Students' Indirect Strategies in Speaking English: An EFL Study at Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen

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1.   Abstract

Excellent communication requires excellent speaking strategies. The indirect speaking strategies adopted by students in English class were the subject of this study. The researchers gathered information from 60 students of third graders at Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen through surveys and interviews. It took place during March in the academic year of 2022/2023. According to the study's findings, students used a range of indirect speaking strategies to improve their speaking skills. Three categories of indirect strategies were discovered by the research: metacognitive with high category of use (79.4%), affective with high category of use (69.7%), and social strategies with medium category of use (47.1%). Three learning activities: setting goals, taking breaks, and finding a partner were employed the most frequently among these three categories. According to the study, using various indirect strategies can help the students become better speakers. Teachers ought to think about utilizing various strategies in order to support the students' improving skills in speaking.

Keywords: *Speaking, indirect strategies, students, skills*

2.   Introduction

Speaking is a fundamental component of human communication and is extremely important to people daily. First, speaking lets people communicate their ideas and opinions clearly and concisely. It enables them to effectively and persuasively communicate their message to others. Speaking can also help develop relationships. Someone who speak well may help him establish close relationships with others, including friends, family, and coworkers. Third, speaking might aid in career success. To put it briefly, speaking is an important talent in social, professional, and personal settings. Therefore understanding speaking strategies is significant.

Some theoretical underpinnings were applied in order to explain speaking strategies to us. Paivio (1971) proposed the idea of dual coding stating that the brain interprets verbal and visual information differently. Verbal information is processed by the language system, whilst visual information is processed by the imaging system. Although these two systems are designed to function separately, they can cooperate to support memory and learning. The schema theory by Gass and Neu (1996) is yet another theoretical foundation for speaking strategies. A schemas is as organized knowledge structures that represent human understanding of the world. Schemas can be about anything, from specific events to general concepts. Schemas provide learners with a framework for understanding new information. When learners encounter new information in the target language, they can use their existing schemas to help them make sense of it. Previously, Brewer and Treyens (1981) came to the conclusion that schemas are crucial to memory for locations. They suggested that schemas offer a framework for classifying geographic information and that this framework aids in helping someone remember information that matches his expectations. Giles (1973), who

published the communication accommodation theory, is also one of the cornerstones of the speaking strategy foundation theory. The theory places a strong emphasis on how people adjust (or accommodate) their speech patterns to one another when speaking. This will help the message sender communicate with the recipient more effectively and maintain their positive social persona. Zimmerman (2000) provides additional explanation of the self-regulated learning hypothesis. The approach places a strong emphasis on how important it is for students to actively manage their own learning. According to the SRL hypothesis, learners generate their own knowledge through a process of planning, monitoring, and assessing their learning rather than being passive consumers of information. Chamot (2005) also provided a detailed overview of metacognitive strategies and how they can be used to improve language learning. She argues that these strategies are essential for effective language learning because they help learners to become more aware of their own learning processes and to make better decisions about how to learn. The anxiety/uncertainty management theory (AUM) is discussed by Gudykunst and Nishida (2001). It is among the most important theories in the fields of communication and anxiety. The hypothesis contends that two of the key elements affecting our communication are worry and uncertainty. We are more likely to avoid communicating or to communicate in a defensive or aggressive manner when we are feeling uneasy or uncertain. The social constructivist theory by Vygotsky (1978) comes last. According to the theory, knowledge is actively generated by learners through their relationships with others rather than being something that is passively passed from teacher to student. Many educational strategies, including problem-based learning, project-based learning, and collaborative learning, have been developed using it. These methods

place a strong emphasis on the value of social contact in the learning process and give students the chance to build knowledge via their interactions with others.

