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English Teacher's Modeling and Deep Learning in Overcoming Students' Vocabulary and Speaking Confidence Issues

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Abstract

This study looks at how modeling and deep learning methods are used in teaching English and how they affect vocabulary knowledge and speaking confidence among fifth graders at Tandrawana Public Elementary School 074039. The research used a qualitative approach, involving one English teacher and 20 students. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with the teacher, and document analysis of the ATP (Flow of Learning Objectives) and observation sheets. The data were analyzed using an interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, triangulation was applied by cross-checking findings from observations, interviews, and documents. This study contributes to existing literature by integrating modeling and deep learning in a real elementary EFL classroom and demonstrating that deep learning activities need to be pedagogically adapted to match primary students' cognitive and linguistic development. The results showed that the teacher often used modeling by practicing pronunciation, using simple sentences, and having students repeat dialogues. Deep learning was used through visual aids, group work, and exercises that helped students understand and think about vocabulary more deeply. The study found that these methods helped improve students' vocabulary and speaking confidence. However, some activities, like role-playing, were not used as effectively because the students had limited analytical abilities. Overall, using both modeling and deep learning helps

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students develop their vocabulary and speaking skills, but the way these methods are applied should match the thinking level of elementary school students.

Keywords: *Modeling, Deep Learning, Vocabulary, Speaking Confidence, English Learning.*

A. Introduction

Learning English at the elementary level plays a fundamental role in shaping students' future language development, particularly in building strong vocabulary and fostering speaking confidence. However, most previous studies have examined modeling or deep learning separately and there is still limited research that integrates both approaches specifically to address vocabulary mastery and speaking confidence among elementary school learners. In this study, deep learning is understood as a pedagogical approach rather than artificial intelligence–based technology; it refers to instructional strategies that encourage students to process language meaningfully, connect vocabulary to real-life contexts, and actively engage in learning instead of merely memorizing words. Despite these theoretical and pedagogical advancements, in real classroom practice at SD Negeri 074039 Tandrawana, two major issues still persist: Limited vocabulary and a lack of confidence in speaking. These two issues are not separated; instead, they are deeply interconnected and often reinforce each other in a detrimental manner. Students with a limited vocabulary often feel insecure when attempting to speak, as they fear making mistakes, selecting the wrong words, or failing to complete a sentence. Conversely, students who lack confidence are generally hesitant to engage in speaking activities, even when they comprehend the basic material presented by the teacher. This creates a cycle where a low vocabulary leads to reduced speaking attempts, and a lack of speaking practice, in turn, hinders vocabulary growth. (Amelia et al., 2021) states that vocabulary acquisition not only supports speaking skills but also enhances critical thinking abilities by enabling individuals to select the right words to convey arguments effectively and that a broad vocabulary provides flexibility in speaking allowing expression of ideas in various formal and informal contexts. In practice, preliminary classroom observations at SD Negeri 074039 Tandrawana indicate that

many fifth-grade students remain passive during speaking activities. During initial observations, only a small number of students actively participated in English speaking tasks, while most students tended to remain silent unless directly called upon by the teacher. In addition, the English teacher reported that many students struggle to recall basic vocabulary and often hesitate to speak due to fear of making mistakes. These initial findings suggest that limited vocabulary and low speaking confidence are not merely theoretical concerns but real challenges in this classroom context, thus reinforcing the urgency of this study. Consequently, English instruction at the elementary level should not solely focus on memorizing vocabulary lists but should also emphasize the growth of confidence and communicative abilities. Students need engaging learning experiences that promote active involvement rather than passive learning.

English instruction at the elementary level should not solely focus on memorizing vocabulary lists but should also emphasize the growth of confidence and communicative abilities. Students need engaging learning experiences that promote active involvement rather than passive learning. (Nashruddin, 2024) highlights that using games and visual media in teaching greatly increases learners' speaking motivation and confidence, showing that interactive learning activities are beneficial for students. To tackle these challenges, English teachers at SD Negeri 074039 Tandrawana have started adopting two teaching methods: modeling and deep learning, which in this study refers strictly to a pedagogical learning approach rather than artificial intelligence–based instruction. Modeling offers students clear examples provided by the teacher, such as how to pronounce words accurately, comprehend new vocabulary, and construct sentences in context.

