

The Strategies Based Instruction to Improve Speaking Ability of UPB Class Students at STAI DU Kandangan

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Abstrak: Kemampuan berkomunikasi dengan baik dan lancar adalah tujuan akhir pelajaran bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL), namun peserta didik banyak menghadapi masalah berkomunikasi saat mereka mencoba menggunakan bahasa target (Bahasa Inggris). Memperkenalkan dan mengajarkan peserta didik dengan strategi pembelajaran, khususnya strategi berkomunikasi dalam Bahasa Inggris adalah solusi yang bagus untuk masalah komunikasi peserta didik. Pengajaran strategi komunikasi umumnya dikenal dengan sebutan instruksi berbasis strategi. Penelitian ini meneliti implementasi Instruksi Berbasis Strategi untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara Mahasiswa kelas UPB di STAI Darul Ulum Kandangan. Instruksi Berbasis Strategi diimplementasikan secara eksplisit dan implisit dan terintegrasi dalam materi pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Instruksi Berbasis Strategi yang dilaksanakan di dalam kelas untuk menanamkan kesadaran peserta didik dalam menggunakan strategi komunikasi memudahkan peserta didik lebih bertanggung jawab dalam menggunakan bahasa target (Bahasa Inggris). Hasilnya dapat dilihat dari penggunaan beberapa strategi komunikasi oleh peserta didik untuk memecahkan masalah saat berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris. Strategi ini juga membantu peserta didik untuk mengurangi penggunaan bahasa ibu dan membuat bahasa Inggris peserta didik lebih komprehensif.

Kata kunci: Instruksi Berbasis Strategi, Pengajaran kemampuan Berbicara, Kemampuan Berbicara.

Abstract: Meaningful and fluent communication is the ultimate goal of English as foreign language (EFL) learners in teaching and learning English, but the language learners faced communication problems when they attempt to use the target language. Introducing and teaching the learners with learning strategies, specifically communication strategy is a plausible solution to the learners' communication problem. The teaching of communication strategies commonly known as strategies based instruction. This study investigated the implementation of strategies based instruction to

improve students speaking ability of UPB Class at STAI Darul Ulum Kandungan. The strategies based instruction was implemented in explicitly and implicitly way and it embedded into the teaching and learning material. The result showed that the strategies based instruction which was implemented in the classroom to embed the learners' awareness to use the communication strategies facilitated the learners to be more responsible in using the target language. It could be seen from students' use of some communication strategies to solve their speaking problems in oral performance. This strategy also helped the learners to reduce the use of mother tongue and make their speaking more comprehensive.

Keywords: *Strategies based instruction, speaking ability, teaching speaking, speaking ability.*

A. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is still considered as one of the most difficult skills to be acquired by English language learners. It is supported by Horwitz, et al. who claimed that speaking are considered as one the most difficult skill to be mastered in learning a foreign language.¹ Young also stated that “speaking is probably considered as the most difficult language skill from the perspective of both foreign language teacher and learners”.² In addition, Yusparizal mentions that “the language learners perceive speaking English is difficult to acquire”.³ Furthermore, the students encounter some problems that make them reluctant to use English in classroom. In short, the students cannot participate actively in the classroom because they have difficulties to communicate in the target language.

The problems that faced by the learners when communicating in the target language are unwilling to speak and mother tongue use. It is strengthened by Alibakhshi & Padiz who stated that “the common problem that a lot of language learners faced is reluctant to participate in conversations and other speech events”.⁴ Hence, “the learners choose to speak in their native language to convey the message across or try to be silent which leads to a communication break” (Ur).⁵ This is in line with the result of researcher’s preliminary study in UPB Class of STAI Darul Ulum Kandangan; most of the students were hard to use English for communicative objectives and they tended to speak in mother tongue to convey the message to the interlocutors. In short, that evidence proves that commonly the

¹ Elaine K Horwitz, dkk. (1986). *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. The Modern Language Journal*, 70 (2), 125-132. Dornyei, Zoltan. 1995. *On The Teachability of Communication Strategies*. *Tesol Quartely Journal*. Volume 29, 58. Retrieve on October 28, 2015.

