AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN TEACHING *KELAS UNGGULAN* AT ISLAMIC JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Muhammad Haikal Attabik [1]*, **Nana Priajana** [2], and **Septi Gumiandari** [3]

[1] English Language Teaching Department, IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon
[2] English Language Teaching Department, IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon
[3] English Language Teaching Department, IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon

Abstract

This study looked at how English teachers teach *kelas unggulan*, what challenges they face, and how they solve those challenges. The researcher used interviews, observations, and documents to collect information. They found that English teachers in *kelas unggulan* es use different teaching methods like Direct Instruction, Cooperative Learning, Small-Group Work, Problem-Solving, and Role-Play. But they also face problems both from inside and outside the classroom. Internal problems include not enough training, not knowing all the teaching methods well, not being familiar with technology, lack of professional growth, and confusion about students' readiness. External problems include students not knowing enough vocabulary, not getting support from parents, feeling bored, having trouble speaking or pronouncing, lacking confidence, facing social pressures, and not having enough class time. To tackle these problems, teachers search for teaching methods online, study with colleagues who understand technology, attend training sessions, and give students more time to prepare. They also ask students to memorize vocabulary, create parent chat groups, use different teaching strategies, give students more practice time, read together in class, motivate students, advise them on learning and time management, and adjust the curriculum to make it more engaging. This study shows that while English teachers use different teaching methods in *kelas unggulan* es, some of these methods may be outdated, but they have solutions to deal with challenges.

Keywords: English teachers; teaching strategy; *kelas unggulan*; inhibiting factors

Abstrak

Penelitian ini melihat bagaimana guru bahasa Inggris mengajar kelas-kelas lanjutan, apa tantangan yang mereka hadapi, dan bagaimana mereka menyelesaikan tantangan tersebut. Peneliti menggunakan wawancara, observasi, dan dokumen untuk mengumpulkan informasi. Mereka menemukan bahwa guru bahasa Inggris di kelas-kelas lanjutan menggunakan berbagai metode pengajaran seperti Instruksi Langsung, Pembelajaran Kooperatif, Kerja Kelompok Kecil, Pemecahan Masalah, dan Peran. Namun, mereka juga menghadapi masalah baik dari dalam maupun luar kelas. Masalah internal meliputi kurangnya pelatihan, tidak menguasai semua metode pengajaran dengan baik, tidak terbiasa dengan teknologi, kurangnya pertumbuhan profesional, dan kebingungan tentang kesiapan siswa. Masalah eksternal meliputi siswa yang kurang menguasai kosakata, tidak mendapatkan dukungan dari orang tua, merasa bosan, mengalami kesulitan berbicara atau berbicara, kurang percaya diri, menghadapi tekanan sosial, dan tidak memiliki waktu yang cukup di kelas. Untuk mengatasi masalah ini, guru mencari metode pengajaran secara online, belajar dengan rekan yang memahami teknologi, mengikuti sesi pelatihan, dan memberi siswa lebih banyak waktu untuk mempersiapkan diri. Mereka juga meminta siswa untuk menghafal kosakata, membuat grup obrolan orang tua, menggunakan berbagai strategi pengajaran, memberi siswa lebih banyak waktu latihan, membaca bersama di kelas, memotivasi siswa, memberi mereka saran tentang pembelajaran dan manajemen waktu, dan menyesuaikan kurikulum untuk membuatnya lebih menarik. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa sementara guru bahasa Inggris menggunakan berbagai metode pengajaran di kelas-kelas lanjutan, beberapa metode tersebut mungkin sudah ketinggalan zaman, tetapi mereka memiliki solusi untuk mengatasi tantangan.

Kata Kunci: *guru bahasa Inggris; strategi pengajaran; kelas unggulan; faktor penghambat*

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Since English became mandatory in the curriculum, schools have introduced programs like *kelas unggulan* to boost students' skills. This program, like the one at MTsN 2 Cirebon, focuses on high-achieving students, enhancing their abilities in English, Arabic, Quran memorization, and IT (Husni Mubarat & Fachruddin Azmi, 2020). Qomariyah (2017) explains that such programs prepare students for global competition and meet national standards. They also address various needs, like religious education, global communication (English and Arabic), and special education for diverse student populations.

