

The Effectiveness of UPCM (Universal Picture Card Media) in Improving Students' Public Speaking Skills

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Abstract

This study investigated the effectiveness of Universal Picture Card Media (UPCM) in enhancing elementary school students' public speaking skills through a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design. The participants consisted of 20 students aged 10–12 years from SD Muhammadiyah 2 Sorong City, selected using purposive sampling and divided equally into experimental and control groups. Students' speaking performance was assessed based on six indicators: pronunciation accuracy, fluency, grammatical accuracy, coherence and cohesion, clarity of message delivery, and confidence in social interaction. Data were collected through structured speaking tests, classroom observations, and documentation, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and the nonparametric Mann–Whitney U test due to non-normal data distribution in one dataset. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups ($U = 0.000$; $Z = -3.791$; $p < 0.05$). The experimental group's mean score increased substantially from 21.70 in the pretest to 48.50 in the posttest, representing a 26.80% improvement. In contrast, the control group showed only a marginal increase from 23.00 to 24.40. The most notable improvement in the experimental group was observed in fluency ($M = 4.40$) and confidence and social interaction ($M = 4.40$), while coherence and cohesion demonstrated the greatest developmental progression across cycles. Pronunciation accuracy showed improvement but remained the lowest indicator compared to others. The intervention was implemented over three cycles and three meetings, integrating storytelling, singing activities, educational games, and structured debriefing sessions. These findings demonstrate that UPCM provides effective visual scaffolding that significantly enhances students' structured expression, fluency, and communicative confidence in public speaking contexts.

Keywords: *Experimental Research; Picture Cards; Speaking Skills.*

INTRODUCTION

Stages of child development, particularly at the elementary school level, must be aligned with the developmental tasks experienced by children at that phase. Based on psychological studies, the developmental tasks of elementary school aged children encompass several important aspects, namely cognitive development, moral development, mental-emotional and social development, as well as psychomotor development. (Sabani, 2019).

Developmental tasks are a series of responsibilities or achievements that individuals must accomplish at certain stages of their life span. If individuals successfully complete these tasks, they will experience happiness and be able to progress to the next stage of development. However, failure to achieve them may cause individuals to experience difficulties in social adjustment and encounter obstacles in fulfilling subsequent developmental tasks. (Havighurst, 1961). Language skills consist of four main aspects listening, speaking, reading, and writing which are interrelated in supporting children's ability to communicate effectively (Ripai, 2012). Mastery of spelling, vocabulary, sentence structure, and grammar as components of language skills plays an important role in supporting children's ability to speak in public (Mardison, 2016). Nevertheless, children's reading skills remain relatively low, particularly in terms of basic literacy (Ihsan et al., 2018). This condition is reinforced by the results of the National Assessment conducted by the Indonesia National Assessment Programme (INAP), which indicate that children's reading proficiency levels in the West Papua region are below 50% (Koesoema et al., 2017). According to a study by

literacy activists in Sorong City, approximately 39.20% of students have limited reading comprehension skills, and 42.28% were reported to be unable to read at all (Watak, 2025).

Public speaking skills are not only applied when an individual serves as a speaker or resource person at an event, but can also be practiced in various contexts, such as classroom settings, school environments, or other situations that meet communication needs (Dwi Narsih, Nur Rizkiyah, 2022). According to a report by CNBC News, approximately 75% of adults experience fear when speaking in public, indicating that public speaking is an essential skill and should not be underestimated. (Literasiliwangi, 2023).

Public speaking skills play an important role for children because they can foster self-confidence, enhance communication skills, and encourage the development of positive character traits (Jami et al., 2024). In addition, learning for elementary school-aged children will be more effective when packaged in the form of play-based activities, as through play children can more easily understand the knowledge provided without feeling that they are studying, thereby avoiding feelings of pressure or burden (Suryana, 2021).

Storytelling activities are one form of speaking skill aimed at conveying information to others (Tarigan, 2008). Children who tend to have good speaking abilities are more readily accepted by their environment, whereas children who experience barriers may face difficulties in communicating with their peers (Mayling, 2024).

Storytelling activities have been proven effective in improving students' speaking skills because they are implemented in a planned and structured manner and are accompanied by appropriate assessment processes (Delvia, 2019). One alternative learning medium that can support such activities is the use of picture cards.

