



## Implementing Small Group Discussion and Gallery Activities for Elementary School Students' Speaking Skills

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**Abstract:** This study aims to identify the teaching techniques used by teachers in developing students' speaking skills and to describe the implementation stages, including pre-implementation, execution, and reflection. The study involved 28 fourth-grade elementary school students in the context of Indonesian language learning. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, with data collected through observation, interviews, and document analysis to capture the dynamics of classroom interaction. The findings reveal that the Small Group Discussion technique, when integrated with Gallery Walk activities, effectively enhances students' speaking skills by providing structured opportunities to discuss, express ideas, and respond to peers' work. In addition, this combination creates a more participatory and interactive learning environment, allowing students to gradually build confidence in speaking. Therefore, the integration of Small Group Discussion and Gallery Walk can serve as a practical and effective teaching technique to support the development of speaking skills in elementary education.

**Keyword :** Small Group Discussion, Gallery Walk, Speaking Skills

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### Introduction

Speaking skills are a fundamental ability that plays a vital role in elementary school education. This ability is not only related to conveying ideas but also to building academic interaction, expanding communication with peers, and shaping students' confidence in expressing opinions orally. In the context of classroom learning, speaking serves as a medium through which students negotiate meaning, construct knowledge, and participate actively in the learning process. However, in actual teaching practices, many students still demonstrate a passive tendency when given the opportunity to speak. They often hesitate to express their ideas, struggle to organize their thoughts coherently, and rely on more dominant peers to initiate communication (Afandi et al., 2024). This condition indicates that speaking skills have not yet been optimally developed due to limited opportunities for structured and meaningful

practice. Such findings are reinforced by studies showing that students' speaking difficulties are closely related to low confidence, insufficient vocabulary mastery, and the lack of interactive learning strategies that actively engage learners in communication (Rahmat & Jon, 2023; Sesriyani et al., 2022). In elementary education, this issue becomes more critical because early communication skills significantly influence students' long-term academic and social development (Puspitasari, 2023).

Conceptually, speaking skills are not acquired instantly but require continuous practice in meaningful and interactive communication contexts (Anggraeni et al., 2024). Students need structured guidance to organize their ideas logically, select appropriate vocabulary, and deliver messages effectively while maintaining respect toward interlocutors. From a socio-constructivist perspective, language development is strongly influenced by social interaction, where learners build understanding through dialogue and collaboration. Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes that learning occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where students can achieve higher levels of performance with the support of more capable peers. This perspective highlights the importance of collaborative learning environments that provide opportunities for students to interact, exchange ideas, and construct knowledge collectively (Ibrahim S et al., 2022). Therefore, cooperative learning becomes a relevant pedagogical approach to facilitate the development of speaking skills in elementary school contexts (Kustiarini et al., 2025).

One cooperative learning technique that has gained considerable attention in recent studies is Small Group Discussion (SGD). SGD refers to a structured discussion activity conducted in small groups, designed to provide equal speaking opportunities for each member. This technique allows students to participate more actively because the group size reduces anxiety and creates a more supportive communication environment. Research conducted by Susanti et al., (2021) demonstrates that the implementation of SGD significantly improves students' speaking performance by encouraging them to express ideas more confidently in a smaller, less intimidating setting. Similarly, Rubai et al. (2022) found that SGD enhances students' speaking ability by increasing participation and engagement during classroom interaction. Students are more willing to contribute ideas when they feel psychologically safe within their groups.

In addition to improving performance, SGD also positively influences students' attitudes toward speaking activities. Zuhro & Budi (2024) report that students perceive SGD as an effective strategy that enhances their confidence and motivation to speak. The collaborative nature of SGD encourages learners to support each other, which fosters a positive learning atmosphere. Furthermore, experimental research by Patricia et al. (2024) confirms that SGD has a statistically significant effect on improving speaking skills, particularly in terms of fluency and coherence. This finding is further supported by Sevinch (2025), who highlights that SGD consistently contributes to the

development of speaking competence by providing repeated opportunities for interaction and feedback. These studies collectively indicate that SGD is not only effective in improving speaking performance but also in fostering students' confidence and engagement in communication (Dony et al., 2023).

