

## EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES APPLIED IN ENGLISH SPEAKING CLASS (A Case Study of 8 Graders of MTs Muhammadiyah 1 Ciputat)

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### Abstract

This study was aimed at portraying teachers' strategies in teaching speaking to students of Junior High School and recognizing these students' responses toward those strategies by involving two English teachers and a class of 22 students. This research tried to find out whether or not the strategies used by the teachers in teaching speaking were effective. This was a case study which applied qualitative method. The instruments used to collect the data were interviews and questionnaire. Two English teachers of that school became the informants of the interview, while the questionnaire was distributed to the students. The results showed that in teaching speaking in English class, the strategies used by the teachers were discussion and storytelling. By implementing these two strategies, the students were able to use English easier, became more active and were able to receive the material well. The results of the questionnaire revealed that 73.18% students were interested in English learning, 76.59% students preferred storytelling strategy and 73.41% students thought that discussion strategy was more enjoyable for them.

**Keywords:** teaching strategies, storytelling strategy, speaking skill

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### Introduction

English is made up of four skills that need to be taught: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Recently, language in the second language / foreign language has played an increasingly important role as a means of communication in daily life. Human communication is a complex process (Gilakjani cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017).

In the context of a language teaching and learning, speaking is a type of productive or active skill. While all four skills are equally important, speaking becomes the most important communication tool.

A speaker needs to find the most appropriate words and grammar to express the meaning precisely and specifically, and organize the language so that the listener can understand it. Therefore, speaking is a fundamental

skill that foreign language learners must master. You have a responsibility to prepare students to speak this language in the real world. Speaking is the way to communicate with one another. It is used to convey an idea in a spoken way. Speaking is a skill that students can develop not only in a formal educational establishment but also in a private learning establishment, such as an English course.

The teaching of speaking is of great importance in many language programs, and teaching strategies cannot be dismissed as factors influencing teaching outcomes. The strategies for achieving the ability to write and speak would be different as the goals of each skill are not the same. For teaching English, the skills must be appropriate for each ability to produce the expected results. This is in line with what Armstrong (2013) explained that

strategies of teaching are used to assist the learners learn desired subject contents and make them able to achieve the objectives in the future”.

Besides, teachers conceive to produce good learning atmosphere to form students experience the educational method by using each appropriate materials and teaching strategies.

Strategy is an important aspect in the teaching and learning process in creating an effective and efficient activity. The teacher, of course, who has the first obligation to design effective and appropriate strategy and is followed by the students to practice their oral language during those learning activities.

will need the appropriate materials to obtain from the teacher. The strategies used by the teacher must be consistent with the skills and condition of the students. Speaking strategies help the teacher guide the class to speak better. Thus, even there are many effective speaking strategies used by the teacher in teaching speaking, especially in English as a foreign language, not all strategies work for certain class since different students have different needs and proficiencies.

In respond to the description above, the objective of this study is to descriptively present the analysis of effective strategies implemented by the English teachers of MTs Muhammadiyah 1 Ciputat, South Tangerang, in order to improve 8<sup>th</sup> grade students speaking skill.

#### Literature Review

##### *Speaking Skill in Language Learning*

Learning a language aims to make the learners to be able to use the language, hence, speaking ability becomes the main focus of the teacher in teaching the language. Lumettu & Runtuwene (2018) argued that a teacher has a key role in teaching and learning a language as a means of communication.

Further they added that a teacher is required to provide the students with a set of patterns and then equip the students with those patterns in oral form.

Language skills should be taught integratedly; listening, speaking, reading and writing. And, “Of the four skills, speaking usually gets the first priority in English teaching” (Lumettu & Runtuwene, 2018:1).

Speaking is a process of conveying thoughts and feelings. It involves both the speaker and the listener. In order to make an effective communication, the one who speaks must have adequate ability to express his/her speech.

