Improving Students Speaking Ability Using Story Telling Methods In Class XI IPA SMAN 5 Kundur

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
	One of the main goals of improving students' engagement in speaking class is using certain strategies that are believed to expose a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structures. In this case, a teacher could use storytelling to assist students to express ideas more clearly and creatively. However, students of class XI IPA SMA Negeri 5 Kundur academic year 2023-2024 appeared to have low speaking skills. In this class, the level of speaking skill mastery is less than 50%. For this reason, the researchers teach narrative text using storytelling. This is a Classroom Action Research which was conducted in two cycles starting from April to May 2023. The research uses several instruments including observation, questionnaire, practice, and documentation. Data was analyzed quantitatively and the overall result of the research showed an increase in students' mastery criteria up to 78,85%. This means that the storytelling method in teaching narrative text is effective in improving students' speaking ability. *This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking ability is the ability to convey our intentions and goals verbally to the person we are talking to, whether in one-way or two-way communication. Talking about one way means that this communication focuses on the communication process which only takes place in one direction. Such as TV news broadcasts, radio broadcasts, and speeches. Meanwhile, two-way speaking means communication that exists between two parties, namely the speaker himself and the audience (Haggag, 2023).

In English Language Teaching (ELT), speaking ability refers to a learner's proficiency in expressing themselves verbally in English (Tiu, Groenewald, Kilag, Balicoco, Wenceslao& Asentado, 2023). This encompasses several key skills including fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, coherence & cohesion, interactive communication & range of vocabulary and grammar. Developing speaking ability in students is a key goal in ELT, as it is essential for effective communication in both everyday situations and academic or professional contexts. To help students improve these aspects of speaking, teachers could use various activities and one of them is storytelling.

Speaking is a person's ability to convey ideas, concepts, or thoughts to other people through spoken language. Based on this understanding, speaking is not just conveying a message but the process of giving birth to the message itself. Speaking has a role as a means of communication and it is not uncommon for a speaker to be able to adapt himself to convey messages in certain circumstances. For this communication to run well, of course, both parties must have equal abilities both in processing the words to be conveyed and in the audience receiving the information well. This has not escaped the attention of the government, especially in the education sector. From elementary school, middle school, high school, and even universities, it is emphasized to pay serious attention to and provide serious follow-up to improve students' speaking skills for future generations (Bachtiar, 2021; Irasuti & Bachtiar, 2024). This attention also extends to the Riau Islands Province.

Riau Island is one of the provinces located on the island of Sumatra and shares a border with neighboring countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Brunei Darussalam where English is used as a second language. This is a special challenge for students and teachers in Riau to improve students speaking competence particularly also considering that the progress of the times is increasingly sophisticated, commensurate with the progress of communication between individuals from all over the world, which is increasingly easy to access via social media. It is hoped to live in such an environment, students are encouraged to use English both in the school environment and in everyday life, even at a higher level.

Unfortunately, the situation seems difficult to achieve considering the initial findings that researchers have made that it turns out that there are numbers of high school students who are reluctant to talk. This is influenced by several factors, both internal and external. One of the internal factors is a lack of knowledge about the importance of learning English. Students are less interested in reading and speaking and several other factors. On the contrary, resources for English lessons are easily accessed everywhere like social media platforms that provide online-based learning, both free and paid. Meanwhile, the external factors are learning resources that are not sufficient to attract students' interest, the environment, teaching methods that are not yet relevant to the material and there is a stigma that says that English is a foreign language that does not need to be studied (Chaerunnisa et al., 2024; Ismitasari et al., 2024). If this problem is not immediately addressed, students; interest in learning English will continue to decrease which will affect their academic scores and their ability to speak and understand English (Bachtiar et al., 2024).

