps students to get to the answer by providing more information related to the topic of the question

7. **redirecting** – the same question is redirected to other students

8. **response slot** – teacher expects students to finish his/her unfinished sentence

**N** – the teacher did not get the answer from students and/or teacher answered the question himself/herself

All the extracted questions were tabularly displayed, with each table consisting of the initial question, and all the students’ responses and teachers’ re-initiations employed to get to the expected answer. Later, all of the re-initiations were analysed and marked with the specific abbreviations, relating to the strategies used (as shown in the above-listed classification). Afterwards, the statistical analysis was carried out to answer the research questions.

## **3.4. Results**

This section shows the results of the research presented in three subsections – with each subsection corresponding to a research question.

### **3.4.1. Teachers lead students to answer their questions**

In this research, out of 395 extracted initial teachers’ questions, in 306 cases teachers employed the questioning strategies, i.e., one or more re-initiations occurred. So, those 306 questions were examined and one of the initial objectives of the research was to determine whether students answer all teachers’ questions, or more accurately, if teachers lead students to answer all of their questions in some way. What was being observed here is how teachers react when students do not provide any answer to their question, i.e. if teachers proceed with questioning strategies to obtain

students' response in any form, no matter if it is an incorrect answer, partially correct answer, or a simple "I don't know" answer which Wilen (1987: 126) acknowledges as an "acceptable minimal response".

The results graphically presented in Figure 3, show that out of the 306 teachers' questions, teachers answered their own questions before students or withdrew without any students' response 9 times. In other words, 2.94 % of teachers' questions were not answered, and 97.06 % were. So, one can conclude that teachers lead students to provide any kind of answer to their questions to a large degree.

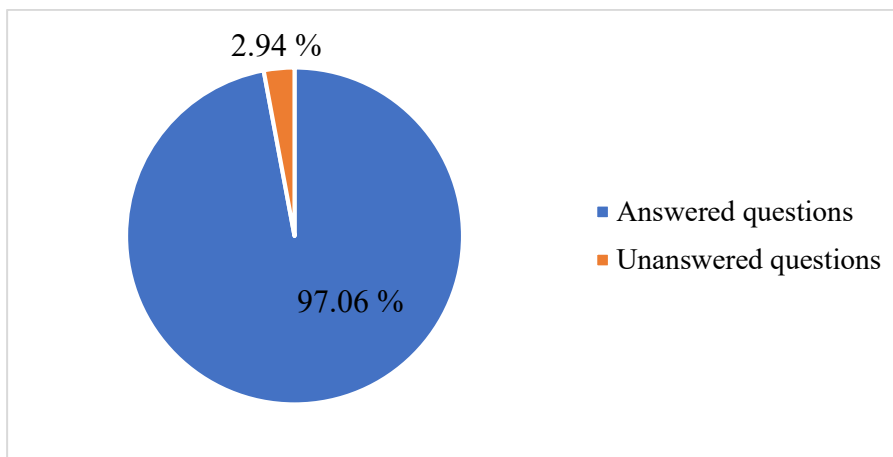


Figure 3. The ratio of answered and unanswered questions

In the tables displaying the extracted questions, the cases where the question was not answered were marked with a symbol **N**, which was previously defined as a case in which the teacher did not get the answer from the students and/or the teacher answered the question himself/herself. The same symbol (**N**) was also used in the cases where the teacher answered the question, or moved to the other topic, but after getting some kind of the students' response. Below are the examples of the following cases, one where the question was not answered at all (Table 4), and the one where the question was not correctly answered by students, or it was answered by the teacher, but after receiving a students' response in some form (Table 5).

Table 4. Example of an unanswered question

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Do you know anything else about Rihanna that the girl in the presentation did not mention?</i>	
	<i>Are there any fans of Rihanna?</i>	P/ASQ
	<i>What do you think about her?</i>	P/ASQ
	<i>Nothing? OK, then we'll move to the next task.</i>	N

N = the teacher did not get the answer from students and/or teacher answered the question himself/herself

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

Table 5. Example of the situation where the teacher answered the question, but after getting some kind of the students' response

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>It has an en suite bathroom, what does that mean?</i>	
	<i>Room with an en suite bathroom?</i>	RE
S	Odvojeno.	
T	<i>En suite, it's a French word actually.</i>	PAI
S2	Je l' možete ponoviti?	
T	<i>En suite.</i>	R1
S	Jednosobna.	
T	<i>To je soba s kupaonicom. En suite znači da je u sobi i kupaonica, odnosno uz sobu.</i>	N

N = the teacher did not get the answer from students and/or teacher answered the question himself/herself

RE = rephrasing

PAI = providing additional information

R1 = teacher's question or part of a teacher's question is repeated

### 3.4.2. Frequency of the used strategies

In the 306 analysed teachers' questions, 1084 re-initiations appeared, but in some of the re-initiations more than one questioning strategies was used, so the total number of identified

questioning strategies was 1322. The minimum number of re-initiations or questioning strategies used in the examined questions was 1 (see example in Table 6), while the maximum number of re-initiations was 21 (see Table 7), and this example demonstrates the use of multiple questioning strategies used to gather all the wanted answers. In this case 29 strategies (shown in the last column) were used, as more than one strategy was used in some of the re-initiations. The mean value of re-initiations was 3.76 (SD = 3.40).

Table 6. The example of an interaction with one re-initiation

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Have you heard of anyone paying fine for it in Croatia?</i>	
	<i>Paying fine for downloading music or movies?</i>	RE
S	No, I don't think so.	

