



Developing Speaking Skills through Storytelling: A Case Study of Sixth Grade Students at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya

Yanti Sumiyati,¹ Siti Latifatul Rosidah²

^{1,2} Universitas Pamulang, Indonesia

² Email: dosen 01035@unpam.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to explore the use of storytelling as a technique to develop students' speaking skills. Specifically, it investigates three key aspects: (1) the types of storytelling topics that effectively enhance speaking abilities, (2) the instructional activities employed by the teacher to teach speaking through storytelling, and (3) the students' responses to the use of storytelling in the classroom. To achieve these objectives, a qualitative research method was applied, where the analysis is presented in a descriptive, textual form. Data were collected through direct observation of classroom activities and interviews with both the teacher and the students. The observations allowed for an in-depth understanding of how storytelling is integrated into the speaking curriculum, while the interviews provided insights into the students' experiences and perceptions. The findings of this study reveal that storytelling is an effective technique for teaching speaking. It helps students become more engaged and active participants in the classroom. Through storytelling, students were encouraged to use their own words to narrate, describe, and express ideas, which in turn built their confidence in speaking English. The interactive nature of the storytelling activities also fostered a positive learning environment, as students enjoyed the process of listening to and telling stories. This enjoyment was crucial in motivating them to practice speaking more frequently and confidently. Overall, the study concludes that storytelling is a valuable tool for developing speaking skills, as it not only helps students practice language but also nurtures their creativity and enhances their ability to communicate in a more relaxed, supportive atmosphere. The findings underscore the importance of integrating engaging, communicative methods like storytelling into language teaching, particularly when aiming to improve students' speaking proficiency.

Keywords: *Speaking Skill, Story Telling, qualitative research*

INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, English has become an essential tool for communication and plays a significant role in various domains such as education, business, technology, and tourism. Particularly in Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject at almost all levels of formal education, starting from playgroups to universities. The importance of mastering English is evident not only for academic success but also for career development.

English language learning encompasses four fundamental skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Additionally, four linguistic aspects support these skills, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling. Among these, speaking is considered one of the most critical skills, as it enables individuals to express their thoughts, engage in conversations, and communicate effectively in everyday situations.

According to Nunan (1998), speaking is defined as the ability to carry out a conversation in the language, which highlights the importance of fluency and the ability to make oneself understood in various social interactions. For students, developing speaking skills requires continuous practice, especially in the classroom, where they should be encouraged to actively engage in communication. However, teaching speaking skills goes beyond language comprehension; it aims to foster students' ability to use English fluently and appropriately in both oral and written communication.

Finocchiaro (1989) emphasizes that the primary goal of language teaching is to develop learners' communicative competence. This involves not only producing grammatically correct language but also using language that is socially appropriate and acceptable in various situations. Thus, teaching speaking is essential in building students' confidence, enhancing their communication skills, and preparing them to speak in public.

Given the variety of teaching methods available, it is crucial for teachers to select the most suitable approach to achieve their teaching objectives. Among the various methods, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) stands out as an effective technique for teaching speaking. CLT encourages students to engage in active communication and to express their ideas and thoughts freely. Additionally, teachers must create an engaging classroom environment to motivate students and sustain their interest in learning.

One teaching technique that has proven effective in enhancing speaking skills is storytelling. Storytelling not only captivates students' interest but also fosters imagination and creativity, which are crucial for language learning. Ratih Inayah's research from STKIP Siliwangi Bandung shows that storytelling significantly improves students' speaking abilities. By retelling real or imaginary stories, students practice both their speaking and listening skills, which contributes to their overall language development.

Wright (1995) asserts that children have a natural inclination toward stories, and storytelling provides an ideal platform for students to practice language in a meaningful context. Through storytelling, students are not merely memorizing vocabulary but are learning to convey their own thoughts and experiences in English. Moreover, storytelling facilitates interactive communication between teachers and students, making the learning process more dynamic and effective.

