A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF ORAL QUESTIONING STRATEGIES IN EFL THESIS EXAMINATIONS

Imanuel Kamlasi
ikamlasi@yahoo.com
English Education, Universitas Timor, Indonesia

Edmundus Bouk
mund.timor@gmail.com
English Education, Universitas Timor, Indonesia

Anselmus Sahan
anselsahan@gmail.com
English Education, Universitas Timor, Indonesia

Abstract

Questions strategy plays a complementary role in EFL thesis examinations. Examiners employ a variety of strategies when posing oral questions during these assessments. This study analyzed the oral questioning strategies used by examiners in EFL thesis examinations. Given the nature of the research problem, a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for analyzing and describing the data. The participants included six examiners and five undergraduate candidates. Data were collected through video recordings of the examinations. The researchers employed several procedures, including transcription, coding, classification, analysis, and discussion of the data. The findings revealed that examiners employed various questioning strategies, such as reinforcement, probing, adjustment/refocusing, redirection, rephrasing, repetition, verification, clarification, elaboration, extension, challenge, and code-switching. These results suggest the potential for applying questioning strategies across various academic disciplines.

Keywords: *analysis, oral questioning, strategy, thesis examination*

Sari

Strategi pertanyaan memainkan peran pelengkap dalam ujian tesis EFL. Para penguji menggunakan berbagai strategi saat mengajukan pertanyaan lisan selama penilaian ini. Studi ini menganalisis strategi bertanya secara lisan yang digunakan oleh para penguji dalam ujian tesis EFL. Mengingat sifat permasalahan penelitian, pendekatan kualitatif dianggap sesuai untuk menganalisis dan mendeskripsikan data. Partisipan terdiri dari enam penguji dan lima kandidat sarjana. Data dikumpulkan melalui rekaman video ujian. Peneliti menggunakan beberapa prosedur, termasuk transkripsi, pengkodean, klasifikasi, analisis, dan pembahasan data. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa para penguji menggunakan berbagai strategi bertanya, seperti penguatan, penggalian *(probing)*, penyesuaian/pengalihan fokus, pengalihan, parafrase, pengulangan, verifikasi,

klarifikasi, elaborasi, perluasan, tantangan, dan alih kode *(code-switching)*. Hasil ini menunjukkan potensi penerapan strategi bertanya di berbagai disiplin ilmu akademik.

Introduction

The thesis is a final project for students with undergraduate and master's degrees. This final project contains academic writing that covers background, problems, purposes, literature, method, results, and conclusion. The undergraduate students must complete a thesis writing through a long process, from identifying research problems to drawing a conclusion. When an undergraduate student has completed thesis writing, she/he is going to the final step, an oral or thesis examination. In thesis examination, the student must prepare herself/himself to defend her/his thesis writing orally in front of the examiners. Mauch and Park (2003: 263) said that oral examination in most institutions is the final procedural step in student evaluation during the degree process. In this phase, the examiners pose oral questions to the candidate about the content of the thesis. The oral questions concentrate on the study, the findings, and the interpretation of the findings. However, questions regarding the academic and professional preparation of the candidate may also arise. The candidate needs to pay serious attention to answer the questions from the examiners orally. The exchange of questions and responses during the examination fosters interaction and feedback between the examiners and the candidate.

Interaction cannot be produced easily and naturally without initiative or effort from examiners. Examiners must constantly engage and stimulate the examinee or candidate to participate actively in the thesis examination. Furthermore, the stimulus from examiners at the beginning of the thesis examination is crucial to building interactive communication. One of the paramount techniques which teachers can use to initiate and maintain interaction in the thesis examination is developing questioning strategies or techniques. The examiners usually ask the examinee or candidate many questions. The purpose is to measure whether the examinee or candidate understands

the thesis writing content. Furthermore, Mauch and Park (2003: 274) said that the final oral examination culminates in a long preparation process. The candidate has been guided by an academic advisor, a person who is usually a member of the committee.

