

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the study by presenting the background and rationale for investigating teachers' perceptions of their teaching speaking strategies in facilitating students' engagement in the English Club. It begins by describing the research context and the issues that motivate the study, particularly the teaching of speaking to young EFL learners, students' engagement in speaking activities, and teachers' perceptions of how their instructional strategies facilitate such engagement. The chapter then presents the research questions that guide the investigation, followed by the research objectives, significance of the study, scope and limitations, previous studies, and the study's contribution.

1.1 Research Background

Speaking is a central component of English language learning because it enables learners to use language for communication, express meaning, and interact with others (Cameron, 2001; Thornbury, 2005; Burns & Goh, 2012). For young EFL learners, however, developing speaking ability can be challenging because their linguistic resources and cognitive, social, and emotional capacities are still developing (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990; Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2017). Young learners may therefore experience difficulties in producing language independently, maintaining confidence, and expressing meaning during speaking activities (Pinter, 2017; Cameron, 2001; Saragih et al., 2025). These characteristics indicate that speaking instruction for young learners requires more than opportunities to speak. It also requires instructional support that helps learners access language, participate in interaction, and gradually develop their ability to communicate.

Teachers play an important role in providing such support through the teaching speaking strategies they employ during speaking activities. Teaching speaking strategies enable teachers to structure speaking practice, provide language support, and create opportunities for learners to use English for communicative purposes (Richards, 2008; Burns & Goh, 2012; Brown & Lee, 2015). Different strategies may serve different pedagogical purposes, including providing language models, supporting repeated practice, eliciting oral responses, and creating opportunities for interaction (Thornbury, 2005; Richards, 2008; Burns & Goh,

2012). However, the use of a particular strategy does not necessarily produce the same classroom response in every situation. Teachers need to consider learners' proficiency, developmental characteristics, activity purposes, and classroom conditions when selecting and enacting strategies (Nunan, 2003; Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2017). Thus, examining teaching speaking strategies requires attention not only to which strategies teachers use but also to how those strategies are enacted during actual speaking activities.

The significance of teaching strategies becomes clearer when considering student engagement as an important part of the learning process. Student engagement is a multidimensional construct that includes behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social involvement in learning activities (Fredricks et al., 2004; Philp & Duchesne, 2016; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). In speaking activities, behavioral engagement may be reflected in students' participation and responses, emotional engagement in their enthusiasm or willingness to participate, cognitive engagement in their effort to understand and produce language, and social engagement in their interaction with teachers and peers (Fredricks et al., 2004; Philp & Duchesne, 2016; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). Therefore, students' engagement should not be understood only through whether they speak or remain physically involved in an activity. Examining the different forms of engagement can provide a more comprehensive view of how students respond to instructional practices during speaking activities (Wang et al., 2024; Acosta-Manzano & Mercer, 2024).

The relationship between teaching speaking strategies and student engagement is particularly important because a strategy may create opportunities for engagement only through the way it is implemented in a particular classroom situation. A teacher may use modeling, for example, to provide learners with an example of expected oral performance, while drilling may provide repeated opportunities to practise target expressions (Thornbury, 2005; Richards, 2008; Burns & Goh, 2012). Both strategies may therefore support students' preparation for oral production, but they may do so through different forms of enactment. Similarly, pair work and teacher questioning may both encourage oral participation, although pair work does so through peer interaction whereas questioning does so through teacher-elicited responses (Richards, 2008; Brown & Lee, 2015; Burns &

Goh, 2012). This suggests that the facilitative role of a teaching strategy cannot be understood only from the strategy label or its general pedagogical purpose. It needs to be examined through what teachers actually do and how students respond during the activity.

An English Club provides a relevant context for examining this process because it offers additional opportunities for learners to use English beyond regular classroom instruction. As a school-based extracurricular program, an English Club can provide opportunities for communication, interaction, and speaking practice through activities that may differ from those commonly conducted in regular English lessons (Brewster et al., 2002; Aditya et al., 2024; Liana et al., 2024). Previous research has shown that English Club activities such as storytelling, games, public speaking, and other communicative activities can support learners' speaking development and confidence (Aditya et al., 2024; Romli et al., 2024; Octaberlina & Muslimin, 2022). At the same time, the extracurricular nature of an English Club may create different instructional conditions in which teachers have opportunities to select and adapt speaking strategies according to learners, activities, and available resources. The English Club therefore provides a meaningful setting for examining how teaching speaking strategies are enacted and how students engage with the speaking opportunities created through them.