RE = rephrasing

Table 7. The longest interaction, with 21 re-initiation

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>What would you say to someone who has a dilemma? If someone asks you for an advice... If I have a dilemma about which cellphone am I going to buy, what would you say to me?</i>	
S	Samsung.	
S2	I would say to you to go to YouTube and watch some reviews.	
T	<i>You would say 'Go to YouTube.' OK, anything else?</i>	R2 P/ASQ
S3	Ignore all the other phones, buy Xiaomi 8.	
T	<i>Anything else? Any other construction besides imperative? Go, buy... Don't listen... Anything else?</i>	P/ASQ
	<i>How would you express your own opinion? How would you express the advice to someone?</i>	P/ASQ
S4	I suggest.	
T	<i>OK, I suggest you to...</i>	R2
S5	I propose.	
S6	I think.	

T	<i>I think what?</i>	R2
S6	I think you should...	
T	<i>Should, yes. I think you should do something. Do you know how this verb 'should' is called in English?</i>	R2 P/ASQ
S7	How?	
T	<i>Well, you tell me, S7?</i>	P/ASQ
	<i>Any idea?</i>	P/ASQ
	<i>Have you ever heard of modal verbs?</i>	P/ASQ
Ss	Yes.	
S7	Maybe.	
T	<i>OK, so should is one of the modal verbs, any other idea?</i>	PAI P/ASQ
S8	I advise you.	
T	<i>I advise you, not really.</i>	R2
	<i>OK, if you have strong opinion about something, that I absolutely have to buy Samsung, Xiaomi... If you have a strong opinion about my choice of mobile phone, what would you say? You...</i>	P/ASQ RS
S8	Need.	
S7	Have to.	
T	<i>You have to, OK, and...?</i>	R2 RS
S4	You should.	
T	<i>OK, you should, it's an advice, but if you strongly feel about this advice...?</i>	R2 P/ASQ
S9	You must.	
T	<i>You must, yes. You must buy it.</i>	R2
	<i>Any other ideas?</i>	P/ASQ
S9	You can.	
T	<i>What's can?</i>	P/ASQ
S9	Moći.	
T	<i>OK, you can, it's the ability. You can...</i>	PAI RS
S9	Buy something.	



T	<i>OK, 'You can sing' is the ability, or 'You can buy', that's the permission.</i>	PAI
S7	Je l' može could?	
T	<i>Could, yes, it's a past tense of can. Any other suggestions for can?</i>	PAI
	<i>You can buy Xiaomi, you...?</i>	P/ASQ
	<i>I'm giving you a permission, you are...?</i>	RS
S8	Allowed.	
T	<i>Allowed, yes.</i>	

---

R2 = teacher repeats students' answers or sections of students' answers

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

PAI = providing additional information

RS = response slot

When it comes to the frequency of the strategies used, probing or asking supplementary questions was used the most often, 411 times (31.09 % of all of the used strategies). After that, teachers' repeating of students' answers or sections of students' answers was used 272 times (20.57 %). Teachers' action of providing additional information to help students to get to the answer was used 141 times (10.67%), and teachers' use of response slot was used 109 times (8.25 %). Moreover, decomposition of the initial question was used 104 times (7.87 %), and the rephrasing of the question was used 93 times (7.03 %). Simplification of the question was used 60 times (4.54 %), teachers' repeating of their question, or part of their question was used 46 times, (3.48 %), and previously analysed teachers' answering to the question, or giving up from getting the answer occurred 44 times (3.33 %). Finally, the least often used strategy is redirecting the question to other students, which was used 42 times (3.18 %). Those results are also graphically presented in Figure 4.

