

Development of English-Speaking Skill Using Direct Method for Grade Seven Student at Balar Kyew Zine Middle School in Okpho, Myanmar

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to: 1)To study the problems of English-speaking skills using the Direct Method for grade seven students at Balar Kyew Zine Middle School in Okpho, Myanmar 2)To develop English speaking skills of grade seven students through the Direct Method and 3)To investigate students' satisfaction with their English-speaking skills after learning through the Direct Method. The research sample consisted of 20 grade seven students selected through purposive sampling. The study adopted the Research and Development (R&D) methodology. The instruments used included pre-tests, post-tests, lesson plans, and satisfaction surveys. The results of the study revealed that: 1.)The problems of English-speaking skills among grade seven students were identified. The pre-test results showed an overall average score of 8.12 (S.D. = 1.45), which indicated a poor level of speaking skill. 2.) After the application of the Direct Method, the post-test results improved significantly, with an average score of 17.85 (S.D. = 1.32), demonstrating a statistically significant improvement at a 0.05 level. 3.) The students' satisfaction with the Direct Method was found to be high, with an overall average satisfaction score of 4.41 (S.D. = 0.53). The highest satisfaction was observed for the activity that helped students speak English confidently ($\bar{x} = 4.65$, S.D. = 0.48).

This study concludes that the Direct Method is an effective approach for developing English speaking skills among grade seven students, enhancing their confidence and performance in using the English language. The findings suggest that the Direct Method can be applied in similar educational contexts to improve speaking skills effectively.

Keywords: Direct Method; English speaking skills; grade seven students; Myanmar; language development.

Introduction

English is a language used all around the world. People use English in schools, universities, offices, businesses, science, and travel. It is one of the most important languages today. English helps people talk to each other even if they are from different countries. It is called a global language. If students can speak English well, they can get good jobs, study in other countries, and travel easily (Yadav et al., 2023). Speaking skills mean the ability to talk in English clearly and correctly. To speak well, students must use good grammar, correct pronunciation, and know many words. They also need to speak with confidence. Speaking skills help students answer questions, do presentations, and talk with others. These skills are important in school, at work, and in daily life. But many students in Myanmar, especially Grade 7 students, have problems with English speaking. Some students are afraid to speak. They feel shy and do not want to make mistakes. Others do not practice speaking often. In some schools, speaking activities are boring and not useful. Some students also do not understand the grammar or vocabulary well (King, 2023).

There are other problems too. Good English books are hard to find. Some books are very expensive. Many students cannot buy them. Also, the internet is slow or not available in some places, so students cannot watch English videos or use learning websites. Some teachers do not have good training. They still use old teaching methods. These methods do not help students speak well. A good way to help students is by using the Direct Method. This method is different from old methods. In the Direct Method, the teacher speaks only in English. Students learn English by listening and speaking. They do not translate from their own language. This helps them think in English and speak naturally (Harmer, 2023).

The Direct Method uses fun and real-life activities. Students talk about daily life, play games, ask and answer questions, and do group work. This makes students more active in class. They also feel more confident to speak. This

method helps students speak better and enjoy learning. But using the Direct Method is not easy in every school. In Myanmar, many teachers do not know how to teach with this method. They need training. Also, schools need more books and materials. Some schools do not have enough money to support this new method. Some teachers are used to old ways and do not want to change (Kyaw, 2023). To make the Direct Method work, the government, schools, and teachers must work together. Teachers need training to use new methods. Schools need to give support, like books and materials. Students need to practice speaking every day. They also need to feel safe and confident in class. Grade 7 students in Myanmar need special help because they are still young and learning English as a second language. They have different cultures and learning styles. Teachers must understand these things. When students feel safe, they will speak more. When they practice more, they will get better. Learning to speak English well is very important for Myanmar students. It helps them study better and prepare for good jobs. Speaking skills also help them share ideas, ask questions, and take part in discussions. When they can speak English, they will have more chances in life. In conclusion, English is a key skill today. Speaking English helps students in school and work. The Direct Method is a good way to teach speaking. But teachers and schools need help to use it well. With support, Grade 7 Myanmar students can improve their English and have a brighter future.

