ENHANCING STUDENTS' SPEAKING PROFICIENCY: INVESTIGATING THE EFFICACY OF THE STORY COMPLETION TECHNIQUE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of the Story Completion technique in improving students' speaking proficiency. It focused on secondary school students in Indonesia, addressing a research gap in this specific context. The study involved 60 participants divided into two groups, using a Quasi-experimental design. Data collection included pre-test and post-test speaking assessments. Analyzing the results with an Independent Sample t-test revealed that the Story Completion technique had a significant positive impact on students' speaking proficiency compared to traditional Storytelling. The statistical analysis confirmed the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis and rejection of the null hypothesis. Additionally, the N-Gain analysis indicated that the experimental group achieved a higher mean score, demonstrating superior speaking skills compared to the control group. In conclusion, this study establishes that Story Completion is an effective and engaging method for enhancing students' speaking proficiency. These findings provide support for the use of the Story Completion technique in teaching speaking skills.

Keywords: story completion; speaking; storytelling

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mempelajari keefektifan teknik *Story Completion* dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris terutama pada siswa kelas delapan sekolah menengah atas di Indonesia. Desain quasi-experimental digunakan dengan melibatkan 60 partisipan yang dibagi menjadi dua kelompok. Pengumpulan data meliputi penilaian berbicara pre-test dan post-test. Hasil yang dianalisis dengan Independent Sample t-test membuktikan bahwa teknik *Story Completion* memiliki dampak positif yang signifikan terhadap peningkatan kemampuan berbicara siswa dibandingkan dengan metode *story telling* tradisional. Analisis statistik mengkonfirmasi diterimanya hipotesis alternatif sekaligus menolak hipotesis nol. Selain itu, analisis N-Gain menunjukkan bahwa kelompok eksperimen mencapai skor rata-rata yang lebih tinggi dan secara kuantitatif menunjukkan keterampilan berbicara yang lebih baik dibandingkan dengan kelompok kontrol. Sebagai kesimpulan, penelitian ini membuktikan

bahwa teknik *Story Completion* adalah teknik yang efektif dan menarik untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa. Temuan ini mendukung penggunaan teknik *Story Completion* dalam pengajaran keterampilan berbicara.

Kata Kunci*: story completion; kemampuan berbicara; storytelling*

INTRODUCTION

Fauzi & Hanifah (2018) and Rahmawana (2017) asserted that oral communication, specifically speaking, is a fundamental skill in interpersonal communication. In various communication activities, speaking is more commonly employed than written communication. Developing speaking skills is crucial for students as it enables them to effectively convey ideas, engage in oral presentations, and interact with peers in foreign language classes (Sepyanda, 2017). Harahap and Rasyidah (2016) further emphasized the significance of speaking proficiency in the mastery of English. Proficient speaking skills empower students to access a wealth of information and enhance their overall communicative abilities.

The current study aims to address the challenges faced by students in speaking English, such as a lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, and a passive learning approach. These issues hinder students' active participation and hinder their speaking proficiency (Putri et al., 2015). Additionally, students often perceive speaking as a difficult task, as it requires not only the use of vocabulary but also the expression of emotions and ideas (Bailey, 2003). Compared to reading or writing, speaking occurs in real-time and lacks the ability to revise and edit, making it more challenging for learners.

Preliminary observations conducted at a public high school in Indonesia revealed that students felt nervous and unprepared when asked to speak in front of the class. Consequently, their speaking abilities remained at a low level due to a lack of opportunities to express their ideas in front of others. Teachers must therefore explore new techniques for teaching speaking skills effectively.

To address these issues, the researchers aim to investigate students' speaking abilities and enhance speaking activities by employing an appropriate and effective technique, namely the story completion technique. Story completion is a fun and engaging strategy that encourages students to freely express themselves and contribute to a narrative (Kayi, 2006).

