ผลของการสอนแบบสมิทธิภาพด้วยการอ่านและการเล่าเรื่อง ที่มีต่อความสามารถในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 5

EFFECTS OF TEACHING PROFICIENCY THROUGH READING AND STORYTELLING (TPRS) ON THE SPEAKING ABILITY OF FIFTH-GRADE STUDENTS

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยในครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ศึกษาผลของการสอนแบบสมิทธิภาพด้วยการอ่านและการเล่าเรื่องที่มีต่อความสามารถในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 5 และ 2) เพื่อศึกษาความคิดเห็นของนักเรียนที่มีต่อการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้การสอนแบบสมิทธิภาพด้วยการอ่านและการเล่าเรื่อง กลุ่มตัวอย่าง คือ นักเรียนชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 5 จำนวน 25 คน จากโรงเรียนระดับประถมศึกษาแห่งหนึ่งในอำเภอห้วยคต จังหวัดอุทัยธานี โดยใช้วิธีการสุ่มแบบแบ่งกลุ่ม เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในการวิจัย ได้แก่ แผนการสอน แบบทดสอบวัดความสามารถในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ และแบบสอบถามความคิดเห็นของนักเรียน สถิติที่ใช้ในการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล ได้แก่ ทดสอบการแจกแจงแบบปกติของคะแนนก่อนและหลังเรียนโดยใช้ K-S test จากนั้นวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลหาค่าเฉลี่ย ส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน และใช้สถิติทีแบบไม่อิสระ

ผลการวิจัยพบว่า คะแนนเฉลี่ยความสามารถในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ ของนักเรียนหลังเรียนด้วยการสอนแบบสมิทธิภาพด้วยการอ่านและการเล่าเรื่องสูงกว่าก่อนเรียนอย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติที่ระดับ .05 และนักเรียนมีความคิดเห็นที่ดีต่อการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษแบบสมิทธิภาพด้วยการอ่านและการเล่าเรื่อง แสดงให้เห็นว่าการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษแบบสมิทธิภาพด้วยการอ่านและการเล่าเรื่องสามารถพัฒนาการความสามารถในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 5 ได้

คำสำคัญ: การสอนแบบสมิทธิภาพด้วยการอ่านและการเล่าเรื่อง, ความสามารถในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษ, การเล่าเรื่อง

Abstract

The research objectives of this study were: 1) to investigate the effects of Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) on fifth-grade students' English-speaking

ability and 2) to study students' opinions towards learning English using TPRS. The sample consisted of 25 fifth-grade students from one of the primary schools in Huay Khot district, Uthai Thani Province. They were selected using cluster random sampling. The instruments were the two lesson plans based on TPRS, an English-speaking ability test, and a questionnaire. The data were analyzed to test the normal distribution of the pre-test and post-test using the K-S test, then using mean (*M*), Standard Deviation (*SD*), and t-test for the dependent.

The results of this research showed that the mean score of the post-test of the English-speaking ability of the participants who learned English using TPRS was significantly higher than the pre-test one at the .05 level. The participants had favorable opinions towards learning English using TPRS. This study indicated that Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling could effectively develop fifth-grade students' speaking ability.

Keywords: Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), English Speaking Ability, Storytelling

Introduction

English, a globally ubiquitous language, is crucial for information acquisition and dissemination. Its prominence is often a marker of a nation's educational advancement. In Thailand, English language education is compulsory from kindergarten through high school (Ministry of Education, 2017). The curriculum emphasizes developing all four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Effective English language learning prioritizes communicative competence over rote memorization. Thus, speaking is important for developing students' language skills in school, enabling them to express themselves and interact with peers. This practice enhances communication and prepares students to build relationships with people from diverse backgrounds, an essential skill in today's globalized world (Crisianita & Mandasari, 2022). Success in English language learning is frequently equated with the ability to engage in fluent conversations (Nunan, 1991). Consequently, English education should prioritize vocabulary development from diverse sources and ample opportunities for real-world speaking practice.

