Sindoro
CENDIKIA PENDIDIKAN
ISSN: 3025-6488

Vol. 18 No 8, Tahun 2026
Palagiarism Check 02/234/67/78

THE USE OF PEER TUTORING ON SPEAKING ABILITY OF ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMKN 2 PANDEGLANG

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Abstract
This study aimed to determine the effect of the peer tutoring method on the speaking ability of eleventh-grade students at SMKN 2 Pandeglang. The study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group design. The research sample consisted of 35 students in the experimental group and 34 students in the control group. Speaking pre-test and post-test data were collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics, normality tests, homogeneity tests and independent samples t-test. The results indicated that the mean score of the experimental group increased from 55.29 to 74.03 and the mean score of the control group increased from 42.15 to 57.76. The independent samples t-test results showed the significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that the peer tutoring method had a positive and statistically significant effect on students' speaking ability.

Keywords: Peer Tutoring, Speaking Ability, eleventh-grade students, quasi-experimental design

Article History
Received: Juli 2026
Reviewed: Juli 2026
Published: Juli 2026

Plagirism Checker No 2635

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Publish by : Sindoro

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the most basic skills in learning English as it allows the learners to share ideas, give information and interact with others in meaningful communication. Thornbury (2005) states that speaking is the process of constructing and sharing meaning using verbal and non-verbal language in a variety of communicative situations. Learners need to develop several aspects of speaking such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency and comprehension to be able to communicate effectively (Brown, 2004). Speaking is viewed as a crucial indicator of the general English proficiency, as it demonstrates the learners' capacity to use the language in actual life situations (Richards, 2008). This is also found in the Merdeka Curriculum of Indonesia, which emphasizes communicative competence as one of the main objectives of English language learning.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Indonesia still face difficulties developing speaking skill, although speaking is an important skill. The previous studies found that students' speaking performance was still hindered by limited vocabulary, lack of grammatical knowledge, and incorrect pronunciation (Prasojo et al., 2023). In many classrooms, teaching is teacher centered and students have limited opportunities to actively practice speaking English. Besides, teacher-centered and old-fashioned teaching methods are likely to lead to less classroom interaction and less student participation, and thus, less chances for learners to practice speaking English (Ali et al., 2025). The same condition is found in SMKN 2 Pandeglang. The English lessons observed in the classroom were mainly teacher-centered activities with little opportunity for students to communicate and practice speaking. Hence, many students showed relatively low speaking ability.

One way of handling this is through learning strategies that make students more active in classroom activities. In the usual learning situations students help their classmates in case they have difficulties. However, this support is generally informal and seeks more to provide answers than to help classmates understand the learning process (Montanero & Franco, 2024). Therefore, peer interaction needs to be more systematically organized to contribute to meaningful learning. Peer tutoring is one approach which offers this type of structured interaction where students learn by helping and guiding each other in the learning process (Falchikov, 2001). This strategy is seen as effective as students tend to feel more comfortable asking questions, discussing ideas and practicing English with their classmates than with their teachers (Topping, 2005).

Some previous studies have reported that peer tutoring was effective to improve speaking ability. Peer tutoring resulted in higher participation and better performance in English conversation tasks (Trang, 2023). Similarly, Chantaraphat and Jaturapitakkul (2023) found that tutor–tutee activities developed the students' fluency, self-confidence and sentence construction. In another study, Ariesinta and Widyantoro (2024) reported that peer tutoring led to improvements in students' fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, collaborative skills, and self-confidence in a multi-age EFL classroom. The findings point to the great potential of peer tutoring to support speaking development in English language learning.

The evidence of the benefits of peer tutoring is increasing, but the studies on Indonesian vocational high schools using a quantitative quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group are still relatively limited. Therefore, this research will be conducted to investigate the effect of peer tutoring method to the students' speaking ability of the eleventh-grade students of SMKN 2 Pandeglang. The findings are hoped to add to the existing body of literature and also provide practical insights for English teachers who intend to establish more interactive and student-centered speaking classrooms.

METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental research design with a non-equivalent control group design. The research was conducted at SMKN 2 Pandeglang and was done on two classes of the eleventh grade, which were selected through convenience sampling based on class schedule availability. The experimental group was Class XI DKV 1 with 35 students, and the control group was Class XI DKV 3 with 34 students, making the total number of participants 69. Independent variable was peer tutoring strategy. Dependent variable was students' ability in speaking.

