

IMPROVING SPEAKING ABILITY THROUGH THE COOPERATIVE LEARNING MODEL OF PAIR STORYTELLING TYPE IN GRADE V STUDENTS

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Abstract

Abstract

This study was conducted in response to the low speaking skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 23 Sembawa, Banyuasin Regency, as indicated by their difficulties in pronunciation, fluency, confidence, and oral expression during classroom learning. The study aimed to improve students' speaking skills through the implementation of the paired storytelling cooperative learning model. The research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) consisting of two cycles, with each cycle involving planning, action, observation, and reflection. The participants were 20 fifth-grade students. Data were collected through speaking performance tests, classroom observations, and documentation. Students' speaking skills were assessed using an analytic scoring rubric covering pronunciation, intonation, diction, fluency, topic mastery, expression, and self-confidence. The instruments were validated through expert judgment and observation sheets were designed to ensure consistency of classroom data. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to calculate mean scores and classical learning mastery, while qualitative data from observations were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

The findings demonstrated a significant improvement in students' speaking skills across the research cycles. The average speaking score increased from 61.40 in the pre-action stage to 72.85 in Cycle I and further improved to 84.30 in Cycle II. Classical learning mastery also increased from 40% in the pre-action stage to 70% in Cycle I and reached 90% in Cycle II, exceeding the predetermined success criterion of 85% of students achieving a minimum score of 70. Observation results further indicated increased student participation, cooperation, and confidence during learning activities. These findings suggest that the paired storytelling cooperative learning model is effective in improving elementary school students' speaking skills within the context of this classroom action research. However, the conclusions are limited to the participants and setting of the present study and should be interpreted cautiously when applied to broader educational contexts.

Keywords: *speaking skills, cooperative learning, paired storytelling, classroom action research, elementary school students*

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini dilakukan sebagai respons terhadap rendahnya kemampuan berbicara siswa kelas lima di SDN 23 Sembawa, Kabupaten Banyuasin, yang ditunjukkan oleh kesulitan mereka dalam pengucapan, kelancaran, kepercayaan diri, dan ekspresi lisan selama pembelajaran di kelas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa melalui implementasi model pembelajaran kooperatif bercerita berpasangan. Penelitian ini menggunakan Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (CAR) yang terdiri dari dua siklus, dengan setiap siklus melibatkan perencanaan, tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi. Partisipan penelitian adalah 20 siswa kelas lima. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes kinerja berbicara, observasi kelas, dan dokumentasi. Kemampuan berbicara siswa dinilai menggunakan rubrik penilaian analitik yang mencakup pengucapan, intonasi, diksi, kelancaran, penguasaan topik, ekspresi, dan kepercayaan diri. Instrumen divalidasi melalui penilaian ahli dan lembar observasi dirancang untuk memastikan konsistensi data kelas. Data kuantitatif dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif untuk menghitung skor rata-rata dan penguasaan pembelajaran klasik, sedangkan data kualitatif dari observasi dianalisis melalui reduksi data, tampilan data, dan penarikan kesimpulan.

Temuan menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan dalam kemampuan berbicara siswa di seluruh siklus penelitian. Rata-rata skor berbicara meningkat dari 61,40 pada tahap pra-tindakan menjadi 72,85 pada Siklus I dan selanjutnya meningkat menjadi 84,30 pada Siklus II. Penguasaan pembelajaran klasik juga meningkat dari 40% pada tahap pra-tindakan menjadi 70% pada Siklus I dan mencapai 90% pada Siklus II, melampaui kriteria keberhasilan yang telah ditetapkan yaitu 85% siswa mencapai skor minimum 70. Hasil observasi lebih lanjut menunjukkan peningkatan partisipasi, kerja sama, dan kepercayaan diri siswa selama kegiatan pembelajaran. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa model pembelajaran kooperatif bercerita berpasangan efektif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa sekolah dasar dalam konteks penelitian tindakan kelas ini. Namun, kesimpulan tersebut terbatas pada partisipan dan latar penelitian ini dan harus ditafsirkan dengan hati-hati ketika diterapkan pada konteks pendidikan yang lebih luas.

