



THE IMPLEMENTATION OF READ-ALoud DESCRIPTIVE TEXT IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the implementation of the read-aloud method in teaching English speaking to Grade VII students involved 27 with 13 males and 14 females at SMPN 3 Cianjur and to identify the difficulties encountered during the process. The data analysis employed a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collected through classroom observations, questionnaires, and teacher interviews. The findings revealed that the read-aloud method was applied through several stages: teacher modeling, guided student reading, individual and pair practice, and oral description tasks. This technique helped improve students' pronunciation, intonation, fluency, and speaking confidence. Most students responded positively to the method, stating that it made them more accustomed to speaking English in front of others and reduced their fear of making mistakes. Although there were some difficulties found by teacher and students, this technique is advised to be used in teaching speaking. The teacher also faced difficulties in managing students with different levels of English proficiency and in maintaining student motivation.

Keywords: Read-Aloud Method, Speaking Skills, Descriptive Text, Junior High School, Qualitative Research

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a core language skill in English learning, and it often serves as a benchmark to assess learners' language proficiency. However, many junior high school students struggle with speaking English due to limited vocabulary, poor



pronunciation, and low self-confidence. These issues are further exacerbated by the lack of teacher creativity and a learning environment that does not support active oral communication (Tamala & Wulandari, 2021). According to Pakula (2019), speaking is one of the most difficult skills to teach and learn in EFL contexts. When speaking is excluded from formal assessments, teachers tend to prioritize grammar and reading, leaving students with limited oral practice.

To address these issues, various instructional strategies have been introduced, including role play, storytelling, and read-aloud. Among them, the read-aloud technique shows promise in improving speaking fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary retention (Kaharuddin et al., 2023). It also builds students' confidence and bridges reading and speaking skills (Sadyawati & Rosmawati, 2020). Despite its potential, read-aloud is underutilized in junior high schools. Students often feel bored or embarrassed, requiring teachers to design engaging and supportive activities (Harmer, 2007 as cited in Yulitrisisya & Narius, 2018).

Several previous studies have explored the use of read-aloud in language learning. Sadyawati & Rosmawati (2020) investigated its role in reading comprehension and pronunciation, while Sun (2020) explored its effects on word inference and reading attitudes in middle school EFL learners. Kaharuddin et al., (2023) analyzed how reading aloud, combined with vocabulary enrichment, contributes to speaking skill development. However, few studies have focused specifically on how read-aloud is implemented in speaking instruction and the challenges faced in its classroom application. Thus, this study aims to examine:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Speaking in EFL Contexts

Speaking is a productive skill that requires the ability to communicate ideas fluently, accurately, and confidently. In EFL settings, students often struggle with pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, which hinders their oral performance (Tamala & Wulandari, 2021). Gilakjani (2016) argues that pronunciation is crucial in oral communication and that learners do not need native-like pronunciation, but intelligibility. Astutik (2015) as cited in Tamala & Wulandari, (2021) outlines five aspects of speaking; grammar, fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and pronunciation, which together determine students' communicative competence. These components serve as the basis for evaluating speaking performance in this study.

The Read-Aloud Technique



The read-aloud technique is defined as the oral expression of written text, used to train learners in pronunciation, intonation, and reading fluency. According to Kaharuddin et al., (2023) reading aloud helps students become familiar with vocabulary and trains them to pronounce words correctly. Huang (2010:148) identifies five main functions of read-aloud: improving pronunciation, oral fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and grammar retention, and classroom motivation. This method encourages active learner involvement and supports language internalization by connecting reading and speaking activities. It also reduces students' fear of speaking by providing structured language models.

Descriptive Text as a Teaching Medium

Descriptive texts are commonly used in junior high school English curricula. They help students practice describing people, places, or objects using simple sentence structures and relevant vocabulary (Hanafiawi et al., 2020). The clear organization of descriptive texts, consisting of identification and description makes them suitable for read-aloud activities, especially at the beginner level.

Affective Factors in Speaking

The study also draws upon effective theories, especially related to learners' motivation, confidence, and anxiety. Students' emotional readiness greatly affects their speaking performance (Aulia et al., 2023). Read-aloud, as an oral activity performed in a low-pressure and supportive setting, can help reduce speaking anxiety, particularly in adolescents who are often sensitive to peer judgment (Harmer, 2007 as cited in Yulitrinisya & Narius, 2018).

