Exploring English Teacher’s Teaching Strategies to Build Students’ Confidence to Practice Speaking English

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Abstract
This study aims to explore English teacher’s teaching strategies to build students’ confidence to practice speaking English. Case study was used as research method with data collection techniques through classroom observation and interviews. A novice English teacher and two students were randomly selected as samples in the interviews. Having gathered data then it analyzed by following theory of Miles and Huberman. The results of this study showed that the three teaching strategies (partner work, modeled talk, and story reenactment) had significant implications for students’ confidence to practice speaking English. This was reflected in various attitudes of students, namely students’ persistence and desire to practice speaking English, a high sense of optimism and learning motivation, students’ open-mindedness to receive positive feedbacks from teacher, mental and physical health state, students’ ability to adapt to subject matter in order to achieve learning objectives, as well as encouragement to become autonomous learners.

Keywords: Teaching Strategies, Speaking, Students’ Confidence

1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher was a noble profession. There were many opinions regarding the definition of the teaching profession. Two decades before, Harmer (2001, p.56), an English teacher practitioner used many metaphors to
describe this profession based on what s/he does. Firstly, s/he was like an actor/actress because s/he acted in front of students. Secondly, s/he was like a musical director because s/he directed conversation and set the pace and tone. Another analogy illustrated a teacher was like gardener because s/he planted the seeds (teach students) and watched them grow.

In addition, some scholars also provided various interpretations of teacher profession. Arroyo (2021, p.118) defined “teacher as a person who assists pupils to acquire new insight, skills and virtues. They usually taught in a formal education institution such as at school”. Meanwhile, Jukić described the teacher profession (2019, p.3) from his/her multiple roles view. She said that “teacher as a humanist, organizer, and leader of the teaching process, coordinator and supervisor, motivator, rightful stakeholder, facilitator, predictor of the school culture improvement”.

Basically, one of the reasons that make difficult to describe what teachers do in general is because different teachers often have different strategies in the classroom. Strategy is “the application that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is specific steps, plans, or invention which utilized to accomplish learning objectives” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.19). Reiser and Dick (1996) emphasized that “teachers have the privilege to select a wide variety of teaching strategies to attain learning objectives”. Besides, according to Jarvis (2010) “a professional teacher ideally must be able to apply a variety of teaching strategies in order to achieve learning outcomes”. This applies to all subjects including English.

Recently, students from all around the world learn to speak English for several reasons. Harmer (2007, p.11) elaborated that “some students learn English because it was on the curriculum at primary or secondary school, and other students study English for a Specific Purpose (ESP). For example: English for tourism, law, banking, or nursing”. Up to now, for
ESLs or EFLs, mastering speaking is the most important aspect of learning second or foreign language, and success can be measured in terms of the ability to conduct a conversation in English fluently” (Nunan, 2000, p. 39). In line with Nunan, Richard (2008, p. 19) asserted that “mastery of speaking skill in English is a priority for some ESLs and EFLs, speaking is a fundamental skill to express feelings and share ideas in communication”.

In fact, in the context of learning English in Indonesia, most students at primary or secondary level have not been able to speak English fluently and accurately. Based on researchers’ preliminary study through direct observation in several classrooms, the researchers found that there were several factors that can hinder students’ ability to speak English fluently and accurately, such as less exposure, psychological factors (e.g., shyness, worry, nervous, unconfident), mother tongue-use influence, low mastery of grammar, lack of vocabulary mastery, poor pronunciation and others. The same thing also happened in some previous studies (Nur, 2004; Renandya, 2004; cited in Cahyono and Widiati, 2011, p.2) which revealed that “teaching English in Indonesia was considered a failure because many graduates of secondary school did not have adequate English-speaking skills”.