Oral questioning has been used in the thesis examination process for centuries. Typically, questions are used to stimulate and build critical thinking skills. The examiners ask questions for the examinee or candidate to help them measure what has been written in the thesis. Therefore, examiners must ask good questions before asking the examinee or candidate. Good questions will have clear answers from the students, while poor questions can confuse and intimidate the students and limit creative thinking from the students. Oral questioning is a formative assessment of comprehension during and after a lesson, including thesis examination. Effective oral questioning requires good teacher preparation before they ask the students. Examiners need to have enough knowledge and skills to ask oral questions. The incorrect oral questioning may confuse the examinee or candidate, and it is potentially she/he who gives the wrong answer or response. The primary purpose of oral questions is to stimulate the students to think in minimal time to answer the question orally or directly to the examiners. Research conducted by Kelly (2010) highlighted that the primary purposes of the oral examination were to clarify and authenticate the thesis and to test their wider knowledge of the field. He underlined that doing a thesis oral examination is an intimidation process, but it is a helpful way for the candidate to defend the research in front of the examiners.

Questioning strategies are helpful for the examiner during the thesis examination process. The examiner carefully asks questions of the candidate and vice versa. The candidate also prepares the response strategy to answer the questions from the examiner. Based on the background of this study, which was stated in the previous paragraphs, the researchers reflect on the importance of using the oral questions strategies in an EFL thesis examination. Researchers developed a study about using oral question strategies in an EFL thesis examination. This research describes the strategies of oral questioning in an EFL thesis examination. The analyses focus on the questioning strategies used by the examiners in an EFL thesis examination.

Recent studies on oral questions have explored the types of questions teachers use in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. Vebriyanto (2015) examined teachers' questions regarding EFL classroom interaction, identifying display/closed questions for checking students' understanding of materials and referential/open questions for seeking specific information. Primadini (2020) found three types of questioning strategies in an EFL classroom: probing, factual, and divergent, with teachers using five types of questions: clarifying, prompting, redirecting, a simple bit of information, and divergent. Milawati and Suryati (2019) found that redirecting and reinforcement were more frequent than rephrasing and probing. Kamlasi and Sahan (2019) found that prospective English teachers actively used oral questionnaires, WH, and Yes/No questions and never used WH or Yes/No questions. Ahmadi and Kurniawan (2020) analyzed teachers' questions in Indonesian EFL classrooms, finding that a low level of thinking skill dominated questions. Overall, these studies highlight the importance of oral questioning in EFL classrooms to stimulate students' understanding and engagement.

In an EFL thesis examination, the examiner's questioning strategy is defined as an instructional key to stimulate the student or candidate to convey the material. Practical questioning sessions in thesis examination can produce good answers or responses. While some instructors may be skilled in extemporaneous questioning, many find that such questions have phrasing problems, are not organized logically, or do not require students to use the desired thinking skills. Willen (1991: 6) defined questions as generally concerned with information seeking and stimulating some mental activity or thinking. Then, he stated that a question is broadly defined as any sentence having either an interrogative form or function. Questions refer to instructional or direction, guiding students in what they should do and how they should do it. Through questions, the student can improve their ability to learn. Therefore, appropriate questions in the classroom can fulfill different functions, such as giving the students a chance to produce language and to react to the students' interactions among themselves. Kelly (2010) noted that the purpose of examiners in the oral examination can be perceived in various ways. It will depend on what examiners see as the purpose of the candidate and how they perceive their function as examiners. Goodwin et al. (1983: 1) emphasized that an instructor should ask questions requiring students to use the thinking skills he is trying

to develop. Goodwin et al. (1983: 14–18) recommended four questioning strategies: reinforcement, probe, adjust/refocus, redirect, and rephrasing. In addition, Cele-Murcia (2001: 81) discussed various question types, which cover repetition, paraphrasing, verification, clarification, elaboration, extension, and challenge. In an EFL thesis examination setting, asking questions for candidates is an essential clue to promote and show the power of examination. The oral examination is likely to proceed smoothly when examiners employ a variety of questioning strategies. This study was conducted to explore the oral question strategies that were used by the examiners in an EFL thesis examinations.

Methods

Research Design

The issue investigated in this research focuses on analyzing the types of oral questioning and responses in a thesis examination; therefore, this research is categorized as descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive qualitative research design is used to solve or answer a problem that is happening nowadays. The research is done by collecting, classifying, analyzing the data, and making conclusions and reports. Cohen et al. (2007: 461) explained that qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for, and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities. Furthermore, Creswell (2014: 234) mentioned that the data sources in qualitative research are multiple forms of data, such as interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual information, rather than relying on a single data source. Regarding the issue of this research, the qualitative method is suitable for analyzing and describing the data descriptively.

