



Utilizing Narrative Text as a Means of Incorporating Literature into English Language Teaching to Enhance Students' Listening and Speaking Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the efficacy of using narrative texts to enhance students' speaking and listening skills in English Language Teaching (ELT). Employing a qualitative descriptive method, the research involved interviews with English teachers and two junior high school students, investigating the integration of narrative texts in ELT for bolstering listening and speaking proficiencies. The primary objective was to identify obstacles encountered by educators and students when employing narrative texts as a tool to cultivate speaking and listening skills. Findings indicate that integrating narrative texts presents a promising pedagogical approach, fostering collaborative learning, critical thinking, and enhanced linguistic abilities. Despite challenges, such as instructional refinement and overcoming learning obstacles, this research underscores the immense potential of narrative texts in advancing students' language proficiency. Sustained efforts in tailoring instructional strategies and providing support are crucial to maximizing the benefits of utilizing narrative texts in ELT, paving the way for improved language acquisition.

INTRODUCTION

The use of literature works as learning media is increasingly used. Literature works provide convenience in improving students' language skills. According to Wahya et al. (2023), it can be argued that literature can help students become more motivated to read, write, and speak better in order to succeed academically. The use of literature works gives another way in learning which then has an impact in increasing student interest. Using literature in the language classroom gives students the chance to interact with a broad range of important texts that are full of creative possibilities (Xerri & Agius, 2012). A good way to increase student interest in the classroom could be by using literature (Vural, 2013). The use of literature in the classroom has the power to hold students' interest and stimulate their curiosity about the subject.

Using literature into lessons offers an exciting and captivating approach to investigate different ideas and promotes a deeper comprehension of the subject matter. Through the integration of captivating narratives with academic content, teachers can establish a more dynamic and interactive learning environment that

inspires students to take an active role in their education. Yadav (2014) states that students can improve their critical and analytical thinking abilities, their capacity for autonomous decision-making, and their ability to present their own arguments and justifications with logical examples from literary texts by reading a literary text.

A narrative text describes an event, or a series of events, that happened to an individual or a group of individuals, as though the author lived with or inside the main characters (Sallabas, 2013). A narrative text functions as used for narrating the events that transpire, whether singular or sequential, within the experiences of a single person or a group of people (Kreminski et al., 2019). Because of the narrative structure, readers can fully immerse themselves in the story, feeling as though the author is a part of or living inside the main characters. By using this immersive technique, the author presents a realistic and present illustration of the events, allowing readers to empathize with the characters and learn more about the plot as it develops. Narrative texts are often used in language learning because they can be a media for promoting language skills contextually.

The use of narrative texts in English Language Teaching (ELT) is essential because they offer a captivating setting for language learning. The function of narrative text is to create captivating resources that hold students' attention, resulting in a more pleasurable and productive educational experience. Furthermore, narrative texts aid in the development of language abilities such as vocabulary growth, comprehension, and the capacity to comprehend and construct coherent narratives. Another function of the narrative text is to make the reader's actual or fictional experience fun in various ways, with a generic structure of orientation, complexity, resolution, and reorientation (Setiyaningsih, 2013). Students learn about various writing styles and cultural quirks in addition to improving their language skills through the study of various narratives. Basically, narrative texts are used to introduce reading skills and techniques or to give students the opportunity to write their own narrative texts, which have an impact on their writing skills. However, as time goes by, narrative texts are used by teachers to introduce listening and speaking skills, as the researcher found when making observations to write this article. The ability to listen to ESL is one of the integrated abilities junior high school students should have (Kirana, 2016).

Friska (2018) conducted a thorough research on this issue at MTs Jamiyyah Islamiyyah Pondok Aren. Through project-based reading, this research focuses on using narrative text as a media for introducing reading skills to students. According to this research, when project-based learning was used in the classroom with narrative text, students were more engaged and enthusiastic about reading activities. In a similar vein, Listyani (2019) also explored this topic with thorough research, but her study focuses on using narrative text to promote writing skills through the visual image method. Listyani (2019) found that pictures and comic strips are very useful in helping students write narratives. Furthermore, Dhillon et al. (2020) also have contributed to this research issue by utilizing narrative text as a medium to introduce reading skills,

particularly skimming techniques. In this study, it was found that reading narrative texts with skimming techniques can improve students' ability to read.