To overcome students’ speaking problems, some previous studies have been conducted by emphasizing on teaching strategies of speaking. First, Syafrizal & Rohmawati (2017) in a study, they portrayed teacher’s strategies in teaching speaking by using cooperative activities, role-play, creative tasks, and drilling. In addition, students responded to the speaking strategies with a positive attitude because the strategies assisted them to speak English and oral production of students increased gradually. Second, Tumagor, Heriansyah & Inayah (2018) who investigated teacher strategies in EFL speaking class such as role plays, discussion, storytelling, and
games. The research findings showed that the strategies can stimulate students to speak up and be more actively engaged in the learning processes. Third, indeed similar to previous study, a study which committed by Maryanti, Gani & Marhaban (2021) also disclosed that the English teacher used various types of teaching strategies such as role-play, picture description, interview, and simulation. In addition, this study also revealed some obstacles in teaching and learning processes such as the inability of teacher to completely control students, the passivity of students in learning process, low respect for classmates, limited study duration and lack of vocabulary mastery.

Nevertheless, from the previous studies, they used almost the same speaking strategies and there was no study focused on building students’ confidence to practice speaking English. Therefore, this study has a novelty, especially in terms of exploring teacher’s teaching strategies by using different strategies such as partner work, modeled talk, and story reenactment with concern on its implication toward students’ confidence to practice speaking English.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language that included in the curriculum either at primary or secondary school level. The important role of English in education is reflected in several regulations such as Permendiknas No.22, 2006 on national education System and Peraturan Pemerintah No, 28, 1990 on the Development of Human Resource that put English as a compulsory subject in formal education. Learning English means learning four language competencies (e.g., speaking, writing, listening, reading) and three language components (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) thoroughly and they cannot be separated
one to another, because the language competencies and components are unity.

In connection to the topic of this study, there are three main issues, namely: speaking, teaching strategies, and self-confidence, they will be put forward respectively in the following sub-chapter:

2.1. Speaking

Among four language competencies, speaking seems to be the most favorite language competencies for EFLs and become a top priority in the learning process. Ur (2000, p.120) stated that “speaking is considered as the most important language competencies of all the four skills. People who know a language are referred to as speakers of that language, . . . Therefore, most EFLs are primarily interested in a learning to speak”.

Speaking is classified into a productive skill that enable people to communicate thoughts, express opinions, share feelings, and reveal desires to others. Chaney and Tamara (1998, p.13) expressed that “speaking is the process of building and sharing meanings through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols in a variety of contexts”. This means that the speaker produces various of sounds to send messages to the interlocutor(s), then, s/he will receive the messages to be processed, analyzed, and interpreted so that the interlocutor can respond properly. Almost similar to what Chaney and Tamara said, Richards and Renandya (2002, p.201) also stated that “we use speaking to give instruction or to get things done”.

Furthermore, Brown and Yule (1999, p.13) pointed out that “speaking has three functions, namely speaking as (1) interaction; (2) transaction; and (performance)”. Firstly, speaking as interaction, this means that speaking as a medium to build social relationship which is manifested in form of greetings or small talk. Secondly, speaking as transaction, this means that speaking acts as a medium for exchange information in daily conversation (e.g., asking and giving direction). Thirdly, speaking as performance is
realized when someone deliver information in public (monolog) such as opening speech or public announcement.

Speaking as one of major language competencies in English has complex difficulties for EFLs. Abbs and Freebrain (2000, p.4) clarified that “speaking is complex skill should be learned by second or foreign learners because they must to think the ideas they want to express only if they are eager to figure out the various sounds, structures and vocabulary system of language”. The previous statement is in accordance with the opinion of Brown (2001, p.13) which elaborated that there are four aspects that affect speaking skills, namely: (1) vocabulary; (2) grammar; (3) fluency; and (4) pronunciation.

2.2. Teaching Strategies

Unavoidably, teaching strategy is one of fundamental factors that determine the success of learning process to achieve learning objectives. Syafrizal and Rohmati (2017, p.66) argued that “the way of teaching English, has a significant effect to EFL’s academic achievement especially at secondary level”. The indicators of success in teaching speaking are “students talk a lot, actively engaged in the learning process, have high motivation, the language used is acceptable” (Ur, 2000, p.120). Similar to Ur, Baker and Westrup (2003) asserted that “teaching speaking aims to facilitate students to enrich new vocabularies and learn grammar, provide opportunity to use the new language they find in various situation with different topics.

