

An Analysis of Teacher Strategies in Teaching English Speaking at SMPN 2 Praya

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Received : June 3, 2024

Revised : June 28, 2024

Accepted : June 28, 2024

Published: June 30, 2024

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DOI: [10.29303/jeef.v4i2.671](https://doi.org/10.29303/jeef.v4i2.671)

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Abstract: This study delves into the intricacies of English-speaking instruction at SMPN 2 Praya, aiming to scrutinize the strategies employed by teachers in this context. Through a qualitative research approach, the data was gathered from questionnaire and interviews. The findings reveal a variety of strategies utilized by teachers, ranging from communicative activities to technology integration. Additionally, factors influencing the selection and implementation of these strategies are examined. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of effective pedagogical practices in English speaking instruction, offering insights for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers to enhance the quality of language education in Indonesian secondary schools.

Keywords: teacher strategy, English speaking, SMPN 2 Praya

INTRODUCTION

Speaking serves as a means of communication between individuals, allowing them to express ideas verbally. This skill can be honed not only within formal educational settings but also in private learning institutions like English language courses based on the 2013 Curriculum.

As per the guidelines of the 2013 Curriculum, the teaching of speaking skills at English language courses begins with the introduction of various types of English texts, such as reports, narratives, and analytical expositions, during daily activities. In essence, the curriculum aims for students at private educational levels to develop English communication abilities suitable for daily interactions both within the school environment and beyond, post-graduation.

Mastering English is a crucial skill for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Harmer emphasizes the significance of speaking proficiency in English for individuals studying a foreign language. Furthermore, Oxford (1990) suggests that writing provides ample opportunities for language acquisition. Additionally, Parvis (2000) underscores the role of language as a tool for communication. Communication involves the exchange of ideas, enabling individuals to express their thoughts and comprehend the perspectives of others (Brown in Shaikh, 2012). Speech serves as the foundation of communication, without which effective interaction would be hindered, impeding the development of mutual understanding and clarity of expression.

English, as a second language, encompasses four essential skills – reading, listening, writing, and speaking – which students must acquire proficiency in. Among these skills, speaking holds particular importance. The teaching of English aims to cultivate linguistic competence in both oral and written forms. It is not uncommon to encounter individuals proficient in written English who struggle with spoken expression.

On the contrary, Vanderplank (1993) discusses the concepts of 'Pacing' and 'Spacing' as indicators of challenges in speaking and comprehending English. Speaking is considered a challenging aspect of English language learning because students must generate and structure their thoughts to overcome speaking difficulties (Vanderplank, 1993, p. 117-125). Proudfoot and Cardo (2013) further elaborate on the complexities of speaking, which include issues such as pronunciation, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary to express emotions, and differences in syntax. Additionally, mastering speaking skills involves intricate planning, organization, and overcoming challenges related to pronunciation and syntax (Proudfoot & Cardo, 2013). Consequently, students must diligently learn proper pronunciation and grammar to effectively communicate orally.

According to Thornbury (2005), the ability to speak is influenced by various factors, including linguistic knowledge such as genre knowledge, discourse knowledge, grammar, vocabulary, and phonology, as well as extra-linguistic factors like topic and cultural background, contextual understanding, and familiarity with other speakers. However, given that the primary aim of speaking instruction is to enhance students' oral proficiency, teachers play a crucial role in facilitating students' speaking opportunities. Reiser and Dick (1996) suggest that teachers can employ a range of teaching strategies to effectively attain teaching and learning objectives. This underscores the teacher's responsibility in enabling students to communicate effectively in English through the implementation of appropriate speaking teaching strategies.

Moreover, "teachers must select the suitable methods and strategies tailored to students' varying capacities and needs" (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 2001). Additionally, educators strive to foster a conducive learning environment, ensuring that students engage in the learning process through the effective utilization of suitable materials and teaching techniques (Fitria et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the success of teachers' efforts in

meeting students' needs relies heavily on the judicious selection of appropriate teaching strategies.

