

Teacher's Speaking Strategies at Vocational High School

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Abstract

The aim of Study is portraying teacher's strategies in teaching speaking to students at vocational high school level and recognizing students' response towards the strategies by involving an English teacher and a class of 38 students. In collecting the data, classroom observation and interview were conducted to identify the strategies of teaching speaking, and questionnaire was administered to the students to gain the data about their response towards the strategies under the umbrella of descriptive research. The result revealed that the strategies used by the teacher were cooperative activities, role-play, creative tasks, and drilling. In the meantime, students' response towards the strategies resulted in positive attitude as they responded that the strategies helped them to speak, as well as concerned oral production of students whose participation was emphasized.

Key words: *Teaching strategies, the teaching of speaking, vocational high school students*

INTRODUCTION

English language teaching is overwhelmed with countless techniques and methods in EFL classroom. Language reflects life, and perhaps teaching English should, therefore be as varied as living and include as many ways as possible. The way English is taught, can affect the academic achievement of the foreign language learners especially at higher secondary level. English Language teachers usually employ uniform pedagogical methods without addressing the particular needs, set of habits, cultural background as well as areas of weakness of the young learners they teach. Much has been investigated to develop the teaching strategies in terms of foreign language learning. Even then both the Public Sector and Private Sector teachers neither update themselves nor take advantage of the latest researches in foreign language learning. Nunan (1992, p.99) argues:

"The teachers need to be aware that motivation is a consideration in determining whether or not learners are willing to communicate. Clearly, the more meaningful the materials and the tasks are for the learners involved the better the outcome will be".

Ur (1996, p. 120) develops this further by suggesting that good speaking skills classrooms are ones where learners talk a lot, participation is even, motivation is high and the language is at an acceptable level. The flaws in English language teaching are responsible for inadequate performance on the part of second language learners, since the teaching methodology focuses mainly on the reading and writing skills and do not encourage learners to acquire spoken competence.

Basically, people need communication with others. To do this, they need language to express their feeling, ideas and desires to others. English as an international language is widely spoken all over the world. In Indonesia, as the first foreign language, it has very important roles in some aspects of life such as science, technology and educational fields as well. Considering the importance of English, Indonesia government decided English as a compulsory subject for formal school (PERMENDIKNAS No.22, 2006 about National Education System and PP No. 28, 1990 about The Development of Human Resource). Learning English means learning four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Besides four language skills, it also learns three important components such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.

Based on the statement above, it is clear four major skills and the three components of English cannot be separated one to another, because they are as unity. Unity means the skill are supported by components of English language. Among the four skills of language, speaking is one of the basic skills that has be learnt by students. Richard (2008, p. 19) states the mastery of speaking skill in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign language learners. Speaking is a basic skill to tell and share ideas in communication. Abbs and Freebairn (2000, p. 4) states that speaking is complex skill to be learned by learners because they have to think the ideas or thought they wishes to express only if they are eager to know about sounds, structure, and vocabulary system of language.

Speaking is one of the major skills that must be noticed in learning language. Speaking is literally defined as to say things, express thought aloud,

and use voice talk. This definition can be understood further through the word "express and aloud." expressing means to show feeling, opinion, or fact word or in some other ways and aloud means in voice that may be heard.

Teaching speaking is having high concern in many language programs and teaching strategies cannot be denied as a factor influencing the teaching outcome. Strategies employed to achieve the ability to write and speak would be different because the goals of each skill are not the same. The former is concerned with the ability to produce written language, whereas the latter mainly focuses on producing oral language. Moreover, the strategies for teaching the English skills should be made appropriate for each skill in order to attain the expected outcomes. Regarding strategies for teaching speaking, it is ironic that, based on experience of the researcher during studying in high school, most of students of secondary school were not able to speak English. Furthermore, those who graduated from secondary school do not have sufficient ability for English speaking as the teaching of English in Indonesia is considered unsuccessful (Nur, 2004; Renandya, 2004; as cited in Cahyono and Widiati, 2011, p. 2).

As Reiser and Dick (1996, p. 316) argue that teachers can use different strategies of teaching to achieve teaching-learning goals and objectives. It's mean that the teacher's role to provide effective plans/strategies in accomplishing students' educational needs, whose general purpose is to communicate using the language being learnt. These imply that it is teachers' responsibility to make students speak English by employing suitable teaching strategies of speaking.