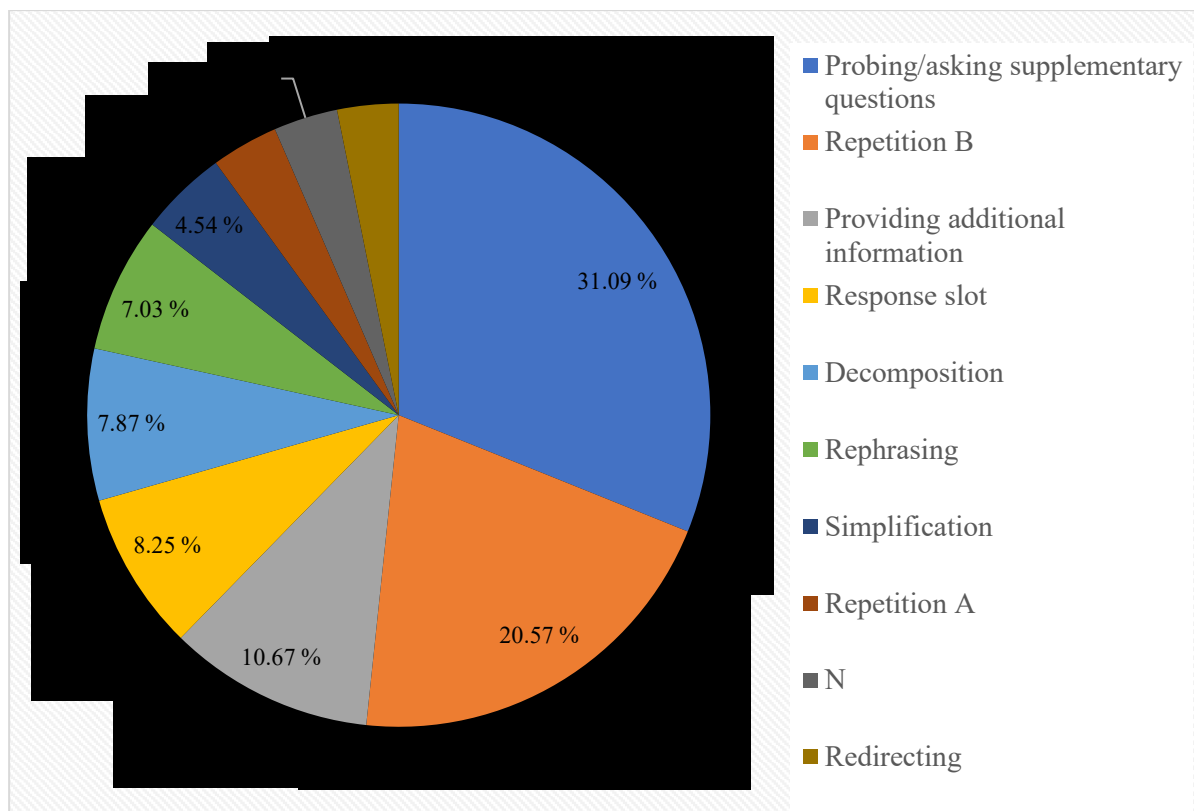


Figure 4. The frequency of questioning strategies

From the presented data, it can be inferred that the observed teachers used all of the mentioned questioning strategies. However, two of the strategies were used noticeably more, i.e., probing or asking supplementary questions and teachers' repeating of students' answers. Next, one can notice that providing additional information, response slot, decomposition, and rephrasing were used significantly less often, and finally, that simplification, teachers' repeating of their question, redirecting, and teacher's answering to the question, or giving up from getting students' answer were again used very rarely. All of the strategies will be further analysed and the examples from the sample provided, while the situations in which the teacher answered the question or did not get any answer from the students, marked by N, will in this chapter be omitted, as it was previously analysed in 3.4.1.

**Probing or asking for supplementary questions** is the most often used questioning strategy, and teachers can ask additional questions to help students improve their initial response in many ways. For example, by asking supplementary questions, teachers can lead students to elaborate on their answers, as in the example in Table 8, they can induce further interaction, as in the example in Table 9, or help students to correct themselves, and get to the correct answer which is shown in the example in Table 10. Taking the variety of functions into account, it is not

surprising that this strategy is used the most frequently. In all of the examples, probing or asking for supplementary questions is marked with **P/ASQ**.

Table 8. Use of probing to lead students to elaborate on their answers

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Do they have some kind of responsibility?</i>	
S	I think yes.	
T	<i>Why?</i>	<b>P/ASQ</b>
S	Because they are a role model to a lot of young people and if they support good causes, young people can learn from them.	

**P/ASQ** = probing/asking supplementary questions

Table 9. Use of probing to induce more complex interaction

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>What does to support good causes mean?</i>	
	<i>What would be a good cause?</i>	S
	<i>Can you give me some examples of what would good causes be?</i>	RE
S	To help the poor.	
T	<i>OK, what else?</i>	<b>P/ASQ</b>
S2	Fighting AIDS.	
T	<i>Good, what else?</i>	<b>P/ASQ</b>
S3	Helping to save the environment.	
T	<i>Good, would you say that cleaning the rubbish from national parks is also a good cause?</i>	<b>P/ASQ</b>
Ss	Yes.	
T	<i>OK, so, what would 'good cause' mean?</i>	RE
	<i>How would you explain the words 'good causes'?</i>	RE
S	Some idea or organization that deserves support.	
T	<i>OK, so, ideas, organizations, people, anything that is worth preserving.</i>	

**P/ASQ** = probing/asking supplementary questions

---

S = simplification

RE = rephrasing

Table 10. Use of probing to help students to correct themselves

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
S	'Is service being included in the bill?'	
T	<i>Is it 'being included'? Why would you use...</i>	
S2	Included.	
T	<i>Sorry, why would you use present continuous, S?</i>	R1
S	Možda zato što je to sada.	
T	<i>Ali to je nešto što je uobičajeno. Što znači to 'Is service included in the bill?' Što to znači?</i>	PAI P/ASQ
S	Pa je li uključeno u račun.	
T	<i>Je li uključeno što?</i>	P/ASQ
S	Pa servis.	
S3	Usluga.	
T	<i>Usluga, mi bismo rekli je li napojnica uključena. To je service. Dakle, je li napojnica uključena u cijenu, u račun. To je nešto što je općenito, ne pita ga je li sada trenutno uključena.</i>	N

---

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

R1 = teacher's question or part of a teacher's question is repeated

PAI = providing additional information

N = the teacher did not get the answer from students and/or teacher answered the question himself/herself

**Repetition** of students' answers or sections of students' answers is the second most often used strategy, and it is generally used in two different ways. First, it is used if the student's answer is correct, and the teacher repeats the (part of the) answer as a sort of feedback, to encourage the student to continue speaking, as shown in the example in Table 11. Second, it is used when the answer is incorrect, and the teacher repeats the answer to encourage students to correct themselves. The example for the second case is shown in Table 12. In both of the examples, this form of repetition is marked by **R2**.

