

The Effect of the Implementation of Three-Language Speech Movements (FREE) on Improving Speaking Skills and Character Formation of Elementary School Students

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Copyright © 2026 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.	
Citation: Asmawati J, Nuraeni Kasman, Jumiati Lanta, & Andi Sadapotto. (2026). The effect of the implementation of three-language speech movements (FREE) on improving speaking skills and character formation of elementary school students. UKR Journal of Education and Literature, 2(5), 107-114.	<i>This study examines the implementation of the Three Language Speech Movement (Geratis) as a learning strategy to improve speaking skills while supporting character building of upper grade students at the UPT SD Negeri 1 Passeno. The research problem stems from the initial condition that students' speaking skills in formal contexts are still relatively low and some students show hesitation when having to appear in public. The study used a mixed methods approach with a quasi-experimental design of Nonequivalent Control Group Design. The population and sample amounted to 49 students, consisting of 24 students in the experimental group and 25 students in the control group. Data were collected through observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Qualitative analysis was carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, while quantitative data were analyzed using inferential statistical tests.</i> <i>The results of the study showed that Geratis was implemented in a structured manner through planning, script preparation, practice, performance, evaluation, as well as reflection and follow-up. In speaking skills, the experimental group's score increased by an average of 22.25 points, from 62.21 in the pretest to 84.46 in the posttest; the control group increased by 20.16 points, from 40.52 to 60.68. The statistical test showed a significance of 0.000. In character building, the experimental group increased by 23.67 points, from 62.13 to 85.79, while the control group increased by 14.88 points, from 61.56 to 76.44; the posttest difference between groups was also significant at 0.000. These findings suggest that regular, directed, and multilingual speech practice can be a learning experience that combines linguistic competence with strengthening self-confidence and responsibility.</i> Keywords: Free, speaking skills, character, trilingual speech, elementary school.

1. Introduction

Speaking skills are a crucial competency in language learning because they enable students to express ideas, feelings, opinions, and information verbally. At the elementary school level, these skills are not simply developed through conceptual explanations; they require opportunities for real-life, repeated practice. Speaking in formal situations, such as presentations and speeches, requires students to organize ideas, choose vocabulary, manage pronunciation and intonation, and demonstrate the courage to communicate in front of others.

In the context of the UPT SD Negeri 1 Passeno, preliminary research that forms the basis of this article indicates that only 20.41% of students are able to speak coherently and confidently in formal situations. Most students still exhibit nervousness, lack confidence, and struggle to convey ideas systematically. Interviews with teachers also revealed that students are not yet accustomed to structured and sustained oral communication. This situation highlights the need for strategies that not only teach language but also provide live performance experiences.

The Three Language Speech Movement (Geratis) is a practice that combines Indonesian, regional languages, and English in speech activities. Indonesian serves as the national language and a means of formal communication; regional languages serve as a vehicle for maintaining local identity and culture; while English introduces communication experiences in a broader context. Thus, speech activities are not only oriented toward speech production but also provide space for students to experience linguistic diversity contextually.

Pedagogically, Geratis' practice is relevant to active learning because students are placed as the primary actors in the activity. Students prepare materials, practice, perform, receive feedback, and reflect. This process has the potential to bring together cognitive, linguistic, social, and affective aspects. In this study, the character aspects of primary concern are self-confidence and responsibility. Both are directly related to the demands of preparing and delivering a speech.

Formulation of the problem

- How is the implementation of Free Tuition for upper class students at UPT SD Negeri 1 Passeno?
- Does the implementation of Geratis have an effect on improving students' speaking skills?
- Does the implementation of Free Education have an impact on character formation, especially self-confidence and responsibility?

Research purposes

The research aims to describe the implementation of Geratis, analyze its influence on speaking skills, and analyze its influence on the formation of students' character.

2. Theoretical Study

2.1 Trilingual Speech Movement

Free in this study is understood as a speech activity that provides students with the opportunity to use three languages: Indonesian, a regional language, and English. This concept connects language practice to the students' social and cultural contexts. The use of regional languages is not viewed as an obstacle to mastering the national or foreign language, but as part of a language experience that enriches students' identities. This multilingual perspective aligns with the idea that learners' language resources can be used flexibly to support communication and learning processes (García & Sylvan, 2011).