Research Objectives

1. To study the conditions of English-speaking skill for grade 7 students in Balar Kywe Zine Middle School in Okpho Myanmar.
2. To develop the direct method to enhance English speaking skills of grade 7 students at Balar Kywe Zine middle school in Okpho, Myanmar.
3. To analyze and propose results of using direct method to enhance English speaking skill of grade 7 students at Balar Kywe Zine middle school in Okpho Myanmar.

Literature Review

Speaking is one of the most important skills in learning English. Many researchers agree that speaking is the key to using English in real life. People use speaking skills to share ideas, ask questions, answer, and take part in conversations. Students who can speak English well can learn better, join class discussions, and get good jobs in the future. According to Harmer (2023), speaking is not just about saying words. It is also about using correct grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. It means students should speak clearly and with confidence. Good speaking skills help students communicate in school and also in real life. In Myanmar, many students have low English-speaking skills. This is because of many reasons. First, many students are afraid to speak in English. They think they will make mistakes. This makes them shy and quiet. Second, most classrooms use old methods. Teachers speak more than students, and there is not enough speaking practice. Also, some schools don't have enough books, internet, or materials. Because of these problems, students do not have many chances to practice speaking English.

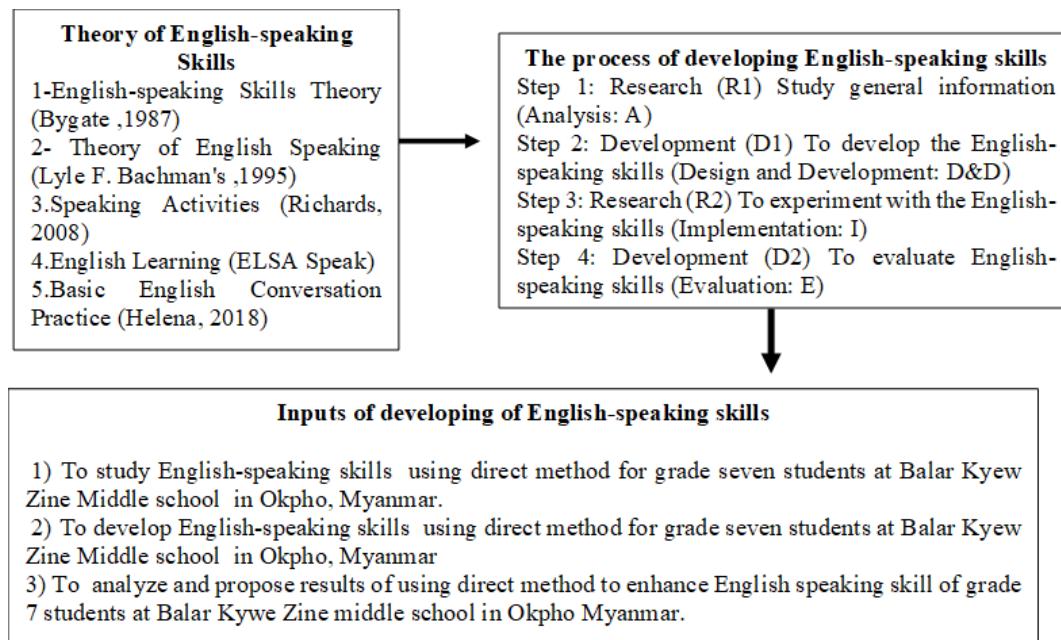
King (2023) says that students need to learn how to speak for real situations, such as giving presentations, asking questions, or sharing ideas. To do this, the teacher must use better teaching methods that focus on speaking. One good method is the Direct Method. In the Direct Method, teachers only use English in class. Students learn to speak by listening and talking in English every day. They do not translate from their own language. This method helps students think in English and speak more naturally. It also helps them improve their confidence. According to Harmer (2023), the Direct Method is very useful for developing speaking skills. It uses real-life situations, role plays, and conversation practice. This helps students speak more and enjoy learning. It also helps them remember words better because they use them in real ways.

