

The effectiveness of the two stay-two stray technique in teaching speaking

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Abstract. This study aims to determine the effectiveness of the Two Stay-Two Stray (TSTS) technique in teaching speaking to fifth-grade students at SDN 1 Karangcengis, Bukateja, Purbalingga, Indonesia during the 2023/2024 academic year. A quasi-experimental design was employed with two groups: an experimental group taught using the TSTS technique and a control group using traditional methods. Data collection involved pre- and post-tests, assessing fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. The results indicate a significant improvement in the experimental group's speaking skills, with post-test scores averaging 34.42, compared to the control group's 18.64. The TSTS technique encouraged active participation, peer interaction, and boosted confidence in speaking English. In conclusion, TSTS is an effective alternative to traditional methods, promoting communicative competence among elementary school students. Wider application in English language teaching is recommended.

1 Introduction

Speaking is one of the core skills in language learning and is crucial for effective communication (1). In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, speaking is often seen as the most challenging skill to master, especially for students in environments where English is not used daily (2). Many elementary school students in Indonesia struggle to develop their speaking skills due to limited vocabulary, grammatical inaccuracies, and insufficient exposure to authentic English communication contexts (3). These challenges are compounded by the prevalence of teacher-centered, lecture-based methods, which focus on memorization and passive learning rather than active engagement (4). This often results in low student participation and reluctance to speak in English due to a lack of confidence.

Recent pedagogical trends advocate for more interactive, student-centered approaches, particularly cooperative learning models, which have been proven to enhance language proficiency, motivation, and engagement (5). One such method is the Two Stay-Two Stray (TSTS) technique, developed by Spencer Kagan, which encourages peer collaboration and group discussions. In this technique, students work in groups, with two students "staying" to present their group's ideas and two "straying" to other groups to gather information. This

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interaction encourages active participation and provides students with multiple opportunities to practice speaking in an authentic, supportive setting (6).

In elementary education, particularly for younger learners, the TSTS technique fosters a safe, interactive environment that reduces the pressure of speaking in front of a class. The small-group setup builds confidence and encourages more active involvement. By allowing students to interact frequently, this method enhances both their linguistic and social skills (7).

Given these advantages, this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the TSTS technique in improving the speaking skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 1 Karangcengis. The research seeks to compare the impact of this cooperative learning method with traditional methods and explore how TSTS influences students' confidence, motivation, and engagement. Through this investigation, the study will contribute valuable insights into the practical application of cooperative learning techniques in EFL classrooms, particularly in Indonesia, where speaking skills remain underdeveloped.

Previous research has demonstrated the potential of TSTS in improving language skills such as reading comprehension and writing (8). However, there is limited research on its effectiveness in enhancing speaking skills, particularly at the elementary level (9). This study aims to fill that gap by providing empirical data on the effectiveness of TSTS in improving speaking proficiency among young learners, thereby contributing to the broader body of research on cooperative learning in EFL education (10).

In summary, while traditional teaching methods may still be prevalent, the need for more interactive and student-centered approaches to teaching speaking is evident (11). The TSTS technique, with its emphasis on peer collaboration and active learning, offers a promising alternative that can improve speaking skills, build confidence, and foster greater student engagement (12). This study seeks to assess the efficacy of TSTS in an elementary school context, contributing to the ongoing conversation about best practices in language education.

2 Methodology

This quasi-experimental study involved two groups of fifth-grade students from SDN 1 Karangcengis. The experimental group consisted of 11 students, and the control group comprised 12 students. The experimental group was taught using the Two Stay-Two Stray (TSTS) technique, while the control group was taught using traditional methods (13). Data collection included pre-tests and post-tests to evaluate the students' speaking skills in terms of vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation. A scoring rubric was used for assessment. This study used several instruments, including a test scoring rubric to evaluate vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation. Interviews were also conducted to gather qualitative data on students' perceptions of the TSTS technique and their learning experience (14).

The TSTS technique was implemented across multiple sessions (15). During each session, students participated in group discussions, with two students "straying" to another group to gather information, while the remaining two "stayed" to share their group's findings. The "strayers" then returned to their original group to present the information they had gathered (16).

In addition to test scores, qualitative data were collected through interviews to assess students' perceptions of the TSTS technique and their learning experience. The interviews provided insight into how the students felt about their improved speaking skills and confidence.

3 Findings

The results show a significant improvement in the speaking skills of students in the experimental group compared to the control group. The average pre-test score for the experimental group was 20.08, while the post-test score increased to 34.42. In contrast, the control group had an average pre-test score of 15.45, with only a slight improvement to 18.64 in the post-test. A paired t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups, confirming that the TSTS technique is more effective in enhancing speaking skills than traditional methods.

Student interviews further supported these findings. The students reported that they found the TSTS technique enjoyable and helpful for practicing speaking. They appreciated the opportunity to interact with their peers, exchange information, and present in front of the class with greater confidence. Many students also noted that learning through peer interaction helped them understand new vocabulary and concepts more effectively.

4 Discussion

The results of this study align with Saputra's (2016) research on the effectiveness of the Two Stay-Two Stray (TSTS) technique in teaching reading (4). Saputra's study demonstrated that TSTS improved students' reading comprehension by encouraging interactive and cooperative learning. Although Saputra focused on reading, the improvement in comprehension and engagement reflects similarities with the current study's findings on speaking. Both studies highlight how TSTS fosters collaboration and active participation, making it an effective alternative to traditional methods.

Furthermore, Aswar's (2020) study on TSTS in improving Indonesian language skills shares notable similarities with the current research. Aswar found that TSTS significantly enhanced students' storytelling abilities and learning outcomes. Similarly, this study observed that TSTS not only improved the experimental group's speaking scores but also boosted their confidence and engagement. Both studies emphasize the role of TSTS in making the classroom environment more dynamic and conducive to skill development.

Additionally, this study's findings echo those of Annas et al. (2018), who investigated TSTS's impact on young learners' speaking skills and motivation. Annas et al. reported significant improvements in speaking abilities and reductions in students' fear of public speaking. This closely mirrors the outcomes of the current research, where students in the experimental group showed increased confidence and fluency after participating in TSTS-based activities. Both studies confirm that TSTS is an effective approach for enhancing speaking skills, particularly among younger learners.

5 Conclusion

The Two Stay-Two Stray technique has proven to be an effective method for enhancing the speaking skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 1 Karangcengis. The interactive nature of TSTS, which fosters peer collaboration and information exchange, significantly improved students' vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation. Furthermore, the technique cultivated a positive learning environment, boosting students' confidence in speaking. These findings suggest that TSTS should be considered a valuable alternative to traditional teaching methods in English language instruction, especially in settings where active participation and oral communication are critical learning objectives. Future research could explore the long-term effects of TSTS on speaking skills and its applicability in different educational contexts.

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