Despite English being a part of the Thai elementary school curriculum for many years, students often graduate with limited speaking proficiency. While they may have a solid understanding of grammar and vocabulary, their ability to engage in spontaneous and fluent conversations remains underdeveloped. This lack of fluency presents a significant barrier to

their professional growth and future career opportunities, especially in an increasingly globalized workforce where English is a vital medium of communication (Sasum & Weeks, 2018). According to Hamilton et al. (2023), Thai students face challenges speaking English even after years of study due to reluctance, fear of failure, and lack of self-confidence. Speaking involves real-time interaction, which can cause anxiety and limit participation. Even with engaging topics, students may feel their contributions are irrelevant or struggle to find something to say. Large class sizes and dominant speakers also reduce practice opportunities. Creating a supportive and inclusive environment is essential to overcoming these barriers and improving students' speaking skills.

Based on the problem of fifth-grade students at the school district in Uthai Thani Province, there are several reasons why the students' speaking ability was still low when the researcher interviewed the English teachers at the school, especially at the fifth-grade level. One of the causes of the problem was that the teaching strategies were inappropriate. The strategy used in the teaching-learning process could not make all students speak English actively. The teacher only focused on the textbook and asked the students to memorize the conversation provided by the teacher. This situation is considered a traditional method, and it is not suitable for teaching speaking. The second problem was that the students feared making mistakes when speaking or conversing in English. The third problem was being passive learners; some did not want to talk or say anything and copied their peers' answers and responses to the teacher. As a result, the students are not active in the learning process of speaking.

To find a solution to these problems, one promising pedagogical method for enhancing oral proficiency is Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), initially called TPR-Storytelling, developed by Ray and Seely in 1998 (Ray & Seely, 2018). This method emphasizes the development of fluency through storytelling, incorporating gestures, acting, and visual aids. It is derived from the Total Physical Response method, which aims to facilitate vocabulary acquisition and oral skills development through engagement with stories, reading, and retelling using target vocabulary.

The concept of TPRS has its roots in several influential language teaching methods. Total Physical Response (TPR), developed by Asher (1968), emphasizes learning through physical movement, which helps in internalizing language through actions and reducing stress in the learning process. The Natural Approach, developed by Krashen and Terrell (1983), focuses on providing comprehensible input and lowering the affective filter to facilitate

language acquisition. TPR-Storytelling, initially developed by Ray and Seely (2005), combined these principles by incorporating storytelling to enhance language learning through engaging and memorable narratives. This method evolved into Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) as Ray and Seely (2005) refined the approach to include more structured storytelling and reading activities.

Studies on the TPRS method have applied a comprehensive language learning approach in various countries, including those by Eryilmaz (2019), Nugraha (2021), Ponguagoon & Lornklang (2022), and Printer (2021). These studies consistently show positive outcomes, particularly in enhancing oral proficiency. TPRS has also been found to improve attitudes towards language learning, increase motivation, and reduce anxiety, while providing opportunities for vocabulary acquisition. However, there remains a lack of research, both domestically and internationally, specifically focusing on the impact of TPRS on speaking ability.

Although the efficacy of TPRS in fostering overall English language proficiency has been widely explored, research specifically examining its impact on spoken language skills remains limited. This study aims to investigate the effects of TPRS on the speaking ability of fifth-grade students.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the effects of TPRS on the English-speaking ability of fifth-grade students.
2. To study the students' opinions towards learning English using TPRS.

Research Hypothesis

It was expected that using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) can enhance English speaking ability of fifth-grade students. Therefore, the hypothesis in this study is the mean score of the English-speaking ability in the post-test of the students who have been taught English by using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) will be significantly higher than the pre-test.

Research Methodology

1. Population and Samples

The population in this study comprised fifth graders from government schools in Huay Khot district, Uthai Thani Province, who were enrolled in English language courses during the first semester of the 2023 academic year. The population was arranged using mixed-ability classes. The samples consisted of 25 fifth-grade students from one of the primary schools in schools in Huay Khot, district, Uthai Thani Province in the first semester of the 2023 academic year. They were selected using cluster random sampling.

2. Instrumentation

2.1 The instruments used in the research procedure were two English lesson plans focused on teaching English via the Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) learning process outlined by Ray and Seely (2018). Each lesson plan took four hours to complete. The content of TPRS lesson plans related to the English core curriculum 2008 for primary students, especially fifth-grade students. The study topics were "Pete the Cat" and "Three Little Pigs." These topics were selected for several reasons: they are familiar to students at this level, the language used in these stories is suitable for fifth-grade students, and most students chose these two topics out of the four options. This selection process ensured the materials were engaging and appropriate for the student's language proficiency and interests. Each lesson contained a worksheet, relevant pictures, a script to retell the story, and tasks related to TPRS lesson plans. The lesson plans were divided into three main steps of teaching as follows:

1) Establish meaning: The teacher introduces new vocabulary and grammatical constructions in the narrative and assesses students' understanding of the terms.

