



English Education
Journal

MAGISTER PENDIDIKAN
BAHASA INGGRIS

ENGLISH EDUCATION JOURNAL
Graduate Program in English Language Education
Program

The University of Syiah Kuala
Jalan Tgk. Cik Pante Kulu No. 5 Darussalam,
Banda Aceh, Indonesia 23111

Email: eej@usk.ac.id

Website: <http://www.jurnal.unsyiah.ac.id/EEJ>

LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE

Number 05a/1677/EEJ-Journal/07/2026

Banda Aceh, May 21, 2026

Email: nandaeliza01@gmail.com

Dear Nanda Eliza and Rahmi Fhonna,

On behalf of the *English Education Journal* (EEJ) journal management, I am pleased to confirm the acceptance for publication of your scholarly article entitled:

EXPLORING TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING SPEAKING FOR STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

The article will be published in Volume 17 Number 3 (July 2026). To develop the online journal management system, including indexation and accreditation, I need your commitment to the article processing charge (APC) outlined in the email sent to you.

Congratulations to you, and I wish a great success in your continuous contribution toward your expertise, academic career, and discipline.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Dian Fajrina

Editor-in-Chief

English Education Journal

ISSN: 2085-3750 (print), 3025-9789 (online)

Exploring Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Speaking to Students in Vocational High School

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ABSTRACT

The ability to convey information clearly and confidently is prominent for students in vocational school since it directly impacts on their future job opportunities and professional success. The teacher's role in applying various strategies in order to strengthen the students' speaking skills is essential. This study explores English teachers' strategies in teaching speaking skill in vocational high school, specifically in the Hospitality Department, Culinary Department, Beauty Department, Tourism Department, and Fashion Design Department. It aims to find out and describe how these strategies are implemented in the classroom, including the teaching process, the teachers' rationale for selecting them, and their perceived effectiveness. This research employed a descriptive qualitative approach by inviting six English teachers at SMK Negeri 3 Banda Aceh. Therefore, this study employed a total sampling technique, in which all members of the target population were included in the study. An observation and semi-structured interview were used to gather information about their strategies in teaching students' speaking skills. The data were analyzed by using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's framework, which involves three essential activities: data reduction, data display, and drawing/verifying conclusions. The results revealed that six English teachers employed various strategies in teaching, such as role-play, discussion, dialogue, and describing pictures. These findings are useful for teachers to teach speaking skills to vocational high school students, particularly in the tourism sector. Future English teachers may also adopt these strategies to develop students' language skills, as they are perceived to be effective in fostering language development.

Keywords: *teaching strategies, speaking skills, vocational high school.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

English is a universal language that is largely used in many important nations across the globe. According to Syafrizal and Rohmawati (2017), English is a language that plays a vital role in various aspects of life, such as science, technology, and education. Similarly, one of the vital languages that plays many crucial roles in education is the English language (Silaban et al., 2023). Today, English is not only a fundamental component of the educational curriculum in many countries but also a primary means of communication in international meetings. Many reading materials in various countries are published in English, such as books, magazines, and newspapers (Kurniasih, 2011). Given its pervasive role in global education and media, mastering the core skills of the English language has become an essential prerequisite for success.

Thus, to achieve success in the global workplace, proficiency in English is crucial for all students, especially vocational students who will continue their careers after graduation. According to Sadiku (2015), there are four basic skills that need to be developed in learning English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, Wulandari (2020) states that speaking is one of the crucial skills in using a language. Similarly, speaking is further described as the ability to express information or messages to others, either orally in face-to-face situations or through the media (Rahayu, 2015). Therefore, to be able to communicate effectively in the real world, practice is needed to hone students' skills. For vocational students, the ability to convey information clearly and confidently is directly related to their future job opportunities and professional success.

However, in the global workplace, vocational graduates need to not only speak but also understand the situations in which they must converse with clients, colleagues, and superiors. According to Hardika and Pratolo (2025), students in vocational high schools require strong English proficiency to complement their technical skills, thereby enhancing their readiness for the workforce and competitive job market. These speaking skills are not only used when talking to people in the surrounding environment but are also needed in the real world at work. A different context when only able to speak but do not have the skills in speaking. Speaking skills are the abilities that a person has, including clarity, fluency, pronunciation, and the ability to express ideas in an organized and coherent way (Rizqiningsih & Hadi, 2019).