Teaching strategies are methods teachers use to help students learn effectively, aiming to achieve specific goals. Killen (2009) defines them as techniques used in the classroom, including direct instruction, discussion, and problem-solving. Each strategy has pros and cons, so it's essential to choose the right one considering students' needs and characteristics. Effective teaching strategies are vital, requiring flexibility and adaptation to different learning styles (Killen, 2009). Sarode (2018) stresses the importance of tools and techniques in maximizing learning, while Anderson (2020) highlights instructional planning and various activities to achieve outcomes. Richards & Bohlke (2011) emphasize factors like student involvement and metacognition, while Wilson & Conyers (2020) underscore teachers' role in effective teaching. Effective teachers lead to effective teaching, impacting student success.

Teaching English in *kelas unggulan*es is demanding, requiring teachers to manage various language skills while fostering students' passion and positive attitude toward English (Songbatumis, 2017). Effective teaching strategies, as defined by Harmer and Brown in Chasanah et al. (2022), help adapt English teaching to different situations. Research at MTsN Taliwang found teachers lacked professional development opportunities, instructional strategy knowledge, and access to technology and resources, leading to time constraints (Songbatumis, 2017). In conclusion, English teachers not only teach language skills but also nurture students' enthusiasm for English. Strong teaching strategies are essential, especially in *kelas unggulan*.

The researcher aims to explore the importance of research in teaching strategies. Previous research in this area has been limited, as it often does not focus on *kelas unggulan*. To address this, the researcher conducted research in MTsN 2 Cirebon, a popular school with numerous achievements, both academic and non-academic. The school has a *kelas unggulan* program, with different teachers and curricula used for teaching English. The researcher aims to investigate the implementation of teaching English, the strategies used by teachers, and the inhibiting factors in applying strategies in teaching *kelas unggulan* at MTsN 2 Cirebon.

METHOD

This qualitative research investigates English teaching in the *kelas unggulan* at MTsN 2 Cirebon. Sugiyono (2016, p. 8) describes qualitative research as naturalistic, conducted in real-life settings. Moleong (2017, p. 6) states it aims to understand subjects' experiences, behaviors, and motivations. Qualitative research uses diverse scientific methods and verbal descriptions to explore phenomena comprehensively. The study aims to uncover English teachers' strategies, obstacles, and solutions in teaching, focusing on policies, procedures, and individual experiences.

The research used observation, interviews, and documentation to study English teaching in classes VII A and VIII A. Observation allows detailed classroom interaction descriptions (Sutopo in Chelsa, 2018, p. 63). Interviews with English teachers aim to gather specific insights (Sutopo, 2018). Documentation, per Sugiyono (2015, p. 329), collects data from various sources like reports and lesson plans. Miles and Huberman's model guides data analysis, involving data reduction,

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

display, conclusion, and verification (Madina, 2015). Triangulation ensures data accuracy by cross-referencing observation, interviews, and documents (Sugiyono, 2015, p. 83).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings
1. **English Teachers' Strategies in Teaching *Kelas unggulan***
A. **The Teaching Strategies Implementation in The Seventh and Eighth Grade of *Kelas unggulan***

In order to learn more about the strategies of two English teachers, the researcher uses observation checklists, interviews, and document analysis to find out the strategies used by the teachers. In this study, the researcher made observations in two classes, namely class 7 A and class 8 A, with two observations in each class, so the researcher made four observations. In *kelas unggulan* at MTsN 2 Cirebon, the teaching and learning process used CBC (Competence Based Curriculum) with more in speaking. The curriculum used by this school is the 2013 curriculum. The researcher divides the teaching process into three stages, namely:

a. **Observation at Class 8 A**
   a) **Pre-Teaching**

   Pre-teaching includes greetings, attendance, and discussing material. Teacher 1 used various strategies: on day 1, direct instruction and problem-solving; on day 2, direct instruction and role-play.
   b) **Whilst Teaching**

   During whilst-teaching, Teacher 1 employs various methods. On day 1, they explain and set challenges for students to find verbs and create sentences. On day 2, the teacher instructs students to make dialogues from pictures and checks their work. After, they correct mistakes and encourage role-play.
   c) **Post-Teaching**

   After finishing the lesson, the teacher ends the class. On the first day, they give grades and let students relax. On the second day, because of limited time, they only grade dialogues. But they remind students to get ready for the next class and say goodbye.

