



TEACHERS' QUESTIONING STRATEGIES AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN AN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Author:

Ivy M. Saballa

Student, Master of Arts in Education (Language Teaching in English)
Faculty of the Graduate School, PHINMA-Araullo University

Abstract

This study examines how questioning strategies affect student engagement in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms at Namangan Presidential School, Uzbekistan (2024–2025). Using a phenomenological approach, it analyzes experiences of 10 teachers and 18 students via interviews, focus groups, and observations. Findings show that open-ended, probing, and real-life connection questions, alongside personalized prompts, humor, rewards, and collaboration, boost critical thinking and participation. Challenges include balancing engagement with academic rigor and ensuring inclusivity. Teachers stressed culturally responsive methods, scaffolding, and student-led inquiry to address diverse needs. A proposed three-month intervention, Mastering the Art of Questioning, offers workshops, hands-on training, and classroom practice to refine teachers' skills, structured into pre-assessment, training, and post-reflection phases. The study highlights adaptive, interactive strategies to create inclusive, dynamic EFL environments, enhancing both pedagogical practices and learning outcomes. It underscores the importance of intuitive teaching methods in fostering student engagement and professional teacher growth.

Keywords: questioning strategies, student engagement, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Uzbekistan

Introduction

Effective questioning strategies in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms are widely recognized as pivotal for fostering student engagement and academic success. Student engagement—marked by attention, curiosity, and critical thinking—directly influences language acquisition outcomes, particularly in contexts where exposure to the target language is limited. Research underscores that teacher-led questions stimulate interaction, guide cognitive processes, and cultivate dynamic learning environments, emphasizing their role in enhancing comprehension and retention (Al-Hoorie & Hiver, 2020; Liu et al., 2021).

Despite broad acknowledgment of their importance, existing studies on questioning strategies remain fragmented. Prior research often focuses on Western settings, overlooking cultural and institutional nuances in non-Western contexts like Uzbekistan. Furthermore, gaps persist in understanding how factors such as teacher training, classroom culture, and time constraints influence the implementation of these strategies. For instance, in settings like Namangan Presidential School, teacher-centered practices and a tendency to supply answers rather than encourage critical inquiry highlight systemic challenges unaddressed in global literature (Khongput, 2020; Arini & Wahyudin, 2022).

This study addresses these gaps by examining the interplay between questioning strategies and student engagement at Namangan Presidential School, a multicultural EFL context in



Uzbekistan. Through qualitative focus groups, interviews, and classroom observations, the research identified locally effective techniques, evaluated their impact on participation, and explored barriers such as professional development needs. By offering context-specific insights, the study aimed to inform tailored pedagogical training and fostered evidence-based practices, ultimately advancing equitable, engaging EFL instruction in underrepresented educational settings.

Theoretical Framework

The present attempt is anchored on two theories that provide valuable frameworks for understanding the complex interplay between students, learning environments, and instructional practices. First, Socio-cultural theory, rooted in the work of Lev Vygotsky, emphasizes the importance of social interaction, cultural context, and collaborative learning in shaping students' engagement and learning outcomes. According to this perspective, learning is a social and cultural activity whereby students construct knowledge through interaction and participation in authentic tasks (Glăveanu, 2020).

In the context of student engagement, socio-cultural theory highlights the role of social interactions, such as peer collaboration and teacher-student discourse, in promoting active involvement and knowledge co-construction. By fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment that values diverse perspectives and encourages collaborative inquiry, educators can enhance students' engagement and facilitate more profound learning experiences.

On the other hand, cognitive engagement theory focuses on the cognitive processes and metacognitive strategies that underpin students' active involvement and investment in learning tasks. Rooted in cognitive psychology, this perspective emphasizes the importance of students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to learning stimuli (Johnston, 2018). According to cognitive engagement theory, engagement is not simply a passive state of attention but an active and dynamic process involving attention, motivation, and self-regulation.

Educators can foster cognitive engagement by designing learning activities that are challenging, relevant, and meaningful to students' interests and prior knowledge. By providing opportunities for active problem-solving, reflection, and metacognitive awareness, instructors can empower students to take ownership of their learning and become self-directed learners.

