

**LEARNING STRATEGIES USED TO IMPROVE SPEAKING
SKILL: A CASE STUDY ON STUDENTS OF ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT, MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF
SURAKARTA**



RESEARCH PAPER

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by

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Studying English is not easy for many Indonesian students. It is very complex and it has four skills that must be mastered if someone wants to be successful in learning English. Those are speaking skill, reading skill, listening skill, and writing skill. Each of them has close relation. The difficulty of each skill is relative, and it depends on the students. Speaking as one of the language skills is not an easy skill to master. To be successful in mastering speaking skill, someone must have strategy. Cohen (1998: 18-19) states that there are many strategies that can be used by students to improve speaking for example before-speaking strategies including lowering anxiety (e.g. relaxation techniques and positive self-talks), preparing and planning (identifying the goal and purpose of task, activating background knowledge, predicting what is going to happen and planning possible responses).

Learning strategies are procedures undertaken by the learner in order to make their own language learning as effective as possible. O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 89-90) state that:

focusing on selected aspects of new information, analyzing, and monitoring informatung during the encoding process, evaluating, the learning when it is completed, or assuring oneself that the learning will be successful as a way to allay anxiety.

Thus, the strategies have to be learned in exactly the same way. In learning English, the students have various strategies; they will apply their own strategies. Here, the writer concerns with the strategies used by the students of English Department Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta to improve speaking skill.

In English Department of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, there are four competences to improve speaking skill. The first competence in speaking I is the students are expected to make an appropriate response related to the interpersonal communication based on social rules for language use. The second competence in speaking II is the students are expected to use an appropriate expression related to the everyday life situations. The next competence in speaking III is the students are expected to converse smoothly by using Conversation Techniques. And the last competence in speaking IV is the students are expected to converse smoothly by using expression in business. This subject is important to support student's major competence as English teacher.

According to *Buku Pedoman 2005-2006*, English Department has the vision and mission statement. The English Department vision is:

The English Department is directed to be the center of excellence in learning English and developing human resources. By the center of excellence in learning English is meant that the existence of the English Department and the role it plays are recognized, needed, and preferred by the wider community at various levels. By the center of excellence in developing human resources is meant that the outputs the English Department produces should be professional, critical, analytical, innovative, creative, independent, and competitive,

in addition to having entrepreneurship, fighting spirit, and good conduct.

The mission statement says that:

The English Department wants to accomplish is to advance English language learning, to produce outputs, and to give services through education, research, and community services.

Based on the vision and mission above, English Department wants to produce the students who have good ability especially in speaking skill. But, in fact some phenomena happen in the process of reaching the goal. For example in the class, when teaching speaking, the lecturer will find many students who have good ability, many students who have middle ability, and may be they will find many students who have bad ability in speaking. That phenomenon depends on each student, and they are also influenced by the students learning style.

In Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta especially in English Department, there are some ways to improve speaking skill, for example, SEGA and English Contest.

SEGA (Saturday English Gathering) is activity that's done every Saturday and must be followed by all of students of English Department in the first and second semester. In this activity, the tutor makes some groups that consist of ten people in order to be easier to control the activities of students. In SEGA, the tutor tries to improve students speaking with dialog, discussion, conversations and tells about something in English. It does not only in door

but also out door. This activity makes teaching-learning process more relax and interesting.

The different ways to improve speaking skill is English Contest. It means to show their speaking ability. But in a fact, not all of students have confidence to do it. They are anxious, nervous, clumsy tongue when they speak English. Likewise in the classroom, they are shy to talk with their friends in English. They still use mix language, it is Indonesian-English. So, to be able to speak English well it depends on the students and their strategy.

Realizing the phenomena above, the writer is interested in knowing more deeply about the learning strategies used by the students of English Department Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta to improve speaking skill. Therefore the writer concerns in discussing *Learning Strategies Used to Improve Speaking Skill: A Case Study of Students on English Department Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta*.

B. Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the writer states that the problems of the study is what are the learning strategies used by students of English Department Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta to improve Speaking Skill?

C. Limitation of the Study

In this research the writer analyzes learning strategies used by students of English Department Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta to improve Speaking Skill based on the classification of learning strategies proposed by O' Malley and Chamot. Those students are mentioned below.

1. S1 is a student who has good ability in Speaking Skill.

The value of class assessment are 3,1-4,0

2. S2 is a student who has middle ability in Speaking Skill.

The value of class assessment are 2,7-3,0

3. S3 is a student who has poor ability in Speaking Skill.

The value of class assessment are 2,4-2,6

D. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to describe the learning strategies used by students of English Department Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta to Improve Speaking Skill.

E. Benefit of the Study

It is known that everything done always has advantages; there are two benefits, as follows:

1. Practical benefit

- a. The finding of the research will be useful for the student of English Department Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

b. It also gives considerations for university-level instructor of English Department especially in improving Speaking Skill.

2. Theoretical benefit

This research will give a contribution for other researchers who are interested in analyzing and investigating the learning strategies of foreign language learners.

F. Research Paper Organization

The organization of the research paper is given in order to make the reader understand the content of the paper, as follows:

Chapter I is introduction which consists of the background of the study, problem of the study, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study and research paper organization.

Chapter II is review of related literature. It contains review of previous study, and some related studies which deal with notion of learning, notion of strategy, notion of learning strategy, classification of learning strategy, and the last is notion of speaking skill.

Chapter III is research method. In this chapter, the writer presents research design, subject and object of the research, data and data source, method of collecting data, and technique for analyzing data.

Chapter IV is analysis and discussion. In this chapter the writer shows the implementation of learning strategies in improving speaking skill used by

students of English Department Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. At this occasion, the writer also presents the finding of the research.

Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion. In this chapter the writer presents conclusion and gives the suggestion taken from the result of the research.