Consequently, students are required to possess specialized skills and knowledge to face in the future workplace. This acquisition is a crucial prerequisite for adapting to rapid global change and development. In this context, the competencies gained through industrial practice are crucial in preparing students for career success and equipping them to face the challenges of the professional environment (Yen et al., 2023). However, achieving tailored and effective teaching is often hampered by fundamental challenges in students' speaking learning environments. A study by Moulidya et al. (2022) identified three primary problems faced by students: (1) lack of fluency in English pronunciation, (2) limited vocabulary hindering their ability to speak, and (3) low motivation resulting from difficulty understanding the language. Given these challenges, it is crucial to prioritize student comfort in the learning process. Therefore, the teacher's instructional strategy is essential in increasing students' interest in learning.

To address the specific problems of low fluency, limited vocabulary, and lack of motivation in teaching speaking skills, the role of the teacher becomes even more critical. Nurbaktiah et al. (2021) emphasized that English teachers must be skilled in developing materials and selecting strategies tailored to students' proficiency levels. Similarly, Putri et al. (2023) added that teachers need to understand students' challenges and apply creative strategies to make speaking classes practical. The success of language acquisition in speaking is greatly influenced by these teacher strategies, given the importance of good speaking skills in the real world. Strategy is a way used to achieve target goals with certain activities that can be used to improve language skills more effectively.

However, several previous studies have discussed the strategies used by teachers to improve the speaking skills of EFL students. Hardika and Pratolo (2025) showed that teachers used various strategies, including storytelling, class discussions, and the use of social media, which effectively increased student motivation, active participation, and speaking skills. Similarly, Hasibuan et al. (2022) stated that role-play, storytelling, and discussion can be used to enhance students' speaking skills. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that interactive and student-centered strategies consistently yield positive outcomes for EFL speaking skills. This convergence of findings strengthens the claim that such strategies are essential for developing oral proficiency.

Although previous researchers have identified a variety of speaking strategies used by English as Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, there is a significant gap that this study aims to address. Previous studies also have successfully identified various strategies that can be used to improve students' speaking skills, as well as noted the common benefits and challenges of these strategies. However, these studies tend to focus primarily on the "what" of the strategies and the learning outcomes, without delving deeply into the "how" of their implementation within the specific context of vocational high schools. This study seeks to fill this gap by not only identifying the strategies used but also providing a rich contextual description of their implementation within the natural classroom setting, including teachers' rationales for selecting particular strategies and their perceived effectiveness. Furthermore, the novelty of this study provides how commonly used speaking strategies are pedagogically adapted to meet the demands of workplace communication in tourism-oriented vocational programs such as the Hospitality Department, Culinary Department, Beauty Department, Tourism Department, and Fashion Design Department, where students are expected to develop communication skills relevant to authentic professional situations, by highlighting how teachers apply strategies in teaching speaking skills in a vocational school context to actual workplace communication needs in various related vocational programs.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Teaching Strategies in Speaking Skills

Strategy is a way used to achieve target goals with certain activities that can be used to improve language skills more effectively. According to Lestari and Patolo (2019) strategies encompass the components of a teacher's teaching. The strategies implemented by teachers are used to enable students to develop their

skills independently. According to Widiati et al. (2023), teaching strategies are methods used to achieve desired goals in accordance with learning expectations. In the context of vocational education, these strategies must be adapted to align with the specific skill profiles of each program, thereby equipping students with the language competencies required for their intended professions (Mahbub, 2018). Thus, a student's success in learning is also driven by the strategies employed by the teacher.

In English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms, teaching strategies should be designed to address learners' specific academic and professional needs. Since ESP emphasizes the practical use of language in particular fields, teachers are expected to employ strategies that promote authentic communication and workplace-related tasks. According to Arroyani and Setianingsih (2025), ESP aims to encourage the use of strategies to improve English language skills appropriate to the target environment. Therefore, the selection of teaching strategies should not only improve students' general speaking ability but also prepare them to communicate effectively in situations relevant to their future professions.

Teachers use a variety of strategies to facilitate communicative teaching and learning processes. These strategies are intended to attract and motivate students, while also creating a more comfortable learning environment. Based on that, there are a few strategies that teachers might employ to teach English speaking, according to Kayi (2006, as cited in Alfallah et al., 2023) there are discussion, role-play, simulations, information gap, brainstorming, and storytelling. Discussion enables students to gain insights and ideas from others and improves their language skills. This discussion group can be divided into large and small groups according to the number of students needed. Role-play is a learning strategy that involves taking on the role of a character. Meanwhile, simulation often described as similar to role-play is a strategy used to recreate a real-life situation using props. In language use, the listener and speaker must complement each other, much like the information gap strategy, which is used to exchange ideas or thoughts when conveying information. Meanwhile, brainstorming is used to generate as many ideas as possible to sharpen students' thinking skills. Finally, the storytelling strategy helps improve students' fluency and speaking ability through both telling and listening to stories.