Since speaking is a mandatory subject for students from grade X to grade XII in high school (Permendikbud, 2018), English lessons should be more approachable for students. In the grade X speaking curriculum, narrative texts are part of the basic competency (KD) 4.5, which focuses on understanding contextual meaning related to social functions, text structure, and linguistic elements of simple narrative, oral, and written texts, specifically related to folk legends. In this context, students are expected to develop the ability to retell narrative texts in the form of folk tales.

In line with this curriculum, the researchers of this study intend to use storytelling. It is believed that storytelling helps develop students' creativity and addresses the obstacles or misunderstandings that often occur between the storyteller and the listener. Additionally, one advantage of storytelling is that it can enhance the ability to retell the content of stories, information, and messages in a good speaking style. However, at SMA N 5 Kundur, many students do not master good speaking skills, and the grades obtained are incomplete. Another challenge arises as Indonesian folk tales written in English are still limited and not as numerous as folk tales from other cultures. The researcher therefore collected several folk tales, both local and international, as sources for the storytelling materials.

Based on this perspective, it is assumed that using the storytelling technique in teaching narratives could assist students in improving their speaking ability. Thus, the main research question of this study is, "How can storytelling improve students' speaking ability?"

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The problem of low speaking skills in the study context required to be solved so that the learning could provide optimal results and assist students in improving their speaking skills. One of the solutions chosen to overcome the problem of students' low speaking skills is to apply the storytelling method as it is assumed an excellent method in education (Latif, 2012). In general, stories are associated with humans for their amazing effect on attracting the listener's attention and making someone remember the events in a story quickly. The storytelling method engages students in a dynamic and interactive learning process, where they can practice language use in a meaningful context. To further explore the benefits and practical applications of this method, the following readings provide in-depth insights and strategies for effectively integrating storytelling into language teaching.

2.1. Speaking Skills

Humans carry out speaking activities to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings (Tarigan, 2015). Talking is done by humans in everyday interactions. Therefore, students should master speaking skills and have good grades for speaking skills. This skill relates to the ability to perform linguistic knowledge in actual communication which functions to express ideas, feelings, thoughts, and needs verbally (Ampa, Basri, and Andriani, 2013). A person is skilled at speaking if he can convey ideas, thoughts, and feelings verbally to others, correctly, accurately, and completely, so that the listener understands what the speaker is conveying (Nurjamal, Sumirat, & Darwis 2011). Mastering speaking skills is essential not only for academic success but also for effective participation in social interactions and professional environments. Given the importance of these skills, educators must prioritize methods that actively engage students in verbal communication, allowing them to practice and refine their abilities in real-life contexts.

There are several elements to consider in teaching skills, the core ones include accuracy, fluency, comprehensibility, and interactional competence (Ampa, et al, 2013; Wicaksani, 2013). Accuracy focuses on the correct use of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation; fluency assesses the ease and speed of speech production; coherence and comprehensibility look at the logical flow and clarity of ideas; and interactional competence, evaluating the student's ability to engage in conversations, respond appropriately, and manage turn-taking. In addition, pronunciation and intonation are also needed in speaking assessment to ensure that the speaker is easily understood by the listener. All these elements provide a comprehensive picture of a student's speaking proficiency (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). Thus, when a teacher decides to improve students' ability these elements could be a great guide to contemplate.

Storytelling is a powerful instructional technique that can significantly enhance students' speaking abilities. By engaging students in the process of creating and narrating stories, storytelling promotes the active use of language in a meaningful context, allowing students to practice speaking in a way that is both creative and structured. This method encourages the development of fluency, vocabulary, and coherence, as students are required to think critically about how to organize their thoughts and convey them effectively to an audience. Additionally, storytelling fosters a supportive environment where students can build confidence in their speaking skills through repeated practice and peer feedback (Isbell & Sobol, 2019). To this end, storytelling appears to be the right method to apply in the context of the study.

