

Students' Direct Strategies in Speaking English of the Third Graders at Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen

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Abstract: Speaking strategies are important for effective communication. This study investigated the speaking strategies used by students in English class. The researchers used surveys and interviews to collect data from 60 students at Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen. It was done from March-April 2023. The study results show that students have used a variety of direct speaking strategies in purpose to improve their speaking skills. The research identified three types of direct strategies to be used which include memory, cognition, and compensation strategies. Among of those three types strategies, three learning activities were considered to be the most frequently used, namely placing, role-playing, and mother tongue. The study suggests that a combination of the types of direct strategies can be effective in improving speaking skills. Teachers should consider using a variety of strategies to help their students improve their speaking skills.

Keyword: *Direct strategies, speaking skills, effective, communication*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a fundamental component of human communication and is extremely important to people on a daily basis. Speaking is vital for a number of reasons, possibly multiple ones. First, speaking enables people to communicate their ideas and opinions in a clear and concise manner. It enables them to effectively and persuasively communicate their message to others. Speaking can also help develop relationships. Speaking is an essential part of communication, which is a major aspect in developing connections. Speaking well can help people establish close relationships with others, including friends, family, and coworkers. Third, speaking might aid in career success. Effective communication abilities are highly regarded in the business. Effective communication with clients and consumers can help people succeed in their jobs, forge bonds with colleagues, and develop strong connections. To put it briefly, speaking is an important talent that is important in social, professional, and personal settings. In order to excel in many aspects of life, it is crucial to possess strong speaking abilities. Understanding speaking strategies is a necessity in order to accomplish that.

In order to explain speaking methods to us, some theoretical foundations were used. The dual-coding notion was put forth by Paivio in 1971. The hypothesis proposes that verbal and visual information are processed by the mind in distinct ways. According to the dual-coding theory, the language system is responsible for processing verbal information, whereas the imaging system is responsible for processing visual information. Despite the fact that these two systems are supposed to operate independently of one another, they can work together to aid in learning and memory.

Another theoretical base for speaking strategies is the schema theory. Bartlett, F. C. (1932) stated that we store information in our minds in the form of schemas. A schema is a mental framework that

organizes our knowledge about a particular topic. It includes our beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and experiences related to that topic. Schemas are important for human as they help people to make sense of new information, remember information, and guide thinking and behavior. Supporting to Bartlett, Brewer, W. F., and Treyns, J. C. (1981) concluded in their research that schemas play an important role in memory for places. They argued that schemas provide a framework for organizing information about places, and that this framework helps somebody to remember information that is consistent with his expectations.

The last to base the foundation theory for speaking strategies is Giles, H. (1973), the one that has put out the communication accommodation theory. The theory emphasizes the notion that when conversing, people adapt (or accommodate) their speech patterns to one another. By doing this, the message sender can boost the effectiveness of their communication with the recipient and preserve their positive social identity.

Speaking English is typically taught in Indonesian schools as a component of the English language curriculum. English is often first introduced to students in elementary school and is continued through middle and high school. Individual practice, group exercises, and classroom teaching are typically used to teach speaking skills. In relation to improving speaking skills, Oxford, R. L. (1990) proposed what the so called direct strategies. The direct strategies are those that involve directly using the target language. They require mental processing of the language, and they can be divided into three main categories: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. Memory strategies help learners to store and retrieve information in the target language. For example, learners might use rehearsal, chunking, or mnemonic devices to help them remember vocabulary or grammar rules. Cognitive strategies help learners to understand and produce the target language. For example, learners might use inferencing, deduction, or translation to help them understand what they are reading or hearing. They might also use planning, monitoring, or self-correction to help them produce accurate and fluent speech. Last, the compensation strategies help learners to overcome difficulties in understanding or producing the target language. For example, learners might use gestures, facial expressions, or circumlocution to help them communicate their meaning. They might also use the L1 (first language) as a way to support their learning of the L2 (second language).

At Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen, English language instruction is integrated. English language usage among students is needed daily. Mentors are available to help students learn to speak English. To improve learning environments, some students are even trained to live in boarding houses. According to the study's initial observations, there were still a lot of students who lacked speaking abilities. They were in fear of making mistakes. Other students believed that it was difficult for them to increase their vocabulary in English, especially with idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs. Grammar was also difficult. Given the significant obstacles that students must overcome in order to develop their speaking abilities and the significance of these abilities for success in life, it is crucial to conduct research on speaking strategies in English language learning in order to identify the widespread approaches that may be used to advance students' academic progress.

A previously related study has been done by Hidayati, N., Lestari, S., & Huda, D. N. (2019). The study investigated the effectiveness of using direct strategies in speaking for students of SMK Ma'arif 5 Kebumen. The participants were 30 students who were divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group received instruction using direct strategies, while the control group received instruction using traditional methods. The results of the study showed that the experimental group had significantly higher scores on a speaking test than the control group. The

researchers concluded that direct strategies are an effective way to improve speaking skills. Although another research has been done, this research investigated a deeper application of direct strategies at the research site with more samples. The result is expected to see a wider perspective in relation to the application of direct strategies in speaking lesson of English.