2.2 Speaking Skills

Speaking plays a critical role in communication, where success depends significantly on the speaker's use of appropriate language. Correspondingly, Septiana and Rahayuningsih (2022) define speaking as a productive skill that enables individuals to express thoughts, share opinions, convey emotions, and articulate desires, thereby reinforcing its foundational importance. This perspective clarifies that speaking extends beyond vocabulary memorization, functioning as a vital tool for social and cognitive engagement in expressing ideas and perspectives. Consequently, cultivating this skill is fundamental for achieving success in both personal and academic contexts.

Speaking is not merely about producing sound; rather, it is the internal processes involved that are the focus of speaking itself. Mislawiyadi (2023) mentioned that speaking is the principles of action, activity, continuity, integrity,

psychological comfort, variability, creativity, and communicative orientation. The development of speaking skills involves various components such as grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, and task (Sugianto et al., 2020). Therefore, as the world's developments become more sophisticated, the need to speak English is increasingly needed in academic and social environments. Developing speaking skills can improve the ability to interact with others in conveying ideas and expressing themselves. Speaking in a good way can create good communication that is essential to be used in any circumstances, whether in an educational setting or in the work. According to Apsari et al. (2022), speaking skills are the most important skill in the present modern world for learners to enhance their career enhancement, improve their business, and obtain better job opportunities. Furthermore, they are crucial for building personal confidence and for effective participation in a range of activities, including public speeches, interviews, debates, group discussions, and presentations.

In the context of ESP, English-speaking skills are used to meet communication needs in specific occupations or professions. The use of English is adapted to the situations and tasks that students will face in the hospitality industry, such as welcoming and serving guests at hotels, handling customers at hotels, explaining tourist attractions to tourists as a tour guide, providing services to clients at salons or spas, and responding to customer needs and requests professionally. As Mulyah and Aminatun (2020) state, teachers and students in vocational schools not only focus on disciplinary knowledge but also must understand English in practice. Therefore, speaking skills in ESP not only focus on language fluency but also on the ability to communicate effectively according to the specific work context.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research methodology to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' lived experiences. A descriptive qualitative method was used to elicit open and in-depth responses from informants. Following the framework outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2018) for qualitative data collection, this study applied observation and interview techniques. This study used a total sample technique, in which all English teachers were involved, namely, six English teachers who currently teach English at SMK Negeri 3 Banda Aceh. The teachers have approximately 10-15 years of teaching experience and educational backgrounds in English education and related fields. They teach students from various vocational programs, including Hospitality Department, Culinary Department, Beauty Department, Tourism Department, and Fashion Design Department. The participants were invited to be part of this study in order to gather a range of representative perspectives on specific strategies used to improve speaking skills across various study programs. By focusing on these experienced educators, this study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of how these teaching methods are implemented in the classroom to improve students' speaking skills in various ESP-related contexts.

To collect observational data, classroom observations were conducted involving only three teachers due to time constraints in November, as students will be taking exams next month. The teaching system at the vocational school is divided into two weeks of classroom learning and two weeks of practical work.

This leaves approximately one week of classroom learning for observation. Each teacher was observed once during a regular English lesson, resulting in a total of three observation sessions. Each observation lasted approximately 70-105 minutes until the lesson concluded, depending on the class schedule. During the observations, researchers used field notes to document the teaching strategies used by the teachers, classroom interactions, student participation, and speaking activities implemented during the lessons.

In addition to classroom observations, semi-structured interviews were conducted with all six teachers. Interviews with the three observed teachers were conducted to gain deeper insights into the selection, implementation, and perceived effectiveness of the teaching strategies used in their classrooms. Interviews with the remaining three teachers were conducted to obtain additional perspectives on the implementation of speaking-teaching strategies and their experiences in adapting instruction to meet the needs of students from different vocational programs.

