



## **Enhancing Students' Speaking Skill through the Show and Tell Technique**

**Marshela Tri Wardani \***

*Department of English Education, State Islamic Institute of (IAIN) Kediri, Indonesia*

### **ABSTRACT**

Speaking is critical for junior high school students alongside listening, reading, and writing. However, problems in teaching speaking, such as limited vocabulary and low participation rates, expectedly emerged as observed at an Islamic junior high school. This study explores the effectiveness of the "Show and Tell" method in improving students' speaking abilities through classroom action research (CAR). The research shows significant improvement in speaking skills across two cycles. In the first cycle, scores increased from 57.47 to 70.42, highlighting progress despite the initial challenges. Several modifications were done in the second cycle, such as using pictures instead of objects. This further boosted engagement and comprehension and raising the scores to 86.02. Based on the finding, this study underscores the value of innovative teaching methods like "Show and Tell" which has proven its effectiveness in enhancing students' speaking proficiency. It provides insights for educators who seek to improve language learning outcomes through student-centered approaches, fostering confidence and proficiency in communication skills.

*Keywords: speaking skills, show and tell technique, classroom action research (CAR)*

## Introduction

Speaking is one of the four crucial skills that junior high school students need to master, alongside listening, reading, and writing. This complex skill involves an interactive process of constructing meaning through producing, receiving, and processing information (Brown, 1994). Through speaking, students are expected to communicate and convey language meaning in both transactional and interpersonal spoken texts to engage with those around them. However, teaching and learning speaking skills often present significant challenges. Drawing from the researcher's experience as an English teacher at MTs. Ma'arif Bakung, several issues frequently arise during speaking classes. One of the main obstacles is a limited vocabulary. Students often struggle to find the right words to express their ideas, leading to frustration and reluctance to speak. Consequently, many students choose to remain silent rather than taking a risk of making mistakes.

Another major factor is the lack of students' participation. When the teachers ask questions, students often remain silent and hesitant to respond. Articulating responses can be slow, with students giving simple, short answers and long pauses. This hesitation is mainly due to a lack of confidence and fear of making errors in choosing the appropriate and correct vocabulary, pronouncing the words, or other aspects of speaking. These insecurities hinder them from actively participating in class, resulting in the decreased motivation and engagement in speaking activities. As the result, students do not enjoy the lessons and are less likely to participate actively. Given these challenges, there is an urgent need for engaging learning methods that can encourage students to speak and enhance their speaking abilities. To address these issues, the researcher utilized descriptive methods to provide a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the obstacles faced by students and the potential solutions. By describing the students' struggles with vocabulary and participation in detail, the researcher could identify specific areas where interventions were needed.

One promising method identified through this descriptive approach is the Show and Tell technique. Recently introduced at the school where the research was conducted, this method has shown potential to make speaking activities more enjoyable and interactive. The Show and Tell method involve students bringing an item to class and talking about it. This simple yet effective technique helps build students' confidence by providing them with a tangible focus for their speaking. It also helps expand their vocabulary as they describe and

discuss their chosen items. Additionally, the Show and Tell method creates a more dynamic and engaging classroom atmosphere, encouraging students to participate more actively and enjoy the learning process. By implementing the Show and Tell method, teachers can address the issues of limited vocabulary and lack of participation, thereby improving students' speaking skills. This method not only enhances students' ability to communicate effectively but also fosters a more positive and motivating learning environment. Through such innovative approaches, educators can help students overcome the challenges associated with speaking and enable them to become more confident and proficient speakers.