² Dolly Jesusita Young. (1991). *Creating a Lower Anxiety Classroom Environment: What Does Language Anxiety Research Suggest? The Modern Language Journal*, 75(4), 426-437.

³ Yusparizal. (2016). *Communication Strategies Employed by the ELT Students of State University of Malang*. State University of Malang, Malang.

⁴ Gudarz Alibakhshi, & D Padiz. (2011). *The effect of teaching strategic competence on speaking performance of EFL Learners. Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(4), 941-947.

⁵ Penny Ur. (1999). *A course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

learners have a certain idea in their mind but they cannot express their ideas orally.

Two factors that affect the learners' communication problems are internal and external factors. According to Rozal "students' limited speaking is due to the learners' internal factor, such as learners' fear of encountering unfamiliar words, phrases and topic that hinder their comprehension and language production".⁶ This is in line with Alibakhshi & Padiz who state that "the learners' lack of motivation, self-confidence and learners' embarrassment or the external factor, such as impractical teaching methods and materials are mostly the factors that affect the learners' communicative problem".⁷ It can be concluded that the learners' affective factors and the teachers' input in the classroom influence the learners' oral production.

Equipping the learners with learning strategies, specifically communication strategies may be a possible solution to the learners' speaking problem. According to Faerch & Kasper "communication strategies are potentially conscious plans which are used by an individual to solve a problem in order to reach a specific communication goal".⁸ It is in line with Rodriguez & Rodriguez also state that "communication strategy refers to a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in a situation in which they do not share the requisite meaning structure".⁹ To sum up, communication strategies are the conscious ways that can be used by the learners to surmount their communication problem.

According to Dornyei "the gap of limited speaking can be bridged by introducing and teaching the communication strategies. It can help the learners to improve their speaking proficiency, increasing interaction in the target language and cope with their oral communication breakdowns during

⁶ E Rozal . (2013). *Communication Strategies Employed by The ELT Students in Speaking Class*. State University of Malang, Malang.

⁷ Gudarz Alibakhshi, & D Padiz. Op. cit. hal. 2

⁸ G. Faerch, & Kasper G. (1980). *Process and Strategies in Foreign Language Learning and Communivcation*. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, 5, 47-118.

⁹ Rodriguez, C. A., & Rodriguez, R. R. (2012). *The Use of Communication Strategies in the Beginner EFL Classroom*. *Gist Education and Learning Research Journal*(6), 111-128.

communication".¹⁰ The teaching of communication strategies commonly known as strategies based instruction. There are some previous studies which correlate to the strategies based instruction. Those studies are investigated about the impact of the communication strategies instruction to the students' speaking ability. A study conducted by Alibakhshi & Padiz revealed that the teaching of communication strategies improved the students' speaking performance and it was stable after a long interval.¹¹ Sukirlan also investigated the teaching of communication strategies in EFL class. The finding showed that there was a significant improvement in the level of speech comprehensibility and it promoted the students' communication skill.¹²

Considering the previous studies above, the researcher intends to conduct a study on the strategies based instruction. This study aims to implement the strategies based instruction in an explicit and implicit way to improve the students' speaking ability.

B. DISCUSSION

1. The teaching of Speaking

The mastery of speaking skill in English still became a priority for second language or foreign language learners. Nunan (1999) stated that "the ability in mastering another language is generally characterized in terms of being able to speak that language".¹³ Nunan's statement indicates that the main goal of teaching and learning English as a second or foreign language is used to provide the learners with the ability to use English for communication inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, the ability to use English for communication means not only producing words and sounds, stress, and intonation patterns

¹⁰ Z. Dornyei. (1995). *On the teachability of communication strategies*. *TESOL quarterly*, 29(1), 55-85.