   So, what we see is that on the first day after teaching, the teacher uses a direct instruction method combined with problem-solving. On the second day, the teacher only focuses on grading dialogues without any other activities. From what we've observed, it's clear that the teacher uses different teaching strategies on these two days in class 8-A. They start with direct instruction on both days, but on the first day, they also include problem-solving, while on the second day, they shift to just grading dialogues. Despite starting with direct instruction both days, they use different strategies overall.

b. **Observation at Class 7-A**
   a) **Pre-Teaching**

   Pre-teaching sets the stage for learning. On day 1, Teacher 2 initiated small-group work, forming groups and reviewing previous lessons. On day 2, they used direct instruction, guiding students to write about daily activities individually.
   b) **Whilst Teaching**

   On day 1, Teacher 2 guides group activities about daily routines, monitoring progress and celebrating achievements. On day 2, they opt for direct instruction, explaining and giving practice questions. In whilst-teaching, Teacher 2 consistently uses small-group work on day 1 and direct instruction on day 2.

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

c) Post Teaching

On day 1, Teacher 2 appreciates groups' work, closes with greetings. On day 2, they review the material, give clues for the next class, and close with greetings. In post-teaching, Teacher 2 used small-group work on day 1 and direct instruction on day 2.

B. English Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Seventh and Eighth-Grade *Kelas unggulan*

To enhance teaching in *kelas unggulan*, teachers need diverse strategies. Interviews were held with teacher 1 on February 18th and teacher 2 on February 19th. They were asked about their teaching strategies, based on Roy Killen's theory, covering eight methods. Below are the findings from the interviews:

a. Direct Instruction

From the researcher's observations and interviews, both teachers primarily use direct instruction. Teacher 1 uses it to gauge student understanding and encourage questions. Teacher 2 finds it effective for introducing material at the start of lessons. Their reasons for using direct instruction differ.

b. Discussion

Both teachers confirmed in interviews that they don't use the discussion strategy in teaching *kelas unggulan*. Teacher 1 believes every session includes discussion-like elements, while Teacher 2 considers question-and-answer sessions as mini discussions. Thus, both teachers find discussion sessions redundant.

c. Small-Group Work

Both teachers confirmed in interviews that they used the small-group work strategy. Teacher 1 aimed to enhance speaking skills by dividing students into groups of three, allowing her to assess individual abilities. Meanwhile, Teacher 2 preferred small-group work for time efficiency, as tasks are completed faster when students work together. Thus, while Teacher 1 focused on assessing individual abilities, Teacher 2 prioritized efficiency in completing tasks.

d. Cooperative Learning

Based on interviews, only Teacher 1 used the cooperative learning strategy, focusing on narrative and procedure text materials to boost students' confidence in English speaking. Teacher 2 did not use this strategy, as she felt it didn't align with class 7 materials. Thus, while Teacher 1 found cooperative learning suitable for specific text types, Teacher 2 didn't see it as applicable to her teaching material.

e. Problem-Solving

Based on interviews, only Teacher 1 used the problem-solving strategy to encourage students to express their opinions and present their ideas. Teacher 2 didn't use this strategy, feeling it wasn't suitable for grade 7 students but might be more appropriate for higher grades. So, while Teacher 1 aimed to boost students' confidence in problem-solving and presentation skills, Teacher 2 considered it more fitting for older students.

f. Role-Play

Based on the interviews, both teachers use role-play strategies in *kelas unggulan*. Teacher 1 uses it to enhance students' speaking skills, allowing them to express themselves confidently. Teacher 2 employs role-play because students enjoy it, believing it helps them better understand the material. So, while Teacher 1 focuses on improving speaking skills, Teacher 2 prioritizes student engagement and comprehension through enjoyment.

g. Case Study

Both teachers confirmed they don't use the case-study strategy. Teacher 1 finds it challenging for junior high students. Similarly, Teacher 2 believes it's too advanced for grade 7 students. So, they share the view that this strategy isn't suitable for their students' readiness.

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

C. Teachers' Strategies on Lesson Plans

The researcher analyzed the lesson plans of both English teachers to understand their teaching strategies. This helps assess if the learning process fits the students. First, Teacher 1's lesson plan on Simple Past Tense and Recount Text was analyzed. Here are the findings:

a. Teacher 1 Pre-Teaching Activity

On day 1, Teacher 1 listed some activities before the main lesson. Starting the class is important for boosting student morale. Teacher 1 greeted the class, took attendance, and explained the lesson goal, following their lesson plan. In this activity, Teacher 1 only explained, and students listened and responded.

b. Teacher 1 Whilst Teaching Activity

On day 1, Teacher 1 explains the lesson and encourages questions as planned. But, instead of group reading and role-playing, students work independently, which wasn't part of the plan. On day 2, Teacher 1 mostly sticks to the plan, but skips the reflection activity with students. Generally, day 2 matches the plan better.

c. Teacher 1 Post-Teaching Activity

In post-teaching activity, the teacher mostly followed the lesson plan, except for skipping the closing activity on day 1. Instead, Teacher 1 let students rest early because they finished their work fast. Besides that, all other activities went as planned.