The significance of speaking proficiency in education has long been a focal point, as evidenced by various interpretations from scholars. This emphasis reflects the understanding that speaking is not merely a fundamental language skill but also essential for effective communication. Bailey (2005), provided an encompassing definition, describing speaking as "an interactive process of constructing meaning involving producing, receiving, and processing information, often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving, yet not entirely unpredictable". This definition underscores the dynamic and adaptable nature of speaking as a means of communication. Richard (2006) further elaborated on effective speaking, stressing the need for speakers to communicate fluently and accurately. Fluency ensures smooth, uninterrupted communication, while accuracy involves correct language use, crucial for clarity in educational settings. Brown (2007) added another dimension, asserting that true speaking competence is demonstrated through practical language use in real-life contexts. This perspective aligns with communicative language teaching, prioritizing practical usage over theoretical knowledge. Hammer (2007) complemented these views by highlighting the importance of understanding the context and functions of speaking events. He identifies two primary functions: transactional and interpersonal, both critical for effective communication across diverse situations. In Indonesian classrooms, teaching speaking skills presents challenges such as large class sizes and varying student proficiencies. To overcome these challenges, innovative and engaging teaching methods are essential to stimulate active participation and improve speaking abilities.

Among these methods, the Show and Tell approach stands out for its effectiveness in motivating students to speak and engage actively in learning. Barletta (2008, as cited in Mortlock, 2014) described it as a method where students share oral narratives about personal

objects or experiences, connecting classroom activities with their lives. Thornbury (2005) noted that the Show and Tell method prepares students for real-life speaking by giving them experience in presenting to classmates, enhancing confidence and public speaking skills. Moffet and Wagner (1976, as cited in Bohning, 1981) highlighted several benefits, including improved communication skills and a supportive classroom environment conducive to language learning. Enderweni's (2014) study on grade VIII students at SMP Pembaharuan Purworejo demonstrated the effectiveness of the Show and Tell technique in enhancing speaking skills, affirming its potential in English teaching and learning processes.

Further, the literature underscores the importance of speaking skills and the challenges in teaching them in Indonesian classrooms. The Show and Tell method emerge as a promising approach to address these challenges, offering structured opportunities for meaningful practice and fostering confidence and proficiency in communication.

Thus, the primary purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the "Show and Tell" method in improving speaking skills among Junior High School students at MTs. Ma'arif Bakung. It aims to assess whether the implementation of this method can lead to significant improvements in students' speaking abilities, including vocabulary usage, confidence, and overall participation in speaking activities. By focusing on these areas, the researcher seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the "Show and Tell" technique can be utilized to enhance language learning outcomes.

## **Methods**

The research methodology employed in this study was Classroom Action Research (CAR). Burns (2010), CAR is part of a broader educational movement closely related to the ideas of 'reflective practice' and 'the teacher as researcher.' CAR emphasizes the importance of teachers critically examining their own practices in order to improve student learning outcomes. This methodology is highly iterative and cyclical, consisting of four main components that interact in a spiral fashion: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Each phase is interconnected, with the outcomes of one phase informing the next, thereby creating a continuous loop of improvement and adaptation.

This research was conducted in MTs. Ma'arif Bakung at VIII H class in the even semester 2023/2024 from February to May. In this research there were 4 phases:

1. **Planning:** In the planning phase, the researcher identifies specific issues or problems within the classroom that need addressing. This involves a thorough analysis of the current situation; including student needs, learning objectives, and potential obstacles. Based on this analysis, the researcher formulates a detailed action plan outlining the strategies and interventions to be implemented.
2. **Action:** The action phase involves implementing the planned interventions. During this phase, the researcher puts the strategies into practice within the classroom setting. This may include introducing new teaching methods, modifying existing practices, or integrating new materials and activities designed to enhance student engagement and learning.
3. **Observation:** The observation phase is critical for gathering data on the effectiveness of the interventions. The researcher systematically collects information about the teaching and learning process, focusing on student behavior, participation, and performance. This is done through various tools such as observation checklists, field notes, video recordings, and student assessments.
4. **Reflection:** In the reflection phase, the researcher analyzes the collected data to evaluate the impact of the interventions. This involves critically assessing what worked well, what didn't, and why. The insights gained from this analysis are used to inform the next cycle of planning and action, ensuring continuous improvement.