¹¹ Gudarz Alibakhshi, & D Padiz. Op. cit. hal. 2

¹² M. Sukirlan. (2014). *Teaching communication strategies in an EFL class of tertiary level*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(10), 2033.

¹³ David Nunan. (1999). *Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

correctly and appropriately, but also to make sure the audience understand what the speakers are trying to convey.

2. Tarone's Typology of Communication Strategies

a. Avoidance

"Avoidance strategy is a speaker's action to avoid talking about topics in a conversation because they lack of the necessary vocabulary or grammar rules. This strategy will make the speaker avoids talking about the topic that they do not feel comfortable or confident to discuss. For instance, the speaker avoids to take risk to talk about unknown figures, times, or name of place".¹⁴

b. Paraphrase

"Paraphrase is the ability to simplify words or message to be accepted by the target language construction when the appropriate form of situation is not known by the speaker. For instance, the word "worm" for "silkworm", "pipe" for "waterpipe", and "labor" for "work". It is clear that approximation is a type of over-generalization.¹⁵

c. Conscious Transfer

This strategy takes the form of literal translation and language switch. The first is literal translation. "This strategy takes place when the learner translates the first language (L1) words or phrases into second or foreign language. For instance, the learner says "number telephone" for telephone number". The second is language switch. "This strategy is the process of inserting words from another language and it is also called as code switching".¹⁶

d. Appeal for Assistance

"This strategy occurs when the learners try to consult and ask for the correct term with any source. The source could be the experimenter, any native speaker or even refers to a dictionary. For instance, the learner says "it something to cook pancake...what do you call it? (Spatula)".¹⁷

¹⁴ Elaine Tarone. 1983. *Some Thoughts on the Nation of Communication Strategy*. In *Claus Faerch & Gabriele Kasper (Eds.), Strategies in Interlanguage Communication* (p. 61-74). New York: Longman Inc.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

e. Mime

The last strategy is mime. It refers to “the use of nonverbal communication strategies by the language learner to act out an action in order to communicate. For instance, the learner claps his/her hand to indicate applause”.¹⁸

In relation to the teaching of communication strategies, there have been some studies conducted in the teaching of communication strategies to help the students to surmount their problem in communication. Alibakhshi & Padiz¹⁹ investigated that communication strategies instruction to Iranian language learners of English to know the effect of teaching communication strategies to the learners and to know whether the effect of teaching communication strategies will be stable after long time. The finding of the research showed that the use of communication strategies can improve the Iranian learners’ speaking performance, and the effect of the teaching of communication strategies was stable after a long interval. It can be said that explicit teaching of communication strategies helped the students to improve their speaking skill.

Besides, Mesgarsharh & Abdollahzadeh²⁰ investigated the impact of the teaching of communication strategies on Iranian EFL learners’ willingness to communicate. This study used experimental method of research which was provided experimental and control groups. The result of the study showed that the degree of willingness to communicate (WTC) of the treatment group was significantly higher compared with the result of the control group. The researchers concluded that the teaching of communication strategies helped the learners become more willing to communicate in the classroom.

The other study about the teaching of communication strategy is conducted by Mirsane & Khabiri²¹. They investigated the effect of teaching communicative strategy on EFL learners’

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Gudarz Alibakhshi, & D Padiz. Op. cit. hal. 2

²⁰ A. Mesgarsharh., & E. Abdollahzadeh. (2014). *The impact of teaching communication strategies on EFL learners' Willingness to Communicate*. Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching (IV-1), 51-76.