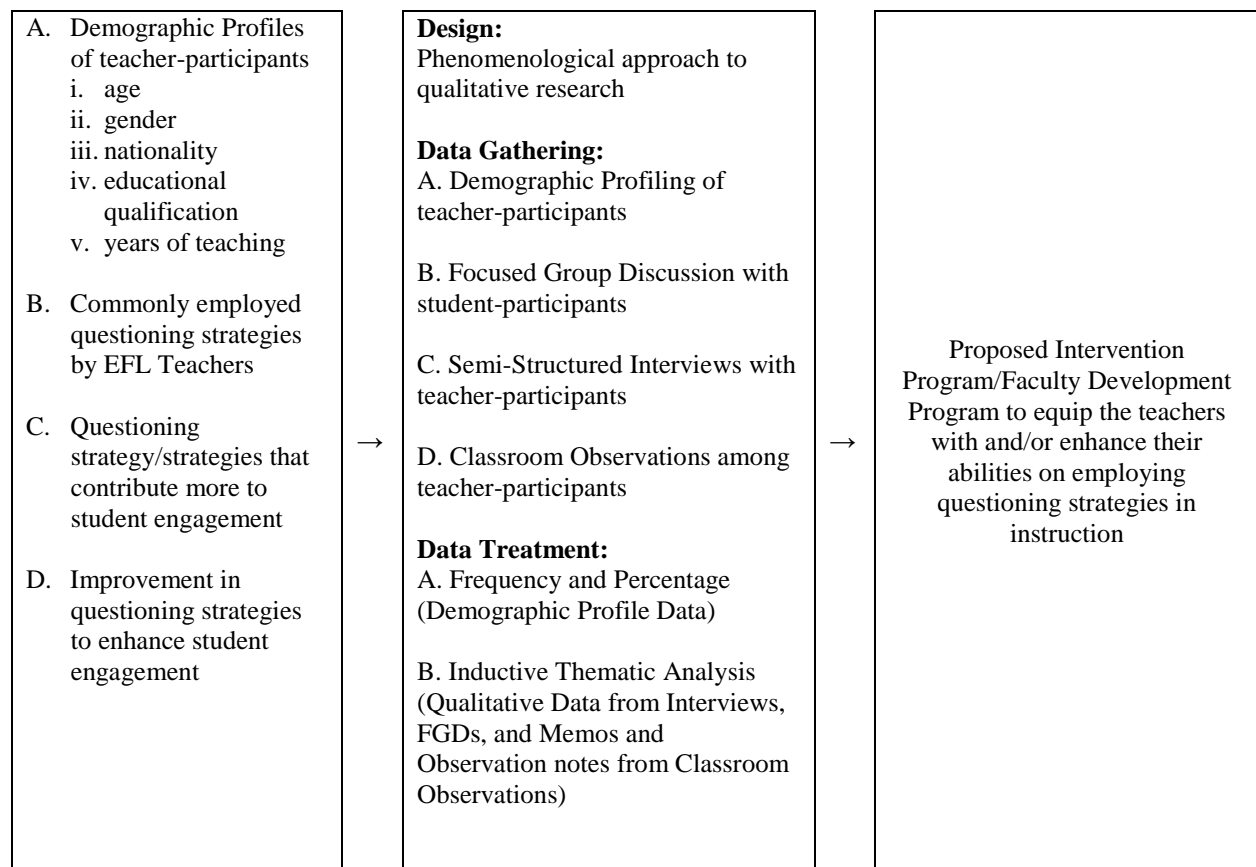
Finally, sociocultural and cognitive engagement theories offer complementary perspectives on student engagement, highlighting the interplay between social, cultural, and cognitive factors in shaping students' learning experiences. Educators can create dynamic and inclusive learning environments that promote active participation, collaborative inquiry, and deep learning by integrating insights from these theoretical frameworks into instructional practices. Educators can effectively support students' engagement and foster meaningful learning experiences by understanding the complex interplay between sociocultural dynamics and cognitive processes.



Conceptual Framework of the Study

The study employed the phenomenological design of qualitative research, collecting and analyzing qualitative data to uncover how individuals make sense of their experiences, aiming to describe the essence of these experiences to comprehensively explore the influence of questioning strategies on student engagement in EFL classrooms at Namangan Presidential School. This approach was chosen to capture the depth and complexity of participants' lived experiences, providing a nuanced understanding of the interplay between questioning techniques and learner engagement. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews among teachers, focused-group discussion with students, and classroom observations ensuring a holistic perspective. The findings were analyzed thematically to identify patterns and themes, offering insights into how questioning strategies foster interaction and critical thinking among students. The research paradigm, which integrates these qualitative methods, is visually represented in Figure 1 to illustrate the conceptual framework underpinning the study.