Despite its advantages, the effectiveness of SGD depends on how it is implemented in the classroom. Fauziah & Sukmawati (2023) emphasize that group discussion, while beneficial, also presents several challenges, such as unequal participation, dominance of certain group members, and limited exposure to diverse perspectives. If not properly structured, SGD may fail to provide equal speaking opportunities for all students. Therefore, it is necessary to complement SGD with additional learning strategies that can extend interaction beyond small groups and provide opportunities for students to engage with a wider audience (Jannah et al., 2025; Utami et al., 2023).

One such complementary strategy is Gallery Walk, also known as Windows Shopping. This activity allows students to display their group work and interact with other groups by visiting different "stations" in the classroom. Through this process, students assume dual roles as presenters (hosts) and observers (visitors). As hosts, they explain their group's ideas, while as visitors, they analyze and respond to the work of others. This dynamic interaction creates a more comprehensive communication environment, as students are not only engaged in intra-group discussion but also in inter-group interaction. Although research on Gallery Walk has shown its effectiveness in promoting active learning and communication, most studies tend to examine it separately from SGD.

This separation highlights a significant research gap. While SGD focuses on idea development within small groups, Gallery Walk emphasizes presentation and interaction across groups. However, few studies have explored how these two strategies can be integrated into a single, coherent learning framework. Slavin (2010) argues that the effectiveness of cooperative learning depends on key elements such as individual accountability and positive interdependence, which require careful instructional design. When SGD and Gallery Walk are implemented separately, these elements may not be fully optimized. Therefore, integrating both strategies has the potential to create a more comprehensive learning process that combines idea generation, discussion, presentation, and feedback.

The integration of Small Group Discussion and Gallery Walk offers a promising approach to enhancing students' speaking skills in a more structured and interactive manner. Through SGD, students engage in initial idea exploration within a small group, where they can discuss and refine their thoughts in a supportive environment. Subsequently, Gallery Walk provides opportunities for students to present their ideas to a broader audience and receive feedback from peers. This sequential process allows students to develop their speaking skills gradually, starting from low-pressure

interaction to more public communication. Such an approach aligns with the concept of scaffolded learning, where students build confidence and competence through progressive stages of interaction (Putri et al., 2024; Siregar, 2025).

In practice, the implementation of this integrated model involves several stages. Initially, students engage in individual thinking to generate ideas related to the learning topic. This is followed by pair or small group discussions, where they exchange ideas and develop a collective understanding. The results of these discussions are then transformed into group products, such as posters or written summaries, which are displayed during the Gallery Walk session. During this stage, students rotate roles as hosts and visitors, ensuring that each student actively participates in speaking activities. This rotation not only increases speaking opportunities but also encourages students to engage in critical thinking and constructive feedback.

To explore the effectiveness of this integrated approach, this study adopts a descriptive qualitative design. Data are collected through classroom observations, teacher interviews, and documentation of student activities. This approach allows for an in-depth understanding of how the learning process unfolds and how students' speaking skills develop over time. By focusing on natural classroom settings, the study aims to capture authentic interactions and provide a comprehensive description of the implementation process.

In this study, several key concepts are defined to ensure clarity. Small Group Discussion is understood as a structured interaction within small groups aimed at facilitating active communication and collaborative learning. Gallery Walk refers to an activity where students present and observe group work through rotational interaction. The roles of "host" and "visitor" are used to describe students' participation during the Gallery Walk session. The integration of these strategies is expected to create a dynamic learning environment that supports the development of speaking skills through discussion, presentation, and interaction.

