



# A Retrospective Study on English Teachers' Strategies to Improve Students' Speaking Fluency

Bunga Yolandita Siahaan<sup>1</sup>, Cindi Rajagukguk<sup>2</sup>, Erikson Saragih<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>[bungasiahaan09@gmail.com](mailto:bungasiahaan09@gmail.com), <sup>2</sup>[cindirajagukguk35@gmail.com](mailto:cindirajagukguk35@gmail.com), <sup>3</sup>[eriksonsaragih@usu.ac.id](mailto:eriksonsaragih@usu.ac.id)

<sup>1,2,3</sup>English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,  
Universitas Prima Indonesia, Medan

Received: 2022-11-21 Accepted: 2022-12-31

DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v10i2.3492

## Abstract

A retrospective study on English teachers' strategies to improve student fluency describes strategies implemented by teachers to enhance student fluency. It is also the most effective strategy for improving the speaking ability of students. Whereas there are many studies on teachers' speaking skills in Indonesia, there are still few studies argue teachers' speaking strategies to improve students' speaking skills. The purpose of this study is to find strategies that teachers can apply to enhance their students' fluency in English and effective strategies that can be used in learning to improve their students' fluency. This research method uses the qualitative research method and survey design. As a research tool, researcher used a questionnaire that was distributed to 10 English teachers who were used as respondents or research subjects by the researchers. The researchers then collected responses from the questionnaire, and from the results of the data collected, the researchers found that the strategies used by teachers had a significant impact on improving students' fluency. The methods used by teachers should be effective and understandable to students. Similar to, use of media to support achievement of learning indicators. Furthermore, teachers must be able to invite students to take an active role in learning by motivating them. Based on this research, we can conclude that speaking is one of the basic skills that language learners must master. Strategies employed by teachers have a significant impact on student fluency development.

**Keywords:** Fluency; Retrospective; Speaking; Teachers' strategies

## **Introduction**

Speaking is the ability to pronounce clear sounds and words to express, express, and convey thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Simply put, speaking can be defined as the ability to convey a message to others through spoken language. Speaking fluency is also an important component of communication competence, because the ability of speaking fluently can help the speaker to produce continuous speech without comprehension difficulties for the listener and to maintain the communicative ideas more effectively (Yang, Y. I., 2014:226).

Speaking is one of skill in English which is used to communicate with the other people from the other countries. English learners have to practice to speak with the native speakers of English to make their ability in speaking increase. To speak with the native speakers they have to master expression commonly used in their daily life (Areski, W. P., 2018: 17).

Speaking ability is generally important in human life. Good speaking skills can support all existing activities. Speaking has been considered as an important language skill for foreign learning. The importance of speaking skills is not only useful for teachers, but also useful for students as subjects and objects of learning. During school learning activities, teachers need to create experiences in different disciplines so that students can acquire speaking skills.

Asrori (2007) researched the Development of Arabic Speaking Skills by Indonesian Speaking Students in the Perspective of Foreign Language Learning. The results of this study show that there are types of language learning strategies in the development of Arabic, the form of language in speaking skills (complexity and fluency) and the function of illocution in speaking Arabic. Furthermore, Naimie (2007) with the title Field Dependent Students Language Learning Strategies Preference found that students have their own preferences in choosing language learning strategies. Students choose learning strategies that make learning easier in order to become better language learners. Given the lack of a relationship between tied learning and language learning strategies in the sample of students, then independent language learning strategies have been used by Iranian students.

This study is different because it uses a questionnaire system that will be sent to 10 English teachers from several institutions. The questionnaire will contain 10 questions prepared by the researcher to be filled out by the teachers.

The questions that will be compiled by researchers include Speaking topics, and teachers' strategies Based on an explanation of the phenomenon and supported by several research results related to the problem, researchers are interested in raising issues related to the strategy of developing speaking skills. Therefore, the researcher raised the title "A retrospective study of English teacher's strategies to improve student's speaking fluency".

In order to achieve this quality, teachers should be encouraged to use their energy, knowledge along with motivation. n the classroom, teachers play a central

role. Their wishes, styles and instructions control everything that happens in the classroom, and they typically speak most of the time (Alharbi, H. A., 2015: 106-107). Thus, teachers should play various roles according to the skills and needs of the learners (Selcuk Koran, 2015: 407). This topic is important to research because basically speaking is one of the basic components in English which is very important.

In this study, researchers can solve problems in the form of what teaching strategies are good to support the learning process in improving English speaking skills by teachers, so that the learning process can be carried out actively and fun for students. If a person is good at speaking, he or she will be able to stand in front of others and speak effectively (Huon & Em:13). And how do teachers overcome learning difficulties in students so that learning objectives are achieved and run well.