The analysis of qualitative data was begun after the initial phase of data collection. According to Miles et al. (2020), there are three activities that must be carried out in analyzing data continuously, which are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. After collecting data from the teachers, the researcher conducted data reduction by selecting and simplifying participant data regarding language variation and the factors that influence it, including eliminating unimportant utterances. Data collected from field notes during observations and interviews were transcribed and coded according to the research questions. Then, researchers summarized and reformulated the results of the interviews and observations by presenting the data according to the strategies used by the teachers. Finally, the researcher drew conclusions from the highlighted phonological and morphological principles and subsequently verified these interpretations by triangulating them with the raw field notes to ensure the credibility and reliability of the results.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Result of Observation

This section presented research findings based on observations that have been reduced and categorized according to the research focus, namely the speaking teaching strategies implemented by English teachers in vocational high school classes. Observations were conducted with three English teachers who teach in different departments: the Culinary Department, the Beauty Department, and the Fashion Design Department. The teachers as participants in this observation were named P1, P2, and P3. Each observation lasted approximately 70-105 minutes and was carried out during English lessons. The observation results can be seen in the following table 1.

Table 1. Teachers' strategies in teaching speaking based on observation.

Teacher	Strategies Used	Theme/Material	Students' Core Activities
P1	Role-play	Salon services	Students played the role of beautician and salon customers.
P2	Group discussion	Procedure text about making food "How to Make Ayam Geprek"	Students discussed in groups of 5, then group representatives presented the results of their discussion about making food recipes.
P3	Describing pictures	Describing the designer	Students described pictures of designer figures and their work.

*P = Participant

Based on the table above, the researcher found that three English teachers employed different teaching strategies according to the students' vocational backgrounds and learning objectives. During the observations, three major strategies were identified, namely role-play, discussion, and describing pictures.

The first observation was conducted the teacher (P1) in the Beauty Class. The class consisted of 17 eleventh-grade students. The lesson focused on salon service interactions. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher greeted the students and reviewed previously learned vocabulary related to beauty treatments. Then, the teacher showed a YouTube video by Learn English with Jessica showing an interaction between a beautician and a customer in a salon. The video covered four main situations: advice for acne treatment, cosmetic surgery, body massage, and nail salons. Students were instructed to watch the video carefully and identify useful expressions used in the conversation. The teacher then discussed the expressions with the students, explaining their meaning and function. The teacher explained that some simple expressions that we can use when customers come to our salon are "Hi, may I help you?" or "Hi, can I have your name, please?" This sentence is used if they have already booked it in advance. Then, when they tell us about their skin health concerns, we can say, "Could I have a look at it?." The teacher explained that every expression used must be in the form of polite and friendly expressions.

Following the explanation, students were divided into two or three members in a group and asked to create short dialogues based on salon service situations. During the activity, the teacher monitored the students' discussion, corrected pronunciation errors, and assisted students who had difficulty constructing sentences. After approximately twenty minutes of preparation, the students performed their role-plays in front of the class. Most students actively participated and appeared confident as they portrayed the roles of receptionists, beauticians, and customers. This role-play activity allowed students to practice workplace communication relevant to their future professions.

The second observation was conducted in a culinary department with 28 eleventh-grade students under the supervision of a teacher (P2). The lesson focused on a procedural text about food preparation, the topic being "How to Make Ayam Geprek." At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher introduced several action verbs related to cooking activities, such as chopping, mixing, boiling, frying, and serving. The teacher then divided students into groups of five

and asked them to discuss the ingredients and cooking procedures for making *Ayam Geprek* within their groups.

During the group discussions, students exchanged ideas and organized the cooking steps into a logical sequence. The teacher monitored student participation and encouraged them to use English expressions during the discussions. After completing the task, each group selected a representative to present the procedure to the class. Other students listened to the presentations and were given the opportunity to ask questions. The observations revealed that the discussion activities encouraged collaboration, idea sharing, and speaking practice among students.

The third observation was conducted in a fashion design classroom with a teacher (P3) and 30 students. The lesson focused on descriptive text through the strategy of describing pictures. The teacher displayed a projector screen showing fashion designer Ivan Gunawan and his work. Before starting the activity, the teacher introduced vocabulary related to fashion design, including fabric, collars, sleeves, patterns, accessories, and the colors and shapes of the garments displayed. The teacher then displayed examples of descriptions of Ivan Gunawan and his designs.

Furthermore, students were asked to prepare brief descriptive pictures of the looks of other famous fashion designers. This assignment was completed in pairs so students could generate ideas from each other when constructing sentences. The images were obtained online. Afterward, students presented orally to the class while the teacher provided corrective feedback on pronunciation and sentence structure. Observations showed that visual media helped students generate ideas more easily, increased their interest in design, enabled them to explain the fashion designs they described in detail, and increased their confidence in speaking English.