Figure 1
Research Paradigm





Statement of the Problem

This study investigated the gap in understanding how different questioning techniques influence student engagement in EFL classrooms at Namangan Presidential School for the academic year 2024-2025.

Specifically, the present study answered the following queries:

1. How may the demographic profile of the teacher-participants be described in terms of:
 - a. age;
 - b. gender;
 - c. nationality;
 - d. educational qualifications; and
 - e. years of teaching?
2. What questioning strategies do EFL teachers commonly employ during instructional sessions?
3. Which of the employed questioning strategies contribute more to student engagement?
4. How can the teachers further improve their questioning strategies to enhance student engagement in the EFL classroom?
5. Based on the present study's findings, what Intervention Program may be proposed to equip the teachers with and/or enhance their abilities to employ questioning strategies in instruction?

Review of Related Literature

Research underscores the critical role of questioning strategies in fostering engagement and language proficiency in EFL classrooms. Student engagement, defined by attention, curiosity, and active participation, is a cornerstone of effective language acquisition, particularly in contexts with limited exposure to English beyond formal instruction (Han, 2021). Studies highlight that teacher-generated questions stimulate cognitive processes, encourage dialogue, and scaffold comprehension, making them indispensable for developing critical thinking and linguistic competence (Liu et al., 2021; Guasch et al., 2019). For instance, analytical and open-ended questions prompt deeper analysis, while clarification and Socratic questions refine reasoning skills and metacognition (Saswati, 2022; Khongput, 2020). These strategies align with sociocultural and social cognitive theories, which emphasize interaction and guided inquiry as drivers of learning (Phan, 2020; Han, 2021).

However, the efficacy of questioning strategies is mediated by contextual and demographic factors. Teachers' age, gender, cultural background, and experience shape their questioning approaches. For example, younger educators often adopt student-centered techniques, while



experienced teachers may prioritize factual recall due to institutional norms (Havik & Westergård, 2020). Cultural contexts further influence implementation: in authority-respecting environments, students may hesitate to engage openly, necessitating adaptive strategies like anonymous submissions or group discussions (Darong, 2022). Research also reveals disparities in professional training, with under-resourced educators relying on teacher-centered methods, limiting opportunities for higher-order thinking (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022). Such findings highlight the need for culturally responsive pedagogical frameworks.

Despite their benefits, challenges persist in deploying questioning strategies equitably. Linguistic barriers, varying proficiency levels, and time constraints often restrict meaningful interaction, particularly in large or heterogeneous classrooms (Mustika et al., 2020). Additionally, studies predominantly focus on Western contexts, neglecting non-Anglophone settings like Central Asia, where EFL instruction faces unique sociocultural and institutional challenges (Khongput, 2020). For instance, in Uzbekistan's Namangan Presidential School, teachers' tendency to supply answers—driven by curriculum pressures or training gaps—underscores systemic issues unaddressed in global literature (Anisah et al., 2019). This gap limits the transferability of existing models to diverse educational ecosystems.

Emerging evidence advocates for technology-integrated questioning to enhance engagement. Digital tools like online forums and interactive platforms foster asynchronous participation, catering to introverted learners and transcending classroom limitations (Irawati et al., 2021). However, such innovations require infrastructure and training often absent in under-resourced regions. Furthermore, while studies like those by Cheung (2021) emphasize the motivational potential of personalized, culturally relevant questions, their implementation remains underexplored in multilingual EFL settings. This underscores the urgency of context-specific research to balance theoretical advancements with practical applicability.

Collectively, the literature identifies a pressing need for localized, empirical studies to address gaps in cultural relevance, teacher training, and equitable strategy implementation. By examining under-researched contexts like Uzbekistan, future research can bridge global pedagogical theories with grassroots realities, fostering inclusive, engagement-driven EFL instruction.

