Developing Speaking Skill Through Storytelling (A Case Study at Sixth Grade of MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya)

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the use of storytelling to develop students' speaking skills, analyze the teaching activities employed by teachers in using storytelling for speaking instruction, and examine students' responses to this method. A qualitative research approach was applied, with data collected through observations and interviews and analyzed in textual form. The results indicate that teaching speaking through storytelling increases student participation and confidence, as students actively engage in speaking with their peers and teachers using their own words. This positive outcome is attributed to the enjoyment students experience during the learning process.

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INTRODUCTION

Learning English is one of the most important subjects needed by people today, especially students. In Indonesia, English has become a compulsory subject in almost all schools, taught from playgroup, elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, up to the university level. English holds a significant position in various aspects of life—not only for educational purposes but also for career development in fields such as business, sports, culture, tourism, and technology. Mastery of English involves four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Supporting these skills are four key aspects: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling.

Among these skills, speaking is particularly fundamental. Nunan (1998) defines speaking as the ability to carry out a conversation in a language, meaning it is the capacity to conduct and engage in communication. Speaking plays a crucial role in everyday interaction and often forms the first impression of a person's fluency and comprehension. Therefore, students must actively practice speaking throughout the learning process. However, students should be encouraged to be more active in expressing their thoughts and ideas in English communication.

Teaching English speaking aims not only to help students understand the language but also to enable them to use it fluently in both oral and written forms. Finocchiaro (1989) emphasizes that the primary goal of language teaching today is to help learners use language fluently across its multiple functions in real life and to develop their communicative competence. This competence enables learners to understand and produce language that is not only grammatically correct but also appropriate and acceptable in various social contexts. In summary, teaching speaking is vital because it enhances students' communication skills and builds their confidence to speak in front of the class. In this process, teachers play a fundamental role in motivating students and fostering enthusiasm by creating engaging classroom situations and employing suitable teaching methods.

Because English is a diverse subject, teachers are obliged to select appropriate methods to achieve teaching objectives effectively. The right method facilitates students' learning, examples of which include Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Silent Way, Direct Method, Suggestopedia, and Audio-Lingual Method. In this study, the writer employs Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Through CLT, teachers expect students to actively use the language in communication and express their thoughts and ideas.

To maintain students' interest during learning, teachers should create engaging situations. Various techniques can be applied in teaching speaking, such as dialogues, role plays, singing songs, and storytelling. These techniques help students develop their speaking skills, although some, especially primary students, may face challenges in mastering English.

One of the most effective techniques for learning English is storytelling. This technique is popular among children, teenagers, and even adults. An observation by Ratih Inayah from STKIP Siliwangi Bandung demonstrated that storytelling positively affects students' speaking abilities. Storytelling is an excellent tool for developing speaking skills because it involves telling or retelling real or imagined experiences. It enhances oral skills and sharpens listening abilities. Wright (1995) states that children have a constant need for stories and are always willing to listen or read if the right moments are chosen. This means that listening to and reading stories can be effectively complemented by students telling or retelling stories

in their own words. Storytelling also facilitates teachers in understanding their students better, as it involves communication, entertainment, and information sharing. Teachers can select stories from folk tales, guidebooks, real-life experiences, and more. Moreover, storytelling is expected to improve students' speaking skills and enable better communication outside the classroom.

Storytelling can be described as a form of magic shared between the teller and the audience. It is a meeting of minds where visions, values, feelings, and memories are conveyed through words. Storytellers project their vision and receive feedback from listeners through body language. This dynamic interaction creates an energetic connection, often referred to as "magic." Each listener may interpret the story differently, making storytelling a unique and personal experience.

This study on teaching speaking through storytelling was conducted with sixth-grade students at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya, based on Klippel's theory, which states that "the aim of storytelling is to encourage students to produce longer connected texts, requiring imagination as well as some skill in the foreign language." Storytelling helps students share and express what they want to say because they create stories based on their experiences and understanding, using their own words rather than merely memorizing vocabulary or answering questions mechanically.

Based on the background above, this study focuses on teaching speaking using storytelling at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya. The research questions are as follows:

1. What storytelling topics are given to sixth-grade students in teaching speaking at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya?

2. What activities do teachers use to teach speaking through storytelling to sixth-grade students at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya?

3. What are the students' responses to teaching speaking through storytelling in the sixth grade at MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya?

Teaching speaking differs from reading, writing, and listening because it requires frequent practice (habit formation) as it involves real communication. Teaching speaking is an essential part of learning English because it improves students' communication skills. According to Anuradha, Raman, and Hemamalini (2014), the principle of teaching speaking is to "encourage students to speak correctly and actively with whatever English knowledge they have." This principle highlights the importance of supporting students to speak more during the learning process and share their thoughts in English.

