Using Chain Story Technique To Develop Speaking Skill Of Grade VIII Students Of SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to determine the effectiveness of the chain story technique in teaching English speaking to grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah. The study involved two classes, namely class VIII B with 27 students as the experimental group and class VIII A with 28 students as the control group. Data were collected through speaking tests, consisting of pre-test and post-test, and analyzed using simple statistical methods. The findings revealed a significant improvement in the students' speaking skills, as indicated by the t-count value (8.35) being higher than the t-table value (1.67) at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the research concluded that the chain story technique is effective in teaching English speaking and provides a significant positive impact on students' speaking skill development.

1. Introduction

Language is a very important tool that people use to share their ideas and feelings. English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world and is often used for international communication. In Indonesia, English is taught from an early age in schools, and speaking is considered one of the most important skills to master (Al-Tamimi & Lin, 2022; Anngawirya et al., 2021; Rahman, 2018). When people speak, others often form impressions based on how they talk. This shows that speaking plays a big role in communication.

However, speaking English is not easy for many learners. They must understand grammar, learn enough vocabulary, and use correct pronunciation. At the same time, many students feel nervous or shy when speaking. They are often afraid of making mistakes or being laughed at. These psychological problems, like anxiety and lack of confidence, can make it difficult to speak well (Liu & Jackson, 2021; Ko et al., 2025; Yaumi et al., 2023).

In addition to these emotional challenges, there is also the problem of limited practice. In many classrooms, more time is spent on reading and writing than on speaking. Because of this, students do not get enough chances to practice speaking. This can lead to hesitation and low fluency. Many students feel unsure of themselves when asked to speak, especially in front of others (Çapan & Büyükkarcı, 2021; Said et al., 2021; Youngsun et al., 2024).

Culture and social background can also affect students' speaking ability. In some cultures, students are taught to avoid making mistakes or to stay silent if they are unsure. This cultural expectation can prevent them from speaking up and practicing their skills. Previous studies have shown that learners' sociocultural context strongly influences their willingness to communicate and their confidence in using English (Peng, 2022; Khajavy, 2021; Weda et al., 2021.; Junaid & Andini, 2025). A positive and supportive learning environment can help students feel safe and more willing to speak (Zhang & Papi, 2021; Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020).

At SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah, many students still face difficulties in speaking English. Based on the researcher's pre-observation and an interview with the English teacher, it was found that students struggle to speak due to several reasons. First, English is not their native language. Second, they lack vocabulary. Third, they are afraid of making mistakes. All of these factors contribute to low confidence in speaking English (Derakhshan & Zhaleh, 2022).

To help solve this problem, the chain story technique was used in this study. This is a group activity where each student adds a sentence to create a story. This method allows students to speak in a relaxed and fun way, helping them build confidence and practice speaking naturally. The steps used in this study followed the procedure introduced by Klippel (1984). Based on this, the researcher conducted a study titled "Using Chain Story Technique to Develop Speaking Skill of Grade VIII Students of SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah" to find out if this technique can help students improve their speaking skills.

2. Methodology

This research applied of a quasi-experimental design; the nonequivalent control group design, which involve two groups. One group was designated as the experimental group, while the other was designated as the control group. The chain story technique would be provided during the treatment in the experimental class. This research design was based on Arikunto's design (2006: 78) as follow:

Experimental   : O1 X O2

Control   : O1   O2

Where :

O1   = Pre-test

O2   = Post-test

X = Treatment

The population for this research was grade VIII students from SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah. It consisted of four parallel classes. There were 113 students in the population.

Table 1. The Population of the Students

NO	Class	Number of students
1	VIIIA	28
2	VIIIB	27
3	VIIIC	27
4	VIIID	31
	Total	113

The research sample was selected using a cluster random sampling technique. Experimental research is a method used to examine cause-and-effect relationships between variables. In this study, the researcher manipulated the independent variable to observe its impact on the dependent variable. The sample consisted of two parallel Grade VIII classes at SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah. Class VIII B was assigned as the experimental group, while Class VIII A served as the control group.