Participants

The researchers used purposive sample in this research. Cresswell (2104) noted that in qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question. Therefore; the researchers involved 6 examiners and 5 examinees or candidates in an EFL thesis examination process.

Instrument

The instrument is an important part of research. It is used to collect data. Cohen (2007: 79) noted that instruments cover questionnaires, interviews, observation, tests, field notes, accounts, documents, personal constructs, and role-play. Thus, the instrument of this research is the script of oral questioning and responses in a thesis examination. The researchers used a Tape Video Recorder (TVR) to obtain the data.

Ethical Considerations and Trustworthiness

The instrument is an important part of research. It is used to collect data. Cohen (2007: 79) noted that instruments cover questionnaires, interviews, observation, tests, field notes, accounts, documents, personal constructs, and role-play. Thus, the instrument of this research is the script of oral questioning and responses in a thesis examination. The researchers used a Tape Video Recorder (TVR) to obtain the data.

Research Cite

This research was conducted at the English Education of Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (STKIP) Soe and the English Education of Universitas Timor.

Technique of Collecting Data

In collecting the data, there are some steps used as follows

a) Observation

Observation is one of the research procedures in data collection. Cohen et al. (2007: 396) said that observation can be of facts, such as the number of books in a classroom, the number of students in a class, and the number of students who visit the school library in a given period. In this research, the researchers observed the thesis examination. The researchers identified the types of questions and responses used in an EFL thesis examination during the observation.

b) Video Recording

Recording is a suitable technique for data collection. Creswell (2014) explained that the data collection steps include setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documents, and visual materials, and establishing the protocol for recording

information. Thus, in collecting the data, the researchers took video recordings during an EFL thesis examination process.

c)   Taking Note

Taking Notes is part of collecting data in qualitative research. The researchers wrote down the important parts of an EFL thesis examination process.

Technique of Data Analyses

In analyzing the data; the researchers apply the following steps:

a)   Transcribing

The audio files were transferred to the computer to make it easier to transcribe the data. In this part, the researchers listened to and observed a video of an EFL thesis examination process.

b)   Codifying

In this part, the researchers coded each type of oral questioning strategy used in the thesis examination. The researchers gave codes for each type of question strategy based on relevant theory.

c)   Analyzing

In this section, the researchers categorized the data into types of questioning strategies and response strategies. The analysis focused on identifying the types of oral questions used in EFL thesis examinations.

d)   Discussing

This section discusses the results as the research findings. The discussion addresses the two main research problems: identifying questioning strategies and analyzing the functions of oral questioning in thesis examinations

Results and Discussion

The researchers spent a couple of months collecting the data by video recording an EFL thesis examination process. In this section, the researchers would like to present the questions and response strategies data from the EFL thesis examination. The data were recorded and then transcribed into written form, which is presented in the following section. The data related to questioning strategies in an EFL thesis examination process are presented in the following part. Those strategies are based on Goodwin et al. (1983) and Cele-Murcia's (2001) recommendation.

1) Reinforcement

Reinforcement is a part of reward, which is given to respect someone. The instructor should reinforce student responses and questions positively to encourage future participation. The instructor can reinforce this by making positive statements. Reinforcement is a strategy (often verbal or behavioral) that acts as a reward to recognize and encourage good performance or participation. It is also a way to respect and motivate someone, especially in formal or academic situations such EFL thesis examination.

Table 1

Data on Reinforcement Strategy

Tract 1		
Examiner	:	Did you use both qualitative and quantitative?
Candidate	:	To support each other.
Examiner	:	Yes, **that is good,** next, we moved.
Tract 2		
Examiner 1	:	Ok, thank you so much, **congratulation**
Candidate 2	:	Thank you
Examiner 2	:	Okay I think that's all, for me I just ….. Okay thank you very much. **Congratulation**.
Tract 3		
Examiner 2	:	Okay, I think that enough. **Good luck.**
Candidate 4	:	Thank you so much, Sir.
Candidate 4	:	Because when I still practice in there, I found that the students ...
Examiner 2	:	Yes, **very good**.