Based on the observed learning process, the integration of SGD and Gallery Walk provides significant opportunities for students to improve their speaking skills. Students who initially demonstrate passive behavior gradually become more active in expressing their ideas during group discussions. When acting as hosts, they develop greater confidence in presenting their work, while the role of visitors allows them to practice giving feedback and engaging in dialogue. This combination of activities creates a comprehensive and gradual learning process that supports the development of speaking competence in elementary school students. Therefore, this study contributes to the understanding of how integrated cooperative learning strategies can enhance speaking skills through structured and meaningful classroom interaction.

## Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design to provide an in-depth understanding of the implementation of Small Group Discussion (SGD) integrated with the Gallery Walk technique in Indonesian language learning. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate because it allows researchers to explore natural classroom interactions and interpret students' speaking development within authentic educational settings. Qualitative research focuses on understanding meanings, experiences, and social interactions as they naturally occur in social contexts (Ary et al., 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Miles et al., 2019). In this study, the data were presented in descriptive narratives reflecting students' behaviors, responses, and interaction patterns during the learning process.

This research was conducted at SDN Percobaan 2 Malang, a public elementary school in Malang, in November 2025 during the 2025/2026 academic year. The participants consisted of 28 fourth-grade students who were directly involved in the implementation of SGD and Gallery Walk. The participants were selected using purposive sampling based on specific considerations related to the research objectives, particularly the need for structured support in developing speaking skills. Purposive sampling allows researchers to select participants who are information-rich and relevant to the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2015). The class also represented heterogeneous characteristics, enabling the researcher to observe variations in students' abilities and participation levels.

As illustrated in Figure 1, data collection in this study was carried out through three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation.

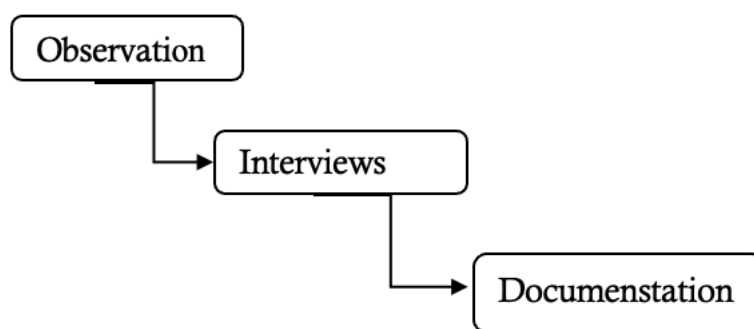


Figure 1. Data Collection Techniques

## Research Instruments

The study utilized three main instruments: observation guides, interview guides, and documentation sheets, each designed to capture different aspects of the learning process. The observation guide focused on speaking skill indicators such as clarity of expression, fluency, confidence, and responsiveness to peers. These indicators were developed based on established theoretical frameworks of speaking

skills and adapted from previous related studies to ensure their relevance to the research objectives. The interview guide was used to obtain in-depth information from the teacher regarding instructional strategies, student development, and classroom challenges during the implementation of SGD and Gallery Walk. Documentation sheets were used to collect supporting evidence such as student work, photos, and activity records.

**Table 2. Research Instruments and Indicators**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Observation Guide	Students' speaking skills	Clarity, fluency, confidence, responsiveness
Interview Guide	Teacher's perspective	Instructional strategy, student progress, challenges
Documentation	Supporting data	Student work, photos, activity records

The use of multiple instruments allows for comprehensive data collection and strengthens the credibility of the findings. These instruments were systematically developed to ensure that all relevant aspects of student interaction and speaking performance were captured during the implementation process (Aziz et al., 2026). Before being implemented, the observation and interview instruments were reviewed through expert judgment to assess their clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This process was conducted to improve the quality and trustworthiness of the research instruments.

