



An Analysis of Learning Strategies in English Speaking Skills Among Second Year Students at English Department UNP

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Abstract

Speaking plays a crucial role in the learning process, serving as a vital channel for effective interaction. The importance of speaking in learning is emphasized by recognizing language learning strategies (LLS) as valuable tools for enhancing proficiency in a foreign language. This research aims to analyze the learning strategies employed by second-year students in their speaking classes within the English department at UNP, majoring in English education. The study focuses on English education students enrolled in 2022, with a total population of 241 students from 10 classes. Using simple random sampling, 5 students from each class were selected as the sample, resulting in a total of 50 participants. A questionnaire, encompassing six aspects of language learning strategies (cognitive, metacognitive, memory, compensatory, affective, and social) adapted from Oxford's (1990) framework, was distributed to students in speaking classes. The questionnaires were administered online through Google Forms. The data analysis revealed that the strategy students most commonly employed in their speaking classes pertained to the cognitive aspect of language learning. The ranking of the aspects, from the first to the sixth, was cognitive, social, memory, metacognitive, compensatory, and affective.

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is crucial in learning, serving as a key means of communication (Amalia & Husna, 2020). It allows learners to gather information, express ideas, and contribute to knowledge production and comprehension (Emirza & Sahril, 2021). The importance of speaking highlights the significance of language learning strategies (LLS) as efficient means for improving foreign language skills. According to Oxford (1990), language learning strategies are particular techniques that simplify, accelerate, and enhance the learning process, making it more enjoyable, self-guided, effective, and adaptable.

Lestari & Fatimah (2020) explored strategies for language learning employed by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) student teachers at Universitas Negeri Padang. They assessed the overall usage of strategies, identifying the most and least preferred ones based on Oxford's framework. Focusing on international classes from 2017 to 2019, they discovered that metacognitive strategies were used the most frequently, while affective strategies were utilized the least. The findings highlighted the importance of these strategies in enhancing learner awareness and influencing teaching methods.

Meanwhile, this research focused on second-year English education students at UNP enrolled in 2022, specifically those in speaking classes, using Oxford's (1990) learning strategy aspects. Unlike previous research, speaking classes were chosen due to students' issues with speaking English. The goal was to analyze learning strategies relevant to these classes. Second-year students were chosen for their courses in speaking, like Speaking for Formal Interaction, Speaking for Informal Interaction, and Public Speaking, providing fresh insights into diverse learning strategy applications.

Students in the English Education Department at UNP faced difficulties in speaking. Yumiza & Fatimah (2022) found that nearly 70% of pronunciation errors were made by students in speaking classes. Nasution & Amri (2021) reported frequent subject-verb agreement errors among second-year students. Najla & Fatimah (2020) identified 16 types of grammatical errors in EFL learners' speaking. Research also highlighted speaking anxiety as a significant issue, with studies by some experts, showing varying levels of anxiety, largely influenced by classroom management (Handayani et al., 2020; Plantika & Adnan, 2021; Qurnia & Marlina, 2020). These results prompted an examination of the learning strategies employed by second-year students in English speaking courses at UNP, using Oxford's six categories of learning strategies as a framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking is crucial for language learning and future success (Kayi, 2006; Rido & Sari, 2018). Participation in speaking activities builds confidence and aids in achieving fluency (Qhobosheane & Phindane, 2022). Clear learning processes and adaptability in speaking classes are essential (James et al., 2019). Speaking involves using language to share thoughts and ideas verbally. Experts define it as producing organized verbal expressions to convey meaning (Nunan, 2003; Rickheit & Strohner, 2008).

Language learning involves acquiring a language through memorizing rules and facts to understand and use its structure (Shen, 2010). According to Oxford (1990), it involves formal instruction to understand language rules, but this doesn't guarantee fluency. Shen (2010) defines it as a cooperative process where teachers and learners interact, enhancing oral practice and effectiveness. Jia (2003) adds that it organizes social interactions to meet communication needs in the target language.