Previous studies have also explored the effectiveness of story completion techniques in teaching speaking skills. For example, Rifa'at and Suryani (2018) used the technique with non-English major students and found it to be effective in improving speaking abilities. Ivosari (2017) also applied story completion techniques with third-semester English department students and reported positive results. Similarly, Wijaya, Muhammad, and Sudirman (2014) implemented story completion techniques and observed an increase in students' speaking abilities.

Although story completion techniques have been examined in university settings, there is a lack of research on their effectiveness for secondary school students. Therefore,

this study aims to fill this research gap by modifying the story completion technique using video conference tools (Zoom Meeting) for secondary school students. The experimental class will use the modified technique, while the control class will employ traditional storytelling techniques for comparison.

In conclusion, this study seeks to investigate the effectiveness of story completion techniques on students' speaking proficiency. By implementing innovative methods and considering the unique challenges faced by students, it is hoped that this research will contribute to enhancing students' interest and motivation in speaking English.

METHOD

In this study, a quasi-experimental research design was utilized. The study population comprised 300 tenth-grade students from a public senior high school in Malang, East Java Province, Indonesia. Purposive sampling technique was employed to determine the samples; which consist of two groups (experimental and control group), each comprising 30 students. The experimental procedure involved several steps. Initially, a speaking test was administered as a pre-test to measure the students' abilities before treatment. The students were required to record a script-free Personal Narrative Speech video and share the video link with the researchers, aiming to assess their initial speaking skills. Next, the treatment phase comprised six sessions for each group. The experimental group received instruction using the Story Completion technique, while the control group was taught using the Storytelling technique. For the experimental group, students were divided based on the generic structure of narrative text, and the researchers initiated the story, with subsequent students continuing it sequentially. Conversely, the control group engaged in individual storytelling without any script, prompted by a video of a folktale story. The final step involved a post-test administered to both groups upon completing the treatment. The post-test aimed to measure the effectiveness of the implemented strategy or method in enhancing students' speaking proficiency.

To analyze the data, a test instrument comprising a pre-test and a post-test was employed. Both tests evaluated students' speaking skills based on five criteria: pronunciation, grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (adapted from Brown's (2004) speaking rubric). The collected data from the tests were analyzed to determine score differences between the experimental and control groups. Regarding reliability, inter-rater reliability analysis was conducted. Two raters, including the teacher as the first rater and the researchers as the second rater, evaluated the students' speaking tests. Cohen's Kappa coefficient was used to measure the agreement level between the raters.

The data analysis process involved multiple steps. Initially, a Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted to assess the normality of the data distribution. The Levene's test was then employed to examine homogeneity between the experimental and control groups. Subsequently, an independent sample t-test was used to examine the effectiveness of the Story Completion and Storytelling techniques in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. A

significance level of 0.05 was set for the t-test. Additionally, N-Gain calculation, based on Hake's (1999) theory, was employed to measure the increase in students' speaking ability according to the scoring rubric. Reliability analysis was conducted using Cohen's Kappa coefficient as suggested by Widhiarso & Mada (2016) since the subject is judged by only two raters.

RESULTS

The assessment of normality is an essential prerequisite for parametric analysis. The purpose of this test is to determine whether the data follows a normal distribution. In this study, the collected data was analyzed using the Shapiro-Wilk test in SPSS version 22 for Windows. The results of the normality test conducted on the pre-test data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Normality Test of Pre-Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test for Experimental Group	.121	30	.200[*]	.952	30	.188
Pre-test for Control Group	.147	30	.099	.951	30	.182

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the results presented in Table 1, the normality of the pre-test data can be assessed by examining the Shapiro-Wilk column. The significance scores for the experimental group and the control group were 0.188 and 0.182, respectively, both based on a sample size of 30 students per group. Consequently, it can be concluded that the data in both groups follow a normal distribution, and the levels of speaking proficiency are equivalent. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the significance values (0.188 > 0.05) for the experimental group and (0.182 > 0.05) for the control group are greater than the chosen significance level of 0.05. Next, Table 2 displays the results of the normality test conducted on the post-test data.