Overall, the observations demonstrated that the teachers adapted their speaking strategies to the characteristics of each vocational department. Role-play was primarily used to simulate workplace situations in the beauty department; discussion was employed to facilitate collaborative learning in the culinary department; and describing pictures was used to stimulate students' oral production in fashion design. These strategies created meaningful opportunities for students to practice speaking English actively and contextually according to their future professional needs.

4.1.2 Result of Interview

Based on the interviews, the strategies teachers use to teach speaking skills vary greatly depending on the needs of students in each program. Indeed, as mentioned by Kayi (2006, as cited in Alfallah et al., 2023), there are some teaching strategies for helping students improve their English speaking skills, namely discussions, role-play, simulations, information gaps, brainstorming, storytelling, interviews, story completion, reporting, playing cards, picture narrating, and picture describing. The results obtained from interviews with English teachers regarding the teaching strategies used in teaching speaking skills can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Teacher strategies in teaching speaking based on interviews

No	Teachers' Strategies	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
1.	Discussion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	Role-Play	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-
3.	Describing Pictures	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
4.	Dialogue	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Based on Table 2, interviews have shown that six teachers as participants coded, as P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6 use discussion and dialogue strategies in all departments to facilitate the exchange of ideas between students. Four teachers implemented role-playing strategies in the Hospitality Department, Culinary Department, and Beauty Departments. This allowed students to experience the real-world environment where they will eventually work. Three teachers used the picture description strategy in the fashion and culinary departments. These departments are the most image-related, so teachers use this strategy to help students memorize vocabulary for communication. At the end of the lesson, students can achieve the final learning objective well in developing context-appropriate communication skills after graduating from vocational school and entering the workforce.

4.1.2.1 Discussion

Discussion is one of the most frequently used strategies by teachers in the classroom. This strategy aims to broaden students' horizons and develop their learning skills. Through discussion activities, students are encouraged to exchange ideas, express opinions, solve problems collaboratively, and practice using job-specific vocabulary in meaningful communication. At the beginning of each lesson, teachers always provide activities that can arouse students' interest in the lesson. Teachers ask students to create sentences from vocabulary they have written at home related to the topic they will be learning in class, according to their field. This helps students develop the communicative competencies needed in a real-world work environment where teamwork and customer interaction are crucial.

"Students write 10 verbs and 10 nouns and their meanings at home. Then, at the start of each class, I mention the words they have written, and students have to make sentences from them. This is done spontaneously." {P6}

The statement expressed by P6 was consistent with those of P1 and P2. They explained that at the beginning of each lesson, students were asked to construct sentences using the vocabulary items they had prepared at home, including both nouns and verbs along with their meanings. This activity encouraged students to practice using new vocabulary in meaningful contexts and helped them develop the ability to respond spontaneously during communication.

As a result, students became more confident and better prepared to engage in conversations with others in English.

After giving some questions to the students, the teacher began to divide them into several groups. For fashion design majors, teachers provide vocabulary about things that are often found in clothing, such as clothes, sleeves, collars, cuffs, needles, scissors, and thread. The teacher will ask about some of the things they often use when sewing and designing. Afterward, students selected and created a different design within one lesson hour. After completing their designs, students discussed them in groups, particularly the materials, equipment, and steps needed to produce the garments. The teacher gives them freedom to discuss but still uses English as the language of discussion.

"I give my students the freedom to discuss the fashion designs they want, and then they present the results of the collaboration they discussed in front of the class." {P1}

Afterward, as P1 and P3 mentioned, students presented the outcomes of their discussions to the class. These discussion and presentation activities encouraged students to develop greater confidence in public speaking while also preparing them for authentic workplace communication, such as explaining design concepts and garment specifications to clients.

In the culinary arts class, the teacher provides food-related vocabulary and uses videos to establish the classroom atmosphere for procedural texts. The session starts with group division, followed by playing the song "When You're Happy, Please Clap Your Hands" to prompt students to identify word types. The teacher then clarifies that imperative verbs are required for recipe instructions, offering "firstly, pour water into the bowl" as an example. Subsequently, the teacher selects topics from textbooks and online sources for procedural text projects. Students collaboratively discuss their chosen recipes before presenting them in class, while their peers are expected to listen carefully. The aim of implementing this strategy is to equip students to be able to explain food preparation procedures in English when they are in the workplace, while also training them to recognize kitchen ingredients that generally use English terms.