Learning strategies are techniques or cognitive approaches that students employ to enhance their learning (Oxford, 1990). (Scrivener, 2010) described it as frameworks for educators to design activities that meet individual and group needs. Cohen (2014) noted that learning strategies enhance both teaching and learning, especially when it comes to acquiring English as a foreign language, and include cognitive, metacognitive, social, and grammatical approaches. Yusuf et al. (2021)

defined learning strategies are deliberate actions selected by individuals to oversee and guide their process of language acquisition. Yoong & Hashim (2023) highlighted that these strategies enhance understanding, expression, and retention of linguistic content. Oxford's theory on Language Learning Strategies (LLS), established in 1990, are well-regarded, especially within the context of learning English as a second language (Lestari & Fatimah, 2020). Oxford (1990) categorized language learning strategies into six aspects: cognitive, metacognitive, memory, compensatory, affective, and social. According to Oxford, this strategy framework is not only more thorough and detailed but also more methodical in linking individual strategies and strategy groups to each of the four language skills, including speaking.

1. Cognitive Aspect

Oxford (1990) stated that cognitive learning strategies involve mental processes used to understand and produce the target language. These activities encompass reasoning, analyzing, taking notes, summarizing, synthesizing, creating outlines, reorganizing information, applying skills in practical situations, and practicing structures and sounds formally (Oxford, 2003).

2. Metacognitive Aspect

Oxford (1990) defined metacognitive learning strategies as techniques for planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning. These include recognizing personal learning preferences, planning tasks, organizing materials, setting up study spaces and schedules, monitoring errors, and assessing task success (Oxford, 2003).

3. Memory Aspect

According to Oxford (1990), memory strategies help learners associate one language item with recalling memories. Oxford (2003) added that these strategies include using acronyms, rhymes, mental images, the keyword method, body movements, flashcards, or associating information with specific locations.

4. Compensatory Aspect

Compensation strategies aid language learners by filling gaps in grammar and vocabulary. Techniques involve employing synonyms, elaborating on absent terms, and incorporating gestures or filler words during speech (Oxford, 1990, 2003).

5. Affective Aspect

In language learning, the emotional aspect is key, affecting motivation, confidence, and anxiety (Oxford, 1990). Strategies like monitoring emotions, discussing feelings, and using techniques such as deep breathing or positive self-talk are linked to proficiency (Dreyer & Oxford, 1996; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995).

6. Social Aspect

Oxford (1990) described social learning strategies as involving interaction with others to enhance language learning. This includes active engagement, communication, and collaboration between learners and educators. Practices like asking questions, seeking clarification, conversing with native speakers, and exploring cultural norms aid collaboration and cultural understanding (Oxford, 2003).

METHOD

The research design employed descriptive quantitative methods to analyze learning strategies in English speaking classes at UNP, aiming to identify strategies enhancing students' speaking skills. The study focused on second-year English

education students, selecting 50 participants through simple random sampling. A questionnaire adapted from Oxford (1990) with 36 closed-ended questions assessed learning strategies, focusing on positive categories. Validity was ensured through expert assessment, and reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.902. Data collection involved setting up online questionnaire with the use of Google Forms, with analysis conducted using Likert scale scores in Microsoft Excel, calculating mean scores and categorizing student levels for interpretation. Percentage calculations from Google Forms aided strategy analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researcher examined the learning techniques employed by second-year students in the speaking class at the English Education Department of UNP. Using simple random sampling, 5 volunteers from each class were chosen to complete a questionnaire, totaling 50 students. The questionnaire was based on Oxford's theory, covering six aspects: cognitive, metacognitive, memory, compensatory, affective, and social, with 6 questions for each aspect, making 36 items in total. Students filled out the questionnaire through Google Forms, and their answers were rated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4 points. Additionally, percentage scores from Google Form were used to assess each aspect (Malini, 2022).