Given that teacher's strategies are important to attain the lesson objectives, which affect the teaching learning circumstances, and speaking skill is typically a sign of successful language learning (Brown and Yule, 1999, p. 14), these become the focus of the study. Considering those explanations, this research is conducted to find out strategies employed in teaching speaking to students of a senior high school in Sumedang and students' responses towards the strategies. The researchers put forward the research questions as follows: 1). What are teacher's strategies in improving speaking skill of SMKN 3 Kota Serang students? 2) How do the teacher implement the strategies to improving students' speaking skill?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

One of the earliest researchers in this field, Rubin (1975, p.43) provided a very broad definition of learning strategies as “the techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge”. In 1981 (pp.124-126) she identified two kinds of learning strategies: those which contribute directly to learning, and those which contribute indirectly to learning. The direct learning strategies she divided into six types (clarification/verification, monitoring, memorization, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning, practice), and the indirect learning strategies she divided into two types (creating opportunities for practice, production tricks).

Ellis (1986, p. 165) is another who views strategies for learning and strategies for using, including communication strategies or “devices for compensating for inadequate resources”, as quite different manifestations of a more general phenomenon which he calls learner strategies. He argues that it is even possible that successful use of communication strategies may actually prevent language learning since skilful compensation for lack of linguistic knowledge may obviate the need for learning.

Oxford (1990, p. 9) argues that “Language learning strategies are specific actions or techniques that learners use to assist their progress in developing second or foreign language skills”. Furthermore, he said, “the types of strategies used by different learners vary due to different factors, such as degree of awareness, stage of learning, task requirements, teacher expectations, age, sex, nationality/ethnicity, general learning style, personality traits, motivation level, and purpose for learning the language”. Teacher is the main resourceful person who provides the techniques and skills to the students. Not only are they responsible for providing but also they are supposed to create environment where second language learners can easily learn the target language.

Moreover, she claimed that successful language learners use a wide range of strategies that are most appropriate for their learning tasks. It means, learners must find out which strategies help, learn and develop speaking abilities. The language teachers read aloud lessons and make the students read and comprehend. They do not speak the target language in EFL classroom nor are the EFL learners encouraged to interact with the teacher.

Students are the passive learners while the teachers are active ones. They do not play grammar and language games or any other CLT (communicative language teaching) activities in order to encourage the learners. What happens, the students helplessly go to tuition centers, where, they find some sort of speaking activities i.e. speech competition, daily routine speech activities are the encouraging opportunities for them to develop the target language.

Learning strategies are technique or routines that enable students to learn to solve problems and complete tasks independently (Katims,1997, p. 3). In the teaching and learning process, the teacher might consider that every learner learns differently, but the teacher may not have necessary skills for dealing with different learning skills in the classroom.

When O'Malley *et al* (1985, p. 23) came to conduct their research, they used the definition of learning strategies as being "operations or steps used by a learner that will facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval or use of information", a definition originally used by Rigney (1978). In an attempt to produce a classification scheme with mutually exclusive categories, O'Malley and his colleagues developed a taxonomy of their own identifying 26 strategies which they divided into three categories: metacognitive (knowing about learning), cognitive (specific to distinct learning activities) and social. The metacognitive and cognitive categories correspond approximately with Rubin's indirect and direct strategies. However, the addition of the social mediation category was an important step in the direction of acknowledging the importance of interactional strategies in language learning.

Presently, importance of oral skill proficiency cannot be denied, since spoken proficiency is gaining stronger and faster recognition throughout the world. The EFL learners must learn the modern skills, so that they should not only develop communicative abilities but also all other skills of learning a language. The same speaking strategies argued by Chamot, A. U (1993, p. 308) as follows:

"To develop classroom speaking skills, children need opportunities to participate in small group discussion, to present oral reports, and to respond adequately to teacher questioning..."

Day to-day modification in language learning has paved the ways and means to develop its different theories in different horizon. In addition, if we have a cursory look at the uniform methods and approaches of English language learning, we can have clear-cut and categorical ideas of speaking skills applied by second language teachers in their ESL classrooms.

Strategies of Teaching Speaking

Students often think that the ability to speak is the product of language learning, but speaking is also a crucial part of the language learning process. Effective instructors teach students speaking strategies--using minimal responses, recognizing scripts, and using language to talk about language—which they can use to help themselves expand their knowledge of the language and their confidence in using it. These instructors help students to learn speaking so that the students can use speaking to learn.

Since English is included as a compulsory subject in vocational high schools in Indonesia, the learners have the same need. The need is passing the examinations to job, and the general requirement is the students are able to speak and hold conversations.