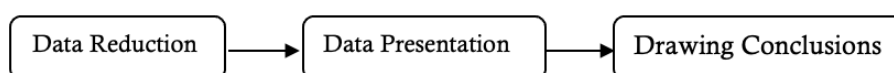
### **Data Sources and Data Types**

The data sources in this study consisted of primary and secondary data sources, including students, teachers, and learning documentation. The primary data were obtained from students' speaking activities and teacher interviews, while the secondary data were derived from supporting documents such as student worksheets, photos, and classroom activity records. The data included both verbal and non-verbal forms, such as students' spoken responses during discussions, interactions during Gallery Walk activities, field notes, and visual documentation in the form of photos and videos. All data were collected in natural classroom settings to ensure authenticity and to reflect actual learning conditions.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection was conducted through observation, interviews, and documentation in an integrated manner. Observation was used to record student interactions during individual, pair, and group activities using structured observation

guidelines(Ary et al., 2021). Interviews were conducted with the classroom teacher through semi-structured interviews to explore instructional planning, implementation strategies, and responses to student performance (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Documentation was used to support observational findings through tangible evidence, such as student worksheets, classroom photographs, and activity records. The combination of these techniques enables data triangulation, which enhances the depth and accuracy of the findings by comparing information obtained from different sources and methods. As shown in Figure 2, the data analysis process followed systematic qualitative procedures.



**Figure 2. Stages of Qualitative Data Analysis**

During the observation process, the researcher acted as a non-participant observer. This means that the researcher did not take part in teaching activities and did not intervene in the learning process but focused on systematically recording students' interactions and behaviors as they naturally occurred in the classroom. The role of the teacher remained unchanged as the primary instructor who implemented the Small Group Discussion and Gallery Walk techniques.

The researcher positioned themselves at the back or side of the classroom to minimize disruption and maintain the authenticity of the learning environment. Field notes were taken during the activities, focusing on students' speaking performance, interaction patterns, and participation levels. This observational position allowed the researcher to obtain more objective and naturalistic data while preserving the natural classroom dynamics.

### **Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña (2014), which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing as an ongoing and cyclical process throughout the research. Data reduction involved selecting, simplifying, and categorizing relevant information based on the research focus. Data display was carried out by organizing information into descriptive forms and thematic categories to identify patterns of interaction and learning processes. Conclusion drawing was performed by interpreting consistent patterns found across the data to produce meaningful insights into the implementation of SGD and Gallery Walk. The conclusions were continuously verified through repeated comparison of observation, interview, and documentation data to ensure consistency and accuracy of the findings.

## Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

To ensure the quality of the research instruments, the observation guide, interview guide, and documentation sheet were developed based on theoretical indicators of speaking skills and aligned with the objectives of the study. The observation indicators focused on clarity, fluency, confidence, and responsiveness, while the interview questions were designed to explore instructional strategies and student development. The documentation sheet was designed to systematically record supporting evidence, including student worksheets, photographs, and classroom activity records. Before implementation, the instruments were reviewed through expert judgment to assess their relevance and clarity and to ensure their alignment with the research objectives.

The trustworthiness of the instruments and findings was established using the criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability as proposed by Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba (1985). Credibility was achieved through prolonged observation and triangulation of data sources and techniques. Dependability was ensured by maintaining consistency in data collection procedures using structured instruments. Confirmability was established by documenting all research processes and ensuring that the findings were derived directly from the collected data rather than researcher bias. Transferability was supported by providing detailed descriptions of the research context, participants, and learning activities.

In addition, source triangulation was conducted by comparing data from students, teachers, and documentation, while technique triangulation was applied by cross-checking observation, interview, and documentation data. Data verification was performed continuously until consistent patterns were obtained. These procedures strengthened the trustworthiness of the instruments and the overall credibility of the research findings.

## Result and Discussion

### Findings

#### 1. Implementation of Small Group Discussion Integrated with Gallery Walk

The implementation of Small Group Discussion (SGD) integrated with Gallery Walk in Indonesian language learning showed that students were actively involved in structured speaking activities through group discussions and intergroup interaction. In the Indonesian language learning process for fourth-grade students at SDN Percobaan 2 Malang, the SGD technique was applied in combination with a Gallery Walk activity. This integration provided structured opportunities for students to interact both within their groups and across different groups in a broader classroom communication setting.