Moving on, the researcher studied Teacher 2's lesson plan on Simple Present Tense. Here are the findings:

d. Teacher 2 Pre-Teaching Activity

On the pre-teaching activity, teacher 2 carried out almost all activities in the pre-teaching lesson plan except ice-breaking; on days 1 and 2, teacher 2 did not hold ice-breaking.

e. Teacher 2 Whilst Teaching Activity

Teacher 2 nearly finished all the planned activities. On day 1, only the linguistic identification wasn't done during the teaching. But on day 2, Teacher 2 did everything as planned. So, it seems Teacher 2 followed the lesson plan closely.

f. Teacher 2 Post-Teaching Activity

Teacher 2 implemented it all in the post-teaching activity according to what she designed in her lesson plan.

2. The English Teachers' Inhibiting Factors and Solutions in Applying Teaching Strategies at *Kelas unggulan*

The researcher interviewed two English teachers in *Kelas unggulan* to understand challenges and solutions in applying teaching strategies. They referred to Songbatumis' theory, which outlines internal factors like training shortages and limited teaching strategy mastery, and external factors such as student vocabulary, parental support, and confidence issues. The interviews shed light on the obstacles English teachers face in implementing effective teaching strategies. The researcher asked about all inhibiting factors to gather comprehensive data. Here are the findings from the interviews with the two teachers:

A. Internal Factors

a. Shortage of Teachers' Training

From the interviews, the researcher found that both teachers identified the Shortage of Teachers' Training as an internal barrier in implementing teaching strategies in *kelas unggulan*. Both teachers highlighted the necessity of training to enhance teaching methods. They also rely on online resources for self-learning.

b. Limited Mastery of Teaching Strategies

From the interviews, it's clear the two teachers hold different views. Teacher 1 sees Limited Mastery of Teaching Strategies as a *inhibit*. Teacher 2 disagrees.. Teacher 1 emphasizes the need for diverse strategies to avoid student boredom, while Teacher 2 relies on online resources for new ideas, seeing no *inhibit* in strategy mastery.

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

c. Unfamiliarity with IT

From the interviews, it's clear that both teachers face challenges due to their unfamiliarity with IT. Both teachers feel the pressure to understand IT, given its importance in modern teaching. They agree that learning from colleagues who are more IT-savvy is the solution.

d. Teachers' Lack of Professional Development

From the interviews, it's evident that only Teacher 1 sees the lack of professional development as an obstacle. Teacher 1 stressed the importance of continuous learning to evolve teaching methods. On the other hand, Teacher 2 has a different perspective. Teacher 2 believes that active inquiry and information seeking mitigate the impact of limited professional development.

B. External Factors

a. Students' Lack of Vocabulary Mastery

From the interviews with the two teachers, it's evident they both agree that students' limited vocabulary mastery hinders their teaching strategies. Teacher 1 stressed the importance of vocabulary in English learning, highlighting that inadequate mastery consumes valuable class time. Her solution involves assigning daily vocabulary memorization tasks. Similarly, Teacher 2 shares this concern, attributing it to students' perception of English as challenging due to its unfamiliarity. Both teachers advocate for daily vocabulary practice as the solution. In summary, both teachers identify students' vocabulary limitations as an external *inhibit* and propose daily vocabulary activities as the remedy.

b. Students' Lack of Parental Support

In the interviews, the researcher found differing views between the two teachers on the impact of students' lack of parental support. Teacher 1 doesn't see it as an *inhibit*, while Teacher 2 views it as problematic. Teacher 2's solution involves creating a WhatsApp group with parents to share student activities and keep them informed. So, while Teacher 1 doesn't consider it a barrier, Teacher 2 believes parental involvement is crucial and takes steps to engage parents through communication Apps like WhatsApp.

c. Students' Boredom

Both teachers agree that students' boredom is a challenge. Teacher 1 finds it very hindering and combats it by using diverse teaching methods and incorporating stories into lessons. Similarly, Teacher 2 acknowledges student boredom and believes it stems from monotonous strategies. To address this, she advocates for a variety of methods, including incorporating games. So, both teachers recognize student boredom as an issue and propose using diverse teaching strategies to keep students engaged..