From a communicative purpose, speaking is closely related to listening. The interaction between these two skills is shown in the conversation. Brown (2001: p. 275-276) states that there are seven principles for designing speaking techniques.

- a. Use techniques that cover the spectrum of learner needs, from language based focus on accuracy to message-based on interaction, meaning, and fluency.
- b. Provide intrinsically motivating techniques.
- c. Encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts.
- d. Provide appropriate feedback and correction.
- e. Capitalize on the natural link between speaking and listening.
- f. Give students opportunities to initiate oral communication.
- g. Encourage the development of speaking strategies.

The process of teaching speaking itself can be done in several stages. Scott (1981, p. 72) mentions three stages to complete the teaching of speaking. The first stage is stating objectives. The teacher has to put across what operation the students are going to learn. When the students understand

the objectives of learning, the instruction will be done communicatively. The teacher could tell students the objective of the lesson directly. Giving students clues for brainstorming the objectives is preferable. Another way is using visual aids to attract students' attention and participation.

The next stage is presentation. One thing that should be considered in this stage is the whole language operations that will be given in the lesson are presented in context. It is very important to make language items clear. To contextualize a language item, the teacher can use text, video, recorded or picture in the form of transaction of native speaker and the like.

The last is practice and production. Drilling check will be given to the students in the phase to see if they have understood of what is being learnt through choral repetition of language presented and then move to individual responses. The teacher will direct the students by providing information gap and feedback for students. And the students' replies are not only seen from the grammatical accuracy point of view but rather of language appropriateness and acceptability.

Then, there are some important points that should be considered in teaching speaking to young learners. The first thing to be considered is who the learner is and why they are. The clear objective is the next. In the end of the lesson, students at least are able to do something using oral English. The third, since the final objective of learning speaking is communication, all materials that are given to the students such as vocabulary, grammatical structures, and other language items, are expected to be applied by students in the daily life. Teacher's role in the speaking learning is creating activities in which the students can practice and apply what they have learnt orally. In other words, this is the turn of the students to practice communication.

A various number of speaking teaching strategies are utilized and used in the classrooms for many circumstances. Among others, the strategies of teaching speaking are cooperative activities, role-play, creative tasks, and drilling. Cooperative activities can encourage negotiation of language item (Newton and Nation, 2009). Role plays are activities where students are asked to pretend to be in various social contexts and various social roles (Harmer, 2001; Thornbury, 2005; Solcova, 2011). Creative tasks resemble real-life tasks as Solcova (2011) asserts that students develop their fluency best, if engaged in

tasks where all their concentration focuses on producing something, rather than on the language itself. Drilling, as Thornbury (2005, p. 20) argues, is a strategy to improve pronunciation by imitating and repeating words, phrases, and even whole utterances. It functions to make students pay attention to the new materials and emphasize words, phrases, or utterances on students' mind, move new items from working memory to long term memory, provide means of gaining articulatory control over language.

In addition, designing activities for teaching speaking requires some principles to consider. Firstly, speaking activities need to maximize the production of language to provide the best conditions for autonomous language use (Brown, 2001, p. 52). Secondly, the activities should be performed in situations where students can show interest, understanding, and ask questions or make comments, called interactivity, and include competitive element where students work together to achieve certain purpose.

Thirdly, teachers bear in mind what student needs, from language-based focus on accuracy to message-based focus on interaction, meaning, and fluency to encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts. Besides, meaningful contexts for each activity is important to relate new material with what has been learned and experienced by students so that it can be stored in the long-term memory of students (Brown, 2001; Richards and Rodgers, 2002). Meanwhile, the functions of speaking including talk as transaction aims to exchange information or goods, and talk as interaction aims to maintain social relationship (Brown and Yule, 1999; Brown, 2001; Bailey, 2005; Thornbury, 2005; Richards, 2008).

Students at Vocational High School

In Indonesia, there are two categories of Secondary School, namely Senior High School and Vocational High School with two different purposes as well. Senior High School has a goal to prepare the students to enter a university. Meanwhile, Vocational High School has a goal to prepare the students to enter a job field. Thus, the Vocational High School students need a specific English lesson to reach that goal. Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 3) state that English for specific purposes is based on designing courses to meet the learners' needs.

Government has determined a curriculum as a guideline. In the

curriculum 2013, it is stated that the purpose of teaching English in Vocational High School tends to be more communicative; especially when they get a job training (Double System Education). However, the fact is contrary to the expectation as it is stated above that the curriculum demand is not fulfilled by the method used by the teacher.