Previous research included in the thesis shows that multilingual learning can improve speaking skills when students are given space to alternate between regional and foreign languages. Meanwhile, research on speaking activities shows a relationship with increased self-

confidence and speaking skills. Geratis' uniqueness lies in combining these two elements with character-building goals.

2.2 Speech in Learning

Speech is a form of oral communication that requires content planning, organization of ideas, language accuracy, and delivery skills. In education, speech can be used as an active learning method because students are involved from the preparation stage through evaluation. Yannuar (2020) positions speaking activities, such as speeches, as a means of developing active and structured language use. Botirova (2022) also emphasizes that speaking activities can contribute to broader communication competencies.

Speech-based strategies need to be implemented gradually. Amani and Fedai (2024) emphasize the importance of contextual, active speaking instruction, and attention to affective factors such as courage and self-confidence. Mainga et al. (2022) emphasize gradual and continuous practice accompanied by formative evaluation. Within this framework, Geratis provides repetitive practice patterns and relatively short performance opportunities, making them easier to integrate into school routines.

2.3 Speaking Skills

Tarigan (2021) defines speaking as the ability to express ideas and feelings clearly and in a structured manner. This skill encompasses linguistic aspects such as pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, and structure, as well as non-linguistic aspects such as fluency, expression, and body language. Pennington and Rogerson-Revell (2018) emphasize the importance of prosody and intonation in conveying meaning, while Barbosa and Vale (2021) emphasize fluency as a crucial element of oral performance.

Affective factors also influence speaking performance. Shyness, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and low self-confidence can hinder participation (Putri & Chigbundu, 2024). Therefore, safe, regular practice accompanied by constructive feedback is essential for developing speaking skills.

2.4 Character Building

Character education is a mentoring process that guides students to internalize values so that these values are reflected in their attitudes and actions. Susilo et al. (2022) view character education as a process involving the family, school, and social environments. In this study, character is narrowed down to self-confidence and responsibility because these two aspects are directly evident in speaking activities.

Self-confidence develops when students have the opportunity to perform, express ideas, and receive

recognition for their efforts. Responsibility develops through the obligation to prepare scripts, practice, attend activities, follow directions, and complete performance assignments. Thus, character is not taught as a separate concept from language learning, but is formed through experience.

Nurasiah et al. (2022) demonstrated that speaking skills-based activities such as speeches and storytelling can be associated with increased activeness, self-confidence, and responsibility. Anshori (2023) emphasized the link between systematic speaking learning and self-confidence and active participation. Kurdi et al. (2020) also highlighted the

importance of repetition of speaking activities, formative evaluation, and feedback in strengthening character values.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The research's conceptual framework positions Geratis as a treatment variable that operates through a sequence of experiences: preparation → practice → performance → feedback → reflection. This sequence is expected to improve speaking skills because students have the opportunity to use language in a real-life setting. At the same time, the demands of preparation and performance provide experiences that build confidence and responsibility.

Component	Key indicators	Form of experience
Free	Three languages; speech structure	Preparation and drafting of the script
Exercise	Pronunciation; intonation; fluency	Repetitive practice and guidance
Appearance	Courage; expression; organization of content	3–5 minute speech
Character	Self-confidence; responsibility	Readiness, courage, task completion
Evaluation	Feedback; reflection	Next appearance improvement

Hypothesis

The research hypothesis states that the implementation of Geratis has an effect on improving speaking skills and there are differences in the formation of self-confidence and responsibility characters between students who participate in Geratis and students who do not participate in Geratis.

3. Research Methods

3.1 Approach and Design

The study employed a mixed methods approach. The qualitative component was used to obtain an overview of

the Geratis implementation process through observation and interviews, while the quantitative component was used to examine changes in speaking and character skill scores through pretests and posttests. The quantitative design used was a quasi-experimental design with a nonequivalent control group design. This design was used because the student allocation followed the existing class structure, so full randomization was not performed.

Group	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Experiment	O ₁	Free (X)	O ₂
Control	O ₃	Regular learning	O ₄

3.2 Population and Sample

The research population was all 49 upper grade students of UPT SD Negeri 1 Passeno: 18 students from grade IV, 14 students from grade V, and 17 students from grade VI. Since the population was less than 100, the entire population was used as the sample. The sample then consisted of 24 students in the experimental group and 25 students in the control group.