There have been some previously related studies on speaking strategies. Zhang, Q. (2017) investigated the effects of speaking strategies on the speaking performance of Chinese EFL learners. It was found that students who were taught using a combination of direct and indirect strategies made significantly more progress in their speaking skills than those who were taught using only one type of strategy. Similarly, Zhang, L. J. (2012) investigated the effects of metacognitive strategies on the speaking performance of Chinese EFL learners. The study found that Chinese EFL learners who used metacognitive strategies, such as setting goals, planning, monitoring their progress, and evaluating their learning, improved their speaking skills more than those who did not use these strategies. The study also found that learners who used metacognitive strategies were more likely to be motivated and engaged in their learning. They were also more likely to believe in their ability to succeed. These factors may have also contributed to the improvements in their speaking skills. Another study, Syafryadin (2020) made a research on students' strategies in learning speaking: Experience of two Indonesian schools. This study examined the speaking strategies used by students in two Indonesian schools. The study found that students used a variety of strategies, including practicing with friends, watching English movies, and listening to English songs. Norimah et.al, (2014) investigated the use of indirect strategies in speaking English among students from the *Mengubah Destini Anak Bangsa* (MDAB) program in Malaysia. The findings showed that social strategies were the most frequently used, followed by metacognitive, and affective strategies. Oxford (2003) raised an issue on language learning strategies (LLS) for teachers' notions and practice. The findings showed that teachers

generally have a positive view of language learning strategies, but they often lack knowledge about how to effectively teach them. The last study, Hoang & Ngue (2015) discussed teaching English speaking strategies. The study provided a framework for teaching speaking strategies and outlined a number of specific strategies that can be used to improve learners' speaking skills.

In Indonesian context, teaching speaking at vocational high schools can be a challenge. This is because Indonesian students often have a fear of speaking English in front of others. They may be afraid of making mistakes, or they may not feel confident in their ability to speak the language. Therefore, knowing what speaking strategies to adopt in order to help students have better communication performance are important to be investigated. None of the previous studies focuses on detail elaboration on the use of specific indirect strategies in English speaking class for Indonesian contexts. Therefore, this study is in purpose to investigate this area, expecting that the results of the study add some more insights and contribute additional indirect strategies to help students become better speakers.

3. Methods

3.1. Participants and context

All of the students at SMK Ma'arif V Kebumen, namely those in the 12th grade, during the academic year 2022–2023 made up the study's population. The research sample in this study consisted of 60 students. Population, according to Lind et al. (2017), is the total number of individuals or objects that share a set of traits. A sample, on the other hand, denotes a portion or subset of the population as a whole. The study looked into how the students used English-speaking strategies to learn. It happened in March 2023.

3.2.   Material

Data were gathered for this study using interviews and questionnaires. According to Brown (2001), questionnaires are written things that ask readers to respond to a list of questions or statements by writing down their answers or making a choice from the options presented. The goal of a questionnaire is to gather information on the backgrounds, actions, attitudes, and viewpoints of a large number of people. The closed-ended surveys were chosen because of their simplicity. The questionnaire is modified based on the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Acquisition) developed by Oxford in 1990 to identify language acquisition strategies for speaking. There are a total of 14 components, which reflected speaking activities for indirect strategies.

3.3.   Data Collection and analysis

In this study, a survey research design was used. According to Cresswell (2012), researchers can utilize a survey study design to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or features of the population. This tactic may or may not be applied to the entire community. Through focus groups and questionnaires, a researcher gathers quantitative, numerical data in this process. The information is then statistically examined to identify patterns in the responses to the questions and to test various theories or research issues.