The implementation of this integrated technique was observed through three main stages: planning, implementation, and reflection, based on classroom observation, teacher interviews, and learning documentation.

At the beginning of the learning process, the teacher organized students into small heterogeneous groups consisting of two to three members to encourage active participation and balanced interaction among group members. Observation data showed that this grouping strategy enabled students with different levels of speaking ability to support one another during discussions.

In classroom practice, the teacher began by applying SGD as the foundation of small-group interaction. Students were divided into groups consisting of two to three members to ensure more intensive participation. At the initial stage, students independently generated ideas related to the given topic before sharing them with their group members. When students experienced difficulty, they were directed to write down their ideas first to help organize their thoughts. Observation data showed that several students initially remained silent for 1–2 minutes before beginning to write their ideas, indicating hesitation in verbal expression.

After the initial idea generation, students exchanged opinions and collaboratively developed their ideas into a shared group conclusion. The results of these discussions were documented and prepared for presentation in the Gallery Walk phase. Observations showed that the teacher deliberately formed heterogeneous groups to balance students' academic abilities and confidence levels, ensuring that all members had opportunities to participate. This is supported by interview data, where the teacher stated:

"I mix students based on their ability so that they can help each other and all students can participate in the discussion." (Interview, Teacher)

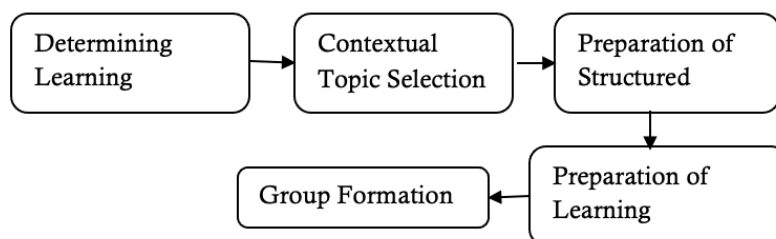
Once the group work was completed, it was displayed at specific locations in the classroom as part of the Gallery Walk activity. Each group assigned members to act as "hosts" and "visitors." Hosts were responsible for explaining their group's work, while visitors moved between groups to observe, ask questions, and provide feedback. This activity expanded student interaction beyond the small group and created a more dynamic speaking environment. Documentation data (student worksheets and posters) showed that each group produced written summaries that were later used as visual support during presentations.

Before the activity began, the teacher provided clear instructions regarding discussion procedures, role distribution, and communication rules. Based on interview data, this structured sequence was intended to gradually build students' confidence, starting from small-group discussions and progressing to wider classroom interaction. The teacher explained:

"Students are usually shy at first, but when they start in small groups, they become more confident when presenting to others." (Interview, Teacher)

## 2. Planning Stage

The planning stage focused on designing structured learning activities that supported the development of students' speaking skills. As illustrated in Figure 3 (Planning Stage), the teacher began by defining specific learning objectives, such as expressing opinions and retelling information clearly. Interview data showed that the teacher emphasized speaking confidence and active participation as the main learning targets in this stage.



