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The Role of Teachers in Enhancing Public Speaking Abilities among Primary School Students

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ABSTRACT

Public speaking is a crucial skill in the 21st century, but numerous primary school students struggle to convey their opinions within a group environment. The main objective of the research was to determine which activities improve public speaking skills, the influence of instructors, and the factors influencing their capacity to introduce these activities at Muhammadiyah Purwodiningratan Primary School in Yogyakarta. The study employed a descriptive qualitative methodology, incorporating in-depth interviews and direct observation with the headteacher, two teacher-coaches, and four pupils, supplemented by documentary triangulation of activity records. Findings revealed that the principal activities, pildacil (children's Islamic speech contest) and saritilawah (Qur'anic recitation and speech competition), served as primary channels for pupils to practise courage, fluency, and overall speaking proficiency. Teachers functioned as facilitators, motivators, and coaches by routinely encouraging classroom discourse, tailoring materials to individual pupil needs, and providing emotional support to alleviate nervousness and stage fright. Success was underpinned by institutional school support, active parental engagement, and pupils' intrinsic motivation. The main impediments were insufficient practice time, disparities in the levels of preparedness among pupils, and variations in their initial public speaking skills. Research findings confirm that faith-based initiatives are a successful approach for developing public-speaking skills in primary school students. Effective time management and enhanced collaboration between teachers and parents are essential for guaranteeing the long-term success of comparable projects.

Keywords
Communication Skills
Public Speaking
Self-Confidence
Supporting Activities
Teacher's Role

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Introduction

While developing public speaking skills is essential for the modern era and should begin as early as primary school. Achieving this level of proficiency not only enhances self-confidence but also promotes critical thinking and enhances communication skills among students [1]. Despite this, numerous primary school students continue to face challenges in articulating their perspectives, articulately pronouncing their words, and structuring their thoughts in a logical sequence. This situation highlights a gap between the need for effective communication and students' capacity to utilise it in the classroom [2].

Conversely, advances in modern education establish public speaking as an increasingly essential skill to be nurtured from an early age. This capability has been shown not only to support academic achievement but also to strengthen pupils' self-confidence and adaptability in thinking during social interactions. Contemporary literature reviews confirm that public speaking contributes significantly to the calibre of communication and pupils' engagement in 21st-century education [3].

Numerous studies clarify that challenges in public speaking are often shaped by both psychological and pedagogical elements. Pupils commonly experience nervousness, shyness, or apprehension about erring when addressing the class [4]. Such barriers are intensified by inadequate practice opportunities, restricted variety in teaching approaches, and a scarcity of auxiliary activities designed to promote the systematic advancement of speaking abilities. Nonetheless, endeavours like storytelling, morning literacy routines, group deliberations, and oratory contests may function as potent mechanisms for boosting pupils' boldness and articulacy in speech [5].

Teachers occupy a central position in educational settings, acting as facilitators to create interactive and supportive learning environments. Bandura's (1986) Social Learning Theory suggests that learning occurs through observing and imitating relevant model behaviors, and that teachers who demonstrate effective speaking practices and provide positive feedback can assist students in developing public speaking skills. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in language and cognitive development, attributing critical value to collaborative activities within students' zone of proximal development [6]. Research by [7] suggests that teachers' communication

abilities have a direct impact on students' ability to comprehend coursework and participate more in the learning process.

The design and implementation of speaking activities by teachers play a crucial role in developing students' self-confidence and communication skills. Structured public speaking activities encourage active participation and meaningful engagement in the classroom. Beyond being a technical ability, public speaking serves as a pedagogical tool to foster effective communication aligned with the demands of 21st-century education and the Society 5.0 era [8].

However, in practical school contexts, the primary problem addressed in this research is the limited availability of supplementary learning activities implemented by teachers at at Muhammadiyah Purwodiningratan Primary School to develop primary school students' public speaking abilities. The school is also missing a comprehensive and ongoing programme to foster good speaking habits, which ultimately prevents the pupils' self-confidence and communication skills from developing to their full potential.

