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INCREASING STUDENTS SPEAKING SKILL USING LITERATURE: CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH IN MAN 1 PROBOLINGGO

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan langkah pembelajaran yang efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa melalui penggunaan naskah sastra. Penelitian ini melibatkan 13 siswa dari kelas XB dan dilakukan dalam dua siklus dengan mengikuti model Kemmis dan McTaggart, yang terdiri dari perencanaan, tindakan, pengamatan, dan refleksi. Data kuantitatif diperoleh dari skor pretest dan post-test. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa terjadi peningkatan signifikan dalam kinerja berbicara siswa, dengan persentase siswa yang mencapai nilai lulus minimum (≥ 75) meningkat dari 15,4% menjadi 53,8%, dan nilai rata-rata meningkat dari 68,8 menjadi 74,6. Pembelajaran berbasis sastra, melalui aktivitas seperti membaca puisi, mendengarkan, dan mendiskusikan tema lagu berhasil meningkatkan kepercayaan diri, kelancaran, dan motivasi siswa. Temuan ini menekankan bahwa integrasi sastra dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris menciptakan pengalaman belajar yang bermakna dan menyenangkan yang secara efektif meningkatkan kemampuan komunikatif siswa.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajaran Berbasis Literatur, Keterampilan Berbicara, Motivasi, Penelitian Tindakan Kelas, Kompetensi Komunikatif

Abstract

This study aims to find effective learning steps in improving students' speaking skills through the use of literary texts. This study involved 13 students from class XB and was conducted in two cycles following the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which consists of planning, action, observation, and reflection. Quantitative data were obtained from pretest and posttest scores. The results showed that there was a significant improvement in students' speaking performance, with the percentage of students achieving a minimum passing score (≥ 75) increasing from 15.4% to 53.8%, and the average score increasing from 68.8 to 74.6. Literature-based learning, through activities such as reading poetry, listening, and discussing song themes successfully increased students' confidence, fluency, and motivation. These findings emphasize that the integration of literature in English teaching creates a meaningful and enjoyable learning experience that effectively improves students' communicative abilities.

Keywords: Literature-Based Learning, Speaking Skill, Motivation, Classroom Action Research, Communicative Competence

INTRODUCTION

In the context of English language education, speaking remains one of the most essential yet challenging skills to develop, particularly among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners in Indonesia. The ability to speak English is one of the important competencies that must be mastered by senior high school students as part of 21st century global communication skills. However, in reality, the speaking skills of students in many schools, including MAN 1 Probolinggo, are still relatively low. Initial observations show that most students still feel reluctant and lack confidence to speak English. They tend to be passive, afraid of making mistakes, and have difficulty developing ideas and using vocabulary spontaneously in real communication contexts. This condition is in line with the findings of several recent studies which confirm that low speaking skills are often caused by a lack of learning activities that

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provide opportunities for authentic interaction and stimulate natural language production (Khoir et al., 2024; Yudiarta et al., 2025).

One alternative that is considered effective in overcoming this problem is to utilize literature in speaking lessons. Literature such as short stories, songs, or narrative texts can serve as a context-rich learning medium and encourage students to participate actively through activities such as listening song, retelling, and discussion. This approach not only helps students understand the use of language in a communicative context, but also fosters motivation and courage to speak. Utami and Mahardika states “Literature-based instruction provides learners with authentic exposure to language and culture, promoting deeper emotional engagement and contextual understanding that enhance communicative competence” (Utami & Mahardika, 2023). Meanwhile, Nusa Nipa shows that the storytelling method in classroom action research (CAR) has been successful in significantly improving students' fluency and confidence (Nusa Nipa, n.d.).