²¹ Mirsane, M., & Khabiri, M. (2016). The effect of teaching communicative strategy on EFL learners' willingness to communicate. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 6(2), 399.

willingness to communicate with regards improved learner's language proficiency. The purpose of the study was to determine whether teaching of communicative strategies could significantly influence EFL learners' willingness to communicate. The result of the study showed that the learners' usage of communicative strategy dramatically increased and the learners were perceived more willingness to communicate. The learners also believed that the teaching of communicative strategy helped them to deal with unpredicted problem while speaking. One of the learner also stated that she felt less anxious since she known how to evade answers whenever she could not communicate. Based on the result of the study, the researchers concluded that strategy training helped the learners to overcome the psychological barriers in learning and gave them more motivation and encouragement to learn more skills.

To summarized, studies above show the impact of explicit teaching of communication strategies in improving the students' proficiency in oral production and to surmount the students' problem in oral production. Therefore, the researcher will try to apply explicit teaching of communication strategies in order to improve the students' speaking ability focusing on the theories of Tarone's Typology of Communication strategies.

3. Context and Participant

The design applied in this research was classroom action research. This research focused on a particular classroom or a group of students and aimed to solve the teacher's problem in finding a solution in teaching speaking skill by using certain actions that could give a good impact in increasing the students' speaking ability. This study took place in UPB class of STAI Darul Ulum Kandangan and the class consists of 20 students.

Data for this study came from: (1) The result of speaking assessment and (2) observation checklist of the use of communication strategies taking during the process of teaching. The obtained data from students' speaking performance was analyzed by using speaking scoring rubric to measure accuracy, fluency and comprehensibility. The score was the result of calculating the fluency, accuracy and comprehensibility score ($n_1+n_2+n_3$) which are showed the improvement of students' speaking ability.

$$\text{Fluency} : \frac{\text{Obtained score}}{5 \text{ (highest score)}} \times 40$$

$$\text{Accuracy} : \frac{\text{Obtained score}}{5 \text{ (highest score)}} \times 30$$

$$\text{Comprehensibility} : \frac{\text{Obtained score}}{5 \text{ (highest score)}} \times 30$$

In analyzing the qualitative data, the researcher followed some procedures purposed by Miles & Huberman (1994) such as "data reduction, data display and drawing and verifying conclusion".²²

C. FINDINGS

The researcher implemented the strategies based instruction in improving the speaking ability of the UPB class students of STAI Darul Ulum Kandungan in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of three meetings. The consideration of deciding three meetings in each cycle was based on the implementation of strategies based instruction which consisted of three steps. "They are orientation, exposition and practice" (Dornyei, 1997).²³ So, the two meetings were for orientation and exposition and the last meeting was for practice

1. The First Cycle

In the first cycle, the strategies based instruction in the first cycle was implemented explicitly. The teacher introduced and explained the definition and functions of communication strategies to the students before coming to the main topic. Then, the teacher showed the students the way to use communication strategies in communication.

The result of the observation showed that there were five of seven communication strategies taught to the students were appeared, such as; Mime, language switch, literal translation, approximation, and appeal for help. From the result of the

²² Matthew B Miles, & A. Michael Huberman. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

²³ Dornyei, Z., & Scott, M. L. (1997). *Communication strategies in a second language: Definitions and taxonomies. Language learning*, 47(1), 173-210.

observation, it showed that the use of communication strategies could help the students to avoid two main problems in speaking as mentioned by Ur "such as nothing to say and mother tongue use".²⁴ The use of communication strategy facilitated the students to find a way to keep talking and avoid the silence.

The speaking performances in the learning phase were assessed in the third meeting. The speaking test was an individual performance in describing a famous idol. The obtained scores from the speaking performance test became the judgment for the tenth graders' success or failure in improving their speaking ability.

The obtained score of the speaking performance test in the first cycle was 40 for the lowest score and the highest score was 79. In details, there were eight students who achieved the low level (0-50) in speaking performance test. There were six students who achieved the fair level (51-69). The last 6 students could achieve good level (70-79) and did well in the oral performance test. There was no one who achieved the excellent level (80-100) in speaking performance test.