Table 11. Use of repetition of students' correct answer

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>'Are you understanding what I'm saying?' Is that correct?</i>	
S	Do you understand?	
T	<i>Yes, 'Do you understand what I'm saying?' Present simple. Why?</i>	<b>R2</b>
	<i>Because it's a... dakle to je glagol koji je povezan s razmišljanjem, promišljanjem, misaonim procesima. I ne traje, je li tako? Dakle, razumiješ li što ti govorim, to razumiješ ili ne razumiješ sada u trenutku.</i>	P/ASQ  N

**R2** = teacher repeats students' answers or sections of students' answers

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

N = the teacher did not get the answer from students and/or teacher answered the question himself/herself

Table 12. Use of repetition of students' incorrect answer

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Look at these who pictures. What's the difference?</i>	
S	Profesorica je mogla tući djecu.	
T	<i>OK, besides that?</i>	P/ASQ
S2	They are sad in that picture.	
T	<i>They are sad? Do they look sad?</i>	<b>R2</b>
S3	They are scared.	
...		

**R2** = teacher repeats students' answers or sections of students' answers

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

**Providing additional information** is the first one in the chain of the strategies that were used less often, and its use is quite easy to recognize. Typically, the teacher gives students more information about the topic of the question, or provides students with more details to help them answer the question (see example in Table 13). However, one can also recognize a slightly

different approach to this strategy, where the teachers give additional information in the form of the specific examples (see Table 14). In both of the examples, this strategy is marked by PAI.

Table 13. Use of typical providing additional information

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Do you know how do we call this approach in Croatia?</i>	
	<i>When two people get divorced, they have to go through the process of restorative justice actually, some sort of it.</i>	PAI
	<i>It's mirenje, postupak mirenja. To je sudska obveza kada se, recimo, dvoje ljudi rastaje u Hrvatskoj, moraju proći kroz mirenje, da se pokušaju pomiriti prije nego što se rastanu. To je nešto slično ovome 'restorative justice', samo su ovdje u pitanju kriminalci koji se susreću sa svojim žrtvama.</i>	N

PAI = providing additional information

N = the teacher did not get the answer from students and/or teacher answered the question himself/herself

Table 14. Use of providing additional information through examples

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>S, what is word formation?</i>	
	<i>For example, you have a noun...</i>	PAI
S	<i>A oblici riječi.</i>	
T	<i>Can you say this in English?</i>	P/ASQ
	<i>Oblici riječi, što bi to bilo?</i>	R2
		S
S2	<i>Forms.</i>	
T	<i>Forms, S2 helps. Different forms of words.</i>	

PAI = providing additional information

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

R2 = teacher repeats students' answers or sections of students' answers

S = simplification

**Response slot** is the strategy in which the teachers stop in the middle of the sentence, after which the students are expected to continue the utterance, and give the expected answer. With this strategy, one can also recognize two common scenarios where it is used. First, teachers use this strategy by providing students with part of the expected answer when the answer is not offered by students, as in Table 15. The other typical use of this strategy is the situation in which students offer part of the answer and teachers lead them to continue to give the complete answer, as shown in the example in Table 16. In both of the examples, this strategy is marked by **RS**.

Table 15. Use of response slot when the answer is not offered by students

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Što znači glagol take up on running? Što znači fraza take up?</i>	
	<i>I want to take up some hobby, I want to take up some sport, what does it mean?</i>	S
	<i>Početi, početi se...</i>	RS
S	Početi se baviti nečim.	
T	Baviti nečim.	

RS = response slot

S = simplification

Table 16. Use of response slot when students offer a partial answer

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>What are the attitudes of this wolf?</i>	
S	Suspicious.	
		R2
T	<i>Suspicious, and...?</i>	RS
	<i>Another attitude?</i>	P/ASQ
S	Condescending.	
T	Yes.	

RS = response slot

R2 = teacher repeats students' answers or sections of students' answers

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

**Decomposition** is typically used when the teacher detects that the initial question is too demanding to students. In the following cases, the teacher decomposes the question into several less complex or less challenging questions, and gets to the answer to the initially targeted question through several supplementary questions. The example of this strategy is shown in Table 17, and it is marked with **D**.

Table 17. Use of decomposition

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Why is the title 'Sunshine'?</i>	
	<i>Who are the people involved in the story?</i>	<b>D</b>
S	Mom, dad, children.	
T	<i>How do children feel?</i>	<b>D</b>
S	Sad.	
T	<i>Why?</i>	<b>D</b>
S	Because mom is not home.	
T	<i>How do they start the story?</i>	<b>D</b>
S	Another day with no sunshine.	
T	<i>So, why? Why is the title sunshine?</i>	R1
S	Because there is no sunshine when mom is not home.	

**D** = decomposition

R1 = teacher's question or part of a teacher's question is repeated

**Rephrasing** is used when teachers express their initial question in a slightly different way. In most of the analysed questions rephrasing is used when the teacher does not receive the answer, so the initial question is put in other words in a way that is believed to be better understood (see example in Table 18). However, rephrasing is occasionally also used when students offer an answer that is not satisfactory, again with the expectation that it will be better understood if put differently. The example of this use can be found in Table 19. This strategy is marked by **RE** in both of the examples.



Table 18. Use of rephrasing when the answer is not offered

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Can you just speculate, try to guess, why did they get this kind of punishment?</i>	
	<i>What did they do to get this kind of punishment? Just make some guess.</i>	RE
	<i>You don't have to stick to the text, you can guess. Why did the judge give them this punishment?</i>	RE
S	They maybe steal something from the shop.	
T	<i>Uhum, they might have stolen something, and the judge gave them this kind of punishment?</i>	R2
S	Yes.	
T	OK.	