The selection of these two classes was based on two main considerations. First, the results of a pre-observation and an interview with the English teacher indicated that students in both classes experienced difficulties in speaking English. These included low self-confidence and a fear of making mistakes when speaking. Second, the students in these classes were found to have limited opportunities to practice public speaking during English lessons.

The data were collected through testing, which involved both a pre-test and a post-test. To begin, the researcher administered a pre-test to both the experimental and control classes to assess the students' initial speaking abilities before any treatment was applied. The purpose of the pre-test was to identify the students' baseline knowledge and skills in speaking.

After the treatment was implemented in the experimental group, a post-test was given to all students. The content of the post-test was the same as that of the pre-test to ensure consistency in measuring learning outcomes. The post-test was used to observe any improvements in students' speaking performance after the treatment.

Following the administration of the tests, the researcher analyzed the results to determine students' performance levels. To calculate each student's score, the researcher applied the formula proposed by Arikunto (2006, p. 240):

$$\sum \llbracket = \rrbracket \quad x/n \times 100$$

Where:

$\sum$ = Sum standard score

x = Obtained score

n = Maximum score

100 = Range score 10-100

After obtaining the individual scores of the students, the researcher calculated the mean score of each group using the formula proposed by Arikunto (2006, p. 306), as follows:

The formula used for experimental group:

$Mx = (\sum X)/N$

The formula used for control group:

$My = (\sum y)/N$

Where: Mx   = Mean score of deviation of experimental group

My   = Mean score of deviation of control group

$\sum x$ = Sum scores of experimental group

$\sum y$ = Sum scores of control group

N   = Number of students in each group

To compute the sum of square deviation, the researcher used the following formula: Arikunto (2006: 312).

The formula for experimental group

$$\sum x2 = \Sigma X2 - \llbracket ((\Sigma x))/N \rrbracket ^2$$

The formula for control group

$$\sum y2 = \Sigma Y2 - \llbracket ((\Sigma y))/N \rrbracket ^2$$

Where:

$\sum x2$ = The score sum of experimental group

$\sum y2$ = The score sum of control group

$\sum X2$ = Number of experimental group's standard deviation

$\Sigma Y2$ = Number of control group's standard deviation

N = Number of students

The researcher applied t-test formula proposed by Arikunto (2006: 309) to evaluate the result of pretest and posttest of both experimental group and control group as follows:

$$\text{t-counted} = (Mx-My)/\sqrt{(((\llbracket \sum x \rrbracket ^{(2)} + \llbracket \sum y \rrbracket ^2)/(Nx+Ny-2))(1/Nx+1/Ny))}$$

Where: t-counted = t-test score

Mx   = Mean of experimental group

My   = Mean of control group

Nx   = Number of students (experimental group)

Ny   = Number of students (control group)

X2   = Deviation of score x1 and x2

Y2   = deviation of score y1 and y2

Σx2   = quadrate deviation of experimental group

Σy2   = quadrate deviation of control group

The researcher conducted hypothesis testing to determine whether the use of the chain story technique was effective in improving the speaking skills of Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah. This testing was also used to assess whether the research hypothesis could be accepted or rejected.

To implement the treatment, the researcher applied the chain story technique as a strategy to enhance students' speaking skills. After administering the pre-test, the treatment was given only to the experimental class, while the control class did not receive any intervention. The treatment was conducted over six meetings, during which students in the experimental group participated in various speaking activities using the chain story technique.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Findings

This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah and involved Grade VIII students. Two classes participated in the study. Class VIII B, consisting of 27 students, was designated as the experimental group, while Class VIII A, consisting of 28 students, served as the control group.

An oral test was used as the primary instrument for data collection. The data consisted of students' scores from both the pre-test and the post-test, administered to the experimental and control classes. The pre-test was conducted during the first meeting on November 21, 2024, for both classes. Its purpose was to assess the students' initial speaking skills before the treatment was applied.

Following six treatment sessions using the chain story technique in the experimental class, the researcher administered the post-test to both groups on December 11, 2024. The post-test aimed to measure any improvement in students' speaking skills after the intervention. The summary of the pre-test and post-test scores from both the experimental and control classes are presented in the following tables.