To comprehensively evaluate the impact of the Show and Tell method on students' speaking skills, a variety of data collection instruments were employed:

- **Observation Checklists:** These were used to systematically record specific behaviors and participation levels during the teaching-learning process. The checklists ensured that observations were consistent and focused on key aspects of student engagement and interaction.
- **Field Notes:** Detailed field notes were taken during and after the lessons to capture qualitative data on the classroom dynamics, student responses, and any noteworthy incidents. These notes provided rich contextual information that helped in understanding the nuances of the classroom environment.
- **Interviews:** Post-lesson interviews with students and teachers were conducted to gather in-depth insights into their experiences and perceptions of the Show and Tell method. These interviews helped to triangulate the observational data and provided a deeper

understanding of the participants' perspectives.

- Tests: Speaking performance tests were administered at the end of each cycle to quantitatively measure improvements in students' speaking skills. These tests were designed to assess various aspects of speaking, including fluency, accuracy, and coherence.

This Classroom Action Research was designed to systematically tackle the speaking difficulties encountered by eighth-grade students in class H. The study employed a structured and reflective approach, utilizing a practical and interactive method known as "show and tell." The goal was to improve the students' speaking abilities, increase their confidence, and make a contribution to the broader field of language education research. The results of this study could help shape effective teaching practices for speaking skills, especially in comparable educational settings.

**Table 1. The criteria used to assess students' speaking skills**

<b>Speaking Aspects</b>	<b>Very Poor 10-39</b>	<b>Poor 40-60</b>	<b>Quite Good 61-70</b>	<b>Good 71-80</b>	<b>Very Good 81-100</b>
Pronunciation	No correct Pronunciation	Makes many pronunciation mistakes	Makes several pronunciation mistakes in conversation	Makes few pronunciation mistakes in conversation	No pronunciation mistakes in conversation
Fluency	No correct speech production	Doesn't speak fluently, takes too long to think	Speaks somewhat fluently, with some hesitations	Speaks quite fluently, with occasional pauses	Speaks very fluently
Vocabulary	Knows no required vocabulary	Knows few required vocabulary words	Knows several required vocabulary words	Knows many required vocabulary words	Knows all required vocabulary words
Word Order	No correct order	Poor order	Quite good order	Good order	Very good order

Grammar	No correct grammar	Makes many grammar mistakes	Makes several grammar mistakes	Makes few grammar mistakes	No grammar mistakes
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The data analysis involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data is from observations, field notes, interviews, and were analyzed thematically to identify patterns and trends in student behavior and participation. This involved coding the data into categories and interpreting the findings to draw meaningful conclusions about the effectiveness of the interventions. Quantitative data is from the speaking tests were analyzed using statistical methods to measure changes in student performance over time. The students' speaking abilities were evaluated using a rating scale adapted from Heaton (1990), which categorized oral communication skills into six levels: excellent (6), very good (5), satisfactory (4), fairly satisfactory (3), much difficulty (2), and extreme difficulty (1). This rating scale provided a standardized measure of student performance, allowing for a consistent and objective assessment. To assess the overall improvement in students' speaking skills, the qualitative ratings were converted into numerical data. The speaking scores were calculated and compared across different cycles to determine the progress made by the students. This analysis revealed a clear improvement in students' speaking abilities, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Show and Tell method.

The results of the tests and observations indicated a significant enhancement in the students' speaking skills. The scores showed a marked improvement from the initial to the subsequent cycles, providing strong evidence of the benefits of the Show and Tell method. Students not only became more confident and actively participate in speaking activities but also demonstrated greater fluency and accuracy in their oral communication. The iterative nature of CAR, with its focus on continuous reflection and adaptation, allowed for the fine-tuning of teaching strategies and ensured that the interventions were responsive to student needs. This ongoing process of evaluation and modification was the key to achieve the observed improvements in student outcomes.

Hence, the use of Classroom Action Research in this study provided a structured yet flexible framework for systematically enhancing students' speaking skills. The combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the Show and Tell method, highlighting its effectiveness in fostering better speaking abilities

among students. The findings underscore the importance of reflective practice and teacher-led research in driving educational improvements and suggest that the Show and Tell method holds significant promise for broader application in language teaching contexts.