The criteria of success in this research required 70% of the students could pass the score 70-100 and automatically achieved good and excellent level in the speaking test. Based on the factual data mentioned, it meant that there were only 30% of the students who could meet the criteria of success and 70% of the students failed. Indeed, this data showed that the criterion of success was not achieved and the implementation of the instruction failed. This fact gave a notice for the researcher to develop the implementation of the action in order to help the students achieved the criteria of success and improved the students' speaking ability.

2. The Second Cycle

In the implementation of the strategies based instruction in the second cycle, the researcher decided to do a change. In the beginning of the lesson, the teacher gave some questions related to the topic in order to encourage the students' use of communication strategies. The teacher also used the communication strategies to communicate to the students in order to give a model to the students. Then, the explanation of communication strategies would be followed. The researcher

²⁴ Penny Ur, op. cit. hlm 3

decided to reward the four best performances in the speaking test performance. It intended to increase the students' motivation to participate the teaching and learning process.

The result of the observation showed that there were six of seven communication strategies taught to the students were appeared. It increased one type of communication strategies used by the students, such as; Mime, language switch, literal translation, approximation, and appeal for help and word coinage. The result of the observation in the second cycle confirmed that the use of communication strategies could help the students to reduce their use of mother tongue language in speaking activities. The use of communication strategies also helped the students to handle difficulties and breakdowns in communication then the students could participate actively in the classroom. The result also showed that the use of communication strategies, especially mime could be used by the students to emphasize the intended meaning of a word.

The speaking performances in the second cycle were assessed in the third meeting. The speaking test was the students' performance in giving their opinion toward the video which was shown screen viewer. The effectiveness of the strategy could be seen based on the students' speaking performance in the second cycle. They could increase the score of the test which was obtained in the previous cycle into 70%. The minimum score was 48 and the highest score was 88. This was the improvement from the previous students' speaking performance test in which the minimum score was only 40 and the highest score was 80. In details, three students achieved low level (0-50) in speaking performance test. There were three students achieved fair level (51-69). There were ten students achieved good level (70-79) and the last four students could achieve the excellent level (81-100) in speaking performance test.

The criteria of success in this research required 70% of the students could achieve the score 70-100 and automatically achieved good and excellent level in the speaking test. Based on the result of the speaking performance test, it meant that there was 70% of the students achieved the score and met the criteria of success. In short, the data showed that the criterion of success was achieved and the implementation of the strategies based instruction was success to improve the students' speaking ability.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions in the previous chapter, the researcher comes into a conclusion that the strategies based instruction could improve the speaking ability of the UPB class students of STAI Darul Ulum Kandangan. The conclusion is derived from the result of analysis of the students' speaking performance and the students' use of communication strategies during the implementation of the strategies based instruction in the class.

In reference to the students' score of speaking performance in the end of the study, it showed that there were 70% of the students could pass the score 70-100 and automatically achieved good and excellent level in the speaking test and met the criteria of success. This meant that after the implementation of the teaching of communication strategies, the students were able to use some of communication strategies and it reduced several problems which hindered them from speaking English, such as being reticent (unwilling to communicate), mother tongue use, and inhibition. The use of communication strategies could facilitate the students to find a way to keep talking and avoid the silence. The result also showed that the use of communication strategies, especially mime was used by the students to emphasize the intended meaning of a word.

To sum up, the strategies based instruction which was implemented in the classroom to embed the learners' awareness to use the communication strategies facilitated the learners to be more responsible in using the target language. It could be seen from students' use of some communication strategies to solve their speaking problem in oral performance. This strategy also helped the learners to reduce the use of mother tongue and make their speaking more comprehensive.

Besides, the implementation of strategies based instruction to encourage the students' active participation was a success. The teacher embedded some strategies to communicate to the students. The result showed that the use of those strategies was successful to encourage the passive students to talk. So, it can be said that the strategies based instruction was successful to raise the learners' awareness in using the strategy to communicate and it helped the learners to improve their speaking ability.

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