Muchtar et al. (2020) conducted comparable research. Their research focuses on the use of narrative text as a medium for teaching writing skills. This study found that using the picture and picture learning model increased students' writing skills, particularly when producing narrative texts. Additionally, Laraswati et al. (2018) conducted study on this topic. Their study focused on pupils' narrative reading abilities utilizing picture books as media. Laraswati et al. discovered that incorporating pictures of books for student discussion increased students' enthusiasm in reading. The current study's focus differs from the previous five. This study focuses on the use of narrative text as a media to enhance listening and speaking skills.

The main aim of the study is to show the utilization of narrative texts to promote students' speaking and listening abilities in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT). Furthermore, the study aims to recognize and comprehend the difficulties that students and educators face during the course of the learning process when using narrative texts as a teaching tool to promote speaking and listening abilities. The researchers hope to make a significant contribution to the field of ELT with this study.

METHODS

This research used a qualitative descriptive method by conducting interviews with English teachers and 2 students in junior high schools regarding narrative text as literary integration in ELT for promoting student's listening and speaking skills. Pathak et al., (2013) stated that qualitative research focuses on understanding research questions as humanist or idealistic approaches. Qualitative methods are used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviours and interactions. It generates non-numerical data. By conducting interviews, it can provide some information and provide personal detailed information. McGehee (2012) claimed that the interview method works well when the researcher needs to find out about the experiences and opinions of the informant, or when the topic of study is issue-oriented. Apart from that, the data in this study was also obtained from direct observations at one of the MTsN located in Batu City. Thus, the context of this research focuses on the methods used by English teachers to improve students' listening and speaking abilities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An object is any entity that is referred to by a sign or classified into one of three categories of objects (Dawkins, 2020). An icon is a sign that closely resembles its reference. An index is a sign that signifies a connection between the representation and the object in terms of events and presence. A symbol is a sign that is widely recognized and accepted through mutual agreement.

The Implementation of Narrative Text as a Media to Promote Listening and Speaking Skills

Promoting students' speaking and listening skills in English Language Teaching (ELT) through narrative text is not an easy task. It requires the preparation of methods by educators to ensure effective and enjoyable delivery of the material to learners. One English teacher at MTsN in Batu City, has introduced a highly unique method to enhance the listening and speaking abilities of her students. A multisensory approach involving the use of audiovisuals and storytelling lies at the core of her approach. A learning process that incorporates both visual and auditory elements—sound and images—into one medium is known as audio-visual media (Fabriliyani, 2019).

A teaching and learning strategy that effectively combines visual and auditory components into a single educational media is known as audio-visual media. This strategy makes use of both sound and visuals to improve the quality of the learning process overall and give students a more dynamic and interesting platform. Through the use of multisensory approaches, teachers hope to accommodate a range of learning styles and foster a deeper comprehension of the material by combining visual aids with corresponding audio content. Videos that combine audio and visual elements facilitate better comprehension; the visual component in particular helps students grasp the context more fully (Kartika et al., 2023). Nurizmawati et al., (2015) argues that it is useful for teachers to be able to visualize the content through videos, as it allows them to show students specific motor skills, facial expressions, and environments. Storytelling is the act of communicating with an audience through the use of vocalization, dramatic and mental imagery, and a narrative structure (Lucarevschi, 2016).

The craft of storytelling entails using vocalization to establish a personal and expressive communication channel with the audience or in this case the students. Storytellers, which in this case are teachers, are able to arouse emotions and paint a clear mental representation for their audience by using dramatic and mental imagery. A captivating and memorable storytelling experience is enhanced by the narrative structure that is inherent in storytelling. This structure not only captivates the students but also makes it easier for ideas to be organized coherently. Providing storytelling to students in the classroom has several advantages, such as lowering their affective filter, boosting their creativity and collaboration, and improving their verbal and listening comprehension (Atta-Alla, 2012).