Despite teachers' diligent efforts to utilize their full expertise, master the content, understand the objectives, manage the curriculum, apply methods and techniques, and facilitate classroom activities using available resources, the importance of teachers' strategies cannot be overlooked. Cole (2008) similarly asserts that it is the responsibility of teachers to devise effective plans and strategies to meet students' educational requirements, with the ultimate goal of enabling effective communication in the target language. In addition to that, expert teachers may use a wide variety of teaching techniques, combined with various teaching sources as found by Rido et al. (2015).

The advent of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has captured the interest of educators and teachers due to its emphasis on "communication" as the primary focus in the classroom. CLT, recognized as the contemporary approach for teaching English to ESL students (Richard and Rodgers, 2002), encourages students to actively engage in the learning process to develop both receptive and productive communication skills in a second or foreign language. From its emphasis on facilitating communication, CLT appears to stem from Interactive Language Teaching, where proficiency in speaking is deemed essential for language acquisition success. It is widely acknowledged that mastery of a language includes verbal communication, as the primary objective of language learning is the ability to converse, considering language as a form of behavior (Brown and Yule, 1999; Richards, 2008; Nation and Newton, 2009).

Considering the significance of teachers' strategies in achieving lesson objectives, which directly impact the teaching-learning environment, and recognizing that proficiency in speaking is often indicative of successful language acquisition, making it a primary aspect of language instruction (Brown and Yule, 1999), these factors are central to the study. Thus, based on these considerations, this research aims to explore the specific strategies utilized by teachers in teaching speaking at SMPN 2 Praya.

In the contemporary landscape of English language education, fostering proficient speaking skills is increasingly recognized as paramount. This study delves into the intricate realm of pedagogical strategies employed by teachers at SMPN 2 Praya to bolster English speaking proficiency among students. By scrutinizing various methodologies, approaches, and their resultant impacts, this analysis aims to offer valuable insights into the dynamic interplay between teaching strategies and the acquisition of speaking skills in an educational setting. Through a comprehensive examination, this research seeks to shed light on the efficacy of these strategies and illuminate pathways for further pedagogical refinement.

RESEARCH METHOD

Based on the existing problems, the type of research used was descriptive qualitative. The researcher used the descriptive qualitative method because it was considered suitable for describing and detailing the problems being studied so that the core of the problems in the research could be conveyed clearly. According to Creswell (2018), the objective of qualitative research was to investigate the

significance of specific groups and provide descriptions of social and human matters.

The research was conducted at SMPN 2 Praya. The school had built a language environment through daily conversations to improve the students' speaking skills. The subjects of this study were the teachers in the third grade of SMPN 2 Praya, selected considering their professionalism in teaching. According to Creswell (2018), a sample is a subgroup of the target population that the researcher planned to study for the purpose of making generalizations about the target population. The sample for this research was chosen based on the uniqueness of the case. In this research, samples were chosen based on English education, consisting of four English teachers.

To collect the data, research tools played a crucial role in the conducted study. These tools, known as research instruments, were carefully chosen by researchers to systematically and effortlessly collect the necessary data. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews. The researcher asked some questions to the teachers about the problems they encountered while using the teaching strategies. According to Arikunto (1996), a questionnaire was some written questions used to gather information from respondents about their personality or anything they knew. Respondents only needed to choose yes or no answers from the questions provided via Google Form. To ensure the reliability of the data, teachers were interviewed. These interviews were designed to address inquiries regarding the teachers' strategies. Interviews were chosen as a guided approach to understanding individuals' thoughts, emotions, and actions. According to Cohen et al. (2007: 41), interviews serve to explore participants' perspectives and issues within situations from their own viewpoints. Hence, interviewing teachers aimed to mitigate subjectivity in responding to the initial research questions concerning the strategies employed in teaching speaking.

Data analysis involved condensing, summarizing, and assessing the collected data, aiming to distill the large volume of information into meaningful insights. Following the completion of data collection, the researcher undertook several steps to address the problem statement and uncover the answers from data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Data Reduction: The data collected from the interviews, and questionnaires were carefully detailed. The more the data collection process was conducted, the more data was gathered. Therefore, in this process, the data were reduced. Reducing the data meant summarizing, choosing the main things, focusing on the important things, finding the topic and the form (Moleong, 2006: 51).