The table provides the verbal positive responses given by the examiner to encourage or motivate the candidates in EFL tehsis examination. The examiner confirms that the candidate's response is good before proceeding. This validates the response and encourages the candidate. The examiner uses direct verbal reinforcement, appreciating the effort and success by saying congratulations. The examiner uses direct and affirmative feedback to support the candidate's ongoing explanation such as in Tarct 3 (Yes, very good), which motivates candidates to elaborate and continue speaking.

2) Probe

Probes are based on student responses. Students' initial responses may be superficial. The instructor needs to use a questioning strategy called probing to make students explore their initial comments. Probes are useful in getting students more involved in critical analysis of their own and others' ideas.

Table 2
Data on Probe Strategy

Tract 5	:	
Examiner	:	Okay, Yes I know you idea. So tell me: **How did you conduct the research?** I just you don't need open your thesis. **Did you go to the school? What did you do there? Did you meet headmaster? Did you meet English teacher? Did you meet students?**
Candidate	:	Students. Yes.. but English teacher, no. *karena waktu itu corona*
Examiner	:	Alright. Okay and then did you meet students, **What did you do with the students?**
Candidate	:	I give reading test and they…
Tract 5	:	
Examiner 3	:	Four..ok four short stories. Next question, **when did you get the short story, from the internet, or from the text book, or is it your own short story something like that?**
Candidate 5	:	From internet

The examiner broke down the general question into specific aspects to ensure full understanding of the research setting such as in Tract 5 *(when did you get the short story, from the internet, or from the text book, or is it your own short story something like that?)*, probing further into one aspect (students) to extract procedural details. The examienr also probed deeper into data collection activities such as Did you meet the headmaster? In additon; the examiner confirmed the source and reliability of materials used: When did you get the short story?

3) Adjust/Refocus

When a student provides a response that appears out of context, the instructor can refocus and encourage the student to tie her response to the content being discussed. This technique is also used to shift attention to a new topic.

Table 3

Data on Adjust/Refocus Strategy

Tract 1		
Examiner 1	:	So, you mean that is your conclusion, all that you have done. And **where is the writing achievement?** In this triangle there is …, we expect that you are finding a correlation ….. and writing achievement. **So; Where is the writing achievement?**
Candidate 1	:	(just laugh and silent)

The examiner summarized the candidate's earlier (possibly unclear) response, setting up a refocus. The examiner adjusted the focus by directly referencing the title and expected variable *("writing achievement")*, reminding the candidate of what they should measure. Under pressure, the candidate was challenged to reflect on their study structure and logic. This strategy is beneficial in EFL oral examinations, where candidates may lose track of the main idea or struggle to connect all parts of their research in English coherently.

4) Redirect

When a student responds to a question, the instructor can ask another student to comment on his statement. This technique can enable more students to participate and allow a student to correct another student's incorrect statement.

Table 4

Data on Redirect Strategy

Tract 2		
Examiner 1	:	Ok. So, later on **I will ask you supervisor how do they? What are their strategies in pronouncing English by using English, English pronunciation?** Not their mother tongue pronunciation.
Candidate 2	:	So I think *saya sudah mengatakan ini*
Examiner 1	:	*Ok. Nanti kau bisa nanyakan Ibu W, bagaimana cara mereka berbicara dengan menggunakan bahasa Inggris yang baik dan benar?*
Tract 5		
Candidate 5	:	Thank you sir. According to Haris and Sipay (1980) explains that reading is ….
Examiner 1	:	**What does it mean? What is your opinion?**
Candidate 5	:	Aaa..*(shut up)*

The examiner used a redirect the discussion toward a more practical follow-up, suggesting what the candidate *should* do rather than dwelling on a vague answer. This stragey guides candidate toward clearer, more relevant input or action, promotes

personal understanding and critical thinking and keeps the discussion efficient and purposeful such as in Tarct 5 *(What does it mean).*

5) Rephrasing

The questions ask only for restatement in different words, often words that are simpler and easier to understand. This technique is used when a student provides an incorrect or no response. Instead of telling the student she is incorrect or calling upon another student, the instructor can try one of three strategies.