The same strategy was also applied in the beauty and tourism departments. At the beginning of the activity, the teacher played a video showing interactions between customers and staff at a salon, as well as tourists visiting tourist destinations. Students were asked to watch the video and note down the vocabulary they heard. Next, students worked in pairs. Beauty students discussed common phrases used when receiving customers at a beauty clinic, while tourism students practiced constructing sentences to welcome tourists and introduce tourist attractions. After that, each pair presented their discussion findings in front of the class. Other groups that were not presenting were required to listen attentively and ask questions to the presenters. This discussion and presentation activity proved highly beneficial for both departments, as it trained students to use English directly in accordance with their future work contexts, while simultaneously building their confidence in communicating with customers and tourists.

4.1.2.2 Role-Play

The interview data indicated that the implementation of role play followed several stages. First, the teacher began the lesson by greeting the students and conducting pre-learning activities to prepare them for the learning process. Afterward, students were divided into groups, and the teacher introduced several topics related to hospitality services. These topics included handling hotel reservations, booking rooms by offline or online, and making restaurant reservations. Students were then given the opportunity to select a topic that interested them most, which increased their engagement and participation during the activity.

Before students started creating their role-play scenarios, the teacher provided language input by modeling expressions and dialogues commonly used in hospitality settings. Particular attention was given to pronunciation practice and the use of appropriate language expressions. P5 highlighted the importance of grammatical accuracy, especially the use of verb tenses, to help students produce meaningful and contextually appropriate utterances.

"The accurate use of verb tenses (past, present, and future) to enable students to construct contextually appropriate sentences. This way, students can become accustomed to correct pronunciation and contextual use." {P5}

Based on the interview, the teacher initiated the class by greeting all students and carrying out several pre-learning activities. Subsequently, she organized the students into groups and provided them with various practice topics, including handling a hotel reservation, booking a room by telephone or online, and reserving a dinner table. Following this, each group was permitted to select their preferred topic. Upon topic selection, the teacher facilitated pronunciation practice by modeling several sentences concerning the procedures for welcoming guests and reserving hotel rooms. Teachers usually use textbooks or seek out sources from the media as learning materials.

Afterward, the students worked within their groups to create a scenario and assign each role to be played. The scenario was not too long, so students could practice and everyone could take turns performing in front of the class. For assessment, the teacher looked at the students' pronunciation and confidence in performing their roles. The teachers stated this strategy aims to introduce students to situations they will encounter in the workplace. They really need this training because the basic things practiced in class will be very useful when they carry out fieldwork practice.

"Because when they do their internship, at least they already know how to receive guests to book a hotel room and how to refuse an order." {P2}

P2 explained that students need such training because the fundamental skills practiced in the classroom become highly beneficial when they participate in internships. This view was supported by P5, who stated that through repeated practice, students develop a better understanding of how to communicate appropriately during their fieldwork practice. As a result, students become more prepared to handle various professional situations, such as welcoming guests,

managing hotel reservations, and responding effectively to customer requests. These role-play activities provide students with opportunities to simulate real workplace interactions, enabling them to build both communicative competence and confidence before entering the actual work environment.

4.1.2.3 Describing Pictures

In addition, teachers teach descriptive texts in fashion and culinary arts classes using strategies that involve using the describing pictures. This method is considered interactive and engaging, so students don't feel awkward expressing their ideas. The teacher also stated that by viewing pictures, students are not only required to memorize vocabulary but also learn to construct sentences coherently and logically.

"Students usually enjoy looking at pictures, so for my fashion design class, I projected several images of designers and their work on a projector. I also provided several images with important vocabulary words underneath them to help students remember the words they will need later." {P1}

P1 stated that fashion design students are actively involved in creating fashion designs, so for the descriptive text lesson, the teacher showed pictures of famous designers and their work using a projector. To make these images more useful, the teacher placed important vocabulary words right below each picture. Just like P3 said, using pictures makes learning more interesting and active. During the activity, students designed their own fashion drawings. Then, they worked in pairs to describe those drawings by writing several sentences about them. After that, they presented their work in front of the class. The teacher found that this method helped students easily understand and remember the fashion terms they had seen. In this way, students become directly engaged while also learning the language they would need for future projects and discussions.