RE = rephrasing

R2 = teacher repeats students' answers or sections of students' answers

Table 19. Use of rephrasing after unsatisfactory answer

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>A kako kažemo miroljubiv, miran?</i>	
S	Nice.	
T	<i>Kako se kaže prijateljski, suprotno od hostile?</i>	RE
S2	Kind.	
S3	Friendly.	

RE = rephrasing

**Simplification** is one of the less frequently used questioning strategies. Simplification stands for rephrasing the initial question in a way that it becomes simpler and easier to answer. Several typical uses of simplification can be found in the sample, and the first one is a classical simplification in which the question is put in other words, as in the example in Table 20. Next, we can find the examples of simplification in which the Croatian language is used – teachers tend to use the Croatian language when the answer to the question in English is not obtained. This happens

in two different ways. Firstly, teachers do that by asking students to answer the question using the Croatian language, as in the example in Table 21, or by giving students clues using the Croatian language as in the example in Table 22. Finally, this strategy is also often used by providing students with possible answers to choose from, like in the example in Table 23. In all of the examples, this strategy is marked by S.

Table 20. Use of simplification by simple rephrasing

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Why is it 'Children are given... '?</i>	
	<i>Why is there a passive voice?</i>	RE
	<i>Who gives pocket money to the children?</i>	S
S	Parents.	
T	<i>Parents give, yes. And children are given.</i>	

S = simplification  
RE = rephrasing

Table 21. Use of simplification by asking for students to answer using the Croatian language

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Do you know, S, what a euphemism is?</i>	
S	Ne znam.	
T	<i>Na hrvatskom, je l' znaš što je eufemizam?</i>	S
S	Ne... A znam?	
T	<i>Kada ne želiš reći neku onako grubu riječ pa ju malo uljepšaj.</i>	PAI
S	Da, kad kažemo nešto ublaženo.	

S = simplification  
PAI = providing additional information

Table 22. Use of simplification by giving students clues using Croatian language

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Kako je osoba od law, kako kažemo?</i>	

*Osoba koja te brani na sudu, kako se zove?* S

S     Lawyer.

...

---

S = simplification

*Table 23. Use of simplification by offering possible answers*

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Which part of speech is number three?</i>	
	<i>'It's always...' what? Is it a noun, adjective, adverb?</i>	S
	<i>'It is...' Što može ići iza 'It is'?</i>	S
S	Adjective.	
T	<i>Adjective, tako je.</i>	

---

S = simplification

**Repetition** of teachers' question is also among the strategies that are rarely used. This strategy refers to the plain repetition of complete teachers' question, as in the example in Table 24, or only the part of the teachers' question, as in the example in Table 25. In both of the examples, this repetition is marked by **R1**.

*Table 24. Use of repetition by repeating the whole question*

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Which parts of speech do you know, S?</i>	
	<i>Which parts of speech do you know?</i>	R1
	<i>For example, history is a noun, what is historic?</i>	D
S	Adjective.	

...

---

**R1** = teacher's question or part of a teacher's question is repeated

D = decomposition

Table 25. Use of repetition by repeating part of the question.

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Do you think that famous people, because they are so influential, do you think that they have a certain amount of responsibility in this sense?</i>	
	<i>To raise important issues, should they do this?</i>	RE
	<i>Do they have any responsibility in this sense?</i>	R1
S	I think they have, because a lot of people see what they are doing, and if they support good causes, the media will present that and a lot of people will see that, and maybe they will do the same.	
T	<i>OK, thank you.</i>	

R1 = teacher's question or part of a teacher's question is repeated

RE = rephrasing

**Redirecting** is the least frequent strategy, and it is used by teachers when they want to ask a different student or students the same question, or continue the conversation related to the same topic with another student or students, as in the example in Table 26. Redirecting is also used when the teacher asks all students a question, and then names a single student if the answer is not obtained (see Table 27). Another use of redirecting can be seen in Table 28, where the teacher nominates another student to help the student who could not answer the question. In all of the examples redirecting is marked by RD.

Table 26. Use of redirecting to continue the conversation with different students

Speaker	Question-Answer Sequences	Questioning Strategies
T	<i>Do you agree with this statement?</i>	
	<i>Why or why not?</i>	P/ASQ
S	I don't agree with this statement.	
T	<i>OK, why?</i>	P/ASQ
S	Because they are micro, that means small, mini.	
T	<i>Small, yes, mini, more than mini actually.</i>	R2
	<i>Does anyone agree with that statement, that microchips are huge?</i>	R1

	<i>S2, what about you?</i>	<b>RD</b>
S2	No.	
T	<i>And S3?</i>	<b>RD</b>
S3	Ja da.	
T	<i>Why?</i>	P/ASQ
S3	They can receive a lot of data.	
T	<i>Yes, tons of information and they are, their impact and their importance is actually huge, while they are physically tiny.</i>	

---

**RD** = redirecting

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

R2 = teacher repeats students' answers or sections of students' answers

R1 = teacher's question or part of a teacher's question is repeated

Table 27. Use of redirecting to a single student after not receiving the answer

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Question-Answer Sequences</b>	<b>Questioning Strategies</b>
T	<i>Imamo li ovdje budućih pravnika?</i>	
	<i>S, hoćeš ti biti odvjetnica?</i>	<b>RD</b>
S	I don't think so.	
T	<i>S2, ti bi mogao biti dobar odvjetnik, što kažeš?</i>	<b>RD</b>
S2	<i>Možda, da.</i>	

---

**RD** = redirecting

Table 28. Use of redirecting to help other students

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Question-Answer Sequences</b>	<b>Questioning Strategies</b>
T	<i>Are there any words that you are not familiar with?</i>	
S	Bustle.	
T	<i>Uhum, who can help? What does bustle mean?</i>	<b>RD</b>
	<i>Hustle and bustle, jeste čuli tu frazu?</i>	PAI
	<i>Strka, vreva, gužva, kada je stalno u pokretu.</i>	N
	<i>Još nešto? Any other words?</i>	P/ASQ
	...	