Table 5

Data on Rephrasing Strategy

Tract 1		
Examiner 1	:	So **What is the relation of conducting and observation on teacher**, or maybe you can tell us **what is your purpose of doing observation on teachers**, actually you should do observation on students. **Can you explain that?** *(Laughing)* **Why do you conduct an observation on teacher; not on students?**
Candidate 1	:	Yaa ok, so, I think in my research, I focus, I'm sorry I just focus on
Examiner 3	:	Almost okay. **What are the problems your face during writing your result of research?**
Candidate 1	:	Ok honestly. All the draft I try to find by myself
Examiner 3	:	**What are the problems?**
Candidate 1	:	The problem is mix method is new thing for me. …
Tract 2		
Examiner 1	:	Okay, Iren. **Did you offer some kind of life style to your participant?**
Candidate 2	:	Once again please, *(smile)*
Examiner 1	:	**Did you offer some kind of life style to your participant?**

The examiner noticed that the question might be too complex, so they rephrased it into a more straightforward, direct question to help the candidate respond. The examiner uses direct language to get a more relevant response. This strategy helps EFL students understand the examiner's intent in unfamiliar or complex questions and invites candidates to answer when they otherwise might give up or stay silent.

6) Repetition

The repetition strategy requires candidates to reproduce previously provided information, either verbatim or with minor modifications. Although this approach imposes minimal cognitive demand, it serves multiple purposes in educational

instruction and assessment. The questions ask only for verbatim repetition of information, e.g., Could you repeat the part about?

Table 6

Data on Repetition Strategy

Tract 1		
Examiner 3	:	**Could you go to the previous one?**
Candidate 1	:	Well,
Tract 4		
Examiner 3	:	**Can you repeat your title of your thesis, please?**
Candidate 1	:	Well, My title is Improving Reading Comprehension of the first-grade students of SMP Negeri N through RAP strategy.

This strategy entails revisiting or reiterating previously discussed points, such as specific statements or elements of the thesis. Repetition of a title or central idea serves to refocus the discussion. The use of key phrases, including the thesis title, enables examiners to evaluate pronunciation and confidence. This method is particularly effective in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) oral examination, where comprehension, recall, and accuracy are critical assessment criteria. In tract 1 *(Could you go to the previous one?)* and Tract 4 (*Can you repeat your title of your thesis, please)*, the examiner prompts the candidate to return to a previous point or slide. This is a directive speech act, which indirectly demands repetition/review of earlier information.

7) Verification

The questions seek confirmation that the listener understood the information correctly. They are used not only to continue the conversation but also to ensure that the listener understands the speaker's true meaning. This is very common in teaching, instruction, teamwork, and formal communication, such as thesis examination.

Table 7

Data on Verification Strategy

Tract 1		
Examiner 1	:	Ok. So, **do you have any strategy to improve it or**?
Candidate 1	:	Aaaaa…I have my friends but, I have one My lecture Give me comments …
Examiner 1	:	You use mix method. Okay, Qualitative and quantitative. **Which**

		research questions applied quantitative, and which qualitative?
Candidate 1	:	I can tell, in my research question, the first and the second research question is …
Tract 2		
Examiner 1	:	**Did the pronunciation of your participant e helped pronunciation of the participant impact their English learning?**
Candidate 2	:	Yes, their pronunciation can impact the process of learning because …

A verification question aimed at confirming whether the candidate believes there is a causal or contributing relationship, such as "*Did the pronunciation of your participant help... impact their English learning?*" The examiner verified that the candidate understands and correctly categorizes the research design. This strategy plays a critical role in academic oral assessments by ensuring that candidates are actively aware of the decisions and findings of research.

8) Clarification

These are questions that seek more details or an explanation of an item. They are questions asked by people when they want to understand something more deeply and are used when the information provided is insufficient or unclear or when the listener wants to know how or why something happened that way.

Table 8

Data on Clarification Strategy

Tract 1		
Examiner 1	:	My first question is..**Could you please explain me how you measure your own weaknesses in relation to your writing?**
Candidate 1	:	*(Laughing)..* Actually, I still have many weakness of statement learning writing, because …
Examiner 1	:	Well, it.. **What is it?** I can say that your focus is too broad … The result and observation on the students' research is not your need. **Is not the main point of this research actually?** Okay; and then, my last question is **can you please show me the triangle in the last slide or the second slide?** Correlation among three variables, my question is **did you aim to find out the correlation among these things?**
Candidate 1	:	Aaaa…My object of the study is to the students' writing programs and to see …
Examiner 1	:	Imagine you are a teacher one day, **What will you do when face the students as a teacher?**
Candidate 1	:	I will do the same thing that I got here.