Through the Classroom Action Research approach, teachers can systematically innovate literature-based learning through four stages, namely planning, action, observation, and reflection. This model allows teachers to identify problems directly in the classroom, apply literature-based strategies, observe the results, and improve their actions in the next cycle. A number of studies in Indonesia, such as those conducted by Yudiarta et al. prove that drama-based learning and show-and-tell in CAR format can improve students' fluency, pronunciation, and interaction in speaking (Yudiarta et al., 2025). In line with this, Lady et al. emphasizes that “role play as a literature-based technique encourages students to express ideas creatively, increases participation, and significantly improves their speaking performance through experiential learning” (Lady et al., 2024).

With this background, this study aims to improve the speaking skills of students at MAN 1 Probolinggo through the application of literature-based activities in English language learning. Specifically, this study seeks to determine the extent to which the application of storytelling, retelling, and dramatization activities in two action cycles can improve aspects of student speaking, such as fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary use, and interaction. In addition, this study also aims to describe the responses, motivation, and obstacles experienced by students during the literature-based learning process.

Theoretically, this study is supported by several key concepts. First, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach emphasizes the importance of real interaction and communication in language learning. Literature provides an authentic context for students to practice communicative speaking. Second, the literature-based approach theory explains that literary texts can be used to practice language skills through creative activities such as drama, role-play, and storytelling, which are effective in developing students' communicative competence (Khoir et al., 2024; Lady et al., 2024; Nusa Nipa, n.d.; Utami & Mahardika, 2023). Third, the Classroom Action Research framework (Kemmis & McTaggart) provides a strong methodological basis for making continuous improvements in learning practices. Finally, affective-motivational theory shows that literature-based learning can reduce speaking anxiety and increase learning motivation because it provides a fun and meaningful learning experience (Nusa Nipa, n.d.; Yudiarta et al., 2025).

METHOD

This study used the classroom action research (CAR) method with a cycle model consisting of four stages, namely planning, implementation of actions, observation, and reflection. This cycle model was chosen because it allowed teachers and researchers to collaborate directly to improve the students' speaking learning process in a continuous and reflective manner. Each cycle involved several meetings, with the overall duration of the research being around six to eight meetings. In each cycle, activities focused on the use of literary texts such as short stories, poetry, or song as teaching materials linked to speaking activities such as role play, retelling, and discussion. This approach is considered appropriate for improving speaking skills because literary material provides a rich and meaningful context for students to communicate (Kamarudin & Mat Noor, 2024). Moreover, integrating literature-based learning into CAR aligns with the pedagogical idea that authentic texts promote contextualized and meaningful interaction. Alruwili and Elsayy highlight that story-based

instruction offers learners natural exposure to language, provides opportunities for authentic oral communication, and fosters fluency, accuracy, and confidence (Alruwili & Elsayy, 2024). Thus, by incorporating short stories and dramatization activities, the research aimed to provide engaging contexts that motivate students to speak more actively and spontaneously.

The research participants consisted of 13 students from grade XB at MAN 1 Probolinggo, reflecting diverse speaking abilities. Initially, only 40% could speak fluently, indicating the need for effective intervention.

This research used action research with pretest and post-test as the main instruments to collect the data. The purpose of the test was to find out whether students' speaking skills improved after being taught through literature. The pretest was given before the treatment to measure the students' initial speaking ability. After several meetings using literature-based learning activities, the post-test was given to see the improvement. Both tests used the same speaking topics and criteria. The speaking test was assessed based on five aspects: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension. The scores from both tests were compared to determine the effect of the treatment.

