



Exploring Teacher Strategies for Teaching English Speaking Skills at SMAN 2 Sorong City

Nurin Kelian

English Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Sorong, Indonesia

Corresponding Author

keliannurin@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study explored teacher strategies for teaching English speaking skills and the challenges encountered in their implementation at SMAN 2 Sorong City. A qualitative case study was conducted with three English teachers purposively selected on the basis of their experience teaching grades XI and XII. Data were obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation and analysed by coding, categorising, summarising, and identifying patterns. The teachers reported using role-play, dialogue, conversation, discussion, presentation, listening for speaking, describing pictures, performance, and argumentation. Supporting activities included games, songs, films, vocabulary practice, and pronunciation examples. The main challenges concerned limited vocabulary, low confidence, shyness, pronunciation difficulties, and fear of making mistakes or being laughed at by classmates. Teachers responded through regular interaction, simple classroom expressions, pronunciation modelling, correction and repetition, pair conversations, and vocabulary games. They generally described students as enthusiastic, although students sometimes preferred working with their own friends. Feedback included reflection on difficulties, praise, applause, and encouragement. The findings describe how teachers combined speaking activities with support for students' language use and confidence. The study recommended combining creative strategies, such as role-play with audiovisual media, and regularly evaluating their implementation.

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an important part of learning English because it enables learners to communicate information, express ideas, and interact with other people. English teaching involves reading, writing, listening, and speaking, but oral communication requires students to use the language directly in an exchange with others. Speaking is therefore presented as a basic tool of human



communication and an important goal of language instruction (Royani & Tukimun, 2023). Developing this skill involves opportunities for learners to practise expressing what they know and understand.

Speaking also involves the relationship between language input and language production. Learners listen to words and expressions, but they also need opportunities to produce language themselves. Ati and Parmawati (2022) discuss oral presentation as a means of developing speaking, while Dabamona (2023) addresses the development of English-speaking skills through podcasts. These discussions place speaking practice within activities that allow learners to encounter language and use it orally. In the classroom, oral assignments, discussions, and presentations are among the activities through which students practise English.

Students may nevertheless encounter difficulties when asked to speak. The problems discussed in the literature include limited vocabulary, difficulties with grammar and pronunciation, and a lack of confidence in expressing ideas. Learners may know what they want to communicate but hesitate when selecting the words or expressions needed to do so. Fear of making mistakes can also affect their willingness to speak in front of other people. These concerns are relevant to research on teaching strategies and the development of confidence in English speaking (Sri Rahayuningsih, 2022).

Teachers have an important role in choosing activities that respond to these difficulties. A teaching strategy involves a plan, method, or sequence of activities directed towards a learning goal. Strategies concern how teachers organise instruction and provide opportunities for students to learn, rather than only the information presented in a lesson (Tambunan et al., 2024). The selection of strategies is therefore related to students' needs and the objectives of the classroom activity. Anggraeni et al. (2020) likewise discuss the importance of teachers' strategies in speaking instruction.

A range of strategies can be used in teaching speaking. The literature reviewed in this study includes role-play, language games, drilling, describing pictures, storytelling, discussion, and presentation. These activities provide different ways for students to practise words, convey information, and exchange ideas (Razi et al., 2021; Royani & Tukimun, 2023). Role-play, for example, gives students opportunities to use language while taking the roles of other people in a particular situation. Discussion and presentation involve sharing ideas with classmates and communicating information to a wider classroom audience.

Previous studies have explored how teachers use such strategies in different settings. Govinda et al. (2022) conducted a qualitative case study at SMP Negeri 12 Malang to investigate teachers' speaking strategies and the problems encountered during implementation. The study described active learning combined with role-playing and expository learning combined with drilling. Handayani and Fajria (2024) examined teachers' strategies for improving speaking in a professional context at Universitas Ahmad Dahlan. Both studies concern speaking instruction, but they address educational settings different from the senior high school examined in the present research.