2) Ask a story: In this step, the teacher and students collaboratively create a story. While telling it, the teacher uses the circling method, asking yes/no and wh-questions to assess students' comprehension.

3) Read and discuss: Students read and translate a written narrative provided by the teacher. During the discussion, they analyze the story’s grammar, storyline, characters, circumstances, and morals. Additionally, they share both the original and revised versions of the story with their peers.

Three experts verified the lesson plans. The average score for the lesson plan evaluation was 3.76 on a 4-point rating scale, indicating that the lesson plans were of excellent quality. These lesson plans were tested with students who were not part of the sample group but shared a similar background knowledge with the sample group.

2.2 The instruments for data collection were the English-speaking ability test used for the pre-test and the post-test and a questionnaire. 1) The English-speaking ability test was an interview comprising ten questions designed following the structure of the fifth-grade English curriculum. The Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) Index of all items ranged from 0.67 to 1.00, indicating that the test was acceptable and congruent with the objectives. The scoring rubric was adapted from New Haven Public Schools (2014) and Sawongta (2017) to evaluate students' English-speaking ability. The value of the correlation between the two raters, the researcher and another teacher, was 0.80, indicating a highly reliable relationship between their scores. To minimize bias, both raters ensured they thoroughly understood and consistently applied the details of the scoring rubric when assessing students' speaking ability. 2) The questionnaire was verified by the three experts and used to explore students' perspectives on learning English through the TPRS method, it included 10 closed-ended questions and three open-ended questions.

3. Data Collection

Data were collected during the first semester of the 2023 academic year. Initially, a pre-test was administered to 25 fifth-grade students at a school to assess their English-speaking ability before the treatment. The treatment involved two lesson plans using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS). Each lesson plan was taught for four hours, two hours per week. Finally, after the treatment, the students were administered a post-test to measure their English-speaking ability and completed a questionnaire to ascertain their opinions towards learning English using TPRS. This data collection process ensured that the student's progress could be accurately measured before and after the intervention, providing a clear picture of the effects of TPRS on their speaking ability.

4. Data Analysis

Due to this study's relatively small sample size (25 students), the pre-and post-test data were examined for normality using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test. This was done to ensure the selection of suitable inferential statistical tests, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1 The test for normality of data

Mode of Assessment	n	*M*	*SD*	K-S	p**
Pre-test	25	10.32	3.48	.070	.024
Post-test	25	14.56	3.77	.085	.050

**p<.01

Table 1 shows that the p-value of the pre-test was .024, and the p-value of the post-test was .050. This distribution of the pre-test and post-test scores was normal, or each data was insignificant because the p-value was higher than .01. Consequently, the simple t-test for the dependent was employed to analyze the pre-and post-test data. Data analysis was conducted as follows:

1. The pre-test and post-test English speaking ability data were analyzed using mean (*M*) Standard Deviations (*SD*) and a t-test for the dependent.

2. The students' opinions towards learning English using TPRS were analyzed using mean (*M*) and Standard Deviations (*SD*). Qualitative data from open-ended questions were analyzed through content analysis.

Research Results

The first objective is to investigate the effects of TPRS on students' speaking ability using the English-speaking ability test. The test consisted of 10 interview questions. The total score was 25 points. The results are presented in Tables 2 and 3

Table 2 The scores of the pre-test and post-test English speaking ability of fifth- grade students in five aspects (Total scores = 25 points)

Pre-test							Post-test					
No.	CH (5)	CT (5)	VC (5)	LG (5)	CM (5)	Total (25)	CH (5)	CT (5)	VC (5)	LG (5)	CM (5)	Total (25)
1	3	2	1	1	1	8	3	2	2	2	2	11
2	3	4	3	2	2	14	4	4	3	4	3	18
3	2	1	1	1	1	6	3	3	2	1	1	10
4	4	2	2	2	2	12	4	3	3	2	3	15
5	2	2	2	2	1	9	3	3	3	2	2	13
6	2	2	2	1	1	8	3	3	4	2	2	14
7	3	4	2	1	1	11	4	3	2	3	2	14
8	3	2	1	1	1	8	4	3	3	2	3	15

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Table 2 (Cont.)