A take a look at through by Kristianingsih (2023) entitled "*Enhancing Speaking Ability Through Pop-Up Card: Its Effects on Students' Speaking Proficiency*", worried 62 junior high faculty students and observed that pop-up card media considerably stepped forward newcomers' speakme overall performance.

Similarly, a study by (Widiyaningrum et al., 2019) entitled "*Children's Language Development Through the Storytelling Methods of Picture-Card Media*", examined kindergarten youngsters elderly five–six years and mentioned that storytelling sports supported by way of picture playing cards positively inspired youngsters's public speaking development.

Research conducted by (Nurjanah, 2020) entitled "*Metode Bercerita untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Berbicara pada Anak Usia 5–6 Tahun*" engaged 16 kindergarten members and concluded that storytelling techniques more advantageous youngsters's oral communicate abilities at the same time as simultaneously strengthening their self-self belief.

Furthermore, a study by (Fahrudin et al., 2022) entitled "*Efektivitas Penggunaan Media Kartu Bergambar untuk Meningkatkan Keterampilan Berbicara*", demonstrated that picture-card media yielded statistically good sized improvements in young children's speaking competencies.

Conversely, findings from (Alfatihaturrohman et al., 2018) entitled "*Keterampilan Berbicara Anak Usia 5–6 Tahun di TK X Kamal*" indicated that kids within this age group had no longer completely performed the anticipated talking indicators, as their speech lacked coherent sequencing and was commonly constrained to short utterances of approximately six to seven phrases. Previous empirical studies demonstrate inconsistent findings regarding the effectiveness of picture-card media in improving children's speaking skills. Several studies report positive impacts, indicating that visual card-based media can significantly enhance oral language development by facilitating idea generation and structured expression. For example, Kristianingsih (2023) found that pop-up card media significantly improved students' speaking proficiency in secondary-level learners. Similarly, Fahrudin et al. (2022) reported statistically significant improvements in children's speaking abilities after the implementation of picture-card media. Widiyaningrum et al. (2019) also concluded that storytelling activities supported by picture cards positively influenced children's language development and early public speaking

competence. In addition, Nurjanah (2020) revealed that storytelling methods contributed to improvements in fluency and self-confidence among young learners.

Nevertheless, contradictory evidence was reported by Alfatihaturrohmah et al. (2018), who found that children's speaking indicators remained below expected developmental standards despite the use of picture-based media. Their findings indicated that students' utterances were still limited in length and lacked coherent sequencing. These divergent outcomes suggest that the effectiveness of picture-card media may vary depending on contextual variables such as learner age, instructional design, and implementation strategy. Moreover, most previous studies have focused primarily on kindergarten-aged children (5–6 years), creating a research gap at the elementary school level, particularly among students aged 10–12 years.

Preliminary observations and informal interviews conducted at School X further highlight this issue. Teachers reported that some students were reluctant to present in front of the class and frequently refused when asked to speak publicly. Students expressed feelings of embarrassment and confusion when attempting to articulate their ideas, indicating anxiety and fear of making mistakes. Such findings align with broader evidence that public speaking anxiety is common among learners and may hinder communicative development (Jami et al., 2024).

This study therefore focuses on children aged 10–12 years, a developmental stage characterized by more refined vocabulary mastery and improved syntactic accuracy. According to Theresia (2020), children within the 9–12 age range demonstrate greater precision in sentence construction and word choice, indicating readiness for structured speaking interventions. Furthermore, Tarigan (2015) emphasizes that speaking competence requires systematic training to enable learners to organize ideas coherently and express them effectively in oral communication.

Based on the identified research gap, inconsistent prior findings, and field observations regarding students' speaking anxiety, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of Universal Picture Card Media (UPCM) in improving elementary school students' public speaking skills. The objective is to analyze whether structured UPCM-based instruction can significantly enhance fluency, coherence, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, clarity of message delivery, and confidence in social interaction.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study applied a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest control group design to examine the effectiveness of Universal Picture Card Media (UPCM) in improving students' public speaking skills. The quasi-experimental model allows researchers to compare outcomes between groups while observing changes before and after the intervention. The research was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah 2 Sorong City from July to August 2025 and involved 20 students aged 10–12 years selected through purposive sampling. The participants were divided into an experimental group that received UPCM-based instruction and a control group that followed conventional learning activities.