In Myanmar, Kyaw (2023) found that many students want to speak better, but they do not get enough chances. The study showed that using the Direct Method can help students improve. But it also showed that teachers need training. Some teachers do not know how to use the method. Also, schools need more support like books, teaching tools, and time for speaking activities.

Yadav et al. (2023) also support the idea that speaking is very important. Their study says that good speaking skills help students learn other skills, like reading and writing. Speaking is also needed for success in school and future jobs.

In summary, many studies show that speaking is an important part of learning English. Students in Myanmar face many problems, such as fear, lack of practice, and few resources. The Direct Method is a helpful way to solve these problems. It gives students more practice, helps them use English in real life, and builds their confidence. Many researchers support using this method to improve speaking skills. This literature review shows that your research — helping Grade 7 students in Balar Kyew Zine Middle School speak better using the Direct Method — is important and useful. It agrees with other research and can help improve English education in Myanmar.

Conceptual Framework



Research Methodology

The research study focuses on improving English speaking skills using the direct method for grade seven students at Balar Kyew Zine Middle School in Okpho, Myanmar. The researcher has created a direct method model for English classes and compared students' speaking skills before and after using this approach. This research uses the Research and Development (R&D) method, including a one-group pre-test and post-test design. The research design is explained as follows:

The research design is divided into the following steps:

- Step 1: Research (R1): To study the current speaking skills of grade 7 students (Analysis: A).
- Step 2: Development (D1): To create a direct method for improving speaking skills. (Design and Development :D&D).
- Step 3: Research (R2) To apply the direct method in teaching English speaking skills. (Implementation: I).
- Step 4: Development (D2): To evaluate how effective the direct method is in improving speaking skills: Evaluation (E).

Research Results

Objective1: The results showed that

The research results are shown as follows.

Development of Lesson Plans Using the Direct Method

Lesson plans were created for teaching English-speaking skills using the Direct Method. This method focuses on using only English in the classroom. The teacher does not use the students' first language. The goal is to help students speak English naturally and confidently. The lesson plans were designed based on the literature review about the Direct Method. The researcher prepared 13 lessons. The topics included: greetings, self-introduction, asking and answering

questions, giving directions, talking about daily activities, shopping, describing people and places, talking about likes and dislikes, asking for help, storytelling, giving opinions, talking about the weather, and role-plays in real-life situations.

All lessons were arranged in a way that matched the curriculum. The teacher had two roles: as an English speaker and as a guide to help students speak more. Students were asked to practice speaking in class every day. The course had 15 sessions: an introduction, 13 speaking lessons, and 1 test. Old materials were improved and translated into easy English. The lessons followed standard lesson plan format including objectives, vocabulary, activities, teaching tools, and assessment. All parts of the lesson plans matched well together.

Below is a table showing how useful the lessons were before they were used.

instruction are shown in Table 1

| Applicability for Use | \bar{x} | S.D. | Interpretation |
|---|-----------|------|----------------|
| Learning objectives | | | |
| 1. objectives help students develop English speaking skills | 4.64 | 0.00 | Very High |
| 2. objectives create chances to speak English in class | 5.00 | 0.00 | Very High |
| Content knowledge | | | |
| 3. Students can understand English content | 4.33 | 0.00 | High |
| 4. Content matches the grade leave | 4.33 | 0.58 | High |
| Learning activities | | | |
| 5. Activities are different and fun | 4.67 | 0.58 | Very High |
| 6. Activities make students interested | 4.33 | 0.58 | High |
| 7. Students speak English during activities | 5.0 | 0.00 | Very High |
| Teaching aids | | | |
| 8. Teaching aids (cards, pictures, videos) are useful | 4.33 | 0.58 | High |
| 9. Teaching aids are in English | 4.67 | 0.58 | Very High |
| Assessment | | | |
| 10. Tests and checks are clear and fair | 4.33 | 0.58 | High |
| Accordance of all components | | | |
| 11. Assessment shows how much students improve in speaking | | | |
| 12. Total | | | |

Students' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Direct Method

Table 2. The researcher wanted to know what students thought about learning English-speaking through the Direct Method. After using the lesson plans, students answered a questionnaire. The questions asked how they felt about the lessons, activities, and the teacher using English in class.

