

Improving Speaking Skills (Imaginative Storytelling) through the “Kancing Gemerincing” Cooperative Learning Model among Seventh-Grade Students of SMP PGRI Belis

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to improve the speaking skills (imaginative storytelling) of seventh-grade students of SMP PGRI Belis Class VII A through the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model. This study employed a classroom action research (CAR) design consisting of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The research was conducted in two cycles. The subjects of the study were 20 students of Class VII A at SMP PGRI Belis, consisting of 8 male students and 12 female students. The results showed an improvement in the students' speaking skills (imaginative storytelling), both in the learning process and in learning outcomes. This improvement was evidenced by the increase in the students' mean score, which was 46.05 in the first cycle and was still below the expected level. In the second meeting of Cycle II, the students' mean score increased to 70.15. Thus, the students' learning mastery in speaking skills (imaginative storytelling) through the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model had achieved the predetermined Minimum Mastery Criterion of 60.

Keywords: *Speaking Skills; Imaginative Storytelling; Kancing Gemerincing Cooperative Learning Model; Classroom Action Research*



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INTRODUCTION

Language education in Indonesia is essentially aimed at improving students' language proficiency and communication skills. Therefore, Indonesian language instruction plays a strategic role in preparing students to communicate clearly, accurately, and effectively, both orally and in writing. Indonesian language learning should incorporate a systematic series of efforts designed to develop and refine students' language skills comprehensively. According to Tarigan (2021), speaking is one of the major language skills whose development begins during childhood. When speaking skills are continuously practiced and intensively developed, students' proficiency will improve over time. One form of speaking skill application at the secondary school level is students' ability to retell texts or imaginative stories (narratives) that they have read or heard.

Narrative texts are structurally based on the telling of a story or event arranged according to a chronological sequence (Musyadad *et al.*, 2021). In line with this view, Tresnawati *et al.* (2025) explain that a narrative is a text that presents a sequence of events chronologically over a particular period, emphasizing characters' actions and descriptions. Therefore, retelling an imaginative story requires not only an understanding of the content of the text but also fluency and accuracy in oral language use. However, the ideal conditions expected in the teaching and learning of narrative-text speaking skills have not yet been fully achieved in practice. Based on observations and interviews conducted on July 17, 2024, with the Indonesian language teacher of Class VII-A at SMP PGRI Belis, Sitti Samsiah Ulath, S.Pd., it was found that the students' speaking skills at the school were still relatively low. This was evidenced by students' learning achievement, which remained below the Minimum Mastery Criterion of 60.

More specifically, several major factors contributed to the problems encountered in teaching narrative texts (imaginative stories) in Class VII-A at SMP PGRI Belis. First, difficulties in using standard Indonesian: students were not yet able to speak Indonesian properly and correctly. During classroom activities and speaking exercises, students predominantly used the local/everyday language, namely Ambon Malay. Second, limited variation in learning models: the teacher tended to rely on conventional methods such as lectures, general discussions, and question-and-answer sessions. The teacher had never implemented an innovative cooperative learning model, even though varied learning models are needed to stimulate students' active participation during the learning process. Third, limited learning resources: the teaching materials and references used by both teachers and students remained heavily dependent on the main textbook, providing insufficient opportunities to enrich students' vocabulary and imagination. Fourth, low retelling skills: students experienced difficulties and were unable to systematically express or retell the material and story content they had learned.

To address these problems, an interactive learning strategy that can involve all students equally is needed. One relevant solution is the implementation of the Kancing Gemerincing Cooperative Learning Model.

The *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model is a small-group learning model consisting of 4–5 students that uses buttons or similar objects as participation markers. In its implementation, the teacher distributes a number of buttons to each student. Whenever a student wishes to contribute an idea, answer a question, or express an opinion, the student must place one button in the center of the table. Through this mechanism, every group member has an equal opportunity to express ideas and listen to the perspectives of their peers (Murti & Anas, 2020; Maghfiroh *et al.*, 2025).