At senior high school level, Roza et al. (2023) identified storytelling, role-playing, reporting, presentation, and group discussion at SMAN 2 Tembilahan. Rezeki and Ibrahim (2022) examined strategies for overcoming speaking problems at SMAN 1 Selayar and reported role-play, discussion, number head together, and grouping, with role-play described as the dominant strategy. These studies provide accounts of the strategies teachers use and the problems they seek to address. They also show the relevance of examining both instructional activities and the difficulties encountered when implementing them.

The local setting of the present study was SMAN 2 Sorong City. During one month of preliminary observation, the researcher encountered students who were reluctant to speak English in and outside the classroom. Limited vocabulary made conversation difficult, and some students appeared worried about making mistakes or lacked confidence. An English teacher also described difficulties involving focus, concentration, word selection, and grammar. Students sometimes needed time to select the words they wanted to say, which affected their ability to communicate fluently and accurately.

The studies reviewed above describe speaking instruction in other schools and in a university context. The present research focused on the strategies used by English teachers at SMAN 2 Sorong City and the challenges arising in that setting. Its focus was on several strategies used in classroom practice, together with teachers' accounts of how they responded to students' speaking difficulties. This contextual focus followed the problems encountered during the preliminary observation and the need to describe teachers' responses to those problems.

Accordingly, this study aimed to explore teacher strategies for teaching English speaking skills at SMAN 2 Sorong City. It addressed two research questions: what strategies do teachers use in teaching English speaking skills, and what challenges do teachers face when implementing those strategies? The investigation also examined how teachers addressed the challenges, how they described students' responses to the activities, and what feedback they provided after students spoke English. These aspects were explored through a qualitative case study involving three English teachers.

METHOD

Research design and setting

The study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. The purpose was to describe teachers' strategies for teaching speaking and the challenges encountered in their implementation at SMAN 2 Sorong City. Qualitative research was used to examine the teachers' accounts and classroom context through descriptive information. This approach is consistent with the discussion of qualitative research as attending to people and their behaviour through written and oral data (Abdussamad, 2021; Alaslan, 2021).



The research took place at SMAN 2 Sorong City, located on Jalan Sungai Maruni, KM 10, Sawagumu. The school was selected after the researcher had undertaken one month of preliminary observation and identified difficulties related to English speaking. These included reluctance to speak, differences in students' abilities, limited vocabulary, and a lack of confidence. The setting therefore provided the context for examining the teaching strategies and problems described by the English teachers.

Participants and data sources

Three English teachers were purposively selected as the main informants on the basis of their experience teaching English in grades XI and XII. The teachers were identified as T1, T2, and T3. T1 taught grade XI and had more than ten years of teaching experience. T2 taught grade XII, had approximately 23 years of teaching experience, and was reported to have served as a principal for the preceding year. T3 taught grade XI and had more than one year of teaching experience.

Primary data were obtained directly from the teachers and the fieldwork at the school. The teachers provided accounts of their strategies, classroom challenges, responses to those challenges, and feedback practices. Secondary sources consisted of books, journal articles, and theses related to teaching strategies and English speaking skills. These sources supplied the literature used to frame and discuss the research. Students' enthusiasm and participation in the interview findings were described by the teachers; the interview informants were the three teachers.

Instruments and data collection

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation involved direct attention to the teachers and the teaching context at SMAN 2 Sorong City. The preliminary observation helped identify the speaking problems that motivated the study. Interviews involved direct interaction and questions and answers with the English teachers concerning the research topic. Documentation was included as supporting material for the research.

The interview instrument contained six questions. These asked about the strategies teachers used in teaching speaking, the challenges they commonly encountered, and the ways they addressed those challenges. Additional questions concerned students' responses to activities such as role-play, discussion, and presentation; the strategies most often used; and the feedback teachers considered appropriate after students spoke English in front of the class. The questions provided a common focus for the accounts collected from the three informants.

The interview transcripts organised each teacher's answers according to these six questions. They included examples of activities, descriptions of students' difficulties, and explanations of feedback and encouragement. The documentation accompanying the research included the informant list, interview instrument and transcripts, research permission and completion



letters, and photographs of teacher interviews. These materials formed part of the research record presented in the thesis.