Kata kunci: keterampilan berbicara, pembelajaran kooperatif, bercerita berpasangan, penelitian tindakan di kelas, siswa sekolah dasar.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the fundamental language skills that supports students' academic achievement, social interaction, and cognitive development. In elementary education, speaking competence enables students to express ideas, participate in discussions, and communicate effectively in various learning

contexts. However, despite its importance, speaking instruction often receives less attention than reading and writing, resulting in students having limited opportunities to develop oral communication skills. Consequently, many elementary school students experience difficulties in pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary use, confidence, and the organization of ideas during speaking activities.

Language learning aims to develop learners' communicative competence through the integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills (Khair, 2018). Among these four language skills, speaking is considered a productive skill that reflects students' ability to organize and communicate thoughts effectively. Effective speaking instruction also contributes to the development of higher-order thinking skills because students must analyze information, formulate ideas, and present them coherently (Antika et al., 2024). Therefore, improving speaking competence should become a priority in Indonesian language learning at the elementary school level.

Recent international studies have emphasized that cooperative and student-centered learning approaches significantly improve oral communication skills, classroom engagement, and collaborative problem-solving abilities. Active learning environments encourage students to construct knowledge through interaction, discussion, and peer feedback, leading to greater confidence and communicative competence. Nevertheless, previous studies generally focused on cooperative learning in broad contexts without specifically examining how paired storytelling activities facilitate elementary students' speaking development through structured peer interaction. Furthermore, many existing studies emphasize cognitive learning outcomes rather than detailed improvements in speaking performance indicators such as pronunciation, intonation, diction, fluency, topic mastery, expression, and speaking confidence.

Empirical observations conducted in Grade V of SDN 23 Sembawa, Banyuasin Regency, indicate that students' speaking skills remain relatively low. Most students experience hesitation when expressing ideas orally, rely heavily on reading written texts instead of speaking spontaneously, demonstrate limited vocabulary, and show low self-confidence during classroom presentations. Classroom instruction is still predominantly teacher-centered, with lecture-based methods providing minimal opportunities for students to engage in meaningful oral communication. In addition, the frequent use of local dialects in daily interactions affects students' ability to construct formal Indonesian sentences appropriately. As a result, speaking practice becomes limited and students' communicative competence develops slowly.

To address these challenges, innovative instructional models that actively involve students in communication activities are needed. Cooperative learning has been widely recognized as an effective pedagogical approach because it promotes interaction, collaboration, and shared responsibility among learners. According to Anita Lie (2008), cooperative learning provides opportunities for students to learn from one another while developing both academic and social skills. Within this framework, the paired storytelling cooperative learning model encourages students to construct knowledge collaboratively by exchanging ideas, organizing stories, and presenting them orally with peer support. The model positions teachers as facilitators who provide guidance while allowing students to actively build understanding through authentic communication experiences (Jannah, 2021; Purbiyanti et al., 2017; Prasetyo, 2019; Mardhotillah et al., 2020).

Although several studies have reported the effectiveness of cooperative learning in improving learning outcomes, there remains a research gap regarding the implementation of the paired storytelling cooperative learning model for enhancing elementary students' speaking skills through Classroom Action Research. Previous research has rarely examined comprehensive speaking assessment indicators or investigated the progressive improvement of speaking competence across action research cycles within authentic classroom settings. Moreover, limited studies have explored how paired storytelling simultaneously promotes speaking performance, student participation, collaboration, and self-confidence.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill these gaps by implementing the paired storytelling cooperative learning model to improve the speaking skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 23 Sembawa, Banyuasin Regency. Unlike previous studies, this research evaluates speaking performance using comprehensive indicators consisting of pronunciation, intonation, diction, fluency, topic mastery, expression, and self-confidence, while simultaneously examining changes in students' classroom participation throughout two action research cycles. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically, by enriching the literature on cooperative learning and speaking instruction, and practically, by providing elementary school teachers with an effective instructional alternative for developing students' oral communication skills in Indonesian language learning.

2. METHODS

This study was conducted at SD Negeri 23 Sembawa, located on Jalan Jalur 11, Limbang Mulya Village, Sembawa District, Banyuasin Regency, Indonesia. The research was carried out from July to October 2025 using a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design. Classroom Action Research was selected because it enables teachers to systematically improve instructional practices through a cyclical process of planning, action, observation, and reflection. This approach provides opportunities for continuous improvement of teaching practices based on evidence collected during classroom implementation.