Consistent with its underlying principles, cooperative learning does not merely focus on the theoretical mastery of subject matter but places greater emphasis on developing students' social skills and direct participation (Hasanah & Himami, 2021; Mukhtar, 2023). The main advantage of the *Kancing Gemerincing* technique lies in its ability to address unequal participation, which often occurs in conventional group work. In ordinary group discussions, some students tend to dominate the conversation, while other members remain passive and depend on the more dominant students (Amalia *et al.*, 2023). Through the use of buttons, responsibility and opportunities to speak can be distributed more equally among all students.

Technically, this model is implemented by distributing buttons to each group after the presentation of the main learning material. The teacher then provides questions or task instructions, such as asking students to retell parts of an imaginative story. Students express their understanding freely according to the turns determined by the buttons they possess. The implementation of this model is designed to make the learning process more dynamic and enjoyable while preventing students from becoming bored or disengaged.

Based on the problems described above, the researcher was interested in conducting a classroom action research study on the implementation of a learning model entitled "Improving Speaking Skills (Imaginative Storytelling) through the Kancing Gemerincing Cooperative Learning Model among Seventh-Grade Students of SMP PGRI Belis, Teluk Waru District, East Seram Regency."

Based on the background of the problem described above, the research questions are as follows: First, how is the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model implemented in teaching imaginative storytelling speaking skills among Class VII-A students of SMP PGRI Belis, Teluk Waru District, East Seram Regency? Second, can the implementation of the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model improve the speaking skills (retelling imaginative stories) of Class VII-A students of SMP PGRI Belis, Teluk Waru District, East Seram Regency? In accordance with the research questions, the objectives of this study are: First, to describe the process of implementing the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model to improve imaginative storytelling speaking skills among Class VII-A students of SMP PGRI Belis. Second, to determine the improvement in the speaking skills (retelling imaginative stories) of Class VII-A students of SMP PGRI Belis following the implementation of the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model.

METHODS

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) methodology (Susilo *et al.*, 2022), following a cyclical process of Planning, Action, Observation, and Reflection (Norlaila & Hermina, 2025). The study was conducted over two cycles (Suwandi, 2011), each consisting of four interrelated stages designed to systematically implement and evaluate the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model. The research was conducted at SMP PGRI Belis, located in Teluk Waru District, East Seram Regency, during the 2024–2025 academic year. The research subjects were 20 students of Class VII-A, consisting of 8 male students (40%) and 12 female students (60%), ranging in age from 13 to 14 years. This class was selected based on the results of an initial observation indicating challenges in students' speaking skills, as well as the need to improve the use of proper and accurate Indonesian during the learning process. Data were collected using several instruments to ensure a comprehensive assessment of students' development. The primary instrument was a speaking skills assessment rubric (Nufus *et al.*, 2026), which covered four aspects: first, speaking clarity (25%); second, speaking fluency (25%); third, speaking style (25%); and fourth, speaking intonation (25%). Each aspect was assessed on a scale of 1–4, accompanied by specific descriptors for each level of performance. Additional data sources included a questionnaire used to measure students' levels of engagement and participation, as well as teacher field notes used to document the learning process and its outcomes. In addition, pre-tests and post-tests administered in each cycle were used as quantitative measures to determine improvements in students' speaking skills.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To achieve the research objectives in teaching speaking skills (imaginative storytelling) using the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model among Class VII-A students, the learning activities began with an explanation of narrative texts (imaginative stories) using the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model, while students' attitudes were observed throughout the learning process. At the end of each meeting, the teacher and students jointly reflected on the learning process by evaluating the students' speaking skills (imaginative storytelling).

Classroom Action Research Results: Cycle I Cycle I, Meeting 1

The first meeting of Cycle I was conducted in Class VII-A at SMP PGRI Belis on July 15, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. WIT. The teacher began the lesson by greeting the students and checking attendance. The learning process began with an apperception activity in the form of questions and answers concerning the students' interest in retelling a story. One of the main problems encountered in teaching speaking skills in Class VII-A at SMP PGRI Belis was that students found it difficult and were afraid to speak in front of the class.