Although previous studies have explored public speaking development from various perspectives, studies have found that public speaking skills in primary school pupils are substantially impacted by both linguistic and psychological factors. Research by [9] suggests that students' vocabulary mastery and self-confidence levels have a significant correlation with their speaking fluency, indicating that learning interventions focusing on both areas can enhance verbal performance. According to [1], early public speaking training is vital for fostering a confident character in children and improving their communication skills through structured oral expression.

Furthermore, studies have investigated the efficacy of particular teaching techniques in cultivating spoken language skills, with a focus on reducing the effects of performance anxiety. Research by [5] indicates that game-based learning leads to a decrease in students' speaking anxiety levels and promotes active participation in the learning process. The research of [10] shows that regular practice in religious speech can greatly enhance students' verbal abilities and build their confidence in public speaking situations. Studies by [11] found that TBLT and CLT approaches improve speaking fluency and encourage active student participation.

Previous studies have predominantly emphasized formal language instruction and conventional classroom-based approaches to improving students' public speaking skills. However, limited attention has been given to the teacher's role in utilizing supplementary, non-formal, faith-based activities to enhance speaking competence and self-confidence. This study addresses this gap by providing a qualitative case-based analysis of how non-formal

school activities contribute to the development of primary students' speaking competence and confidence.

This study seeks to bridge a research gap by investigating the absence of empirical studies on the deliberate and sustained development and implementation of supplementary public speaking initiatives by educators. Previous academic research has predominantly concentrated on conventional learning methods and formal language instruction techniques. This lack therefore represents a significant deficiency in the deep analysis of the impact that these co-curricular activities have on students' self-confidence and their ability to communicate effectively.

This research aims to address the recognised gap and make a contribution to the field by first identifying the dominant supplementary public speaking programmes and initiatives within educational institutions. The study will then go on to elaborate in detail the instructional role that teachers play in developing students' public speaking skills. An additional goal is to identify both the factors that support and those that hinder the success of these initiatives. The research ultimately aims to analyse the effects of these additional interactions on students' self-assurance and their overall communication abilities.

Material and Methods

A. Type and Design

This study uses a descriptive qualitative methodology to gain a comprehensive understanding of the teacher's role in creating and implementing additional activities that improve the public speaking skills of primary school students. This methodological decision allows for a contextual investigation of the educational practices and non-academic activities put in place to develop students' self-assurance and communication abilities.

The study employs a case study approach, focusing primarily on Muhammadiyah Purwodiningratan Primary School in Yogyakarta. This approach enables a detailed examination of the processes, strategies, and interactions involved in the school's public speaking support activities. It also enables an exploration of the meanings and lived experiences from the viewpoints of the teachers and students involved.

B. Data and Data Sources

Data for this study were gathered through in-depth interviews conducted with the head teacher, teachers, and students at Muhammadiyah Purwodiningratan Primary School, Yogyakarta. The interview method was chosen as the main data collection technique because of its effectiveness in gathering a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and viewpoints. To select participants relevant to the study, a purposive sampling method was used, which helped in gathering detailed and context-specific information [12].

The students were selected to represent varying levels of public speaking confidence, ranging from those who demonstrated high confidence to those who were relatively less confident. This strategy allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of how teacher support influenced students with different characteristics.

The research supplemented primary data with secondary data that consisted of documentation regarding public speaking activities, such as training materials, event photographs, and competition records. These secondary sources played a crucial role in verifying the data, supporting the accuracy of the findings obtained from interviews and observations. The data collection process involved multiple sessions to ensure comprehensive and accurate information regarding the implementation of these activities within the school environment. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the school principal. Prior to participation, students were informed about the purpose of the study and agreed to participate voluntarily. Participants' identities were anonymized to ensure confidentiality.

C. Data Collection Technique

In-depth interviews were conducted to gather detailed information about the teacher's role in developing students' public speaking skills and the strategies used in the supplementary activities. In qualitative inquiry, interviewing goes beyond a basic question-and-answer format, instead serving as a method to delve into participants' everyday lives, emotional reactions, and viewpoints in a detailed manner [13].