This study focuses on the use of storytelling in teaching speaking to sixth-grade students at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya. The aim is to explore how storytelling can enhance students' speaking abilities and foster active participation in the classroom. Based on the background presented, the following research questions are formulated:

1. What topics of storytelling materials are given to the students in teaching speaking in sixth grade at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya?
2. What activities do teachers implement when teaching speaking through storytelling to sixth-grade students at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya?
3. What are the students' responses to the use of storytelling in teaching speaking in the sixth grade of MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya?

By focusing on these questions, the study aims to contribute to the understanding of effective teaching strategies for speaking skills through storytelling in primary education.

METHODS

In conducting this study, the writer used a qualitative research method to explore and describe the process of teaching and learning speaking in the classroom. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research involves gathering data from multiple sources, such as interviews, observations, and documents, to establish a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon from the participants' perspectives. This approach allowed the writer to collect data from various resources, including classroom activities, interviews, and questionnaires, to analyze the teaching process of speaking skills using storytelling in the sixth grade at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya.

The data for this study were obtained from the sixth-grade students at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya, located at Jl. Pondok Jaya Rt 4 Rw 3. The study focused on one class of 30 students as the primary data source, with data collected from classroom observations, interviews with the English teacher, and questionnaires distributed to the students. These sources provided insights into the materials used, the speaking activities conducted, and the overall classroom environment during the teaching and learning process.

To collect data, the writer observed the classroom teaching and learning process to investigate the methods and strategies used by the teacher in teaching speaking through storytelling. This observation helped identify effective approaches to enhance student

participation and speaking proficiency. Additionally, interviews with the English teacher provided further information about the teaching process, challenges faced, and the effectiveness of the methods applied. The writer also distributed questionnaires to the students to gather their feedback and opinions on the speaking activities using storytelling.

In analyzing the data, the writer described the process of teaching speaking through storytelling using the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method. The data were analyzed qualitatively and presented in descriptive writing, detailing the classroom dynamics, student engagement, and the outcomes of using storytelling to improve speaking skills in the sixth grade at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya. This method provided a comprehensive understanding of how storytelling can be an effective tool in enhancing students' speaking abilities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Materials in Teaching Speaking

After conducting observations and interviews, the writer identified several interesting materials for teaching speaking. These materials included pictures, videos, dictionaries, movies, stories, and workbooks. Teachers need engaging materials to present in class during the teaching and learning process because these materials play a crucial role in helping students feel comfortable, build confidence, and achieve communicative goals. Richard and Rogers (2014) highlight the importance of various materials in supporting Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

1.1 Text-based materials

There are numerous textbooks designed to guide and support CLT. These books, based on CLT principles, provide learners with prompts to initiate conversation. Typically, they include visual cues, pictures, and sentence fragments that learners can use as a starting point for speaking activities.

Topic: Asking a person's wishes

Margareth: What do you wish to be when you grow up?

Michael: I wish to be a pilot when I grow up.

Margareth: Why do you wish to be a pilot?

Michael: Because I want to travel around the world.

Margareth: How will you make your wish come true?

Michael: I will read books about airplanes and practice hard. How about you? What do you wish

to be when you grow up?

Margareth: I wish to be a teacher.

Michael: Why do you wish to be a teacher?

Margareth: Because I love sharing knowledge.

1.2 Task-based materials

A variety of games, role plays, simulations, and task-based communication activities are prepared to support CLT classes. These typically include exercise handbooks, cue cards, activity cards, pair-communication practice materials, and student interaction practice booklets.

Topic: Hobbies

Task: Work in pairs or groups. Discuss your hobbies.

Farah: What is your hobby, Miranda?

Miranda: My hobby is singing.

Farah: Can you play the piano?

Miranda: No, I can't. How about your hobby, Farah?

Farah: My hobby is cooking.

Miranda: Oh, you're going to be a chef.

Farah: Of course, I hope so.

