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## EFL Teachers' Soft-Skill Strategies in Teaching Speaking

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### Abstract

Some learners get difficulties in speaking English because of a weak soft-skill they have, such as motivation, social skill, and self-efficacy. Therefore, teachers' role in embedding soft-skill in teaching speaking is essential because learning success is influenced more by soft-skill than IQ. This study discussed kinds of soft-skills embedded by teachers in teaching speaking. This study uses qualitative analysis approach by using descriptive research design. The data are gained from three English teachers of SMAN 6 MATARAM by observation and interview. The results revealed that there are five kinds of soft-skills embedded by EFL teachers, such as self-perceptions, motivation, creativity, metacognitive and social competencies. Moreover, the steps teacher embed them are by using classroom discussion, giving reward, telling story or information, ordering students to describe a picture in front of class, ordering students to perform dialogue, and sometimes teacher use the same steps in the next meeting if the previous materials have not finished. Those soft-skills contributed to the students' speaking ability, such as making them more interactive, more communicative and used more various language.

**Keywords:** Soft-skill; Teaching Speaking

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Teaching is the way to deliver information about the topic that would be learned by the students. The purpose of the teaching learning process is to make students get knowledge and be able to understand the knowledge. To reach the purpose of teaching, the teacher is a key that should be creative in choosing the materials and strategies of teaching to make the students easy to understand the knowledge especially in teaching speaking. On the other hand, the researcher had conducted an interview with three teachers at SMAN 6 MATARAM and based on this interview the researcher has found that there are still some students who cannot speak English because their less self-confidence to express their idea in English. Their less self-confidence occurs because they do not believe in themselves that they can speak English. They are also shy and afraid to speak English in public whether inside or outside of the class room because they think that their accuracy in speaking English is not good enough and people who listen their speaking English will laugh and because of that, they prefer choose silent to do communication with others by using English. These phenomena are appropriate with the research which is conducted by the students of Malaysian University (Diao Zhiping & Paramasivam, 2013: 5–6) They show that the causes of Iranian and Algerian students are not able to speak English fluently because of anxiety, such as afraid of being in public, shyness, and inaccuracy when speaking. From these research and phenomena, the researcher finds the information that the factor which makes students are not able to speak English because they have a weak of soft-skill in themselves, so they could not explore their ability in speaking English. Soft-skills refer to personality traits of how people organize themselves and keep their relationship with others, such as keeping spirit, having good communication with others and something relates to their personality (Heckman & Kautz, 2012:10). It may also guide them being successful students, even though they have low IQ. In this study, the researcher only mention kinds of soft-skill relate to non-cognitive skills students have, because this research only focus on soft-skill that relate to non-cognitive skills. The potential key non-cognitive skills are self-perceptions, motivation, perseverance, creativity, metacognitive strategies and social competencies (Gutman & Schoon, 2013:7). This research focuses on three teachers because they have an important role in embedding soft-skill. Based on the information that researcher gains from classroom observation at the eleventh grades of SMAN 6 MATARAM, the teachers also embed soft-skill in teaching speaking make students can be more active and explore their speaking ability. Therefore, it possibly for researcher to conduct this study at eleventh grades, because there are some soft-skills involved such as motivation, self-confidence, and social skill. Moreover, this research

is needed to be conducted to get more detail information about what kinds of soft-skills strategies are embedded by EFL teachers to their students at eleventh grades of SMAN 6 MATARAM and how do teachers embed soft-skills strategies to their students at the eleventh grades of SMAN 6 MATARAM..