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to explore the implementation of read-aloud technique in teaching speaking and to identify the difficulties faced by the teacher. Qualitative research is appropriate for examining real-life classroom practices and capturing participants' perspectives in natural contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Data were collected through classroom observation, teacher interview, and student questionnaire. Observations were carried out over three meetings to monitor teaching activities and student participation during read-aloud sessions. A semi-structured interview with the teacher explored the difficulties faced during the



process. Meanwhile, open-ended questionnaire gathered students' perceptions and experiences. The collected data were analyzed using Creswell & Creswell (2018) qualitative analysis steps: organizing, coding, developing themes, and interpreting results to answer the research questions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Read-Aloud Technique in Teaching Speaking

The implementation of read-aloud technique in Grade VII English speaking classes followed a structured process across three meetings:

1. Teacher Modelling

At the beginning of the lessons, the teacher modelled how to read descriptive texts aloud by demonstrating accurate pronunciation, appropriate intonation, and expressive delivery. This served as a foundation for students to imitate.

2. Guided Student Practice

Students were given opportunities to read aloud in pairs. The teacher provided guidance and feedback, focusing on pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency. This stage helped reduce students' anxiety and encouraged peer learning

3. Oral Performance Activities

Students practiced presenting their own descriptive texts and describing their classmates based on photos and prompts. These activities enabled them to apply vocabulary and speaking structures in meaningful oral communication.

Observations indicated that students' speaking skills, particularly pronunciation, fluency, and confidence showed improvement over the three sessions. And repeated oral practice helped reduce nervousness and increased students' willingness to speak. These findings are supported by Kaharuddin et al., (2023), who stated that read-aloud enhances pronunciation and builds vocabulary retention through repetition.

Students also responded positively in the questionnaire. Most of them reported that reading aloud helped them become more confident and familiar with English pronunciation and structure. However, some students initially felt anxious or shy when asked to speak in front of the others.



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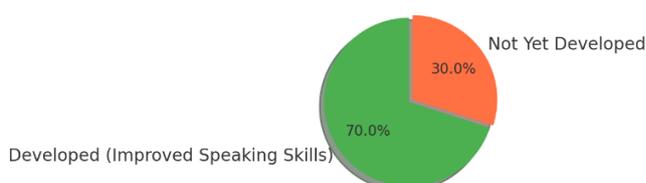


Chart 1. Student Progress in Speaking through Read-Aloud Activities

The pie chart illustrates the proportion of students who showed noticeable improvement in their speaking skills after participating in read-aloud activities, based on classroom observation and questionnaire data. 70% of students were categorized as “Developed”, meaning they showed positive progress in areas such as pronunciation, fluency, and speaking confidence. These students became more active, were willing to read aloud, and demonstrated better control of vocabulary and sentence structure. 30% of students were categorized as “Not Yet Developing”, indicating they still struggled with speaking performance. These students tended to be less confident, often hesitated to speak, and showed limited progress despite participating in the same activities. Most of them were affected by speaking anxiety, fear of mispronunciation, or low vocabulary mastery.

Teacher’s Difficulties in Using Read-Aloud

Based on interview and classroom observations, several challenges emerged during the application of read-aloud method:

1. Different Student Proficiency Levels
The class consisted of students with varying English abilities. This made it difficult for the teacher to maintain equal progress and adjust the pace for all learners.
2. Limited Time for Individual Feedback
Due to time constraints, the teacher was unable to provide detailed correction or feedback to every student during the sessions, which limited personalized improvement.
3. Classroom management



Monitoring multiple students or pairs reading aloud simultaneously was challenging. The teacher had to balance supervision, feedback, and control over classroom noise.

4. Student Confidence and Anxiety

Some students were hesitant to participate due to fear of mispronunciation or embarrassment, especially when performing in front of their peers.

These challenges are consistent with previous findings by Aulia et al., (2023) and Fauziyah & Susanto (2024) who highlighted the role of affective factors and classroom complexity in oral English learning. The teacher addressed some of these issues by providing encouragement, using pair work to lower pressure, and gradually building students' confidence through repetition and positive reinforcement.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the implementation of read-aloud technique in teaching English speaking to junior high school students and identified the challenges faced by the teacher during the process. The findings revealed that the read-aloud method, when structured through teacher modelling, guided practice, and student performance, effectively enhanced students' speaking skills particularly in pronunciation, fluency, and confidence.

Students responded positively to the technique, stating that it helped reduce their fear of speaking English in public and made them more engaged in the learning process. However, emotional barriers such as nervousness and shyness still appeared, especially among lower-level learners. The teacher encountered several challenges, including managing students with mixed proficiency levels, maintaining classroom focus during pair activities, and providing individualized feedback within limited time. These challenges indicate that while read-aloud is a promising method, its success depends heavily on classroom management, student support and careful scaffolding.

In conclusion, read-aloud is an effective and practical technique for improving speaking skills in EFL contexts, particularly when combined with supportive learning environments and adaptive teaching strategies. Future implementation should emphasize student confidence-building, differentiated instruction, and interactive elements to overcome existing limitations.



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