Data analysis

The data were analysed qualitatively by organising the information, assigning codes, grouping related material, and identifying patterns. The methodological account described recording field information and coding it to facilitate the identification of data sources. It also described collecting, sorting, classifying, synthesising, and summarising the data before drawing conclusions. These procedures followed the account of qualitative analysis presented in Alaslan (2021).

The findings were arranged around the research questions and the topics addressed in the teacher interviews. The analysis described the strategies teachers used, the challenges they encountered, their responses to those challenges, their accounts of student reactions, and the feedback they provided. Teacher statements were used to support the descriptive presentation. Conclusions were drawn from the patterns in these accounts and related to the study's focus on speaking instruction at SMAN 2 Sorong City.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

1. Strategies used by the teachers

The three teachers described a range of speaking activities. Their accounts included role models, dialogue, conversation, role-play, small-group discussion, presentation, listening for speaking, describing pictures, performance, and argumentation. The strategies were used in relation to classroom material and the need to encourage students to speak. The teachers did not describe a single identical set of activities; each provided examples from their own teaching.

T1 referred to role models, dialogue, and conversation, and explained how speaking activities were connected to exposition texts in grade XI. Students were placed in small groups, given topics, and asked to discuss them before presenting the results to the class. T1 stated:

“Usually, the strategies I use are role models, dialogues, conversations, or, for example, if there is material related to texts, such as exposition texts in grade XI, which usually involve arguments, we form small groups, then I give them titles, several titles, and they discuss them and then present what they have discussed in front of the class.”

This account described a sequence from a text-related topic to small-group discussion and then a class presentation. Students were expected to discuss arguments and communicate the outcomes of their discussion orally. In a further answer, T1 also mentioned games, song interludes, and card games as activities used to strengthen students' English and vocabulary knowledge.



These were presented as additional ways for students to practise while participating in classroom activities.

T2 identified role-play, listening for speaking, dialogue, and describing pictures. The account was expressed as follows:

“Yes, I use strategies such as role play, listening for speaking, dialogue, and describing pictures.”

When asked which strategies were most frequently used, T2 named dialogue and role-play. The interview therefore distinguished the wider range of strategies available to the teacher from those used most often. Listening for speaking and describing pictures were named as strategies, although the interview did not provide a detailed sequence for implementing each of those activities.

T3 described dialogue, role-play, performance, and argumentation. The teacher connected these strategies with assigning tasks and encouraging students to speak in front of the class:

“Strategies such as dialogue, role play, performance, and argumentation are used so that the students are given tasks and encouraged to speak in front of the class.”

T3’s account also included preparation before speaking. In the interview transcript, the teacher described encouraging students to write down what they wanted to say when they did not know how to express it and then practise communicating it. This was presented as a way of helping students prepare for oral expression. The reported activities thus included both speaking in front of others and preparation for that speaking.

2. Classroom implementation and frequently used activities

Role-play appeared across the teacher accounts and was identified in the findings as a frequently used activity. The implementation described in the findings involved arranging the classroom, setting time limits, and preparing the roles students would take. Roles could include friends, adults, and teachers. Students then participated in the role-play, followed by discussion, evaluation, and the sharing of experiences.

The reported sequence included preparation before the activity and reflection afterwards. Students were assigned or selected for roles before performing, and after the activity they exchanged accounts of what they had done. The description presented role-play as an opportunity for students to communicate through a role and subsequently discuss the experience with classmates. The quotation describing this sequence was attributed collectively to the teacher interviews in the findings, rather than to one identified teacher.

Discussion and presentation were also part of the reported practice. T1 described groups discussing topics associated with exposition texts and presenting their discussion results. T3 referred to argumentation and performance as ways to encourage students to speak in front of others. T2 identified dialogue alongside role-play as a frequently used strategy.



Together, the accounts documented individual, pair, and group opportunities to practise speaking within the classroom activities described by the teachers.

