

Students' Learning Strategies in Developing Speaking Skills

Wilda Chelvia¹, Heni Novita Sari²

Muhammadiyah University of Prof. Dr. Hamka, Jakarta, Indonesia

¹ wildachel@gmail.com, ² henisalman.17@gmail.com

Abstract

One of the languages used for communication is English. Speaking fluently in English is one of the most important components. Learning to speak was another essential component of learning a new language. Students needed to choose the most effective learning strategy to help them get more knowledge and to develop their speaking skills. Therefore, this research was carried out to know the strategies of learning that were used to develop speaking skills by English Language Education students at Muhammadiyah university of Prof. Dr. Hamka. To collect the data, the writer used questionnaire as quantitative data. The results showed that there were six learning strategies used by students namely metacognitive strategies, compensatory strategies, cognitive strategies, affective strategies, memory strategies, and social strategies. Related to this, the most frequent strategies implemented by the students were metacognitive strategies (80%), compensatory strategies (79.38%), and the cognitive strategies (78%).

Keywords: Students' Learning Strategies; Speaking Skills

INTRODUCTION

In today's global world, English is a language used as universal communication, for both local and international communication. English is recognized as both foreign language and second language in other countries. English is still regarded as a foreign language in Indonesia since individuals frequently speak their native tongue or even their traditional language while interacting with friends, family, and other people in daily life. The core of communication is worthwhile to people's needs in their lives. In everyday interactions and communication, people use both spoken and written languages. Therefore, speaking skills are the basis for identifying the students' English learning skills. Reading, listening, speaking, and writing are the four aspects of language skills that students need to master. Speaking is a part of the four language skills and one of the most crucial to master while picking up a new language. Speaking is a crucial component to consider when assessing someone's English proficiency based on their communication ways.

Referring to Parlindungan (2020), speaking skills contain the expression of feelings, opinions, and ideas to develop the interactive communication and to improve the people's daily lives. Students are able to communicate with others and exchange information, thoughts, and feelings to the listener by speaking. The facts or messages stated by the speakers can then be understood by the listener. Speaking is a linguistic skill that requires the interlocutor in which the students can practice with others. For students, speaking is a challenging skill to develop into good speakers. Every student has a different ability. However, the students are necessary to practice their speaking skills very often to be fluent amid people's interaction. For speaking is one part of verbal communication that can be used to develop conversations in which children can communicate their thoughts and feelings. Students must consider the several factors when acquiring and achieving the language. Therefore, speaking is the essential skill in everyday life. Various ways and strategies are used to express the students' ideas in saying something through words and sentences. It is therefore widely believed that students must carefully prepare their

learning strategies. This reflects to encouragement, vocabulary, fluent, and reading comprehension skills (Haerazi & Irawan, 2019). To develop students' speaking skills, it is essential to understand the learning strategies to become the effective students.

According to O'Malley and Chamot Griffiths (2018), strategies for learning are certain thoughts or behaviors in processing information that the people use it to help them understand, learn, or remember the new information. In short, strategies refer to the ways or acts that students take to get prepared for lessons. To find more effective strategies, students must make the efforts to know, to understand, and to learn the correct methods. The learning strategies are acts or procedures that language learners use to improve any area of their learning. In the system of education, students' choices of learning strategy are very important. Students who follow the realistic learning style will be able to write and speak easily (Hashim R. Y., 2019). Students can increase their learning achievement by focusing their efforts with the help of learning strategies. By using the right strategies, they will effectively determine their learning strengths and weaknesses and find the learning solutions. In other words, learning strategies is one of the factors that need to be used to help the students achieve their learning goals. To achieve the best results, students must carefully arrange their steps and concern how they behave and think when they are learning the new material. Teaching students to plan and to think about the learning process are the purpose of implementing learning strategies into practice. To improve the students' skills and comprehension, learning strategies are the important thing to manage the teaching plan that sets up the learning techniques and methods. In the matter of learning strategies, Oxford (1990) classifies it into the six categories : cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, memory strategies, compensation strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. Based on the six categories, cognitive strategies function to understand and to produce language or consistent methods of individuals in organizing and processing information during learning. Metacognitive strategies have function to coordinate the learning process that students can organize their own learning process to create their learning styles. Memory strategies can be used by students to help their retention of new information and to help their brains understand all of the study materials. Compensation strategies can help students to understand the missing knowledge with their skills to find it. Affective strategies are used to control feelings. Students have the abilities to control their learning with their emotions and mood. While, social strategies can be helpful to learn with others. Discussing with other students was one of the social strategy functions to learn with others. Students can discuss the difficult materials with other students to help them understand the purpose of the study materials.