---

---

**RD** = redirecting

PAI = providing additional information

N = the teacher did not get the answer from students and/or teacher answered the question himself/herself

P/ASQ = probing/asking supplementary questions

### **3.4.3. The difference between strategies used with unanswered and answered questions**

Out of the initial 306 analysed questions, 172 questions were partially answered, incorrectly answered, or the teacher wanted to continue the interaction to gather more answers, while 134 were not answered at all, so the teachers used questioning strategies to get any response from the students. In this part of the research, the focus was on the teachers' first reaction to the unanswered, or unsatisfactorily answered question, namely the questioning strategies that teachers used in the first re-initiation. The intention was to detect if teachers use different questioning strategies in the two above mentioned cases.

In 172 cases where the questions were unsatisfactorily answered, or the teacher wanted to gather more answers to the same question, 231 questioning strategies were used in the first re-initiation. The strategy that was most often used in this case is probing, or asking supplementary questions, which was used 95 times (41.12 % of all of the used strategies). The second most often used strategy, repetition of students answers or parts of students' answers, was used 69 times (29.87 %). After that, teachers used the response slot 30 times (12.99 %), and all the other strategies were used significantly less often. Providing additional information was used 10 times (4.33 %), rephrasing and redirecting were both used 7 times (3.03 %), decomposition was used 6 times (2.60 %), repetition of teachers' questions or parts of teachers' questions was used 4 times (1.73 %), the teacher answered the question or left the question unanswered in only 2 cases (0.87 %), and the least often used strategy is simplification which was used only 1 time (0.43 %). The results are graphically presented in Figure 5.

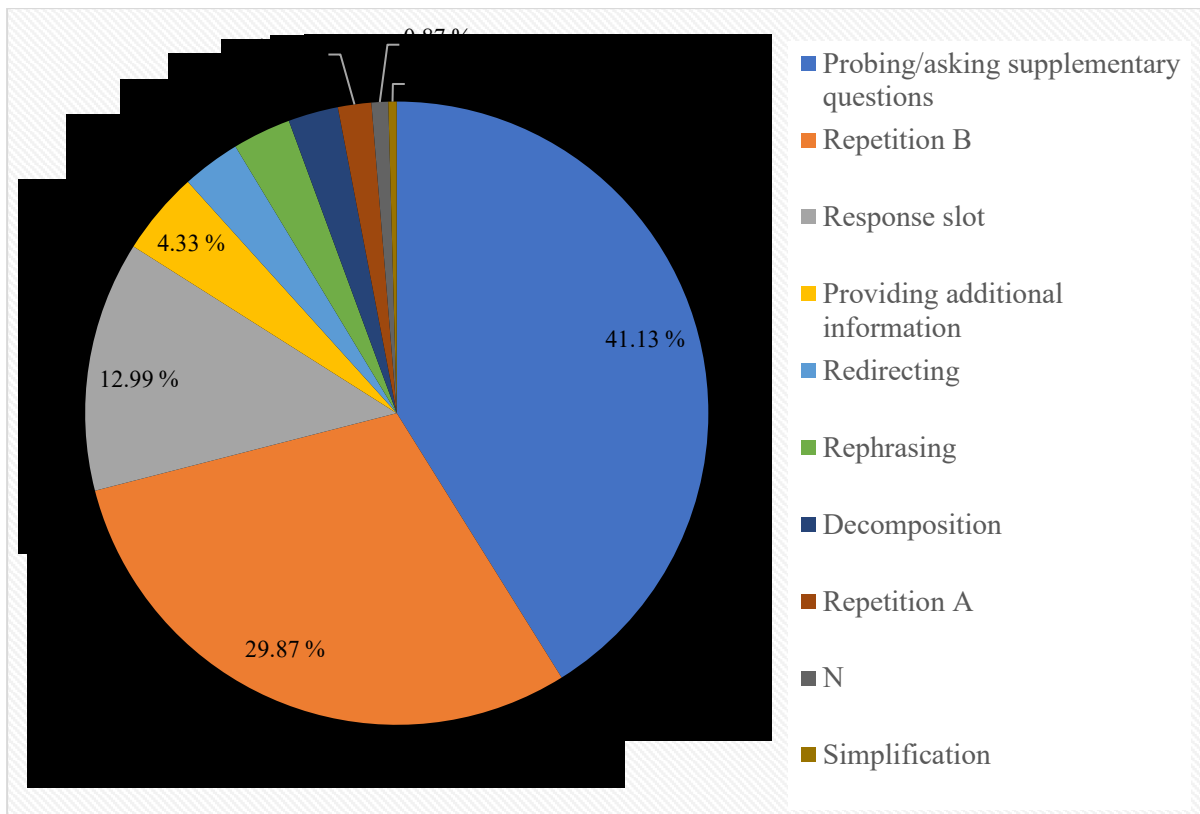


Figure 5. Frequency of strategies used after answered initial questions

In 134 initial questions, which were not answered by students at all, teachers used 138 questioning strategies in the first re-initiation. In these cases, rephrasing was the most often used strategy, and it was used 37 times (26.81 %). Providing additional information was used 29 times (21.01 %), and simplification was used 26 times (18.84 %). Decomposition was used 13 times (9.42 %), probing, or asking supplementary questions was used 11 times (7.97 %), repetition of teachers' questions or parts of teachers' questions was used 10 times (7.25 %), response slot was used 6 times (4.35 %), redirecting was used 5 times (3.62 %), and the teacher answered the question or left the question unanswered in only 1 case (0.72 %). Repetition of students' answers, or sections of students' answers, due to the absence of the students' answers, naturally did not occur at all. The results are also graphically presented in Figure 6.