Table 1 Distribution of questionnaire items

No	Strategies	Number of items	Total of items
1.	Metacognitive strategies	1-4	4
2.	Affective strategies	5-9	5
3.	Social strategies	10-14	5
	Total		14

The distribution of students' indirect speaking techniques is shown in Table 1. Following the steps shown in Table 2, a scale rating was used to assign a value to each item:

Table 2 Likert Scale

Option	Rating
Always (A)	5
Usually (U)	4
Sometimes (S)	3
Rarely (R)	2
Never (N)	1

Table 2 displays the rating scale that participants can use to answer each survey question. The respondent never uses a certain strategy, therefore the rating scale starts at 1. The highest grade of 5, which was 5, demonstrated that the respondent employed the strategy consistently. After completing the likert scale with the students' replies, the researcher totaled the central tendency. The information was broken down into five categories for analysis: very high (80 to 100%), high (60 to 79%), medium (40 to 59%), low (20 to 39%), and extremely low (0-19%). An interview was conducted in addition to the questionnaire to enhance the data collected.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are of utmost importance when conducting survey research. To ensure the well-being and rights of the research participants at the Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen, several ethical guidelines were applied throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from each student and the school principal, ensuring that they were fully aware of the purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits of participating in the survey. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by assigning unique identifiers to the participants and storing their data securely. Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants were given the right to withdraw at any point without facing any negative consequences. The data collected were used solely for research purposes and reported in an aggregated and anonymized manner, protecting the privacy of the participants.

3.5. Limitations to the Study

While conducting survey research on speaking strategies at the Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations that may impact the generalizability and validity of the findings. Firstly, the sample size of 60 students from the third grade may not fully represent the entire student population, limiting the ability to draw broader conclusions. Additionally, the study's reliance on self-reported data through surveys may introduce response bias or social desirability effects, potentially influencing the accuracy of the obtained information. Furthermore, the research is limited to a specific time frame in March 2023, which might not capture long-term or seasonal variations in speaking strategies. Despite these limitations, the findings

from this survey research can still provide valuable insights and serve as a foundation for future investigations in this area.

4. Results and Discussion

In his book Strategies in Learning and Using a Second Language, Andrew D. Cohen (2011) provides a comprehensive overview of language learning strategies. He defines strategies as what learners do consciously or unconsciously to facilitate their own learning. He also identifies three main types of strategies, namely metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. The metacognitive strategies involve thinking about one's own learning process. For example, learners can set goals, plan what they are going to say before they speak, monitor their own progress while they are speaking, and evaluate their performance after they have finished speaking. Second, the affective strategies are techniques that learners use to manage their emotions and motivation. They can help learners to reduce anxiety, increase confidence, and stay motivated. Some common affective strategies include: self-talk, visualization, cooperating with others, taking break, and rewarding oneself. Last, the social strategies involve interacting with others in a supportive and encouraging environment. For example, learners can pair up with a partner to practice speaking, work in small groups to complete a project, or join a club or organization where they can practice speaking with other learners. Some list activities for social strategies are finding a language partner, joining a language community, watching videos of native speakers, participating in an online forum or discussion, and seeking out opportunities to speak in public. Cohen argues that language learning strategies are essential for successful language learning. He provides evidence from research showing that learners who use strategies are more likely to achieve their language learning goals.

4.1. Survey Results on Metacognitive Strategies

In order to see the use of metacognitive strategies, a survey was conducted. The results can be seen as in table 3.

Table 3 Survey Results on the Use of Metacognitive Strategies

No	Strategies items	N (1)	R (2)	S (3)	U (4)	A (5)	The Number of Participants	CT %	Interpreta-tion
1	Setting goals	0	0	5	25	30	60	88.3	Very high
2	Planning	0	0	9	23	28	60	86.3	Very high
3	Monitoring progress	0	7	22	26	5	60	69.6	High
4	Evaluating	0	5	20	25	10	60	73.3	High
							Average	79.4	High

Notes: N=never, R=rare, S=sometimes, U=usually, A=always, CT=central tendency

Table 3 presents data on the use of metacognitive strategies by 60 students at Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen. The survey asked learners how often they used each of the four metacognitive strategies: setting goals, planning, monitoring progress, and evaluating learning. The results show that learners use these strategies very frequently, with an average central tendency of 79.4%.