Understanding this facilitative process also requires attention to teachers' perceptions of their instructional practices. Teachers do not merely implement strategies; they also observe students' responses, interpret classroom events, and make judgments about the appropriateness or effectiveness of their instructional choices (Wolff et al., 2017; Gatbonton, 2008; Borg, 2019). Their perceptions can therefore provide information that cannot be obtained solely from classroom observation, particularly regarding how teachers understand the purposes of their strategies and how they interpret students' responses to those strategies. In this study, teacher perception is consequently treated as a complementary perspective rather than as an outcome of teaching strategies or student engagement. Examining teachers' perceptions alongside observed classroom practices can help explain how teachers themselves understand the role of their speaking strategies in facilitating student engagement.

Previous studies have examined English Clubs, teaching speaking strategies, and student engagement from several perspectives. Studies of English Clubs have generally highlighted their contribution to speaking development, confidence, communication, and interaction (Aditya et al., 2024; Romli et al., 2024; Octaberlina & Muslimin, 2022). Research on teaching speaking strategies has identified a range of strategies used by teachers and has discussed their relevance to learners' speaking development and instructional needs (Richards, 2008; Burns & Goh, 2012; Andriani et al., 2025). Meanwhile, research on engagement has established that students' involvement in language learning is multidimensional and shaped by behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social processes (Fredricks et al., 2004; Philp & Duchesne, 2016; Wang et al., 2024). These studies provide important foundations for understanding the three areas, but they do not sufficiently specify how established teaching speaking strategies, through their particular enactments, function to facilitate observable forms of student engagement during actual speaking activities.

The gap is therefore not simply the absence of studies combining teaching strategies and engagement. Rather, existing literature provides relatively clear accounts of what teaching speaking strategies are and what student engagement consists of, while less attention has been given to the analytical process through which the facilitative role of a strategy can be specified in classroom practice. In particular, the same facilitative purpose may be realized through different strategies and different enactments, while the same strategy may function differently depending on how it is enacted and how learners respond (Cameron, 2001; Nunan, 2003; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). Examining this process requires observation of naturally occurring classroom practices as well as attention to teachers' accounts of their instructional decisions and responses to students (Wolff et al., 2017; Borg, 2019; Acosta-Manzano & Mercer, 2024). The present study therefore examines how teachers' teaching speaking strategies facilitate student engagement in an English Club and explores how teachers perceive their teaching speaking strategies in facilitating such engagement.

1.2 Research Problem

Although teaching speaking strategies are intended to support students' participation and engagement, the use of a particular strategy does not necessarily result in engagement in the same way across speaking activities. The facilitative role of a strategy may depend on how it is enacted, the purpose of the activity, the characteristics of the learners, and the responses that emerge during instruction (Cameron, 2001; Nunan, 2003; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020). A strategy label alone, therefore, does not sufficiently explain how facilitation occurs in an actual speaking activity. For example, different strategies may support learners' preparation for oral production, but they may do so through different forms of enactment, such as providing a model, guiding repeated practice, or allowing rehearsal. This makes it necessary to examine teaching speaking strategies together with their actual enactment and the observable engagement that occurs during the activity.

At the same time, classroom observation alone cannot fully explain how teachers understand the role of their instructional strategies in facilitating student engagement. Teachers may select a strategy for a particular instructional purpose, notice particular student responses, and make judgments about whether the strategy is appropriate or effective in the situation (Gatbonton, 2008; Wolff et al., 2017; Borg, 2019). These perceptions provide an additional perspective for interpreting the observed facilitative process because they reveal how teachers themselves understand the relationship between their instructional practices and students' responses. Therefore, the research problem addressed in this study concerns both the observable facilitation of student engagement through teaching speaking strategies and teachers' perceptions of that facilitative process.