The teacher attempted to provide a structured learning model to enable students to retell imaginative stories effectively (Dewi, 2025). The model employed was the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model, which was intended to serve as a guide for students in retelling imaginative stories effectively. The teacher then briefly explained the material on imaginative stories and the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model. After providing an explanation of the material and learning model, the students were divided into four groups, each consisting of five students. The teacher distributed buttons according to the number of students, provided material on narrative texts (imaginative stories), and distributed Student Worksheets (LKPD) to each group for group discussion, after which the stories would be retold. The teacher also explained that, when retelling imaginative stories, students should use proper and accurate Indonesian. After completing the explanation, the teacher gave the students an opportunity to discuss the material. Following the discussion, each group summarized the results of its group work, and each student retold the imaginative story that had been provided.

Based on Table 4.1, the assessment of students' speaking skills (imaginative storytelling) using the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative learning model showed that 6 students (30%) achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion, with a minimum score of 60. The researcher also presented in Table 4.2 the difficulties experienced by Class VII-A students at SMP PGRI Belis in retelling imaginative stories. The students' difficulties included their inability to speak or retell imaginative stories while paying attention to the relevant aspects, namely speaking clarity, fluency, speaking style, and intonation. The most appropriate solution provided to students who experienced difficulties in retelling imaginative stories was the use of the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative learning model. Since the assessment results in Cycle I were still below the expected level, the research continued to the next cycle using the same material and learning model in order to achieve better improvement.

Cycle I, Meeting 2

The second meeting of Cycle I was conducted in Class VII-A at SMP PGRI Belis on July 17, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. WIT. The teacher began the lesson by greeting the students and checking attendance. The learning activities in the second meeting of Cycle I focused on reflecting on and analyzing the students' speaking skills (imaginative storytelling), particularly their ability to retell imaginative stories. The teacher then distributed a questionnaire to be completed at the end of the learning process. Before reflecting on and analyzing the students' speaking skills (imaginative storytelling), the teacher explained the purpose of speaking activities using the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative learning model, namely to encourage students to participate more actively in retelling the narrative text (imaginative story) they had read. The teacher explained what students were expected to do during the activity, including listening carefully when their classmates retold the content of the imaginative story while paying attention to speaking clarity, fluency, speaking style, and intonation. At the end of the meeting, the teacher once again evaluated the students' understanding of the material related to speaking skills (imaginative storytelling) using the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative learning model. The results obtained from Cycle I, Meeting 1, were as follows. Based on the questionnaire results presented in Table 4.3 regarding the implementation of speaking activities (imaginative storytelling) using the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative learning model among Class VII-A students at SMP PGRI Belis, 17 students (85%) stated that they enjoyed the narrative-text (imaginative-story) learning material, 6 students (30%) stated that they enjoyed being assigned to retell a story, and 14 students (70%) stated that they still found it difficult and were afraid to speak in front of the class.

Classroom Action Research Results: Cycle II

The implementation of Cycle II was necessary because the learning activities in Cycle I had not been sufficiently successful in addressing the students' difficulties in speaking or retelling imaginative stories through the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative learning model ([Muawanah et al., 2024](#)). Consequently, the achievement scores remained low. Based on the problems and contributing factors identified during Cycle I, the researcher and teacher planned to conduct Cycle II. The steps for implementing Cycle II included making the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative learning model more engaging than in Cycle I while maintaining the question-and-answer technique to broaden students' perspectives and stimulate their thinking through questions. Cycle II was designed based on the weaknesses identified in Cycle I and was conducted in two meetings.

Cycle II, Meeting 1

The first meeting of Cycle II was conducted in Class VII-A at SMP PGRI Belis on July 29, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. WIT. The teacher entered the classroom and began the narrative-text (imaginative-story) lesson by greeting the students, leading a prayer, and checking attendance. The lesson began by reviewing the material from the previous meeting. The students were very enthusiastic in responding to the questions. They appeared to have understood the narrative-text (imaginative-story) material, although some students still had difficulty understanding the concept.