The table also shows that the most frequently used metacognitive strategy is setting goals with the average central tendency of 88.3% which means very high category in the frequency of usage. This is followed by planning, monitoring progress, and evaluating learning. The high use of metacognitive strategies by language learners is a positive finding. Metacognitive strategies can be an effective way to improve language learning. They can help learners to stay focused, motivated, and on track. The specific findings of the survey can be interpreted as follows:

a. Setting goals: The high number of learners who said they "always" or "usually" set goals indicates that this is a very popular metacognitive strategy among language

learners. Setting goals can help learners to stay focused and motivated, and it can also help them to make more effective use of their time and resources.

b. Planning: The high number of learners who said they "always" or "usually" plan their learning indicates that this is another popular metacognitive strategy. Planning can help learners to make the most of their time and resources, and it can also help them to identify areas where they need to improve.

c. Monitoring progress: The lower number of learners who said they "always" or "usually" monitor their progress indicates that this is a metacognitive strategy that is used less frequently than setting goals and planning. However, monitoring progress can be an important way for learners to track their own progress and to identify areas where they need to improve.

d. Evaluating learning: The lower number of learners who said they "always" or "usually" evaluate their learning indicates that this is a metacognitive strategy that is used even less frequently than monitoring progress. However, evaluating learning can be an important way for learners to assess their own proficiency and to identify areas where they need to focus their learning.

Overall, the findings of the survey suggest that language learners use metacognitive strategies very frequently. This is a positive finding, as metacognitive strategies can be an effective way to improve language learning. It is in line with a study by Zhang (2012) that found that Chinese EFL learners who used metacognitive strategies improved their speaking skills more than those who did not use these strategies. In addition, Chamot (2005) said that metacognitive strategies help learners to become more aware of their own learning processes and to make better decisions about how to learn.

Last, Zimmerman, B. J. (2000) explained the importance for students to actively manage their own learning. According to the SRL hypothesis, learners generate their own knowledge through a process of planning, monitoring, and assessing their learning rather than being passive consumers of information. This is in accordance with the interview results that students need to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning since they have expectation to succeed learning.

4.2. Survey Results on Affective Strategies

In order to see the use of affective strategies, a survey was conducted. The results can be seen as in table 4.

Table 4 Survey Results on the Use of Affective Strategies

No	Strategies items	N (1)	R (2)	S (3)	U (4)	A (5)	The Number of Participants	CT %	Interpreta-tion
1	Self-talk	0	4	32	16	8	60	69.3	High
2	Visualization	0	9	25	18	8	60	68.3	High
3	Cooperating with others	0	3	22	25	10	60	74	High
4	Taking breaks	0	1	21	32	6	60	74.3	High
5	Rewarding oneself	2	12	27	14	5	60	62.7	High
							Average	69.7	High

Notes: N=never, R=rare, S=sometimes, U=usually, A=always, CT=central tendency

The table 4 shows the survey results on the use of affective strategies by 60 students at Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen. The strategies are self-talk, visualization, cooperating with others, taking breaks, and rewarding oneself. The participants were asked to indicate how often they used each strategy on a scale of never (N), rare (R), sometimes (S), usually (U), and always (A).

The table shows that all of the strategies were used by a significant number of

participants. The most commonly used strategies were self-talk (CT=69.3%), visualization (CT=68.3%), cooperating with others (CT=74%), and taking breaks (CT=74.3%). The least commonly used strategy was rewarding oneself (CT=62.7%). The average CT value for all of the strategies was 69.7%, which indicates that the participants used affective strategies to a high degree. This suggests that affective strategies can be an effective way to improve language learning. The table also shows that the interpretation of the CT values is "high" for all of the strategies. This means that the participants used each strategy at a level that is considered to be effective for language learning. Overall, the table shows that affective strategies are used by students to a high degree and that they can be an effective way to improve language learning. Gudykunst, W. B., and Nishida, T. (2001) hypothesized that two of the key elements affecting our communication are worry and uncertainty. We are more likely to avoid communicating when we are feeling uneasy or uncertain. Using affective strategies help learners manage their emotions and motivation during learning. This correlated to the results of interview that students used the affective strategies to build their confidence and to avoid anxiety. They think that if they are relaxed, learning is more enjoyable.