In this section, the interrelated research about students' learning strategies for developing speaking skills are : First, research on identifying students' learning strategies for enhancing their skills in speaking English was done by Laura Maloni Lingga et al. (2020). This study showed that the students have difficulties with speaking English and used many types of coping mechanisms to overcome these obstacles. Second, Jernih D. Sinura (2021) commented on the different speaking learning techniques that students used. This study found that the cognitive strategies is the most commonly used (57%), followed by memory and compensation strategies (13%). This study emphasized the importance of these strategies in teaching English speaking skills and the teachers can motivate the students to improve their speaking skills. In addition, this study also discussed the importance of speaking skills in learning.

Seeing the importance of learning strategies used by students, the aim of this research was to know the learning strategy used by students of the English Language Education Department of Muhammadiyah University Prof. Dr. Hamka in implementing learning strategies used to develop their speaking skills.

METHOD

The quantitative method was used in this research into questionnaire Google Form. The writer distributed it to WhatsApp group for 49 students. This research was conducted at Muhammadiyah University of Prof. Dr. Hamka on June 3, 2024. The instruments of this research were adapted from Sri Erma Purwanti, et al. (2021). This questionnaire consisted of 30 statement items into six categories of metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, affective strategies, memory strategies, compensation strategies, and social strategies. For the data analysis technique of this research was the questionnaire by using Likert scale and process into excel to find out the number of strategies used in each category and then analyzed descriptively about the students’ strategies used in developing their speaking skills. According to Weinstein at al. (2016), the score assessment was categorized into three groups, high, medium, and low based on the following table :

Level	Percentile Range (%)
High	75 - 100
Medium	55 - 75
Low	0 - 55

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The research findings based on the data were interpreted into this following table :

Table 1. The Result of Students’ Learning by Using Metacognitive Strategies

Item	Statements	Mean	Percentage (%)	Strategy
1.	I look for as many opportunities as I can to use English.	4.18	83.67%	High
2.	I am aware of my English error and make use of the knowledge to improve.	4.30	86.12%	High
3.	I have specific goals for improving my English skills.	4.04	80.81%	High
4.	I make in advance decision to focus on specific aspects of language, such as understanding how native speakers pronounce specific words.	3.93	78.77%	High
5.	I set up a schedule to develop speaking skills regularly, not just before exams.	3.55	71.02%	Medium
6.	To determine the meaning of an English word, I break it down into parts that I can understand.	3.95	79.18%	High

Referring to table 1 above, it showed that the number 2 gained 86.12% student felt aware of English error and wanted to improve their better knowledge. While, item number 5 gained 71.02% in the medium level. The results described that the students did not regularly improve their knowledge before, during, and after the exam.

Table 2. The Result of Students' Learning by Using Memory Strategies

Item	Statements	Mean	Percentage (%)	Strategy
1.	To help me remember new words in English, I use them in sentences.	4.10	82.04%	High
2.	I remember a new English word.	3.97	79.59%	High
3.	I pronounce new words in English.	3.77	75.51%	Medium
4.	I review English often.	3.71	74.28%	Medium
5.	I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their by sticking them on the cupboard or door or other places to remember it.	3.38	67.75%	Medium
6.	I added the new word to my speaking skills vocabulary development.	4.06	81.22%	High

Referring to table 2 above, it showed that the number 1 gained 82.04% student used the new words in sentences to help them remember the words in English. While, item numbers 5 gained 67.75% in the medium level. The results described that the students used the method by sticking the new words on cupboard, door, or other places to make it easier for them to remember.

Table 3. The Result Students' Learning by Using Cognitive Strategies

Item	Statements	Mean	Percentage (%)	Strategy
1.	I prepare the material for speaking skills by using reference materials like books, Google, and dictionaries.	4.30	86.12%	High
2.	I guess the words apart into easily understood chunks or use logic to infer the meaning of the statement.	4.18	83.67%	High
3.	I try to say new vocabularies repeatedly.	4.02	80.40%	High
4.	I practice speaking in English and repeat the pronunciation of the words.	4.06	81.22%	High
5.	When I read or hear the interlated to English, I always make summary.	3.53	70.61%	Medium
6.	If I don't know a word in English, I don't look up or use words that have the same meaning.	3.22	64.48%	Medium

Referring to table 3 above, it showed that the number 1 gained 86.12% students used the reference sources such as Google, books, and dictionaries to compile the materials. While, item number 6 gained 64.48% in the medium level. The results described that students did not search for or used the same words if they were not familiar with certain words.