Teaching speaking is also an engaging subject because it allows students to express their skills as effectively as they wish. Students become more confident speaking in front of the class or in public, expressing their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and beliefs. Arlin (1990) explains that teaching as conversation is an exploration between teacher and student, actively engaging in topics of their own choosing. This approach fosters understanding and helps meet specific learning objectives. Therefore, a good relationship and communication between teacher and students are essential, with the teacher's role centered on guiding students to improve their speaking skills.

Several methodologies exist for teaching language, such as Total Physical Response (TPR), Silent Way, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and Audio-Lingual Method

(Richard & Rodgers, 2001). This study uses CLT as the method for teaching speaking through storytelling. CLT is effective because it requires teachers to engage students communicatively, encouraging active interaction and continuous practice in English. Richard (2010) defines CLT as a set of principles concerning language teaching goals, how learners acquire language, classroom activities, and the roles of teachers and learners. The main focus of CLT is comprehension and communication. Richard and Rodgers (1999) further emphasize that the goal of language teaching is to develop communicative competence, enabling students to convey and share knowledge effectively. CLT thus enhances communication between teachers and students as well as among students themselves.

During the teaching process using CLT, activities focus on real oral communication without emphasizing grammatical form (Harmer, 1998). Students are encouraged to speak freely about topics of their choice, prioritizing communication over grammatical accuracy.

Communication can take many forms, including sharing experiences, hopes, and ideas. Maynard (2005) states that stories are a way people communicate their experiences, understand others' experiences, liberate their imagination, and make sense of the world and their place within it. Storytelling, therefore, is a direct sharing of personal experience. Cameron (2001) describes storytelling as an oral activity designed to be listened to and participated in across various situations. In storytelling, words are not memorized but created spontaneously. McKay and Dudley (1996) define storytelling as an art in which the teller conveys messages, truths, information, knowledge, or wisdom to an audience—often subliminally—in an entertaining way, using various skills or props to enhance enjoyment, retention, and understanding. Stories may also be told purely for joy and delight.

Children especially enjoy stories. Listening to stories helps them develop a sense of structure that aids in understanding more complex literature. Applying storytelling in the classroom can improve students' speaking skills and encourage them to speak English confidently. Harmer (2007) notes that storytelling is a common activity in daily life and is helpful in practicing speaking skills. Since students tell stories regularly, using storytelling in English learning reduces difficulty and increases engagement.

METHODS

1. Approach of the Study
In conducting this study, the writer used qualitative method to describe approach of the study, data sources, data collection, and analysis method to know how the process of teaching and learning speaking in the classroom. Creswell (2014:21) points out: "Qualitative research typically gather multiple form the data, such as interviews, observations, and documents, rather than rely on a single data source, researcher seek to establish meaning of a phenomenon from the views of participants behaviour by participating in their activities". Based on the statement above, qualitative research is a research that focused on exploring data and information from different sources (books, another thesis, internet,etc) to support the analysis of the study and describe the result of the data analysis in descriptive writing.

2 Data Source
In this thesis the data were taken from the sixth grade students in MI Nurul Huda Pondok Jaya which is located at. Jl. Pondok Jaya Rt 4 Rw 3. The writer only chose one class for this research and there were total 30 students in the classroom. It is as the primary data

that is needed to accomplish the research. The data were taken from the classroom activities including teaching and learning process to find out the materials, speaking activities, observation result of the sixth grade students of MI Nurul Huda, interviewed the English teacher, and the questioners given to the students.

3 Collecting Data

To make this study successful, the writer attended to the sixth grade class students of MI Nurul Huda to investigate the teaching and learning process. The purpose of the observation was to highlight the best method and strategy, besides the process in teaching speaking as well. To support the data become more complete, there are some data collection methods that writer have done:

3.1. Observation

The observation was done by attending the classroom to investigate how the teacher applying the interviewing and reporting activities in teaching speaking using Storytelling through CLT method and observed during the teaching learning process of the students activities directly.

3.2 Interview

The writer interviewed the English teacher to get some data and more information needed for this research by asking some questions. The interview is necessary to analyze the research data that consisted of some information about teaching speaking.

3.3 Questionnaire

Questionnaires were given in order to know the responses and opinion from the students about speaking activities using Storytelling using CLT method in the classroom. The writer gives the questioners to the students in the last day of observation.

