

Integrating Short Conversations into English Language Teaching to Improve Students' Speaking Skills

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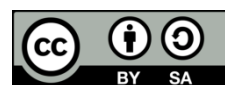
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of integrating short conversations into English language teaching to enhance students' speaking skills. Conducted at MTs Muhammadiyah Soasio Galela, the research applied a quasi-experimental design with two groups: an experimental class exposed to short conversation techniques and a control class taught through conventional methods. Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests, focusing on fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension. Findings reveal that students in the experimental group demonstrated significant improvement in speaking proficiency compared to the control group. The use of short conversations encouraged active participation, reduced speaking anxiety, and improved oral communication skills. This study concludes that short conversations are an effective pedagogical strategy to foster students' speaking abilities in EFL contexts.

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ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini mengkaji efektivitas pengintegrasian percakapan singkat dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa. Penelitian ini dilakukan di MTs Muhammadiyah Soasio Galela dengan desain quasi-eksperimental yang melibatkan dua kelompok: kelas eksperimen yang diajarkan teknik percakapan singkat dan kelas kontrol yang diajarkan dengan metode konvensional. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes awal dan tes akhir, dengan fokus pada kelancaran, kosakata, pelafalan, tata bahasa, dan pemahaman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa di kelompok eksperimen menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam kemampuan berbicara dibandingkan dengan kelompok kontrol. Penggunaan percakapan singkat mendorong partisipasi aktif, mengurangi kecemasan berbicara, dan meningkatkan keterampilan komunikasi lisan. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa percakapan singkat merupakan strategi pedagogis yang efektif untuk mengembangkan kemampuan berbicara siswa dalam konteks pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL).

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the most essential skills in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning. However, many students face barriers such as lack of confidence, limited opportunities, and fear of making mistakes. Traditional grammar-based teaching often fails to provide students with authentic communication practice.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of integrating short conversations in English classrooms. Specifically, it examines whether short conversation practice can improve students' fluency, pronunciation, and overall communicative competence at MTs Muhammadiyah Soasio Galela.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The teaching of speaking has long been recognized as a major challenge in EFL contexts. According to Brown (2001), successful speaking requires mastery of fluency, accuracy, and interactional competence. In Indonesia, where English is taught primarily as a foreign language, opportunities for authentic communication are often limited to the classroom (Sofyan & Ferry, 2021).

Short conversations, also referred to as mini-dialogues, provide students with immediate and practical exposure to communicative English. Anshar et al. (2022) argue that short dialogues help students engage in real-life communication scenarios, encouraging active participation. Similarly, Mariam et al. (2022) emphasize that short conversation practice boosts students' motivation and reduces anxiety in speaking activities.

METHOD

This study employed a quasi-experimental design with two groups:

- Experimental Group: students practiced speaking through short conversations.
- Control Group: students were taught using conventional methods.

A total of 40 eighth-grade students participated in the study. Data were collected through oral tests (pre-test and post-test), focusing on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. Data analysis employed descriptive statistics, normality tests, and an independent sample t-test using SPSS 22.

RESULTS

The experimental group demonstrated substantial progress in speaking skills. Their mean score increased from 46.20 (pre-test) to 69.20 (post-test), while the control group only improved slightly, from 24.90 to 28.90. The independent sample t-test confirmed a significant difference between the groups ($p < 0.05$). These results suggest that short conversations encourage students to practice actively, build confidence, and engage in authentic communication.

DISCUSSION

The findings imply that short conversations help reduce student anxiety by providing a safe and structured platform for communication. Unlike traditional grammar-focused approaches, short conversations expose learners to real-life communication scenarios, enhancing pronunciation, vocabulary mastery, and overall fluency. Students reported higher confidence and willingness to participate in classroom discussions, aligning with



theories of communicative language teaching.

Language Teaching Society, 3(1), 1–10.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study concludes that integrating short conversations in English classrooms significantly enhances students' speaking proficiency. The method improves fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation while also boosting students' confidence in oral communication.

Suggestions:

1. For Students: Engage in short conversation practice both in and outside the classroom.
2. For Teachers: Incorporate short conversation activities into lesson plans to create an interactive learning environment.
3. For Future Research: Explore the integration of short conversations with digital platforms to maximize engagement and learning outcomes.

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