Data were collected through speaking performance tests administered in the pretest and posttest phases, in which students completed a storytelling task of approximately one minute and thirty seconds. Assessment indicators included pronunciation accuracy, fluency, grammatical correctness, coherence and cohesion, clarity of message delivery, and confidence in social interaction. These indicators align with the concept that speaking is a structured language skill requiring systematic training and organization of ideas (Tarigan, 2015).

The intervention was implemented in three instructional cycles incorporating storytelling activities, singing, educational games, and reflective sessions. The design of the training refers to the concept of scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which

emphasizes guided support in developing language competence (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). This structured and gradual approach was intended to facilitate measurable improvements in students' public speaking performance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Normality Test

The criteria carried out on this evaluation nation that information are seemed as normally disbursed when the significance level (p-price) exceeds zero.05. In evaluation, a p-cost beneath 0.05 shows that the records deviate from ordinary distribution. for this reason, the final results of the Shapiro–Wilk test turns into the idea for choosing the appropriate statistical procedure, figuring out whether a parametric or nonparametric approach need to be hired.

Table 1. Distribution of Participant Data

	Group	Measurement	Shapiro-Wilk		
			Statistic	df	Sig.
Result	Experiment	T1	0,949	10	0,653
		T2	0,896	10	0,197
	Control	T1	0,973	10	0,913
		T2	0,803	10	0,016

*Ket T1: *Pretest* T2: *Posttest*

The normality assessment conducted at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ indicated that one datasetspecifically the control group's post-test scoresdid not follow a normal distribution, while the remaining datasets displayed distributions that approximated normality. Because the assumption of normality was not fully satisfied, the hypothesis testing procedure was carried out using the nonparametric Mann–Whitney U Test. This method was selected due to its suitability for data that do not require normal distribution assumptions and its effectiveness in comparing differences between two independent samples, namely the experimental and control groups.

Homogeneity Test

A homogeneity check became carried out to evaluate whether or not the variances of the sample facts have been equal throughout the organizations being compared. This procedure is important previous to accomplishing analyses of group variations, as it ensures that the interpretation of speculation testing outcomes stays legitimate. The decision rule is based at the importance stage (p-fee): facts are regarded as homogeneous while the p-value exceeds zero.05, whereas a price underneath 0.05 shows unequal variances (heterogeneity). consequently, the final results of this take a look at serves as the idea for determining the suitability of the following statistical analysis.

Table 2. Homogeneity Test

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Result	<i>Based on Mean</i>	0,263	1	18	0,615
	<i>Based on Median</i>	0,196	1	18	0,663
	<i>Based on Median and with adjusted df</i>	0,196	1	16,849	0,664
	<i>Based on trimmed mean</i>	0,306	1	18	0,587

The homogeneity check produced a importance cost (Sig. based on imply) of zero.615, that's better than the installed alpha level of zero.05. This end result shows that the posttest

variance between the experimental and control companies can be taken into consideration homogeneous.

Hypothesis Testing

After conducting descriptive analysis, normality testing, and homogeneity testing, the results indicated that some of the data were not normally distributed. Consequently, the researcher employed the nonparametric *Mann–Whitney U Test* to test the research hypothesis. This test was used to determine whether there was a difference in the improvement of speaking skills between students who received UPCM (*Universal Picture Card Media*) training as the experimental group and those who did not receive the training as the control group. The standards used to interpret this check indicate that a significance value (p-fee) more than zero.05 displays the absence of a statistically significant distinction among the 2 groups. In evaluation, a p-fee under 0.05 signifies that a massive distinction exists among the experimental and control businesses.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)	Description
Experiment	10	5.50	55.00	0.000	-3.791	0.000	Significant
Control	10	15.50	155.00				

*Ket T1: Pretest T2: Posttest

The Mann–Whitney U check completed using SPSS version 26.0 yielded $U = 0.000$, $Z = -3.791$, and an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of zero.000. because the received importance price is below the 0.05 threshold ($p < zero.05$), the null speculation (H_0) is rejected and the opportunity speculation (H_1) is established. those findings imply a statistically enormous distinction between the experimental institution that received the UPCM (customary photograph Card Media) schooling and the manipulate organization that did not participate within the training. Therefore, the post-test findings screen a statistically tremendous difference among the experimental and control groups. The experimental group recorded a mean rank of 5.50, while the manipulate institution accomplished an average rank of 15.50. this variation shows that the UPCM (widespread photo Card Media) training administered to the experimental organization contributed positively to the enhancement of students' public talking performance. In different phrases, members who obtained the schooling exhibited more potent talking skills in comparison to those who had been no longer exposed to the intervention.