Result

The mean score for every aspect was assessed and ranked from highest to lowest. The questionnaire data subsequently presented as percentages for each aspect to facilitate further analysis. This method sought to determine how responses were distributed across the Likert scale categories: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

1. Cognitive Aspect

No.	Items	Percentage				Mean Score
		SA	A	D	SD	
1.	I start practice speaking in various situations to enhance my speaking skill.	48%	52%			3,48
2.	I try to practice my speaking like Native English speakers.	50%	48%	2%		3,48
3.	Using strategies like note-taking and summarizing helps me prepare to speak about different topics.	28%	60%	8%	4%	3,12
4.	Being aware of common speech patterns makes it simpler for me to speak.	50%	48%	2%		3,48
5.	I repeat silently to myself when someone is speaking English.	30%	56%	10%	4%	3,12
6.	When I learn speaking rules, I make sure to practice them in different situations to get better at using them.	34%	64%	2%		3,32
Total						3,33

The table presented indicates that the mean score for the students' cognitive aspect is 3.33, categorizing it as "very high" within the learning aspect suitability interval. Items 1, 2, 4, and 6 fall into the "very high" interval, while items 3 and 5 are in the "high" interval. Thus, the cognitive aspect is mostly categorized as very high based on the total mean score. Most participants agreed with using certain learning strategies, with item 1 receiving unanimous agreement: 100% of students did not disagree or strongly disagree. Specifically, 48% of students strongly agreed and 52% agreed with practicing speaking in various situations to enhance their skills. Items 2 and 4 showed consistency, with 50% of students strongly agreeing, 48% agreeing, and 2% disagreeing. In general, all respondents consider item 1 to be a highly endorsed learning strategy.

2. Metacognitive Aspect

No.	Items	Percentage				Mean Score
		SA	A	D	SD	
1.	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	68%	30%	2%		3,66
2.	Reading books and talking to people helps me get better at speaking.	42%	54%	4%		3,38
3.	I try to find the opportunities to speak English with others as much as possible.	36%	50%	14%		3,22
4.	I notice my mistakes in speaking English.	54%	42%	4%		3,50
5.	I arrange my schedule to improve my speaking skill.	4%	48%	42%	6%	2,50
6.	I check my progress in learning speaking and try to evaluate myself.	20%	60%	18%	2%	2,98
Total						3,21

The total mean score obtained is 3.21, categorizing the learning aspect suitability as "high." Items 1, 2, and 4 are rated as "very high," while items 3 and 6 are "high." Item 5 falls into the "low" category, missing the "high" category by just 0.01 points. Thus, within the metacognitive aspect, item 5 is categorized as "low," but overall, the aspect is considered "high" based on the final mean score. Notably, 68% of students strongly agreed with item 1, with 30% agreeing and only 2% disagreeing, making it the highest agreed-upon item. For item 5, the agreement and disagreement percentages are nearly equal, with only 2% more students agreeing. This data underscores the high level of agreement on the metacognitive statements, particularly item 1, and the balanced responses to item 5.

3. Memory Aspect

No.	Items	Percentage				Mean Score
		SA	A	D	SD	
1.	Remembering words with sound and pictures makes it easier for me to speak.	56%	40%	4%		3,52

2.	The more I practice pronunciation formally, the better I become at expressing myself verbally.	42%	54%	4%		3,38
3.	Practicing pronunciation formally not only helps me speak more clearly but also boosts my confidence in speaking situations.	44%	50%	6%		3,38
4.	When I remember new words through sound associations, like rhymes, I can recall them quickly when speaking.	28%	60%	12%		3,16
5.	Practicing with rhymes help me speak better because it makes learning words more fun.	22%	62%	16%		3,06
6.	Rhymes help me speak better by making it easier to remember how words sound.	26%	62%	12%		3,14
Total						3,27

The analysis of the table data reveals a mean score of 3.27 for the memory aspect, classifying it as "very high". Examining individual item scores, items 1, 2, and 3 fall into the "very high" category, while items 4, 5, and 6 are categorized as "high", resulting in a balanced distribution. However, none of the items fall into the "low" or "very low" categories. Despite no strong disagreements, items 1 and 2 had 96% agreement, while items 4 and 6 had 88% agreement, indicating a strong consensus among respondents towards statements related to memory. Therefore, the memory aspect is conclusively categorized as "very high".