These method exposes students to structured language use and helps them grasp how English functions in real communication. On the other hand, deep learning encourages students to think beyond memorization and to apply language in meaningful ways. By promoting deeper processing of language, this approach enables students to link classroom lessons with real-life situations, which can gradually enhance their confidence. Several studies back the effectiveness of

these approaches. (Afrianti & Rustipa, 2023) points out that the Total Physical Response method enhances vocabulary and speaking confidence by making learning enjoyable and meaningful, indicating that active participation can strengthen understanding. (Zheng, 2025) explains that the deep learning-based approach greatly supports second-language learners by offering personalized learning paths, showcasing the potential of deep learning to cater to students' individual needs. (Wang, 2024) mention that using Spiking Neural Network and Conv LSTM algorithms created a model that helps students better understand and use vocabulary. (Yana, 2025) also states that implementing deep learning in vocabulary teaching allows students to engage more deeply and build confidence through real context and repeated practice. Additionally, (Rumapea, 2020) found a significant positive correlation between self-confidence and English speaking ability, concluding that increasing self-confidence directly improves speaking skills, highlighting that building confidence is key to maximizing vocabulary use in oral communication. Therefore, both vocabulary and confidence must be strengthened from the very beginning to ensure that students are not only able to understand English but also motivated to use it actively. It is crucial to address these issues promptly because weak vocabulary and speaking skills developed from an early age can significantly impact students' future language development.

While modeling and deep learning have been widely discussed in previous studies, most research has examined these approaches separately rather than in an integrated manner. For instance, Afrianti and Rustipa (2023) focused on active learning strategies to enhance vocabulary and speaking confidence, while Zheng (2025) emphasized the potential of deep learning as a pedagogical approach to support individualized language learning. Similarly, Wang (2024) highlighted the effectiveness of innovative instructional models in vocabulary development, and Rumapea (2020) demonstrated the strong relationship between self-confidence and speaking ability. However, these studies have not explicitly explored how the combined implementation of modeling and deep learning can simultaneously address vocabulary mastery and speaking confidence among elementary school students. This study contributes to the existing literature by investigating the integrated use of modeling and deep learning in a real classroom setting at SD Negeri 074039 Tandrawana. Accordingly, the present study aims to explore how these two approaches are implemented by English teachers and to assess their

effectiveness in helping fifth-grade students overcome challenges related to vocabulary mastery and speaking confidence. Therefore, this study aims to explore how these two approaches are implemented by English teachers and to assess their effectiveness in helping fifth-grade students overcome challenges related to vocabulary mastery and speaking confidence at SD Negeri 074039 Tandrawana.

B. Methods

This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study approach to understand how modeling and deep learning were implemented in real classroom practice and how students responded to these approaches. This choice aligns with (Riwayatiningsih, 2024), who emphasized that descriptive qualitative research through classroom observation and interviews is appropriate for capturing natural interactions in Indonesian EFL settings without researcher interference. The research was conducted at SD Negeri 074039 Tandrawana during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year and involved one English teacher and 20 fifth-grade students. The school was selected because it had already begun implementing modeling and deep learning strategies in English instruction, making it relevant to the research objectives. The participants were chosen purposively based on their involvement in English learning activities and their representation of typical elementary EFL learners with Basic English proficiency, limited vocabulary, and varying levels of speaking confidence. Data were collected through three instruments. First, classroom observations were conducted across three learning sessions to examine how modeling and deep learning were applied and how students reacted. Observation sheets were developed based on the school's ATP documents. Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the English teacher to gain deeper insights into students' vocabulary difficulties, speaking confidence, and the rationale behind instructional choices. Third, document analysis was carried out by reviewing ATP documents to understand learning objectives, materials, and expected competencies. Data analysis followed three steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure data validity, triangulation was applied by comparing findings from observations,

interviews, and document analysis, which strengthens credibility and reduces researcher bias (Chand, 2025). Regarding ethical considerations, permission was obtained from the school principal, teacher, and students' parents. Participation was voluntary, and students' identities were kept confidential. The researchers maintained objectivity and ensured that their involvement as participant observers did not disrupt normal classroom activities.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Implementation Modeling and Deep Learning in the Classroom