3. Challenges in teaching speaking

The teachers described difficulties involving vocabulary, confidence, pronunciation, shyness, and students' willingness to speak in front of classmates. T1 emphasised that speaking required students to be brave enough to perform and express what they understood in English. The teacher also stressed the need to know sufficient vocabulary, particularly everyday expressions. Without this vocabulary, students found it difficult to engage in conversation and communicate their ideas.

T2 focused on students' shyness and their difficulty with pronunciation:

"The challenge often faced when teaching speaking skills is that students are often shy to speak. This is due to a lack of understanding of pronunciation, which is related to the four English language skills, thereby hindering students' speaking abilities."

T3 similarly described a lack of confidence and vocabulary, but also referred to classmates' reactions when a student pronounced words incorrectly:

"The challenge is because English is a foreign language, so if we ask them to speak, first they are not confident, then there are those who pronounce the words, and their friends laugh or find it funny, and there is a lack of vocabulary and so on."

These accounts showed that the challenges reported by teachers concerned both language resources and the experience of speaking in front of others. Limited vocabulary restricted what students could express, while uncertainty about pronunciation and the possibility of being laughed at were associated with hesitation. The findings described fear of mistakes and a lack of confidence as recurring problems during speaking activities.

The preliminary account of the school context also identified differences in students' abilities and difficulties maintaining focus. Students sometimes needed time to choose vocabulary or grammatical forms before speaking. Within the teacher interviews, vocabulary and confidence were particularly prominent. These descriptions provided the basis for the teachers' explanations of the support they used during lessons.

4. Strategies for addressing speaking difficulties

T1 described building confidence through continuing interaction and speaking practice at each meeting. The teacher used simple sentences and everyday classroom exchanges, including requests for permission and answers to questions. Reading, films, and songs were also mentioned as ways to expand students' knowledge of English. T1 explained:

"This is done by building students' confidence through constant interaction with them, then practicing speaking at every meeting. So, in every session, as an English teacher, I always practice speaking with them using simple sentences, such as asking permission to leave or meet someone or a friend, or answering questions that are asked. I also try to help the



m use these sentences in english, for example, “who can answer the questions? Please raise your hand.” So, how can we train them with simple sentences? Then, expand their knowledge by reading, watching, and listening to songs. Overcoming these challenges with English films.”

T2 addressed pronunciation and sentence production by giving examples, correcting students’ spoken sentences, and asking the class to repeat them together. This account combined correction with encouragement. The teacher described positive reinforcement as part of helping students become more confident when speaking English:

“When facing challenges, sometimes I give examples of pronunciation and correct the sentences spoken, then I correct the existing sentences and ask the students to repeat them together. In addition, I also give encouragement as a form of positive reinforcement so that students are more confident in speaking.”

T3 described starting lessons with simple, enjoyable activities, particularly pair conversations and vocabulary games. These activities were used with students who were shy about speaking. The teacher linked them to comfort and confidence in the classroom:

“I usually start the lesson with simple and fun activities such as pair conversations or vocabulary games to help students who are sometimes shy to speak. This makes students feel more comfortable and confident, thereby helping them to improve their courage to speak.”

The three accounts described different responses to the challenges. T1 emphasised regular interaction and everyday expressions, T2 emphasised pronunciation examples and collective repetition, and T3 emphasised enjoyable initial activities and pair work. Encouragement was present across the accounts. The findings also included T3’s use of writing before speaking when students had difficulty expressing an idea orally.

5. Teachers’ accounts of student responses

The teachers generally described students as enthusiastic, excited, or happy during the activities. T1 reported that role-play and discussion allowed students to express what they had learned and act out roles. The teacher contrasted these activities with simply reading or sitting and described students as able to express themselves in their own style. T2 also reported that students were excited and happy.

At the same time, the teachers described difficulties in organising groups. T1 reported that students sometimes wanted to remain with their own friends. The teacher responded by distributing students across groups and asking them to take turns rather than staying in the same group. This was reported as a classroom-management issue arising during activities that students otherwise received enthusiastically.