2.2. Story Telling & Speaking skills

Storytelling is an educational technique that involves the use of narrative structures to convey information, ideas, or experiences to an audience. It is a dynamic and interactive method where the storyteller engages listeners through a sequence of events that are often imaginative, culturally significant, or personally meaningful. In the context of language teaching, storytelling serves as a tool for developing language skills, particularly speaking, by encouraging learners to articulate thoughts, organize ideas logically, and use language creatively in a structured yet engaging way (Ellis, 2018). As storytelling invites students to speak and convey a story they have read using their language, it appears to offer an effective learning experience and improve students' speaking abilities. Furthermore, in the context of the study, it is hoped that this technique will attract students' interest and motivation.

The efficacy of storytelling has been contested in several places and has proven to be a satisfactory approach. As a pedagogical tool, storytelling activities improve both fluency and vocabulary (Johnson & Liu, 2023). One unique criterion of storytelling is the activity allows students to practice speaking in a structured yet creative manner. Despite the model of storytelling approach used by teachers, the role of traditional storytelling methods in fostering speaking skills among high school students also indicated similar results (Patel & Kim 2023). The oral narrative passed down through generations in traditional storytelling, can effectively improve students' pronunciation, intonation, and overall speaking confidence. Students who participated in storytelling activities showed greater confidence and were better able to organize and express their ideas verbally. The study also found that traditional storytelling helped reduce speaking anxiety, making students more comfortable with public speaking tasks. This once again supports the use of traditional storytelling as an effective method for enhancing speaking skills in high school language education.

A quite sole form of storytelling, other researchers experimented what so-called peer storytelling sessions to enhance students' speaking skills. The research suggests that when students share personal stories with peers, they become more comfortable with public speaking, leading to improved language proficiency and reduced anxiety (Davies and Morgan, 2023). This study was conducted in several high schools incorporating several instruments like observations, interviews, and analysis of student performance over a semester. The researchers also advocate the use of regular storytelling as it not only enhances language proficiency but also builds a positive classroom community. Another technique of using storytelling in teaching speaking is arranging students to sit in circles and share stories in turns (Nguyen and Parker, 2023). This technique reassures a collaborative and supportive environment that helps students practice speaking in a more relaxed and enjoyable setting, enhancing their confidence and language ability. A more updated storytelling technique was employed by Martinez and Jackson (2023). This study explores how digital storytelling, where students create and share multimedia stories, impacts speaking skills in a high school context. The findings indicate that digital storytelling not only improves students' speaking abilities but also increases their engagement and motivation to participate in language learning activities. All these studies suggest that storytelling assists teachers in creating an engaging and supportive environment that promotes speaking skill development and reduces the anxiety often associated with public speaking. Despite numerous approaches to implementing the technique, the teacher needs to be aware of their condition before they decide which approach to implement to meet student's needs and the curriculum content.

2.3. Narrative Stories

A narrative text is an essay that contains a series of events that explains a series of events in the order in which they occurred (chronologically). Which provides meaning from a series of events to

learn lessons from the story and answer the reader's curiosity about what happened in the story (Fadilah, Nor & Masitoh, 2018). Narrative stories convey incidents or incidents based on time sequence (Fauziyah, 2022). The skill of understanding stories is very important for children to acquire further skills. Sometimes students also don't want to re-read the contents of the text to answer questions related to the reading they have read. Children tend to just answer questions without reading the questions and the contents of the reading text again. In this case, narrative stories that offer fantasy and interesting conflict are options that provide different learning experiences.

Using narrative for storytelling activities in speaking classes offers several educational benefits, supported by recent research. Narratives provide a structured yet flexible framework that encourages students to practice speaking in a meaningful context. According to Isbell and Sobol (2019), storytelling engages students by allowing them to create and share stories that reflect their personal experiences or imaginative scenarios. This engagement helps students improve their fluency and coherence as they organize their thoughts and coherently articulate them.