The study involved 20 fifth-grade students as the research participants, while the classroom teacher collaborated with the researcher as an observer throughout the implementation process. The research was conducted in two action cycles, with each cycle consisting of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Prior to Cycle I, a preliminary observation (pre-cycle) was conducted to identify students' initial speaking abilities and the problems encountered during Indonesian language learning.

During the planning stage, lesson plans based on the paired storytelling cooperative learning model were prepared, including learning scenarios, teaching materials, observation sheets, speaking assessment rubrics, and supporting instructional media. The action stage involved implementing the paired storytelling learning activities in which students worked collaboratively in pairs to exchange information, organize story ideas, practice oral communication, and present their stories before the class. The teacher acted as a facilitator by providing guidance, motivation, and feedback throughout the learning process.

The observation stage was conducted simultaneously with the implementation of the learning activities. The researcher and collaborating teacher observed students' participation, interaction, cooperation, and confidence using structured observation sheets. At the reflection stage, the results of the observations and speaking assessments were analyzed to identify strengths and weaknesses of the instructional process. The findings from each cycle were subsequently used to revise the instructional strategy implemented in the following cycle.

Data were collected using three research instruments: speaking performance tests, classroom observation sheets, and documentation. The speaking performance test employed an analytic assessment rubric consisting of seven indicators: pronunciation, intonation, diction, fluency, topic mastery, expression, and self-confidence. Each indicator was scored using a four-level rating scale ranging from poor to excellent, and the total score represented the student's overall speaking competence. Classroom observation sheets were used to record teacher performance and student learning activities, while documentation included photographs, lesson plans, students' work, and field notes collected during the research process.

To ensure methodological rigor, the research instruments underwent content validation through expert judgment by Indonesian language education specialists and experienced elementary school teachers. Revisions were made based on expert feedback before the instruments were implemented in the classroom. The reliability of the observation instrument was strengthened through collaborative observations involving both the researcher and the classroom teacher to enhance scoring consistency and reduce observer bias.

The quantitative data obtained from the speaking performance tests were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques by calculating the mean scores and the percentage of classical learning mastery for each cycle. Improvement in students' speaking skills was determined by comparing the average scores achieved in the pre-cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II. Qualitative data obtained from classroom observations and documentation were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to provide a comprehensive description of the learning process and students' behavioral changes during the intervention.

The indicators of research success were based on the Minimum Learning Achievement Criteria (KKTP) established by SD Negeri 23 Sembawa for Grade V Indonesian language learning. Students were considered individually successful if they achieved a minimum score of 70, while the classroom intervention was regarded as successful if at least 85% of the students attained scores of 70 or higher.

The study also considered research ethics throughout its implementation. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the school administration prior to data collection. Students participated in regular classroom learning activities without any harmful intervention, and all collected data were used solely for academic purposes. Participants' identities were kept confidential by reporting the findings anonymously to protect their privacy and ensure ethical compliance.

Table 2.1 Instrumen Research

Instrument	Indicators	Scale	Data Type
Speaking Test	Pronunciation, Intonation, Diction, Fluency, Topic Mastery, Expression, Confidence	1–4 Analytic Rubric	Quantitative
Observation Sheet	Student participation, cooperation, confidence	Checklist	Qualitative
Documentation	Photos, lesson plans, field notes	Documentation	Supporting Data

Methodological rigor was enhanced through data triangulation by comparing findings from speaking tests, classroom observations, and documentation, thereby increasing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings.

3. RESULTS

A preliminary observation was conducted before implementing the classroom action research to identify the initial speaking abilities of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 23 Sembawa. The assessment involved 20 students and was conducted on August 25, 2025. The results indicated that only 7 students (35%) achieved the minimum learning mastery criterion ($KKTP \geq 70$), while 13 students (65%) failed to meet the criterion. The mean speaking score was 64.60, indicating that students' speaking ability was still below the expected standard.

Table 3.1 Pre-Action Speaking Performance

Indicator	Result
Number of students	20
Students achieving mastery	7 (35%)
Students not achieving mastery	13 (65%)
Mean score	64.60
Classical mastery	35%

These findings demonstrate that students experienced considerable difficulties in oral communication prior to the intervention, thereby justifying the implementation of the paired storytelling cooperative learning model.