d. Students' Speaking Problem

Both teachers confirmed that speaking problems hindered their teaching strategies. For Teacher 1, speaking is highly emphasized in *kelas unggulan*, so any speaking issues pose a challenge. Teacher 2 shares this view. Their solution is consistent: providing additional practice time for students in *kelas unggulan*. So, both teachers agree that speaking problems are *inhibits* and advocate for more practice opportunities.

e. Students' Pronunciation Problem

Both teachers agreed that pronunciation problems hindered their teaching. Teacher 1 highlighted how pronunciation affects vocabulary learning and linked it to a lack of practice in Islamic boarding houses. Teacher 2 shared the same concern. Their solution is consistent: having students follow and repeat readings together with the teacher. So, both teachers see pronunciation issues as obstacles and address them through repeated practice.

f. Students' Confidence Issue

Both teachers agree that lack of confidence hinders learning. Teacher 1 believes it's tough for students to progress without confidence, while Teacher 2 thinks less confident students struggle to understand material. They offer different solutions: Teacher 1 focuses on

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

motivating students, while Teacher 2 suggests having them move forward with support from friends to reduce embarrassment.

Discussion
1. English Teachers' Strategies in Teaching *Kelas unggulan*
a. Direct Instruction

Direct instruction is a widely used teaching strategy in Indonesia, with teachers playing a crucial role in ongoing activities. Majid (2013) emphasizes the importance of direct instruction in ensuring student engagement and directing activities. Teachers 1 and 2 mainly use direct instruction at the beginning of teaching and learning activities, followed by other strategies. This aligns with the opinions of Majid, Zahrani, and Nuraeni et al. (2022), indicating that direct instruction is effective when combined with other strategies.

b. Small-Group Work

Small-Group Work involves students collaborating in teams, each with a unique role. Martinis (2019) describes it as collaborative learning rather than traditional teaching. Both teachers use this method to boost speaking skills in *kelas unggulan*es, supported by Rosadi, Nuraeni, and Priadi (2020). La'biran (2017) praises its effectiveness in enhancing speaking abilities. Teacher 2 prefers this strategy for its efficiency, echoing SW Daichi (2017) and RH Siregar's (2019) views. Small-Group Work offers advantages over large-group discussions and individual work.

c. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning, as described by Rusman (2013) and Wina Sanjaya (2011), promotes active interaction and problem-solving among students, drawing on Piaget and Vygotsky's ideas. Only Teacher 1 used this method to enhance speaking skills in procedure text, supported by Rohemah, Kurnia, and Fadilah's (2022) research. Yusniah and Adriana (2014) found that cooperative learning made students feel at ease and improved various skills like reading and writing.

d. Problem-Solving

Majid and Boga stress problem-solving as a teaching method to aid student understanding. It boosts attention and critical thinking, leading to better analysis and solutions. Research by Boga et al. (2021) and Zainuddin et al. (2017) shows problem-solving improves writing, speaking, grades, and class participation. This method suits *kelas unggulan*es, involving more students and reinforcing studied material.

e. Role-Play

Role-play is a communication method where students act out roles in various situations. It boosts English speaking skills, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Research by Husbandarti and Asra (2017), Dewi (2020), Kasiyati (2015), and Ayuningtyas Wulandari, and Yana (2019) shows it builds confidence and encourages active participation. Syaifurrahman (2020) and Soleh, Suparman, and Herpratiwi (2015) found it fun and engaging, motivating students to learn. Overall, role-play improves speaking skills and creates a positive learning environment in *kelas unggulan*es.

2. The English Teachers' Inhibiting Factors and Solutions in Applying Teaching Strategies at *Kelas unggulan*

Based on the results of the researcher's analysis on finding, the researcher found that the two English teachers faced and found many inhibiting factors when implementing teaching strategies in *kelas unggulan* es, both internal and external inhibiting factors which they had their own solutions to overcome these inhibiting factors.