T3 also described students’ preference for working with friends and the need to mix less active students with more active classmates:

“They said that yes, they are enthusiastic, but when it comes to discussions and so on, they definitely choose their friends. Perhaps there are s



ome children who cannot or are too lazy to move, so we mix them with friends who are active so that they also have enthusiasm, but when it comes to discussions, they are more enthusiastic.”

These responses were the teachers’ accounts of students’ behaviour and reactions. They included positive descriptions of enthusiasm alongside the practical difficulty of forming groups. The teachers described changing group membership and involving active classmates as responses to students’ reluctance to move or participate with different peers.

6. Feedback and encouragement after speaking

Feedback was described as including reflection on the lesson, questions about difficulties, praise, applause, and encouragement. T1 asked whether students had found the material difficult or enjoyable and invited them to express whether speaking activities had been easy or difficult. Reflection and question-and-answer exchanges were part of the feedback described after activities such as role-play and discussion.

T2 emphasised supporting students’ confidence when they had attempted to speak. The teacher reported that shortcomings should not be exaggerated and that students should receive applause, praise, and support:

“It certainly encourages students to be more confident, so even if there are shortcomings, teachers do not exaggerate them, but instead give applause and praise, and support the students.”

T3 also described asking students about their experiences of the material and the speaking tasks. The teacher invited students to state honestly whether the activities had been difficult and referred to active question-and-answer sessions:

“Yes, feedback. Every time we enter the classroom, we must provide feedback on the material we have taught. Did they find it difficult? Were they happy with what they learned? When we teach speaking, we should know we ask if there were any difficulties during today’s lesson. For example, when practicing methods like role-playing or discussion, the feedback I always give to the students is to reflect honestly and express themselves—whether it was difficult or easy. Additionally, their question-and-answer sessions are also active.”

The feedback accounts therefore included both attention to learning difficulties and recognition of students’ efforts. Teachers described correcting pronunciation and sentences during instruction while also encouraging students after their attempts to speak. The findings concluded that praise, reflection, and support formed part of the teachers’ responses to students’ speaking performance.

Discussion

1. Varied strategies for speaking practice

The findings described several strategies used in teaching speaking at SMAN 2 Sorong City. Role-play, dialogue, discussion, conversation, presentation, listening for speaking, describing pictures, and performance were among the



reported activities. Teachers also referred to argumentation, games, songs, and films. The discussion in the study presented this variety as supporting students' opportunities to practise English and communicate what they understood. The activities were connected to the material being taught and the difficulties teachers encountered.

This variety corresponds to the teaching strategies discussed by Razi et al. (2021), which include role-play, drilling games, describing pictures, storytelling, dialogue, and conversation. The connection concerns the range of approaches available for teaching speaking. In the present study, teachers reported using different activities rather than relying on one approach in every lesson. T1's description of exposition texts, group discussion, and presentation illustrated how speaking practice was connected to a classroom topic.

Role-play was particularly prominent in the teacher accounts. The findings described arranging roles and classroom conditions, setting time limits, and giving students opportunities to perform and share their experiences. This description is consistent with the treatment of role-play in the literature reviewed in the thesis, where students communicate by taking roles within a situation (Riska Tri Putri et al., 2024). In the present case, teachers associated role-play with students expressing themselves and participating in activities beyond reading or remaining seated.

The emphasis on role-play also resembles the findings of Govinda et al. (2022), who described active learning combined with role-playing, and Rezeki and Ibrahim (2022), who identified role-play among the strategies used to address speaking problems. Roza et al. (2023) likewise reported role-playing, presentation, and group discussion in a senior high school setting. These similarities concern the types of activities reported across the studies, while the present research provides the teachers' accounts from SMAN 2 Sorong City.

2. Confidence and language-related challenges

The study identified low confidence, limited vocabulary, shyness, pronunciation difficulties, and fear of mistakes as challenges in speaking instruction. These problems were central to teachers' explanations of why students hesitated to speak. T1 emphasised the vocabulary needed for everyday communication, while T2 and T3 described pronunciation and confidence concerns. T3 also mentioned classmates laughing when a student pronounced a word incorrectly.

