

STUDENTS' LEARNING STRATEGIES ON MICROTEACHING COURSE : A CASE STUDY IN WEST SUMATERA UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine students' speaking learning strategies in microteaching courses, particularly in English language education at PGRI University of West Sumatra. This study uses a qualitative approach with a narrative inquiry method. The research subjects are a number of students who have completed the microteaching course in the 6th semester of 2024. The research instruments used are structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Metacognitive strategies appear to be the most dominant, as most students emphasize planning before acting, monitoring themselves while speaking, and conducting self-evaluation afterwards. Cognitive strategies are also widely used, mainly through translation, note-taking, and the use of social media or digital applications to enrich vocabulary and strengthen grammar knowledge. Meanwhile, social-affective strategies helped students reduce anxiety, maintain confidence, and ensure language accuracy by seeking clarification from lecturers, classmates, or applications. These findings indicate that the three strategies complement each other, with metacognitive strategies as the main foundation, cognitive strategies as language support tools, and social-affective strategies as confidence-building factors in microteaching.

Keywords: Microteaching, Language Learning Strategies, Learning Strategies, Strategi Speaking

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji strategi belajar berbicara mahasiswa pada kursus microteaching, khususnya dalam pendidikan bahasa Inggris di Universitas PGRI Sumatera Barat.. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode narrative inquiry. Subjek penelitian adalah sejumlah mahasiswa yang telah menyelesaikan matakuliah microteaching pada semester 6 tahun 2024. Instrumen penelitian yang digunakan berupa wawancara terstruktur, observasi partisipan, dan dokumentasi. Strategi metakognitif tampaknya menjadi yang paling dominan, karena sebagian besar mahasiswa menekankan perencanaan sebelum beraksi, memantau diri sendiri selama berbicara, dan melakukan evaluasi diri setelahnya. Strategi kognitif juga banyak digunakan, terutama melalui terjemahan, mencatat, dan penggunaan media sosial atau aplikasi digital untuk memperkaya

kosakata dan memperkuat pengetahuan tata bahasa. Sementara itu, strategi sosial-afektif membantu siswa mengurangi kecemasan, mempertahankan kepercayaan diri, dan memastikan akurasi bahasa dengan mencari klarifikasi dari dosen, teman sekelas, atau aplikasi. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa ketiga strategi saling melengkapi, dengan strategi metakognitif sebagai landasan utama, strategi kognitif sebagai alat pendukung bahasa, dan strategi sosial-afektif sebagai faktor pembangun kepercayaan diri dalam microteaching.

Kata Kunci: Mikromengajar, Strategi Pembelajaran Bahasa, Strategi Pembelajaran, Strategi Berbicara.

A. Introduction

Teachers play a central role in shaping students' knowledge, character, and future success. A teacher is not only responsible for transferring knowledge but also serves as a role model, motivator, and facilitator in the learning process. According to Clement and Rencewigg (2020), teachers equip students with essential life and career skills, such as adaptability, proactivity, and interpersonal competence. Furthermore, Vrahara and Jamil (2021) emphasize that teachers must possess leadership and communication skills to create meaningful learning experiences. Robert J. Walker (as cited in Clement & Rencewigg, 2020) also identifies traits of memorable teachers, including preparation, humor, creativity, fairness, and compassion. These qualities underline the

importance of pedagogical and interpersonal competence in teaching.

In English language teaching, educators are expected to master the four fundamental language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, speaking is considered the most demanding because it involves real-time communication, pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary mastery, and grammatical precision (Sadiku, 2015). Effective English teachers must therefore be able to communicate fluently and confidently in the target language. As Dinçer et al. (2013) explain, good English teachers not only demonstrate mastery of subject matter but also engage students actively through meaningful classroom interactions.