The instrument of this study was an oral speaking test of analytical exposition speech. Brown's (2004) speaking rubric was used to measure the students' speaking performance. This rubric assesses five components: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Each component was scored on a 5-point scale with a maximum score of 100. All subjects were given a pre-test of speaking before the treatment and an equivalent post-test after the treatment.

The experimental group was taught through peer tutoring strategy in two instructional sessions. The students were grouped heterogeneously where one high achieving student acted as a tutor to guide his peers in understanding analytical exposition texts including their generic structure, language features and speaking performance. In speaking practice tutors gave feedback on

pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and fluency without directly giving the answers. During the same instructional time, the control group learned the same material using traditional teacher-centered instruction without any structured peer interaction.

The validity of the content of the instrument was used and was determined by expert judgment. The English teacher reviewed the speaking tasks and scoring rubric to ensure that they were well representative of the intended speaking competencies and that they were aligned with the learning objectives. The expert said that the instrument was suitable to measure students' speaking ability.

Inter-rater reliability was investigated by Cohen's Kappa coefficient as the speaking test consisted of subjective performance assessment. Two raters, a researcher and an English teacher, independently scored each student's speaking performance according to the same scoring rubric. The Kappa coefficients of the pre-test and post-test in the experimental and control groups indicated substantial to almost perfect agreement ($\kappa = 0.878$ for experimental pre-test, $\kappa = 0.662$ for control pre-test, $\kappa = 0.812$ for experimental post-test, and $\kappa = 0.760$ for control post-test; all $p = 0.000$) and consistency and reliability of the scoring procedure.

SPSS was used for analysis of quantitative data of pre-test and post-test. Descriptive statistics were then used to summarize students' speaking scores. Then the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was used to determine the normality of the data distribution. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was used to assess the homogeneity of the variances between the two groups. When both assumptions were satisfied, an independent samples t-test was used to compare the post-test mean scores of the experimental and control groups at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

FINDINGS

The findings of this study are presented in accordance with the research objective of examining the effect of the peer tutoring method on students' speaking ability.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test Experimental Class	35	30	96	55.29	14.319
Post-test Experimental Class	35	50	100	74.03	13.759
Pre-test Control Class	34	20	74	42.15	14.784
Post-test Control Class	34	32	86	57.76	14.002
Valid N (listwise)	34				

The descriptive statistics indicate that both groups showed improvement from the pre-test to the post-test. The experimental group's mean score increased from 55.29 to 74.03, representing an improvement of 18.74 points. Meanwhile, the control group's mean score increased from 42.15 to 57.76, with an improvement of 15.61 points. These results suggest that the experimental group achieved a greater increase in speaking scores than the control group.

Table 2 Normality Test

Tests of Normality

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Class	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-test	Experimental Class	.099	35	.200*	.970	35	.436
	Control Class	.146	34	.064	.932	34	.035
Post-test	Experimental Class	.076	35	.200*	.970	35	.443
	Control Class	.087	34	.200*	.977	34	.682

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The results of the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test showed significance values of 0.200, 0.064, 0.200, and 0.200 for the experimental pre-test, control pre-test, experimental post-test, and control post-test, respectively. Since all significance values were greater than 0.05, the data were normally distributed.

Table 3 Homogeneity Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Pre-test	Based on Mean	.170	1	67	.682
	Based on Median	.024	1	67	.878
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.024	1	65.887	.878
	Based on trimmed mean	.143	1	67	.706
Post-test	Based on Mean	.003	1	67	.958
	Based on Median	.000	1	67	.999
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.000	1	66.657	.999
	Based on trimmed mean	.002	1	67	.962

Levene's test yielded significance values of 0.682 for the pre-test and 0.958 for the post-test. Since both values were greater than 0.05, the variances of the experimental and control groups were considered homogeneous.

Table 4 Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Post-test	Equal variances assumed	.003	.958	4.866	67	.000	16.264	3.342	9.593	22.935
	Equal variances not assumed			4.865	66.853	.000	16.264	3.343	9.591	22.937

The independent samples *t*-test showed a significant difference between the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups (t = 4.866, df = 67, p = 0.000). Since the significance value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the peer tutoring strategy had a significant positive effect on students' speaking ability.

