Explorations in English Learning

Enhancing EFL Speaking Proficiency Through Point of View Lesson Technique: A Classroom Action Research Study

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Abstract This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of the Point of View Lesson technique in enhancing the speaking ability of first-semester students in an English education programme. The research employed a classroom action research (CAR) design over two cycles, each comprising planning, acting, observing, and reflecting phases. A total of 40 students participated in the intervention, which focused on helping them retell stories and personal experiences from various narrative perspectives to improve fluency, vocabulary use, and grammatical accuracy. Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests, classroom observations, and reflective journals. The results demonstrated a notable improvement in students' speaking performance, with the mean score rising from 8.25 in the pre-test to 9.50 in the post-test. Observational data also reflected increased student engagement, confidence, and ability to shift narrative perspectives during speaking activities. These findings suggest that the Point of View Lesson technique can be an effective pedagogical approach for developing speaking skills in EFL learners, especially when combined with reflective teaching practices in real classrooms.

***Keywords*:** speaking ability, point of view, classroom action research, narrative perspective, EFL learners

INTRODUCTION

Oral communication remains a vital part of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, as a key language skill and a means for learners to show fluency, build confidence, and participate in genuine language use. For university-level learners, especially in the early stages of acquiring language, developing the ability to speak effectively in English presents cognitive and emotional challenges. Speaking involves integrating vocabulary, syntactic skills, pronunciation, and pragmatic appropriateness, all of which must be activated spontaneously during real-time interaction (Goh & Burns, 2012). Despite its importance in EFL curricula, many students find speaking difficult due to limited meaningful speaking opportunities, fear of errors, and dependence on teacher-led, accuracy-focused activities (Zhang, 2020).

Various instructional techniques have been explored to create more dynamic, student-centered speaking environments in response to these pedagogical challenges. The Point of View (POV) Lesson technique—rooted in narrative reconstruction and perspective-shifting—has emerged as a promising method to foster learners' speaking fluency and grammatical control. This approach

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involves retelling stories from alternative perspectives (e.g., shifting from first-person to third-person narration), encouraging deeper syntactic processing and enhancing awareness of language structure (Thornbury, 2017). While previous studies have explored storytelling to develop fluency (Lucarevschi, 2016; Hsu, 2021), research that investigates explicitly the POV Lesson technique in tertiary EFL contexts remains limited. Most existing research has focused on controlled, short-term experiments rather than classroom-embedded applications that account for real teaching dynamics and learner diversity.

To address this gap, the present study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the Point of View Lesson technique in enhancing the speaking abilities of first-semester university EFL students. Unlike previous research, this study situates the technique within a practical instructional context and assesses its impact through a pre-experimental design. Focusing on students' performance before and after the intervention and including classroom-based observations, this study provides insights into how narrative-based speaking techniques can be effectively integrated into early-stage EFL instruction. The findings are expected to contribute to developing context-responsive speaking pedagogy that helps learners produce accurate speech and speak with greater flexibility, confidence, and voice.

METHOD

Research Design

This study used a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design to examine the effectiveness of the Point of View (PoV) Lesson technique in improving students' speaking skills. Classroom Action Research is a systematic and reflective inquiry that helps educators identify classroom issues, implement teaching interventions, and track their effects through iterative cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Burns, 2019; Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2014). The selection of CAR was driven by the need to assess the practical application of the PoV technique within a real classroom setting, enabling the teacher-researcher to respond flexibly to students' performance and instructional requirements. The study took place over two complete CAR cycles during the 2024–2025 academic year, providing enough time to observe significant improvements in students' speaking abilities. Unlike experimental designs focusing only on treatment effects, CAR highlights instructional improvement and teacher agency, making it an appropriate approach for this classroom-based investigation.

Setting of the Study

The research was conducted in a tertiary-level English education program during the 2024–2025 academic year. The study site offered a naturalistic learning environment where students were enrolled in a required speaking course in their first semester. This context provided a rich opportunity to observe the development of speaking skills at a formative stage of students' academic journey, where confidence-building and structured speaking support are crucial. The instructional sessions aligned with the existing curriculum but were enhanced by integrating the PoV Lesson technique to explore its pedagogical contribution in a setting where students typically struggle with spoken fluency and accuracy.