This research contributes to helping parties in learning English, especially on the topic of speaking. This research is expected to be a material and reference for teachers, researchers, and readers to pay more attention to teachers' strategies in improve speaking fluency.

Based on the background, writers formulated problems or research such: What strategies have been carried out by teachers in improving students' English-speaking fluency? What strategies are most effective in improving students' speaking fluency? Objective of this study is to find out about the teachers' strategies in improving students' English-speaking skills based on a Retrospective perspective. Significance of the Study Theoretically (1) Providing benefits for the development of science, improving the quality of education. (2) To increase knowledge related to improving students' English-speaking skills through teacher-implemented strategies. Practically for Teachers: (1) This research is expected to be used as material for information knowledge and guidance on teacher strategies in improving students' English-speaking skills. (2) This research is expected to be a material for consideration and reference for teachers or educators in improving students' English-speaking skills. For Students: This research is expected to be used as information material that can increase students' knowledge about strategies that can be used in improving their English-speaking skills.

## **Method**

Researchers used qualitative research methods with survey design. Qualitative research was a type of research where researchers collected data systematically naturally, or directly, and produced descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words, also through observing the behavior of people or groups, natural data and valid and verifiable data. Researchers conducted qualitative research methods through questionnaires and documentation. What strategies the teachers had implemented and whether the teachers were satisfied with the strategies they had applied.

In this study, the research subjects were 10 teachers of English subjects from several institutions, and usually raise the topic of Speaking to students, The Subjects was selected by researchers to find out what strategies have been applied in achieving the learning process of speaking English, the extent to which teachers could overcome obstacles to students who have difficulties in speaking English, what activities could help in improving students' speaking English skills , so that all learning materials could run well.

This research was conducted by researchers from March until September 2022 and the data collection process was conducted through a survey on Google form media. Researchers used Google Forms to make it easier for researchers to perform the data collection process and it could be carried out easily.

The research instrument was the method used to obtain information, so that information could be more easily processed. Research instruments were tools or facilities used by researchers in collecting data to facilitate their work and produced better, more accurate, complete, and 4 systematic results so that data was obtained that was easier to process.

In this study, researchers collected data through a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of four parts containing 10 questions, Part 1: Respondent's Identity (Email, Name, Education, Institution, and Study Period). Part 2: Teacher Preparation in Class (3 Questions); Part 3: Classroom Teaching Practice (4 Questions); Part 4: Teacher Evaluation / Evaluation (3 Questions). Researchers chose the google-form with the reason to make it easier for researchers to collect data, also because the google-form could be more easily accessed wherever and whenever. Google-form is part of the google-docs service which is very suitable for everyone to create online quizzes, forms, and surveys, which aim to collect certain information.

The data collection methods used by researchers in this study were questionnaires and documents. Below explained the meaning of each technique used by the researcher: (1) Questionnaire, this survey used a questionnaire in the form of open questions, and researchers chose to collect data based on the perceptions of each respondent. (2) Documentation, this research document was in the form of answers from respondents who participated in Google Forms.

The data analysis method used by the researchers in this study was the process of data collection from start to finish. Similar to the survey process, researchers

prepare 10 questions that participants answered via Google Forms and analyze their answers. If a participants' responses are unsatisfactory for the researcher, Researchers chose what was important and what they should learn, and drew conclusions that are easy for themselves and others to understand.

Based on the explanation above, the data analysis in this study was divided into several components, namely as follows: (1) Data Reduction, as a material to clarify data reduction in this study, researchers selected each data obtained through questionnaires and documentation and held discussions with other researchers to obtain accurate results. (2) Data Display, after the data was selected by the researcher, the researcher arranged the selection results systematically, making it easier for researchers to conclude the data obtained. (3) Conclusions, findings could be in the form of a description or description of an object sothat after research it became clear. it could be in the form of casual or interactive relationships, hypotheses, or theories. In the end, researchers used data that selected and organized systematically to draw solid, clear, and accurate conclusions.

**Results**

*3.1 Data*

*Table 3.1.1 How often do you prepare your learning indicators?*

No	Question 1	Answer
1	How often do you prepare your learning indicators?	Always

Table 3.1.1 shows that every teacher always prepares learning indicators before the teacher starts learning, of course, the teacher must prepare the learning indicators to be achieved in learning.

*Table 3.1.2 Where are your learning indicators of teaching speaking from?*

No	Question 2	Answer
1	Where are your learning indicators of teaching speaking from?	Syllabus, from curriculum given by government, English text books, and students' ability in

	speaking
--	----------

Table 3.1.2 shows that Learning indicators used by teachers to improve students' speaking skills are from the curriculum provided by the government, from the syllabus, and from speaking books which can be a benchmark or indicator for teachers in teaching.