## Result and Discussion

This action research was conducted from February 1st, 2024 to May 31st, 2024. The data collection involved various instruments, including tests, Field notes, observation sheets, interview results. To further support the data, the researcher utilized field photos to capture the process of the research. The data from the tests indicated an improvement in the students' speaking achievements. Field notes and observation sheets demonstrated positive impacts on students' participation in the teaching and learning process. Interviews reflected the students' positive feelings after the implementation of the Show and Tell Method. The "show and tell" method created a competitive atmosphere among students, which fostered increased participation and confidence in speaking. This observation aligns with Murlock's (2013) findings that "show and tell" encourages competition among students, thereby enhancing individual and peer participation.

Based on these observations, the speaking class was dull and inactive. Classes were ineffective because students felt anxious or fearful about speaking in class (Afrizal, 2015). The teacher dominated the learning process. This finding aligns with the document analysis conducted by the researchers, which revealed that the students had low average speaking scores. The average pre-test scores of the students' speaking skills are shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. The average score of students on the pre-test**

No	Aspects	Pre-Test Scores	Category
1.	Pronunciation	57,59	Poor
2.	Fluency	60,23	Poor
3.	Vocabulary	55,37	Poor
4.	Word Order	60,72	Poor
5.	Grammar	53,47	Poor
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>57,476</b>	<b>Poor</b>

Table 2 reveals that the average pre-test score is 57, 47. According to the rubric established by the researchers in Table 1, this score is classified as poor. Consequently, the



researchers implemented the first cycle using a "show and tell" activity, where students show and then tell some various objects or topics. In the second cycle, they continued to use the "show and tell" method to further develop students' English-speaking skills.

In the first cycle, conducted from February 7th to February 12th, 2024, the focus was on recount text with the theme "Unforgettable Moment." During this cycle, the researcher noted a slight improvement in students' activity and interest in the classroom. The students generally enjoyed the lessons and showed enthusiasm and confidence in speaking, despite making mistakes in their presentations. The "show and tell" method encouraged students to ask questions and engage with their peers' presentations, sparking interest and participation.

After completing a session using the "show and tell" method, the researchers conducted a post-test. Thirty-six students presented their descriptions, showcasing what they had practiced during the sessions. The researchers evaluated and compared the students' speaking skills from the pre-test to the post-test in the first cycle. The post-test scores indicated improvement compared to the pre-test scores. However, the researchers were not entirely satisfied, as the post-test results still did not meet the school's Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 76. The post-test results for the first cycle are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. The average score of students between the Pre-Test and Post-Test 1**

No	Aspects	Pre-Test Scores	Post-Test 1 Scores	Improvements
1.	Pronunciation	57,59	67,35	9,76
2.	Fluency	60,23	75,27	15,04
3.	Vocabulary	55,37	70,43	15,06
4.	Word Order	60,72	69,33	8,61
5.	Grammar	53,47	69,75	16,28
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>57,476</b>	<b>70,426</b>	<b>12,95</b>

Table 3 shows that the average score from the pre-test was 57,47, while the post-test 1 average was 70.42. The improvement between the pre-test and post-test in cycle 1 was 12.95%, which was a notable achievement.

However, several challenges were identified in this cycle:

1. Some students remained silent or were not fluent enough in their monologues due to a lack of understanding of the material.

2. Limited vocabulary hindered full engagement for some students.
3. The small size of some objects made it difficult for all students to see clearly in a large class setting.

Based on these observations, the researcher planned improvements for the next cycle to enhance student participation and engagement. The actions of Cycle 2 were carried out from May 11th to 13th, 2024. In this cycle, the objects were changed to pictures to address visibility issues. Significant improvements were observed during this cycle. To engage silent students, the researcher introduced pair discussions, modified group compositions based on students' abilities, allocated more time for discussions, brought larger objects, and provided instructions in both languages.