This problem is particularly relevant in an English Club for young EFL learners because the program provides an extracurricular context in which speaking activities, instructional strategies, and student participation may take forms that differ from regular classroom instruction (Brewster et al., 2002; Aditya et al., 2024; Romli et al., 2024). Young learners' developing linguistic, cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics also require teachers to adapt instructional practices to students' needs and responses (Scott & Ytreberg, 1990; Cameron, 2001; Pinter, 2017). Investigating teaching speaking strategies in this context can therefore

provide a more detailed understanding of how facilitation occurs during actual speaking activities and how teachers perceive their strategies in relation to student engagement.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How do teachers' teaching speaking strategies facilitate students' engagement in the English Club?
2. How do teachers perceive their teaching speaking strategies in facilitating students' engagement in the English Club?

1.4 Research Purposes

1. To examine the strategy used by the teachers in facilitating engagement in the English Club.
2. To explore the perception of teachers in their teaching speaking strategies to facilitate engagement in the English Club.

1.5 Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study involves two teachers and one English Club; therefore, the findings represent the practices and perceptions of these participants within the particular English Club context and are not intended to be generalized to other teachers, schools, or English Club settings. Second, the data are limited to six classroom observation sessions and one semi-structured interview with each teacher, meaning that the study captures a specific period of teaching practice and teacher reflection rather than changes in strategy use or perceptions over a longer period. The study also focuses on observable student engagement rather than students' own reported experiences, as students are not interview participants. These limitations are consistent with the qualitative case study orientation of the research, which prioritizes an in-depth and context-specific understanding of the phenomenon rather than statistical generalization (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018; Miles et al., 2014).

Despite these limitations, the study provides a context-specific account of how teaching speaking strategies are enacted in an English Club and how such enactment relates to observable forms of student engagement. The inclusion of teacher interviews further provides insight into how teachers perceive their strategies and the engagement observed during their teaching. By examining both classroom practices and teacher perceptions, the study seeks to provide a more nuanced understanding of the facilitative process while remaining appropriately bounded by the characteristics of the participants, setting, and data collected (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles et al., 2014).

1.6 Conceptual Framework

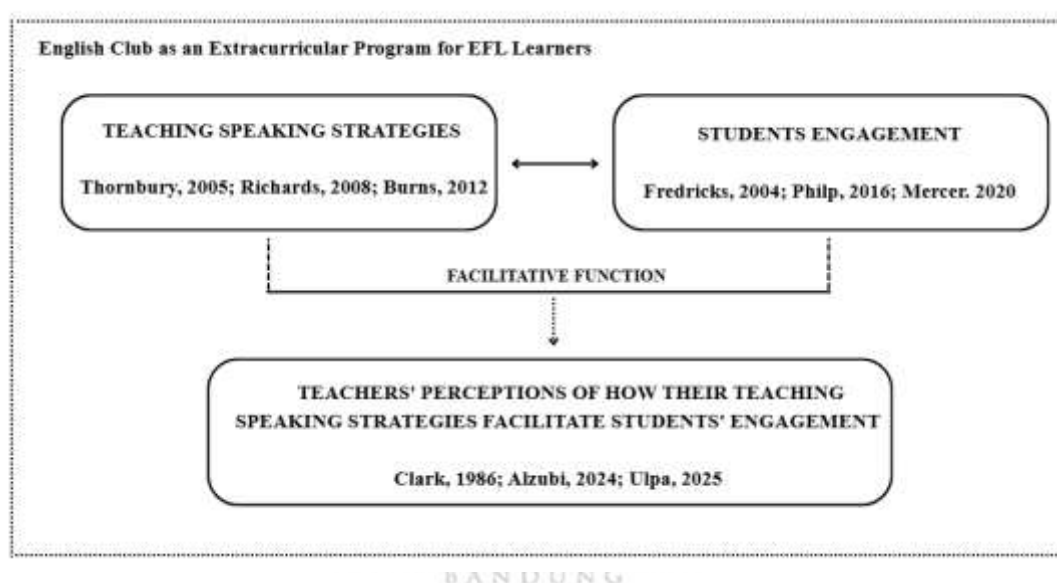


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of This Study

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the relationship among teaching speaking strategies, students' engagement, facilitative function, and teachers' perceptions within the context of an English Club as an extracurricular program for EFL learners. The framework is grounded in the view that teaching speaking involves the use of various instructional strategies to provide learners with opportunities to develop and practise oral communication (Thornbury, 2005; Richards, 2008; Burns & Goh, 2012). In this study, teaching speaking strategies refer to the instructional practices employed by teachers during speaking activities, while students' engagement refers to the observable ways in which learners participate in and respond to classroom activities across behavioral, emotional,

cognitive, and social dimensions (Fredricks et al., 2004; Philp & Duchesne, 2016; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