Table 2. The Normality Test of Post Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Post-test of Experimental Group	.126	30	.200[*]	.950	30	.171
Post-test of Control Group	.148	30	.092	.955	30	.230

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

In Table 2, the Shapiro-Wilk column provides insights into the normality of the distributions. The significance values for the experimental group and the control group were 0.171 and 0.230, respectively, based on a sample size of 30 students per group. Both groups exhibit significance values greater than 0.05, indicating that their data distributions are approximately normal and have equivalent proficiency levels.

The homogeneity test aims to assess the similarity in sample characteristics between the experimental and control groups. In this study, the researchers employed Lavene's test in SPSS version 22 for Windows to examine the homogeneity of the tests. The findings of the homogeneity test are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Test of Homogeneity of Variances on Pre-Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
Pre_test			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.836	1	58	.181

In Table 3, we can see that the Significance value of pre-test score was 0.181 > 0.05. It means that the pre-test had similar variances or homogenous. Meanwhile, the result of homogeneity test of the post-test is shown on Table 4.

Table 4. Test of Homogeneity of Variances on Post-Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
Post_test			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.913	1	58	.343

As shown in Table 4, we can see that the Significance value of post-test score was 0.343 > 0.05. It means that the post-test of this study had similar variances or homogenous. From the normality and homogeneity analysis of the sample, it can be concluded that the data were normally distributed and at an equivalent level.

The hypothesis testing was carried out using the independent sample t-test using SPSS version 22 for Windows to prove whether the mean scores of the two groups were significantly different. If the t-value is less than 0.05, it means that Ha is accepted and Ho is rejected. This shows that effectiveness is found. Conversely, if the t-value is more than 0.05, it means that Ha is rejected, and Ho is accepted. It can be concluded that effectiveness is not found. The results obtained from the experimental group and the control group on the pre-test is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The Result of Independent Sample t-test on Pre-test

	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.836	.181	-.106	58	.916	-.267	2.527	-5.325	4.792
Equal variances not assumed			-.106	56.171	.916	-.267	2.527	-5.329	4.792

Header spanning: **Independent Samples Test (Pre-test)** / t-test for Equality of Means

In Table 5 we can see that the significance value (Sig. (2-tailed)) is more than 0.05, 0.916 < 0.05. Thus, the Ho is accepted, but the Ha is rejected. It affirms that there is no difference in mean of post-test scores between experimental class and control class before doing the treatment. Furthermore, in Table 6 we can see the result of the test on the Post Test.

Table 6. The Result of Independent Sample t-test on Post-test

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	26.874	.000	3.281	58	.002	6.80000	2.07285	2.65074	10.94926
Equal variances not assumed			3.281	39.530	.002	6.80000	2.07285	2.60906	10.99094

Header spanning: **Independent Samples Test** / t-test for Equality of Means

It is shown in Table 6 that the significance value (Sig. (2-tailed)) is lower than 0.05, 0.002 < 0.05. Therefore, the Ho is rejected, but the Ha is accepted. It affirms that there is a difference in mean of post-test scores between experimental class and control class.

The researchers gave a pre-test to the two groups to determine the students' speaking ability before the researchers gave the treatment. In the experimental group, the initial test was in the form of an oral test on narrative text, the researchers assessed it using the Analytical Scoring rubric. The researchers calculated the pre-test scores for the experimental group and the control group as a comparison between the two class averages. The results of the pre-test scores of the experimental group is presented on Table 7:

Table 7. The Result of Descriptive Statistic on Pre-test

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Experimental Group (X MIPA 7)	30	48.00	80.00	61.2000	1.61772	8.860
Control Group (X MIPA 6)	30	44.00	80.00	61.4667	1.94152	10.634
Valid N (listwise)	60					

Table 7 shows the pre-test results of each class. On the experimental group, the mean score is 61.20 with a total of 30 students. The minimum score is 48 and the maximum score is 80; while the standard deviation is 8.860. On the other hand, the control group obtained mean score of 61.46 with a total of 30 students. The minimum score is 44 and the maximum score is 80; while the standard deviation is 10.634. The results of the analysis show that the experimental group and the control group have almost similar performance in the Pre-test.