Pre-test							Post-test					
No.	CH (5)	CT (5)	VC (5)	LG (5)	CM (5)	Total (25)	CH (5)	CT (5)	VC (5)	LG (5)	CM (5)	Total (25)
9	4	4	2	1	1	12	5	4	3	2	3	17
10	2	1	1	1	2	7	3	4	2	2	2	13
11	5	4	3	2	2	16	5	5	4	4	3	21
12	3	2	2	1	3	11	4	4	3	2	2	15
13	4	4	3	2	4	17	5	5	4	4	4	22
14	2	1	2	1	2	8	3	4	2	1	2	12
15	2	1	1	1	2	7	3	2	2	1	2	10
16	4	2	2	1	1	10	4	3	3	2	1	13
17	5	4	3	3	2	17	5	5	4	4	4	22
18	3	4	2	1	2	12	4	4	2	2	2	14
19	2	2	1	1	2	8	2	2	2	1	2	9
20	2	1	1	1	1	6	3	2	2	1	2	10
21	1	1	1	1	1	5	2	3	2	1	3	11
22	4	3	2	1	2	12	4	4	3	3	3	17
23	2	2	2	1	1	8	3	3	3	2	2	13
24	3	2	2	2	2	11	4	3	3	3	2	15
25	3	4	2	3	3	15	4	5	3	3	5	20
M	2.92	2.44	1.84	1.40	1.72	10.32	3.64	3.44	2.76	2.24	2.48	14.56
SD	1.03	1.1	.68	.64	.79	3.48	.86	.96	.72	1.01	.91	3.77

Note. CH = Comprehensibility CT = Content VC = Vocabulary Use
LG = Language Level CM = Communication Strategies

From Table 2, before learning English using TPRS, the highest pre-test score of English-speaking ability among students was 17 points (2 students). Moreover, the lowest score was 5 points. (1 student). The pre-test mean score was 10.32. After learning English using TPRS, students' highest post-test score of English-speaking ability was 22 points
(2 students), The lowest score was 9 points (1 student), and the post-test mean score was 14.56. Most samples achieved higher scores on the post-test compared to the pre-test.

The results from comparing the pre-test mean score of fifth-grade students' English-speaking ability with the post-test mean score in five aspects are presented in Table 3

Table 3 The comparison of fifth-grade students' pre-test mean score of English-speaking ability with the post-test mean score in five aspects.

Speaking aspects	Total score	Pre-test		Post-test		MD	t-test	p*
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
Comprehensibility	5	2.92	1.03	3.64	.86	.72	7.856*	.000
Content	5	2.44	1.19	3.44	.96	1.00	5.477*	.000
Vocabulary Use	5	1.84	.68	2.76	.72	.92	9.325*	.000
Language Level	5	1.40	.64	2.24	1.01	.84	5.629*	.000
Communication Strategies	5	1.72	.79	2.48	.48	.76	4.575*	.001
Total	25	10.32	3.48	14.56	3.77	4.24	15.559*	.000

**p < .05

As shown in Table 3, the post-test mean score for each English-speaking aspect (Comprehensibility, Content, Vocabulary Use, Language Level, and Communication Strategies) was significantly higher than the pre-test mean score at the .05 level. Moreover, the total mean score for the post-test of fifth-grade students who learned English through TPRS (*M*= 14.56) was significantly higher than the pre-test mean score (*M*= 10.32) at the .05 level.

According to objective 2, this part aims to show the result of the students' opinions towards learning English using TPRS. The questionnaire was utilized to investigate students' views on learning English through TPRS. This questionnaire contains 2 parts, which are 10 closed questions and 3 open-ended questions. In the part of the closed questions, the students were asked to respond to 10 closed questions related to learning English using TPRS by selecting a point on an opinion scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The results of the students' opinions towards learning English using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling are shown in Table 4

Table 4 Students' opinions towards learning English using the TPRS.