Data Display: Once the data had been condensed and the essential elements retained, the subsequent step involved presenting the data. This presentation could take various forms such as graphics, tables, charts, or citations. In qualitative research, data display might involve concise narratives, tables, flowcharts, or the interrelation of categories. Sugiyono (2007: 341) refers to Miles and Huberman, noting that historically, qualitative research data were predominantly displayed through narrative text. This was necessary for researchers to deeply comprehend the data until specific relationships and patterns emerged. Once identified, these patterns needed to be

substantiated by data throughout the research and presented at the conclusion of the report.

Conclusion Drawing: The process of drawing conclusions entailed the researcher's interpretation to derive meaning from the data. This encompassed the examination of the tools employed to address the two research inquiries. The methodologies utilized in this study comprised observation, interviews, and questionnaires.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research aimed to understand the methods used by teachers in teaching English speaking at SMPN 2 Praya. Four teachers were surveyed and interviewed to gather their insights on these strategies. The findings from the questionnaire and interviews are presented and analyzed in this chapter.

Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Speaking

a. Data From Questionnaire

Based on the data collected from the questionnaire, several key findings emerged regarding the teacher strategies employed in teaching English speaking at SMPN 2 Praya:

1. Drill

50% of teachers reported using drills often, 25% reported using them sometimes, and 25% reported using them rarely. 50% of teachers believed that drills are effective in improving students' English-speaking skills, while 50% were unsure.

2. Information Gap

25% of teachers reported using information gap activities often, 25% reported using them sometimes, and 50% reported using them rarely. 25% of teachers believe that information gap is effective in improving students' English-speaking skill, while 50% were unsure, and 25% no.

3. Games

50% of teachers reported using games often, 50% reported using them sometimes. 75% of teachers believed that the use of games can increase students' motivation and engagement in learning to speak English, and 25% were unsure.

4. Personalization & Localization

25% of teachers reported using personalization and localization Sometimes, while 75% reported using them rarely. 75% of teachers not sure there is a difference in student engagement when learning materials are personalized and localized, while 25% teachers see no difference.

5. Role Play

25% of teachers reported using role play often, 50% reported using them sometimes, and 25% reported using them rarely. 25% of teachers saw an improvement in students' verbal communication skills after using role play, while 50% teacher unsure, and 25% teacher see no improvement.

6. Discussion

75% of teachers reported using discussions often, and 25% reported using them sometimes. 75% of teachers considered discussions effective in improving students' speaking skills, while 25% teacher were unsure.

Table 1. Teachers' strategies based on questionnaire

Strategy	Often	Sometimes	Rare
Drill	50%	25%	25%
Information gap	25%	25%	50%
Games	50%	50%	0%
Personalization & Localization	0%	25%	75%
Role Play	25%	50%	25%
Discussion	75%	25%	0%

It also can be seen from bar chart in Figure 1.

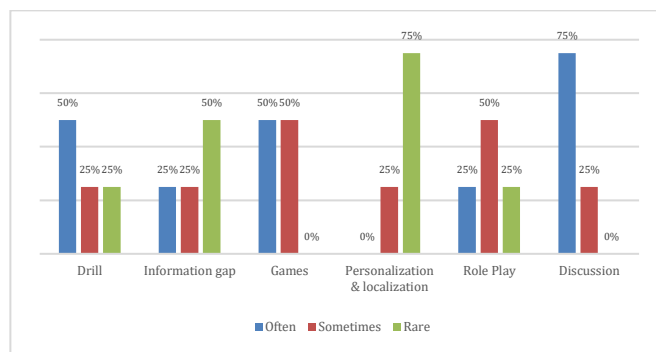


Figure 1. Teachers' strategies based on questionnaire

These results offer understanding into how often different teaching strategies are employed and their perceived impact, showcasing both common ground and differences in perspectives among teachers at SMPN 2 Praya. In conclusion, the data shows that there is diversity in the approaches used by teachers in teaching English speaking at SMPN 2 Praya, with varying levels of confidence in the effectiveness of different strategies. Further exploration and research may be needed to understand the most impactful methods in improving students' English skills in this context.