Methods

Research Design and Methodology

This study employed a phenomenological design guided by Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step descriptive method to explore the lived experiences of EFL teachers and students regarding questioning strategies and engagement. Data were triangulated through semi-structured interviews with 10 teachers, three focus group discussions (FGDs) with 18 students (Grades 5–11), and classroom observations using structured checklists. Colaizzi's framework ensured systematic analysis, including extracting significant statements, formulating meanings, clustering themes, and validating findings through participant feedback. This approach captured the depth of instructional dynamics while maintaining rigor and participant-centered interpretation.



Participants and Context

The study was conducted at Namangan Presidential School, Uzbekistan—a CIS- and Cambridge-accredited institution serving Grades 5–11. Participants included 10 EFL teachers (purposely sampled) and 18 students grouped into three grade-level FGDs (6 students each). Teachers were observed during lessons, while students provided insights into engagement experiences. The school’s merit-based, residential structure and focus on global standards offered a unique context for examining EFL practices in a multilingual, Central Asian setting.

Data Collection Instruments

Four instruments were used: (1) Demographic profilers (student/teacher) capturing age, experience, and educational background; (2) Semi-structured interview protocols exploring teachers’ questioning practices; (3) FGD protocols eliciting student perspectives on engagement; and (4) Classroom observation checklists documenting questioning techniques and student responses in real time. These tools ensured comprehensive, multi-perspective data collection aligned with phenomenological inquiry.

Data Collection and Analysis

After securing ethical approvals, data were collected sequentially: demographic profiling, teacher interviews, student FGDs, and classroom observations. Interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim and analyzed thematically using Colaizzi’s method, while observation data were coded for frequency and interaction patterns. Triangulation across datasets enhanced validity, with emerging themes validated through member-checking. NVivo software facilitated coding and theme development, ensuring systematic organization of qualitative insights.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivity were prioritized. Participants were anonymized, and data were stored securely. The study adhered to protocols minimizing disruption to instruction, respecting Uzbekistan’s cultural norms (e.g., authority dynamics), and addressing potential distress through transparent communication. Institutional review boards and school administrators approved all procedures to align with global ethical standards for educational research.

Results and Discussions

This section presents an integration of key findings related to the demographic profile of the participants and the effectiveness of questioning strategies in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. Common questioning strategies employed by teachers are explored and their role in fostering student engagement is established. In addition, insights from the 10 participants on how specific questioning techniques can enhance student participation and motivation in EFL settings are synthesized. Finally, recommendations for refining questioning strategies to maximize



student engagement and improve overall learning outcomes coming from the participants are summarized and presented.

Demographic Profile of the Participants

The 10 participants considered in the present study represent a diverse group of EFL teachers with varied demographic profiles, teaching experiences, and areas of expertise. The group includes both male and female educators, ranging in age from 27 to 48 years old, with teaching experience spanning 6 to 28 years. They hail from different nationalities, including Filipino, Uzbek, Pakistani, Nigerian, and Indonesian, and teach across a wide range of grade levels, from Grade 5 to Grade 11. Their educational backgrounds are equally diverse, with qualifications ranging from bachelor's degrees to doctorates, and their teaching subjects include English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Mathematics, Science, Programming, and Computer Science. This diversity in age, experience, and expertise allows them to bring unique perspectives and adaptive questioning strategies to their classrooms.

In terms of teaching experience, the participants demonstrate a strong commitment to education, with many holding advanced degrees such as master's or doctorate. For example, Participant 1 holds a doctorate and has 11 years of experience, while Participant 9 has 18 years of experience and a master's degree. Their extensive backgrounds enable them to employ a variety of questioning strategies tailored to diverse student needs, such as scaffolding, differentiation, and real-life connections. Additionally, their multidisciplinary expertise—ranging from medicine and public health to mathematics and computer science—allows them to integrate real-world applications into their lessons, making abstract concepts more relatable and engaging for students.

Despite their diverse backgrounds, the participants share common challenges and goals, such as fostering student engagement, building confidence, and addressing varying proficiency levels. Many emphasize the importance of adapting questioning strategies to suit students' linguistic and cultural contexts, particularly in EFL settings where English is not the native language. For instance, Participants 1 and 3 highlight the need to simplify language for Uzbek-speaking students, while Participant 4 focuses on culturally responsive questioning for Pakistani students. Finally, the demographic profiles of the participants reflect a group of dedicated educators who leverage their diverse experiences and expertise to create inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environments for their students.