The discussion treated confidence-building and speaking practice as important responses to these challenges. This focus is related to the literature on strategies for developing students' confidence to practise English (Sri Rahayuningsih, 2022). The problems reported at SMAN 2 Sorong City were also consistent with the concerns described in the study's background, where limited vocabulary and fear of mistakes were associated with reluctance to speak. Teachers therefore addressed both the language students needed and their willingness to use it.



T1's response was to provide repeated opportunities for interaction using simple sentences. Requests for permission, answers to questions, and other everyday classroom expressions were used to practise English at each meeting. T2 provided pronunciation models and corrected sentences before asking students to repeat them together. T3 began with pair conversations and vocabulary games. These were the concrete practices described by teachers when explaining how they dealt with students' difficulties.

The study presented these practices as ways of helping students feel more comfortable and confident. Reading, listening to songs, and watching English films were also included in T1's account of expanding students' knowledge. The strategies therefore extended beyond asking students to perform a speaking task: the teachers also described examples, preparation, repetition, and familiar expressions. These supports were reported as part of their attempts to help students participate in English speaking activities.

3. Student responses and classroom grouping

Teachers described students as enthusiastic during role-play, discussion, and related activities. T1 associated this response with opportunities to act out roles and express learning in a personal style. T2 described students as excited and happy, while T3 reported enthusiasm particularly during discussions. The study's discussion treated these positive responses as an indication that the strategies made speaking lessons engaging for students.

However, the teachers also reported that students wanted to work with their friends. T1 described rotating group membership, and T3 described mixing less active students with more active classmates. These accounts retained an important practical aspect of implementation: the strategies were accompanied by decisions about how to organise students. The positive teacher descriptions of enthusiasm therefore occurred alongside reported challenges in managing group participation.

4. Feedback in speaking instruction

The study's discussion identified praise, reflection, and support as forms of feedback provided when students attempted to speak English. T1 and T3 described asking whether the lesson had been difficult or enjoyable and encouraging students to communicate their experiences honestly. T2 emphasised applause, praise, and avoiding an exaggerated focus on shortcomings. These practices were described as ways to support students' confidence after speaking.

Feedback also included attention to language form. T2 reported demonstrating pronunciation, correcting spoken sentences, and asking students to repeat the corrected sentences together. The discussion therefore included correction as well as encouragement. The teachers' accounts connected these practices to the same difficulties identified in the findings: uncertainty about pronunciation, limited confidence, and hesitation in front of others.

The study concluded that the strategies were helpful in supporting students' speaking practice and participation. Its evidence consisted of qualitative descriptions and teacher accounts of classroom activities and responses. The



reported benefits should therefore be understood in relation to those accounts. The findings describe what the teachers did, the problems they encountered, and why they considered their responses useful in the speaking lessons examined.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the strategies used by three English teachers to teach speaking at SMAN 2 Sorong City and the challenges they faced during implementation. The teachers reported role-play, dialogue, conversation, discussion, presentation, listening for speaking, describing pictures, performance, and argumentation. They also described supporting activities such as games, songs, films, pronunciation examples, and vocabulary practice. Role-play and dialogue were among the activities identified as frequently used, while group discussion and presentation were connected to classroom topics.

The main challenges were limited vocabulary, low confidence, shyness, pronunciation difficulties, fear of making mistakes, and anxiety about speaking in front of classmates. Teachers responded through regular interaction, simple everyday expressions, correction and repetition, pair conversations, and vocabulary games. Their accounts generally described students as enthusiastic, excited, or happy, although some preferred to remain in groups with their friends. Teachers addressed this by rotating or mixing group membership.

Feedback included asking students about the difficulties they experienced, reflecting on the lesson, and providing praise, applause, and encouragement. The study presented these practices as supporting students when they attempted to speak English. It recommended that teachers combine creative strategies, including role-play with audiovisual media, and conduct regular evaluations of the strategies used. These recommendations followed the teachers' descriptions of speaking practice, classroom challenges, and support for students at the school.

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