After conducting the pre-test, the researchers conducted a post-test on the experimental group and the control group to determine the differences in the achievement of speaking proficiency after being given treatment. The test used was an oral test of narrative text but by using different treatments in the two groups. The experimental group was taught using the Story Completion Technique and the control group which was taught using the Storytelling Technique. The researchers assess their speaking proficiency by adopting the Analytical Scoring by Brown (2004). The rubric covering aspects of pronunciation, grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The researchers calculated the post-test scores for the experimental group and the control group to compare the means of the two classes. The results of the post-test scores of the experimental group and the control group are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. The Result of Descriptive Statistic on Post-test

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Experimental Group	30	60.00	80.00	68.1333	.82453	4.516
Control Group	30	44.00	80.00	61.3333	1.90180	10.416
Valid N (listwise)	60					

Table 8 shows the results of post-test for each class. On the experimental group the mean score is 68.13 with a total of 30 students. The minimum score is 60, and the maximum score is 80, while the standard deviation is 4.516. On the contrary side, the control group obtained mean score of 61.33 with a total of 30 students. The minimum score is 44, and the maximum score is 80, while the standard deviation is 10,416. The results of the analysis show that the experimental group and the control group have different achievement.

The researchers use N-Gain to determine the increase in students' speaking ability which is measured based on the aspect according to the scoring rubric. It calculated with computer by using SPSS version 22 for window. The results obtained from the experimental group and the control group is shown in Table 9.

Table 9. The Result of N-Gain Score

Groups	Descriptive		
	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Experimental Class	0.3938	0.18	0.58
Control Class	0.2123	0.08	0.33

Based on the results of the N-gain score test calculation in Table 9, it shows that the average N-gain score for the experimental class (Story Completion Technique) is 0.39, which is included in the moderate category. The minimum N-gain score of 0.18 and the maximum of 0.58. Meanwhile, the average N-gain score for the control class (Storytelling Technique) is 0.21 which is included in the low category. The minimum N-gain score of 0.08 and the maximum of 0.33. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of Story Completion Technique is significantly effective in improving the English-speaking proficiency of high school students in Malang, East Java Province, Indonesia.

DISCUSSION

In addressing the research questions concerning the efficacy of the Story Completion Technique in enhancing students' speaking proficiency, data was collected based on participants' speaking test scores. The collected data revealed a distinction between the experimental group and the control group, as explicated in the findings. The Independent sample t-test demonstrated a significance value of 0.002, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the Story Completion Technique significantly contributes to the improvement of students' speaking proficiency. By employing the Story Completion Technique, students actively engage and demonstrate heightened interest in the learning process, as they can express their ideas through developing stories based on their imaginations. This is in line with Tanjung and Fitri (2020) which assert that the Story Completion technique is an enjoyable teaching method that fosters students' confidence in expressing ideas in spoken English. Thus, the current study findings corroborate previous research findings.

Furthermore, the researchers contends that students instructed using the Story Completion technique achieve better speaking scores compared to those who are not exposed to this method. The researchers maintain that employing the Story Completion Technique is an effective approach for teaching speaking in the classroom. Aligning with the present study's results, Aufa et al. (2018) conducted a similar investigation on the impact of the Story Completion Technique on students' speaking skills, wherein drama techniques were found to enhance students' speaking abilities. Therefore, the conclusion drawn from this study is that the experimental group, subjected to the Story Completion Technique, experienced greater improvement in their speaking proficiency.

To demonstrate the significant differences between the two groups, the researchers employed an independent sample t-test, thereby accepting the alternative hypothesis (Ha). The researchers concludes that the Story Completion Technique significantly contributes to enhancing students' speaking proficiency and posits it as an effective method for teaching speaking. These findings align with the research conducted by Akramah (2019). Akramah's study employed independent sample t-test analysis, revealing a statistically significant difference between the performance of the two groups, with the experimental group achieving higher scores in the speaking post-test.