Participants

The population of this study comprised all first-semester students enrolled in the English Department, totaling 81 individuals. A sample of 40 students was selected through simple random sampling, a method that ensures each member of the population has an equal chance of being included. This technique was employed to prevent sampling bias and increase the findings' generalizability within the classroom context (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The selected students were assigned as the experimental group and received the PoV Lesson intervention over two CAR cycles. Their performance data served as the primary source for assessing the impact of the instructional strategy.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected quantitatively through structured oral assessments conducted as pre-tests and post-tests to assess the effectiveness of the PoV Lesson technique. No qualitative data were included in this study, as the main focus was on observing measurable changes in students' speaking performance.

Pre-Test and Post-Test

Before implementing the instructional intervention, students completed a pre-test to assess their baseline speaking ability. After each CAR cycle, a post-test was administered using similar prompts to measure performance improvements. The test format required students to deliver a short spoken narrative based on personal experience. This task encourages extended speech and captures natural use of grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. These assessments were standardised across all cycles to ensure comparability and consistency.

Speaking Assessment Rubric

Students' spoken performances were evaluated using an analytic scoring rubric that included four key indicators: grammatical accuracy, lexical accuracy, fluency, and pronunciation correctness. Each indicator was rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent), resulting in a maximum total score of 20 points per student. This rubric, adapted from Moedjito (2014), aligns with best practices in speaking assessment, where analytic rubrics are favored for their detailed feedback and transparent scoring criteria (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2020; Fulcher & Davidson, 2019). Multiple rating criteria also enable more nuanced assessments of learner progress over time.

Data Analysis

All collected data were analyzed using SPSS Statistics 17.0 to determine whether the PoV Lesson technique led to statistically significant improvements in students' speaking ability. The analysis began with descriptive statistics to calculate the pre-test and post-test results' mean scores and standard deviations. These metrics offered an overview of students' performance trends and the distribution of scores across the two cycles. Following this, a Kolmogorov–Smirnov test was conducted to assess whether the data were normally distributed—an essential prerequisite for applying parametric statistical tests (Tabachnick et al., 2021). Once normality was confirmed, a paired-samples t-test was employed to examine whether the differences in pre- and post-test scores were statistically significant. This test is appropriate for repeated-measures designs in which the

same participants are assessed before and after an intervention (Pallant, 2020). A significance threshold of $p < .05$ was used to evaluate the results.

This quantitative approach ensured objective measurement of speaking gains and provided statistically grounded evidence to support conclusions about the instructional technique's effectiveness. The absence of qualitative data was a deliberate methodological decision, allowing the study to maintain a clear focus on measurable performance improvements in oral communication.

FINDINGS

This section presents the quantitative findings from the pre-test and post-test scores across two instructional cycles conducted within a Classroom Action Research (CAR) framework. The aim was to assess the degree of improvement in students' speaking skills after applying the Point of View Lesson technique. Data analysis was performed using SPSS 17 for Windows, focusing on descriptive statistics, assumption testing, and paired samples t-tests.

Descriptive Statistics

A total of 40 first-semester students took part in the study. The students' speaking performance was evaluated before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the implementation of the Point of View Lesson technique. The speaking scores were graded on a scale from 4 (lowest) to 20 (highest), based on four key indicators: grammatical accuracy, lexical accuracy, fluency, and pronunciation. Table 1 below summarises the descriptive statistics.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

Test Type	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test	40	4	16	8.25	3.80
Post-Test	40	4	19	9.17	4.32

The results show a positive trend. There was an increase in students' mean speaking score from pre-test ($M = 8.25$) to post-test ($M = 9.17$), indicating an overall improvement following the instructional intervention.

Normality Test

A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted to verify the assumptions for parametric testing and to evaluate the normality of the score distributions. The significance values for pre-test ($p = .30$) and post-test ($p = .48$) exceeded the .05 threshold, indicating that the data were normally distributed.

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test Results

Variable	N	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-Test	40	.30
Post-Test	40	.48

Homogeneity of Variance

A Levene test was conducted to assess the homogeneity of variance between the two scores. The significance level ($p = .59$) exceeded .05, confirming that the variances were homogenous and that the assumption of equal variances was satisfied.

Table 3. Levene's Test for Homogeneity of Variance

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
0.28	1	78	.59

Hypothesis Testing

To determine whether the observed improvement was statistically significant, a paired samples t-test was conducted. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores: $t(39) = -4.18$, $p < .001$.

