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ANALYSIS STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT THROUGH STORYTELLING IN SPEAKING ENGLISH

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Abstrak

Kemampuan berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris merupakan keterampilan esensial bagi siswa untuk berkomunikasi secara efektif dalam lingkungan global. Namun, banyak siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris akibat kurangnya keterlibatan, rasa percaya diri, dan paparan terhadap situasi komunikasi nyata. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh metode storytelling terhadap keterlibatan siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris serta mengidentifikasi tantangan yang mereka hadapi saat menggunakan metode ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode observasi, wawancara, dan kuesioner sebagai instrumen pengumpulan data. Subjek penelitian adalah 24 siswa kelas VIII di SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori yang dipilih melalui purposive sampling. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa storytelling meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris, meningkatkan kepercayaan diri, serta memperbaiki pengucapan dan kelancaran berbicara. Namun, beberapa tantangan yang dihadapi siswa meliputi kesulitan dalam menyusun cerita,

pengucapan kata-kata yang kompleks, serta rasa gugup saat berbicara di depan kelas. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa storytelling dapat menjadi strategi efektif dalam meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris, namun perlu didukung dengan latihan berkelanjutan dan bimbingan guru.

Kata Kunci: storytelling, keterlibatan siswa, berbicara bahasa Inggris, pembelajaran bahasa

Abstract

Speaking skills in English are essential for students to communicate effectively in a global environment. However, many students struggle with speaking English due to a lack of engagement, confidence, and exposure to real-life communication situations. This study aims to analyze the impact of storytelling on students' engagement in speaking English and to identify the challenges they face when using this method. This research employs a qualitative approach, using observation, interviews, and questionnaires as data collection instruments. The participants are 24 eighth-grade students from SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori, selected through purposive sampling. The findings reveal that storytelling enhances students' engagement in speaking English, boosts their confidence, and improves pronunciation and fluency. However, students face challenges such as difficulties in structuring stories, pronouncing complex words, and nervousness when speaking in front of the class. These findings indicate that storytelling can be an effective strategy for improving students' engagement in speaking English, but it needs to be supported by continuous practice and teacher guidance.

Keywords: storytelling, students' engagement, speaking English, language learning

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Speaking English is essential in today's more interconnected world because it enables people to interact with others from all origins. One of the most important abilities that students must acquire in order to become fluent in the language is speaking English (Natasia & Angelianawati, 2022). It entails not just knowing English grammar and vocabulary but also being able to communicate ideas and thoughts clearly and concisely in a range of settings. Speaking is so vital and important that people frequently forget how important it is to speak clearly and captivantly, which makes it harder to improve these skills (Nguyen Van Huy et al., 2024). However, many students struggle with speaking skills due to a lack of practice, confidence, or exposure to real-life conversations.

Speaking in English requires active students' engagement. As stated in the independent curriculum policy, there are four underlying

theoretical frameworks, namely policy implementation theory, education system theory, curriculum change theory, and progressive education theory. Specifically, progressive education theory focuses on a student-centered learning approach, developing critical thinking skills, creativity, and students' social abilities. This approach emphasizes the importance of active student involvement, direct learning experiences, and integration of various disciplines to encourage comprehensive development of students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Tuerah & Tuerah, 2023).

Engagement in learning activities is crucial for students to develop their speaking skills. Engaged students are more likely to participate actively, practice their speaking skills more, and achieve better learning outcomes. In the context of English speaking, student engagement can be defined as the level of interest, motivation, and active involvement students have in the learning process. As stated by Ginting (2021) the term "student engagement" describes a dedication to meeting learning goals as well as active involvement in a range of extracurricular and academic activities. Students who are motivated to learn are more likely to put in the time and effort necessary to accomplish their objectives. Engaged students feel more confident in using the language and are more likely to take risks in speaking. Schools expect students to be not only competent in language but also active participants in their learning process.

To address these issues, storytelling has emerged as a potential strategy to enhance students' engagement in speaking English. Kayi (2006) (in Maylia Arina & Islamiah, 2020) state storytelling technique can push creative thinking and helps to express ideas in the beginning, in progress, and the end, including the characters, and setting of the story. Storytelling is a creative and interactive method that allows students to narrate stories in a structured yet engaging way, providing them with opportunities to practice pronunciation, fluency, and expression. By incorporating storytelling into English speaking lessons, students can develop their confidence and improve their language skills in an enjoyable and less stressful environment.

There are several previous studies that found the benefits of the story telling method as follows. Hartono et al. (2021) found that students who are taught using storytelling techniques acquire better English speaking skills. And then, Kaet et al. (2023) suggested the result of the storytelling strategies help the students to speak more clearly and they also get more confidence in practicing their English.