The data from the pretest and post-test were analysed quantitatively. The students' scores were calculated to find the mean score of each test. Then, the results were compared to see whether there was any improvement in students' speaking performance after the treatment. To find out if the difference was significant, a paired sample t-test was used. If the p-value was less than 0.05, it indicated that literature-based learning had a significant effect on improving students' speaking skills.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Pretest Results and Analysis

The pretest and post-test targeted a score of 75 as the minimum passing grade. In the pretest conducted before the treatment, 13 students participated, with the following results:

Table 1 Pretest Results

Number	Number of students	Total score obtained
1.	2	75
2.	5	70
3.	6	65

The table shows that 2 students scored 75, 5 students scored 70, and 6 students scored 65. The percentage is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Number of Students}}{\text{Total Students}} \times 100\%$$

1. For students who scored 75
 - Number of students = 2
 - Total students = 13
 - Calculation = $(2 / 13) \times 100\% = 15.4 \%$
2. For students who scored 70
 - Number of students = 5
 - Total students = 13
 - Calculation = $(5 / 13) \times 100\% = 38.5 \%$
3. For students who scored 65
 - Number of students = 6
 - Total students = 13
 - Calculation = $(6 / 13) \times 100\% = 46.1 \%$

The data reveal that none of the students scored above 75, and most students (84.6%) scored below the minimum passing grade. This indicates that students' speaking skills were still low at the beginning of the study. They struggled to express ideas fluently and had limited vocabulary and pronunciation accuracy.

1. Post-test results and analysis

After the treatment using literature-based learning activities, the post-test was conducted with the same 13 students. The results are as follows:

Table.2 Post Test Result

Number	Number of students	Total score obtained
1.	4	80
2.	3	75
3.	6	70

The table shows that 4 students scored 80, 3 students scored 75, and 6 students scored 70. The percentage is calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Number of Students}}{\text{Total Students}} \times 100\%$$

1. For students who scored 80
 - Number of students = 4
 - Total students = 13
 - Calculation $(4 / 13) \times 100 \% = 30.8 \%$
2. For students who scored 75
 - Number of students = 3
 - Total students = 13
 - Calculation $(3 / 13) \times 100 \% = 23.1 \%$
3. For students who scored 70
 - Number of students = 6
 - Total students = 13
 - Calculation $(6 / 13) \times 100 \% = 46.1 \%$

From the results above, 7 out of 13 students (53.8%) achieved the minimum passing grade (≥ 75). This shows a clear improvement compared to the pretest, where only 15.4% of students reached the target. The mean score increased from 68.8 in the pretest to 74.6 in the post-test, with an average gain of 5.8 points. This improvement indicates that literature-based learning activities, such as using poems and short texts, helped students become more confident and fluent in speaking. They were more active, expressive, and motivated during speaking sessions, showing that literature can effectively enhance students' speaking ability.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to determine whether literature-based learning could improve students' speaking skills. The present study sought to explore how literature-based learning could enhance students' speaking skills in the context of EFL education at MAN 1 Probolinggo. The quantitative results indicated a clear improvement: students achieving the minimum passing grade (≥ 75) increased from 15.4 % in the pretest to 53.8 % in the post-test, and the mean score rose from 68.8 to 74.6, demonstrating an average gain of 5.8 points. These findings suggest that the integration of literary materials such as poems and song into speaking lessons substantially contributed to students' progress in fluency, vocabulary mastery, and confidence.

This improvement can be attributed to the active engagement required in literature-based tasks. Activities like reading aloud, discussing themes, and retelling stories invite students to express ideas, emotions, and interpretations verbally. This aligns with the view of Utami and Mahardika (2023), who argue that literature-based instruction provides authentic exposure to language and culture, deepens emotional engagement, and develops learners' communicative competence (Utami & Mahardika, 2023) Through such authentic contexts, students are not merely practicing mechanical language use but experiencing communication as a meaningful,

human interaction — a key principle of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach.

The findings of this research also echo Fitria Dewi Navisa et al. who revealed that literature-based strategies in higher education foster creativity, critical thinking, and linguistic expression across all language skills (Fitria Dewi Navisa et al., 2025). Their study emphasized that literary texts stimulate deeper reflection and vocabulary acquisition because learners interpret language rather than memorize it mechanically (Fitria Dewi Navisa et al., 2025). Similarly, in this study, students at MAN 1 Probolinggo demonstrated richer lexical choices and more coherent speech after being exposed to poems and narrative texts, indicating that literature served as a scaffold for both linguistic and cognitive development.