The teacher began the narrative-text (imaginative-story) lesson using the same learning model, namely the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative learning model ([Muliyani et al., 2023](#)). The lesson began with the presentation of the learning competencies to be achieved, followed by the presentation of the narrative-text (imaginative-story) material and an explanation of the learning model. The teacher then distributed buttons to each student to be used when retelling the imaginative story that had previously been provided. Next, students were asked to come to the front of the classroom and individually retell the imaginative story provided by the teacher. The students were very enthusiastic about retelling the imaginative stories. Based on the assessment results presented in Table 4.4, 18 students (90%) achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion, while 2 students (10%) had not yet achieved the predetermined Minimum Mastery Criterion score of 60. Table 4.5 presents the difficulties experienced by Class VII-A students at SMP PGRI Belis in participating in speaking-skills learning (imaginative storytelling) using the *Kancing Gernerincing* cooperative

learning model. A total of 2 students (10%) still experienced difficulties in retelling imaginative stories. Most of the difficulties involved speaking clarity, fluency, speaking style, and intonation.

Cycle II, Meeting 2

The second meeting of Cycle II was conducted on July 31, 2024, at 10:30 a.m. WIT. The teacher began the lesson by greeting the students, leading a prayer, and checking attendance. The teacher then gave students who had not yet understood the material an opportunity to ask questions about the speaking activity (imaginative storytelling) that would be conducted at the end of the meeting. The teacher also asked about the difficulties students experienced when speaking in front of the class. Subsequently, the teacher provided motivation and encouragement so that students would become more diligent in practicing their speaking skills (imaginative storytelling) in subsequent learning activities. The teacher and students then reflected together on the learning outcomes. The results of the questionnaire on the implementation of speaking-skills learning (imaginative storytelling) using the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model among Class VII-A students at SMP PGRI Belis, Cycle II, Meeting 2, showed that 20 students (100%) stated that they enjoyed the narrative-text (imaginative-story) learning material, 18 students (90%) stated that they enjoyed being assigned to retell a story, and 2 students (10%) stated that they still experienced difficulties speaking in front of the class.

CONCLUSION

The learning outcomes of the speaking skills test (imaginative storytelling) in the first meeting of Cycle I had not yet reached the Minimum Mastery Criterion. This was indicated by the fact that, out of the 20 students, only 6 students (30%) had achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion or demonstrated mastery of speaking skills (imaginative storytelling), while 14 students (70%) had not yet achieved the Minimum Mastery Criterion or had not demonstrated mastery. The questionnaire results from the second meeting of Cycle I showed that 17 students (85%) stated that they enjoyed the narrative-text (imaginative-story) learning material, 6 students (30%) stated that they enjoyed being assigned to retell a story, and 14 students (70%) stated that they still experienced difficulties and were afraid to speak in front of the class. The learning outcomes of the speaking skills test (imaginative storytelling) in the first meeting of Cycle II showed an improvement in speaking skills, with 18 students (90%) achieving the Minimum Mastery Criterion or demonstrating mastery. The questionnaire results from the second meeting of Cycle II showed that 20 students (100%) stated that they enjoyed the narrative-text (imaginative-story) learning material, 18 students (90%) stated that they enjoyed being assigned to retell a story, and 2 students (10%) stated that they still experienced difficulties and were afraid to speak in front of the class. The improvement in speaking skills (imaginative storytelling) through the *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model was achieved over two cycles, comprising four face-to-face meetings. The *Kancing Gemerincing* cooperative learning model had a positive impact on the improvement of students' speaking skills (imaginative storytelling). This can be seen from the mean score, which was 46.07 in Cycle I and increased to 70.15 in Cycle II. Since the mean score in Cycle II exceeded the predetermined Minimum Mastery Criterion of 60, the study was concluded after two cycles.

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