"Before I start my class, I usually give the students an ice-breaking activity because they always come in with different moods, especially for my afternoon class. So, to make them more enthusiastic about learning, I lighten the mood with an ice-breaking activity".

"I employ a gradual method, starting from introducing the narrative text, then dissecting its structure together, followed by group analysis. What's the goal? It's to prevent them from being taken aback and assuming that narrative text is difficult right away. Just imagine if I

were to immediately present them with theory without any introductory insight into the material beforehand”.

Before commencing the learning process, the teacher conducts an ice-breaking activity to foster a positive learning atmosphere and prepare the students for subsequent learning activities. Ice-breaking is a useful activity to relieve student anxiety and learning saturation and make the classroom more enjoyable and conducive before starting core activities (Kasimova, 2022). There are various advantages to holding icebreaker activities prior to a lesson. First of all, it contributes to the development of a welcoming and positive classroom environment that strengthens students' sense of community. Second, icebreakers can help to defuse tension and create a more laid-back atmosphere that is ideal for learning. In the end least, these exercises are a useful way to catch students' attention and get them mentally ready for the lesson that will follow. Rezki et al., (2022) claimed that icebreakers can improve recall and capture skills, promote group cohesion, and raise student attention spans. To initiate the teaching, the teacher starts with Building Knowledge of The Field (BKOF) by providing both a picture and a video regarding "Arif and the Apple Tree" to be observed and analyzed by the students. Providing video and audio aims to train the students' listening skills and familiarize them further with listening comprehension, thereby facilitating their ability to respond to questions related to social function, text structure, and linguistic elements. Subsequently, the session involves the Modeling of The Text (MOT), where both students and the teacher engage in discussions concerning the story's content, text structure, linguistic elements, and moral message embedded within the narrative text.

"I've designed this group session as a platform for them to build confidence by presenting the outcomes of their discussions in front of the class”.

The next session is the Joint Construction of The Text (JCOT), in which the teacher divides several groups to assist students in observing, analyzing, and drawing conclusions about the moral message within the narrative text and video titled “Jack and The Beanstalk,” which has been provided by the teacher using a Spider Map. The story mapping is a fundamental framework that aids in students' comprehension of the narrative story's orientation, complication, and resolution (Latifah & Rahmawati, 2019). The teacher allocates 10 minutes for discussion, followed by students exchanging their group discussion outcomes with other groups for alternating presentations in front of the class. Budiyanto et al., (2018) stated that through the presentations, students are given the opportunity to practice and hone their speaking skills and courage, which helps them become better public speakers. Presentations promote the development of proficient speaking skills by encouraging students to articulate ideas, arrange information coherently, and express ideas fluently. This activity can introduce speaking skills to students as they are required to retell or present the results of their discussions to other groups. The goal of JCOT is to actively involve students in the learning

process, enabling them to practice their speaking skills while receiving guidance and feedback from the teacher.

Independent Construction of The Text (ICOT) is the final session before concluding the learning process. In this session, students read the narrative text and watch the video titled "The Ugly Duckling," individually provided by the teacher for analysis using a Spider Map to draw conclusions regarding the moral message embedded within the text. A spider map is a visual tool used to help students organize and brainstorm ideas for narrative texts. It typically consists of a central concept or theme in the middle, connected to various branches representing different aspects of the story, such as characters, settings, events, and emotions. Following this, students exchange their analysis outcomes with their classmates seated nearby to acquire feedback regarding their analyses. This activity also aims to cultivate students' speaking skills through dialogue, encouraging them to respond to each other's comments to enrich the discussion. Incorporating dialogues into instruction not only enhances the linguistic backgrounds of EFL learners but also their cognitive capacities, improving their speaking and listening comprehension abilities (Simerabet, 2019).