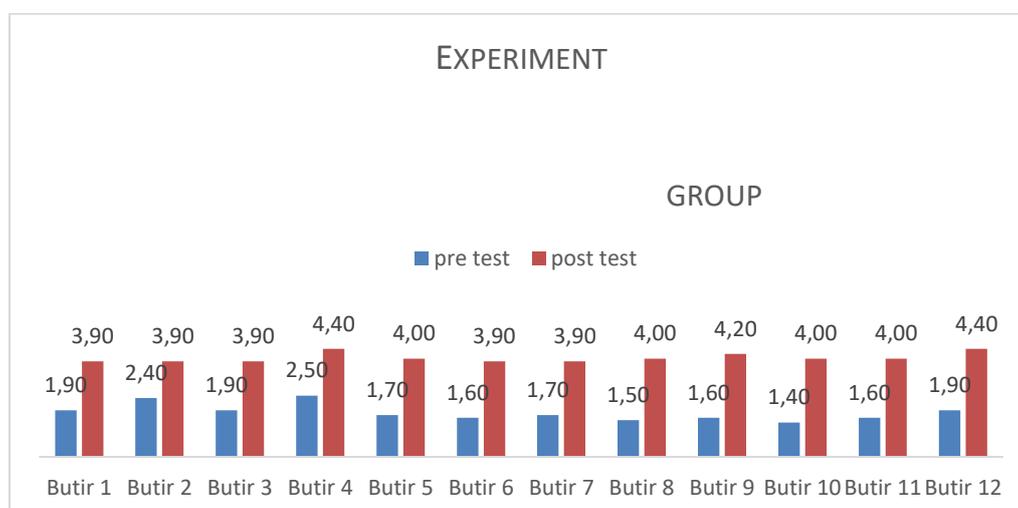


Figure 1. Mean scores of speaking skills of participants in the experimental group

Based on the analysis of the mean scores of speaking skills in the experimental group, it was found that at the initial stage (T1), item number 10 representing the *Clarity of Meaning* aspect had the lowest mean score ($M = 1.40$), while item number 8 representing the *Coherence & Cohesion* aspect obtained a mean score of $M = 1.60$. This indicates that, at the initial measurement, students' abilities to convey meaning clearly and to construct coherent and cohesive sentences were still relatively low. However, after the treatment (T2), students' speaking skills showed a significant improvement. The highest mean scores were obtained for item number 4 representing the *Fluency* aspect ($M = 4.40$) and item number 12 representing the *Confidence & Social Interaction* aspect ($M = 4.40$). These findings indicate that training using UPCM (*Universal Picture Card Media*) was effective in improving students' speaking fluency and self-confidence in social interaction.