Although several studies have explored the impact of storytelling on English language learning, there are still gaps in research that need to be addressed, particularly in the context of student engagement in speaking English at SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori. The previous research do not specifically analyze how storytelling influences students' engagement in speaking activities. Engagement is a crucial factor in language learning, as it determines students' motivation, participation, and overall success in mastering speaking skills. This research aims to bridge this gap by investigating how storytelling enhances students' engagement in speaking English rather than just improving their technical speaking skills.

Based on the background above, the researchers formulated the following research questions: first, how does storytelling affect students' engagement in speaking English at SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori? Second, what are the challenges faced by students when using storytelling as a method to enhance engagement in speaking English? So that, this research aims to analyze the impact of storytelling on students' engagement in speaking English at SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori and then to identify the challenges that students encounter when using storytelling as a learning strategy to enhance speaking engagement.

By conducting research through a qualitative approach, this study is expected to provide valuable insights into how storytelling improves students' engagement in speaking English.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative research design to explore students' engagement through storytelling in speaking English at SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori. According to Leavy (2017) qualitative research is a method of inquiry that focuses on exploring and understanding human experiences, behaviors, and social phenomena through non-numerical data. The qualitative approach allows for an in-depth understanding of students' experiences, levels of engagement, and the challenges they face when using storytelling as a method to improve their speaking skills. By focusing on students' perceptions and behaviors, this design provides rich descriptive data that captures the nuances of classroom interactions and engagement.

The participants in this study were 24 eighth-grade students from SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori, all of whom were involved in English language learning. These students were selected using purposive sampling based on their participation in English speaking classes. The

sample size was small, as the study focused on a specific group of students, allowing for a detailed understanding of their engagement with storytelling-based learning activities.

To collect data, research use instruments as following:

1. Observation

Classroom observations will be conducted during English speaking lessons, specifically when storytelling activities are implemented. The researcher will observe students' level of participation, body language, and overall engagement in the activities. This will provide insights into how storytelling affects their active involvement in speaking tasks.

2. Interview

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a subset of students to gain deeper insights into their personal experiences with storytelling. The interviews will explore students' challenges, feelings of self-efficacy, and their thoughts on how storytelling helps or hinders their speaking skills development.

Data triangulation in this study was conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the research results by comparing data from various sources and data collection methods. Based on the research results that have been explained, data triangulation includes classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with students, and reflections from students on their experiences in storytelling.

Data analysis will follow the data analysis process as outlined by Matthew B. Miles et al. (2014) namely condensation, condensation, drawing and verification. The first step involves organizing and reducing the data collected. This will include transcribing interview recordings, organizing observation notes, and coding responses from the questionnaire. Irrelevant data will be removed to focus on key themes related to student engagement and storytelling. The summarized data will be presented in an easily accessible format, such as tables, to display patterns and trends. Based on the data presented, the researcher will draw conclusions regarding the relationship between storytelling and student engagement. These conclusions will be made by reviewing the data to ensure accuracy and consistency, and through triangulation across different data sources (observations, and interviews). Finally, the researcher will verify the findings by comparing the results with the

existing literature on storytelling and student engagement in language learning. The conclusion will reflect on the implications of storytelling in improving students' speaking skills, highlighting effective and broad practices for further research.

This approach ensures that the study captures a comprehensive view of how storytelling affects students' engagement in speaking English, providing actionable insights for educators at SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori and similar educational settings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of this study were derived from the analysis of data gathered through classroom observations, questionnaires, and interviews conducted with the 24 eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 1 Sitolu Ori. The findings were organized into key themes that relate to the impact of storytelling on student engagement in speaking English.

In observation, researchers observed level of participation, body language, interaction with peers, and overall engagement. The analysis of classroom observations revealed that storytelling significantly increased students' engagement in speaking English. Students were observed to participate more actively in the lessons, with increased enthusiasm and interaction with peers. The result showed that 1) The majority of students participated actively in storytelling activities, though some required encouragement. 2) About half of the students displayed confidence, while others showed signs of nervousness or hesitation. 3) Most students engaged well in group discussions, benefiting from peer feedback and teamwork. 4) Some students faced difficulties with pronunciation and sentence structure.

Table 1. Observation Indicators

Aspects	Indicator
Participation Level	Actively engaged in storytelling
	Consistently participates in storytelling activities?
Confidence and Body Language	Volunteers to tell stories or answer questions during activities?
	Displays signs of confidence (e.g., eye contact, posture, speaking volume)?
	Appear anxious or reluctant to participate?