METHOD

This study utilized a survey research design. A survey study design may be used by researchers to characterize the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population, claims Cresswell (2012). The entire community may or may not be subjected to this strategy. Through group interviews and questionnaires, a survey researcher collects quantitative, numerical data in this procedure. The data is then statistically analyzed to describe trends in question replies and to test research questions or hypotheses.

All of the students at SMK Ma'arif V Kebumen, specifically the 12th grade during the academic year 2022–2023 comprised the study's population. This study included 60 students who served as the research sample. According to Lind et al. (2017), population is the total number of people or things with similar characteristics, whereas sample refers to a subset or segment of the population as a whole. The study investigated the students' usage of English-speaking techniques for learning. It took place in March and April of 2023.

In this study, questionnaires and interviews were used to gather data. According to Brown (2001), questionnaires are any written items that require readers to reply to a series of queries or claims by writing their responses down or selecting from available possibilities. A questionnaire's objective is to compile data on the histories, behaviors, attitudes, and opinions of a large number of people. Given their simplicity, Google Forms' closed-ended surveys were chosen. The SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language acquisition) by Oxford (1990) used to know the language acquisition techniques in speaking is adapted as basis for the questionnaire. There are 15 items in total, which reflected activities for direct strategies in speaking.

Table 1 Distribution of questionnaire items

No	Strategies	Number of items	Total of items
1.	Memory strategies	1-5	5
2.	Cognitive strategies	6-10	5
3.	Compensation strategies	11-15	5
	Total		15

Table 1 shows the distribution of speaking strategies used by the students. In order to value each item, scale rating was applied following the procedure as seen in table 2:

Table 2 Likert Scale

Option	Rating
Always (A)	5
Usually (U)	4
Sometimes (S)	3
Rarely (R)	2

Never (N)

1

The rating scale that respondents can use to respond to each question on the surveys is shown in Table 2. The rating scale starts at 1, meaning the responder never employs a certain tactic. The responder used the technique always, as indicated by the highest rating of 5, which was 5. The researcher completed the likert scale and then tallied the central tendency from the students' responses. In order to analyze the data, it was divided into five categories: very high (80 to 100 percent), high (60 to 79 percent), mediocre (40 to 59 percent), low (20 to 39 percent), and very low (0-19 percent). To supplement the information gathered from the questionnaire, an interview was also done.

To sum up, the data analysis procedure included reviewing the findings, analyzing the data, computing the central tendency (CT), grading the questionnaire, and drawing a conclusion. In the interim, the interview transcripts were completed. The transcriptions were then translated from Indonesian into English. The results of the questionnaire were then supported by important information from the interview.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As Oxford, R. (1990) mentioned that direct strategies consist of three types, namely: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. The memory strategies may stand for learning activities like grouping words or phrases together that are related in meaning, associating new words or phrases with something that the learner already knows, placing new words or phrases in a physical space, using imagery to create mental images of the new words or phrases, and using semantic structure to understand the relationships between words and phrases. The memory strategies help learners to remember the words and phrases more easily, and to use them more effectively in conversation. The cognitive strategies cover activities like repetition, rephrasing, role-playing, discussion, and mind mapping. The cognitive strategies are particularly important for improving fluency and accuracy. The last, the compensation strategies list activities such as using gestures, using circumlocution, using foreign language equivalents, using the mother tongue, asking for help from the other person. The compensation strategies help learners overcome difficulties in understanding or using the target language. Table 3-5 identifies activities reflected in the learning while applying the strategies.

Table 3 The Central Tendency of Memory Strategy

No	Items	N	R	S	U	A	The Number of Participants	CT %	Interpretation
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)			
1	Grouping	0	4	32	16	8	60	69.3	High
2	Associating	3	9	25	15	8	60	65.3	High
3	Placing	0	5	20	25	10	60	73.3	High
4	Using imagery	0	13	21	20	6	60	66.3	High
5	Using semantic structure	1	14	27	12	6	60	62.7	High
Average								67.4	High

Table 3 tells that there are five items to indicate that the students have used memory strategy such as grouping, associating, placing, using imagery, and using semantic structure. Out of the five items, all are considered to have high category in use with placing item to be the highest one (73.3%). The average score of the central tendency equals 67.4. This means that the use of memory strategies in the teaching-learning activities is high category. Based on the group interview, the students said that activities like

grouping, associating, placing, using imagery, and semantic structure are sometimes to be used as they make the students easier memorize and recall materials that they have learnt so far. It is in line with the explanation Oxford, R. (1970) said that memory strategies help learners to remember the words and phrases more easily, and to use them more effectively in conversation. In other words the theory said that learners use the memory strategies to store and retrieve information in the target language.