Presently, teaching strategies are constantly developing and overwhelming in the EFL classroom. The teaching strategy is believed can assist students to improve their fluency and accuracy as well as overcome students’ difficulties in speaking (Widyaningsih & Robiasih, 2018, p.46). with respect to the definition of teaching strategy, Orlich et al (2010, p.4) assumed that teaching strategy as “thoughtful planning to accomplish
something”. Meanwhile, Isaac (2010) explained that teaching strategies are the behavior of the teacher which s/he manifests in the classroom, for example: teaching strategy development, giving proper stimulus for timely responses, drilling for learned responses, increasing responses with extra activities.

Various teaching strategies must be mastered by English teachers in order to be able to create an enthusiastic learning atmosphere and learning process to be more attractive and enjoyable for students. The teaching strategies which used in the classroom should be based on students’ needs and interests, suit to subject matters as well as be relevant to real-life circumstances (contextual).

Regarding the principles of teaching speaking, Chamot (1993, p.308) convinced that “to develop speaking skills in the classroom, students need to be given ample opportunities to take part in small group discussion, to present individual oral reports, to respond sufficiently to questions of teacher. . .” Meanwhile, not really different from the previous opinion, Brown (2001, p. 275-276) describes in detail that:

“In teaching speaking, there are seven main points should be considered by English teacher. Namely: (1) utilize effective strategies that cover all learning needs, with emphasis on speaking components such accuracy, meaning, and fluency; (2) the process of learning speaking must be able to generate students; intrinsic motivation; (3) speaking practice should encourage the use of authentic and meaningful language; (4) English teacher should give positive feedback and constructive correction; (5) utilize natural relation between speaking and listening; (6) provide students chances to practice oral communication as much as possible; and (7) promote students’ speaking development”.

Furthermore, some experts (Kayi, 2006; Nation & Newton, 2009; Leo, 2013) mentioned a number of speaking teaching strategies that can be employed in the EFL classroom for various situations, they are: role-play, discussion, simulation, information gap, story completion, storytelling,
describing pictures, cooperative activities, interview, creative tasks, and drilling.

2.3. Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is one of the key factors that determine a person’s success in speaking English, because without having good self-confidence, a person cannot express his/her ideas or opinions properly to the public. In simple terms, self-confidence can be defined as an attitude of someone or belief in oneself for his/her strengths, abilities and capacities to accomplish a certain goal or desire in life. Self-confidence can be seen in several attitudes such as positive thinking, pride, optimist, independent, and emotional maturity. McPeat (2013) argued that “self-confidence is the belief that and individual has capacity or ability to perform a certain task well”. In addition, self-confidence has two supporting aspects, namely: (1) competence; and (2) self-assurance. On one hand, competence is defined as the abilities of somebody to complete a task or job. On the other hand, self-assurance is a person’s capacity to finish all tasks.

In addition, Goleman cited in Wahyuni (2018) described several indicators of a person’s self-confidence as follows: (1) having a strong effort and desire; (2) always optimistic; (3) adaptability; (4) having high motivation; (5) able to maximizing his/her own advantages; (6) having mental and psychical health; (7) not give up easily (persistent); (8) autonomous person; (9) open-minded; and (10) having a clear objective.

3. METHODS

This study used a case study because the main goal of this study was to explore the speaking teaching strategies of English teacher to build students’ confidence to practice speaking English. Due to this study was a case study, thus this study was restricted by place, time, the phenomenon being observed, and multiple sources of information. Cresswell (2007, p.16)
expressed that “a case study is an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ or a case (multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context”.