In regards with speaking, a long time ago, Thonburry (2005) gave his best ideas that speaking or oral communication is an activity involving two or more people in which the listener and speaker must respond to what they hear and make their contribution at high speed. Someone who is interacting with another person and using language as a medium definitely wants to convey something important. Speaking is very impossible for someone to communicate with others without any purpose whatsoever. While people are communicating, there must be speaker and interlocutors. At least two people are there involved in communication. Sender and recipient need communication in order to exchange information, ideas, opinions, visions or feelings.

##### *The Characteristics of Students in Junior High School*

Students in Junior High School are categorized as young adults who are among twelve and sixteen. Brown (2001:92) defined that young adults are an age of transition, confusion, self-consciousness, growing and converting bodies and minds. Brown additionally states that young adults have a tendency to assume abstractly because the end

result of intellectual maturation and are ultrasensitive to how others understand their converting physical and emotional selves in conjunction with their intellectual capabilities. It can be concluded that the teacher desires an attempt to create a comfortable situation in teaching students in Junior High School in order that the students feel interested to examine the language. Therefore, the teacher is anticipated to have functionality to offer plenty of possibilities to increase their students' potential.

According to Harmer (2001: 39), when young people get involved they have a great ability to learn, a great potential for creativity and a passionate commitment to the things that interest them. Therefore, the teacher must offer various activities in order to participate and involve students in activities. In addition, the teacher must play his role in the teaching and learning process well so that the teaching and learning objectives can be achieved.

Brown (2001: 32) suggested four thoughts that can be taken teachers' consideration when teaching them. The first is that their intellectual abilities be added to the application of abstract operational thoughts, especially around the age of twelve. Second, this attention span lengthens due to intellectual maturation, but it can sometimes be shortened slightly. The third is that they still need a lot of sensory information. The fourth is that the factors surrounding ego, self-image, and self-esteem are at their peak that students tend to become adults because they can be different from others.

### *Speaking Skill in TEFL*

Teaching a language has the main objective of making that language learners to be able to use the language as well as in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). The aim of teaching

and learning English is to develop communication skills that include the ability of listening, speaking, reading and writing appropriately. However, Leong & Ahmadi (2017) argued that speaking skill is considered as one of the most difficult aspects in a language learning. They further explained that many language learners encountered problem in terms of expressing their thoughts effectively in the process of learning foreign language.

Therefore, the teachers are required to apply effective strategy in which the students are given tasks of speaking and then provide them opportunity to use the target language to communicate with others.

Irwan, Asrida and Fadli (2017) argued that in order to make the students speak, teacher needs to understand the factors that affect their speaking performance. From several studies that they have reviewed, they summarized three affecting factors, namely:

- Performance conditions

These include several facets such as time pressure, planning, the standard of the performance and the amount of support

- Affective factors

Several examples fall into this point are such as motivation, confidence, and anxiety.

- Listening ability

Good speaking skill is driven from well ability of listening. The students will be able to speak if they understand what the interlocutor is talking about.

- Feedback during activities

Tuan & Mai (2015) suggested teacher to do the corrections on students' mistakes in a supportive and encouragement ways so that they will not be demotivated.

### *Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Speaking*

A numerous number of speaking teaching strategies are applied and used in the classrooms for lots circumstances. In the following 3 strategies, we're going to look at very different speaking activities. There are a few strategies in that can be implemented in teaching speaking. They are:

- Storytelling

Students can briefly summarize a tale or story they heard from anyone before, or create their own stories to tell their classmates. Storytelling encourages creative thinking. It also helps students to express ideas in the starting, development, and at the end, including the characters and setting a story should have. Students can also tell riddles or jokes. For example, at the beginning of each lesson, the teacher can call some students to tell brief riddles or jokes as an opening. In addition to taking care of the students' speaking skills, the teacher also attracts the class' attention.

- Discussion

After a content-based lesson, a discussion takes place for a variety of reasons. According to Miswar (2020), students can become active through discussion since they discuss a problem posed by the teacher. Further he described that problem solving and or solutions are managed in a discussion activity.