Table 4 The Central Tendency of Cognitive Strategy

No	Items	N	R	S	U	A	The Number of Participants	CT %	Interpretation
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)			
1	Repetition	0	7	18	24	11	60	73	High
2	Rephrasing	0	13	25	15	7	60	65.3	High
3	Role-playing	0	0	12	25	23	60	83.7	Very high
4	Discussion	0	0	19	21	20	60	80.3	Very high
5	Mind-maping	0	5	16	30	9	60	74.3	High
Average								75.3	High

Table 4 shows five activity items indicated to have been used by the students in the cognitive strategies. Those cover repetition, rephrasing, role-playing, discussion, and mind-maping. Out of the five items, three are considered to have high category in use while two are very high. The highest item in use is role-playing that equals 83.7%. Based on the students' group interview they said that role-playing becomes their favorite activities because they can explore their creativity in role-playing. Another challenge is that role-playing requires them to learn improvisation while practicing their English. It provides students with the opportunity to practice using language in different contexts and in different social roles with different topics. This is like what Oxford, R. (1990) said that cognitive strategies help learners to understand and produce the target language. Supporting Oxford's ideas, Bartlett, F. C. (1932) stated that human store information in their minds in the form of schemas. A schema is a mental framework that organizes somebody's knowledge about a particular topic. It includes his beliefs, assumptions, expectations, and experiences related to that topic. Schemas are important for human as they help people to make sense of new information, remember information, and guide thinking and behavior. Seeing table 4, in general the cognitive strategies are high in use with the average central tendency equals 75.3%. To say shortly, the cognitive strategies are particularly important for improving fluency and accuracy.

Table 5 The Central Tendency of Compensation Strategy

No	Items	N	R	S	U	A	The Number of Participants	CT %	Interpretation
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)			
1	Using circumlocution	0	13	21	17	9	60	67.3	High
2	Using foreign language equivalent	0	9	25	19	7	60	68	High
3	Using gesture	0	14	22	18	6	60	65.3	High
4	Using the mother tongue	0	0	21	27	12	60	77	High
5	Asking for help from other people	0	5	16	33	6	60	73.3	High
Average								70.1	High

Table 5 tells that there are five items activities to indicate that the students have used the compensation strategies in their speaking lesson, such as: using circumlocution, using foreign language equivalent, using gestures, using the mother tongue, and asking help from other people. Out of the five items, all are considered to have high category in use with using the mother tongue item to be the highest one (77%). The high use of the mother tongue according to the students is because the mother tongue can be used as

a tool for scaffolding. When people are learning a new language, they can use their mother tongue to help them understand new concepts and vocabulary. For example, they can translate new words into their mother tongue, or they can use their mother tongue to explain new concepts. Another reason is that the mother tongue is the language that people use to think. When people are learning a new language, they often translate their thoughts from their mother tongue into the new language. In addition to these reasons, the use of mother tongue can also help to boost confidence and motivation. When people are able to use their mother tongue to communicate, they feel more confident and comfortable. This can make them more likely to participate in speaking activities, which can lead to improved speaking skills. In other words, it like what Oxford, R. (1990) said that the compensation strategies help learners overcome difficulties in understanding or using the target language. Supporting to this, Giles, H. (1973) also explain to us in the communication accommodation theory that when conversing, people adapt (or accommodate) their speech patterns to one another. By doing this, the message sender can boost the effectiveness of their communication with the recipient and preserve their positive social identity. Last, to see in general the average score of the central tendency equals 70.1%. This means that the use of compensation strategies in the teaching-learning activities is high category.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion, it is concluded that the third grade students at Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen have used direct strategies in purpose to improve their speaking skills. The strategies covers three types namely the memory strategies, the cognitive strategies, and the compensation strategies. Among of those strategies there were three most frequently used, namely: placing, role-playing, and mother tongue.

Placing is a memory strategy that involves visualizing the location of objects or information in a specific space. This can be helpful for remembering new vocabulary or grammar rules. For example, if students are learning the English word "dog," they can visualize a dog sitting in a particular spot in their room. This can help them to remember the meaning of the word and to use it correctly in their speaking.

Role-playing is a cognitive strategy that involves pretending to be someone else in a particular situation. This can be helpful for practicing using language in different contexts and in different social roles. For example, students could role-play a job interview or a conflict between two friends. This would give them the opportunity to practice using language in these different contexts and to develop their fluency and confidence.

Mother tongue is a compensation strategy that involves using the student's native language to help them understand new concepts or vocabulary. This can be helpful for students who are still learning the target language. For example, if students are learning the English rule for forming the past tense, they could think about how the past tense is formed in their native language. This can help them to understand the rule and to apply it correctly in their speaking.

The study suggests that a combination of the types of direct strategies can be effective in improving speaking skills. Teachers should consider using a variety of strategies to help their students improve their speaking skills.

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