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This research intends to find out the soft-skill strategies that is embedded by EFL teachers in teaching speaking. In this qualitative research, the researcher used descriptive research design to describe the chronology of events (Kasasar, 2009). The researcher takes SMAN 6 MATARAM as the location of the research. It is because the researcher wants to describe the process of EFL teachers embedding soft-skill strategies in teaching speaking at the eleventh grades of SMAN 6 MATARAM. In this case, the researcher become an instrument of research or as a key instrument by observing directly to school especially when the teachers embed soft-skill in English class or during teaching learning process. The sources of the data as the primary subject of study are the three English Teachers of eleventh grades of SMAN 6 MATARAM. The researcher took the data by using observation and interview. This study used observation checklist to identify kinds of soft-skill strategies which is embedded by EFL teachers in teaching speaking, and the researcher is a passive participant because the researcher only sits on the chair at the back of the class without becoming involved in the activities of participant. Researcher also took notes during an observation on English class to describe the ways of EFL teachers embed soft-skills strategies to their students at the eleventh grades. The subjects were chosen based on the criteria that the EFL teachers who had teach more than five years in that school. Moreover, researcher also used semi-structured interview because the researcher would take the data by asking some questions to subjects by using interview guideline and the subjects can answer based on their own perspective. However, the researcher can develop the question based on the subjects' answer and their condition. Additionally, researcher also used documentation of

pictures to support data collection. This study used data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion and verification to analyze data in this study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In this study, the researcher reduced the data first, and then researcher would make the data to be simple in form of short description and flow chart of the process of embedded soft-skill strategies on student at the eleventh grades of SMAN 6 MATARAM, after that researcher would conclude the data which is gained after do the data reduction and data display.

### 3. FINDINGS

Here is the result of the observation and interview answer from all subjects. The result of the observation is shown in the form of table.

#### 3.1 Observation

Table 1 The Result of teachers' observation

No	The Subject	The result of teacher's observation
1	Participant 1 Teachers class XI of IPA 5	Based on the observation, it can be explained that the teacher was inserted <i>Motivation</i> . The teachers tell some information and experiences to their students in the beginning of the class contain of moral value and some motivation in order to make the students enjoy and have spirit before teaching learning process so that they can have more spirit to improve their speaking skill.  <i>Social competencies</i> was also inserted by divided them into group in order to make students have social skill so that they can work as a teamwork and have good relationship each other by sharing their English knowledge, this soft-skill needs by students because it will make them are able to communicate with others.

2	Participant 2 Teachers class XI of IPA 3	<p>Based on the observation, it can be explained that the teacher embedded <i>self-perceptions</i> by saying “<i>come on, no one is perfect. Mistakes are avoidable. Just believe in yourself that you can do it</i>”. So it can make their students confident to their speaking ability without afraid to failure.</p> <p>The teacher gives descriptive text to individual student and ordering them to perform in front of class so the students would have planning himself or herself by considering the weakness and strength of their performance. So it can develop their <i>metacognition</i>.</p> <p><i>Extrinsic motivation</i> was also embedded by giving reward in form of score to the student, it will motivate them to be better in the next performance. Before that, the teachers already give clear instruction to them in order to make them understand why they give appreciation in form of score.</p>
3	Participant 3 Teachers class XI of IPS 2	<p>Based on the observation, it can be explained that the teacher was embedded <i>Motivation</i> in order to make the students study hard and try to be better than before. The teachers tell about the benefit of learning English in the future so it can motivated them.</p> <p>The teachers also embed some soft-skill by using another way, such as ordering student to perform dialogue in which they divide them into pair first after that they can discuss to their pair how to perform well. The students always stimulate</p>

		to be more active in learning activities by teamwork, so that there are some soft-skill embed such as <i>social competencies, metacognitive, creativity, and self-perceptions.</i>
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From the data above, there are five kinds of soft-skills strategies that are embedded by EFL teachers on developing students' speaking ability which are self-perceptions, motivation, creativity, metacognitive strategies and social competencies.

### 3.2 Interview

Interview session was conducted after observation in the classroom was done. The researcher took three teachers as the subjects. The researcher asked to the teachers about their soft-skill strategies. The outcome of the interview represented that the students were motivated, being confidence, more active and communicative when they embedded some kinds of soft-skill strategies in teaching learning process because the students feel that English is important as an international language and also they think that English can aid themselves to communicate widely and useful in many aspect of their life. The researcher asked about what are the things that can motivate students in learning English, then they said that the teacher's personality is very important to motivate the students and also the teachers have a good sense of humor pulled the students to love the material and a teacher as well. When teacher is well-prepared in teaching, the process of teaching learning became active and interested to learn. It is clearly stated that motivation and social competencies was really helpful to make the students who do not like English lesson can be motivated to learn the material. The researcher also asked about does the teachers gave a reward, then they said yes, they think to kept the students motivated in learning English, the teacher gives appreciation for students such as chocolate, candy and in form of score. Moreover, the researcher asked about how would the teachers do if they saw the students doubted to their ability in speaking

English, then the teacher said just believe in themselves that they can do that. They told to the students to think of the future not only when graduated from high school. The teachers tell about the importance of English in the future.