1.3. Realia-based materials

Many proponents of CLT advocate the use of authentic, real-life materials in the classroom. These include language-based realia such as signs, magazines, advertisements, and newspapers, as well as graphic and visual sources like maps, pictures, symbols, graphs, and charts, around which communicative activities can be built.

Topic: Storytelling

Task: Tell a story based on the picture.

My House

My name is Yudi. I have a beautiful house. It has one living room, four bedrooms, and one dining room. There is also a kitchen and a bathroom. Sometimes, I play in the garden with my brother. There is a garage beside the house. My father usually parks the car in the garage. Those are the parts of my house. I really like living in this house.

1.4 Technology-supported materials

Technology provides opportunities to access authentic language input, combining texts, images, audio, and video. Tools such as chat rooms, discussion boards, and teleconferencing can be used to encourage authentic interaction.

The writer also discovered that the school uses the K13 (Kurikulum 2013) curriculum.

Topic: Traditional Musical Instruments

Bali

Bali attracts many tourists from Australia, the USA, Japan, and other countries. They spend several days there enjoying Balinese culture. Tourists can witness beautiful sunrises at Sanur Beach, swim at Nusa Dua Beach, visit Turtle Island, or go to Besakih Temple, among other activities. There are also domestic tourists who visit Bali from cities like Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Solo, and Surabaya. Bali has a traditional language, house, and music. Its traditional houses are called *natah*, and its traditional songs are called *jangger*.

2. Activities in Teaching Speaking through Storytelling

The writer conducted a six-day observation to understand the activities in a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) class and how the teacher implemented storytelling techniques for teaching speaking. The writer documented various activities such as narrating pictures, describing people, and storytelling.

2.1. Narrating Pictures

Date: Tuesday, January 15, 2019

Subject: Speaking

Time: 1:00 PM

Activities: Narrating and Describing Pictures

Teacher: Ms. Nurmaidah

Students: 30 students

A. Opening

The lesson began with a five to ten-minute opening session, during which the teacher greeted the students, checked attendance, and did a warm-up activity. The teacher then showed two pictures and asked the students for their opinions on the sequence of events in the picture stories. The first picture was about a father with a hobby that started from a bookstore and ended at home. The second picture was about a girl doing her daily routine. The teacher gathered the students' thoughts and wrote them on the board, summarizing their opinions about the pictures.

B. Practice

The teacher instructed the students to form pairs or small groups of at least four students each. Each group received a different picture puzzle story, and they were given 20 minutes to discuss the pictures with their classmates. After the discussion, each group had to present their narrated picture story in front of the class. Six groups, with five members each, narrated their pictures. The writer recorded some of the narrations:

- **Group A (Groups 1, 3, 5)**

"We are from Group A. We want to narrate the picture. My father's hobby is reading books. He goes to a bookstore to buy some books. He selects books from the hobby section and pays at the cashier. Then my father goes home to read the books."

- **Group B (Groups 2, 4, 6)**

"We are from Group B. We want to narrate the picture. There is a girl named Anita. She is eight years old. She describes her daily routine. Anita wakes up at 7:00 AM. Then, she takes a bath, prepares her books, and puts them in her bag. After that, Anita wears her uniform, and she never forgets to have breakfast before going to school. After school, Anita plays jump rope. When she gets tired, she eats a snack and continues to play. However, because of the smoke from the matches, Anita starts to feel cold, and then she becomes unwell."

C. Closing

After all the groups had presented, the teacher corrected their mistakes in pronunciation and vocabulary. The teacher instructed the students to practice narrating stories and to focus on improving their pronunciation. The lesson ended with the teacher saying goodbye and concluding the class.

2.2. Describing People

Date: Tuesday, January 22, 2019

Subject: Speaking and Writing

Time: 1:00 PM

Activities: Describing Someone

Teacher: Ms. Nurmaidah

Students: 28 students

A. Opening

The lesson began with a five to ten-minute opening, where the teacher greeted the students, checked attendance, and did a simple warm-up and ice-breaking activity. The teacher gave a brief description of a friend and asked the students to guess who it was based on the clues provided. The teacher then explained how to describe a person.