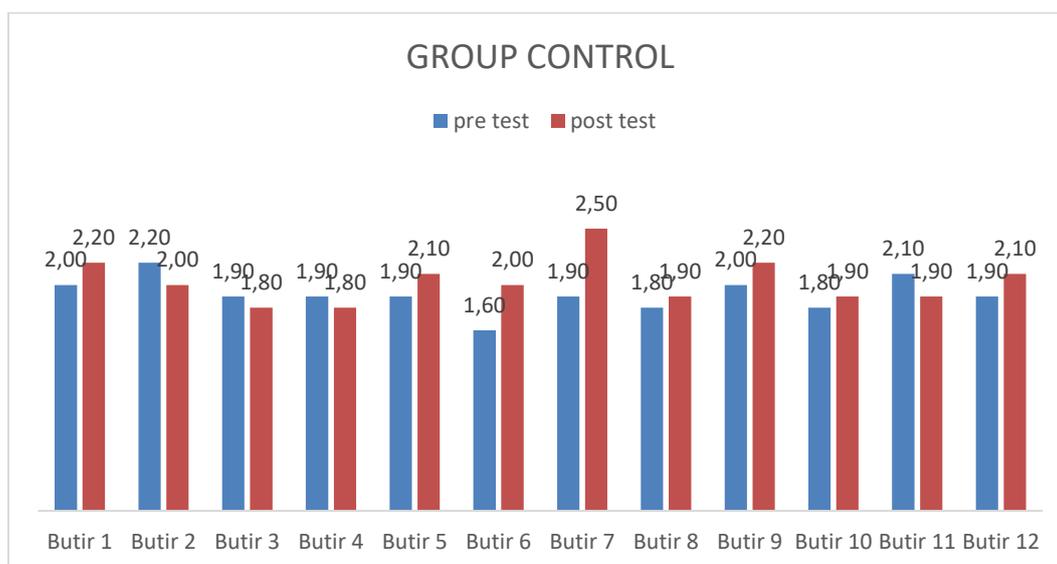


Figure 2. Mean scores of speaking skills of participants in the control group

Based on the mean score graph of the control group, it was found that item number 6 representing the *Grammatical Accuracy* aspect had the lowest mean score at the initial stage (T1) with $M = 1.60$, while at the post-measurement stage (T2), item number 8 representing the *Coherence & Cohesion* aspect showed the lowest mean score with $M = 1.80$. This indicates that students' abilities to construct grammatically correct and cohesive sentences remained relatively low despite regular instruction without intervention. The highest mean scores at the T2 measurement were found in item number 7 representing *Grammatical Accuracy* ($M = 2.50$) and item number 1 representing *Pronunciation Accuracy* ($M = 2.20$).

A evaluation of the T1 and T2 dimension consequences for the experimental and manage corporations affords a clearer evaluate of ways talking competencies developed in a different way between the 2 organizations, as illustrated within the graph under.

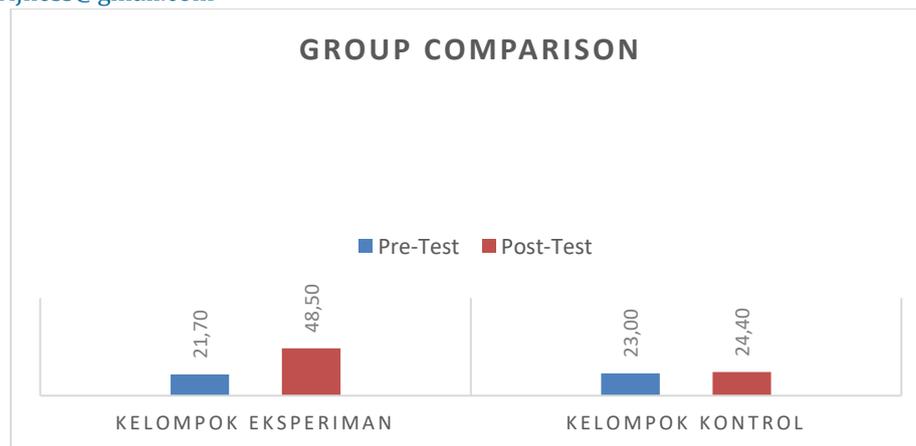


Figure 3. Mean scores of the experimental and control groups (before and after)

Based on the comparison graph of mean scores between the experimental and control groups, it can be seen that the experimental group at the initial stage (T1) had a mean score of $M = 21.70$, which then increased significantly to $M = 48.50$ after receiving the treatment using UPCM (*Universal Picture Card Media*), representing an improvement of 26.80%. Meanwhile, the control group, which did not receive any treatment, had an initial mean score (T1) of $M = 23.00$ and showed only a slight increase to $M = 24.40$ at the final stage (T2). These findings indicate that the implementation of UPCM had a greater impact on improving students' speaking skills compared to conventional learning without intervention.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the hypothesis was accepted, as the training program to improve students' speaking skills using UPCM (*Universal Picture Card Media*) produced a significant effect, with an improvement of 26.80%. The mean score of the experimental group showed a significantly higher increase compared to that of the control group.

These findings suggest that training using UPCM is effective in providing a more active and interactive learning experience and in motivating students to develop the confidence to speak in public. In addition, the use of this medium serves as an alternative and flexible instructional strategy that can be applied in various educational contexts. The experimental group that received the UPCM treatment demonstrated a significant improvement in speaking skills, in contrast to the control group, which did not receive similar treatment.

The findings of this study are consistent with the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD) theory proposed by (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978) which explains that the development of language abilities and speaking skills occurs through social interaction and the use of learning aids, including visual media. In this context, UPCM (*Universal Picture Card Media*) functions as a visual instructional aid that facilitates students in generating ideas, organizing thoughts, and gradually enhancing their speaking abilities.