Speaking skills are particularly essential in microteaching, a

preparatory course designed to help teacher candidates practice teaching techniques before entering real classrooms. Microteaching enables students to develop pedagogical competence in a controlled setting, focusing on specific teaching components such as classroom management, material delivery, and communication (Brown, 2009; Allen & Ryan, 1969). For English education students, the use of English throughout microteaching sessions is mandatory because it reflects the authentic context of teaching English as a foreign language. Thus, students' ability to speak fluently during microteaching becomes a key indicator of their readiness to become professional English teachers.

However, based on preliminary observations in the English Education Department, many students experience difficulties when explaining material in English during microteaching sessions. These challenges include limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, lack of fluency, and disorganized grammar. Such obstacles often reduce students' confidence and disrupt the flow of instruction. Interviews with lecturers and English teachers also confirm

that English education students must demonstrate adequate speaking competence, as this is a fundamental qualification for prospective English teachers.

Considering these issues, this study aims to analyze the speaking strategies used by English education students during microteaching classes. By identifying the strategies that students employ to overcome speaking difficulties, this research seeks to provide insights into how teacher candidates develop their speaking competence and pedagogical performance in English.

B. Research Method

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach using a narrative inquiry design. Narrative inquiry focuses on exploring individuals' lived experiences through stories to understand how they make meaning of particular events within specific social and cultural contexts (Clandinin & Vera, 2019). This design was appropriate because the study aimed to explore how English education students at *Universitas PGRI Sumatera Barat* used speaking learning strategies during their microteaching course. Through short

narrative interviews, the researcher sought to understand students' personal experiences, reflections, and strategies in overcoming challenges in speaking English during teaching practice.

Participants

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, which allows researchers to intentionally choose individuals who possess specific knowledge or experiences relevant to the research focus (Sargeant, 2012). The participants consisted of six English education students from the 2021 academic year who had completed the microteaching course and demonstrated good speaking performance, as indicated by their final grades (A and B) in the course. The selection ensured that the participants had adequate knowledge of teaching practices and sufficient English-speaking ability to provide rich and relevant data.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured interview guided by indicators from O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) theory of learning strategies, which include metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies. Each category

consisted of several sub-indicators such as planning, self-monitoring, note-taking, inferencing, questioning for clarification, and self-talk. These indicators served as the framework for developing interview questions to explore how students planned, practiced, and evaluated their speaking performance during microteaching sessions.

Data Collection Technique

structured interview was used as the main data collection method. This technique involves asking all participants the same set of predetermined questions in the same sequence to ensure consistency and comparability across responses (Akademia Baru et al., 2014). Interviews were conducted individually and recorded with participants' consent. The structured format allowed the researcher to collect systematic and focused information about each student's speaking strategies during the microteaching process.

Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006).

1. Familiarizing with the data

transcribing and repeatedly reading interview transcripts.

2. Generating initial codes

identifying significant statements related to speaking strategies.

3. Searching for themes

grouping similar codes into potential themes.

4. Reviewing themes

refining themes for coherence and consistency.

5. Defining and naming themes

specifying the essence of each theme and its relation to the research objectives.

6. Producing the report

presenting key findings with supporting excerpts from participants' narratives.

This analytical approach helped the researcher identify patterns in students' experiences and interpret how they developed speaking strategies to support their performance in microteaching.

C.Result and Discussion

Result

The findings of this study were derived from in-depth interviews with six English education students who had completed the microteaching

course. Through thematic analysis, three major categories of speaking strategies were identified: metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and social-affective strategies. Each category comprised several sub-strategies that students applied with varying intensity and purpose during their microteaching practice.

Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies emerged as the most dominant category in students' speaking practices. These included planning, directed attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation.

Most students did not have a fixed learning schedule but practiced speaking spontaneously, often before exams or presentations. A few established short daily routines, such as speaking English for one minute or watching English videos to improve pronunciation and fluency. Students also demonstrated directed attention by focusing on specific linguistic aspects such as pronunciation and vocabulary, while others appreciated peers' speaking performance to gain motivation.