"In culinary classes, I usually show pictures of chefs and food. This way, they can describe the appearance of a person, the taste, and the shape of the food." {P2}

Similarly, P2 applied this strategy in culinary class to describe pictures. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher showed a picture of a chef (Chef Juna) on the projector screen, then asked the students "Do you know who I am?" The students answered, "Chef Juna, Miss." Then the teacher emphasized the students' answer, "yes, he is Chef Juna." Then the teacher asked the students to look at the picture in more detail: what chef Juna has. Then, the teacher asked the students to look for pictures of people, food, and restaurants. Students were asked to work together in pairs; pictures can be obtained from the internet. After that, they made several sentences about the picture. The final result will be presented in front of the class so that all students can see it too. Additionally, this activity prepares culinary students for professional practice in a real-world work environment. These skills are essential when serving dishes, explaining menus, or describing kitchen procedures in a real-world work environment.

4.1.2.4 Dialogue

The dialogue strategies employed by teachers are very similar to role-playing; however, the difference is that dialogue focuses on conveying a message through a question-and-answer conversation, while role-play involves predetermined actions and scenarios with assigned roles, allowing students to tailor their responses to specific situations.

Teachers P4 typically use dialogues for self-introduction activities. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher provided an example by showing a video about self-introductions on a projector screen. Then, students are asked to note down important information from the video. Next, students are asked to adapt the dialogue to reflect their own lives. For example, in response to the question "How many brothers do you have?" students answer based on their real life. If they have three older brothers, they say, "I have three older brothers." After that, the teacher explains the use of question words and appropriate answers to the questions given. Next, the teacher asks students to create a dialogue topic about sellers and buyers. Then they practice in pairs with their classmates. Then, they present in front of the class as English-speaking practice. The presentation is done in turns in a question-and-answer format.

"Before class begins, I help students practice their pronunciation by presenting a few sentences so they can get used to them and speak clearly. For the *hospitality class*, students create dialogues about room or restaurant reservations, whether in person or over the phone." {P5}

Teacher P5 revealed that before class, he facilitated pronunciation practice by providing several sentences commonly used when speaking with guests or customers. This aims to familiarize them with the dialogue and enable them to speak clearly when dealing directly with customers. The dialogue used in *hospitality classes* usually concerns the process of reserving a room at a hotel and ordering a table at a hotel restaurant. Meanwhile, P2 described how dialogue activities are also implemented in the culinary arts program, with tasks tailored to food service situations.

"For the culinary arts class, the dialogues might involve, for example, a customer who wants to order spicy food or food with less sugar; students must speak in English and may mix languages. Students write down some phrases they commonly use to complain about food" {P2}

For a culinary arts class, the dialogue is used to practice speaking with customers, for example, serving customers who want to order food. The conversation could involve ordering food, adjusting customer requests to their tastes, and negotiating in a sale. These dialogue activities provide students with opportunities to practice authentic workplace communication, enabling them to develop speaking proficiency, customer-service language skills, and confidence in handling various service situations in English. These activities also create a more active classroom atmosphere because all students are involved in the conversation.

4.2 Discussion

The findings indicate that teachers employ four strategies when teaching speaking skills in vocational high school. The use of discussion, role-play, describing pictures, and dialogue in teaching aligns with Kayi (2006, as cited in Alfallah et al., 2023) statement, namely by creating conversations in small groups, fostering an interactive atmosphere that encourages participation, reducing anxiety about speaking in a foreign language, and ultimately cultivating a more enthusiastic and engaged classroom.

Among the four strategies, discussion emerged as the most frequently used strategy across all departments. The widespread use of discussion suggests that teachers view speaking development as a collaborative process in which students learn through interaction and the exchange of ideas. Through discussion activities, students are encouraged to share their opinions and construct responses using English vocabulary related to their vocational fields. This finding is consistent with Mohammed and Ahmed (2021), who found that discussion activities improve speaking fluency by increasing opportunities for meaningful communication. Furthermore, discussion activities allow teachers to directly assess students' speaking performance while creating a student-centered learning environment (Wulandari, 2020).

Beyond discussion, role-play was widely implemented across different vocational programs to provide students with opportunities to practice English in situations that closely resemble their future workplaces. The use of role-play supports the principles of communicative language teaching, which emphasizes meaningful interaction and the practical use of language in real-life situations. Through role-play activities, students are encouraged to use English for a communicative purpose rather than merely memorizing vocabulary or grammatical structures. The findings are consistent with Nurwanti (2024), who states that role-play can increase students' motivation and help them understand real situations. Furthermore, the scenarios designed by teachers reflected workplace contexts relevant to students' vocational specializations, such as serving customers, handling reservations, providing tourism information, or communicating with clients. As a result, students were able to practice language expressions that they are likely to encounter in their future careers.