The framework places teaching speaking strategies and students' engagement as interconnected components. The two-way arrow between them represents the analytical relationship examined in the study. Teaching speaking strategies provide instructional conditions and opportunities for students to participate in speaking activities, while students' observable responses provide evidence of how they engage with those activities. However, the framework does not assume that a particular strategy automatically produces a particular form of engagement. The pedagogical purposes of speaking strategies may be understood from the literature, but their actual contribution to student engagement depends on how the strategies are enacted within specific activities, classroom conditions, and learner responses (Thornbury, 2005; Richards, 2008; Burns & Goh, 2012; Brown & Lee, 2015).

The central concept connecting these two components is facilitative function. In this study, facilitative function refers to the analytically inferred role through which a specific enactment of a teaching speaking strategy appears to create, support, or sustain conditions for observable student engagement. Thus, facilitative function is not treated as an inherent effect of a strategy. Instead, it is identified by examining how a strategy is enacted and how students respond during the speaking activity. For example, modeling may facilitate students' oral participation by providing a concrete example of the expected language performance, while pair work may facilitate social engagement by creating opportunities for learners to interact with peers. In this sense, the analysis moves beyond identifying *what strategy teachers use* toward examining *how the strategy functions to facilitate engagement* in the observed context (Thornbury, 2005; Richards, 2008; Burns & Goh, 2012; Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

The framework also incorporates teachers' perceptions of how their teaching speaking strategies facilitate students' engagement. This component provides an explanatory perspective on the observed relationship between strategies, facilitative functions, and engagement. Through semi-structured interviews, teachers' perceptions are explored in terms of how they understand,

interpret, and evaluate their use of speaking strategies in relation to students' engagement. Teacher perception is therefore positioned as a complementary source of evidence rather than as a replacement for classroom observation. The observation data show how strategies were enacted and how engagement was manifested, while the interview data provide insight into how teachers perceived and made sense of their instructional practices and students' responses (Clark, 1986; Alzubi, 2024; Ulpa, 2025).

Overall, the framework guides the study through the analytical sequence of teaching speaking strategies → strategy enactment → observable student engagement → facilitative function, while teachers' perceptions provide an additional perspective for explaining the instructional process. The framework therefore allows the study to examine not only which speaking strategies were used by the teachers, but also how those strategies functioned in practice to facilitate different forms of student engagement and how teachers themselves perceived this facilitative process. Accordingly, facilitative function serves as the central analytical bridge that connects the pedagogical practices observed in the English Club with the engagement manifested by the learners.

1.7 Contributions of the Research

1.7.1 Theoretical Contribution

This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of how teaching speaking strategies may facilitate behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social engagement among young EFL learners. It also extends the understanding of teacher perception by examining how teachers understand, interpret, and evaluate their strategies in relation to student engagement. More specifically, the study develops an empirically grounded understanding of facilitative function as the role a strategy may perform through its particular enactment in supporting observable student engagement. Thus, facilitation is viewed as context-dependent rather than an inherent effect of a strategy.

1.7.2 Conceptual Contribution

Conceptually, this study integrates teaching speaking strategies, student engagement, facilitative function, and teacher perceptions within an English Club

context. Facilitative function serves as an analytical bridge connecting strategy enactment with observable student engagement, while teacher perception provides an interpretive perspective on this relationship. This integration highlights teaching speaking as a context-sensitive process in which facilitation depends on strategy enactment, activity demands, and learner responses.

1.7.3 Empirical Contribution

Empirically, this study provides context-specific evidence of how teaching speaking strategies are enacted and how behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social engagement becomes observable during speaking activities in an English Club. It also documents how two teachers perceive and explain the role of their strategies in facilitating engagement. These findings add a contextualized account of the relationship between teaching practices and student engagement in an extracurricular English learning setting.