Additionally, narratives help build vocabulary and language skills. Ellis (2018) notes that storytelling exposes students to rich and varied language use, as they incorporate descriptive language and diverse expressions into their narratives. This exposure to new vocabulary and grammatical structures facilitates better language acquisition and application, contributing to improved speaking proficiency.

Furthermore, using narratives in storytelling activities can enhance students' confidence and reduce speaking anxiety. Davies and Morgan (2023) highlight that sharing personal stories in a supportive environment allows students to practice speaking without the pressure of formal assessments. This supportive environment helps students become more comfortable with public speaking and improves their overall communication skills.

Incorporating narrative storytelling into speaking classes also fosters a collaborative learning environment. Brown and Abeywickrama (2019) emphasize that storytelling activities promote peer interaction and feedback, which can enhance students' speaking abilities. By engaging in storytelling with peers, students receive constructive feedback and develop better conversational skills, making narrative storytelling a valuable pedagogical tool.

3. METHOD

This study employs classroom action research. The research looks at the activities that arise and occur in a class (Suharsimi, 2010). The research was carried out from March 2023 to June 2023 at SMA Negeri 5 Kundur with 35 students as research subjects in class X IPS 2 for the 2020-2021 academic year.

There are two sources of data used in this research, namely qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative data was obtained from observations of student activity, teacher activities when taking action, student responses during learning, and the development of student achievement scores. Meanwhile, quantitative data was obtained from the figures resulting from activities in the pre-cycle, cycle 1, and cycle 2 stages.

The collected data is processed by grouping according to cycles, and then calculated. The results of calculations at the pre-cycle stage, cycle 1, and cycle 2 are compared to determine the success of the actions that have been taken. Data analysis was carried out in simple qualitative and quantitative ways.

Data collection techniques and tools used in this research are:
1) Observation. In this observation process, collaborators observe the implementation of the teacher's learning, student activity, and the learning atmosphere.

2) Questionnaire. Questionnaire sheets are given to students after each learning cycle the aim of using a questionnaire is to evaluate students' responses to the use of storytelling methods in learning.

3) Performance Assessment: This assessment is carried out by giving students the task of storytelling (retelling) a narrative text.

4) Documentation. Documentation is a record of activities, which can be in the form of writing, photos, and videos. In this research, the researchers use narrative stories, photos, and videos as documentation.

When using Classroom Action Research to identify and address classroom issues, there are two key criteria to be met. First, students should achieve a minimum score of 75 in their ability to speak narrative text individually. Second, at least 85% of students should attain a complete score in their narrative speaking skills. Additionally, success criteria based on student responses include the following: at least 75% of students should express satisfaction and enjoyment in participating in storytelling-based learning activities. It is also expected that 75% of students will show improvement in their English-speaking skills after engaging in these storytelling activities. Furthermore, at least 75% of students should report feeling less embarrassed about speaking in front of the class after participating in the storytelling method.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted in two cycles, beginning on April 16, 2023, with pre-cycle activities. Students completed a pretest, which involved a speaking task on a narrative text—specifically, retelling the folk tale "The Smartest Parrot"—via Google Meet. Due to time constraints during scheduled lessons, not all students could perform their storytelling activities in front of the class. As a result, students recorded their storytelling activities at home and submitted the videos to the teacher via Google Classroom (GCR).

Before implementing the strategy, the researchers collected data about students speaking abilities and came up with the following information:

Table 1. Data on Students' speaking ability in pre-cycle

Score	N	%	Benchmark/KKM	Note
71-74	19	54.28	75	fail
75-80	16	45.72	75	pass
	35	100		

The table indicates that more students failed to reach the benchmark compared to those who met it. The overall score of the pre-cycle is 75.20 which means the standard achieved classically. However, the score is unsatisfactory. Additionally, the scores of students who achieved completion status were not very satisfactory. According to the criterion-referenced standards set in the national curriculum, grades of 75-80 fall into the 'C' category. This suggests that students' speaking abilities require significant improvement.