The implementation of role-play strategies can help students solve real-world problems by enabling them to use appropriate language and emotional expressions, thus fostering meaningful social interaction (García, 2018). These strategies focus on the effective use of language, body language, and facial expressions. The implementation of this strategy results in a more engaging and less monotonous learning environment. Additionally, role-playing encourages quick thinking and spontaneous responses in communication situations that mirror everyday life such as ordering food at a restaurant, checking in at a hotel, or filing a complaint about a product or service. It not only boosts students' confidence in speaking but also fosters empathy and social understanding, as they must put themselves in others' shoes (Mulyanti et al., 2021). As a result, speaking skills develop more naturally, and students become better prepared to handle real-life conversations outside the classroom.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers frequently use the image description strategy to teach descriptive text in fashion design and culinary arts

programs. Through this strategy, students are encouraged to actively engage with visual materials to develop their speaking and descriptive language skills. This finding aligns with Pratiwi and Ayu (2020), who explain that the image description strategy utilizes visual media as the primary stimulus, enabling students to observe, understand, and verbally express their observations.

The interview results further revealed that teachers use images as an effective medium to stimulate student participation when expressing ideas. This practice reflects the implementation of the image description strategy proposed by Asikin (2023), in which students use images as references to construct sentences and then present their ideas verbally. The use of visual materials, combined with relevant vocabulary support, helps students connect language learning with their vocational field, making the learning process more meaningful and contextual. Moreover, picture-based activities encourage interaction among students and provide a supportive environment for communication. As a result, students can practice speaking more fluently and confidently while gradually developing their ability to engage in spontaneous and real-life communication.

In addition to using visual-based activities, teachers also implement dialogue activities to further develop students' speaking skills through direct interaction and communication. The findings indicate that dialogue is one of the strategies teachers use to improve students' speaking skills in vocational classes. Dialogues are selected based on topics students will encounter in their future work. These activities involve questions and answers that students engage in while receiving and responding to their conversation partners. In culinary classes, students practice conversations related to receiving and handling customer complaints, while in hospitality classes, students practice dealing with hotel guests when booking hotel rooms and reserving tables at restaurants. These activities provide students with opportunities to use English in situations similar to their future workplaces. This finding is consistent with Sudarsono et al. (2021), who explained that dialogue encourages students to listen attentively to their partner's responses, which helps improve fluency and vocabulary development. Through pairwork and question-and-answer interactions, students become more active in communication and gain experience using English for authentic purposes. Therefore, dialogue is an effective strategy for developing students' speaking skills while preparing them for communication in their future careers.

These are the general strategies used by teachers in teaching speaking skills in vocational classes, specifically in the tourism sector. All of these strategies are used to achieve communicative learning outcomes. Teachers consider these strategies effective in speaking practice classes, where they can directly experience the world of work through the activities used by teachers in class. These strategies are also expected to help students develop their confidence in communicating in the real world, thus ensuring that the skills they acquire align with their future needs.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In conclusion, this study successfully identified and described the teaching strategies used by English teachers in vocational high schools. The findings indicate that teachers frequently use discussions, role-playing, picture descriptions, and dialogues to improve students' speaking skills. Among these

strategies, discussions are the most frequently used by teachers in the classroom, as teachers consistently ask students to first discuss the presented material to achieve shared learning objectives. Role-playing and dialogues are used to simulate real-world workplace interactions, particularly in the Hospitality Department, Culinary Department, and Beauty Department, while picture description helps students in Fashion and Culinary classes build vocabulary and construct coherent sentences.

Furthermore, teachers consistently employ these strategies in relation to the future job demands of their students. Communication skills are essential for successful performance in all jobs. Teachers emphasize that students need a practical approach to boost their motivation in learning English. That is why the teacher's role is crucial in monitoring students in the classroom. Furthermore, the effectiveness of these strategies is evident in increased student motivation, active participation in class, and improved ability to express ideas in English. Overall, this study provides a contextual understanding of how English teachers implement speaking strategies in the learning process across various departments. This study offers opportunities for prospective English teachers to teach English language skills using the strategies described in this study.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT and Quillbot exclusively to support grammar correction and to enhance the overall readability of the text. All AI-assisted output were carefully reviewed, revised, and verified by the authors. The authors accept full responsibility for the accuracy, and originality of the content presented in this publication.

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