In terms of self-monitoring, all participants reported asking for

feedback from peers or lecturers and using digital tools such as Google Translate and Duolingo to check pronunciation and grammar. Furthermore, self-evaluation was a common practice—students recorded their voices, rewrote sentences, or sought correction from native speakers to identify errors. These reflective behaviors helped them improve their speaking performance and gain self-awareness in learning.

Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies were the second most frequently used category. Students applied several sub-strategies such as deduction/induction, grouping, translation, note-taking, resourcing, inferencing, and keyword method.

Most students preferred using simple grammar patterns like the *simple present tense* to communicate clearly and confidently. They often grouped vocabulary by context or synonyms, relying on contextual clues to infer meaning. The use of translation tools—particularly Google Translate and ChatGPT—was highly prevalent for understanding new words.

Nearly all participants kept small vocabulary notes to support their

microteaching preparation and used digital resources like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, podcasts, songs, and films to enrich their speaking input. To memorize new vocabulary, students employed repetition, association, or gesture-based recall, demonstrating that memory-based strategies complemented their communicative practice.

Social-Affective Strategies

The third category identified was social-affective strategies, which played a key role in managing students' emotions and confidence during microteaching. The main strategies were questioning for clarification and self-talk.

Students frequently sought clarification from lecturers, peers, or online applications to ensure correct pronunciation and vocabulary usage. All participants admitted to experiencing anxiety when performing in front of the class. However, they managed it through self-preparation, rehearsing before performance, using personal notes, and fostering self-confidence.

Overall, these strategies helped students regulate their emotions,

build confidence, and perform more effectively in teaching simulations.

The integration of metacognitive, cognitive, and social-affective strategies contributed to students' successful speaking performance in microteaching. Metacognitive strategies functioned as the foundation for planning and reflection, cognitive strategies supported language processing and vocabulary development, and social-affective strategies strengthened emotional control and confidence. Among the three, metacognitive strategies were the most dominant, showing that students' reflective awareness and self-regulation play crucial roles in developing effective speaking skills for teaching.

This study aimed to explore the speaking learning strategies employed by students in microteaching courses within the English Language Education Program at PGRI University of West Sumatra. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and analyzed thematically, focusing on students' experiences in planning, presenting, and reflecting on their speaking performance during mini-teaching sessions. This approach is

consistent with the principles of **narrative inquiry**, which emphasizes personal experiences and the meanings participants construct (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Thematic analysis was applied to identify recurring patterns across data through the stages of familiarization, coding, theme generation, review, and definition (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Microteaching provides students with an authentic yet controlled environment to use English as the medium of instruction during short simulated teaching sessions (approximately 5–30 minutes) in front of peers acting as students. This setting allows them to focus on essential components of oral communication: fluency, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary choice, pronunciation, and discourse management (e.g., lesson opening, questioning, feedback, and closing). The inclusion of video recordings further enables reflective learning, allowing students to review their pronunciation, classroom expressions, gestures, and interactional patterns. Consequently, microteaching functions not only as a pedagogical training tool but also as a

structured platform for developing communicative competence.

Discussion

Findings reveal that metacognitive strategies are the most dominant, particularly in the forms of planning, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Students tended to prepare key teaching points, anticipate possible questions, and select essential vocabulary before performance. Afterward, they reflected on their clarity of instruction and fluency. These practices correspond to the framework of O'Malley and Chamot (1990), where metacognitive strategies regulate attention, set goals, and organize the learning process. Moreover, self-recording through video reinforces the monitor-evaluate cycle with concrete visual evidence—such as intonation, pauses, and stress patterns—making self-reflection more meaningful and data-driven.