Following this, participatory observation was conducted to directly observe the interactional dynamics between the teacher and pupils during the implementation of public speaking support activities. This observational approach allowed the researcher to understand the underlying classroom dynamics, the pupils' responses, and the different teaching methods employed by the teacher to encourage and motivate pupils towards confident public speaking. The documentation collected photographs, video recordings, and activity logs, which enhanced the credibility of the conclusions derived from the interviews and observations. The data collection process involved multiple sessions to guarantee the acquisition of comprehensive and accurate data relating to the implementation of these activities in the school environment.

D. Data Analysis

This study involved interactive data analysis, following the model outlined by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of three separate stages: data reduction, data display, and drawing/verifying conclusions. [14] define qualitative data analysis as a systematic and ongoing process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting data to achieve a thorough understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The data were presented in a descriptive narrative format, highlighting patterns and relationships between the teacher's

role, various supplementary activities, and their subsequent effects on students' self-confidence and communication skills.

Inferences were derived from examining the displayed data and subsequently verified through source and methodological triangulation. As noted by [15], this rigorous approach ensures the high validity and credibility of the research findings. [16] point out that the interactive analysis model has a natural ability to be flexible, enabling researchers to go through repeated cycles of reduction, display, and verification as they respond to the changing data in the field. These analytical procedures, carried out systematically, helped to maintain data accuracy and provide a deep understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

Results

Interviews and observations revealed that public speaking initiatives at Muhammadiyah Purwodiningratan Primary School are integrated into both the formal curriculum and several religious-based supplementary learning activities. Teachers adopt active roles as facilitators, motivators, and coaches in these initiatives. This study involved the Head Teacher, two teacher-coaches, and four pupils participating in the activities.

Table 1. Respondent Information

Initials	Role	Description
YSR	School's Principal	Responsible for policy oversight and support for public speaking activities
AZN	Teacher	*Pildacil* Coach
FSP	Teacher	*Saritilawah* Coach
AKA	Student	*Pildacil* Participant
DS	Student	*Pildacil* Participant
MBTP	Student	*Saritilawah* Participant
ATPM	Student	*Saritilawah* Participant

A. The Nature of Public Speaking Support Activities

At the observed school, a structured program supports the development of public speaking skills through regular practice sessions and participation in internal and external competitions. These activities specifically comprise the Little Preacher Contest (*Pildacil*) and the Poetic Quran Translation (*Saritilawah*). This observation is supported by interview data, with a teacher noting that Pildacil and Saritilawah are the most prominent activities due to their annual, routine implementation. The teacher offered a thorough explanation of this point:

Question: "What activities are employed to develop pupils' ability to deliver public speeches?"

Response: "Presently, the activities that are commonly carried out are *Pildacil* and *Saritilawah*." (FSP)

Interviews with two students, a Year 4 pupil and a Year 5 pupil, revealed that they first gained public speaking experience through the Pildacil activities. One of the students commented:

Question: "Which school activities have you been involved in that necessitated speaking in front of an audience?"

Response: "I am a participant in *Pildacil*. I had earlier tried *Saritilawah*, but I eventually chose *Pildacil*." (AKA)

Additionally, when asked the identical question, two year 6 pupils explained that they had been involved in *Saritilawah* since Year 3. Their foundation in public speaking is attributed to their involvement in the *Saritilawah* activity.

The interview findings clearly indicate that *Pildacil* and *Saritilawah* are the key public speaking support activities at the observed school.

B. The Teacher's Role in Developing Students' Public Speaking Ability

Teachers take a central part in developing students' public speaking skills, encompassing the planning stage of events through to technical guidance during their execution. In this process, the teacher plays a role not only as a facilitator and coach but also as a motivator who inspires pupils to be brave enough to perform and express themselves. According to the interview findings, instructors implement personalised strategies by adapting their teaching techniques to match the distinct personality and foundational skill level of each student. This is shown by the following comment from a teacher (FSP):

Question: "What steps do you take to assist in pupils' development of public speaking skills?"