The data from Track 1 *(Could you please explain me how you measure your own weaknesses in relation to your writing?)* shows the use of a clarification strategy by the examiner to provide clearer explanations to candidates who have vague or unclear responses. This strategy helps ensure mutual understanding and helps guide the candidate towards more precise, relevant, and comprehensible answers. For example, when discussing the candidate's measurement of writing weaknesses, the examiner asked if the candidate aimed to find a correlation, indicating a need to clarify the research objective.

9) Elaboration

The questions ask for additional information on a point introduced in the presentation. The examiners use these questions to ask for more detail about a point mentioned in the presentation. They show that the listener is interested but feels the point needs more detail, clarity, or depth.

Table 9

Data on Elaboration Strategy

Tract 3		
Examiner 2	:	Sometimes, if you don't ask question, you and your friend in the classroom you don't ask question, **what does your teacher do to help you asking question?**
Candidate 3	:	In the classroom I don't understand the …
Examiner 2	:	And you don't ask question, **What do I usually do to make you ask me question?**
Candidate 3	:	I don't understand the question, please a …
Examiner 2		**What did you do during your teaching practice and you found that students didn't ask you question, what did you do?**
Candidate 3		aaa ... in teaching practicum aaa... *kebanyakan* online *ibu kasi tugas, waktu praktek* online
Tract 4		
Examiner 2	:	Ok, **What is the title of your thesis?**
Candidate 4	:	My title is Improving Reading Comprehension of the first grade students of SMP N through RAP strategy.
Examiner 2	:	Ok, tell me **What is the meaning of RAP strategy?**
Candidate 4	:	Yeah.. R is Read, A is Ask, P is Paraphrase.

The data from Track 3 *(what does your teacher do to help you asking question?)* and Tract 4 *(What is the title of your thesis?)* demonstrates the elaboration strategy used by examiners to encourage candidates to provide more detailed responses. Examiner 2 asks

follow-up questions, such as "What do you usually do to make you ask me questions?" and "What did you do during your teaching practice...", prompting candidates to elaborate on their classroom experiences. In Track 4, the examiner asks the candidate to explain the meaning of the RAP strategy, allowing them to express their ideas more fully. This strategy is particularly useful in EFL oral examinations where concise answers are common.

10) Extension

The questions ask for information on a new point that was not introduced in the presentation. These questions bring up a new topic or issue that the candidate did not mention during the presentation. The examiners are shifting the focus to something outside the scope of the original talk.

Table 10

Data on Extension Strategy

Tract 1		
Examiner 1	:	**What is the unique of your research**?
Candidate 1	:	Ok so, the unique of my research compare to the previous study
Examiner 3	:	Ok. In technical system of writing, **What is the most typical difficult for them?**
Candidate 1	:	I think the content.
Examiner 3	:	Ok ok. So, uhhm, **what did they do when you correct their task?**
Candidate 1	:	So when correct their task I used …
Tract 3		
Examiner 1	:	So, related to your statement …., because of motivation then **what did the teachers do to show this problem?**
Candidate 3	:	The teacher use strategy; the first strategy is discussion, game, video, practice and debate
Examiner 1	:	I want you to imagine if you were a teacher, and your students do not ask question then **what will you do?**
Candidate 3	:	I teach use by aaaa…. *(silent)*

The data from Tracks 1 *(What is the unique of your research?)* and Tract 3 *(what did the teachers do to show this problem?)* shows the use of the extension strategy by examiners, which encourages candidates to expand on their responses. In Track 1, the examiner asks the candidate about classroom interaction and feedback practices, encouraging them to elaborate on content writing for students. In Track 3, the examiner confirms the candidate's explanation of teacher strategies and prompts them to imagine

what they would do if they were a teacher, encouraging reflective thinking. This extension strategy deepens discussions, encourages knowledge application, personal viewpoints, and expands on prior responses, which are essential elements in EFL oral assessments.