Students can try to reach a conclusion, share ideas about an event, or find solutions in their discussion groups. Before starting the discussion, it is important that the purpose of the discussion activity is determined by the teacher. That way, the discussion points are relevant for this purpose so that students don't waste their time talking about irrelevant things. For example, students can become involved in agreements / disagreements. In this type of discussion, the teacher can create groups of students, preferably 4 or 5 in each group. Then each group works on

their topic for a certain period of time and presents their opinions on the class. The speech should be divided equally among the group members. For effective group discussions, it is always best not to form large groups, as calm students may avoid contributing in large groups.

### *Teachers' Role*

As the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines it, "teach" means to impart knowledge or to train someone; Thus, a teacher can be defined as a person who gives students knowledge or directs them to study. As mentioned above, teaching should guide and facilitate learning, enable the student to learn and set the learning conditions (Brown, 2007: 7), so it can be said that the role of teachers is to guide and guide the learning make it easier for students to learn and also to set the conditions for learning.

The teacher must play different roles during the various speaking activities

(Harmer, 2007: 347-348). Harmer highlights roles such as prompt, participant, and feedback provider. Sometimes students cannot speak or lose words during classroom activities such as storytelling due to a lack of vocabulary. In these situations, teachers may not be calm. It takes some encouragement to help students think creatively instead of always relying on the teacher's words. Phrases to indicate that students are saying something or to suggest what might happen next, and so on.

The teachers can then take part in an activity as a participant. This is a good reason to join the activity with the students so that the teacher can experience things from the inside out, but avoid the opportunities to master the process. Feedback allows the teacher to both assess and correct the oral work of

the students. However, he/she needs to worry about when and how the teacher will give the feedback to the students. The feedback decisions during the oral assignments also depend on the setting of the lesson, the activity, the type of mistake made and the respective student.

## Methodology

### *Research Design*

The writers used a qualitative method. Hatch (2002) argued that the qualitative study aims to examine the reality of human behavior in naturally present environments and contexts. Another expert, Creswell (2009), stated that qualitative research is used individually or in groups to explore and understand the importance of the social and human problem.

This study used a case study design. A case study was selected because this study observed and examined teachers' strategies in teaching speaking and students' reactions to the use of these strategies. The data collection tools in this study were the interview and the questionnaire.

### *Research Site and Participants*

The purposes of this study were to present effective strategies used by two English teachers in handling their speaking classes and to find out students' responses toward the strategies applied by those teachers. Two English teachers and a total number of 22 students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade of MTs Muhammadiyah 1 Ciputat participated in this study.

### *Data Collection*

The writers collected the qualitative data by using interview and questionnaire. Interview was firstly conducted, followed by questionnaire distribution.

- Interview

Interview is a technique of collecting data from people by asking

them questions and getting them to respond verbally. It can be said that interview is a conversation between two people, the interviewee and the interviewer, where the questions will be asked by the interviewer (the researcher) and the answer will be given by the interviewee (the teacher). The interview conducted on two English teachers through video call for 30 minutes for each teacher. There were five questions asked to the two participants. The purposes of having this interview were to know what strategies used by these two teachers in improving students' speaking ability and how effective these strategies were. A semi-structured approach was applied in which the structured questions were prepared and then the unstructured or open-ended ones were used for the clarification. Adams (2015) described that semi-structured interviews are superbly fit a number of various contexts especially in getting few further informations through open-ended questions. At this stage, the writers used semi-structured interview because unstructured questions helped the writers to get the explanation and elaboration of the structured questions' answers. In this way, a combination of objectivity and depth can be obtained and the results can be tabulated and explained.

- Questionnaire

It was a 4 Likert scale questionnaire comprised the options of "Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree". This questionnaire consisted of 15 items adopted and modified from Rahmasari (2017) which required 5 responses about storytelling, from Yanse (2016) which asked 5 questions about discussion, and another 5 questions designed by the writers which needed students' feedback regarding their interests toward English learning. These five questions made by

the writers based on the results of teachers' interview. After that, the questionnaire was presented in Google Form and shared by WhatsApp Group. All the 22 students filled the questionnaire properly.