Response: "My routine usually starts with simple, basic exercises. Next, each child takes a turn stepping forward to read, introduce themselves, or share an opinion with their classmates. As I build confidence in the outgoing youngsters, I also encourage the more timid ones gradually. During the *Saritilawah* activity, I initially have pupils undertake the task to gauge their aptitude for a specific text type, yet still enabling each pupil to engage and participate. This approach essentially makes public speaking a regular part of their daily routines, helping them become accustomed to clear and accurate communication." (FSP)

The teacher also designs the material and teaches foundational public speaking skills tailored to the students' individual personalities:

Question: "How do you plan public speaking activities to match the students' requirements?"

Response: "I create tailored texts for each student, then provide intensive practice on their presentation skills in the lead-up to competitions, making the most of any available downtime." (AZN)

The finding indicates that educators provide emotional support to pupils when they experience anxiety, which is regarded as an essential method for enhancing self-assurance in public oration. The majority of the students also voiced this concern, who typically indicated experiencing a positive outcome from this encouragement, as one student described below:

Question: "When you felt nervous, what did the teacher do to help you feel more courageous?"

Response: "When I felt nervous, the teacher would reassure me and boost my confidence, such as by telling me that I would definitely succeed because I had prepared thoroughly. It made me feel more confident, even though I was still frightened. This made me feel more confident, even though I was still scared." (AKA)

The interview results show that teachers play a crucial part in enhancing students' public speaking skills, encompassing both regular classroom activities and additional specialised programmes.

C. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

The research findings suggest that both enabling and limiting factors influence the implementation of public speaking activities at the studied school, as illustrated by the following interview quote:

> Question: "What types of assistance does the school offer to teachers in order to facilitate the implementation of public speaking support programs?"
>
> Response: "We express gratitude towards the teacher-coaches. In addition, the school provides administrative support for tasks like registering for competitions, issuing official letters, and accompanying students during events." (YSR)

Parental support is viewed as a vital component in the successful execution of public speaking assignments. The interview findings are corroborated by the statement from teacher AZN, who noted that:

> Question: "What factors contribute to the success of public speaking activities at the school?"
>
> Response: "The key elements that lead to public speaking success are parental support, teacher guidance, and the child's motivation. A parent's involvement in coaching their child at home can significantly impact their development, as evident in the case of a mother who noticed her child's interest in *Pildacil* and subsequently enrolled them in the Jogja Creative Community, a public speaking organisation." (AZN)

The majority of pupils stated that they participated in *Pildacil* and *Saritilawah* because they enjoyed the activities:

> Question: " If you had to choose one, what is your preferred public speaking activity? What is it about it that you like?"
>
> Response: " I had previously tried the *Saritilawah* activity, but I find *Pildacil* more appealing due to its intonation. Although it required me to memorise a lengthy text initially, my enjoyment of it made the process more manageable." (AKA)

The public speaking support activities have been largely successful, yet the interviews uncovered a number of existing difficulties, as noted in a statement from one of the coaches involved in the activity:

> Question: "During the activities, what obstacles arise?"
>
> Response: "The issues I'm experiencing typically stem from conflicts between my own schedule and the children's. Building children's self-confidence is not a straightforward process. Teaching children to understand the underlying meaning of expressions can be a difficult task, and not all kids are able to grasp this concept. Many children initially read in a normal tone without inflection or expression during the early stages of practice. The primary constraint is that not all students have a foundation in public speaking, a skill also impacted by their domestic environments. Children who are rarely encouraged to speak at home or are frequently dictated to tend to become less accustomed to expressing themselves verbally. Additionally, limited support from parents is also a challenge." (FSP)

Therefore, it can be argued that public speaking activities are still restricted by a considerable number of constraints that affect the efficiency of their implementation. Optimising the students' coaching process is a critical consideration for teachers.