At the start of cycle 1, the teacher initiates the learning activity by informing students that it will be conducted via Google Meet, and provides them with a link to join. The teacher then displays a picture of a parrot and asks students to observe it. Following this, the teacher introduces several keywords that will appear in the story to be discussed, titled The Smartest Parrot. Students who encounter unfamiliar vocabulary are encouraged to ask their peers or the teacher for clarification.

The teacher then instructs students to gather information on a specific topic, intending to identify the social function, text structure, and linguistic elements of the narrative text titled The Smartest Parrot. The teacher provides an example of how to retell a folk tale by presenting The Smartest Parrot in two formats: first by reading the text aloud, and then by orally narrating it using teacher-selected words and sentences. Students are expected to distinguish between the written and oral storytelling methods based on these examples. Finally, the teacher asks students to orally retell the discussed folklore text, The Smartest Parrot. This activity takes place via Google Meet, allowing students to share their retellings from home while their peers watch.

The following are students' results in cycle 1: the number of students who participated in taking grades in cycle 1 was 35, meaning that all students in class XI PIA SMA N 5 Kundur participated.

Only 18 students (51.43%) have reached the KKM. Cycle 2 needs to be carried out to improve student learning outcomes.

Table 2. Data on Students Speaking Ability in Cycle 1

Score	N	%	Benchmark/KKM	Note
71-74	17	48.57	75	fail
75-80	18	51.43	75	pass
	35	100		

The table shows a slight increase in student performance. Although more than half of the students met the benchmark, a significant number still struggled and required further assistance. Observations by the researchers noted that some students were still embarrassed to tell stories in front of others. Another crucial finding was that students seemed to need more options for stories. To address these issues, the researchers decided to focus more on boosting the confidence of students with lower self-assurance by providing additional guidance and encouragement. The teacher also introduced several other stories, giving students the option to choose the one that best suits them. The following is the result of cycle II.

**Table 3**. Data on Student's Speaking Ability in Cycle 2

Score	N	%	Benchmark/KKM	Note
74	4	11.42	75	fail
80	30	85.72	75	pass
86	1	2.86	75	pass
	35	100		

Student learning outcomes in Cycle 2 improved significantly, with the lowest score being 74, achieved by four students, and the highest score of 86 achieved by one student. The majority of students (85.72%) scored 80, resulting in an average score of 79.48. Although a few students did not pass, the substantial increase in completion rates indicates the intervention was effective. Overall, the comparison of students' performance before and after the implementation of the storytelling method shows a positive change. While no students achieved an A (90 or above), their grades consistently improved from the pre-cycle to Cycle 1 and from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. This increase in individual student grades naturally led to a rise in the overall average. Consequently, there was an increase in the number of students who met the benchmark and a corresponding decrease in those who did not. The detailed comparison is presented in the following table:

Table 4. Data on Student Completeness Scores in Each Cycle

Level	Number of Completed Students	Students Not Completed
Precycle	16	19
Cycle 1	18	17
Cycle 2	31	4