A novice English teacher and 30 students of the eighth grade from MTs Al Khairiyah Pakuncen – Serang regency were involved in this study for six weeks. The researchers gathered data through classroom observation and interviews. Classroom observation was administered in an attempt to portray the English teacher’s teaching strategies to build students’ confidence to practice speaking English. In meantime, interviews were undertaken to two students who were randomly chosen to figure out their responses on the teacher’s teaching strategies in building students’ confidence to practice speaking English.

Having gathered data, then the data were analyzed by adopting the theory of Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2014) with the following steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The figure of data analysis technique can be illustrated as follows:

![Figure 1. Data Analysis Technique](image-url)
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this sub-chapter, the researcher will show data from classroom observation and interviews. Later on, the data from classroom observation and interviews will be transcribed by using the code #CO and #I. The classroom observation was carried out for 6 weeks. It started from October 4 to November 12, 2021 when learning process has been carried out offline by applying string health protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic. For six weeks the English teacher applied for three teaching strategies with subject matters that have been adapted to the syllabus. The timeline of classroom observation can be seen in table 1 as follows:

**Table 1.** Timeline of Classroom Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Teaching Strategy</th>
<th>Subject Matter</th>
<th>Oct 2</th>
<th>Oct 3</th>
<th>Oct 4</th>
<th>Oct 5</th>
<th>Nov 1</th>
<th>Nov 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Partner work</td>
<td>Asking and giving opinion</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Modeled talk</td>
<td>Stating and asking about ability and willingness to take an action</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Story reenactment</td>
<td>Storytelling (fable)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first teaching strategy used by the English teacher was partner work with subject matter, namely asking and giving opinion. Based on syllabus of the revised 2013 curriculum, the learning objective of this session is every student is able to compose a simple oral text for expressions of asking and giving opinions by taking into account social functions, text structures, and linguistic elements that are correct and according to the context.

To achieve learning objective, the teacher applied partner work strategy. This strategy was first developed in 1993 by Meyers. Meyer cited
in Diaz-Rico & Weed (2002) elucidates that “partner work is a model of cooperative learning that is mainly effective with EFLs because provide many opportunities for verbal interaction and create learning enjoyment”. In addition, this strategy also allows students to extend their communicative competence and to obtain, process, as well as provide subject matter information in spoken form.

Based on the researchers’ notes, the implementation of partner work strategy can be illustrated as follows:

“In implementing this strategy, the English teacher firstly paired two students to accomplish task. She also made sure that one of partners can provide a strong English model. Students were given specific instructions and expected to accomplish a process or product to share with the other pairs. Next step was modelling the task, the English teacher selected one student to act as partner for demonstration and walked through the steps to be done. The English teacher also listed the tasks on white board as a reminder of the steps in the process and expectations of what will be accomplished. Then, the teacher provided support and practice, teacher also given positive feedback and impromptu compliment to students on the way they were working together and communicating. Finally, she shared the progress. She provided an opportunity for students to share their process or product with another pair or whole group. Then, she celebrated students’ accomplishment by giving praises and review the language they were able to use (asking and giving opinion). #CO_1

Having committed classroom observations for two weeks, then the researcher invited two randomly selected students to take part in the interview. They are Edi and Maharani (pseudonym). When the researchers asked about students’ responses on partner work strategy in building their confidence to practice speaking, firstly, Edi reveals that

“It took me a lot of time to understand each step in this strategy. However, after understanding, I felt comfortable to practice speaking English with my partner. I thought, learning to speak by using partner work strategy can foster trust from my partner, generate motivation to learn English, and a sense of optimism”. #I_Edi1
Meanwhile, Maharani who was Edi’s partner in English speaking practice states that:

“I really enjoyed learning English and often practiced conversation at school or for updating status on social media. Practice speaking English with this strategy was very pleased because I can improve my speaking skills and encourage me to continue practice speaking both at school or home”. #I_Maharani1

Based on the two interviews, it can be inferred that both students acknowledged that the partner work strategy had implication for their confidence in speaking English. Because this strategy can increase learning motivation, foster trust from partner, boost a sense of optimism, and trigger students to become autonomous learners.

