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Situational Teaching Approach and Oral English Fluency: A Case Study of Eighth-Grade Students

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of the New Curriculum Standards, increasing emphasis has been placed on the development of junior high school students' oral communicative competence, with oral fluency becoming a key indicator in evaluating comprehensive English proficiency. However, current teaching practices still tend to overemphasize grammatical accuracy while neglecting fluent language production. To address this issue, this study selected eighth-grade students from an educational training institution as research participants. Adopting a quasi-experimental design, students were divided into an experimental group and a control group, receiving situational teaching and traditional imitation-based instruction respectively. Data were collected through oral speaking tasks and questionnaires. The results revealed that students in the experimental group achieved significantly better oral fluency performance than those in the control group. Their composite oral fluency score ($M = 19.25$, $SD = 2.78$) was significantly higher than that of the control group ($M = 17.38$, $SD = 2.91$), with the difference reaching statistical significance ($t = 2.138$, $df = 40$, $p = 0.039 < 0.05$). Specifically, students in the experimental group demonstrated substantial improvements in speaking rate, pause frequency, and coherence of expression. These findings suggest that the situational teaching approach can effectively facilitate the development of English oral fluency among junior high school students. The study also provides empirical evidence and practical implications for educational institutions and public schools seeking to optimize oral English teaching models and enhance students' communicative competence.

Keywords

situational teaching, junior high school English, oral fluency, oral proficiency

1. Introduction

The Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition) explicitly identify oral expression as a core component of English literacy, requiring junior high school students to develop coherent and fluent communicative abilities for everyday interactions and emphasizing effective language output in authentic contexts [1]. Guided by the philosophy of the new curriculum standards, junior high school English instruction is gradually shifting from examination-oriented knowledge transmission toward application-oriented competence development. Consequently, oral fluency has become an important indicator for assessing students' comprehensive language proficiency and a focal point of ongoing educational reform. Nevertheless, considerable challenges remain in current oral English teaching practices. Classroom instruction generally prioritizes grammatical correction over fluent expression, with traditional approaches such as imitation and

mechanical drills continuing to dominate. Authentic communicative situations are often lacking, resulting in passive language output, fragmented speech, and elevated levels of speaking anxiety among students. As a result, improvements in oral fluency remain difficult to achieve. Furthermore, in private educational training institutions, teaching tends to focus heavily on examination preparation and score improvement, while systematic training aimed at enhancing oral fluency is often insufficient. This discrepancy highlights a clear gap between prevailing instructional practices and the requirements outlined in the new curriculum standards. Although previous studies have largely confirmed the positive effects of situational teaching on learning interest and classroom participation, several research gaps remain. First, quantitative empirical evidence concerning oral fluency is limited, particularly regarding objective indicators such as speaking rate, pause frequency, and discourse coherence. Second, relatively few studies have specifically focused on junior high school students in educational training institutions, which may limit the applicability of existing findings to such contexts. Finally, the underlying mechanism through which situational teaching influences oral fluency remains insufficiently supported by empirical data. Building upon these research gaps, the present study focuses on eighth-grade students enrolled in an English training institution. Through a quasi-experimental design, it compares the effects of situational teaching and traditional instruction on oral fluency, with particular attention to speaking rate, pause frequency, and coherence of expression. The study seeks to address the limitations of previous research while providing empirical evidence and practical guidance for optimizing junior high school oral English instruction and enhancing students' fluency development. The study also possesses both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, it further extends the application of the situational teaching approach in junior high school oral English instruction and contributes new empirical evidence to the quantitative evaluation of oral fluency. Moreover, it broadens the research perspective concerning the relationship between situational teaching and second-language output theory. Practically, the findings may assist English teachers in both educational institutions and public schools in optimizing classroom instructional design, constructing authentic communicative contexts, and improving oral teaching models. In turn, this may promote students' oral expression abilities and overall language competence, thereby better implementing the competency-oriented objectives advocated by the new curriculum standards.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Foundations of the Situational Teaching Approach