Table 4. The Result of Students’ Learning Strategies by Using Compensatory Strategies

Item	Statements	Mean	Percentage (%)	Strategy
1.	If I am having trouble thinking of the right way to explain anything, I will mime or make a gesture.	3.89	77.95%	High
2.	If the other person is unable to express something during a conversation, I ask him to say the correct word.	4.06	81.22%	High
3.	If I am having trouble coming up with an expression, I try to come up with alternative methods to put the idea into words, such describing it or using a synonym.	4.04	80.81%	High
4.	I mix mother tongue and English when speaking.	3.87	77.55%	high

Referring to table 4 above, it showed that the number 2 gained 81.22% students asked their friends to use the correct word if their friend could not say anything during the conversation. While, item number 4 gained 77.55%. The results described that the students speak a combination of their mother tongue and English to make it easier for them to speak.

Table 5. The Result of Students’ Learning by Using Affective Strategies

Item	Statements	Mean	Percentage (%)	Strategy
1.	I tell myself positive things to keep pushing myself to give it my all when participating in speaking exercises.	4	80%	high
2.	I am aware of my progress in speaking and have a personal notebook or diary where I record my thoughts on learning to talk.	3.63	72.65%	Medium
3.	Every time I feel anxious about speaking up, I usually try to calm down via deep breathing or practicing meditation.	3.75	75.10%	Medium
4.	I trying to speak English to yourself in front of a mirror.	3.85	77.14%	High

Referring to table 5 above, it showed that the number 1, the students gained 80% that they would continue to do their best speaking practice. While, item numbers 2 gained 72.65%. The results described that students felt better to speak up and that they have a notebook or personal diary to write down their opinions about learning to speak.

Table 6. The Result of Students’ Learning by Using Social Strategies

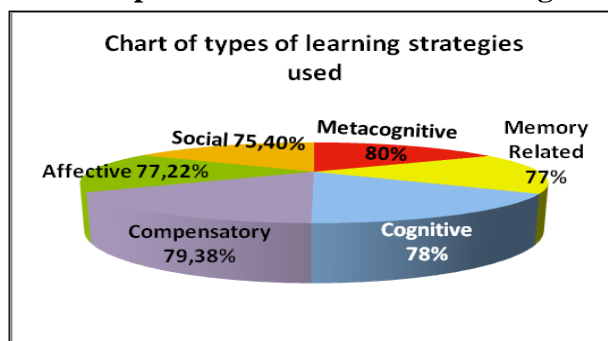
Item	Statements	Mean	Percentage (%)	Strategy
1.	I invite friends or professors to point out my faults when I talk.	3.93	78.77%	High

2.	Speaking at a gathering of friends or fluent speakers helps me learn and improve my speaking skills.	3.83	76.73%	High
3.	When I communicate with others by speaking, I give great attention to their feelings and thoughts.	3.42	68.57%	Medium
4.	I practice to speak English with friends.	3.87	77.55%	High

Referring to table 6 above, it showed that the number 1 gained 78.77% that when speaking, students asked friends or teachers to told them what is wrong. While, item numbers 3 gained 68.57% in the medium level. The results described that students pay close attention to other people's thoughts and feelings when speaking with them.

Having explained the above research findings, the writer wanted to interpret the data into the following recapitulation :

Figure 1. Recapitulation of students' learning strategies



Referring to the chart above, the following are the results of learning strategies commonly used by students. Referring to the given responses, 6th semester students of the English Study Program at Muhammadiyah University Prof. Dr. Hamka used the different learning strategies frequently. However, they also used the six strategies. Thus, metacognitive strategies were in the first position as the most frequent strategies used by the students. Then, the other strategies, such as compensatory strategies, cognitive strategies, affective strategies, social strategies, and strategies related to memory were in the next order.

Dealing with the result of the research, the students mostly used metacognitive strategies to improve their speaking skills. They implemented common English learning in general because they could determine their learning strategies and could find out their learning success. In the matter of metacognitive, it encouraged the students to think about success when they learned the new material in which the metacognitive strategies refer to methods designed to help students understand how they learn. In other words, this strategy means a process designed for students to ‘think’ about their ‘thinking’ or to control or to organize the processes such as planning, monitoring, and evaluation that individuals used to ensure that certain goals had been achieved. Based on the findings, students were aware of their English mistakes and they used some references to learn, and students also made their own study schedule to develop their English skills.

Compensatory strategies were another strategy used by students. Students used compensatory strategies that allow them to convey the clear information to understand the language so that students could more easily understand, remember the material such as using gestures to help

them express something to their conversation, ask others to use the right word or make up a new word if they did not know the right word and also mix their mother tongue and English when they were speaking.

Cognitive strategies were another strategy used by students. They learnt by guessing the meaning of conversations, repeating the new vocabulary, practicing to speak up by repeating words, and making summaries. The students become accustomed to speaking English through habits and repetition in this strategy. By attending speaking classes once a week could realize that they could not improve quickly. The cognitive strategies were internal skills that could help students in thinking, solving problems, learning, and make decisions. Therefore, cognitive strategies focused on the process of thinking, memory, and understanding in processing information.