Collaboration with Peers	Engage in group discussions or peer feedback?
	Work collaboratively with classmates during storytelling exercises
Fluency and Pronunciation	Able to speak clearly and fluently during the storytelling session?
	Struggling with pronunciation or sentence structure?

Semi-structured interviews conducted with a small group of students selected from the class to provide deeper insights into their personal experiences with storytelling. The interviews will explore students' challenges, self-confidence, and perceptions of how storytelling has influenced their engagement in speaking English.

Table 2. List of Interview Questions

No.	Interview Questions
1	How do you feel about storytelling as a way of learning English?
2	Can you describe how storytelling helps you practice your speaking skills?
3	What do you enjoy most about participating in storytelling activities?
4	Do you feel more confident speaking English after doing storytelling exercises? Why or why not?
5	What challenges do you face when telling a story in front of the class?
6	How do you think storytelling has affected your pronunciation and fluency in English?
7	What kind of support do you need to feel more confident in using storytelling to improve your speaking skills?
8	In your opinion, what could make storytelling more enjoyable or helpful for you in improving your English speaking?

The result of interview showed that 1) Most students felt that storytelling was an enjoyable and effective way to practice speaking English. It provided a creative outlet and allowed them to express themselves freely. 2) Storytelling increased students' confidence in speaking English, though some still struggled with anxiety and finding the right words. 3) The main challenges included limited vocabulary, grammatical difficulties, speaking anxiety, and hesitation during public

speaking. 4) Students requested more support in vocabulary building, grammar, and pronunciation. They also suggested incorporating visual aids and providing more opportunities for smaller group practice to enhance the learning experience.

Overall, the interviews revealed that while storytelling is an effective and engaging strategy for improving students' speaking skills, additional support and modifications to the learning environment could further enhance its effectiveness and help overcome the challenges students face.

Discussion

1. Storytelling Affect Students' Engagement in Speaking English?

The findings align with previous literature emphasizing the role of storytelling in language learning. Maharjan et al. (2024) emphasize that students are more engaged in their learning process when using storytelling as an innovative approach. The results of the observation confirm this, as most students actively engaged in storytelling sessions, showed enthusiasm, and maintained eye contact while speaking.

According to Nguyen Van Huy et al. (2024) engaging teaching methods encourage students to speak more confidently. The observed participation level further supports this claim, as most students volunteered to tell stories and responded actively to their peers' narratives. This supports Tuerah & Tuerah (2023) who argue that student-centered learning approaches, such as storytelling, promote active engagement and critical thinking. The interview results reinforce this finding, with students highlighting that storytelling activities made them feel more confident in speaking English.

Hartono et al. (2021) state that students taught using storytelling techniques demonstrated better English speaking skills. Observation results indicate that most students attempted to speak clearly and fluently, although some struggled with pronunciation and sentence structure.

2. What Are the Challenges Faced by Students When Using Storytelling?

Despite its benefits, storytelling also presents several challenges for students. According to Ginting (2021) speaking anxiety can hinder language learning. This is supported by observation data showed that a

few students displayed signs of anxiety, such as avoiding eye contact and hesitating before speaking.

Pronunciation difficulties remain a significant challenge. This supports the findings of Kaet et al. (2023) who noted that while storytelling helps with fluency, students may still struggle with pronunciation if they lack phonetic training. Observation results confirm this, as some students hesitated or stumbled over words during storytelling sessions.

Another challenge identified was difficulty structuring stories. The interview responses indicated that some students found it challenging to organize their thoughts, which aligns with previous research by Kayi in Kaet et al. (2023) emphasizing the need for guided storytelling frameworks. Students with limited vocabulary also faced difficulties, as noted in interview responses. Limited word knowledge made it harder for them to articulate their ideas effectively.

Lastly, peer pressure and fear of making mistakes discouraged some students from participating fully. Observation results showed that a few students hesitated to speak or appeared anxious when asked to tell stories in front of their classmates. This finding supports Nguyen Van Huy et al. (2024), who argue that classroom environment and peer perception significantly impact student engagement in speaking activities.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the research findings highlight that storytelling positively impacts students' engagement in speaking English by fostering enjoyment, motivation, and confidence. However, challenges such as speaking anxiety, pronunciation difficulties, and limited vocabulary remain barriers to full engagement. Addressing these challenges through additional speaking practice, vocabulary-building activities, and supportive classroom environments will further enhance the effectiveness of storytelling as a learning strategy.

These findings contribute to the growing body of literature supporting the use of storytelling in language learning and provide practical insights for educators seeking to improve student engagement in English speaking activities.

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