Common Questioning Strategies in EFL Instruction

Questioning is a fundamental tool in EFL instruction, used by teachers to assess understanding, encourage critical thinking, and foster student engagement. Across the 10 cases considered, participants employed a variety of questioning strategies tailored to their students' proficiency levels, cultural backgrounds, and learning needs. These strategies ranged from open-ended and closed-ended questions to scaffolding techniques and real-life connections, all aimed at creating inclusive and dynamic learning environments. The table below provides a summary of the common questioning strategies used by the participants, supported by exemplars from their teaching practices.



Table 1

Summary of common questioning strategies used by the participants.

Questioning Strategy	Description and Exemplars
Open-Ended Questions	Used to encourage critical thinking and detailed responses. <i>Participant 1 asks, “Why?” and “How?” to prompt reflection.</i> <i>Participant 7 uses open-ended questions throughout lessons to deepen understanding.</i>
Closed-Ended Questions	Used for quick comprehension checks. <i>Participant 8 starts with closed-ended questions like, “Which one is greater, x or y?” before probing deeper.</i> <i>Participant 9 uses yes/no questions to check general comprehension.</i>
Scaffolding Techniques	Involves starting with simpler questions and gradually increasing complexity. <i>Participant 2 builds up questions layer by layer to reach complex concepts.</i> <i>Participant 7 simplifies questions for struggling students.</i>
Real-Life Connections	Links questions to students' experiences to make lessons relatable. <i>Participant 4 asks, “How do you think lice can be transmitted?” to connect to boarding school life.</i> <i>Participant 10 asks students to identify shapes in real-life objects.</i>
Probing Questions	Follow-up questions to deepen understanding. <i>Participant 8 asks, “How did you know?” after students answer initial questions.</i> <i>Participant 1 uses “why” and “how” questions to encourage justification.</i>
Keyword-Based Questions	Helps students understand key terms. <i>Participant 10 starts lessons by asking, “How do you understand this term?” to build foundational knowledge.</i>
Think-Pair-Share Activities	Encourages peer discussion and collaborative learning. <i>Participant 4 uses think-pair-share to allow students to learn from peers and build confidence.</i>
Instruction-Checking Questions (ICQs)	Verifies understanding of instructions. <i>Participant 6 uses ICQs like, “Where does a robber steal from?” to ensure comprehension.</i>
Differentiated Questions	Tailors questions to varying proficiency levels. <i>Participant 5 uses scientific language for advanced students and simplified questions for others.</i> <i>Participant 9 modifies questions for lower- and higher-level students.</i>

EFL teachers employed diverse questioning strategies to enhance engagement, including open-ended, closed-ended, probing, scaffolding, real-life connections, and differentiated techniques. Students emphasized how open-ended questions like “*Why do you think this happens?*” (FGD3) and scaffolding through incremental follow-ups (e.g., “*Why?*” and “*What?*”) nurtured critical thinking and confidence, particularly for varied proficiency levels. Classroom observations revealed teachers like Participant 1 prioritizing analytical questions, while Participant 4 linked lessons to real-world scenarios, such as identifying shapes in everyday objects.

Closed-ended questions, such as “*Is this correct?*” (FGD3), served as quick comprehension checks. Students noted these were effective for clarifying misunderstandings and maintaining focus. Differentiated questioning ensured inclusivity, with teachers tailoring complexity to individual abilities. For example, Participant 6 used clarification questions (“*Can you explain...?*”) to reinforce foundational knowledge, while Participant 9 employed extension questions (“*How can we apply this...?*”) to deepen understanding.



Scaffolding techniques, highlighted by students in FGD2 and FGD3, eased learners into complex topics. Teachers began with simpler questions, gradually increasing difficulty as students gained confidence. Observations showed Participant 10 guiding learners step-by-step through problem-solving, ensuring all could participate regardless of initial proficiency.

Real-life connections, such as “*What emergency situations have you faced?*” (FGD2), made lessons relatable. Students appreciated how these questions bridged abstract concepts to personal experiences, enhancing retention. Participant 7’s application questions (e.g., solving real-world math problems) exemplified this strategy, fostering engagement through relevance.

Probing and evaluative questions, like “*What do you think about this solution?*” (Participant 8), encouraged students to articulate reasoning and explore multiple perspectives. FGD participants valued such prompts for promoting dialogue and deeper analysis, aligning with observations of teachers like Participant 3, who used recall questions to reinforce prior knowledge.