CONCLUSION

Effective speaking skills are important things that can be learned because they help students acquire. Therefore, to organize the learning process and to ensure the students' learning strategies are to improve their speaking skills and to apply their learning strategies as well. As described in this article, it showed that the students of Muhammadiyah University of Prof. Dr. Hamka used the several strategies in developing speaking skills as stated by Oxford (1990), namely memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. However, the learning strategies most often used by 6th semester students were metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. However, they preferred the direct strategies to indirect strategies. However, direct strategies could not be considered as direct strategies because they combined them with indirect strategies. There were several conclusions based on the results of the data analysis and previous discussions. First, English students used all types of learning strategies with variation intensity and dominance. Second, metacognitive strategies were dominantly used to other learning strategies, with the highest average score and percentage used. This showed that the metacognitive strategies were used the most compared to other learning strategies, recognized the errors in their thinking, develop the effective learning practice, reflected on their existing knowledge, and gained a better understanding of their learning process. Therefore, learning English as a foreign language should be designed in a way that will enable students to achieve the optimal results. Third, the use of compensation strategies and cognitive learning were included in the next highest order. This showed that students should try again to improve their knowledge by using various appropriate learning strategies. The learning strategies were useful tools to achieve their learning goals in the best way. Therefore, it can be said that language learning strategies are the basis for every student to achieve the highest success. Further practice is needed to improve the students' learning strategies. In order for learning to be successful, students must understand their learning strategies. As stated by Oxford (1996) and Wenden (1990) that the use of learning strategies consciously would produce the good learners. In other words, students who had the speaking learning strategies would be the good learners. Learning strategies were related to the receptive domain of finding memory and remembering.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Alhamdulillah, thank to Allah SWT for all the blessings so that the writer can finish this article. The writer would like to thank the supervisor, Mrs. Heni Novita Sari, M Pd., who has guided the writer in completing this final project.

REFERENCES

- Ardiansyah, A. (2020). Improving students' speaking skills through the use of video-based scientific approach. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*.
- Basalama, N., Bay, I. W., & Abubakar, A. (2020). Student's learning strategies in English speaking class. *Jambura Journal of English Teaching and Literature*.
- Joana Baker (2018). Essential Speaking Skills. A handbook for English languages Teachers.
- Kehing, K. L., & Yunus, M. M. (2021). A Systematic Review on Language Learning Strategies for Speaking Skills in a New Learning Environment. *European Journal of Educational Research*.
- Lingga, L. M., Simanjuntak, R. M., & Sembiring, Y. (2020). Students' strategies in learning speaking skills at SMP Nasrani 3 Medan. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*.
- Miranda, J. A., & Wahyudin, A. Y. (2023). Pre-service Teachers' Strategies in Improving Students' Speaking Skills. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*.
- Muslimin, N. I., Suriaman, A., Marhum, M., Kamaruddin, A., & Rita, F. (2022). Investigating EFL Learners' Learning Strategies In Speaking Skill. *Journal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*.
- Neroni, J., Meijs, C., Gijsselaers, H. J., Kirschner, P. A., & de Groot, R. H. (2019). Learning strategies and academic performance in distance education. *Learning and Individual Differences*.
- Putri, S. A., Amri, S., & Ahmad, A. (2020). The Students' difficulties Factors in Speaking. *J-shelves of indragiri (JSI)*.
- Samad, P., & Kafryawan, W. (2021). Strategies in learning speaking skills used by the adult EFL students. *KARIWARI SMART: Journal of Education Based on Local Wisdom*.
- Saidin, S. (2021). A study of direct strategies of speaking learning used. *Journal of Applied Linguistics, Translation, and Literature*.
- Selda, Ö. Z. E. R. (2020). Foreign language learning effort levels of students in English for Specific Purposes. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*.
- Setiyadi, A. G. Bambang (2019). Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire (LLSQ) A Measurement to Identify Students' Learning Strategies and Prepare the Success of Learning English in the Indonesian Context (Empirical Evidence) Edisi 2 (7-8).
- Sinurat, J. D. (2021). an Analysis of Students' Learning Strategies in Speaking. *Journal MELT (Medium for English Language Teaching)*.
- Suwanda, B. S., Maghfiroh, A., Mustikawati, D., & Shohenuddin, S. (2023). An Analysis the Factors of Student Interest in English Language SB Sentul Malaysia. *JPP (Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran)*.
- Tanjung, F. Z. (2018). Language learning strategies in English as a foreign language classroom in Indonesian higher education context. *LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching*.
- Wenden, A. L. (2002). Learner development in language learning. *Applied linguistics*.