11) Challenge

The questions are challenge points given or conclusions drawn. These are questions from the audience that question, doubt, or disagree with something the speaker has said in a presentation. These are critical questions that challenge the candidate's claims or conclusions. This strategy assesses the argument, points out possible flaws, or seeks more substantial justification. The challenge strategy often involves questions that probe the validity of the candidate's claims, such as asking for justification of methods or clarifications about conclusions, which can be quite demanding and thus challenging for the candidates. Therefore, challenge questions seem to be the most stimulating in terms of difficulty, pushing candidates to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills (analysis, evaluation, and justification) during their thesis examinations.

Table 11

Data on Challenge Strategy

Tract 1		
Examiner 1	:	Ok. **Why did not you use your own strategy?**
Candidate 1	:	Aaaa….I think this that is my reason. I don't have friends to correct my work
Examiner 1	:	Okay.. **How do you guaranty that the method you used can validate the result of your research?**
Candidate 1	:	Aaaa.. Because the first is, I explore the problem first. …
Tract 2		
Examiner 1	:	Okay. So that's the problem? **Why are you choosing this topic**?
Candidate 2	:	… *(Silent)*

The examiner used the challenge strategy to provoke stronger justification and evidence of critical thinking, such as in Tract 1 *(Why did not you use your own strategy?)*. The question challenges the originality and initiative of the candidate in which the examiner expects a more personal or innovative approach such in Tract 2 *(Why are you choosing this topic?)*. Examiner demands stronger justification of the research's significance and originality. Anothe challnage shifts to methodological rigor.

Examiner doubts whether the method ensures valid results. Thus, the examiner ensured that the candidate can defend both originality and methodological soundness. The examiner employed a direct challenge to the candidate's rationale for selecting the research topic.

12) Switching

Switching is a mixing of various linguistic unit (words, phrases, clauses and sentences) from two participating grammatical system across sentence boundaries within a speech event. In other word, code switching is process of shifting from one linguistic code (a language or dialect) to another, depending on the social context or conversational setting. The context of this topic a question and answer in an EFL thesis examination process.

Table 12

Data on Switching Strategy

Tract 2		
Examiner 1	:	**What is the impact of pronunciation by using mother tongue to pronouncing using English?**
Candidate 2	:	Eeemm… once again please, *(smile)*
Examiner 1	:	In the objective of the study, you want to see the impact of cultural differences on pronouncing English learners so *impact nya apa dari* **mother tongue** *ke bahasa Inggris yang seninya?*
Candidate 2	:	So, aaa… the impact of cultural differences on the pronunciation of Timorese
Examiner 1	:	*(Smile)* okay, Iren, *Coba jelaskan lebih dalam tentang apa betul?* **Do you think it is impossible to your participant to change the habit in pronouncing English by using mother tongue in form of life style and so on,** *apakah bisa?*
Candidate 2	:	Okay, even to change the pronunciation in first language to second language, even it is hard but …
Examiner 1	:	**Did you offer some kind of life style to your participant beside e watching movie**? *apa gaya hidup yang lain yang bisa membantu teman-teman untuk meningkatkan kemampuan* **pronunciation** *mereka?*
Candidate 2	:	Nowadays we have e Sophie the key Technology so they can use e their smart phone or another facilitates…

The table provides the data related to the code-switching strategy. The data showed that the examiners enlisted Intra-sentential switching (English to Indonesia) to clarify the question when the candidate showed confusion. Mixing English and Bahasa Indonesia ensures the candidate understands the concept. Inter-sentential switching

(Indonesian to English) to encourage a deeper explanation and probe the candidate's thinking, combining formal questioning (in English) with conversational cues (in Indonesian). In addition, tag-switching (inserting an L1 phrase into an L2 sentence) was used to prompt more practical examples and make the question more relatable by using L1 terms like "*gaya hidup*" and "*teman-teman.*"

