SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.688| ISI I.F. Value: 1.241| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2016 ISSN: 2455-7838(Online)
EPRA International Journal of Research and Development (IJRD)
Volume: 10 | Issue: 6 | June 2025 - Peer Reviewed Journal

TEACHING SPEAKING THROUGH READING STORIES

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Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra22532
DOI No: 10.36713/epra22532

ABSTRACT
The aim of the paper is study teaching speaking strategies through reading stories. To improving speaking fluency, accuracy, and confidence we have analyzed different storytelling methods that have been widely used in educational research: traditional oral storytelling, dramatization and role-playing, digital storytelling and student-created stories.
KEYWORDS: *Reading Short Stories, Traditional Oral Storytelling, Dramatization And Role-Playing, Digital Storytelling And Student-Created Stories.*

Speaking is one of the fundamental skills in language learning, as it enables learners to communicate effectively and engage in meaningful conversations. Language is a tool for communication, and speaking forms the basis of this communication[1]. In language acquisition, speaking is not only an outcome of the learning process but also a means through which learners can practice and internalize language structures. As highlighted by Lightbown and Spada[2], speaking allows learners to process language in real-time, requiring them to activate vocabulary, apply grammar rules, and convey coherent messages.

According to Thornbury[3], the ability to speak fluently is often seen as the primary goal of language learning, as it reflects a learner's competence in using the target language in real-life situations. Speaking skills are unique because they involve instant, spontaneous production, contrasting with other skills like reading and writing, which allow for more processing time. This instantaneous nature of speaking can lead to increased confidence and independence among language learners as they gain more experience communicating in the target language.

Furthermore, speaking serves as a dynamic avenue for cultural exchange, an essential component of language learning that helps learners understand the diverse contexts in which the language is used[4]. By engaging in speaking activities, learners gain insights into the cultural nuances, values, and customs embedded in language. This cultural aspect of speaking is particularly relevant in multilingual classrooms or international settings, where students can share personal experiences and learn from one another. According to Kramsch[5], language is a "social practice," and the act of speaking provides opportunities for learners to engage with the cultural dimensions of language, leading to a more comprehensive and meaningful understanding of the target language. Speaking tasks often incorporate cultural learning, which deepens students' understanding of the contexts in which language is used. Language is closely tied to culture, and speaking provides an opportunity for learners to explore cultural norms, idiomatic expressions, and social etiquettes embedded in the language. Activities such as storytelling and discussions about cultural topics help students gain cultural insights, which are essential for achieving true communicative competence. For example, by discussing holidays, customs, or everyday life in target-language cultures, learners become more culturally aware, preparing them to interact effectively with native speakers in authentic contexts.

Furthermore, storytelling is one of the most effective ways to link reading and speaking. After reading a story, learners can retell it in their own words, which requires them to synthesize information, organize their thoughts, and use appropriate language to convey meaning. This activity not only reinforces comprehension but also promotes fluency and coherence in speaking. Thornbury emphasizes that retelling stories helps learners practice essential speaking skills, such as structuring ideas, selecting relevant

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vocabulary, and maintaining listener engagement[6]. Moreover, storytelling activities can be adapted to suit different proficiency levels. Beginners can start with simple story summaries, while more advanced learners can elaborate on the story by adding their own interpretations or imagining alternative endings. These tasks encourage creativity and critical thinking, making the learning process more dynamic and interactive. In addition, storytelling fosters a sense of accomplishment and confidence, as learners take ownership of the language they use to express themselves.

Reading can also help to develop pronunciation and intonation. Reading aloud is another effective way to connect reading and speaking. When learners read texts aloud, they practice pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm, which are crucial components of spoken language. Harmer notes that reading aloud helps students become more aware of the sounds and patterns of the target language, improving their overall speaking accuracy[7]. Teachers can use this technique to focus on specific aspects of pronunciation, such as stress patterns or vowel sounds, by selecting texts with challenging phonological features.