Based on the existing literature, there is now a relatively consistent understanding of the nature and characteristics of the situational teaching approach. Liu and Dang argue that situational teaching involves teachers purposefully introducing or constructing vivid and emotionally engaging situations to stimulate students' emotional responses and deepen their understanding of learning content [2]. This definition highlights the emotional and intuitive features of situational learning. From the perspective of language education, Hu explains that the situational teaching approach emphasizes authentic language environments closely connected to students' daily lives, embedding language learning within meaningful contexts. Through active participation in contextualized activities, students are able to understand and apply language more effectively, thereby enhancing both their learning motivation and communicative competence [3]. From a theoretical perspective, the situational teaching approach is closely associated with situated cognition theory. Brown, Collins, and Duguid contend that knowledge is constructed through authentic activities and social contexts, and that learning separated from meaningful contexts often results in inert knowledge that is difficult to apply in practice [4]. Building on this view, Lave and Wenger proposed the theories of situated learning and communities of practice, arguing that learning is a process through which individuals gradually participate in and deepen their engagement with authentic social practices [5]. These theoretical perspectives provide strong support for the situational teaching approach by emphasizing that learning involves not only knowledge acquisition but also contextual participation and meaning construction. By utilizing real-life situations as a medium for instruction, integrating emotional experiences with social interaction, and encouraging learning through meaningful practice, the situational teaching approach facilitates both knowledge comprehension and language application. These theoretical foundations also provide important support for the present study.

2.2 Current Research on Oral English Teaching at Home and Abroad

With regard to international research, Wang, Abdullah, and Leong point out that although studies on oral English teaching continued to increase between 2010 and 2021, the overall volume of research remains relatively limited compared with that in the literacy domain. Moreover, the focus of research has gradually shifted from mechanical repetition and drilling toward task-based instruction, contextualized learning, and authentic communication. Increasing attention has been paid to oral fluency, learner interaction, and affective factors, reflecting a learner-centered teaching trend that emphasizes meaningful communication within authentic contexts [6]. In contrast, domestic research has tended to focus more on pedagogical practices and classroom implementation. Zhu argues that junior high school oral English instruction should be grounded in foundational language training, including imitation, reading aloud, and recitation, while simultaneously strengthening contextualized teaching and the cultivation of students' language intuition [7]. From an affective perspective, Chen and Liu emphasize the importance of encouragement, guidance, and contextual support in helping students overcome speaking anxiety and increasing their willingness to participate in oral communication activities [8]. Meanwhile, Zhao notes that current domestic research remains largely theoretical in nature and lacks sufficient empirical investigation. In particular, limited attention has been given to the contexts of junior high schools and educational training institutions, and the assessment of oral fluency has yet to achieve a high degree of standardization [9]. Overall, both domestic and international studies recognize the importance of contextualization and communicative functions in oral English teaching. However, international research places greater emphasis on empirical evidence, task-based learning, and communicative outcomes, whereas domestic studies have focused more heavily on instructional practice and theoretical discussion. Consequently, there remains considerable scope for further development in terms of research participants, educational settings, and assessment frameworks within the domestic literature. These gaps provide both the practical foundation and the research significance for the present study.

2.3 Factors Influencing Oral English Fluency

Research on English speaking fluency has identified a range of influencing factors across cognitive, affective, and pedagogical dimensions. Qu argues that oral English fluency is closely associated with learners' language proficiency and contextual factors. According to his view, students' speaking performance may vary considerably across different communicative settings, particularly between classroom interactions and authentic real-life communication situations [10]. Therefore, the construction of appropriate learning contexts is regarded as a key factor in promoting the development of oral fluency. From a pedagogical perspective, Yang highlights the important role of instructional methods in improving speaking fluency. He suggests that interactive and context-based teaching strategies can effectively enhance students' oral performance. In particular, simulated real-life communicative situations can help learners reduce language anxiety, thereby facilitating greater fluency in spoken English [11]. Similarly, Szyszka, Peltonen, and Lintunen examine foreign language speaking fluency from the perspective of language anxiety and conclude that anxiety exerts a significant negative influence on learners' oral performance. They further suggest that contextualized learning environments and authentic communicative opportunities can help alleviate anxiety and support fluency development [12]. Taken together, these studies indicate that oral fluency is influenced not only by learners' linguistic competence but also by emotional and instructional factors. As a pedagogical strategy, the situational teaching approach provides authentic communicative contexts that encourage meaningful language use. By reducing learners' anxiety and increasing opportunities for interaction and language output, it can effectively facilitate the development of oral fluency. Therefore, within the context of junior high school English speaking instruction, the situational teaching approach possesses considerable practical value and warrants further empirical investigation.

3. Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study and outlines the systematic procedures used to address the two research questions. It provides detailed information regarding the research participants, instruments, and data collection methods, while also describing the implementation process of the experiment in a clear and structured manner.