Table 2. Summary of Pre-test and Post-test Results

Group	N (Students)	Test Type	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Total Score	Mean Score
Experimental	27	Pre-test	25	50	925	34.25
Experimental	27	Post-test	50	100	1750	64.81
Control	28	Pre-test	25	50	950	33.92
Control	28	Post-test	25	75	1125	40.17

Table 2 presents the pre-test and post-test results for both the experimental and control groups. Each group's performance is described based on the number of students, the type of test administered, and the range and average of their scores.

In the experimental group, which consisted of 27 students, the pre-test scores ranged from 25 to 50, with a total score of 925 and a mean score of 34.25. After the treatment using the chain story technique, the post-test scores increased

significantly, ranging from 50 to 100. The total post-test score was 1750, resulting in a much higher mean score of 64.81. This indicates a notable improvement in students' speaking performance following the intervention.

In contrast, the control group, consisting of 28 students, showed minimal progress. Their pre-test scores also ranged from 25 to 50, with a total score of 950 and a mean score of 33.92. In the post-test, the score range slightly expanded from 25 to 75, with a total score of 1125 and a mean score of 40.17. While there was a slight increase, the improvement was not as significant as that observed in the experimental group.

Overall, the data suggest that the use of the chain story technique had a positive effect on the speaking skills of students in the experimental group, as demonstrated by the considerable increase in their post-test scores. In comparison, the control group, which did not receive the treatment, showed only a marginal improvement.

Table 3 Deviation between Pre-test and Post-test

Group	Total Deviation	Mean Deviation	Total Square Deviation	Mean Square Deviation
Experimental	825	30.55	28,125	1041.66
Control	175	6.25	4,375	156.25

Table 3 shows the deviation between the pre-test and post-test scores of both the experimental and control groups. The table includes total deviation, mean deviation, total square deviation, and mean square deviation, which help to illustrate the extent of improvement in students' speaking performance.

For the experimental group, the total deviation was 825, with a mean deviation of 30.55, indicating a substantial increase in individual students' scores after the treatment. The total square deviation was 28,125, and the mean square deviation was 1041.66, reflecting significant and consistent improvements across the group. These results demonstrate that most students in the experimental group showed marked progress in their post-test performance compared to their pre-test scores.

In contrast, the control group had a total deviation of 175 and a much lower mean deviation of 6.25. The total square deviation was 4,375, with a mean square deviation of 156.25. These values indicate only slight improvement, suggesting that students in the control group experienced minimal gains in speaking ability without the use of the chain story technique.

Overall, the deviation data clearly support the effectiveness of the chain story technique in enhancing students' speaking skills, as evidenced by the significantly higher deviation values in the experimental group compared to the control group. After finding out the deviation of both classes, the researcher calculated the sum-squared deviation around the mean of the experimental and control classes as shown below:

$\Sigma x2 = \Sigma X2 – 〚((\Sigma x))/N〛^2$

$\Sigma x2 = 28125 – 〚((825))/27〛^2$

$\Sigma x2 = 28125 – 〚680625/27〛^\wedge$

$\Sigma x2 = 28125 – 25208.33$

$\Sigma x2 = 291.67 \qquad \Sigma y2 = \Sigma y2 – 〚((\Sigma y))/N〛^2$

$\Sigma y2 = 4375 – 〚((175))/28〛^2$

$\Sigma y2 = 4375 – 〚30625/28〛^\wedge$

$\Sigma y2 = 4375 – 1093.75$

$\Sigma y2 = 3281.25$

Based on the calculation, the sum-squared deviation of the experimental class was 2916.67 and the sum-squared deviation of the control class was 3281.25. After having the sum-squared deviation of both classes, the researcher continued to find out the significant difference between both classes, it is computed as follows:

$$\text{t-counted} = (Mx-My)/\sqrt{(((\llbracket \sum x \rrbracket \char`^(2) + \llbracket \sum y \rrbracket \char`^2)/(Nx+Ny-2))(1/Nx+1/Ny))}$$

$$\text{t-counted} = (30.55-6.25)/\sqrt{(((2916.67+3281.25)/(27+28-2))(1/27+1/28))}$$