D. Impact of Activities on Students' Public Speaking Ability

Research findings have indicated that participation in public speaking activities has a beneficial impact on student progress and growth. This outcome is clear from the statements of the teachers, especially AZN (the *Pildacil* coach) and *FSP* (the Saritilawah coach):

> Question: "What do you believe is the effect of these additional activities on students' ability to give public speeches?"
>
> Response: "The effect is significant, particularly with regard to youngsters' self-confidence and communication skills, which are the primary objectives of public speaking." (FSP)
>
> Question: "What do you think is the effect of these additional activities on students' ability to speak in public?"
>
> Response: "It appears that these activities have a considerable impact. Notably, regardless of the rate of individual progress, improvements in their public speaking abilities are observed consistently. Dinata, in his Year 3, was generally quiet and reserved. Participating in *Pildacil* on a regular basis since Year 4 has clearly shown an increase in his self-confidence. He is now more inclined to move to the front of the class, is active during presentations, and can even introduce his group in English. From the start, Ataya, who is naturally outgoing, has demonstrated notable improvements in her presentation style and delivery. Despite the fact that individual progress differs, noticeable enhancement in their public speaking skills is consistently apparent." (AZN)

Students also reported that they moved from states of fear, shyness, or anxiety to becoming more confident and self-assured after participating in the *Pildacil* and *Saritilawah* activities. This is exemplified by the statements made by respondents DS and MBTP:

> Question: "Do you believe participating in events like the Pildacil competition can boost your self-confidence?"
>
> Response: "My past difficulties in classroom settings due to my shyness have led to this current situation. As a result of my involvement in *Pildacil*, my self-confidence began to increase. I've observed a consistent rise in my self-confidence, accompanied by a marked shift in my overall levels of confidence. I've noticed a significant shift towards becoming more confident, even with the slow and steady progress." (DS)
>
> Question: "Following regular involvement in Saritilawah events, do you experience increased confidence when required to give a public speech?"
>
> Response: "I've become much more courageous. Frequent performances in front of others have left me feeling less nervous than I once was. When speaking in public, I now feel more prepared and confident." (MBTP)

During interviews, several other students shared similar views, showing that the data as a whole indicates these activities have a positive effect on the students' public speaking skills.

Discussion

This study aims to examine the implementation of supplementary public speaking activities at the observed school through an analysis of three key aspects: the types of activities, the teacher's role, and the factors that facilitate or hinder their delivery. This study assesses the effect of these activities on the development of pupils' communication skills. Public

speaking is widely recognised as a crucial skill for enhancing communication competence and self-confidence [17]. The findings suggest that public speaking has become an essential part of the school's educational values, facilitated through multiple additional programs extending beyond formal classroom instruction, including religious-based activities such as *Pildacil* and *Saritilawah*. The integration of these activities provides pupils with multiple opportunities to practice their speaking skills in authentic, real-life situations, thereby enhancing their fundamental speaking skills and self-confidence, which are closely related to the development of self-efficacy. In line with Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory [18], repeated mastery experiences contribute significantly to the development of students' self-efficacy and communication performance. These findings are consistent with the observations made by [19], who stated that repeated contextual performance experience plays a significant role in developing speaking competence, especially in terms of communicative fluency and psychological readiness.

Pildacil and *Saritilawah* were identified as the two main platforms where students can regularly practice public speaking. Research by [20] confirms that repeated exposure to speaking activities in a performative context improves communication skills, particularly in non-verbal expression, stage presence, and audience engagement techniques. In addition to providing a space for practice, these activities also promote mental preparedness through authentic performance experiences, thereby supporting the assertion by [21] that regular public speaking improves both communicative fluency and psychological preparedness.

This study highlights the teacher's key function as facilitators, motivators, and coaches, making a significant contribution to the learning environment. Teachers develop their public speaking skills by engaging in question-and-answer sessions, making presentations in class, and reading aloud in front of their classmates. This supports the research of [22] which suggests that interactive teacher strategies significantly influence pupil confidence. In addition, teachers use a tailored educational approach, considering each student's personality and abilities when deciding their level of participation in *Pildacil* or *Saritilawah*. Public speaking ability is heavily influenced by individual character, according to [23], who assert that this necessitates training methods tailored to specific student needs. Providing emotional support, for example by offering encouragement when students feel anxious, helps reduce speaking anxiety [24], leading to improved communicative skills. This establishes that primary school teachers go beyond serving as mere instructors, instead acting as facilitators and guides during the learning process, especially when it comes to developing 21st-century communication skills.