#### *Data Analysis*

In analyzing the data got from the two instruments afore-mentioned above, the writer took the following steps:

- Interview

The qualitative data from the interview was analyzed through thematic analysis. The steps to conduct the thematic analysis were suggested by Creswell (2012), first of all, the data was collected from the interview transcriptions. The data was saved in file computers and folders were filed after transcribing the raw data into text. Second, all of the data were being coded. In this process, all of the transcripts were read and the ones related to the teachers' strategies in teaching speaking were coded into themes. Finally, the writers presented the descriptions based on the themes.

- Questionnaire

The qualitative data gained from the questionnaire was presented in percentages. Thus, the writers determined the score of each answer first, i.e. "totally agree, agree, disagree, totally disagree". Second, total number of the scores was calculated before finding out the mean score and rating the scale of each option. After that, percentages were used in presenting the results from the respondents and described descriptively.

### **Result and Discussion**

#### **The Results of Interview**

After analyzing the data from interview, there were five points conveyed about teaching speaking,

namely: 1) The problems faced in teaching speaking; 2) The strategies used to improve students' speaking skill; 3) Students' activeness when the strategies applied by the teachers; 4) Students' achievement in the learning process; 5) The importance of applying strategies in teaching. The points were described as follows:

1. The problem faced in teaching speaking

The problems that the teachers faced in teaching speaking were the students felt that they could not speak English and found English as one of difficult subjects. Besides, lack of vocabulary among students also made them feel less confident. They were afraid and embarrassed if they mispronounced words. Both of teachers had the same statement in these problems. It can be noticed from the interview that both of the teachers said "The most common problem is that students find English as a difficult lesson. Because teaching students to speak English is more difficult than reading or writing. Besides, lack of vocabulary among students also make them feel not confident to speak English".

2. The strategy to improve students' speaking skill

The teachers used storytelling and discussion strategies in teaching speaking to improve students' speaking skill. The teachers used those strategies according to the material being studied, but mostly the teachers used discussion more than storytelling. It can be concluded from the interview that, one of the teachers said "Yes, I used those strategies, but mostly I used discussion in teaching speaking. Another teacher also said that "in stimulating the students of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the strategy of discussion was effective since these students were encouraged to discuss something asked

by the teacher. Besides discussion, storytelling is another effective strategy to be used since the students were guided by a story in expressing their opinions in front of the class”.

3. The students were more active when the teachers applied the strategies

The students became more active when the teachers applied discussion and storytelling by combining these two with another strategy. For example, using games or observing the school environment to be discussed together. If there were students who successfully conveyed the results of their discussion and observation in front of the class properly and correctly, they were given rewards. This way made the students became more interested in learning. One of the teachers said “Yes. But if those strategies were combined again. Usually, I use games or invite them to observe the school environment to be discussed together”.

4. The achievement of the learning process

As long as these two strategies were applied, the students joined the learning process well, hence the objectives of the lessons were mostly reached. Thus, this fulfilled the expectations of the teachers. Both of the teachers said “Storytelling and discussion strategies have worked well and were as what we expected. The students also received the learning well through the strategies that we have employed. Therefore, this improved the students’ speaking skill significantly.

5. The Importance of using strategies in teaching

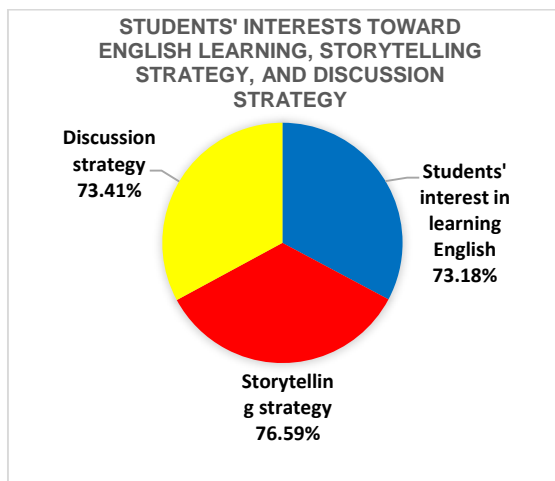
Strategy is the most important in teaching and learning. By using an appropriate strategy, students will be enthusiastic in learning and teachers will be enthusiastic in teaching. Moreover, a strategy applied in an interesting way will help teachers to build different