$$\text{t-counted} = 24.3/\sqrt{((6179.92/53)(0.03704+0.03571))}$$

$$\text{t-counted} = 24.3/\sqrt{((116.94)(0.07275))}$$

$$\text{t-counted} = 24.3/\sqrt{8.50}$$

$$\text{t-counted} = 24.3/2.91$$

$$\text{t-counted} = 8.35$$

The researcher tested hypothesis to prove whether or not the implementation of chain story technique can develop the speaking skill of grade VIII students of SMPN 1 Banawa Tengah. To determine whether the hypothesis of this research is accepted or rejected, it should be verified by testing the hypothesis. If the value of tcounted is higher than the ttable, it means that the assumption is accepted or there is a significant influence. Meanwhile, if tcounted is lower than the ttable value, it means that the hypothesis is rejected.

The researcher tested the tcounted with the ttable using the level of significance 0.05. The degree of freedom (df) of the table is NX + NY – 2 → 27 + 28 – 2 = 53, and the degree of freedom from 53 is 1,67. The researcher found that the value of the ttable is 1,67. Meanwhile, the value of the tcounted is 8.35. Based on the result, the researcher concludes that the hypothesis of this research is accepted because the value of the tcounted is higher than the ttable. It confirms that the chain story technique strategy is effective in developing the speaking skills of grade VIII students of SMPN 1 Banawa Tengah.

3.2. Discussion

The results of this study show that the use of the chain story technique significantly improved the speaking skills of Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah. This conclusion is supported by the increase in the mean score of the experimental group, which rose from 34.25 in the pre-test to 64.81 in the post-test. In contrast, the control group, which did not receive the treatment, showed only a slight improvement, from 33.92 to 40.17. The large deviation and mean square deviation in the experimental group also support the effectiveness of the technique, indicating consistent and substantial progress among the students.

The improvement in students' speaking performance can be attributed to the interactive and cooperative nature of the chain story technique. This method encourages students to speak in a supportive group setting where they feel less anxious and more motivated to participate. According to Zhang and Head (2010), creating a positive and collaborative learning environment can reduce students' speaking anxiety and increase their willingness to communicate. Similarly, Liu and Jackson (2021) emphasize that learners who are less afraid of making mistakes tend to speak more fluently and with greater confidence.

Another factor that contributed to the success of the chain story technique is its focus on peer interaction and creativity. When students construct stories together, they engage in authentic communication, which promotes fluency, vocabulary usage, and grammatical accuracy (Al-Tamimi & Lin, 2022). This aligns with Klippel's (1984) suggestion that fluency activities should be both meaningful and enjoyable, giving learners the chance to practice language naturally without the pressure of formal testing environments.

In contrast, the control group, which was taught using traditional methods without interactive speaking activities, showed minimal progress. This supports previous findings that conventional teacher-centered approaches often limit students' speaking opportunities, leading to lower motivation and slower development of oral skills (Çapan & Büyükkarcı, 2021).

Overall, the findings confirm that the chain story technique is effective in enhancing students' speaking abilities. It addresses common challenges such as fear of speaking, limited vocabulary, and lack of confidence. The improvement observed in the experimental group reflects the importance of using communicative and student-centered strategies in English language teaching, especially for speaking skills.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the chain story technique is effective in improving the speaking skills of Grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 1 Banawa Tengah. The significant increase in the mean score of the experimental group, from 34.25 in the pre-test to 64.81 in the post-test, clearly indicates substantial improvement after the treatment. In contrast, the control group, which did not receive the treatment, showed only a slight increase from 33.92 to 40.17.

The improvement in the experimental group can be attributed to the interactive, collaborative, and engaging nature of the chain story technique. This method encourages students to actively participate, reduces anxiety, and builds confidence in speaking. By creating a supportive learning environment, students become more motivated and willing to express their ideas in English. Therefore, the chain story technique can be recommended as an effective strategy for English language teachers, especially in improving students' oral communication skills. It not only enhances speaking fluency but also helps students overcome common challenges such as fear of making mistakes and lack of vocabulary.

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