Actually, at the speaking level the emphasis of learning should be on free communication. The teacher supervises cooperative activities, role plays, simulations, creative tasks, and drilling where the activities in the classroom are dominated by the students. The goal of the activities is that the students have more chances to use the language.

As a result, any small mistake can make students embarrassed so that working in group can ease their burden on a task (Brown, 2001; Flemming and Stevens, 2004; Hammack and Grayson, 2009). Thus, feedbacks should be delivered in a way that does not obstruct students' utterances, for instance after students' performance and without pointing out to individual error (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 2001; Bailey, 2005; Linse, 2005; Thornbury, 2005; Nation and Newton, 2009). While constant interruption to student speaking in front of class can cause the loss of speaking fluency (Harmer, 2001; Thornbury, 2005; Nation and Newton, 2009).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used short analysis, which was a particular method of qualitative research for gathering and analyzing the content of the text because the process of placing words, message or symbols in a text to communicate to a reader or receiver occurred without influence from the researcher who analyzed the content. Shank (2002, p. 5) defined qualitative research as "a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning". By systematic he meant "planned, ordered and public", following rules agreed upon by members of the qualitative research community. By empirical, he meant that this type of inquiry was grounded in the world of experience. Inquiry into meaning said researcher tried to understand how others made sense of her experience. Having chosen qualitative study by employing descriptive research, the researcher conducted in SMK Negeri 3 Kota Serang, which involved an English teacher and a class of 38 tenth students from that

school. Meanwhile, the instruments were classroom observation, questionnaire and interview, administered to the teacher in attempt to portray speaking teaching strategies used by the teacher, as well as questionnaire and interview administered to the students to recognize their responses towards the strategies.

Research Instrument of Collecting Data

In this research, several instruments were used to get the empirical data required. Each instrument had its own function in this research:

1. Interview was done with the students before doing the research to know the level of students' speaking ability. The orientation test was in a form of oral test where the students were asked to speak based on a role and a situation that was given to them. Then, the students were taught by using role play technique and took the cycle I test in same form of orientation test but with a different role and situation.

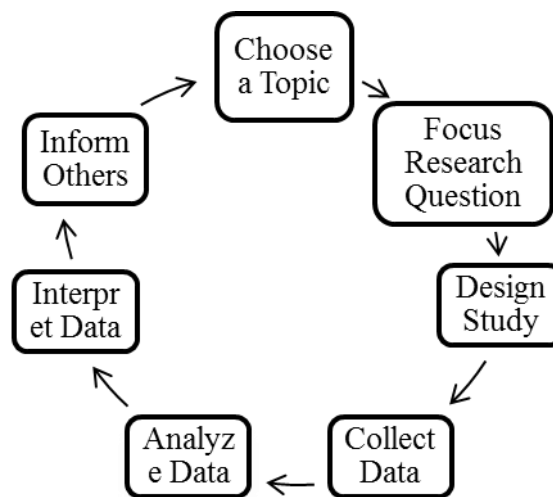
Interview as one of the technique of data collecting also used by the researcher with the English teacher because the researcher hoped to gain deeper information and understanding of a phenomena or situation that could not be obtained through observation. In this research, the writer gives interview form for students to get information from them related to this research or the writer observed. The writer also interviewed the teacher of English subject to get real information related to what the writer observed.

2. Observation was done to collect data about the activities of the students during the research done. The observation sheet was taken by the collaborator to provide the information of the condition happens in the teaching learning process included the application all strategies, the students' behavior, and the interaction between the teacher and the students.
3. Questionnaires were given to the students in the last meeting of the research. It was List of a research or survey questions asked to respondents, and designed to extract specific information as means of eliciting the feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, or attitudes of. It was done to know the students' response about the strategies used in

the research.

Research Procedure

The researchers begun the research procedure by selecting a topic into a specific research question that addressed in the study. After specifying research questions, they planed how would carry out the specific study or research project. The third step involved making decisions about many practical details of doing the research and the researcher was ready to gather the data or evidence. The next step was analyzing the data to see any patterns that emerge. Finally, the researcher informed others by writing a report that described background of the research, how to conduct it, and what was it discovered.



Step in the Research Procedure (Neuman, 2000:12)

Data Analysis Technique

Analysis data was the fourth step in qualitative research process. It was a body of methods that helped to describe facts, detect patterns, develop explanations, and test hypotheses. It entailed coding or transforming the data into another form. How one code depended on the kind of data collected and the larger research questions.