*3.1.3 Mention 3 sources of your learning materials to improve speaking skill!*

No	Question 3	Answer
1	Mention 3 sources of your learning materials to improve speaking skill	English text books, video movie and song /media online.

Table 3.1.3 shows that the sources of teaching materials used by teachers so far are English textbooks, video movies and songs/online media so that students do not get bored.

*Table 3.1.4 Mention 3 useful activities that student should do to improve speaking skill*

No	Question 4	Answer
1	Mention 3 useful activities that student should do to improve speaking skill!	<p>1. Answer or respond me as their English teacher in English in the class activities.</p> <p>2. Practice among students in the English class and if possible and allowed practice in the time of other subjects in the class or outside the class.</p> <p>3. Be active to perform some presentations in the class suggested by me as their English teacher such as in dialogue, class presentation in groups, some dramas directed by me, and other activities</p>

Table 3.1.4 shows that activities that students can do to improve fluency in speaking are practicing by answering or responding teachers in English in the class and discussing with friends and teachers, and be active to perform some presentations, dialogue, and some dramas in the class to build their confidence by practicing

regularly and having many vocabularies.

*3.1.5 Mention 3 useful activities that teacher should do to improve speaking fluency*

No	Question 5	Answer
1	Mention 3 useful activities that teacher should do to improve speaking fluency	1. Teacher should always speak in English in front of the students to make them accustomed to listen to English 2. Teacher should ask students to respond her in English in simple or complete without blaming them if some mistakes 3. Teacher should prepare some materials such as pictures, captions, slogan, videos, etc. to support the lesson planning.

Table 3.1.5 shows that activities that can be used by teachers to improve students' speaking fluency are by teachers using English in class, inviting students to speak by asking students' responds in English, teacher should prepare some materials such as pictures, captions, slogan, videos, etc. to support the lesson planning.

*3.1.6 What do you do to help students having difficulties in speaking English?*

No	Question 6	Answer
1	What do you do to help students having difficulties in speaking English?	Motivate the students and give them easy, Forget the errors, just be happy that they're speaking, create groups to practice, Provide visual support.

Table 3.1.6 shows that when students have difficulties in speaking, the teachers

motivate students, Forget the errors, just be happy that they're speaking, create groups to practice, provide visual support to increase students' enthusiasm to keep trying.

*Table 3.1.7 Do you always do the strategies suggested by the experts to improve speaking skill to your students? Why?*

<b>No</b>	<b>Question 7</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1	Do you always do the strategies suggested by the experts to improve speaking skill to your students? Why?	Yes, of course. Because: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The experts have applied the strategies to their students before and the result is satisfactory by reading the advantages and disadvantages the strategies</li> <li>2. The experts are successful teachers to improve students speaking so I do the same for my students</li> <li>3. We as a teacher, we should always try to see and apply some strategies by the experts to be the best teacher for students</li> </ol>

Table 3.1.7 shows that teachers apply strategies suggested by the experts, because the teachers realize that strategies suggested by the experts is effective because it has been proven to help students improve their speaking fluency.

*Table 3.1.8 Which type of tests do you usually provide to assess your students speaking skill?*

<b>No</b>	<b>Question 8</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1	Which type of tests do you usually provide to assess your students speaking skill?	Conversation test, Re-telling a story, and

		Describing pictures.
--	--	----------------------

Table 3.1.8 shows that in assessing students' speaking fluency, the teachers give conversations to students, Re-telling a story, describing pictures to find out the extent to which students' speaking fluency is.

*Table 3.1.9 Are you satisfied with your teaching strategies that you have practice previously?*

No	Question 9	Answer
1	Are you satisfied with your teaching strategies that you have practice previously?	Satisfied

Table 3.1.9 shows that the teachers are satisfied with their teaching strategies which they have practiced previously.

*Table 3.1.10 What are your suggestions for teachers and students to improve speaking skills?*

No	Question 10	Answer
1	What are your suggestions for teachers and students to improve speaking skills?	<p>For Teachers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have an energetic way to teach</li> <li>2. Make the material as simple as the they can understand</li> <li>3. Give appreciation to the students for their efforts on learning</li> </ol> <p>For Students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Be always active and try to be able to speak in English because practice</li> </ol>

		<p>makes us better and better</p> <p>2. Don't be ashamed and lazy to practice</p> <p>3. Don't stop learning by watching some videos, films, etc. to improve our vocabulary and speaking</p>
--	--	---

Table 3.1.10 shows that the teachers suggested that the strategies used should be simple and easily understood by students, and students should also be able to focus on learning so that there was a good reciprocal relationship between teachers and students.