b. Data From Interview

Based on the interviews conducted with teachers regarding their strategies in teaching English speaking, several key conclusions can be drawn:

1. Variety in Teaching Methods.

Teachers employ diverse teaching methods based on factors such as students' age, proficiency level, and syllabus requirements. Methods range from focusing on vocabulary and pronunciation to incorporating topics like global warming to enhance speaking skills.

2. Challenges in Teaching Speaking.

Common challenges include students' lack of confidence in speaking, difficulty in pronunciation, and managing students with varying levels of proficiency. Additionally, students may struggle with vocabulary, especially in basic speaking classes.

3. Guidance in Problem Solving.

Teachers provide guidance in problem-solving by giving assignments related to real-life scenarios, such as finding someone's birthday, and encouraging students to ask

- questions in English. Feedback and correction are offered to help students improve their language skills.
4. **Role-Playing as an Effective Learning Method.**
Role-playing scenarios are widely regarded as an effective method for improving speaking skills. Teachers incorporate role-playing activities, such as acting out short stories or everyday situations, to make learning more engaging and relevant to students' interests.
 5. **Varied Forms of Communication.**
Teachers utilize different forms of communication, including speaking, writing, and giving orders, to enhance students' language proficiency. This variety helps cater to diverse learning styles and encourages active participation in the learning process.

In summary, the interviews underscore the significance of tailoring teaching methods to suit students' needs and interests, while also nurturing their confidence and competence in English speaking. Incorporating interactive tasks such as role-playing and offering support in problem-solving prove to be effective methods for improving students' speaking abilities and overall language development.

CONCLUSION

After a thorough examination and comprehensive portrayal of teacher strategies employed in teaching speaking skills, the conclusions drawn from the findings and discussions of this research are as follows. This study serves as a beacon, illuminating the myriad of approaches utilized by teachers at SMPN 2 Praya to bolster their students' speaking abilities. Through meticulous analysis and interpretation, it became resoundingly clear that certain pedagogical strategies such as drill exercises, information gap activities, engaging games, personalized and localized content, immersive role play scenarios, and dynamic discussions wielded a more profound impact on enhancing speaking proficiency compared to traditional, one-size-fits-all methodologies.

These findings unveil a critical truth: that the essence of language acquisition lies not merely in rote memorization or passive learning, but rather in the dynamic interplay of creativity, interaction, and authentic engagement. By embracing innovative teaching methods that foster active participation and meaningful communication, educators can cultivate a vibrant linguistic ecosystem within their classrooms, nurturing linguistic confidence and fluency in their students.

Furthermore, this research also unveils the veiled challenges that educators face on a daily basis, from grappling with limited resources to navigating fluctuating levels of student engagement. These hurdles underscore the pressing need for tailored support mechanisms and professional development initiatives aimed at equipping teachers with the requisite tools and strategies to surmount these obstacles effectively.

By delving into the nuances of effective teaching practices, this study not only serves as a compass guiding the development of a more adaptable and impactful curriculum but also lays the foundation for a transformative pedagogical paradigm shift. It is envisaged that the insights gleaned from this research will catalyze a ripple effect, sparking dialogue and collaboration amongst educators, policymakers, and

stakeholders alike, towards the common goal of fostering a thriving learning environment conducive to English language acquisition.

Moreover, this research underscores the imperative of continual evaluation and refinement of teaching methodologies, in tandem with emerging educational trends and best practices. As the educational landscape evolves and diversifies, so too must our pedagogical approaches, in order to remain relevant, effective, and responsive to the evolving needs of learners in the 21st century.

In summation, this study not only sheds light on the current state of affairs but also paves the way forward, towards a future where every student at SMPN 2 Praya can unlock their full linguistic potential, empowered by the transformative power of effective teaching and learning strategies.

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