4. Compensatory Aspect

No.	Items	Percentage				Mean Score
		SA	A	D	SD	
1.	When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.	36%	58%	4%	2%	3,28
2.	I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.	30%	52%	14%	4%	3,08
3.	I use other similar words when I do not know the exact word for my English speaking.	48%	50%	2%		3,46
4.	I select topics of conversation in English.	14%	66%	16%	4%	2,90
5.	Observing nonverbal cues like tone of voice and gestures helps me improve my speaking skills.	32%	58%	10%		3,22
6.	Simplifying message in a new language helps me speak more clearly and be understood by others.	32%	64%	4%		3,28
Total						3,20

The data reveals that the compensatory aspect achieved a high mean score of 3.20, indicating its overall strength, although not as pronounced as the memory aspect. Within this aspect, items 1, 3, and 6 fall into the very high category, while items 2, 4,

and 5 are categorized as high, demonstrating an equal distribution without any items falling into low categories. Despite this, the compensatory aspect remains in the high category overall. Examining responses further, there is a notable agreement among students, with most responses falling into the "agree" category, particularly evident in item 3, where only 2% expressed disagreement. However, item 4 saw the highest percentage of agreement at 66%, albeit with 16% disagreement, indicating some variation in responses for specific items but an overall consensus on the compensatory aspect.

5. Affective Aspect

No.	Items	Percentage				Mean Score
		SA	A	D	SD	
1.	I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.	46%	48%	4%	2%	3,38
2.	I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.	44%	50%	6%		3,38
3.	I reward myself or treat when I do well in English.	28%	48%	18%	6%	2,98
4.	I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.	28%	48%	20%	4%	3,00
5.	Telling myself positive things helps me feel more confident when speaking in the new language.	48%	48%	4%		3,44
6.	Using a checklist helps me understand why I want to speak in the new language, making it easier for me to start conversations.	24%	54%	18%	4%	2,98
Total						3,19

The total mean score for the affective aspect, 3.19, falls into the high category within suitable learning aspects, with a balanced distribution across items 1, 2, and 5 falling into the very high category and items 3, 4, and 6 in the high category. Despite similarities to the compensatory aspect, its mean score remains lower. In terms of student responses, items 3 and 4 show a 76% agreement rate, while item 5 exhibits a 48% agreement rate, with only 4% disagreement, indicating a strong consensus among students regarding these affective aspects.

6. Social Aspect

No.	Items	Percentage				Mean Score
		SA	A	D	SD	
1.	I practice English with other students.	34%	54%	6%	6%	3,16
2.	Asking questions in English with others is important for getting better at speaking.	42%	58%			3,42
3.	I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.	32%	50%	16%	2%	3,12

4.	I ask someone to speak slowly when I cannot catch the meaning of English Sentences.	38%	54%	4%	4%	3,26
5.	I ask someone to correct my mistake in Speaking.	44%	48%	6%	2%	3,34
6.	Asking if something is correct or if a rule fits helps me become more skilled at speaking.	60%	38%	2%		3,58
Total						3,31

The mean score of 3.31 in the social aspect indicates a "very high" category, with items 2, 4, 5, and 6 falling within this range and items 1 and 3 classified as "high." Similarly, the affective aspect predominantly falls into the "very high" category, as reflected in the total mean score. Moreover, the percentage analysis reveals alignment between the social and cognitive aspects, particularly evident in item 2, where 100% of students agreed. Additionally, items 4 and 5 exhibited identical distributions, with 92% agreement and 8% disagreement in both cases, suggesting notable alignment between these aspects. If these aspects are ordered in a table, they can be seen as follows:

No.	The Aspects	Mean Score	Level of Frequency Use
1	Cognitive	3,33	Very High
2	Social	3,31	Very High
3	Memory	3,27	Very High
4	Metacognitive	3,21	High
5	Compensatory	3,20	High
6	Affective	3,19	High
Total		3,25	High

The cognitive aspect was the most frequently used learning strategy in English-speaking classes at UNP, with a very high mean score of 3.33. The social aspect followed closely, with a mean score just 0.02 lower. The memory, metacognitive, and compensatory aspects had similar mean scores, slightly higher than the affective aspect, which was the least utilized but still used fairly often. Overall, the usage of learning strategy aspects was high.

Discussion

The study discovered that students in English-speaking classes at UNP predominantly utilized cognitive strategies, achieving an average score of 3.33 and a full agreement rate of 100%. Social strategies followed closely. The affective aspect, although scoring lowest at 3.19, still fell within the high category. The highest agreement, 68%, was for a metacognitive item. Overall, cognitive strategies were predominant, but within metacognitive strategies, students showed strong preference for specific learning strategies. This reflects the learning preferences of English Department students at UNP.

Studies by Sinurat (2021) and Basalama et al. (2020) indicated that students' learning strategies predominantly focused on the cognitive aspect, with note-taking being the most common. In Basalama's research, 51.4% of students favored note-

taking, while this latest study showed an increase to 60%. However, the most agreed-upon strategy among UNP's English-speaking class students was practicing speaking rules in various situations, with 64% agreement. Malini (2022) and Syafrudin (2020) found that metacognitive strategies, especially organizing and evaluating learning, were also widely used. In recent research, 60% of students favored evaluation in the metacognitive aspect, while 68% agreed on the significance of being attentive when someone is communicating in English. This aligns with Alhaisoni (2012), who noted that students sought to improve their English by actively engaging with proficient speakers, highlighting the role of interaction in language development.

Previous research by Lestari & Fatimah (2020) and Lestari & Wahyudin (2020) on international students at UNP discovered that metacognitive strategies were the most commonly utilized, while affective strategies were the least. However, in 2022, cognitive strategies emerged as the most frequently employed among English-speaking students, including international ones, while affective strategies remained the least used. Lestari and Wahyudin suggested that students might not feel the need for affective strategies due to a lack of perceived issues or unawareness of these strategies. The high mean score for social strategies indicates their importance in addressing affective problems. According to Suryabrata (2014) and Cohen (2014), learning strategies are rooted in cognitive science, explaining why educational institutions often emphasize cognitive approaches, as seen in the dominant strategies chosen by UNP's speaking class students.

To address pronunciation and grammar errors in second-year English education students at UNP, metacognitive and compensatory learning strategies should be enhanced. Metacognitive strategies help monitor errors, while compensatory strategies, like using gestures, bridge grammar gaps, ultimately improving overall language learning.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the learning strategies in English-speaking classrooms for English education students enrolled in 2022 at UNP, it was found that the cognitive aspect was the most frequently applied strategy. Students heavily relied on cognitive strategies to enhance their language learning, particularly in speaking classes. The aspects ranked as follows: cognitive, social, memory, metacognitive, compensatory, and affective. Despite the affective aspect having the lowest average score, it was still considered important. To address pronunciation and grammar errors, enhancing metacognitive and compensatory strategies is necessary. The study revealed that all aspects from Oxford's theory were utilized, although its findings might differ with a larger sample size and a detailed examination of learning outcomes.

Based on the study's findings, several recommendations emerge to enhance benefits for students, lecturers, and researchers. Students should focus on metacognitive and compensatory strategies to improve their speaking skills. Lecturers are encouraged to incorporate these strategies into their teaching methods to help students develop stronger speaking skills. Future studies should tackle the limitations of this research by investigating a larger sample size and evaluating the effectiveness of the learning strategies employed. Comparing students' speaking skills can provide insights into effective strategies, refining language education for all stakeholders.

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