### 1. Strategies Implemented by Teachers to Improve Student Fluency

Based on research, researchers discovered strategies implemented by teachers to improve student fluency. Such as:

- a. Always use English during class (responding or answering in English)
- b. Prepare materials such as photos, captions, slogans, videos. To support lesson design
- c. Practice conversational strategies individually or in groups
- d. Apply strategies suggested by experts to improve speaking skills
- e. Motivate students to speak with confidence

### 2. Strategies are most effective for improving student fluency

Based on this analysis, researchers found a number of strategies that were most dominantly or most frequently used by the English teachers who responded to this survey:

- a. Using English in class (answering in English or the teacher answering)
- b. Practicing everyday conversation strategies both individually and in groups
- c. Motivating students to speak confidently

## Discussion

Researchers have found that the strategies teachers employ are important and influential in improving students' speaking skills. Researchers found that the most effective strategies for improving speaking skills were practicing everyday conversation strategies both individually or in groups, apply English in class (respond or replying to the teacher in English), and learning that students. In fact, research results by Sakarkaya (2013) are similar. When students are arranged to work in pairs or groups, they have the opportunity to improve their speaking skills, and they usually feel more confident and comfortable and can express their opinions freely.

The teachers have to think more positively towards learner-centered methods to involve the learners by concentrating more on the activities related to speaking skills. When learners work in pairs or groups, they work independently and try to speak more and produce many sentences (Rao, P. S., 2019:14). Ideas without fear of mistakes in pair work and group work. Corrections are usually made between students in a group. Most of the students do active participation in applying group work activities because it can develop the students' speaking accuracy, and fluency (Rospinah et al., 2021:3).

To attract students' interest and to increase their motivation to learn the target language, English teachers can be starting using YouTube videos because this media has been proven to help teachers in teaching and to help providing a fun and motivating atmosphere for students in learning (Hussin et al., 2020:30). The use of YouTube videos in learning speaking increases students' learning motivation in speaking class in the way that YouTube videos provide images and audio thus it can help students practice pronunciation, enrich their vocabulary and make it easier for them to find ideas in producing sentences while speaking (Syafiq et al., 2021:54).

Researchers found that teachers also used learning strategies that involved the use of media such as songs, images, and videos that could influence students' fluency development. Teachers use government-provided syllabus and curriculum learning indicators.

Teachers must encourage students to speak daily and ask students to react to all the teacher's actions in order to improve students' speaking skills. Strategy implementation results showed that teachers were satisfied with the strategies they implemented. As devised by Long and Crookes (1992) and Ellis (2009), it is based on situations in which learners use language as they would use it outside the classroom. During classroom interactions, learners focus 'mainly on meaning', convey 'information', rely on 'verbal and non-verbal resources', and use language to achieve communicative goals. Practice speaking by using it. by teachers to improve students' speaking skills. Where teachers can compare strategies that are more effective than previous strategies. It is clear from the collected results that this strategy has had a tremendous impact on helping teachers instill confidence in speaking to their students. It involves the motivation of teachers so that goals or indicators for improving students' speech fluency are achieved.

This study differs from previous studies in that this study used a retrospective study with qualitative methods with a survey design. This research also uses a

Google Forms-style survey tool. This Google Forms tool is more effective and efficient in data collection.

Through this research, researchers hope to expand our knowledge related to improving students' speaking mastery through strategies that will benefit scientific development, improve the quality of teaching, and be used by English teachers as a reference when teaching speaking.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results and discussion of the "Retrospective Study on English Teachers' Strategies to Improve Students' Speaking Fluency", researchers found a number of strategies implemented by teachers to improve student speaking fluency. The strategies a teacher uses are very important and have a great impact on the improvement of a student's speaking skills. The teacher uses daily conversation strategies and teacher-student interactions to improve her students' speaking skills. Teachers must motivate students so that they have the confidence and courage to speak. Teachers should encourage students to speak every day and respond to all actions of teachers so that students' speaking skills improve. Simply put, speaking can be defined as the ability to convey messages to others through spoken language. The ability to speak is important in human life in general. Good speaking skills can support all existing activities. This research makes a significant contribution to the world of education as it provides information on strategies that teachers can employ to improve the speaking ability of their students.

### **Acknowledgement**

All our praise and thanksgiving are directed to the presence of Almighty God. God bless the author to successfully complete this diary.