B. Practice

The teacher prepared slips of paper with the names of all the students. Each student chose a name but was not allowed to reveal it to anyone. They then had to prepare a description of the person they had chosen, and the rest of the class had to guess who it was. The writer recorded the activities of three students as follows:

- **Student A**

She is a woman. She is a teacher. She is smart, nice, and pretty. She wears sunglasses and has a small frame. She is talented and very important in my life. She teaches science.

- **Student B**

He is a boy with a pointed nose. He has beautiful eyes, but he can be a little naughty in class. He dreams of becoming an athlete.

- **Student C**

She is a woman. She is a teacher with long hair and a tall stature. She is wise, kind, and disciplined. She is always patient in educating me. She is a beautiful woman who teaches math.

C. Closing

After the students had described their chosen person and the class had guessed, the teacher asked them to write their descriptions on paper and submit them. The teacher then gave a brief review, assigned homework, and ended the class by saying goodbye.

2.3. Storytelling

Date: Tuesday, February 12, 2019

Subject: Listening and Speaking

Time: 1:00 PM

Activities: Listening and Retelling a Story

Teacher: Ms. Nurmaidah

Students: 30 students

A. Opening

The lesson started with the teacher greeting the students, checking attendance, and conducting a warm-up and ice-breaking activity. The teacher briefly described a friend and asked the students to guess who it was based on the provided hints. The teacher also explained how to describe a person.

B. Practice

The students were asked to form a small circle and sit down. The teacher showed a thick book, explaining its cover, title, author, and illustrator. Then, she read the story aloud, explaining the events as she went. This activity took 20 minutes. Afterward, each student received a paper with a picture related to the story. They were asked to retell the

story based on the picture in front of the class. The writer recorded some storytelling activities as follows:

- **Student 1: A True Friend**

There was a monkey named Moki who had a true friend, a rabbit named Cici. Every day, they thanked God for what they had. However, their lives became difficult when trees were cut down. They wandered from hill to hill looking for food. One day, they found a palm tree but were confronted by a buffalo named Kabau, who tried to eat the leaves. After being captured by a farmer, Moki and Cici decided to help Kabau escape. In the end, they all became true friends.

- **Student 2: Holiday**

On December 23, 2018, our sixth-grade class went to Taman Herbal Insani in Depok. We traveled by bus, singing and playing games. When we arrived, we learned about herbal plants, played fun games, and swam in the pool. We also interacted with animals like rabbits, turtles, and birds. After lunch and a break, we explored more of the park before heading back home. The teachers said this holiday was meant to refresh our minds before the final test.

3. The Result of Teaching Speaking through Storytelling in terms of student's responses

Based on the data above, the writer can conclude that through Communicative Language Teaching using storytelling in sixth grade of MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya are succeeded because 90 % of the student's response are they enjoyed learning process (the data taken from the questioner in the last meeting of this study) and make them were more active so they felt confident in speaking with their friend and their teacher by their own words.

No	Comment	Yes	No
1	Do you like studying English?	27	3
2	Do you enjoy the way your English teacher teaches you?	27	3
3	Does your teacher give the clear instructions in learning process?	27	3

4	Are you interested in learning speaking through Storytelling using CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) method?	27	3
5	Do you get difficulties with the materials that your teacher gave?	3	27
6	Does your English teacher give you opportunity to practice your speaking skill in the classroom?	30	0
7	Do you think that your speaking skill can be improved?	27	3

CONCLUSION

Based on observations, interviews, and questionnaires, it can be concluded that storytelling significantly improves students' speaking skills. First, students showed enjoyment in both listening to and telling stories, which was evident from their active participation throughout the learning process. The activities were designed to promote teamwork, with the teacher dividing the students into groups to complete various tasks. Second, storytelling encouraged students to pay closer attention in class. Even when they didn't understand every word, they engaged with the meaning of the stories and participated actively. Finally, storytelling provided students with an opportunity to express their ideas more freely, helping them become more confident in speaking during class.

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