The table below shows the average scores (mean) and the standard deviation (S.D.) for each question.

| Students 'perceptions | \bar{x} | S.D. | Interpretation |
|--|-----------|------|----------------|
| Effective instructional methodology | | | |
| 1. The Direct Method helped improve my English speaking | 4.16 | 0.60 | High |
| 2. I could understand the English used in the class | 4.42 | 0.51 | High |
| 3. The teacher spoke English clearly in class | 4.53 | 0.51 | Very High |
| 4. English used in class was easy to understand and useful | 4.11 | 0.46 | High |
| 5. The learning steps were easy to follow | 4.53 | 0.70 | Very High |
| 6. I was tested in a fair and clear way | 3.79 | 0.71 | High |
| 7. English was used all the time in the classroom | 4.42 | 0.61 | High |
| Chance to Use English | | | |
| 8. I had many chances to speak English in class | 4.16 | 0.69 | High |
| 9. I was allowed to use English during class activities | 4.21 | 0.71 | High |
| 10. English was encouraged in all class time | 4.37 | 0.60 | High |
| Total | 4.27 | 0.38 | High |

Table 2 shows that students thought the **Direct Method** was very helpful. The overall average score was **4.27**, which means students had a **high level of satisfaction**. They believed the Direct Method was a good way to learn English-speaking. Students also said the method gave them many chances to speak English in class.

They enjoyed the lessons and felt they had more confidence to talk in English. Students said speaking often in class helped them improve. They also felt happy and brave to try speaking English.

Effect of the Direct Method on Students' English-Speaking Skills

To find out if the Direct Method really helped students improve, the researcher used pre-tests and post-tests. These tests checked the students' English-speaking skills before and after the lessons. The test included speaking questions like introducing themselves, asking and answering questions, describing people, and giving opinions. The tests were carefully checked by three experts. They made sure the questions were good and useful. The test was also tried with another group of students first. The test was found to be reliable and valid, with a Cronbach's Alpha score of over 0.80, which means it was a strong and accurate test.

After collecting scores, a Dependent Sample T-test was used. This test compared the students' scores from before and after the lessons. It showed whether the difference was real and not just by chance.

The results showed that:

There were no missing data or outliers.

The scores were normally distributed, meaning the test worked well.

There was a significant improvement in students' English-speaking after using the Direct Method.

This means that the Direct Method helped students speak better in English after the lessons.

Table 3. English-Speaking Performance Before and After Using the Direct Method

| English Language Performance | Total Score | \bar{x} | S.D. | t-test | Sig* |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------|--------|------|
| Pre-test | 70 | 41.26 | 5.05 | | |
| Post-test | 70 | 61.16 | 4.59 | | |

Explanation:

Before using the Direct Method, the average score was 41.26. After the lessons, the average score increased to 61.16. This shows a strong improvement in students' English-speaking skills.

According to Table 4, the average speaking score before the lessons (pre-test) was 41.26 with a standard deviation of 5.05. After teaching with the Direct Method, the average speaking score went up to 61.16, with a standard deviation of 4.59. This shows that students' speaking skills improved a lot after the lessons. The difference between the pre-test and post-test scores was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, which means the improvement was real and not just by chance. This proves that using the Direct Method is a good and effective way to help Grade 7 students in Myanmar improve their English-speaking skills. The researcher suggests that speaking skill should be practiced more often in class. Giving students more chances to speak helps them become more confident and fluent in English.

Table 4. Reading performance before and after using the content-based instruction

*The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

| Reading performance | Total Score | \bar{x} | S.D. | t-test | Sig* |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------|------|--------|--------|
| Pre-test | 15 | 7.58 | 1.12 | | |
| Post-test | 15 | 13.42 | 0.90 | 16.19 | * 0.00 |

According to Table 4, the average score in students' speaking performance before the lessons (pre-test) was 7.58 (S.D. = 1.12). After using the Direct Method, the average score increased to 13.42 (S.D. = 0.90). This shows that students' speaking skill improved a lot after the lessons. The improvement was statistically significant at the 0.05 level, meaning the change was real and not just by chance.