The study found that the success of these activities relies on school support, parental involvement, and the pupils' own motivation to learn. The school offers administrative support, specific payment as a form of recognition for teacher-coaches, and facilities for supervising activities. In line with the findings of [25], institutional backing is seen as essential for the success of communication programmes. According to [26], parental support plays a vital role in enhancing children's self-confidence, with research indicating that parental engagement accelerates the development of verbal skills and encourages children to speak. Students who enjoy *Pildacil* or *Saritilawah* see their own motivation to learn strengthened, which in turn deepens their commitment to practice. [5] state that a positive interest and feeling of comfort during training are key factors in reducing speaking anxiety and boosting performance resilience.

Conversely, the research identified several obstacles, including limited practice time, logistical challenges in aligning schedules between teachers and pupils, and insufficient support from a minority of parents. These temporal and coordinative constraints are consistent with [19], who reveal that non-formal activities are often impeded by time management issues. Internal barriers, such as a lack of self-confidence, difficulties in comprehending expressions, and limitations in intonation, also emerged from these findings. [9] explain that lexical mastery and verbal courage are key determinants of speaking success. Furthermore, the familial environment, particularly parental support, exerts a significant influence on pupils' speaking abilities. Prior research indicates a positive correlation between parental support and student confidence in public speaking contexts, where greater support engenders higher confidence during public performance [27]

Public speaking activities had a notable effect on pupils' learning outcomes. Individuals demonstrated improvements in self-assurance, performance bravery, the capacity to clearly express their opinions, and vocal quality as well as expression. These findings align with [21] and also [28], who noted that engaging in performance-based activities can improve communication skills through prolonged practice and repeated opportunities to perform over time. The positive progression observed across different pupil personality profiles, from initially shy to more expressive pupils, suggests that pedagogical intensity has a more substantial influence than innate predispositions. Research by [5] supports the idea that regular performance opportunities can decrease anxiety and boost student confidence. Research by [29] has found that a mix of emotional intelligence and repeated public speaking experiences can decrease speaking anxiety and increase pupil confidence in public speaking situations.

Consequently, this study demonstrates that teacher-designed public speaking support activities make a tangible contribution to the development of pupils' self-confidence and

communication skills. However, this research is constrained by a relatively small sample size; as a result, the findings may not be broadly generalisable to primary schools with similar characteristics. Furthermore, the scope of the study was confined to two specific forms of support activities Pildacil and Saritilawah and therefore did not explore other activities that might potentially contribute differently to the development of public speaking abilities.

Therefore, it is recommended that future research involve a larger and more diverse participant pool, including comparative analyses across schools with differing socio-cultural contexts, to obtain a more comprehensive perspective. Subsequent studies are also advised to incorporate a wider variety of public speaking activities to evaluate the efficacy of coaching strategies employed across different types of activities.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that at the observed school, further public speaking activities are conducted using two primary methods: Pildacil and Saritilawah, serving as dependable platforms for pupils to hone their performance skills. Teachers take on a crucial role as facilitators, motivators, and coaches, employing strategies such as the establishment of regular classroom question-and-answer interactions, routine practice, and the offering of emotional support to foster pupil confidence.

Support from institutions, involvement from parents, and pupils' interest have been identified as essential factors that contribute to the success of this developmental process. Implementing these activities still faces obstacles, notably insufficient practice time, conflicting schedules, and differences in family support levels.

In summary, supplementary public speaking activities have a considerable effect on enhancing pupils' self-confidence, performance courage, expressive abilities, and spoken communication skills. The research indicates that public speaking development facilitated through religious-based non-formal activities is an effective strategy for developing the communication skills of primary school students. This research also provides opportunities for the development of more innovative and sustainable coaching models, such as using digital media as a tool for pupils' independent practice.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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