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

A. Internal Factors

a. Shortage of teachers' training

The first internal factor is teacher training shortage. Teacher training is vital for competence and meeting the needs of the 4.0 industry in Indonesia. Darling-Hammond and Musfah stress its importance, noting that lifelong learning alone isn't enough. Research by Kadariah, Kusmaladewi, and Hasmiah (2020) and Krisdiana, Apriandi, and Setiansyah (2014) shows teachers need more training to implement teaching strategies in the 2013 Curriculum effectively. Addressing this shortage is crucial for developing a skilled workforce. Adawiyah (2021) found teachers often lack training in diverse teaching strategies due to media unfamiliarity.

b. Limited mastery of teaching strategies

Limited teaching methods knowledge is common in schools, leading to student boredom. Ridhowati (2015) and Khausar (2018) advocate for diverse methods to boost student interest. Teacher 1 acknowledges this issue, proposing internet use for learning new methods, supported by Maulidya (2017) and Sunanda (2015). Both teachers suggest internet use to overcome teaching challenges, enabling teachers to learn new methods and stay updated.

c. Unfamiliarity with IT

The Covid-19 pandemic has shifted teaching to more online formats, canceling National Exams. Astini (2019) stresses teachers' need to embrace technology, focusing on both teaching skills and personal development. Virgiyanti et al. (2016) also emphasize teaching skills' importance, with technology aiding learning. To overcome tech challenges, teachers should study with knowledgeable colleagues, as suggested by both Astini and Virgiyanti et al. Popang (2022) and Sulstyaningsih (2023) support this idea, promoting collaboration and asking questions to improve IT skills. Working with colleagues and seeking guidance helps teachers become comfortable with technology.

d. Teachers' lack of Professional Development

Professional development is crucial for teachers to maintain and improve their skills. Banks and Mayes (2012) stress that it helps teachers stay updated on educational practices and societal changes. Nasution (2014) found that a lack of professional development hinders teachers from being truly professional. Shady, Luther, and Richman (2013) discovered that without such opportunities, teachers can feel frustrated and struggle to teach effectively. To overcome this, Kurniyawan and Zarnita (2020), and Putri and Imaniyati (2017) suggest participating in external training sessions. This helps teachers develop professionally, become more independent, and enhance their performance, leading to better education outcomes.

e. Teacher's Confusion on Students' Unreadiness

Teacher confusion in teaching strategies can cause problems in communication and wasted resources. Hasnida (2019) highlights this issue. Prawesti and Yunanto (2021) found that some teachers struggle with teaching slow learners. Safitri (2019) stresses the importance of teachers adapting to changing standards. To address this, Teacher 1 suggests giving students time to prepare, improving the learning process and readiness for class goals.

B. External Factors

a. Students' Lack of Vocabulary Mastery

In Indonesia, mastering English vocabulary is crucial for students since it's not their native language. Hersalina (2021) emphasizes this, while Salam and Nurnisa (2021) found students struggle with English vocabulary. Fitriani et al. (2022) identify reasons for this, like motivation and lack of practice. To help, teachers can assign students vocabulary to memorize, as suggested by Oten Maret (2016). This method boosts interest. R Yusmad (2022) adds that knowing vocabulary expands students' English knowledge. So, having students memorize vocabulary in class and at home can improve their skills.

---

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

b. Students' Lack of Parental Support

Effendi and Tjahyono, as cited in Fitriyani (2017), highlight the importance of parental support for both students and teachers. Rohaty, mentioned in Paskaran and Yasin (2020), explains how social support can improve mental well-being and academic performance. Harlina and Yusuf (2020) discovered that when students lack interest in English and parental support, it affects their learning. In summary, parental support plays a crucial role in students' well-being and academic success. To address this, Teacher 2 created a WhatsApp group for parents to keep track of their children's progress through class activities and videos.

c. Students' Boredom

Boredom is a common issue for students, affecting their engagement in lessons. Rusman (2013) explains that varying activities in learning can combat this. Monotonous lessons can lead to declining interest. To tackle boredom, teachers need to use diverse strategies. Hasibuan (2006) stresses the importance of effective and relevant methods to keep students interested. Yahya (2014) suggests that different strategies can boost motivation. Developing various teaching approaches is crucial for creating an engaging learning environment and ensuring effective lesson absorption. Thus, teachers should employ diverse strategies to combat student boredom and maintain high interest in lessons.

d. Students' Speaking Problem,

In Indonesia, students often struggle with speaking English, as noted by Jaya, Petrus, and Pitaloka (2022). These problems stem from issues like confidence, social challenges, and linguistic difficulties. Factors include lack of practice, fear of mistakes, and low motivation. Fitria (2013) and Raharjo (2016) found inhibition and errors common among students. To address this, Kusumaningsih and Azman (2018) suggest more practice time. Both teachers stress the importance of regular practice to overcome speaking challenges and improve skills.