The effectiveness of these strategies is supported by research. Xian and Yunus (2021) emphasize open-ended questions for critical thinking, while Almeida and García (2020) underscore scaffolding’s role in bridging learning gaps. Nguyen and Le (2022) affirm that real-world connections improve retention, mirroring student feedback on relatable questioning.

Classroom dynamics were further enriched by differentiated techniques. Teachers like Participant 5 adjusted question complexity based on student responses, ensuring equitable participation. FGD3 students praised this adaptability, noting how it reduced anxiety and encouraged risk-taking in language use.

Collectively, these strategies fostered inclusive, dynamic environments where students developed both linguistic and cognitive skills. By balancing analytical, practical, and reflective questioning, teachers addressed diverse needs, demonstrating how strategic inquiry enhances EFL engagement and proficiency.

Questioning Strategies that Enhance Student Engagement

It is already given that questioning strategies play a pivotal role in enhancing student engagement in EFL classrooms, as they encourage active participation, critical thinking, and meaningful interaction. Across the 10 cases considered, participants employed a variety of techniques to motivate students, create a positive learning environment, and ensure inclusivity. These strategies include personalized questioning, real-life connections, reward systems, and collaborative activities, all of which are designed to cater to diverse student needs and foster enthusiasm for learning. Below is a summary of the questioning strategies used by the participants to enhance engagement, supported by exemplars from their teaching practices.



Table 2

Summary of the questioning strategies used to enhance engagement.

Questioning Strategy	Description and Exemplars
Personalized Questioning	Calling students by name to motivate participation. <i>Participant 8 notes, “When I call a student by name and ask them a question, they feel motivated to respond”</i>
Real-Life Connections	Linking questions to students' experiences to make lessons relatable. <i>Participant 4 asks, “How can blood glucose levels be controlled?” and connects it to managing diabetes.</i> <i>Participant 10 asks students to identify shapes in real-life objects.</i>
Reward Systems	Using incentives to motivate participation. <i>Participant 1 gives rewards like extra points or no homework for correct answers.</i> <i>Participant 8 plans to incorporate reward systems to boost engagement.</i>
Think-Pair-Share Activities	Encouraging peer discussion to increase engagement. <i>Participant 4 uses think-pair-share to allow students to discuss questions and build confidence collectively.</i>
Thought-Provoking Questions	Using questions that require analysis or reflection. <i>Participant 9 asks, “Do you agree that corporate businesses have social responsibilities beyond profit-making?” to spark discussion.</i>
Affirmation and Encouragement	Providing positive feedback to build confidence. <i>Participant 1 uses phrases like “good job” or “you’re almost there” to encourage students.</i> <i>Participant 6 tells students to answer confidently, even if they make mistakes.</i>
Interactive Demonstrations	Using hands-on activities to engage students. <i>Participant 1 asks students to predict outcomes in a physics experiment, such as, “What do you think would happen if Student A pushed Student B?”.</i>
Simplified and Rephrased Questions	Adjusting questions to ensure understanding. <i>Participant 7 rephrases questions using simpler words for struggling students.</i> <i>Participant 9 breaks complex questions into smaller parts to avoid overwhelming students.</i>

Teachers enhanced engagement through personalized questioning and real-life connections, such as asking about students’ hobbies (“*favorite books or TV shows*” – FGD3) or experiences (“*spending money*” – FGD2). These strategies, aligned with Nguyen and Le (2022), fostered relevance and enjoyment. Humor and inside jokes, like those used by a physics teacher (FGD3), further eased anxiety, supporting Banas et al.’s (2011) findings on humor’s role in classroom dynamics.

Reward systems and healthy competition motivated participation, with students citing bonus points in science classes (FGD1/FGD3) and group races for answers (FGD2). While Almeida and García (2020) affirm such methods boost confidence, FGD3 cautioned against overemphasis, noting peer pressure risks. Balancing competition with inclusivity emerged as key to sustaining motivation.

Collaborative activities like debates (FGD2) and group work (FGD1) promoted teamwork and critical thinking, resonating with Xian and Yunus (2021). However, FGD3 highlighted pitfalls: poorly facilitated discussions could turn toxic. Clear guidelines for respectful dialogue were deemed essential to maintain a supportive environment.