Group	Amount	Treatment
Experiment	24	Free Application
Control	25	Conventional learning
Total	49	—

3.3 Techniques and Instruments

Data were collected through observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Observations were used to record the implementation of Geratis, student speaking skills, and character. Interviews were conducted

with teachers and students to obtain details about their experiences during the program. Questionnaires were used to measure speaking skills and character. Documentation was used to supplement information regarding the activities.

Speaking skill indicators include pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary/content structure, fluency, expression, and body language. Character focuses on self-confidence and responsibility. The questionnaire instrument has been tested in source research; the reliability of the speaking skill questionnaire was reported to have a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.939, while the character questionnaire was 0.933.

3.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Quantitative data were analyzed using inferential statistics, including independent samples t-tests to compare groups and paired samples t-tests to examine pretest-posttest changes within groups. Significance decisions were made at the 0.05 level.

4. Research Results

4.1 Free Implementation

Observations show that Geratis is implemented before the start of lessons during morning assembly. The performance lasts 3–5 minutes, and students take turns performing. The activity provides space for students to use Indonesian, regional languages, and English, depending on the theme and their abilities. The teacher serves as a guide, motivator, model, activity manager, and feedback provider.

Implementation Stages

- Planning and socialization: the teacher explains the purpose of the activity, schedule, theme, and performance rules.
- Manuscript preparation: students are guided to prepare an opening, content and closing using appropriate language.
- Practice: students practice pronunciation, intonation, fluency, expression, and mental readiness.
- Performance: students deliver speeches in front of teachers and friends in a supportive atmosphere.
- Evaluation and feedback: teachers identify strengths and aspects that need improvement.

Group	N	Pretest	Posttest	Improvement
Control	25	40.52	60.68	20.16
Experiment	24	62.21	84.46	22.25

The posttest comparison also showed differences between the groups. The control group had an average of 60.68, while the experimental group had an average of 84.46. An independent samples t-test yielded a significance value of 0.000. Thus, at the 0.05 level, there was a significant difference in the posttest results for speaking skills between the two groups.

- Reflection and follow-up: teachers and students discuss experiences and prepare improvements for the next performance.

Observations revealed behavioral changes. Students who were initially shy and hesitant began to show confidence after several practice sessions. Feedback was provided constructively so that the evaluation did not merely assess errors but encouraged students to improve their performance. This pattern is important because speaking skills require continuous practice, not a one-time assessment.

4.2 Teacher and Student Responses

Teacher interviews revealed that Geratis was seen as helping students become more confident in expressing opinions, asking questions, and speaking in front of the class. Teachers also observed an increase in student participation, which had previously been passive. From the students' perspective, the activity was seen as providing a real-life experience for practicing speaking and reducing shyness. These qualitative findings corroborate the quantitative data, which showed that changes were not only seen in scores but also in behavior during the learning process.

Overall, the implementation of Geratis can be understood as a pedagogical routine that combines language practice, performance experiences, social interaction, and reflection. This structure provides continuity so students have the opportunity to gradually improve their performance.

4.3 Influence on Speaking Skills

Statistical data shows an increase in speaking skills in both groups, but the change in the experimental group was greater. The paired samples t-test data showed that the control group had an average pretest score of 40.52 and a posttest score of 60.68, resulting in an increase of 20.16 points. In the experimental group, the average score increased from 62.21 to 84.46, or 22.25 points. The paired t-test in the experimental group showed a significance of 0.000.

Interpretation

This improvement aligns with the nature of the Geratis activities, which provide opportunities for direct and repeated speaking. Scripting activities train the organization of ideas; practice helps with pronunciation and intonation; performance develops fluency and confidence; and feedback helps students improve their performance. In

other words, the treatment involves more than just providing material, but also a series of communication experiences.

These findings support Tarigan's (2021) view that speaking is a communication skill that must be developed through the ability to organize ideas and convey them clearly. The research findings also align with studies emphasizing the importance of practice, context, and affective factors in developing speaking skills (Amani & Fedai, 2024; Putri & Chighundu, 2024).