Storytelling can be implemented in language classrooms using various techniques, each of which offers distinct benefits for speaking skill development. The choice of technique depends on factors such as learners' proficiency levels, classroom resources, and instructional objectives. Here we have given different ***storytelling methods that have been widely used in educational research*** to improve speaking fluency, accuracy, and confidence.

1. Traditional oral storytelling
2. Dramatization and role-playing
3. Digital storytelling
4. Student-created stories

1. Traditional oral storytelling

Traditional oral storytelling involves narrating stories aloud, with students actively listening and later retelling the story in their own words. This technique has been shown to improve fluency, listening comprehension, and speech organization. According to McKay[8] , oral storytelling enhances learners' ability to internalize language structures and develop a sense of natural rhythm in spoken discourse. By listening to well-structured narratives, students become familiar with logical sequencing and cohesive devices, which help them construct their own spoken responses more effectively.

A study by Shin and Crandall[9] found that children who participated in oral storytelling sessions demonstrated a significant increase in speaking fluency compared to those engaged in textbook-based learning. The researchers emphasized that storytelling's interactive nature fosters deeper engagement with language, making learners more confident and motivated to speak.

2. Dramatization and role-playing

Dramatization and role-playing take storytelling a step further by requiring learners to act out stories. This method transforms passive listeners into active participants, promoting both verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

Research by Makarova and Terekhova[10] highlights that dramatization enhances students' confidence in speaking by reducing anxiety. When students take on character roles, they often feel less self-conscious about making mistakes, leading to more spontaneous and fluent speech.

Role-playing also helps students develop pragmatic competence, which is the ability to use language appropriately in different social situations. Lazaraton[11] emphasizes that learners who engage in storytelling through role-playing are better equipped to handle real-life conversations because they practice adjusting their speech based on context, tone, and audience.

3. Digital storytelling

With the rise of technology in education, digital storytelling has emerged as an innovative method for enhancing speaking skills. This technique involves students creating and narrating their own stories using multimedia tools such as videos, slideshows, and animations.

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Khodabandeh (2018) conducted a study in Iranian classrooms and found that digital storytelling increased students' speaking proficiency and engagement. The integration of visual and auditory elements helped learners retain vocabulary and structure their spoken narratives more coherently.

A similar study by Robin[12] showed that digital storytelling fosters creativity and self-expression. Students who created digital stories demonstrated improved pronunciation and fluency, as they were more motivated to rehearse and refine their spoken output before recording their final narration.

Additionally, digital storytelling supports individualized learning. According to Sadik [13], students working on their own digital projects engage in self-paced learning, allowing them to focus on their unique speaking challenges. The ability to pause, re-record, and edit their speech reduces pressure and promotes more confident oral production.

4. Student-created stories

Encouraging students to create their own stories is one of the most effective ways to develop speaking skills. This technique requires learners to think critically, organize their thoughts, and express themselves in their own words.

A study by Handayani[14] found that when students composed their own stories, they exhibited a stronger grasp of vocabulary and sentence structure. Creating original stories also encouraged learners to experiment with new expressions, improving their linguistic range.

Student-created storytelling fosters personal connection to language, making learning more meaningful. According to Wright[15], when students narrate personal experiences or imaginative tales, they become more engaged in the storytelling process, which results in improved fluency and confidence.

Moreover, Mokhtar et al.[16] argue that student-generated storytelling improves cohesion and coherence in speaking. Learners must consider logical sequencing, character development, and plot structure, which enhances their ability to deliver well-structured spoken discourse.

In conclusion each storytelling technique offers unique advantages for language learning. Traditional oral storytelling improves listening comprehension and natural fluency, dramatization and role-playing enhance pronunciation and confidence, digital storytelling engages learners through multimedia integration, and student-created storytelling promotes creativity and self-expression. By incorporating a variety of storytelling techniques, educators can create a dynamic and interactive learning environment that supports students in developing strong speaking skills. Future research should explore how a combination of these methods can maximize learning outcomes in different language-learning contexts.

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