In this research, the data was analyzed by using content analysis. In analyzing the data, the researcher used Matrix analysis of Miles and Huberman (1984, p. 15) cited in Sugiono (2005, p. 92). The data was divided in data reduction, data display and conclusion/drawing verification.

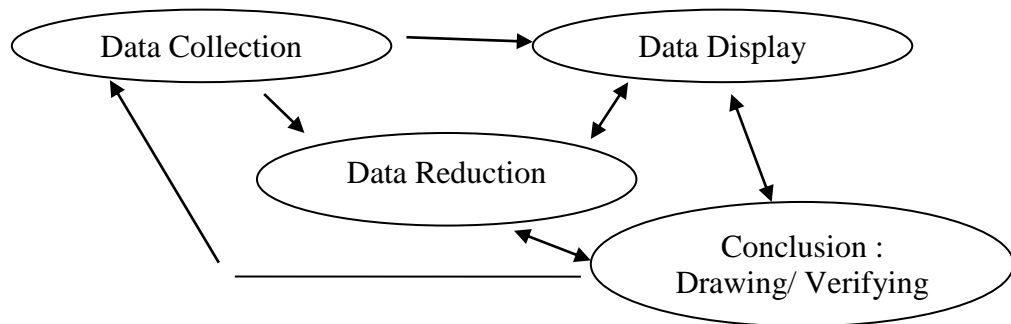


Diagram from Miles and Huberman (in Sugiyono, 2005:92)

Data Display

Data display was a key element in qualitative methodology: "We have become convinced that better displays are a major avenue to valid qualitative analysis. All displays are designed to assemble and organize information in an immediately accessible, compact form, so that the analyst can see what is happening and either draw justified conclusions or move on to the next-step analysis which the display suggests may be useful. You know what you display" (Miles and Huberman 1984, p. 21).

A display in this research was an extended piece of text that provided a new way of arranging and thinking about the more textually embedded data. Data display allowed the analyst to extrapolate from the data enough to begin and to discern systematic patterns and interrelationships. At the display stage, additional, higher order categories or themes may emerge from the data that went beyond those first discovered during the initial process of data reduction.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The researcher did this research by coming, interviewing students and teacher, observing, and documenting teaching learning process in SMKN 3 Kota Serang. From interview with the students before doing the research, it is known that the students feel interested to speak English, but sometimes they are not able to do it because some reasons, the reasons are shown as follow:

No	Reason	Respondent Number	Respondent Percent
1	No partners to talk to	8	21,05%
2	Not confident	5	39,47%
3	Afraid to make grammatical errors	12	31,58%
4	Dislike English	3	7,89%

Based on the reasons above, it is clear that the students face some problems and the English teacher should apply more than one strategies to improve students speaking skill, because the class consists of many students with different difficulties. Then, of the four observations, the following table shows the result of the observations:

Teaching Strategies of Speaking	Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3	Observation 4
Cooperative Activities	√	√	√	-
Role plays and Simulations	√	√	-	-
Creative Tasks	-	-	√	√
Drilling	√	√	√	√

Cooperative activities provided the students with contextual and meaningful topics important to relate new material with what has been learned and experienced by students. It also provides students with the aid of others, meaning that students can discuss problems with their partner, as mentioned above that the use of cooperative activities can encourage negotiation of language item.

Hence, the more students are exposed to language item and contextually meaningful activities emphasizing on oral production, the more they are helped to speak English. In addition, the teacher prompted the

students to participate in the activities, and students' speaking is emphasized. Moreover, an activity involving competitive element where students work together can increase language productivity. However, people's perception on them could influence their performance. Fortunately, the teacher could anticipate this situation by having students work in group to ease their burden on a task, as it had the students classify the expressions, make dialogues, and rearrange steps of how to make something as teams.

It also had the students deliver their work in front of the class, discuss with other groups and at the end, get feedbacks not only from the teacher but also from other groups. As stated, appropriate feedbacks are delivered after students' performance and without pointing out to individual error. Besides, constant interruption to student speaking in front of class can cause the loss of speaking fluency.

Meanwhile, in role play strategy, the teacher did not focus on certain students. It treats students fairly, impartially, and with respect is a must for teachers in secondary level. Furthermore, in terms of function of speaking, it served to maintain social relationship and had purposes to be friendly and nice to interact with others.