The English teacher implemented a modeling approach as a foundation for vocabulary instruction. The observation indicators were created based on the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP), which focuses on teaching vocabulary step by step, ensuring clear pronunciation, and using language in real-life contexts as key skills for fifth-grade students. Because of this, the classroom observation done was to look at how the teacher showed students how to pronounce, understand, and use new words in a way that follows the ATP goals. During the first observations, the teacher introduced new vocabulary through clear pronunciation, followed by simple example sentences to give context. Students were also asked to imitate the teacher's pronunciation, both individually and in groups. These classroom practices align with modeling theory, which describes modeling as a process in which learners shape their thoughts, beliefs, strategies, and behaviors based on examples demonstrated by role models, such as teachers who explain and illustrate specific skills (Kok & Loh, 2009) Furthermore, this finding supports (Garden, 2022) who argues that teaching specific words directly in the early grades, like showing the meaning, how to pronounce them, and how to use them in different situations during read-aloud, helps students speak more confidently and use new words on their own. In the first observations, some students were hesitant and had difficulty pronouncing words on their own, but by the second observations, students became more confident and their pronunciation showed observable improvement. This shows the effectiveness of consistent modeling in assisting learners in building vocabulary. This finding aligns with (Brown & Brown, 2025) opinion in Effective Elementary Vocabulary Instructional Strategies, which states in regards to vocabulary instruction, direct instruction involves explicitly teaching the meanings

of words and modeling word learning strategies. The model used by the teacher is appropriate because elementary school students often implement a lexicon frequently and are in the process of learning to integrate content knowledge using a transparent model. The implementation of this approach can support bilingual students better by not only focusing on the English language but also building foundational skills that students encounter in academic settings. Additionally, the teacher systematically teacher language structures by first demonstrating language in use and then asking students to use the language in pair work. This supports the development of a deep understanding of the language. The teacher also utilized visual media, such as picture cards, to reinforce vocabulary and help students connect words with their meanings. In the first session, some students had difficulty matching words with their corresponding pictures, but over time, a marked improvement was seen. This improvement highlights how using visuals can aid in better understanding, especially for the learners that encounter this language as an additional language.

Specifically, the results demonstrated a significant increase in vocabulary acquisition when picture words were used. This result is supported by the study (Gayathri & Vijayalakshmi, 2025), which states the experimental group, where visual aural engaging strategy was used, demonstrated a more seamless enhancement in vocabulary comprehension compared to the control group. This advancement is attributed to the effectiveness of visual media in making language structures more mental, especially for learners in the learning process. Through model-based instruction, students were given clear examples of new vocabulary. This effectively supports vocabulary learning. The model used by the teacher was appropriate, especially in the foundational stages of acquiring vocabulary, since elementary school students often need careful modeling to understand new language concepts. This process allows students to observed and imitate clear examples, promoting accurate language use and comprehension. This practical implementation leads to overall support for learners in a joyful learning environment. The result has proven to be effective as social interaction and clear modeling provide direct instruction. This learning style is more suitable for

working with individuals who are in the process of learning to understand a new language. The increase in student confidence and pronunciation accuracy is clear evidence of this style's effectiveness. In addition, consistent modeling offers a steady support tool for beginners when they achieve comprehension through the visual media used. The teacher also uses group activities to helped students learn more deeply, like making sentences with words they have already learned or talking about pictures in the way the teacher shows. These activities encouraged teamwork, where students can help each other, shared what they know, and fix their mistakes together. These results match what (Nafi & Faruq, 2025) wrote, which says the research shows that deep learning helps build critical, creative, reflective, and emotional thinking, as well as student involvement, when it is used in a way that connects with their daily lives. In this case, even though fifth-grade students aren't ready for high-level thinking, like analyzing conversations or making complicated talks, they are starting to understand how words fit into simple situations through group work. But during observations, it was clear that the role-play activity was not done well. In the first session, students didn't know what to talk about or who should play which role. In the next class, the teacher stopped the activity because it was too hard for the students' current level. This shows an important problem in the study: deep learning ideas need to fit the thinking skills of young students. So, making activities too complex can actually stop students from focusing. However, teacher found that using pictures, repeating examples, and group work are really useful strategies.

Teacher confirmed these ideas in their interviews. They said using pictures and showing examples helped students understand new words better. But they also had problems, like not having enough teaching tools, time, and students having different levels of ability. This means that using modeling and deep learning needs support from media, plenty of time, and strategies that match what the students can handle. For instance, the teacher decided not to continue role-playing because it did not fit the class's skill level. These findings also support the work of (Guo, 2021) who says deep learning brings in memories, images, and stories from past experiences, helping turn scattered learning into deep understanding through context. The fact that students could link pictures, words, and examples shows that deep learning can move learning from just memorizing to truly understanding, even at a basic level. Another important study is (Bayu et al., 2025) research titled

Vocabulary Building Model in Elementary School English, which says the ADDIE-based vocabulary building model was found to be very valid in terms of language (95%) and materials (92%), and very practical (95-96%) for teaching English to elementary students. This suggests that a systematic, step-by-step learning model, which includes examples, organized exercises, and reflection, works well in elementary school settings, as shown in this study. So, using these two methods in the classroom has led to good results, though there are still some limits, especially in activities that need a lot of analysis. However, overall, using models and deep learning helps a lot in improving students' early understanding and use of vocabulary.