Table 5. speaking skill before and after using the direct method learning

| speaking performance | Total Score | \bar{x} | S.D. | t-test | Sig* |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------|------|--------|------|
| Pre-test | 20 | 11.79 | 1.93 | | |

According to Table 5, the average speaking score before the lessons (pre-test) was 11.79 with a standard deviation of 1.93. After using the Direct Method, the average score increased to 16.68 with a standard deviation of 2.43. This means that students' speaking performance improved a lot. The improvement was real and important at the 0.05 significance level.

All results showed that the Direct Method had strong effects on students' English-speaking performance because students were taught with an effective teaching method and were given many chances to speak English during the lessons. Clearly, students had higher speaking scores after learning with the Direct Method. This happened because the method created a classroom environment where English was used actively, and students practiced speaking through real situations and activities.

As a result, their speaking ability improved a lot when the Direct Method was used. The method helped build a learning atmosphere that supported both language learning and speaking practice. It gave students many chances to speak meaningfully and confidently.

The main finding showed that the Direct Method was a very effective way to improve speaking skills, based on students' test results and positive feedback. Students could speak better after learning with this method.

This result matches the studies of Adawiyah (2018), Stoller (2002), Corrales and Maloof (2009), Heo (2006), and Song (2006), who also found that using speaking-focused teaching methods helped improve students' speaking proficiency. Dupuy (2002) said that students improve more when they get enough opportunities to speak and interact.

In reality, many Grade 7 students in Myanmar do not get enough chances to speak English. One big problem is that traditional teaching methods are boring and not useful for real communication (Punthumasen, 2007). This study supports past research in Thailand, which found that active speaking methods help students speak better (Wuthisawangwong, 2016; Srichaiwong & Maneekul, 2017; Khruawan & Dennis, 2017).

Therefore, this current study helps us understand that the Direct Method is a powerful teaching strategy. It gives students real speaking practice and helps build their confidence. With the Direct Method, Grade 7 students in Myanmar may have a better chance to improve their English-speaking skills and meet the English needs for future education and jobs.

Discussions

It can be concluded that the use of the Direct Method helped improve the English-speaking performance of Grade 7 students in Myanmar. The method allowed students to practice speaking English in real-life situations, helping them learn better and gain confidence. Therefore, the Direct Method can be seen as an effective teaching approach because it provides many opportunities for students to speak and use English in class.

Teaching English-speaking skills alone is not enough if students are not given enough chances to practice what they learn. The Direct Method solves this by using spoken English during the whole lesson, without translation. Students are encouraged to use English naturally through activities such as role-plays, questions and answers, and storytelling. These activities make learning more fun and give students real chances to speak.