e. Students' Pronunciation Problem

Pronunciation is a big challenge for Indonesian students learning English, as seen in studies by Ammar, Hartono, and Angraini (2022), Fadillah (2020), and Muslimah (2013). Differences in phonemes and lack of instruction contribute to this difficulty, as found by Plailek and Essien (2021). To help, teachers can use reading methods and repetition exercises. Annisa, Pupita, and Magdalena (2022) and Hengki and Ratna (2022) found this approach effective in improving pronunciation.

f. Students' confidence issues

Students often struggle with confidence when learning English, as noted by Syafitri, Yundayani, and Kusumajati (2019). Confidence is key for success, helping students handle challenges and make decisions confidently, as seen in studies by Aprillia (2019). Pasarlay (2018) found low confidence affects interest in English classes. Motivation and support from parents and teachers are crucial in overcoming confidence issues, as emphasized by Santosa (2017) and Nasikin (2019). Teachers play a vital role in building confidence, as seen in practices by Teacher 1 and Teacher 2. Teguh (2019) found that various activities like storytelling and presentations help students gain confidence. Overall, support from all sides can boost students' confidence and improve their English learning.

CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded that English teachers in *kelas unggulan* applied five teaching strategies: direct instruction, cooperative learning, small-group work, problem-solving, and role-play. English teachers use various teaching strategies to improve students' English skills in *kelas unggulan*. However, they faced internal and external inhibiting factors, including a lack of training, limited mastery of teaching strategies, IT familiarity, lack of professional development, and teacher confusion. Solutions were found from each teacher to address these factors. They address internal

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

and external inhibiting factors, such as lack of professional development, confusion, and time for preparation. External factors include memorizing vocabularies, creating parental support groups, using strategies, giving practice time, following reading methods, encouraging confidence, providing homework time, and reducing material and ice-breaking.

REFERENCES

Ammar, M. D. (2022). English pronunciation problems analysis faced by english education students in the second semester at indo global mandiri university. *Global Expert: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, *10*(1), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.36982/jge.v10i1.2166

Annisa, M., Puspita, D., & Magdalena, I. (2022). Analisis kesalahan pelafalan bahasa inggris siswa sekolah dasar. *Journal of Educational Review and Research, 5*(1), 38-45. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.26737/jerr.v5i1.3300

Banks, F., & Mayes, A. S. (2012). *Early professional development for teachers.* David Fulton Publishers.

Chasanah, Jihan Ilmiatul., Rasyid, Fathor., and Aini, Nurul. (2022). Investigating the English teaching at excellent class at mtsn 2 kota kediri. *SELL Journal, 7*(2). DOI: https://doi.org/10.31597/sl.v7i2.823

D. Sarode, R. (2018). Teaching strategies, style and qualities of a teacher: a review for valuable higher education. *International Journal of Current Engineering and Scientific Research (IJCESR)*, 5, 57-58. http://troindia.in/journal/ijcesr/vol5iss5part2/57-62.pdf

Dr. Hasnida, M.Pd. (2019). *Buku pedoman pembinaan kompetensi mengajar (pkm)/micro teaching.* STIT INSIDA.

Fitriani, N., Usman, N., Asrifan, A., posi, T., & ., S. (2022). The implementation of semantic mapping to improve students vocabulary mastery. *La Ogi : English Language Journal*, *8*(2), 150-155. https://doi.org/10.55678/loj.v8i2.686

Harlina, Hariya., and Yusuf, Fazri Nur. (2020). Challenges of learning english in rural school. *E-Journal UPI Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan*, *20*(3). DOI: https://doi.org/10.17509/jpp.v20i3.28191

Jaya, H. P., Petrus, I., & Pitaloka, N. L. (2022). Speaking performance and problems faced by English major students at a university in South Sumatera. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, *8*(1), 105-112. https://doi.org/10.25134/ieflj.v8i1.5603

Kasiyati. (2015). upaya peningkata kemampuan berbicara dalam bahasa inggris dengan menggunakan metode pembelajaran role play. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan LPMP Kalimantan Timur*. Vol. *9*(1), bulan Juni 2015. Halaman 55-66 ISSN: 1858-3105 URI: http://repositori.kemdikbud.go.id/id/eprint/15504

Kemala, Zia. (2016). An analysis of factors influencing the autonomous learners in learning English. *ELTIN Journal*, Vol. *4*(1). DOI: https://doi.org/10.22460/eltin.v4i1.p%25p

Killen, R. (2009). *Effective teaching strategies: lessons from research and practice (5th Ed.).* Cengage Learning.