4.3. Survey Results on Social Strategies

In order to see the use of social strategies, a survey was conducted. The results can be seen as in table 5.

Table 5 Survey Results on the Use of Social Strategies

No	Strategies items	N (1)	R (2)	S (3)	U (4)	A (5)	The Number of Participants	CT %	Interpreta-tion
1	Finding a partner	0	5	11	34	10	60	76.3	High
2	Joining an English	14	10	25	8	3	60	52	Medium

	community								
3	Watching videos of native speakers	17	16	20	7	0	60	43.3	Medium
4	Participating in an online forum or discussion	53	5	2	0	0	60	23	Low
5	Seeking out opportunities to speak in public	23	19	11	6	1	60	41	Medium
							Average	47.1	Medium

Notes: N=never, R=rare, S=sometimes, U=usually, A=always, CT=central tendency

Table 5 shows the survey results on the use of social strategies by 60 students at Vocational High School of Ma'arif V Kebumen. The strategies are finding a partner, joining an English community, watching videos of native speakers, participating in an online forum or discussion, and seeking out opportunities to speak in public. The participants were asked to indicate how often they used each strategy on a scale of never (N), rare (R), sometimes (S), usually (U), and always (A).

The table shows that the most commonly used social strategy is finding a partner (CT=76.3%). This is followed by joining an English community (CT=52%), watching videos of native speakers (CT=43.3%), and seeking out opportunities to speak in public (CT=41%). The least commonly used social strategy is participating in an online forum or discussion (CT=23%).

The average CT value for all of the strategies is 47.1, which indicates that the participants used social strategies to a medium degree. This suggests that social strategies can be an effective way to improve speaking skills, but they may not be the only or most effective strategy. Some other specific finding might be interpreted as follows:

a. Finding a partner is the most commonly used social strategy. This is likely because it is a relatively easy and low-pressure way to practice speaking.

b. Joining an English community is also a commonly used social strategy. This can be a great way to connect with other language learners and practice speaking in a supportive environment.

c. Watching videos of native speakers is another commonly used social strategy. This can be a helpful way to improve pronunciation and fluency.

d. Participating in an online forum or discussion is the least commonly used social strategy. This may be because it can be more challenging to participate in an online discussion than in a face-to-face conversation.

e. Seeking out opportunities to speak in public is a medium-commonly used social strategy. This can be a helpful way to improve confidence and fluency, but it can also be anxiety-provoking for some learners.

Overall, the data in Table 5 suggests that social strategies can be an effective way to improve speaking skills. This finding correlates with Vygotsky (1978) who points out some educational strategies including collaborative learning. This strategy places a strong emphasis on the value of social contact in the learning process and gives students the chance to build knowledge via their interactions with others. However, it is important to note that the most effective strategy for one learner may not be the most effective strategy for another learner. It is also important to use social strategies in combination with other learning strategies. In accordance to this finding, the interview results proved that students used variety of social strategies since it help them build both knowledge and relationship with other learners.

5.　　Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, it is concluded that metacognitive, affective, and social strategies can all be effective in improving speaking skills. By using a variety of strategies, learners can address different aspects of language learning and make the process more enjoyable and effective.

Metacognitive strategies can help learners to set goals, plan their learning, and evaluate their progress. Affective strategies can help learners to manage their emotions and motivation. Social strategies can help learners to get feedback, practice speaking in a variety of contexts, and build confidence.

When learners are able to find strategies that work for them and that they enjoy using, they are more likely to stick with language learning and to see improvement in their skills.

6.　　Acknowledgement

7.　　References

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