1.7.4 Methodological Contribution

Methodologically, this study demonstrates the value of combining classroom observations and semi-structured teacher interviews to examine teaching practices and student engagement. Observations provide evidence of strategy enactment and observable engagement, while interviews reveal how teachers understand, interpret, and evaluate their practices and students' responses. Combining these sources provides complementary perspectives while recognizing that teacher perceptions are interpretations rather than evidence of causal effectiveness.

1.7.5 Analytical Contribution

Analytically, this study moves beyond identifying teaching speaking strategies by examining how they are enacted, what forms of engagement become observable, and what facilitative function can be inferred from their relationship. This approach connects strategy enactment with behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social engagement and provides a more nuanced account of how established speaking strategies may facilitate engagement within a particular instructional context.

1.7.6 Practical Contribution

Practically, the findings provide English Club teachers with insights into how speaking strategies can create opportunities for participation, interaction, thinking, and emotional involvement. The identified facilitative functions may encourage teachers to consider not only which strategy to use but also how to enact it according to activity purposes and student responses. The findings may also support teachers and English Club organizers in designing varied speaking activities that promote meaningful student engagement.

1.7.7 Policy Contribution

From a policy perspective, this study provides considerations for schools and educational institutions in supporting English Club programs as extracurricular spaces for English learning. The findings highlight the importance of teacher support, professional development, and meaningful speaking activities alongside the availability of the program itself. However, given the context-specific nature of the study and its limited participants, these findings should be viewed as preliminary considerations rather than generalizable policy recommendations.

1.8 Previous Studies

The following section reviews ten previous studies relevant to the present research. The studies were selected based on their connections with English Club contexts, teaching speaking strategies, student engagement, and teacher perceptions. The review is intended not only to summarize previous findings but also to position the present study in relation to what has already been examined and what remains insufficiently explored.

Aditya, Prayogo, and Anggara (2024) examined the role of English Clubs in supporting students' speaking competence in an Indonesian EFL context. Their findings showed that activities such as debates, storytelling, public speaking, and games supported students' fluency, confidence, pronunciation, and interactional strategies, while teacher support and peer solidarity also contributed to learning. This study provides an important foundation for examining speaking instruction in an English Club because it demonstrates the potential of extracurricular English programs to provide meaningful opportunities for oral communication. However, it does not specifically examine how particular teaching speaking strategies facilitate

students' multidimensional engagement or how teachers perceive this facilitative process.

Romli et al. (2024) investigated English Club activities for developing students' speaking abilities and found that interactive activities, teacher coaching, and peer support contributed to speaking development and confidence. The study is relevant because it highlights the role of teacher-guided activities and interaction in an extracurricular English learning context. Nevertheless, its primary focus is speaking development rather than the relationship between specific teaching strategies and students' behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social engagement. It also does not examine how teachers perceive the relationship between their strategies and students' engagement.

Andriani et al. (2025) examined teachers' strategies for teaching speaking in an Indonesian EFL context and their contribution to students' speaking development. The study provides relevant insights into the range of strategies that teachers may employ in speaking instruction and therefore provides a useful foundation for identifying teaching speaking strategies in the present research. However, its focus is primarily on teaching strategies and speaking outcomes rather than on how those strategies facilitate student engagement or how teachers perceive this facilitative relationship.

Octaberlina and Muslimin (2022) examined English Club activities using a Community Language Learning approach to support students' speaking ability. Their findings demonstrated that a supportive English Club environment could provide opportunities for speaking practice and development. The study is relevant because it confirms the value of English Clubs as additional spaces for oral language use. However, it focuses on speaking ability and the implementation of a particular pedagogical approach rather than examining how specific teaching strategies facilitate different dimensions of student engagement. The present study extends this focus by examining the facilitative process and teachers' perceptions of it.

Hamadameen and Najim (2020) examined the impact of English Club activities on EFL students' communicative skills and reported positive perceptions of their communicative benefits. The study supports the potential of extracurricular

English activities to encourage students' participation in English learning and communication. However, it relies primarily on students' perceptions and focuses on communicative skills rather than examining how teaching strategies and student engagement unfold during actual activities or how teachers perceive this process.