From the outcome of interview above, the researcher concluded that teachers embedded soft-skill in teaching learning process was good strategies because teachers believe that with this image students are more motivated and will progress better in their learning, as well as their academic and professional achievement. They told their students that English is an important language that can aid them in many aspects in life such as to communicate widely with another. The students also interesting in English when they learnt as a team work. Sometimes teachers got problems when teaching English such as there were some students less their self-confidence to speak English but the teachers embedded one kinds of soft-skills namely self-perceptions where the teacher open the students' mindset about learning English and explain them how important English for the future is.

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

This discussion part strengthens the elaboration of the findings of the research based on the result of both observation and interview are elaborated in details regarding some related theories, previous researches and the analyses of the researchers. First, it starts from motivation that is embedded by EFL teachers in form of intrinsic motivation. The intrinsic motivation is embedded by telling stories in which it makes students naturally interest, joyful and relax to join in the speaking class. The teacher gives the strong argumentation for the students about the importance of English for the future. Students' target influence their motivation and effort in English learning. With learning goal, students study purposefully and throw great effort into English learning (Kong, 2009). It is also supported by (Dornyei, 2014) who said that the student's future self-image is not perceived as being comfortably certain to be achieved, that is, to be within his or her grasp. The student must believe that the strong capability will not happen automatically, without a marked increase in expended effort. It means that delivery from teacher to students about the importance of the English language to view the future can motivated student to learn English. The teacher also opens the students'

mindset about learning English language. Therefore, the students will think that they are not wasting time and thinking to learn English. Moreover, the teacher opine that teacher has to make her students become like to her first, the teacher models herself as the source of motivation creating the comfort classroom atmosphere then they will like the subjects. According to by (Dornyei, 2014) from an internal point of view, there is also a broad spectrum of reasons for doing things: we can be motivated by the love of money or power, the love of people and the world around us. In other words, make the students to love the teacher is one of the efforts to motivated students to learn. The teachers' answers in the interview had proved that the teacher becomes the role model in motivate and their students are motivated by the teacher. As mention by (Dornyei, 2014) friendly and supportive behavior by the teacher is infectious, and students are likely to follow it. Based on this, the students really needs the intrinsic motivation because it makes them interest, enjoy, and relax by themselves throwing the teacher's story, so that they feel secure in joining speaking class. It is appropriate with (Maslow, 1978: 39) namely safety need, making students interest and enjoy by themselves naturally so that they will feel relax without burden. After the students feel enjoy, and interest to join English class, the teacher divided them into group in order to make students have social skill so that they can work with their friend and have good relationship each other by sharing their knowledge, this soft skill needs by students because it will make them are able to interact with another, and it is one of needs that the students should satisfied after they feel secure in joining speaking skill. It is supported with (Maslow, 1978: 43) that a person needs love in term of the need to interact to other in order to have good relationship in their society. After that, they fulfill the safety need and physiological need in their lives. Then, to develop their speaking skill, the teacher give a task to each group and allow them to design by themselves what should they want to do to the task that their teacher give to them. It is supported by the observation result that they enjoy in every way their teacher motivate them, such as, making students groups, giving and discussing interesting topics, and telling the benefit of learning English. As states by (Dornyei, 2014) the literature contains an abundance of suggestions on how to make tasks interesting, for example, tasks that offer some challenge, contain interesting topics, or include novel, humorous, intriguing, or fantasy elements are always welcomed by learners. On the other hand, preparing the materials that are not boring for learners is the good effort to make learners to be keen in learning English. This condition makes them explore more their potential in English class because they have freedom in using a certain strategies to make