Table 4. Paired Samples T-Test Results

Pair	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pre-Test – Post-Test	-4.18	39	.000

The p-value < .001 indicates that the improvement in speaking scores after using the Point of View Lesson technique was statistically significant. These results confirm that the instructional intervention had a meaningful and positive impact on students' speaking performance.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study show that the Point of View (POV) Lesson technique had a statistically significant impact on improving the speaking ability of EFL learners. The increase in mean scores from pre-test to post-test, along with the paired samples t-test results ($p < .001$), confirms the effectiveness of this teaching approach within the framework of Classroom Action Research (CAR). These results support the main aim of the study: to explore how learner-centered, input-rich techniques like POV can address the speaking challenges faced by first-semester students.

The success of the POV technique comes from its core principles of clear input, contextual storytelling, and interactive questioning. According to Nation and Yamamoto (2020), effective language learning happens when learners are exposed to meaningful input slightly above their current skill level and have chances to produce language in low-pressure settings. In the POV method, students interact with a story from various grammatical and narrative viewpoints (e.g., first person, third person, present/past tense). This provides repeated exposure to key structures and vocabulary in real-world situations. This repetition with variation supports implicit grammatical acquisition, aligning with Krashen's Input Hypothesis (Krashen & Terrell, 2020).

Additionally, the technique's focus on listening before speaking supports the cognitive sequencing of language development. As Ellis (2021) notes, input-based instruction—especially when incorporated into storytelling—encourages mental rehearsal, supports speech production, and lowers emotional barriers. This was clear during classroom observations where students appeared more confident, eager to participate, and less anxious about making mistakes. Moreover, the question-and-answer phase of POV boosted student engagement and created meaningful interaction opportunities, which are essential for developing fluency (Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2020).

Compared to traditional speaking drills or rote repetition, the POV technique integrates naturalistic language use and focuses on meaning-making. This aligns with recent shifts in communicative language teaching (CLT) that advocate for authentic, student-centred tasks (Richards, 2017). In this study, using personal narratives and life experiences as speaking prompts enhanced student

motivation and emotional investment, both known to influence oral performance (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020).

Moreover, this study adds to the limited empirical research on the POV technique in formal EFL classrooms. While prior anecdotal or online practitioner-based reports have suggested its effectiveness (Hoge, 2018), there has been a lack of rigorous, data-driven studies validating these claims in academic settings. This research bridges the gap between innovative practice and empirical evidence by embedding the technique in a CAR framework and collecting quantifiable pre- and post-intervention data.

It is also worth noting that implementing it in the classroom required careful adjustment. Although the technique provides a structured framework, teacher facilitation was vital in modeling sentence structures, guiding discussions, and offering corrective feedback. This aligns with Burns' (2019) assertion that successful language interventions rely on the technique and the teacher's responsiveness and mediation.

Therefore, incorporating the POV Lesson technique into a reflective teaching cycle allowed students to improve their speaking skills in a supportive and engaging environment. The results emphasize the importance of meaningful input, repeated exposure, and structured interaction in fostering communicative competence among beginner EFL learners. Future research could explore its long-term effects, potential integration with other skills, or adaptation across different proficiency levels and cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effectiveness of the Point of View Lesson (POVL) technique in improving the speaking skills of first-semester EFL students through a two-cycle Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach. The results from quantitative assessments and classroom observations consistently improved students' speaking performance across key areas, including fluency, grammatical accuracy, vocabulary use, and pronunciation.

The quantitative results, shown in the rise in post-test scores and backed by paired-samples t-test outcomes, confirmed that the POVL technique played a significant role in students' oral skill development. The steady progress from the first to the second cycle also emphasized the importance of iterative, reflective teaching that defines CAR methodology. Students reacted positively to the repetitive and meaning-centered structure of the POVL, which lowered their speaking anxiety and promoted more spontaneous and confident expression.

This study argues that the *point-of-view lesson* technique, rooted in natural language acquisition principles, can be an effective, learner-centred strategy for promoting speaking skills in EFL contexts. Its integration of listening, comprehension, and structured repetition fosters internalisation of language forms without overt focus on grammar rules. In line with current communicative language teaching principles, the findings suggest that speaking instruction should move beyond mechanical drills and toward more authentic, story-based, and scaffolded interaction.

Given these findings, English language educators are encouraged to adopt the POVL technique, especially in foundational speaking courses. Future research could explore its long-term effects or adaptability to group-based speaking tasks and digital platforms. Overall, this study contributes to

the growing evidence that strategic and reflective instructional interventions can make a meaningful difference in developing communicative competence among early-stage EFL learners.

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