Then make interviews revealed that students were excited about the activities, particularly as they involved bringing pictures related to their best unforgettable moment. The advance notice of the task allowed students ample time to prepare, resulting in more enjoyable and smoother activities. Despite some ungrammatical monologues, students showed progress and enthusiasm in their presentations. After that conduct field notes indicated that students were more active and motivated to ask questions during peers' presentations. Grouping students encouraged active participation and cooperation, leading to an overall increase in enthusiasm and engagement. However, some students were still slower than their peers, often repeating questions already asked by others.

During the second post-test, it was noted that only a few students still experienced confidence issues and anxiety. However, many students had shown marked improvement in their English-speaking abilities, and their anxiety levels had decreased to a more comfortable level. In this second cycle, students displayed greater enthusiasm, confidence, and fluency as stated by Smalley and Ruetten in Zetira (2015), making speaking engaging can be achieved by incorporating a controlling idea that expresses an attitude or impression about the topics being described. The progress in their speaking skills during the second post-test is shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. The average score of students from Post-Test 1 to Post-Test 2**

No	Aspects	Post-Test 1 Scores	Post-Test 2 Scores	Improvements
1.	Pronunciation	67,35	80,55	13,2

2.	Fluency	75,27	90,27	15
3.	Vocabulary	70,43	89,63	19,2
4.	Word Order	69,33	87,45	18,12
5.	Grammar	69,75	85,83	16,08
	AVERAGE	70,426	86,025	13

Based on the findings in Table 4, there was an improvement in average scores from the first to the second post-tests. Initially, during the first cycle, the average score was 70.42, indicating that students' speaking skills were initially rated as poor. However, in the second cycle, the average score increased to 62.02, reflecting a shift to a good category for speaking skills. This improvement underscores the effectiveness of the second cycle, where the method was updated by replacing objects with pictures to enhance visibility during the "show and tell" activity.

The average improvement between the first and second post-tests was 13%, illustrating a significant enhancement in students' speaking proficiency following the implementation of the explanation column method across two cycles. This improvement suggests that modifying instructional techniques can lead to substantial gains in students' language abilities and overall communication skills.

## Conclusion

The implementation of the Show and Tell method at MTs. Ma'arif Bakunghas proven to be instrumental in enhancing students' speaking skills and fostering active classroom participation. This student-centered approach involved students bringing objects related to lesson topics and presenting them to their peers, followed by interactive Q&A sessions. These activities aimed to increase student engagement and promote meaningful communication in English. During the initial cycles of action research, students responded positively to the Show and Tell method, demonstrating increased enthusiasm and enjoyment in the classroom. They actively participated in presentations, which led to improvements in their speaking intensity and overall engagement. However, challenges such as students' initial unfamiliarity with the method, confusion due to fast instructions in English, and the use of small sample objects were identified.

In response to these challenges, subsequent cycles incorporated strategic revisions to

enhance comprehension and participation. Changes including using the code-mixing for instructions to improve student understanding and introducing larger sample objects to facilitate clearer demonstrations. These adjustments resulted in significant improvements in student participation and the quality of speaking outcomes. Further refinements were made in later cycles to ensure equitable speaking opportunities for all students, particularly encouraging quieter individuals to participate actively. Students were also encouraged to prepare vocabulary lists at home, which enhanced their ability to comprehend and engage effectively during presentations.

Throughout the research cycles, the Show and Tell method consistently demonstrated its effectiveness in enhancing students' progress in speaking activities. Students showed increased participation, enthusiasm, and confidence in speaking tasks, with notable improvements by the final cycles. The method's structured yet flexible approach created a supportive learning environment that fostered a sense of inclusivity and encouraged students to take risks in using English.

The findings highlight the Show and Tell method as a powerful tool for improving students' speaking skills and promoting active participation in language learning. This approach not only motivated less active and less confident students but also enhanced overall speaking proficiency across various aspects. Moving forward, these insights can guide educators in implementing effective strategies to enhance student engagement and language learning outcomes in diverse educational settings.

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