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

Kristiana Dewi, A. A. I. (2020). Meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa melalui model pembelajaran role playing berbantuan media audio visual. *Mimbar Ilmu*, Vol. *25*(No. 3), 449–459. https://doi.org/10.23887/mi.v25i3.26388

Kusumaningsih, Citra., and Azman (2018). Penerapan pendekatan scaffolding dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa STKIP PGRI Bengkulu*, Vol. 7, (2). DOI: https://doi.org/10.31571/bahasa.v7i2.1008

Majid, Abdul. (2013). *Strategi pembelajaran*. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

Martinis. (2019). *Strategi dan metode dalam model pembelajaran*. Gaung Persada Press.

Mirosław Pawlak, Mariusz Kruk, Joanna Zawodniak, Sławomir Pasikowski, (2020). Investigating factors responsible for boredom in English classes: the case of advanced learners, *System*, Volume 91, ISSN 0346-251X, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102259.

Mubarat, Husni and Azmi, Fachruddi. (2020). Management of quality learning in a *kelas unggulan* . *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, Vol. *09*(02), DOI: 10.30868/ei.v9i02.125

Musfah. J. (2012). *Peningkatan kompetensi guru: melalui pelatihan dan sumber belajar teori praktik edisi pertama.* Kencana.

Moleong, Lexy J. (2017). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Remaja Rosdakarya.

Qomariyah, Nurul. (2017). *Pengaruh Persepsi Siswa Tentang Program Kelas unggulan dan Pondok Pesantren Terhadap Minat Siswa Memilih Sekolah di MA NU Banat Kudus.* [Undergraduate's Thesis (S1), Islamic State University of Walisongo]. UIN Walisongo Semarang https://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/id/eprint/7488

Richards, J. C., & Bohlke, D. (2011). *Creating effective language lessons*: Cambridge University Press.

Rohemah, Siti., Kurnia, Fabiola D., and Fadilah, Eka. (2022). Increasing students' speaking ability in procedure text by using cooperative learning. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)* Vol. 5 (No. 1), 5623. DOI: https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v5i1.4268

Rosadi, Fanny Selvia., Nuraeni, Cicih., and Priadi, Agus. (2020). The use of small group discussion strategy in teaching english speaking. *Pujangga: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra.* Vol. 6 (2), 144. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.47313/pujangga.v6i2.992

Rusman. (2013). *Model-model pembelajaran, mengembangkan profesionalisme guru*. PT.Rajagrafindo Persada.

Sugiyono (2016). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D*. CV Alfabeta.

Sugiyono (2015). *Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan r&d*. CV Alfabeta.

Songbatumis, A. M. (2017). Challenges in teaching English at MTsN Taliwang, Indonesia. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching & Learning*, 2(2), 54-67. DOI: https://doi.org/10.18196/ftl.2223

Thilakavathy Paskaran , Mohd Hanafi Mohd Yasin. (2020). Parental support in the learning of students with hearing impaired at home. *Global Conferences Series: Social Sciences, Education and Humanities (GCSSSEH),* Vol.4, 2020. DOI: https://doi.org/10.32698/GCS-04318

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com

Virgiyanti, Diska Fatima; Widiati, Utami; Suharmanto, Suharmanto. (2016). Characteristics of effective junior high school English teachers in kabupaten pacitan based on students' and teachers' perceptions. *Jurnal Pendidikan: Teori, Penelitian, dan Pengembangan,* [S.l.], p. 338-346, ISSN 2502471X. Doi http://dx.doi.org/10.17977/jp.v1i3.6159.

Wilson, D., & Conyers, M. (2020). *Five big ideas for effective teaching: Connecting mind, brain, and education research to classroom practice*. Teachers College Press.

Wina Sanjaya. (2011). *Strategi pembelajaran berorientasi standar proses Pendidikan*. Kencana.

Wulandari, Aini Husnida. (2022). Pengaruh perbedaan waktu belajar terhadap hasil belajar bahasa inggris mahasiswa universitas teknologi mataram. *ARZUSIN Jurnal Manajemen dan Pendidikan Dasar,* Vol. 2 (3), https://ejournal.yasin-alsys.org/index.php/arzusin.

*Author(s) Correspondence:
E-mail: muhhaikal957@gmail.com