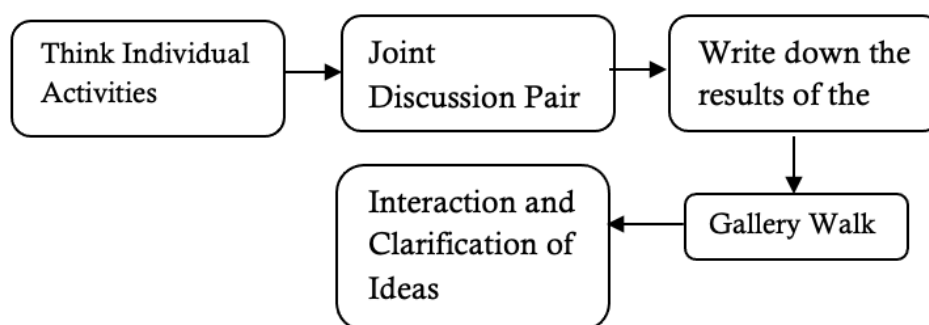
**Figure 3. Planning Stage**

The teacher selected learning topics that were closely related to students' daily experiences to increase engagement and understanding. In addition, the teacher prepared supporting materials such as Student Worksheets (LKPD), visual media, and discussion prompts. These materials functioned as guidance tools to help students stay focused during discussions. Documentation data showed that the worksheets contained structured discussion questions to stimulate students' responses and idea development.

Classroom organization was also carefully arranged, including seating layout and group formation. Students were initially grouped in pairs and later formed small groups, allowing interaction to develop gradually and helping students build confidence before participating in larger discussions. Observation data indicated that this arrangement created a more comfortable interaction pattern, especially for students who initially showed hesitation in speaking.

## 3. Implementation Stage

The implementation stage represented the core of the learning process where students actively engaged in speaking activities. As presented in Figure 4 (Implementation Stage), learning began with individual activities in which students analyzed given stimuli and read instructions independently. Observation data showed that some students initially took time to understand the task instructions before beginning the discussion process.



**Figure 4. Implementation Stage**

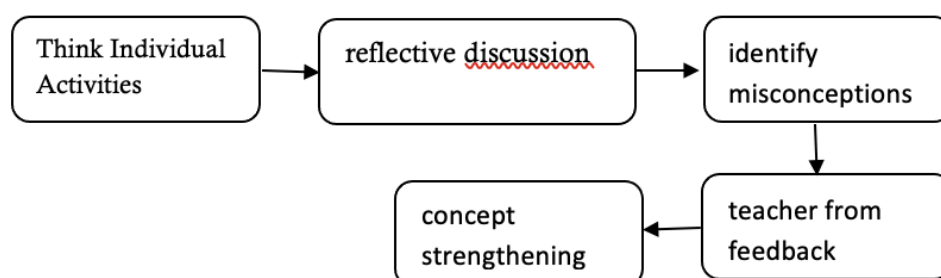
This stage was followed by pair discussions, where students exchanged ideas and refined their responses collaboratively. Afterward, the activity was expanded into a Gallery Walk session, where students interacted with other groups. Observation data indicated that pair discussions helped students organize their ideas before presenting them to a wider audience.

During the Gallery Walk, students actively asked questions, explained ideas, and responded to feedback from peers. This process created a communicative environment that encouraged active participation. For example, observation data recorded that students frequently asked for clarification and provided additional explanations during peer interactions, showing active verbal engagement.

Observations also indicated that students demonstrated mutual support, where more confident students assisted those who were less confident in expressing their ideas. This was also reflected in documentation data, where some students' written notes were revised after receiving feedback during the Gallery Walk session. Interview data with the teacher also confirmed that peer interaction during the Gallery Walk increased students' confidence and willingness to speak in front of others.

#### 4. Reflection Stage

The reflection stage was conducted to evaluate and reinforce students' understanding after completing all learning activities. As shown in Figure 5 (Reflection Stage), the teacher facilitated a discussion session where students reviewed feedback obtained during the Gallery Walk.



**Figure 5. Reflection Stage**

Students were given the opportunity to discuss misunderstandings and improve their responses based on the feedback received. The teacher then provided clarification and emphasized key learning points. During the reflection session, the teacher stated, "Some groups already explained clearly, but others need to improve how they respond to questions" (Observation note), which indicated variation in students' speaking performance.

Observation data showed that several students were able to revise their responses after receiving peer feedback, indicating improvement in their understanding and speaking performance. This finding showed that the reflection activity functioned not only as a feedback mechanism but also as a means of identifying differences in students' speaking abilities. In addition, it allowed the teacher to identify students' progress and areas that required further improvement.