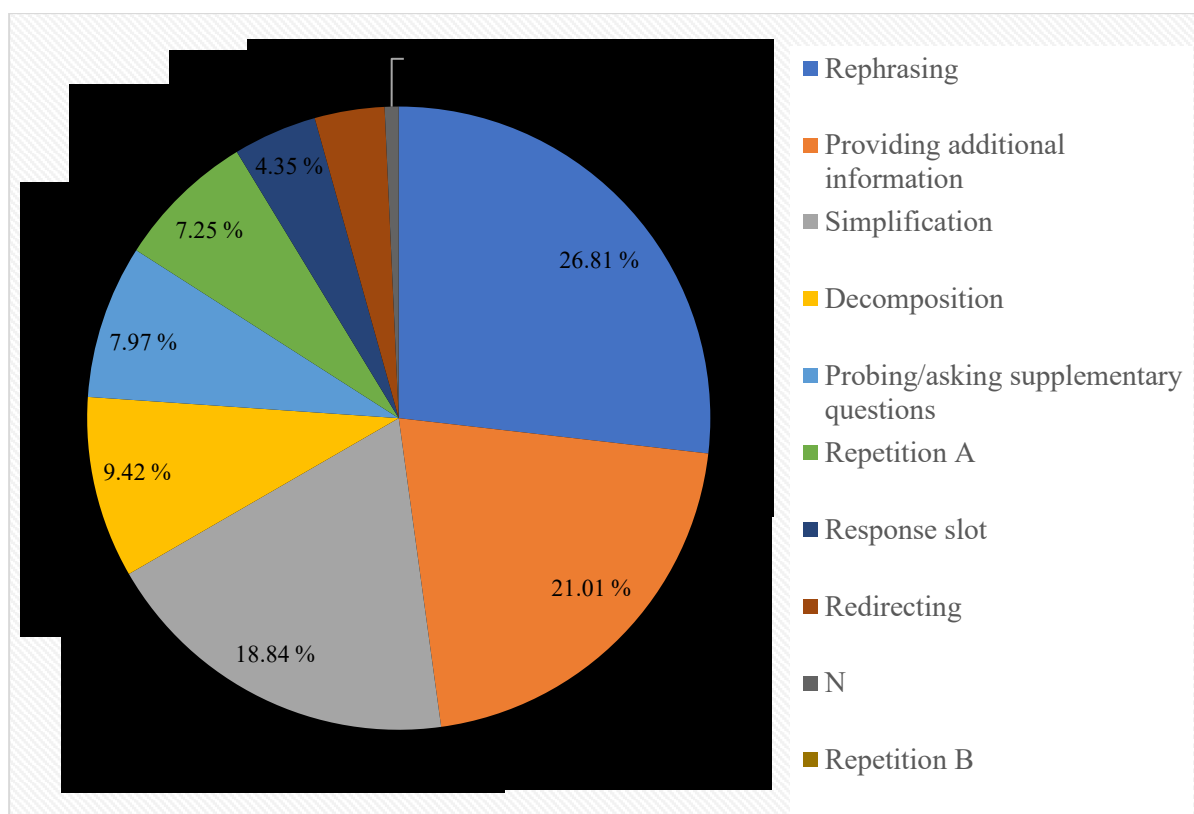


Figure 6. Frequency of strategies used after unanswered questions

When looking at the most frequent strategies used in the above cases, one can notice that they are rather different. Reasonably, in the first situation, where the initial question was answered in a way, the teachers build further interaction on the provided answer. In the observed lessons, teachers did that by repeating students' answers or parts of the students' answers, and by asking supplementary questions. As it is expected, in the cases where the teachers did not receive any response from the students, the same strategies were not used that often, but, different, more suitable strategies were used. In the situations where the teachers' initial questions were not answered by students at all, teachers most frequently rephrased the same questions, or simplified them, hoping that students would understand them better when reformulated, or expressed in a different way. Also, in these cases, teachers often provided students with more information or examples helpful for answering the question.

### 3.5. Discussion

In this part of the paper, the results of the research will be interpreted.

The first aim of this research was to determine if teachers of English as a foreign language in Croatian high schools make sure that students answer all the questions they ask. The results have shown that out of 306 initial questions involved in the research, only 2.94 % of all of the questions



were left unanswered or the teacher answered the question herself. Teachers used questioning strategies adequately, leading students to provide answers to 97.06 % of the initial questions. One can notice that teachers' questions and the use of questioning strategies were certainly efficient in encouraging students to actively participate in the interaction and that by choosing the appropriate strategies, teachers received the answers to the vast majority of their questions. The amount and the intentions of the questions and questioning strategies employed show the teachers' aspirations towards contemporary teaching which is based on the interactivity and makes the student the subject of teaching, and no longer an object.