Ultimately, the findings of this study indicate that students exhibit a positive attitude towards the utilization of the Story Completion Technique in the speaking class. These activities effectively enhance oral skills, provide a platform for students to express their ideas, and bolster confidence in speaking English. Widyawati's research (2017) also supports these findings, suggesting that the application of the Story Completion Technique positively impacts students' speaking performance, particularly in interactive communication. Additionally, researchers contend that this impact heightens teachers' awareness of diverse needs and preferences, thereby encouraging them to adopt the appropriate instructional approach for implementing storytelling activities using the Story Completion Technique in the speaking classroom.

In this study, the researchers investigated the efficacy of the Story Completion Technique in improving the speaking ability of tenth-grade high school students. The researchers anticipated that students' speaking proficiency would improve after receiving treatment using the Story Completion Technique. The study's results were concluded by comparing the mean values of the experimental group and the control group.

Based on these findings, this study aligns with previous research discussed in the previous chapter. Furthermore, the research questions posed in this study have been addressed. This research offers several benefits for students' communicative competence. Therefore, the findings of this study align with the theory proposed by Hamsia (2018), which posits that the Story Completion Technique is an effective strategy for boosting students' self-confidence by providing opportunities to freely express their ideas through speaking.

However, this study also possesses certain limitations, particularly in implementing the Story Completion Technique via synchronous online activities. Commencing the learning process requires all students to attend the Zoom Meeting promptly, yet some students occasionally join the class late due to network issues, resulting in a delayed start. Additionally, there were a few students who seemed less enthusiastic after joining the online meeting room. These students may harbour apprehension about making mistakes and feel embarrassed about speaking English in front of their peers. Consequently, further research is warranted to address these weaknesses, including improvements in time allocation, better classroom management, and enhanced motivation techniques for students in English-speaking learning.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of employing the Story Completion Technique to enhance the speaking skills of students in a public senior high school in Indonesia. The researchers collected data by comparing the average post-test scores of speaking ability between the experimental group and the control group. The results indicated that the experimental group achieved an average score of 68.13, while the control group scored 61.33. These findings suggest that students instructed using the Story Completion Technique exhibited better speaking performance than those taught using the Storytelling Technique.

The analysis of students' speaking proficiency through hypothesis testing revealed an Independent Significance value of 0.002, which is smaller than the significance level of 0.05. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) was accepted, while the null hypothesis (Ho) was rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that the utilization of the Story Completion Technique significantly impacts students' speaking proficiency compared to the use of the Storytelling Technique. Based on the research, it is evident that the Story Completion Technique is highly effective in improving students' speaking proficiency. This approach provides students with the opportunity to freely express their ideas by narrating stories using their imagination. Consequently, it encourages active student participation in the learning process, particularly during synchronous online activities. Moreover, the Story Completion Technique creates a lively atmosphere and fosters student enjoyment in learning activities.

Teachers are encouraged to integrate the Story Completion Technique into their speaking classes, as it enhances students' enjoyment of English language learning. Researchers recommend employing the Story Completion Technique to challenge students and provide them with opportunities to communicate based on their own ideas. This approach can boost students' motivation to learn and stimulate their spoken English skills. Additionally, teachers should ensure the provision of interesting stories to support the learning process. It is also advisable to provide feedback to students after they have spoken, especially for those facing difficulties in speaking. Furthermore, teachers should exert efforts to motivate students in English speaking classes. Lastly, it is hoped that sufficient time will be

allocated for English lessons, enabling teachers to optimize the teaching and learning process in the classroom, particularly during synchronous activities.

Future researchers can utilize this study as a reference for conducting further research in the same field. They are encouraged to address the limitations observed in this study, particularly in terms of time allocation. The researchers hopes that future studies will yield more optimal results within a reasonably short time frame. Moreover, future researchers are encouraged to prepare meticulously to explore additional variables for investigation in subsequent research endeavors.

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