The second teaching strategy was modeled talk. This strategy was used to teach the subject matter about stating and asking about ability and willingness to take an action. The learning objective of this session was every student is expected to be able to compose a simple conversation on stating and asking about ability and willingness to take an action by taking into account social functions, text structures, and linguistic elements that are correct and according to the context.

In order to attain learning objective, the teacher attempted to implement modeled talk strategy. This strategy was developed by Herrell (1999). Peregoy & Boyle (2001) believe that modeled talk is considered as one of the simplest and most powerful strategies of context-embedded academic language that serves to support EFLs in successful classroom participation. This strategy is helpful in lowering students’ anxiety and build students’ confidence because they know what is expected of them. In addition, Herrel (2019) points out that another advantages of this strategy when the teacher uses it consistently, it can increase the chances for EFLs to interact successfully with their peers and it builds feelings of community within the classroom.
In practice, this strategy uses gestures, facial expressions, visuals, and demonstrations as explanations are made. And basically, gesture and modelling provide examples for EFLs to follow and lower their anxiety since they know exactly what to do because they have seen the directions or content modeled. The detailed steps of the English teacher in implementing this strategy can be illustrated in the classroom observation notes as follows:

“After doing apperception and checking students’ attendance, the English teacher identified the lesson and collected materials. Then, she designed gesture that will help the students understand exactly what will be expected of them without having to rely on English vocabulary for understanding. Furthermore, she practiced her modeled talk and designed a visual of directions. She used gestures, facial expressions, visuals, and demonstrations to convey the message to students. the last, the English teacher reviewed the steps to be taken after deliver her modeled talk to students. She used visual to create reinforcement for students’ reference to support in remembering what to do. Lastly, in the end of session, the English teacher did evaluation and provided opportunities for students in pairs to make a short conversation at home about stating and asking about the ability and willingness to take an action”. #CO_2

Similar to what was done previously, after conducting classroom observations, the researchers then carried out interviews with the same students about their responses after learning to speak English by using modeled talk strategy. In an interview Edi expressed his impressions about the modeled talk strategy as follows:

“This strategy gave me many opportunities to be more expressive because I can use gestures or facial expressions when practicing speaking English with my partner. After practicing this strategy for several times, I felt more confident, not nervous or anxious anymore when speaking English in front of the classroom. And the most important thing was I and my partner were able to create a simple conversation that suit the learning objectives”. #1_Edi2
Moreover, in an interview with Maharani, she disclosed that the modeled talk strategy was very beneficial for her in improving her speaking skills. She further stated that:

“I really like modeled talk strategy because this strategy provided opportunity to role play and express like a native speaker. The English teacher also gave the examples of expressions about the ability and willingness to take an action (e.g., Can you play the guitar? Yes, I can or will you come to my party? Of course, I will). The examples of expressions were very useful and can be adapted in a simple conversation that I made with my pair”. #I_Maharani2

From both interviews, it can be concluded that modeled talk strategy is one of powerful teaching strategies for EFLs because this strategy allows students to be more expressive and offers opportunities to interact successfully with their peers as well as build confidence. This is reflected in the students’ optimism and persistence. In addition, this strategy is also very easy to be adapted, able to maximize students’ advantages and potential, as well as make learning process more fun and effective which is very beneficial for their physical and mental health.

The last teaching strategy is story reenactment. Story reenactment is a strategy that urges EFLs to act out stories after they have read them. “This strategy also involves properties or visual aids for EFLs to use in reenacting stories so that they can utilize fable book they have read or heard, and better comprehend the text by acting it out in sequence” (Herrell & Jordan, 2004, p.178). Commonly, properties for story reenactment consist of costumes for EFLs to wear and property boxes containing toys, laminated photos, hand puppet, pop-books, and so on. In fact, the success of this strategy lies in the planning and active involvement of EFLs in discussing the story and creating the required properties.