The second research question aimed at determining which strategies teachers use to get students answers and the results have shown that, even though not to the same extent, teachers do use all of the observed questioning strategies. Some of them were used significantly more often than the others, but the frequency of their occurrence has been shown to be related to the effect that teachers want to achieve. Also, teachers often tend to use multiple questioning strategies to create complete, integrated interaction and to gather all the expected answers from students. In addition to asking questions and employing questioning strategies to encourage active participation, by employing the right questioning strategies, teachers engaged other educational benefits, such as encouraging critical and creative thinking or boosting students' self-esteem and confidence in speaking in a foreign language. The use of various questioning strategies certainly helps teachers in achieving different learning outcomes.

The third aim of the research was to detect if the questioning strategies differ when students do not give any answer to the initial question or when they give an inadequate answer and the results show that there is a difference. In the cases where the initial question was partially answered, incorrectly answered, or the teacher wanted to continue the conversation related to the same initial question, probing or asking for supplementary questions, and repetition of students' answers or sections of students' answers were used the most frequently. Quite logically, those are the strategies that are typically used when the students provide a partial or unsatisfactory answer, and their employment shows that the teachers did not let the interactions stop before getting the complete expected answer(s). It is noticeable that the observed teachers do not ask the questions for the sake of asking, but that they lead the students until their goal is achieved, i.e., until they gather all the anticipated answers.

In the cases where the initial question was not answered by students at all, the teachers tried to modify their initial questions by rephrasing or simplifying them, or to provide students with helpful

and leading information and examples. In these situations, the teachers noticed that their initial questions are perhaps too difficult or incomprehensible to students, and they adapted the question in order to make it easier for students to provide some kind of the answer. Again, as Wilen (1987) claims, effective teachers lead students to respond to all the questions in some way, and in these cases, teachers modified initially “unanswerable” questions instead of leaving them unanswered. However, one must take into consideration that these situations perhaps occurred because the initial questions were not adapted to students’ level. If the initial questions had been better organised and adapted to students, teachers would have possibly got to the answers easier, without having to employ that many questioning strategies. Still, with the use of the right questioning strategies, teachers can monitor students’ comprehension of curriculum content and gather useful information on what and how it should be modified in the classroom for all the students to achieve all of the outcomes.

## 4. Conclusion

The aims of this research were to determine whether teachers make sure that students answer all the questions they ask, which strategies they use to solicit students' answers and to detect if the teachers' questioning strategies differ when students do not provide an answer to the initial question or provide an inadequate answer.

From the analysed data, we can draw the following conclusions:

- teachers lead students to answer the vast majority of the questions asked – 97.06 % of all of the questions were answered by students
- teachers use all of the listed questioning strategies – some of them are used more often than the others
- questioning strategies differ when the initial answer is unanswered, and when it is partially answered, incorrectly answered, or when the teachers want to continue the interaction related to the same topic
- when the initial question is unanswered – rephrasing, providing additional information and simplification are used the most frequently
- when the initial question is inadequately answered – probing or asking for supplementary questions, and teachers' repeating of students' answers or sections of students' answers are used the most frequently.

The results of this research may lead to the conclusion that even though a well-formulated question is the important aspect of every classroom interaction, the employment of right questioning strategies can play an even more meaningful role. Even if the initial question is well-organised, if the answer is not obtained, the teachers must react appropriately and lead students to the expected answers. Teachers do that by the use of adequate questioning strategies.

However, methodical reflection is a mandatory part of teaching, and every teacher should continuously reflect on what he or she does to encourage students to participate actively in the teaching process. Each teacher should not only consider the use of questioning strategies, but also the initial questions preceding them. In other words, would there be less need for the use of questioning strategies if the initial questions were better formulated?

In addition, further research could include investigating the use of questioning strategies after higher cognitive questions only. It would be worth examining whether, after employing the

questioning strategies and perhaps adapting the initial questions, teachers still seek for higher cognitive answers more often than for lower-level answers.

Finally, the present research did not include the observation of the waiting time – how long the teachers wait for students' answers before employing questioning strategies. That aspect might be interesting for exploring in future studies, i.e., if the extension of waiting time increases the quality and quantity of students' answers. Also, the additional waiting time might lead to the teachers' use of fewer, but more wisely applied questioning strategies, which is still to be explored.

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## **6. Summary**

The first part of this paper brings the theoretical overview of the classroom questions, their role in the (EFL) classrooms, the typical question-answer pattern, and finally the definitions and classifications of teachers' questioning strategies. The second part reports on the research of the strategies that teachers of English as a foreign language in two Croatian high schools use, and how they are used. The results show that the teachers successfully choose questioning strategies to lead students to answer most of their questions, and that, even though not in the same proportion, they use all of the strategies, according to their intentions.

Key words: teachers' questions, question-answer pattern, questioning strategies, re-initiation

## **7. Sažetak**

Ovaj je rad podijeljen u dva dijela. U prvome se dijelu donosi teoretski prikaz pitanja, njihova uloga u nastavi (engleskoga kao stranog jezika), tipični uzorak pitanja i odgovora te konačno definicije i podjele učiteljevih strategija postavljanja pitanja. Drugi dio donosi opis istraživanja strategija kojima se učitelji engleskoga kao stranog jezika u dvama hrvatskim srednjim školama koriste. Rezultati pokazuju da učitelji uspješno odabiru strategije postavljanja pitanja kojima navode učenike da odgovore na većinu njihovih pitanja te da se, iako ne u istom omjeru, učitelji koriste svim strategijama, ovisno o njihovim namjerama.

Ključne riječi: nastavnikova pitanja, uzorak pitanja i odgovora, strategije postavljanja pitanja, ponovni poticaj