4 Method of Data Analysis

The writer described the process of teaching speaking through Storytelling using Communicative Language Teaching in six grade class of MI Nurul Huda. The data were analyzed and described in the essay form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1 . The Materials in Teaching Speaking

After conducting observations and interviews, the writer identified several engaging materials suitable for teaching speaking. These materials include pictures, videos, dictionaries, movies, stories, and workbooks. Teachers need interesting and relevant materials to present in class, as such resources play a crucial role in helping students feel at ease, build confidence, and achieve communicative goals.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) supports the use of various types of instructional materials, categorized as follows:

1.1 Text-Based Materials

Numerous textbooks have been developed to support CLT. Designed based on its principles, these textbooks provide learners with a wide range of prompts to initiate conversations. They typically feature visual cues, images, and sentence fragments to encourage learners to speak.

Topic: *Asking about 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.
Michael: 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

CLT also promotes the use of task-based materials such as games, role plays, simulations, and communicative tasks. These are often provided in the form of handbooks, cue cards, activity sheets, pair work exercises, and booklets for student interaction.

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.
Miranda: 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

Proponents of CLT often advocate for 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 constructed.

Topic: *Storytelling*

Task: Describe a 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, where my father usually parks the car. These are the parts of my house. I really enjoy living in this home.

1.4 Technology-Supported Materials

Technology offers valuable opportunities to access authentic language input and to integrate texts, images, audio, and video in language learning. Digital tools such as chat rooms, discussion boards, and teleconferencing platforms can facilitate real-time, authentic interaction among learners.

Furthermore, the writer found that the school uses the 2013 Curriculum (Kurikulum 2013 or K13), which emphasizes the integration of local culture and modern educational approaches.

Topic: *Traditional Musical Instruments of Bali*

There are many tourists visiting Bali, including travelers from Australia, the USA, Japan, and other countries. They spend several days exploring Balinese culture. Tourists can enjoy a beautiful sunrise at Sanur Beach, swim at Nusa Dua Beach, visit Turtle Island, and see the Besakih Temple.

Domestic tourists also visit Bali from cities such as Yogyakarta, Jakarta, Solo, and Surabaya. Bali has its own traditional language, houses, and songs. A traditional Balinese house is called a *natah*, and a traditional song is called *jangger*.

2. The Activities in Teaching Speaking through Storytelling

The writer conducted classroom observations to understand the activities in a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) class and to analyze how the method was implemented by the teacher in teaching speaking through storytelling. The observation took place over six days. The writer documented various activities conducted by the teacher, including narrating pictures, describing someone, and storytelling.

2.1. Narrating a Picture

- **Date**: Tuesday, January 15, 2019
- **Subject**: Speaking
- **Time**: 13.00
- **Activity**: Narrating and Describing a Picture
- **Teacher**: Ms. Nurmaidah
- **Students**: 30 students

A. Opening

The lesson began with a five- to ten-minute opening session. The teacher greeted the students, took attendance, and conducted a brief warm-up. She then showed two picture sequences and asked the students to share their thoughts about the stories depicted. The first picture showed a father with a hobby, starting from a bookstore to returning home. The second picture depicted a girl's daily routine. The teacher collected students' responses and wrote them on the board before summarizing their ideas.

B. Practice

The teacher instructed students to form pairs or small groups of at least four members. Each group received a different picture puzzle story to discuss. They were given 20 minutes to analyze and prepare their narration. Once the time was up, six groups (each with five members) presented their stories in front of the class. The writer recorded the narrations from some groups:

Group A (Groups 1, 3, and 5)

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

Group B (Groups 2, 4, and 6)

"We are from Group B. We want to narrate the picture. There is a girl named Anita. She is eight years old. She talks about her daily activities. Anita wakes up at 7:00 a.m., then takes a bath and prepares her books. She puts them in her bag, wears her school uniform, and has breakfast before going to school. After school, Anita plays jump rope. When she gets tired, she eats a snack and then plays with matches. Because of the smoke from the matches, Anita gets a cold and starts to feel unwell."

C. Closing

After all the groups had presented, the teacher provided feedback, especially on pronunciation and vocabulary. She reminded students to practice narrating stories and pronouncing words correctly. The class ended with the teacher saying, "See you next time."

2.2. Describing Someone

- **Date**: Tuesday, January 22, 2019
- **Subject**: Speaking and Writing
- **Time**: 13.00
- **Activity**: Describing Someone
- **Teacher**: Ms. Nurmaidah
- **Students**: 28 students

A. Opening

The lesson opened with greetings, attendance, and a short warm-up and icebreaker. The teacher described a friend and asked students to guess who it was based on specific clues. She then explained how to describe a person effectively.

B. Practice

The teacher prepared slips of paper with each student's name. Each student picked a name without revealing it. They were asked to prepare a short description of the person whose name they drew, and the class would guess the identity. The writer documented the activity of three students:

Student A

She is a woman. She is a teacher.
She is smart and kind.
She is pretty and wears sunglasses.
She has a small body and is very talented.
She is very important in my life. She teaches science.
Student B
He is a boy. He has a pointed nose.
He has beautiful eyes and is a bit naughty in class.