Challenging questions, such as analyzing the Bukhara Emirate (FGD3) or debating water acidity (FGD3), spurred intellectual curiosity. While students valued these for deepening understanding (Xian & Yunus, 2021), scaffolding—like keyword prompts (FGD2)—was crucial to prevent stress and guide reasoning.

Balancing fun and rigor were critical. Games like Hangman (FGD2) and humorous quizzes energized lessons, yet FGD1 stressed that rewards should complement, not overshadow, intrinsic learning goals. This duality underscores the need for strategies that marry engagement with academic depth.

Students emphasized adaptability: tailoring questions to interests, adjusting competition intensity, and scaffolding challenges. For instance, a chemistry teacher’s guided prompts (FGD2) exemplified effective support, while differentiated group roles (FGD1) ensured equitable participation.

These findings align with existing research but extend it by contextualizing strategies in diverse classrooms. Personalized and collaborative approaches, when thoughtfully implemented, address varied learner needs while fostering critical skills.

Ultimately, successful engagement hinges on balancing innovation with inclusivity. Strategies like humor, real-world links, and scaffolded challenges create dynamic environments, but require mindful execution to ensure all students thrive academically and socially.

Enhancing Questioning Strategies for Greater Engagement

To further improve student engagement through questioning strategies, participants highlighted the need for continuous refinement and adaptation of their techniques. They emphasized the importance of scaffolding, differentiation, real-life connections, and the use of technology to create more inclusive and dynamic learning environments. By focusing on student-centered approaches, such as encouraging student-led questioning and incorporating culturally responsive techniques, they aim to foster deeper comprehension and active participation. In the following pages is a summary of the strategies participants plan to enhance for greater engagement, supported by exemplars from their reflections.

Table 3
Summary of strategies participants plan to enhance for greater engagement.

Questioning Strategy	Description and Exemplars
Culturally Responsive Questioning	Adapting questions to students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds. <i>Participant 1 plans to refine questioning strategies for Uzbek-speaking students through professional development.</i>
Student-Led Questioning	Encouraging students to formulate and ask their own questions. <i>Participant 1 aims to increase student-led questioning to enhance critical thinking and classroom interaction.</i>



Questioning Strategy	Description and Exemplars
Digital Tools and Multimedia	Using technology to present questions in engaging formats. <i>Participant 1 plans to incorporate gamified quizzes and interactive discussion boards.</i>
Scaffolding and Background Knowledge	Providing foundational knowledge to support complex questions. <i>Participant 9 emphasizes the need to build vocabulary and background knowledge before asking analytical questions.</i>
Differentiated Questioning	Tailoring questions to varying proficiency levels. <i>Participant 5 plans to use more exploratory questions for advanced students and real-life questions for mixed-ability classes.</i>
Reward Systems and Incentives	Using rewards to motivate participation. <i>Participant 8 plans to implement a reward system for correct answers to boost engagement.</i>
Chunking Complex Questions	Breaking long questions into smaller, manageable parts. <i>Participant 9 highlights the need to simplify complex questions to avoid overwhelming students.</i>
Interactive and Hands-On Activities	Incorporating interactive activities to engage students. <i>Participant 10 plans to create more interactive activities for each topic to help students discover concepts independently.</i>

Teachers plan to enhance engagement through culturally responsive and student-centered questioning. Strategies include reward systems, such as bonus points in physics (FGD3), and humor reflecting cultural nuances, as suggested by Student#2 (FGD3). These align with Xian and Yunus (2021), who advocate for interactive techniques to boost critical thinking.

Tailoring questions to students’ interests, like linking biology to future medical studies (Student#3, FGD3), increases relevance. Such scaffolding, supported by Nguyen and Le (2022), bridges abstract concepts with real-life contexts, aiding retention. Student#4 (FGD3) emphasized allowing time for reflection, fostering deeper understanding.

Students critiqued rigid questioning patterns (e.g., fixed order by seating), urging random methods to sustain engagement. This aligns with Almeida and García’s (2020) call for adaptive techniques. Differentiated questioning ensures inclusivity, addressing concerns about over-targeting specific learners (Student#1 & #3, FGD3).