Statements	*M*	*SD*	Meaning
1. The lessons are fascinating	4.00	.76	Agree
2. The stories used in the lessons are suitable for the student's ability.	3.72	.89	Agree
3. The learning materials are properly designed.	3.92	.90	Agree
4. The learning steps are well-organized.	3.80	.86	Agree
5. The learning tasks are suitable for the student's level.	3.96	.93	Agree
6. Learning English using TPRS enhances student's English-speaking skills.	3.96	.84	Agree
7. Learning English using TPRS helps to encourage students' engagement in learning English.	4.20	.70	Agree
8. Learning English using TPRS supports group activities.	4.12	.92	Agree
9. The knowledge gained from the lessons can be used in everyday life.	4.04	.73	Agree
10. Student likes to study the English language through TPRS	4.16	.85	Agree
Total	3.98	.23	Agree

As presented in Table 4, the assessment item with the highest average score showed that the majority of students agreed that learning English through TPRS helps to encourage students' engagement in learning English (*M*= 4.20). The assessment item with the lowest average score indicated that most students agreed that the stories used in the lessons were suitable for the students' abilities. (*M*= 3.72). The overall average score of the questionnaire was 3.98, suggesting that students had favorable views on learning English through TPRS. The open-ended part of the questionnaire revealed that students perceived an improvement in their confidence in speaking English when they participated in group activities. They reported that working collaboratively with peers, utilizing gestures, and engaging in word-guessing games made English classes more enjoyable and engaging. This TPRS method was viewed as an effective method to enhance their confidence while maintaining an engaging and dynamic learning environment.

Discussion

Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) is widely recognized as an effective pedagogical approach for developing speaking skills in language learners. This method prioritizes communication over grammatical accuracy, fostering spontaneous speech,

confidence, and language proficiency. By incorporating movement, gestures, and comprehensible input, TPRS creates a low-stress learning environment (Ray & Seely, 2018).

According to, Ponguagoon and Lornklang (2022) reported that students taught through TPRS exhibited significant improvements in vocabulary learning achievement, as reflected in higher post-test scores. Similarly, Fagertun (2020) found that TPRS outperformed traditional read-aloud techniques in second-language learning contexts, reinforcing its efficacy in promoting oral proficiency. These findings highlight TPRS as a superior alternative to conventional teaching methods by fostering meaningful engagement and deeper linguistic retention.

Storytelling, a core component of TPRS, is essential for language development, enhancing narrative comprehension, self-expression, and creative retelling. For instance, Nair and Yunus (2021) highlight its role in improving young learners' speaking skills through active participation. Moreover, this teaching method can enhance learners' overall learning outcomes, particularly in developing their speaking skills. When learners grasp the language input, their understanding is further reinforced through these engaging physical activities (Zhang & Sheng, 2024). Likewise, Yan and Zhao (2019) notes that storytelling reinforces oral proficiency and comprehension by encouraging students to reconstruct narratives in their own words.

The immersive and dramatic nature of TPRS enhances vocabulary retention and student engagement. For example, Bulan and Kasapoglu (2021) found that students in TPRS-based environments showed significant vocabulary gains. Additionally, mini-story dramatization, gestures, and contextualized vocabulary use improved retention and sustained interest in language learning.

The results of students' opinions on learning English with TPRS showed strong support for the method. Nugraha (2021) indicated the effectiveness in teaching speaking skills to tenth-grade students in Bandung, noting highly positive attitudes toward the approach. Similarly, Ponguagoon and Lornklang (2022) found that TPRS improved students' opinions about learning English. Printer (2021) examined secondary school students' perceptions of TPRS through a self-determination theory (SDT) lens, revealing that students viewed the method as fun, engaging, and novel, which fosters intrinsic motivation in foreign language learners.

In conclusion, although teaching English using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling has not been widely used in teaching and learning English in Thailand. This

study confirms that learning English using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling can be used in teaching English Speaking. Especially in young learners because stories can motivate young learners' according to pictures, video clips, sounds, and sentence repetition. In teaching English using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling, the teacher needs to 1) select a story that is interesting, meaningful, and suitable for students' level, 2) monitor and support group work activity and give meaningful recommendations, 3) use various resources or material to motivate or input in order to give them background knowledge before starting class. These helped students to learn English vocabulary better. Moreover, the results from the questionnaire on students' opinions towards learning English using Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling supported students' opinions positively.

Recommendations

Based on this study, several recommendations for instruction are as follows:

1) The teacher should consider students' level and proficiency, especially their mix-ability, before planning the teaching step and designing activities to suit their abilities.

2) The stories used in teaching English speaking should end with a moral because students can express their opinions and share what they think. The teacher should end the story positively.

Suggestions for future research include: 1) Further study should investigate teaching English using TPRS with students of different levels to improve their English-speaking ability. 2) Further study should investigate teaching English using TPRS with other story types related to students' levels and prior knowledge.

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