He wants to become an athlete.
Student C
She is a woman. She is a teacher.
She has long hair and is tall.
She is wise, kind, and disciplined.
She is always patient in teaching me.
She is beautiful and teaches math.

C. Closing

After completing the activity, the teacher asked the students to write their descriptions on a piece of paper and submit them. She reviewed the activity, gave homework for the next meeting, and ended the class by saying, "See you next time."

2.3. Storytelling

- **Date**: Tuesday, February 12, 2019
- **Subject**: Listening and Speaking
- **Time**: 13.00
- **Activity**: Listening and Retelling a Story
- **Teacher**: Ms. Nurmaidah
- **Students**: 30 students

A. Opening

The teacher opened the session with a five- to ten-minute warm-up. She greeted the students, took attendance, and engaged them in a light icebreaker. She again described someone and asked the class to guess who it was based on the clues, as a transition into the main activity of storytelling.

B. Practicing

The teacher asked the students to sit in a small circle on their chairs. She showed them a thick storybook and began by asking questions and explaining the cover of the book. The teacher then read aloud, starting with the title, the author, and the illustrator, and continued with the story itself. As she read, she paused to explain key parts of the story and ensured that students followed along. This activity lasted for approximately 20 minutes.

After the story ended, the teacher handed out sheets of paper to each student. These sheets contained pictures related to the story. The students were then asked to paraphrase or retell the story in front of the class based on the pictures they received. The writer recorded some of the students' storytelling as follows:

Student 1: A True Friend

There was once a monkey named Moki. He had a best friend named Cici, a kind and gentle rabbit. Every day, Moki and Cici thanked God for everything they had—fresh air, delicious fruit, green grass—which allowed them to live happily and peacefully.

But one day, the forest around them began to disappear as more trees were cut down. Their lives grew harder.

"Ci, I'm so hungry," said Moki.

"Yes, Moki, me too," replied Cici.

They began searching for food, moving from one hill to another, but found nothing. Finally, they arrived at a hill filled with palm trees.

"Thank God! We can eat again," they said.

Exhausted from the long journey, they fell asleep under a large palm tree. Suddenly, a loud voice startled them—it was Kabau, a buffalo.

"Today I will have a big meal," said Kabau.

Moki and Cici warned him:

"Don't eat those fresh leaves. If the tree dies, the people will drive you out." But Kabau didn't listen.

Unbeknownst to Kabau, a farmer had been watching. The farmer quickly threw a rope around Kabau's neck. In pain and fear, Kabau cried out for help.

Moki and Cici secretly followed the farmer and found where Kabau had been taken. "Why are you crying, Kabau?" they asked.

"I'm afraid the farmer will hurt me. I know I was wrong to eat the leaves. I tried to escape but the rope is too tight," said Kabau.

"Don't worry, I'll help you," said Moki.

"Ci, help me untie this rope!"

Cici was hesitant.

"Why should I help him? He insulted me."

"I'm sorry, Ci. Please help me escape," Kabau cried with tears in his eyes.

"Alright," said Cici. "For the sake of our friendship, I'll help you."

Using her sharp teeth, Cici bit through the rope and freed Kabau. From that moment on, the three became true friends, sharing both joy and sorrow.

Student 2: Holiday

Last week, on December 23, 2018, we—the sixth graders—went on a trip to Taman Herbal Insani in Depok. We traveled there by bus. On the way, we sang songs and played fun games to pass the time. After almost two hours, we finally arrived.

There were many fun activities to enjoy. We learned about various herbal plants, played games like "full mine" and "clogs," and had a great time. We also swam in a pool provided at

the park. There was a fish pond with lots of colorful fish, and we could interact with animals such as rabbits, turtles, and birds.

After exploring the rides and activities, we took a break at the *Rakit Saung*, where we had lunch and relaxed in the cool, natural atmosphere. After praying and resting, we continued our tour to places we hadn't visited yet.

Later that afternoon, it was time to head home. Our trip came to an end. The teachers reminded us that this holiday was meant to refresh our minds before the final exams. It was a fun and meaningful experience.

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 succussed 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

The writer explains some conclusions that were got through observation, interview, and questionnaire the writer can conclude that through story the students can improve their speaking skill. The first, the students enjoyed listening and telling the stories. It can be seen from the first meeting until the last meeting from learning process. Some activities were developed through team work and the teacher divided the students into some group to do the tasks. The second, through telling story activity in the class made the students to pay more attention. They responded the meaning even they didn't understand the single words. The last, through story telling make the students express their ideas to speak out in the class.

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