## Discussion

This study discusses how the integration of Small Group Discussion (SGD) and Gallery Walk contributes to the development of students' speaking skills through structured and interactive learning processes. The findings indicate that this combination creates a learning environment that not only facilitates communication but also supports gradual skill development. This result confirms that collaborative learning plays a significant role in enhancing students' communication abilities.

First, the implementation of SGD creates a supportive and low-pressure environment that encourages students to express their ideas more confidently. The small group setting allows students to participate more actively because interaction occurs in a more controlled and less intimidating context. This condition reduces speaking anxiety and increases student engagement, which is consistent with Johanna et al. (2023), who emphasize that small group discussions promote active participation and learning involvement.

Second, the Gallery Walk activity extends communication beyond small-group interaction and exposes students to a wider audience. Through this activity, students are required to explain ideas, respond to questions, and engage in dialogue with peers from other groups. This broader interaction not only improves speaking fluency but also strengthens students' critical thinking and social communication skills. This finding is in line with Suhartono (2025), who reports that gallery-based learning enhances creativity and collaboration through active participation.

Third, the integration of SGD and Gallery Walk forms a sequential learning process that supports the gradual development of students' confidence. Students begin with individual idea construction, continue with small-group discussion, and finally present their ideas in a larger forum. This staged interaction enables students to build confidence progressively while continuously practicing their speaking skills.

Such a structured progression is essential in language learning, as it provides repeated opportunities for practice and feedback.

Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of scaffolding in supporting students' speaking development. Activities such as writing ideas before speaking and receiving peer assistance help students organize their thoughts and overcome difficulties in verbal expression. This process reflects the principles of sociocultural theory, where learning occurs through guided interaction and social support, as explained by Sarmiento-Campos (2022).

In addition, the integration of active learning strategies contributes significantly to student engagement and participation. The combination of physical movement during the Gallery Walk and interactive discussion activities creates a dynamic learning atmosphere. This condition encourages students to become more involved in the learning process, supporting Vale and Barbosa's (2023) argument that active learning enhances both participation and understanding.

The use of visual media and contextual topics also plays an important role in facilitating students' comprehension and participation. These elements provide concrete references that help students generate ideas and communicate more effectively. This finding is consistent with previous studies showing that visual-based learning supports speaking development by making abstract concepts more accessible, as indicated by (Yolanda et al. (2022) and Saragih & Gultom (2022).

From a theoretical perspective, this study reinforces key principles of cooperative learning, particularly positive interdependence, individual accountability, and promotive interaction. These elements are reflected in the structured roles, group collaboration, and interactive activities observed during the learning process. Such conditions are essential for creating an effective environment that supports the development of communication skills.

The main contribution of this study lies in the integration of SGD and Gallery Walk into a single, continuous instructional framework. Unlike previous studies that examine these strategies separately, this research demonstrates that their combination produces a more comprehensive approach to developing speaking skills through gradual and structured interaction.

However, this study has several limitations that need to be considered. The relatively small number of participants and the short duration of implementation may limit the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended to apply this approach in different educational contexts and over longer periods. Additionally, further studies using experimental or mixed-method designs are needed to measure the effectiveness of this integrated strategy more rigorously.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that the integration of Small Group Discussion (SGD) and Gallery Walk provides an effective and structured approach to developing elementary students' speaking skills. Through a sequence of interaction stages, students are gradually supported in building confidence, expressing ideas, and engaging in broader communication. The combination of small-group collaboration and intergroup interaction creates a learning environment that promotes active participation, individual accountability, and meaningful communication. This study highlights that the effectiveness of speaking instruction is strongly influenced by how learning activities are structured to provide progressive opportunities for interaction and practice. Therefore, the integration of SGD and Gallery Walk can be considered a practical pedagogical strategy for fostering both communication competence and student engagement in elementary classroom contexts.

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