The progression observed in the posttest results also supports the perspective of Rizqiyanti who found that targeted instructional strategies, such as modeling, peer discussion, and contextualized speaking practice, are crucial for developing oral fluency among EFL beginners (Rizqiyanti, 2023). In the present study, literature-based activities created precisely these conditions: students practiced speaking within structured yet creative settings, combining repetition, imitation, and improvisation. This process fostered automaticity and confidence, both essential for fluent speech.

Another factor contributing to improvement is motivation. According to Amrina and Nafiah, there is a strong correlation between reading interest and speaking performance in EFL learners, as engagement with texts enhances both vocabulary knowledge and the willingness to speak (Amrina & Nafiah, n.d.). In this study, the inclusion of poems and literary discussions increased students' interest and emotional involvement. They reported feeling more motivated because literary texts allowed them to connect language learning with personal experiences and imagination. This emotional engagement reduced speaking anxiety and encouraged participation, key determinants of oral success in EFL contexts.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings reinforce the literature-based communicative learning model, which integrates aesthetic and affective dimensions into communicative pedagogy. While traditional CLT emphasizes function and interaction, literature adds emotional depth, context, and authenticity. As a result, students not only improve their linguistic accuracy but also their expressive ability and confidence in using language creatively. This holistic growth mirrors the view of Lazar (1993) and Collie & Slater (1987), who argued that literature encourages communicative and cultural competence by providing authentic, meaningful, and emotionally resonant language experiences.

Furthermore, classroom observation data revealed behavioral changes during the action cycles: initially passive students began participating actively, volunteering to speak, and showing noticeable improvements in pronunciation and intonation. This behavioral shift highlights how literature can act as an affective catalyst, transforming attitudes toward speaking from fear to enjoyment.

However, despite these positive outcomes, 46.1 % of students still scored below the minimum passing grade after the intervention. This indicates that while literature-based instruction effectively raises the overall performance, some learners may require additional scaffolding — such as pronunciation drills, vocabulary enrichment, or guided practice — to achieve mastery. As Rizqiyanti, Utami, and Mahardika suggest, differentiated instruction and continuous feedback are crucial for ensuring that all learners benefit equally from innovative methods (Rizqiyanti, 2023; Utami & Mahardika, 2023).

In conclusion, the discussion confirms that integrating literature into English speaking instruction not only improved linguistic skills but also enhanced students' motivation and confidence. The findings resonate with contemporary pedagogical trends that emphasize contextualized, learner-centered, and affectively engaging approaches in EFL classrooms. By incorporating literary texts into classroom action research cycles, teachers can create dynamic and meaningful learning environments that cultivate both communicative competence and creative expression. Future research may extend this work by including larger samples, analyzing specific speaking subskills (fluency, accuracy, pronunciation), and integrating literature with digital media to sustain students' engagement and long-term language development.

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CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of literature-based learning effectively improved students' speaking skills. This is evidenced by the increase in the number of students who achieved the minimum passing grade (≥ 75), from 15.4% in the pretest to 53.8% in the posttest. Furthermore, the average score rose from 68.8 to 74.6, showing an overall gain of 5.8 points.

This improvement indicates that literature-based learning activities, such as listening and discussing literary texts, had a positive impact on students' speaking performance. Through these activities, students became more active in expressing their ideas, feelings, and interpretations orally, which enhanced their fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and self-confidence.

The findings also reinforce the idea that literary works can serve as effective tools in language learning because they provide authentic, meaningful, and emotionally engaging contexts for communication. Thus, literature is not only a medium for cultural appreciation but also a pedagogical tool that supports the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. Moreover, the results suggest the development of a Literature-Based Communicative Learning framework, which integrates the aesthetic and affective elements of literature into communicative classroom activities to promote creative, contextual, and meaningful language learning experiences.

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