Result Categories

In the source research report, all 24 students in the experimental group achieved good to excellent speaking

Group	N	Pretest	Posttest	Improvement
Control	25	61.56	76.44	14.88
Experiment	24	62.13	85.79	23.67

An independent samples test on the posttest showed an average of 85.79 for the experimental group and 76.44 for the control group, with a significance level of 0.000. Conversely, the pretest had a significance level of 0.589 between groups. These data indicate that there was no significant difference in initial character scores before treatment, but a significant difference was observed after treatment.

The Meaning of Character Change

Character change can be explained by the structure of activities that demand readiness and courage. Students must complete preparation before performing, memorize or understand the content, attend and follow the schedule, and have the courage to stand before an audience. These activities provide a concrete context for developing responsibility and self-confidence. Character values emerge through action, not simply through normative statements.

These findings align with Susilo et al. (2022), who define character education as a process of internalizing values through experience. Nurasiah et al. (2022) also link speaking activities to increased activeness, self-confidence, and responsibility. In the Geratis context, character is formed through gradual repetition of the same experiences.

Character Categories

The source research report indicates that 20 experimental students (83.3%) were in the excellent category and 4 students (16.7%) were in the good category. No experimental students were in the fair or poor categories. These findings demonstrate that character change occurred

skills: 18 students (75%) were in the excellent category and 6 students (25%) were in the good category. No experimental students were in the fair or poor category. In the control group, the proportion achieving good to excellent skills was reported at 40%.

4.4 Influence on Character Formation

Character building in the study focused on self-confidence and responsibility. Paired samples data showed that the control group improved from an average of 61.56 in the pretest to 76.44 in the posttest, a gain of 14.88 points. The experimental group improved from 62.13 to 85.79, a gain of 23.67 points. The paired-sample test showed a significance level of 0.000 for both groups.

in almost all treatment participants, although this article maintains that these results are within the context of a single school and cannot be directly generalized to all elementary schools.

5. Discussion

5.1 Free as Active Learning

The research results show that Geratis is not merely a ceremonial activity before class, but can also function as an active learning strategy. Students engage in language production, while teachers provide scaffolding through guidance and feedback. This pattern aligns with learning that positions students as active subjects and connects material to real-life experiences.

In practice, the scripting stage develops discourse planning skills. Students must determine a theme, select relevant information, sequence ideas, and determine how to open and close the speech. The rehearsal stage then transfers written knowledge to oral performance. In the performance stage, students face a real audience, thus engaging the affective aspect.

Multilingual activities also expand the scope of language use. Indonesian provides a formal and national context; regional languages connect students to the cultural environment; and English provides communication experiences with an international language. The use of these three languages must be tailored to the students' abilities so that the primary goal remains a meaningful communication experience, not simply code-switching.

5.2 Free and Speaking Skills

The 22.25-point increase in the experimental group represents a greater change than the 20.16-point increase in the control group. While the difference in improvement is not significant numerically, the posttest and statistical tests indicate a significant difference between the groups. Therefore, interpretation should consider the overall evidence, not just the magnitude of the gain.

Repeated practice gives students the opportunity to reduce unnecessary pauses, clarify pronunciation, adjust intonation, and develop expression. This aligns with the speaking skill indicators used in the study. With repeated performance experience, students also gain the opportunity to transform declarative speaking knowledge into performative skills.

These findings can be attributed to affective factors. When students perceive a supportive performance environment and receive constructive feedback, their fear of making mistakes can be reduced. Therefore, Geratis' effectiveness lies not only in the use of three languages, but in the entire ecosystem of practice, performance, social support, and reflection.

5.3 Free and Character Building

In this study, the characteristics of self-confidence and responsibility developed concurrently with speaking practice. This relationship can be understood pedagogically. To perform, students need to prepare

material and manage anxiety. When performances are repeated and students see progress, the experience of success can strengthen their confidence in their ability to speak in front of others.

Responsibility also takes on a concrete context. Students have assignments to complete before their scheduled performance. Teachers not only assess the final results but also guide the process. This pattern makes responsibility a habit cultivated through action. Thus, character education is integrated into learning, not a separate, additional activity.

5.4 Teacher and Student Perspectives

Teacher interviews revealed that previously passive students were becoming more active in expressing their opinions. Teachers also observed an increase in their confidence in answering questions and participating in learning. From the students' perspective, the experience of regularly performing made them more accustomed to speaking in front of peers and teachers.