DISCUSSION

The statistical results indicated that the students who were taught by the peer tutoring strategy had significantly greater improvement in speaking ability than those who were taught by the conventional teacher-centered instruction. The results revealed that peer tutoring was effective in improving students' speaking performance. The improvement cannot be fully attributed to the statistical results, but may be explained by some theoretical and contextual considerations.

Theoretically, the findings are consistent with the Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which states that students learn better in the help of someone who has more knowledge or experience than they do, for example, a teacher or a more competent peer. In the experimental group, tutors were instructed to help their peers by providing explanations, posing questions, and offering feedback, instead of directly giving the correct answers. Such an approach enabled tutees to actively build their understanding with appropriate learning support . The results also support Piaget's (1970) view that cognitive development is facilitated by social interaction. In peer tutoring, students shared ideas, practiced speaking, corrected each other, and improved their speaking performance together which assisted them to improve their speaking ability through repetition.

Another possible explanation for the greater improvement in the experiment group could be the affective aspect of language learning, particularly speaking anxiety. Students feel more comfortable interacting with their peers than with teachers, which creates a more relaxed learning environment that encourages participation in speaking activities (Topping, 2005). Such a more relaxed learning environment might have reduced students' fear of making mistakes, encouraged more participation during speaking activities and increased their

willingness to practice english. As a result, students were more frequently given chances to improve their fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and overall speaking performance.

Peer tutoring also benefits tutors as well as tutees. Tutors must reframe their understanding and explain the learning material in their own words while answering their peers' questions. The process reinforces their own understanding of vocabulary, grammar and text organization. Such reciprocal learning is in keeping with Vygotsky's (1978) view that learning is augmented through social interaction and collaborative construction of knowledge. This mutual benefit may explain why so many higher achieving students, and lower achieving students in the experimental group, improved between the pre-test and post-test.

The findings of the present study are also in line with previous studies on peer tutoring in EFL speaking classrooms. Trang (2023) found that peer tutoring improved students' performance in English speaking tasks through participation and peer support. Chantaraphat and Jaturapitakkul (2023) also found that students' fluency, self-confidence, and sentence construction were improved after students participated in tutor–tutee activities. Similarly, Ariesinta and Widyantoro (2024) found that peer tutoring improved students' fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, self-confidence, and collaborative skills in the multi-age EFL classroom. The present study extends these findings by providing statistically significant evidence of the effectiveness of peer tutoring in an Indonesian vocational high school using quasi-experimental research design.

However, there are some limitations to be noted. The use of convenience sampling and only two intact classes limits the generalizability of the findings to other vocational high schools or educational settings. Secondly, the duration of treatment is relatively short which may not be enough to reflect the long-term effect of peer tutoring on students' speaking development. Thus, it is suggested that future studies include more diverse participants, use longer intervention periods, and explore the efficiency of peer tutoring in enhancing other English language skills such as listening, reading, and writing.

Nevertheless, the results have important implications for pedagogy. Peer tutoring is a viable and low-cost pedagogical approach to enhance students' interaction and speaking practices in English classes. This approach can assist teachers in going beyond teacher-centered instruction, and establishing a more communicative learning environment that can facilitate the development of students' speaking ability by promoting active participation, collaborative learning, and peer support.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effect of the peer tutoring strategy on the speaking ability of eleventh-grade vocational high school students using a quasi-experimental design with a non-equivalent control group. Both the experimental and control groups showed improvement from the pre-test to the post-test. However, the experimental group demonstrated a greater increase in speaking scores, with the mean score rising from 55.29 to 74.03, while the control group's mean score increased from 42.15 to 57.76. Overall, the experimental group achieved an improvement of 18.74 points, compared with 15.61 points in the control group. The independent samples *t*-test further confirmed that the difference between the two groups was statistically significant, with a significance value of 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis was

rejected, indicating that the peer tutoring strategy had a significant positive effect on students' speaking ability.

These findings suggest that structured peer tutoring can serve as an effective pedagogical alternative for developing speaking ability in EFL classrooms. By increasing meaningful speaking practice, reducing speaking anxiety through peer interaction, and promoting collaborative learning, the strategy benefits both tutors and tutees in improving their language skills. Based on these findings, English teachers are encouraged to incorporate peer tutoring into speaking instruction, particularly in classrooms where opportunities for teacher-led speaking practice are limited. Schools are also encouraged to support its implementation by providing training for student tutors and allocating sufficient time for collaborative speaking activities.

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