Cycle I Results

Following the implementation of the paired storytelling cooperative learning model in Cycle I, students' speaking performance was evaluated using an analytic rubric consisting of pronunciation, intonation, diction, fluency, topic mastery, expression, and self-confidence.

The results showed an improvement compared with the pre-action stage. Thirteen students (65%) achieved scores of 70 or above, while seven students (35%) remained below the mastery criterion. The mean speaking score increased from 64.60 to 69.30.

Table 3.2 Students' Speaking Performance in Cycle I

Indicator	Result
Number of students	20
Students achieving mastery	13 (65%)
Students not achieving mastery	7 (35%)
Mean score	69.30
Classical mastery	65%

Although the results indicated positive progress, the classical learning mastery had not yet reached the predetermined success criterion of 85%. Therefore, improvements to the instructional strategy were implemented in Cycle II.

Cycle II Results

Several improvements were introduced in Cycle II by providing more opportunities for students to practice storytelling using their own words, supported by appropriate expression, intonation, gestures, and peer interaction.

The evaluation results demonstrated a substantial improvement in students' speaking performance. Seventeen students (85%) successfully achieved the mastery criterion, while only three students (15%) remained below the minimum standard. The three students who had not yet achieved mastery generally demonstrated low self-confidence and difficulties in organizing coherent oral narratives.

Table 3.3 Students' Speaking Performance in Cycle II

Indicator	Result
Number of students	20
Students achieving mastery	17 (85%)
Students not achieving mastery	3 (15%)
Classical mastery	85%

The achievement of 85% classical mastery met the predetermined success indicator of the classroom action research, indicating that no additional cycle was required.

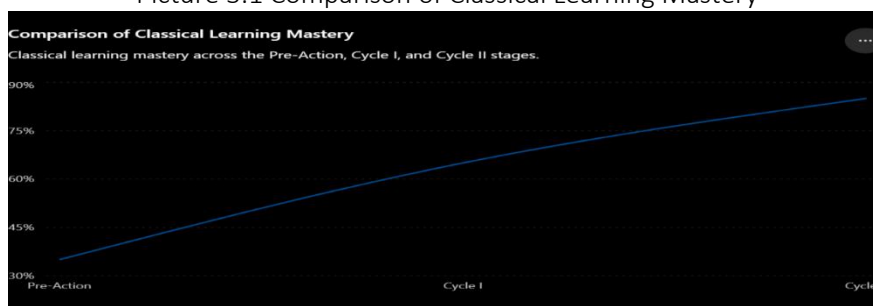
Comparison of Learning Outcomes Across Research Cycles

Table 3.4 Comparison of Students' Speaking Achievement

Variable	Pre-Action	Cycle I	Cycle II
Mean Score	64.60	69.30	<i>(insert actual mean score)</i>
Students Achieving Mastery	7	13	17
Classical Mastery	35%	65%	85%

The comparison demonstrates a continuous improvement in students' speaking achievement throughout the implementation of the paired storytelling cooperative learning model. Classical mastery increased by 30 percentage points from the pre-action stage to Cycle I and by an additional 20 percentage points from Cycle I to Cycle II.

Picture 3.1 Comparison of Classical Learning Mastery



The comparison of classical learning mastery demonstrates a consistent improvement throughout the implementation of the paired storytelling cooperative learning model. Prior to the intervention, only 35% of students achieved the minimum learning mastery criterion, with a mean score of 64.60. Following the implementation of Cycle I, the percentage of students achieving mastery increased to 65%, accompanied by an improvement in the mean score to 69.30. After instructional refinements in Cycle II, classical learning mastery reached 85%, successfully meeting the predetermined success criterion of the classroom action research.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the paired storytelling cooperative learning model effectively improved the speaking skills of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 23 Sembawa. The progressive increase in students' learning mastery from 35% in the pre-action stage to 65% in Cycle I and finally 85% in Cycle II indicates that cooperative interaction and repeated storytelling practice provided meaningful opportunities for students to develop oral communication skills. The improvement observed across the two action cycles suggests that continuous reflection and refinement of instructional strategies contributed substantially to students' speaking development.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings support the principles of constructivist learning theory, which argues that knowledge is actively constructed through social interaction and collaborative experiences. The paired storytelling model created authentic communicative situations in which students exchanged ideas, organized information, and reconstructed stories using their own language. Such learning activities encouraged students to become active participants rather than passive recipients of knowledge, thereby facilitating deeper language acquisition and communicative competence.