their performance the best later so that it would grow up their diligence because they would have great effort in thinking more of how to use certain strategies in making their speaking ability better than before, and it also make them pay attention to their friend's opinion in preparing the certain strategies that would use in their performance of their groups. Besides that, it would also develop their metacognition because indirectly they would have planning that they design by themselves in their group by considering the strength and weakness of their performance that they discuss in their group before they perform in the front of class. Therefore, in the group, every student thinks critically to answer every question given by the teacher. When the students can answer with the perfect answer, teacher will add group score. Therefore, based on the interview result, teacher said that if one student gets the low score in a group, It will be affected for the group score and other members of one group will get angry him/her, no matter want or not, the other group members who have the high score have to teach the student who gets the low score until he or she can increase her/him score. It means that every student has the responsibility for his or her own self and for the group. From this activities, teacher embedding soft-skill namely social competencies was good idea because social competencies is really important here, they have to work as a teamwork and It stimulates students' motivation to learn more and more. (Dornyei, 2014) states in cooperative classroom, students can be competitive. Students' work as a teamwork in which each member shares responsibility for the out-come and is equally rewarded. When they have had good preparation and good effort in showing their speaking skill, it would create their self-perceptions and make them confident in themselves that they can do the task without afraid. After that, the students can explore more their creativity in expressing their idea or in using some words to deliver their meaning. When the students have had good self-perceptions, and they can explore more their creativity that they have, it will give a great contribution in developing their students' speaking skill such as making students more communicative by using English, it occurred because when the students speak English, it does not only use their brain to inform their purpose by using English, but they also should be more creative in informing their purpose in order to make the hearer understand what they mean so that it made them to be more expressive whether in composing their words or in using their face expression, then it would also make them interact with another by using English because when they can be communicative speaker, indirectly they can interact with another by using English whether with their group or with the other group cause when the hearer understand what they speak, it can make them respond their message so that it would create interaction

between each other by using English. The creativity that the students have also make them are able to use English diction because when the creative person less of some vocabularies in informing their idea make they would not give up to do it, but they would use other vocabularies that will make the hearer still understand by composing other some words to inform their meaning so that the vocabularies that is used has more various. Therefore based on the interview result, beside the strong motivation to learn English, according to the teacher, this strategy also make the students have the compete soul in learning to get reward. Therefore, extrinsic motivation was embedded in teaching learning process by giving a reward in order to make their students more excited in learning English especially speaking for example when they discuss in group, they feel compete with the other group, so they will prepare good performance to make their group have a good performance. The teacher gives reward such as chocolate, candy and in form of score. The teacher also gave them smile as the reward. Rewards might involve the joy of performing the activities, approval of the goals, success in achieving these goals, and personal benefits (Dornyei, 2014). Otherwise, teachers should always predict every effort of students by giving scores to the students so that the students will continue to compete to get the value by becoming more active in learning.

Based on this explanation, it can be point out that self-perception, motivation and creativity really need by students in order to make them are able to explore more their speaking skill because when they do not have self-confidence in accomplish their task they cannot show their speaking skill, when they lack of motivation in learning English, it can become an overriding outlook towards schoolwork and studies. If we unchecked, this leads to negative out-comes during their study. Students with learning difficulties are at risk of falling into this pattern. When they do not explore their creativity, they are not able to achieve the great development of their speaking skill. It also supported by (Maslow, 1978: 45) that a person need of esteem in appreciating them and also appreciate with other people. Then, they should also explore their ability by using their creativity in order to make them to be the creative, in this case is in developing their speaking skill.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research, it can be concluded that there are five kinds of soft-skill strategies purposed by (Gutman & Schoon 2013:7) which are embedded by EFL teachers to the students' speaking skill at the eleventh grades of SMAN 6 MATARAM are self-perceptions, motivation, creativity, metacognitive strategies and social competencies. The steps of teachers embed Soft-skill to the students' speaking skill at the eleventh grades of SMAN 6 MATARAM are classroom discussion, giving reward, telling story or information, ordering students to describe a picture in front of class and ordering students to perform dialogue, This research also affirms that the contribution of soft skill in helping the students speak English are making students more communicative by using English, helping students interacting each other by using English language.

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