"Due to the lack of adequate facilities in certain classes that rendered the audio unusable, I took on the role of a storyteller to substitute for the audio while also setting an example for the children on the proper way of speaking".

In addition to utilizing audio-visual methods, the teacher will employ the storytelling method to provide a direct example of how to execute effective speaking. By exposing students to a variety of languages and compelling, common situations, listening to stories allows teachers to recognize and enhance new vocabulary and sentence structures while also enhancing students' thinking and preparing them to eventually start speaking for themselves (Rahasya, 2017). The sequence of learning through storytelling methods does not differ significantly from the application of audio-visual techniques. Students still pay attention to what they hear directly from the teacher who narrates the story. Subsequently, they will be asked to retell the story.

The Difficulties during the Learning Process with Narrative Text as a Media to Promote Speaking and Listening Skills

Difficulties in the learning process are inevitable. Not only from the teacher's perspective, but students also experience difficulties during the learning process.

"As for the obstacles, maybe some facilities are broken and time is limited, especially on Fridays. So, sometimes each session is not optimal."

The teacher highlights attention to the difficulty of integrating audio-visual teaching techniques, identifying broken equipment in some classrooms as the main problem. Jannah et al. (2020) argues that courses promoting performance and satisfaction are interactive. This allows learners to see what kind of skills they learn and their application in the current research scenario. All these factors related to satisfaction relate to education and course design. The impact on the effortless integration of audio-visual aids for efficient instruction is the source of this challenge. The teacher makes the suggestion that, in order to maintain the continuity of audio-visual learning experiences, it may occasionally be necessary to switch classrooms with other classes in response to facility issues. This emphasizes how crucial properly maintained facilities are to the success of contemporary teaching approaches.

In spite of these obstacles, the teacher values audio-visual techniques and looks for workable ways to improve the classroom atmosphere. The time commitment needed by the teacher to use audio-visual and storytelling techniques is another significant challenge. This longer duration stems from the need to play the video several times in each class, as well as the delayed start of student engagement. The teacher observes that students frequently need more time to comprehend material, organize their ideas, and then participate in the lesson by recounting the video's narrative text. The teaching process becomes more complex due to the intricate nature of narrative comprehension and the requirement for thoughtful student engagement. The teacher acknowledges the pedagogical advantages of these approaches despite these time-related challenges, stressing the significance of giving students the required time for reflection and active engagement in order to improve their overall learning experience.

"We can listen to the audio without text, but it takes about 5 repetitions for us to become familiar and understand what the audio is about".

Difficulties are also experienced from the student perspective. One of the students interviewed revealed that overall the use of audio visual and storytelling methods is good, but sometimes it is difficult to focus on paying attention to the story that is being played on the screen or presented by the teacher. This disrupted focus is due to their own fellow students who sometimes do not follow the learning properly. Besides that, students need more effort to remember the storyline presented. This happens because students feel unfamiliar with the vocabulary used in the videos presented. Gilakjani & Sabouri (2016) states that many words have multiple meanings, and when they are not used correctly in the right contexts, students may become confused. Students need several repetitions of the video until they can finally familiarize themselves and understand the contents of the narrative text presented in audio-visual form. According to the students, they need at least three to five repetitions to understand the story. Even so, the students did not immediately get the whole retelling of the story right. In addition, the difficulties experienced by students are like difficulties in learning listening and speaking skills in general, such as difficulty in listening to the story that

is delivered then guessing the plot of the story and difficulty in composing words when retelling the story that has been delivered.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the findings of this study have underscored the promising pedagogical approach entailed in utilizing narrative text as a medium to augment speaking and listening skills. This approach not only presents a dynamic platform for language acquisition but also nurtures collaborative learning, critical thinking, and heightened linguistic capabilities. While challenges pertaining to facility issues and time allocation optimization need to be addressed for further efficacy, the utilization of narrative text as an instructional tool remains a potent catalyst for enhancing students' language proficiency. However, realizing its full potential mandates ongoing endeavors to refine instructional strategies and provide robust support to surmount various learning obstacles.

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