Wang, Patterson, and Long (2024) examined student engagement in language learning and emphasized the importance of understanding engagement as a multidimensional construct rather than simply as visible participation. Their work supports the examination of behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social engagement in the present study. However, the study does not specifically connect these dimensions with teachers' speaking strategies in an English Club context. Therefore, it provides an important conceptual foundation for understanding engagement but leaves open the question of how particular teaching practices may facilitate its different dimensions.

Acosta-Manzano and Mercer (2024) examined engagement in language learning and highlighted the role of interaction and pedagogical conditions in shaping learners' involvement. Their work supports the view that engagement is influenced by the learning environment and instructional practices rather than being solely an individual learner characteristic. However, the study does not specifically examine how particular teaching speaking strategies facilitate the four dimensions of student engagement or how teachers perceive this relationship in an English Club context.

Ulpa, Tahir, and Amin (2025) examined teachers' perceptions of strategies for developing students' speaking confidence at a Cambridge English School. The study highlights the importance of teachers' perceptions in understanding how strategies are used in speaking instruction. Its relevance to the present research lies particularly in its attention to teachers' interpretations of instructional strategies. However, the study focuses on speaking confidence rather than multidimensional student engagement and does not specifically examine young learners in an extracurricular English Club context.

Alzubi, Nazim, and Ahmad (2024) explored teachers' perceptions of EFL students' engagement in collaborative learning, focusing on implementation issues and suggestions. The study provides relevant insights into how teachers perceive

and facilitate student engagement through instructional practices. However, it does not specifically examine engagement in speaking activities or how teachers' perceptions of engagement are reflected in speaking strategies for young learners in an extracurricular English Club context.

Finally, Oga-Baldwin and Nakata (2020) examined how teachers promote young language learners' engagement through lesson form and lesson quality. The study investigated 16 public elementary-school foreign language classes in western Japan using student questionnaires, external ratings, and naturalistic classroom observations. The findings showed that young learners were more responsive in classrooms characterized by teacher warmth and appropriate strictness, homeroom teacher involvement, appropriate pacing, instructional clarity, and a balance of activities. The study is particularly relevant to the present research because it directly demonstrates that young learners' engagement is associated with the quality and enactment of teachers' classroom practices, rather than simply the presence of instructional activities. However, its focus was on broader lesson quality and teacher practices rather than on specific teaching speaking strategies and the facilitative functions realized through their enactment in speaking activities.

Taken together, these previous studies establish several important foundations for the present research. Studies conducted in English Club contexts demonstrate that extracurricular English programs can provide meaningful opportunities for speaking practice, interaction, confidence building, and communicative development (Hamadameen & Najim, 2020; Octaberlina & Muslimin, 2022; Aditya et al., 2024; Romli et al., 2024). Research on teaching speaking strategies provides evidence that teachers employ varied instructional practices to support students' speaking development, while research on student engagement conceptualizes learners' involvement as multidimensional rather than limited to visible participation (Andriani et al., 2025; Wang et al., 2024; Acosta-Manzano & Mercer, 2024). Research on teacher perceptions further demonstrates that teachers' interpretations can provide insight into how instructional practices and student responses are understood (Ulpa et al., 2025; Alzubi et al., 2024). Finally, Oga-Baldwin and Nakata (2020) show that young learners' engagement is closely related to the way teaching practices are organized and enacted.

However, these perspectives remain insufficiently connected at the level of facilitative function. Existing English Club studies tend to emphasize speaking development and communicative outcomes, while studies of teaching speaking strategies generally focus on what teachers do and what speaking outcomes are associated with those practices. Engagement studies, meanwhile, explain the multidimensional nature of learner involvement and identify instructional conditions associated with engagement, but they do not sufficiently specify how a particular teaching speaking strategy, through its enactment in a speaking activity, functions to facilitate particular forms of student engagement. Similarly, teacher perception studies provide an interpretive perspective on instructional practices but have rarely been examined together with observed strategy enactment and observable student engagement in a young EFL English Club context. Therefore, the present study addresses this gap by bringing together teaching speaking strategies, observable student engagement, facilitative function, and teachers' perceptions to examine both how strategies facilitate engagement and how teachers understand that facilitative process.