The concept of *scaffolding* in Vygotsky's theory emphasizes the importance of temporary support provided to students during the learning process, which is gradually reduced as students' independent abilities increase (Kamil, 2012). Thus, speaking skills training through UPCM not only enhances students' verbal abilities but also serves as an effective, structured, and developmentally adaptive learning medium.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of (Kristianingsih, 2023) which show that the use of pop-up card media is effective in improving students' speaking skills. Similar findings were also reported by (Fahrudin et al., 2022) who demonstrated that the use of picture-card media has a significant effect on improving children's speaking abilities and is effective in the context of language learning.

Furthermore, the findings of this study reinforce those of (Widiyaningrum et al., 2019) who stated that the storytelling method supported by picture-card media contributes positively to

the development of students' public speaking skills. In line with this, (Nurjanah, 2020) also found that the storytelling method not only improves children's speaking skills but also fosters their self-confidence in expressing opinions in front of others.

These findings indicate that improvements in students' speaking abilities can be achieved through the application of picture-card media and storytelling methods, which function as forms of temporary support (*scaffolding*) during the learning process. The implementation of UPCM (*Universal Picture Card Media*) as a visual learning medium has been proven to be practical and effective in helping students develop structured speaking skills. Thus, speaking skills training does not focus solely on verbal aspects but also contributes to enhancing students' self-confidence and provides an efficient and applicable alternative instructional method in elementary school settings.

Furthermore, the improvement of speaking skills is considered important because it enables students to express ideas, think critically, and build self-confidence in communication. Speaking skills are also an integral part of children's cognitive development, in which language plays a crucial role in thinking processes and social interaction (Piaget, 1960). In line with this perspective, (Tarigan, 2015) emphasizes that speaking is a means of expressing thoughts and feelings orally. In addition, (Jami et al., 2024) stress that public speaking skills play a central role in fostering self-confidence, enhancing communication abilities, and supporting the development of positive character traits in learners.

The analysis results show that students' public speaking skills improved after receiving UPCM (*Universal Picture Card Media*) training. The highest improvement was found in the *Coherence and Cohesion* indicator, indicating a significant development in students' ability to organize, connect, and convey ideas in a structured manner. Meanwhile, the lowest improvement was observed in the *Pronunciation Accuracy* indicator, suggesting that pronunciation still requires further practice and guidance. Overall, the findings demonstrate that UPCM is effective in improving students' speaking skills, particularly in terms of fluency and the integration of ideas during oral communication.

However, this study has several limitations, such as the small sample size of only 10 students, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to a larger population. Sample size influences data variability in detecting significant differences. The duration of the study also plays an important role in its success, as a short implementation period may limit students' ability to fully optimize their speaking skills. In addition, the study was conducted over a relatively short period, so it is unclear whether the effects of UPCM training are temporary or sustained over the long term.

Based on these findings, the researcher observes that the improvement in students' speaking skills shows positive potential. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to involve larger sample sizes to obtain more representative results. It is also recommended that the duration of UPCM-based instruction be extended so that students can experience deeper and more consistent effects in applying UPCM as a visual learning medium. Furthermore, future studies are expected to examine the effectiveness of UPCM across different age groups or educational levels to achieve broader and more contextualized applications of the model.

CONCLUSION

The findings suggest that the usage of UPCM (customary image Card Media) education effectively improved the public speaking abilities of college students at SD Muhammadiyah 2 Sorong city. throughout the implementation length, the training sports utilizing visible media had been performed in alignment with the planned academic module, ensuing in measurable development. students inside the experimental organization demonstrated a 26.80% development

in speaking overall performance after receiving the intervention. This development emerged through a sequence of UPCM-primarily based training sessions implemented across 3 cycles, incorporating numerous educational strategies which include storytelling, singing, educational games, and debriefing periods. These processes fostered an attractive getting to know environment and proved effective in strengthening students' speaking competence.

The effectiveness of the training for rookies aged 10–12 years is also supported through developmental idea. At approximately eleven years of age, youngsters start to increase logical questioning skills past in simple terms concrete reasoning, allowing them to extra easily join visible representations with the ideas they intend to communicate, as explained in Piaget's developmental framework. Similarly, the outcomes align with the idea of the zone of Proximal Improvement (ZPD) and scaffolding proposed by Vygotsky and Cole, which emphasize that language acquisition and speaking proficiency evolve through guided interaction and academic assist. In this context, UPCM serves as a powerful visual learning device that enables the slow business enterprise of ideas, supports based expression, and strengthens students' self belief in handing over spoken messages.

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