As for the learning objective is to compose an oral narrative text in the form of a fable by taking into account social functions, generic structures,
and linguistic elements that are correct and according to the context. To accomplish the aforementioned learning objective, the English teacher used story reenactment strategy because this strategy can be used at any grades level and allows students to wear minimal costumes and properties (e.g., puppet hand, toys, or other properties made of flannel or laminated photos). In addition, this strategy can also help the English teacher to observe and evaluate the students’ fluency and accuracy in telling a fable as well as increase interaction with storylines, language features and generic structures.

The detailed steps of implementing story reenactment in the classroom which carried out by the English teacher can described as follows:

“Having greeted and explained the learning objectives, the English teacher then described the steps of story reenactment strategy consisted of six steps. The first step was reading the story, the English teacher read fable story to students or asked them to read story individually. The second step was retelling the story, in this step, The English teacher asked students to retell story in sequence and list the properties they will need to accurately reenact the fable story. The third step was gathering and making properties. In this step, the English teacher provided materials for students to use in creating the properties. The English teacher used clay, dough, felt, and flannel as the materials. She also encouraged the students to sign up for the properties they will make. The fourth step was storing the properties. In this step, the English teacher stored all properties which had been made, painted, and sealed in the box. The box also labelled by the English teacher with a photograph so that the students can easily identify the story properties. The fifth step was using properties for retelling. In this step, the English teacher encourage the students to use properties in the box to retell and reenact fable story. The last step was assessing the retellings. In this step, the teacher provided assessment and positive feedback to student’s performance”.

After doing classroom observation, the researchers then met the two students to interview them and asked about their responses regarding to
The results of the interview showed that overall, both students were very pleased with the teaching strategy because it did not just drill students’ speaking skills but also develop their creativity and generate self-confidence. Edi stated that

“This strategy was the best part in learning English, through this strategy I did not merely practice speaking English but also create various properties to be displayed when telling a fable story in front of my classmates. The properties made me more confident because I can tell a fable story more real and the storyline was easier to be understood by them”. #I_Edi3

Furthermore, almost similar to Edi, Maharani also conveyed the same impression about the story reenactment strategy, she revealed that:

“This strategy gave me the opportunity to explore my speaking skills and creativities in making various properties for storytelling purposes. I thought leaning by using this strategy made the learning atmosphere more fun. Besides, the positive feedbacks from the English teacher at the end of performance made me to be an open-minded person to accept all suggestions which given by my teacher”. #I_Maharani3

Based on the previous statements, story reenactment strategy was able to build students’ confidence to practice speaking English. This can be seen from students’ efforts to create various properties for the purpose of storytelling, the desire to convey fable stories better, a cheerful learning atmosphere, and the willingness of students to accept suggestions from their teacher (open-minded).

Finally, in contrast to the previous studies (Syafirizal & Rohmawati, 2017; Tumagor, Heriansyah & Inayah, 2018; and Maryati, Gani & Marhaban, 2021) whose findings only emphasized the use of various
teachings strategies to enhance students’ speaking skills. However, this study succeeded in revealing new findings, especially on the teaching strategies of a novice English teacher which have significant implications for students’ confidence in practice speaking English. This can be seen from students’ desire to practice speaking, increased learning motivation, willingness to accept constructive feedbacks, and encouragement to become autonomous learners.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, this study can be drawn a conclusion that the teaching strategies of a novice English teacher can build students’ confidence to practice speaking English. The implications of the teaching strategies toward students’ confidence were reflected in various attitudes of students, namely students’ persistence and desire to practice speaking English, a high sense of optimism and learning motivation, students’ open-mindedness to receive positive feedbacks from teacher, mental and physical health state, students’ ability to adapt to subject matters in order to accomplish learning objectives, as well as encouragement to become autonomous learners. In summary, some variables such as affective factors (e.g., anxiety, motivation, self-efficacy), cognitive factors (vocabulary mastery, grammar mastery, pronunciation fluency, listening ability, background knowledge, and so forth), performance condition (setting, atmosphere, audience, time pressure, and etc) are addressed to other researchers to be investigated in more depth.

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