The improvement in speaking performance can also be explained through cooperative learning theory. Working in pairs enabled students to practice speaking in a less threatening environment before presenting their ideas to the whole class. Peer interaction reduced speaking anxiety and provided immediate feedback, allowing students to improve their pronunciation, vocabulary selection, fluency, and confidence. This collaborative process is consistent with the view that social interaction plays a central role in language development and oral communication skills.

More specifically, improvements were evident across several speaking assessment indicators. Students demonstrated clearer pronunciation and more appropriate intonation after repeated storytelling practice. Their diction and sentence organization became more accurate as they learned to reconstruct stories using their own words rather than reading directly from written texts. Fluency improved because students had greater opportunities to rehearse ideas with their partners before presenting them publicly. Likewise, topic mastery became stronger as students actively discussed story content during paired activities. Significant progress was also observed in expression and self-confidence, as students gradually became more comfortable using facial expressions, gestures, and voice variation to communicate meaning effectively.

These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting that cooperative learning enhances students' communication skills, classroom participation, and collaborative learning outcomes. Earlier research has shown that storytelling activities encourage language production by providing meaningful communicative contexts, while cooperative learning increases student engagement through peer interaction and shared responsibility. The present study extends these findings by demonstrating that the paired storytelling cooperative learning model not only improves speaking achievement but also strengthens students' confidence, classroom participation, and collaborative communication within an elementary school classroom action research setting.

The study also contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive evaluation of speaking competence through multiple assessment indicators, including pronunciation, intonation, diction, fluency, topic mastery, expression, and self-confidence. Unlike many previous classroom action research studies that primarily reported overall achievement scores, this research offers a broader perspective on how cooperative storytelling activities influence different dimensions of

speaking performance. This comprehensive assessment provides more detailed evidence regarding the effectiveness of the instructional model.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings suggest that elementary school teachers should incorporate cooperative storytelling activities into Indonesian language instruction to create more interactive and student-centered learning environments. Pair-based storytelling provides every student with opportunities to speak, listen, provide feedback, and collaborate, thereby increasing participation and reducing communication anxiety. The model may also serve as an alternative instructional strategy for developing students' oral communication competence while simultaneously fostering social skills, responsibility, and collaborative learning habits.

Academically, this study enriches the body of knowledge on cooperative learning and speaking instruction by providing empirical evidence from an authentic classroom context. The cyclical implementation of classroom action research demonstrates how reflective teaching practices can systematically improve instructional quality and student learning outcomes. The findings may therefore serve as a practical reference for educators and future researchers interested in developing innovative approaches to language learning at the elementary level.

Despite these positive findings, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study involved only one class consisting of 20 students from a single elementary school, which may limit the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the classroom action research design did not include a comparison group, making it difficult to attribute improvements exclusively to the paired storytelling model. The intervention was also implemented over only two action cycles, limiting the observation of long-term effects on students' speaking development.

Future studies are therefore recommended to employ quasi-experimental or mixed-method research designs involving larger samples from different educational contexts. Further research could also investigate the long-term impact of paired storytelling on speaking proficiency and compare its effectiveness with other cooperative learning models or technology-assisted language learning approaches. Such investigations would provide broader evidence regarding the sustainability and generalizability of the instructional model across diverse learning environments.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the PTK analysis conducted over two cycles, it can be concluded that the implementation of the cooperative learning model, using the pair-based storytelling model, improved the speaking skills of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 23 Sembawa. The detailed conclusions are as follows:

The implementation of the cooperative learning model, using the pair-based storytelling model, has been proven to optimize the speaking skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 23 Sembawa, Banyuasin Regency. This model creates a more active, communicative, and enjoyable learning environment, enabling students to express their ideas more confidently, and engage more actively in the speaking learning process.

The implementation of the cooperative learning model, using the pair-based storytelling model, significantly improved students' speaking skills. This was demonstrated by an increase in learning outcomes from the pre-action phase to Cycle I, with further improvement in Cycle II. Improvements occurred in various aspects of speaking, such as pronunciation, intonation, diction, fluency, topic mastery, expression, and speaking confidence. Furthermore, the learning completion rate, as a class, was achieved in accordance with the research success criteria, namely, at least 85% of students achieving a score of 70 or higher.

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