2. Students' Vocabulary Development and Speaking Confidence

The observations showed that students made a observable improvement in their vocabulary skills. In the first session, most students could only say vocabulary words when they were spoken together, and they seemed less confident when saying words on their own. But in the second observation, more students were willing to try saying words by themselves, and their pronunciation was clearer. Using visual media was one key factor that helped students understand the meanings of words better. This result matches what (Thi & Chung, 2023) found in her study called the Efficacy of Visual Aids in Enhancing Vocabulary Acquisition, where she reported the group that used visual aids showed a smoother improvement in vocabulary understanding. In activities where students finding sentences, they started to show they could link words to the situations they are used in. Even though their sentence structures stayed, this shift indicates that they are progressing from merely recalling words to truly understanding them. This idea is backed by (Lessard-clouston, 2021) who talked about how different exercises and real-life situations help students better learn and use vocabulary. Students are also more confident when speaking. At first, they were shy, spoke slowly, and avoided speaking on their own. But after seeing examples from the teacher and working with others, they started to try speaking more. In the second observation, they responded faster to instructions, read words more clearly, and made simple

sentences. This matches the findings of (Lin et al., 2022) group had better speaking results (effect size d=0.85) because of combining visual and listening cues, which worked better than traditional methods for young EFL learners. This shows that seeing and hearing things like picture cards can help students speak more boldly and be more fluent. (Wahyu et al., 2025) says that multisensory learning is also important because it shows how using different senses (like seeing, hearing, and moving) can help students remember words better. Wahyu et al., says multimedia worksheets made learning through multiple senses (visual, auditory, and physical) help students remember words much better. Although this study used digital tools, the idea of using different senses can also be used in simple lessons, like when a teacher uses pictures and body movement to repeat words. Interviews with the teacher suggested that role-play was used to improve speaking. However, classroom observations showed it was not successfully implemented. This discrepancy may result from students' limited cognitive readiness, insufficient time, or misalignment between planned instructional activities and the classroom environment. Recognizing this gap is important for designing effective learning activities for young learners.

Modeling provided students with clear examples to follow, while deep learning supported their ability to process and apply new vocabulary in meaningful contexts. Activities like group work, reading independently, and practicing with partners contributed to vocabulary acquisition and speaking confidence, even though complex activities like role-play were limited. These findings suggest that while role-playing aligns with ATP goals, adaptation is needed to match students' developmental stages. Using modeling, visual aids, and group work proved more effective and practical than activities requiring higher-level cognitive skills. Overall, success depends not only on planned methods but also on the teacher's flexibility in adjusting instruction to classroom realities.

D. Conclusion

This study shows that using modeling and deep learning in English classes at SD Negeri 074039 Tandrawana helped students improve their vocabulary and feel more confident when speaking. By using modeling, the teacher gave clear and repeated examples of how to pronounce words, use them correctly, and form simple sentences. This helped young students understand new words better and

more accurately. This method worked well for kids who need a lot of repetition and direct help when learning a second language. Deep learning was used through activities like matching pictures with words, creating simple sentences, and working in groups. These activities made students more active and helped them use vocabulary in real-life situations. Because of this, students who were shy started speaking more confidently, pronounced words more clearly, and understood better, showing they were moving from just memorizing words to really understanding them. But the study also found that there was a gap between what was planned and what actually happened in class, especially with role-play activities. Even though teachers thought role-play was important, students had trouble making up dialogues and deciding who would play which role. This limitation was due to students' cognitive readiness, varying language proficiency, and time constraints, indicating that deep learning activities need to be adapted to match students' developmental and linguistic levels. This study provides a novel insight into the combined use of modeling and deep learning for young learners in Indonesian elementary schools, showing how these methods can effectively enhance vocabulary acquisition and speaking confidence in real classroom contexts. Modeling helped students understand pronunciation, meanings, and usage of words through clear examples and repetition, while deep learning activities, such as group work and visual-based exercises, allowed students to actively use the new vocabulary and speak with more confidence. Future research should explore longer intervention periods, larger sample sizes, and the integration of role-play activities with appropriate scaffolding to better match students' cognitive and linguistic abilities. In general, how well modeling and deep learning work depends on how well teachers can change their methods to fit the real situation in the classroom. Even though the study had limited observation time and a small group of students, it still gave useful ideas on how to use modeling and context-based deep learning to help build vocabulary and speak more confidently in English for young learners.

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