Additional data from the questionnaire indicate a positive response to the use of the storytelling method. Four components were measured in the questionnaire, and among the 35 students, all items received more than 60% positive responses. The highest agreement was for enjoying the lesson, with a 91% approval rate. Details of the students' responses are presented in Figure 1.
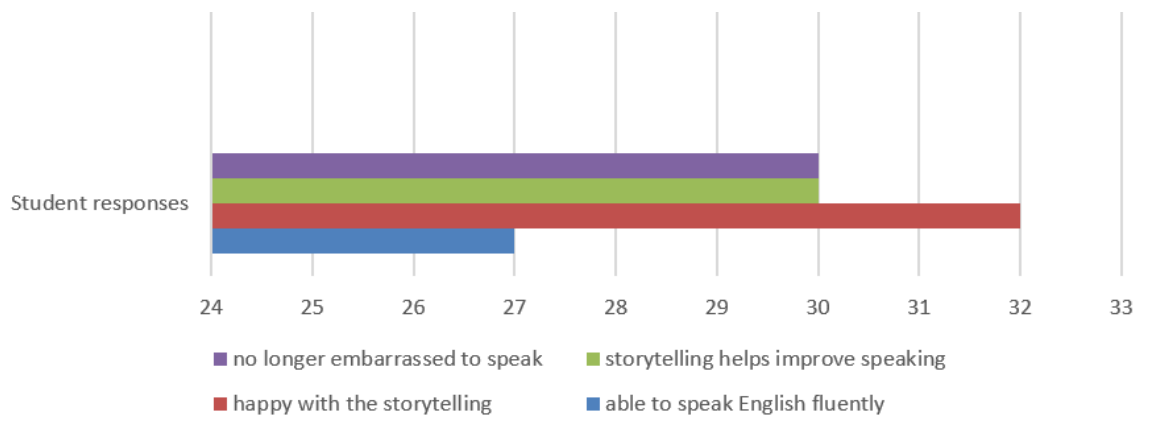
Figure 1. Students' resonses to the questionnaire

This indicates that after participating in the learning activities in Cycle 2, the percentage of students achieving a passing score increased by 37.14%. This improvement can be attributed, in part, to their participation in learning activities using the storytelling method, which made them more aware of the necessary steps for retelling a story in English. As a result, the accuracy and comprehensibility targeted in the speaking activity improved and met the criteria outlined by Ampa et al. (2013) and Wicaksani (2013). However, the accuracy in pronunciation and intonation during the activity still falls short of a proficient level. Although Brown & Abeywickrama (2019) noted that these elements can facilitate understanding, in this case, comprehension seemed to stem more from the students' familiarity with the story content.

The study's findings reaffirm the effectiveness of storytelling in improving students' speaking skills (Ellis, 2018; Isbell & Sobol, 2019; Johnson & Liu, 2023). The storytelling process provides a supportive and structured environment for students to practice and showcase their abilities. This effectiveness may be attributed to the narrative structure of storytelling, which presents events in a sequence, making it easier for students to recall the story as a whole (Fadilah, Oktafiyanti Nor & Masitoh, 2018). Additionally, storytelling fosters the development of fluency and self-confidence, as noted by Patel & Kim (2023). This indicates that storytelling not only strengthens the technical aspects of language learning but also enhances students' overall communication skills. It offers a holistic approach that blends linguistic proficiency with emotional engagement, making it a powerful tool in language education. As the study demonstrates, incorporating storytelling into the curriculum can lead to significant improvements in both accuracy and fluency in speaking activities.

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Initially, this study utilized a semi-digital approach through online meetings, closely resembling the methodology used by Martinez & Jackson (2023). It later transitioned to traditional storytelling with the use of folktales. This change aligns with Patel & Kim's (2023) findings that traditional storytelling effectively reduces student anxiety and serves as a valuable teaching method. Moreover, it not only boosts students' confidence in public speaking but also fosters a more engaging classroom atmosphere (Davies & Morgan, 2023). Ultimately, the study achieved positive outcomes by successfully combining two distinct approaches.

4. CONCLUSION

The storytelling method has been conclusively shown to enhance students' speaking abilities while also encouraging them to confidently share stories in front of the class, particularly in the case of XI IPA students at SMA 5 Kundur, Karimun Kepulauan Riau, for the 2023-2024 academic year. The effectiveness of this method is substantiated by concrete data, which reveals a consistent increase in the percentage of students achieving the minimum competency standard (KKM) from the pre-cycle to the cycle stages. These results highlight the importance of teachers continually exploring and implementing the most suitable teaching methods and strategies. The success of the storytelling method in this context underscores its potential as a powerful tool in language education, suggesting that educators should consider it as a viable option for improving student engagement and proficiency in speaking activities.

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