These qualitative findings help explain the quantitative results. Score change figures do not stand alone but are related to the learning process experienced by students. In mixed methods, process information and outcome figures complement each other: quantitative data show patterns of change, while qualitative data help explain how those changes occur.

5.5 Comparison with Previous Research

Previous research	Focus	Freely filled gaps
Rahman (2019)	Multilingual learning	Free to add speech format and characters
Sari & Nugraha (2020)	Speech and speaking	Free to add multilingual elements
Hidayatullah (2021)	Language learning	Geratis integrates performance and character
Adhi et al. (2017)	Character through ethnolinguistics	Geratis connects character with speech
Nurasiah et al. (2022)	Speaking and character	Free to provide three language context

Thus, the research's primary contribution lies in the integration of three dimensions: speech practice, multilingual experience, and character development. This contribution still needs to be understood within the context of the study, which was conducted in only one school with a sample size of 49 students.

6. Pedagogical Implications

6.1 Implications for Teachers

Teachers can use Geratis as a short routine integrated into the lesson. The 3–5 minute duration allows for the activity to be carried out without changing the overall structure of the lesson. Teachers can schedule the performance, provide a theme, provide sample scripts, and use a simple rubric to

assess pronunciation, intonation, fluency, content, expression, and courage.

Feedback should be given proportionately. In the initial stages, teachers can prioritize confidence and fluency before providing more detailed linguistic corrections. As students gain confidence, the focus can be expanded to discourse organization, vocabulary choice, grammar, and communication strategies with audiences.

6.2 Implications for Schools

Schools can incorporate Geratis into their literacy and communication culture. This can be linked to morning assembly, Indonesian language activities, local content, or English. Schools can also document student progress so that

progress is not solely measured through a single test, but through a portfolio of performance.

6.3 Implications for Character Education

Geratis demonstrates that character can be built through academic activities. Self-confidence and responsibility don't always have to be taught in dedicated sessions. Both can emerge when students receive meaningful assignments, social support, opportunities to practice, and feedback. This model allows character education to be integrated with academic competency.

6.4 Implications for Multilingual Learning

The use of regional languages and English can be designed in stages. Teachers need to consider students' abilities and the speech topic. The primary goal remains understandable communication. Regional languages can be used for cultural or environmental topics, Indonesian for school and daily life issues, and English can be used for simple expressions or topics appropriate to the students' level of proficiency.

6.5 Research Limitations

This study was conducted in one school with 49 students and used pre-formed groups. Therefore, the results cannot be directly generalized to all elementary schools. The duration of the intervention and the scope of character traits were also limited to self-confidence and responsibility. Future research could involve more schools, a longer period of time, and other character variables such as cooperation, tolerance, and leadership.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

First, the Three Language Speech Movement at the UPT SD Negeri 1 Passeno was implemented in a structured manner through six stages: planning and outreach, script development guidance, practice and technical coaching, performance, evaluation and feedback, and reflection and follow-up. The activity took place during morning assembly and lasted approximately 3–5 minutes, with students taking turns performing.

Second, the implementation of Geratis is related to the improvement of speaking skills. The experimental group experienced an average increase of 22.25 points, from 62.21 to 84.46, while the control group increased by 20.16 points, from 40.52 to 60.68. Statistical tests showed a significance of 0.000 in the changes in the experimental group and the posttest comparison between groups, so at the 0.05 level there is a significant difference.

Third, the implementation of Geratis is related to increased self-confidence and responsibility. The experimental group's score increased by 23.67 points, from 62.13 to

85.79, while the control group's score increased by 14.88 points, from 61.56 to 76.44. The posttest comparison yielded a significance level of 0.000. Qualitative data also showed that students became more confident, more active, and more prepared to carry out performance tasks.

7.2 Recommendations

- Schools can maintain free activities as a routine for developing communication and character.
- Teachers need to develop consistent performance schedules, assessment rubrics, and feedback.
- Students need to be given the opportunity to choose a theme that is close to their experiences so that the content of the speech is more meaningful.
- The use of three languages needs to be adapted to the students' level of ability and communication context.
- Further research needs to use larger samples, longer interventions, and more diverse character indicators.

Article Contributions

This article emphasizes that speaking lessons can be designed as an integrative experience. Speeches are not merely rhetorical exercises, nor are character education merely moral messages. The two can be integrated through routines that require preparation, performance, interaction, evaluation, and reflection.

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