In addition to metacognitive strategies, students also demonstrated cognitive strategies to manage the spontaneity of classroom discourse. Common tactics included *translation* (converting thoughts from L1 to English), *keyword preparation*, *note-taking* of common classroom

phrases (e.g., “Today we’re going to...”), and *resourcing* (consulting dictionaries or handouts before performance). These strategies maintained speech flow and reduced hesitation, although overreliance sometimes produced overly rehearsed or translated speech patterns. These findings align with O'Malley & Chamot's (1990) cognitive strategy classification and Oxford's (1990) direct strategies, which involve the active manipulation of language material such as classifying, inferring, and summarizing.

At the socio-affective level, students employed self-talk to reduce anxiety, sought clarification during practice, and requested feedback from peers and lecturers. Cooperative activities, such as pair practice, also increased confidence and enriched their classroom language repertoire. These behaviors illustrate the social and emotional management aspects of social-affective strategies, which facilitate communication and lower anxiety during speaking tasks. The findings suggest that emotional regulation and peer collaboration are not supplementary but rather *integral components* of effective speaking

strategy use in microteaching contexts.

The study also found several constraints, including limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, pronunciation difficulties, and performance anxiety—issues consistent with prior findings on EFL speaking challenges (Horwitz, 1986; Tuan & Mai, 2015). When lexical resources were exhausted, students often reverted to their first language in internal planning or avoided complex structures, which reduced fluency and accuracy. These results highlight the importance of compensatory strategies (e.g., paraphrasing) and affective control to sustain communication.

Interpreted through the study's conceptual framework, a cyclical relationship emerges among metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective dimensions. Planning and monitoring (metacognitive) guide the selection of processing techniques (cognitive), which are supported and stabilized through emotional regulation and peer interaction (socio-affective). Video-based reflection further enhances this learning cycle, making post-performance evaluation evidence-based and targeted. Hence,

communicative competence improvement in microteaching arises not merely from frequent practice, but from the orchestration of multiple strategy types harmonized with teaching demands.

Theoretically, this pattern aligns with Oxford's (1990) categorization of direct (memory, cognitive, compensatory) and indirect (metacognitive, affective, social) strategies. In this study, indirect strategies—especially metacognitive and affective—played an organizing role, while direct strategies operated on the linguistic content and delivery of speech. The specific context of microteaching makes these strategies situationally integrated rather than generic speaking exercises, confirming that effective language learning strategies must be contextualized to the communicative task (teaching), not applied universally.

E. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study on students' speaking learning strategies in the microteaching course at PGRI University of West Sumatra, it can be concluded that students actively employed a combination of metacognitive,

cognitive, and social-affective strategies to support their oral performance during teaching practice. Among these, metacognitive strategies—particularly *planning*, *self-monitoring*, and *self-evaluation*—were the most dominant and contributed significantly to students' readiness and awareness in managing their speaking performance.

Cognitive strategies, including *translation*, *keyword memorization*, *note-taking of classroom language*, and *resourcing*, helped students overcome limitations in vocabulary and grammar, although they occasionally led to a rigid or overly structured speaking style. Meanwhile, social-affective strategies—such as *self-talk*, *peer collaboration*, and *seeking clarification* from lecturers or classmates—played an essential role in reducing anxiety and fostering confidence during performance.

The findings further confirm that students' main challenges in microteaching include vocabulary mastery, pronunciation accuracy, and nervousness, which frequently affect fluency. Consequently, speaking learning strategies function not merely as supplementary tools but as critical mechanisms that enable

students to sustain instructional communication when faced with linguistic and psychological difficulties.

Overall, the effectiveness of students' speaking performance in microteaching is influenced more by their ability to integrate appropriate strategies according to the communicative and instructional demands of the teaching task than by language mastery alone. This study contributes to the literature on Language Learning Strategies (LLS) by illustrating that these strategies operate synergistically within a unified learning cycle unique to the microteaching context, where accuracy, fluency, and classroom management must coexist dynamically.

Kesimpulan akhir yang diperoleh dalam penelitian dan saran perbaikan yang dianggap perlu ataupun penelitian lanjutan yang relevan.

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