atmosphere of the class and as the impact, students will not get bored quickly and will easily understand the material presented by the teacher. Both students and teachers will definitely enjoy the ongoing learning process. However, there are teachers who still apply conventional strategy in teaching. They only fulfill the students with theories followed by assignments’ delivery. This approach is definitely not effective moreover in teaching and learning speaking skill since the students should be encouraged to be active to talk. At this stage, the objectives of the lesson are not well-achieved as one of the teachers said “As teacher, I must be able to use a modern strategy in teaching”. Therefore, using strategy in teaching is crucial aspect thing in learning, especially in learning speaking of English.

Based on the interview with these two teachers, several points can be concluded, namely; implementing discussion and storytelling strategies was the teachers’ choice since the teachers believed that these two strategies would make students active in the classroom, in explaining the materials, answering questions and problems in speaking. English teachers also need to be more creative in teaching so that students will not be bored during the learning process and will keep themselves engaged along the study time. Strategy is one of the most important factors which influences teaching and learning. A professional teacher will always implement an appropriate and effective teaching strategy.

### The Results of Questionnaire

**Figure 1.** Pie Chart of the Questionnaire Results



The figure above present the results of the questionnaire responded by the students. As it can be seen, the data analysis showed that the students' interest toward English learning was 73.18%, to discussion strategy was 73.41%, and toward storytelling strategy was 76.59%. These feedbacks were also supported by the overall percentages gained from the questionnaire, in which 25% of them were 'strongly agree' with the strategy, 54% were 'agree', while the rest of 21% was in both 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. Thus, it can be perceived that more than 75% of the students gave positive responses to these two strategies. Besides, the students were also very motivated in learning speaking through discussion and storytelling strategies since they were not get bored quickly and were able to catch the learning material provided by the teachers well. The students also had good interests in learning English. Thus, the overall results showed that most of the students had positive feedbacks on the two strategies applied by the teachers. The students became more

interested in learning English. They preferred storytelling than discussion strategy.

Based on the analysis of the two data collected above, the writers provided a brief and clear description that focused on the data obtained through the teacher interview and questionnaire. This research focuses on teachers' strategies in teaching speaking.

The research questions are: "How effective were the teacher's strategies in teaching speaking?" and "How did the students react to the strategies used by the teachers?" The first question was answered through a semi-structured interview to two English teachers of the school, while the second was obtained through a questionnaire distributed to the students.

After analyzing the data, the writer observed that the effective strategies for teaching speaking were discussion and storytelling. These strategies helped the teachers confront the students. While the students' responses from the questionnaire were very good and they liked the strategies that were used in the study. Improving good and effective strategies will have a positive impact on the quality of the teaching and learning process. Teachers, as persons who take responsibility in the teaching and learning process, play an important role in the classroom in order to apply suitable and effective teaching strategies.

By inviting the students in discussion and storytelling, the teachers could deliver the teaching material well, especially in speaking, because by applying one of these strategies, the students became more active than before even-though some of them were still embarrassed to talk in front of the class.

By using these strategies, the teaching-learning process became more interesting, and students enjoyed the learning a lot. In teaching speaking, the



teacher always checked the material delivered to the students in order to hit the objectives of the lesson. Implementing appropriate and effective strategies combined with another method or approach will definitely influence students' achievements.

### Conclusion

The findings of this research highlighted two conclusions as follows:

First, based on the interview to two English teachers and students' responses to the questionnaire, it can be concluded that both discussion and storytelling were effective strategies to be applied in the class of speaking.

Second, from the questionnaire distributed to the students, it can be seen that the students enjoyed and became more active in learning speaking through discussion and storytelling strategies. The findings were supported by the data gained from the questionnaire in which 73.41% of the students preferred 'discussion', while 76.59% of the students enjoyed 'storytelling'. The percentages which were  $\geq 70\%$  showed that the students enjoyed learning through these to strategies.

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