In Creative tasks, the students develop their fluency best, if engaged in tasks where all their concentration focuses on producing something. Instead of thinking of language, the students focused on making the procedure of making food or drinks, so that the activity was to develop fluency. It is based on a principle that teachers bear in mind what student needs, from language-based focus on accuracy to message-based focus on interaction, meaning, and fluency.

Employing the strategy, the teacher added some expressions to make the activity look real. There were the one delivering the procedure and others listening, so that interaction between the speaker and the listeners can be built up. Moreover, the function of speaking in this activity was talk as transaction. As argued by Thornbury (2005), speaking activity should be performed in situations where students can show interest, understanding, and ask questions or make comments.

Furthermore, the teacher intended to make the students interested in the lesson by adding the expressions and choosing the topics related to

students for they will react well to the speaker. Reacting to others by showing interest in the topic of conversation can provide fluid interaction. Moreover, materials related to students' lives and interests can increase students' involvement in the classroom.

The last one is drilling, simply a fine-tuning for articulation, drilling is a strategy to improve pronunciation. Drilling yields several benefits, allowing students to pay attention to the new materials presented by teachers, emphasizing words, phrases, or utterances on students' mind, moving new items from working memory to long term memory, and providing a means of gaining articulatory control over language.

Discussions

The research is presented the use of strategies in teaching speaking skill for vocational high school students as English foreign language learners in the academic year of 2016/2017). The use of cooperative activities , role plays and simulations, creative tasks and drilling have been advocated in teaching speaking process. Typically, the strategies are very interested to be implemented to improve speaking skill. Students have a lot of opportunity to practice speaking and have active involvement in speaking. However, they worked very cooperative and tried to defend their team, and they were more active to speak in classroom.

In teaching speaking, the teacher used cooperative activities , role plays and simulations, creative tasks and drilling. It can be enjoyable experience for both teacher and student. There were many students joined the class enthusiastically. They paid attention to the lesson improved their speaking skill after being taught by the strategies.

Students' speaking skill increased as well as their motivation in speaking and they were interested speaking through cooperative activities , role plays and simulations, creative tasks and drilling. Result of the research show that the students improve their speaking skill efficiently and effectively.

In the meantime, regarding the strategies used by the teacher, the overall result shows positive feedbacks on the strategies used by the teacher. It reveals that 16 students (72.72%) agreed that the lessons help them speak English, 15 students (68.18%) agreed and six students (27.27%) strongly agreed

that the activities require students to be active and to participate in the class, particularly in speaking, 15 students (68.18%) agreed that the lessons facilitate varied students visually, motorically as well as audibly, and 14 students (63.63%) agreed that the lessons make them brave to speak English.

The strategies the teacher used help and encourage students to speak English as speaking activities need to maximize the production of language to provide the best conditions for autonomous language use (Brown, 2001; Thornbury, 2005). This also implies that the strategies for speaking require students to produce the language orally. It is also supported by Brown's principle (2001) of criteria for speaking activities, which is to encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful contexts.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Investigating what sort of teaching speaking strategies applied by the teacher used of SMKN 3 Kota Serang were cooperative activities, creative task, role play, and drilling. The research shows that the more advanced strategies the teachers apply the more effective results they achieve. There is a great need of teacher's programs in order to equip students with the latest teaching methods, which ultimately will affect the performance of EFL learners. The EFL teachers should be equipped with the updated methods and the approaches applied in EFL classroom for communicative competence. While, students' responses towards the strategies reveal positive attitude as they responded that the strategies helped them to speak, as well as concerned oral production of students whose participation was emphasized. Thus, it is suggested that teachers use strategies of teaching speaking in accordance with students' characteristics and level of proficiency, and provide materials involving students to be active by using various available media for the implementation of teaching speaking.

In English language teaching and learning at vocational high school, the teacher must create enjoyable, fun and interesting situation as possible as the teacher can. The enjoyment ought to be the foremost aims which hopefully will have good effects on the education, because what they dislike, they drop as soon as possible. In other word, the teacher should make learning enjoyable because students love to play and learn best when they are

enjoying themselves.

This research has found out the description about English language teaching learning SMKN 3 Kota Serang in term of teaching technique. Teaching speaking using cooperative activities , role plays and simulations, creative tasks and drilling can motivate students to practice speaking more, and it improves student's speaking skill. The researcher suggests the teacher uses this technique because it encourages students to speak in speaking class.

Finally, the writer realizes that this paper is far from being perfect, because of that; constructive critics and advice are really expected for the perfection of the thesis. Hopefully, this thesis will be useful for all of us. Amin.

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