Pre-class preparation, like assigned readings (Student#6, FGD3), builds confidence. Scaffolding through simplified explanations—e.g., Newton’s laws via relatable scenarios (Student#4, FGD3)—enhances comprehension. Nguyen and Le (2022) affirm this approach, noting its effectiveness in demystifying complex topics.

Balancing high expectations with intuitive teaching is crucial. Student#3 (FGD3) warned against unrealistic demands without support, advocating methods aligned with current abilities. Scaffolding, as emphasized by Almeida and García (2020), mitigates disengagement from perceived failure.

Fair distribution of questions emerged as a priority. Students urged equitable participation over targeting high- or low-achievers (Student#1 & #3, FGD3). Culturally responsive humor and relatable examples (Student#5, FGD3) further foster inclusivity and belonging.



Technology integration, though underexplored in FGDs, complements these strategies. Combined with student-led inquiry and real-world links, it aligns with global pedagogical trends (Xian & Yunus, 2021), promoting adaptable, dynamic classrooms.

Collectively, these plans reflect research-backed priorities: engagement through relevance, inclusivity via adaptability, and comprehension via scaffolding. By merging student feedback with frameworks like culturally responsive teaching, educators can cultivate environments where questioning drives both academic and personal growth.

Mastering the Art of Questioning: A Proposed Training Program for EFL Teachers

The proposed intervention program found in Appendix F, *Mastering the Art of Questioning: A Training Program for EFL Teachers*, is presented as a strategic initiative to enhance teaching practices and improve student learning outcomes in EFL classrooms. Designed specifically for teachers at Namangan Presidential School, the program aims to equip educators with effective questioning techniques to foster student engagement, critical thinking, and deeper understanding. Through a combination of workshops, hands-on training, collaborative activities, and real-time classroom applications, the program ensures that participants gain both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. By offering this opportunity, the program seeks to empower teachers to create more dynamic and interactive learning environments while fostering a culture of continuous professional growth.

The program invites teachers to participate in a structured three-month journey that includes pre-intervention orientation and assessment, intensive intervention activities, and post-intervention reflection and support. Its emphasis on practical application and peer collaboration ensures that the skills acquired are immediately applicable and sustainable in real classroom settings. Teachers who participate will not only refine their questioning techniques but also join a supportive community of educators committed to excellence in teaching. The program's benefits extend beyond individual growth, as improved teaching practices are expected to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes, creating a positive impact across the school.

Conclusions

1. The diverse backgrounds of the teacher-participants enrich EFL instruction, as their varied nationalities, ages, qualifications, and experiences contribute to innovative and inclusive questioning strategies that foster student engagement and critical thinking.
2. EFL teachers use diverse questioning strategies—open-ended, closed-ended, probing, scaffolding, real-life connections, and differentiated techniques—to promote critical thinking, comprehension, and active participation, creating inclusive and dynamic learning environments.
3. Personalized questioning, humor, reward systems, and collaborative activities boost engagement but require careful facilitation to ensure inclusivity and avoid demotivation. Balancing fun with academic rigor maintains meaningful learning outcomes.



4. Adopting culturally responsive techniques, student-led questioning, scaffolding, and relatable examples enhance engagement. Fair, adaptive, and intuitive questioning methods align with students' abilities and foster deeper understanding.
5. The Mastering the Art of Questioning program may equip teachers with practical questioning skills through workshops, hands-on training, and peer collaboration, fostering professional growth and improving student learning outcomes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following are recommended:

1. Conduct the Mastering the Art of Questioning Training Program to equip the teachers with diverse questioning strategies. School administrators may oversee the program, with progress monitored through classroom observations and post-training assessments.
2. Promote personalized and culturally responsive questioning by encouraging teachers to tailor questions to students' interests, backgrounds, and future goals. Academic heads may monitor implementation through lesson plan reviews and student feedback.
3. Integrate reward systems, collaborative activities, and humor to enhance engagement while ensuring inclusivity and avoiding overemphasis on competition. EFL teachers may lead this, with peer evaluations and activity assessments conducted by department heads.
4. Balance fun activities with academic rigor by using scaffolding and real-life connections to simplify complex concepts and maintain meaningful learning outcomes. School administrators may monitor this through classroom observations and lesson plan reviews.
5. Foster a student-centered learning environment by adopting fair, adaptive, and intuitive questioning methods, such as student-led questioning and pre-class preparation. Department heads may evaluate implementation through classroom observations and student performance data.

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