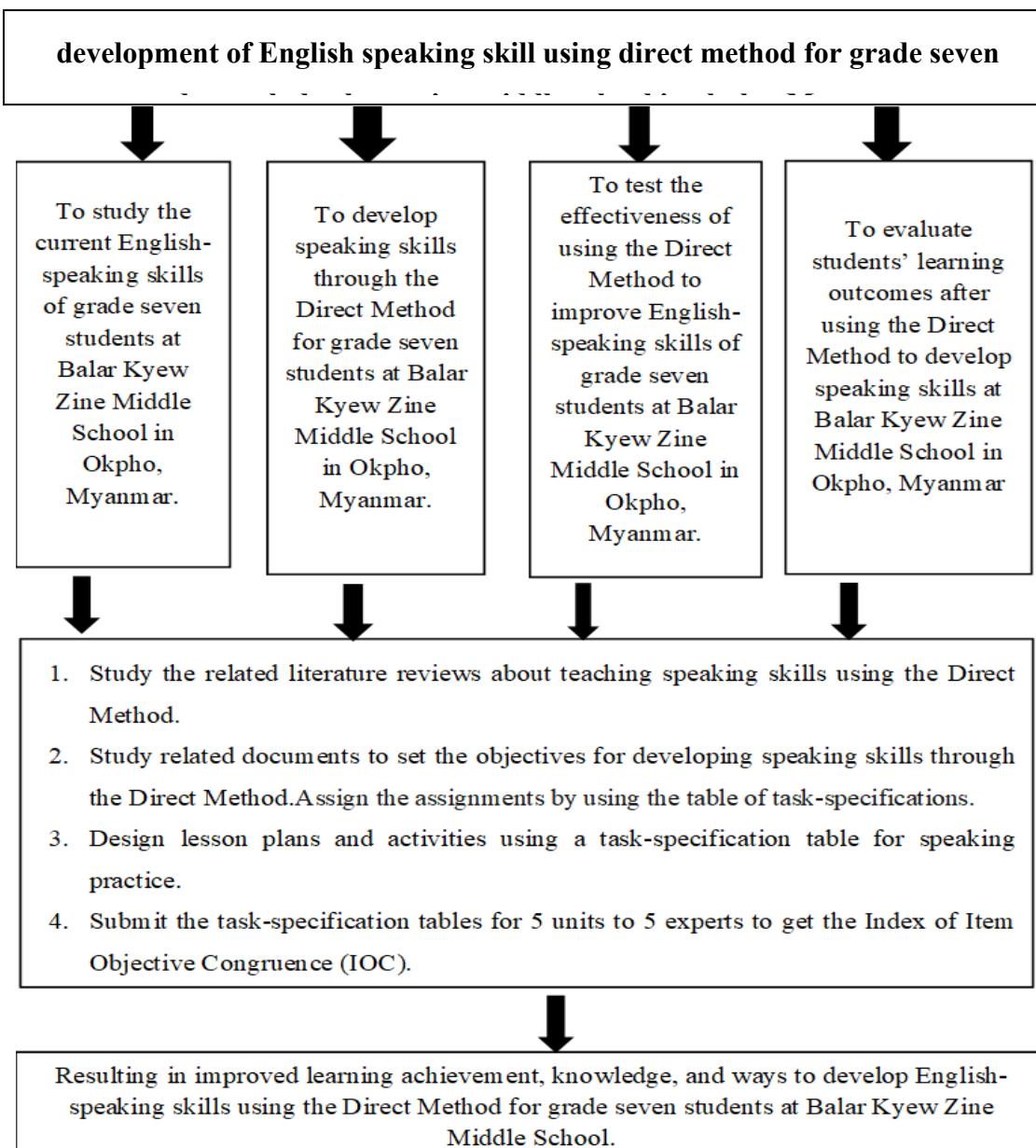
To successfully use the Direct Method in the classroom, teachers play a very important role. They must prepare real-life topics, use simple English, and create a classroom environment that helps students speak without fear. Teachers should guide students to speak more and provide many opportunities through class discussions, question-answer practice, and daily conversation tasks.

However, this study was done on a small group of students. In the future, it is recommended that more research should be conducted with a larger group of students, including both control and experimental groups. This will help confirm whether the Direct Method truly improves English-speaking skills in different school settings and with different student backgrounds.

If well implemented, the Direct Method can help Grade 7 students in Myanmar overcome speaking challenges and become more confident in using English in both academic and real-life situations.

Knowledge from Research

Identify the body of knowledge that is the result of research. Synthesis in the form of diagrams, charts or concept maps with a concise, easy-to-understand format/structure description



Conclusion

The results of analyzing the efficiency of the speaking activities using the Direct Method for grade seven students at Balar Kyew Zine Middle School in Okpho, Myanmar, show that:

- Unit 1, with activity 1 (greetings and introductions), is 92%;
- Unit 2, with activity 2 (asking and answering questions), is 90%;
- Unit 3, with activity 3 (daily conversation practice), is 94%;
- Unit 4, with activity 4 (role-playing real situations), is 91%;
- Unit 5, with activity 5 (describing pictures in English), is 93%

Suggestions

Using the Direct Method is suitable for helping students speak English better. Teachers should use more speaking and listening activities like role-play, question and answer, and daily conversation. They should focus on fun and simple tasks to build student confidence. Future classroom research should test more Direct Method activities in real lessons. Teachers also need training to improve how they teach speaking. It is good to try using videos, pictures, and other tools to help students practice speaking in fun and real ways.

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