The authors express their deep gratitude for the help, support, prayers and guidance from all concerned. Therefore, the author would like to thank for the support and assistance to:

1. Mrs. Prof. Dr. Chrismis Novalinda Ginting, M.Kes., as the Head of University Prima Indonesia Medan;
2. Mrs. Dian Syahfitri, S.S., M.Hum., as the Head of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education;
3. Mrs. Yenita Br Sembiring, S.S., M.Hum., as the head of the English Education Department S1 Study Program;
4. The Head Master and Deputy Principal of the SMP SWASTA TALITAKUM who have given us the space to carry out research;
5. All respondents who have contributed to answering the questionnaire in this study;
6. Our parents Mr. Tongap Siahaan and Mrs. Besty Panggabean; Mr. Paider Ruken Rajagukguk and Mrs. Neny Siregar; and our siblings Roma Siahaan, Samson Siahaan, Maruhum Rajagukguk, Anisa Rajagukguk, Diego Rajagukguk, Isabela Rajagukguk, for their endless love, prayers, and financially and morally support.

7. Agave Family, Megawati Sihombing, relatives, and friends for their endless love, prayers, and moral support.

### References

- Albino, G. (2017). Improving speaking fluency in a task-based language teaching approach: The case of EFL learners at PUNIV-Cazenga. *Sage open*, 7(2), 2158244017691077.
- Alharbi, H. A. (2015). Improving Students' English Speaking Proficiency in Saudi Public Schools. *International journal of instruction*, 8(1), 105-116.
- Areski, W. P. (2018). *Using Expression Card Media to Improve the Students' Speaking Skill at The Second Grade of SMA Negeri 1 Parepare* (Doctoral dissertation, IAIN Parepare).
- Basyori, A., Asrori, I., Sutaman, S., & Ahmed, B. M. B. (2021). The Interactional Features of Bilingual Teacher Talk in the Classroom of Arabic as a Foreign Language. *Tadris: Jurnal Keguruan dan Ilmu Tarbiyah*, 6(2), 363-375.
- Farooqui, S. (2007). Developing speaking skills of adult learners in private universities in Bangladesh: Problems and solutions. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 47(1), 95-110.
- Goh, C. C. M. (2007). *Teaching speaking in the language classroom*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.
- Harmer, J. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching* (3rd ed). London: Longman.
- Houn, T., & Em, S. (2022). Common Factors Affecting Grade-12 Students' Speaking Fluency: A Survey of Cambodian High School Students. *Jurnal As-Salam*, 6(1), 11-24.
- Hussin, R. A., Gani, S. A., & Muslem, A. (2020). The use of Youtube media through group discussion in teaching speaking. *English Education Journal*, 11(1), 19-33.
- Koran, S. (2015, April). The role of teachers in developing learners' speaking skill. In *6th International Visible Conference on Educational Studies and Applied Linguistics, April* (pp. 400-4016).
- Muslem, A., Mustafa, F., & Rahman, A. (2017). The application of video clips with small group and individual activities to improve young learners' speaking performance. *Teaching English with Technology*, 17, 25-37.
- Naimie, Z., & Naimie, A. (2007). Field Dependent Students Language Learning

- Strategies Preference. In *International Conference on Education, Universiti Brunei, Darussalam*
- Oradee, Th. (2012). Developing speaking skills using three communicative activities (discussion, problem-solving, and role-play). *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 2(6), 532- 533.
- Rao, P. S. (2019). The importance of speaking skills in English classrooms. *Alford Council of International English & Literature Journal (ACIELJ)*, 2(2), 6-18.
- Rospinah, R., Ampa, A. T., & Nappu, S. (2021). The Effect of Group Work Activities to Improve Students' Speaking Skill. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 9(1).
- Salaberry, R. (2001). The use of Technology for Second Language Learning and Teaching: A Retrospective. *Modern Language Journal*, 85(1), 39-56. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00096>
- Syafiq, A. N., Rahmawati, A., Anwari, A., & Oktaviana, T. (2021). Increasing speaking skill through YouTube video as English learning material during online learning in pandemic covid-19. *Elsya: Journal of English Language Studies*, 3(1), 50-55.
- Toro, V., Camacho-Minuche, G., Pinza-Tapia, E., & Paredes, F. (2019). The Use of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach to Improve Students' Oral Skills. *English Language Teaching*, 12(1), 110-118.
- Wang, Z. (2014). Developing accuracy and fluency in spoken English of Chinese EFL learners. *English Language Teaching*, 7(2), 110-118. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v7n2p110>.
- Yang, Y. I. (2014). Is speaking fluency strand necessary for the college students to develop in the EFL class?. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(2), 225-231.