Conclusion & Recommendation

During a couple of months; the researchers compiled; analyzed and discussed the data. This is the final step which comes to describe the conclusion as the results of this research. The questioning strategies used by the examiners can significantly impact the candidates' performance during the thesis examination. According to the data, strategies such as clarification, verification, and challenge serve to test the candidate's understanding, depth of knowledge, and ability to defend their research. The effective use of these questions can motivate candidates to think critically, clarify their ideas, and support their arguments, thereby demonstrating their competence and confidence. However, if the questions are poorly framed or too challenging without adequate context, they can cause confusion, anxiety, or doubt, negatively impacting the candidate's performance. For example, challenging questions that require deep justification can cause stress if the candidate is unprepared, potentially disrupting their ability to respond effectively. Overall, a well-structured questioning strategy can facilitate a more interactive and fair assessment, encouraging candidates to demonstrate their knowledge, while poorly executed questions can hinder their performance and understanding. Based on the data from the research, challenge strategies are specifically designed to test the candidates' critical thinking and reasoning abilities by questioning, doubting, or disagreeing with their statements. These types of questions are intended to evaluate the depth of the candidates' understanding and their ability to defend their research. The data indicate that challenge questions are among the critical strategies used to assess candidates, and their purpose is to push candidates to justify or elaborate on their responses rigorously.

References

Ahmadi, N., & Kurniawan, E. (2020). Teachers' questions in Indonesian EFL classroom. *JL3T (Journal of Linguistics Literature and Language Teaching)*, 6(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.32505/jl3t.v6i1.1355.

Blosser, P. E. (1975). *How to ask the right question. USA, Arlington: National Science Teachers Assosiation NSTA*. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED129574.pdf.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. 3rd Edition. Heinle Thomson Learning: New York.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education. Sixth Edition.* Routledge: London-New York.

Creswell, W. John. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches.* Fourth Edition. London: Sage Publication Inc.

Dornyei, Z. & Scott, L, M. (1997). Communication Strategies in a Second Language: Definitions and Taxonomies. *Language Learning* 47(1), 173–210.

Goodwin, S.S., Sharp, G.W., Cloutier, E.F., Diamond, N.A., and Dalgaard, K.A. 1983. *Effective Classroom Questioning.* University of Illinois-Urbana: Office of Instructional and Management Services. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED285497.

Kamlasi, I & Sahan, A. (2019). Analyzing and Describing the Oral Questionings Used by the Prospective English Teacher in EFL Classroom. https://ijicc.net/images/Vol_5_Iss_3/22_Kamlasi_P384_2019R.pdf.

Kelly, F. (2010). Reflecting on the Purpose of the PhD Oral Examination. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies,* 45(1). https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/informit.621037913649826.

Lui, T., Bartosiak, M., Piccoli, G., & Sadhya, V. (2018). Online review response strategy and its effects on competitive performance. *Tourism Management*, 67, 180–190. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2018.01.014.

Mauch, E. J & Park, N. (2003) *Guide to the Successful Thesis and Dissertation: A Handbook for Students and Faculty*. Fifth Edition. Marcel Dekker, Inc: New York.

Milawati, M., & Suryati, N. (2019). EFL Teacher's oral questioning: Are her questions and strategies effective? *DINAMIKA ILMU*, 37–55. https://doi.org/10.21093/di.v19i1.1545.

Primadini, C. M. (2020). The use of questioning strategy in EFL classroom. *RETAIN*, *8*(3). https://jurnal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/43/article/download/33457/30886.

Paltridge, Brian. (2002). *Thesis and Dissertation Writing: An Examination of Published Advice and Actual Practice*. English for Specific Purposes 21 (2002) pp. 125-143 www.elsevier.com/locate/esp.

Vebriyanto, D. A. (2015). Teacher's questions in efl classroom interaction. *Vision Journal for Language and Foreign Language Learning*, 4(2), 279–303. https://doi.org/10.21580/vjv4i21595.

Wensi, F. K., Puspita, H., & Afriazi, R. (2018). Students' strategies in responding teachers' oral questions. *Journal of English Education and Teaching*, 2(2), 35–45. https://doi.org/10.33369/jeet.2.2.35-45.

Wilen, W. W. (1991). *Questioning Skills, for Teachers. What Research Says to the Teacher*. Third Edition. National Education Association: Washington.

Conflict of Interest

Potential conflict of interest, if any, should be reported here during data collection.

About Author

Imanuel Kamlasi is a lecturer of English Education at Universitas Timor, Indonesia. He can be contacted at ikamlasi@yahoo.com.

Edmundus Bouk is a lecturer of English Education at Universitas Timor, Indonesia. He can be contacted at mund.timor@gmail.com.

Anselmus Sahan is a lecturer of English Education at Universitas Timor, Indonesia. He can be contacted at anselsahan@gmail.com.