3.1 Research Questions

This study aims to investigate the effects of the situational teaching approach on the oral English fluency of junior high school students. Specifically, it seeks to address the following research questions: 1. Compared with traditional imitation-based instruction, does the situational teaching approach significantly improve the oral English fluency test performance of eighth-grade students in educational training institutions? 2. What effects does the situational teaching approach have on key indicators of oral English fluency, including speaking rate, pause frequency, and coherence of expression, among eighth-grade students in educational training institutions?

3.2 Research Participants

The participants in this study were eighth-grade students from an educational training institution in Kaiping. Prior to the experiment, both classes were taught by the same English teacher. The experimental class (EC) consisted of 22 students, including 12 boys and 10 girls, while the control class (CC) consisted of 20 students, including 11 boys and 9 girls. The two classes were comparable in terms of class size and overall English speaking proficiency. Throughout the experiment, both groups used English, Grade 8, Volume 2, published by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, as the instructional material. The experimental class received instruction based on the situational teaching approach, whereas the control class continued to receive traditional oral English instruction. To ensure instructional consistency, the same teacher taught both classes throughout the entire experimental period. The intervention lasted for two weeks and consisted of 10 class periods, with each lesson lasting 45 minutes. Both classes followed the same teaching schedule, attending five lessons per week.

3.3 Research Instruments

3.3.1 Oral Topic Tests

Two oral tests were administered during the experimental period, one prior to the intervention and one after its completion. Before the experiment, participants completed an oral test on the topic My Family, while after the experiment they completed a test on My School Life. Scoring was based on the fluency dimension of the CEFR Oral Scale (A2–B1 levels), which was adapted to suit the proficiency level of eighth-grade students. The assessment focused on five core indicators of oral fluency: speaking rate, pause frequency, coherence, self-correction, and sentence length. The maximum score was 30 points, and identical scoring criteria were applied to both tests. Both the pre-test and post-test were designed to be of comparable difficulty, and each speaking task required a 2-minute response. The specific prompts for the pre-test included: (1) describing family members and their occupations; (2) identifying the family member who has had the greatest influence and explaining why. The post-test prompts included: (1) describing daily school activities; (2) discussing the most memorable school event and explaining why. Although the topics differed, they were designed to be parallel in structure and difficulty. The post-test was intended to assess students' ability to use sentence patterns in contextualized situations and to evaluate improvements in oral fluency following instruction. Pre-test scores reflected students' initial proficiency levels, while post-test scores indicated the effects of the two-week instructional intervention on oral fluency. By comparing changes between the two sets of results, the impact of the situational teaching approach on junior high school students' oral English fluency can be clearly determined.

3.3.2 Questionnaire Survey

This study employed a self-designed questionnaire consisting of 19 items across four dimensions: basic information, current oral fluency, experience with traditional teaching, and perceived effectiveness of situational teaching. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software. The results showed that the questionnaire achieved a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.826 and a KMO value of 0.792, indicating good reliability and construct validity. The same questionnaire was administered to students in both the experimental and control classes before and after the intervention, and all responses were collected successfully. This study aimed to investigate students' perceptions of changes in oral fluency and instructional effectiveness.

3.4 Instructional Procedures

This study was conducted over a two-week period consisting of 10 class sessions, using Units 1–6 from the second semester of the eighth-grade textbook published by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press

as instructional material. The purpose was to examine the effects of different teaching models on the oral fluency of junior high school students. The experimental class adopted the situational teaching approach, whereas the control class followed the Presentation–Practice–Production (PPP) model. The instructional design was grounded in Krashen's input hypothesis [13], Swain's output hypothesis [14], and communicative language teaching theory [15,16]. In the experimental class, contextual scenarios such as Career Talks, Growing Pains, Helping Others, Nature Exploration, Living with Nature, Daily Plans, Shopping, Directions, and My Best Friend were constructed to provide comprehensible input (i+1), thereby reducing cognitive load and facilitating language internalization [13]. At the same time, task-based activities such as role-playing, information-gap tasks, and group collaboration were employed to promote sustained oral output and real-time interaction, reflecting the principle of pushed output. These activities encouraged learners to identify gaps in their language production and engage in self-correction [14], thereby improving discourse length and coherence of expression. Furthermore, multi-round communicative tasks reinforced meaning-centered language use, aligning with the principles of communicative language teaching, which emphasizes authentic communication [15,16]. This approach also helped reduce unnecessary pauses and improve fluency performance. In contrast, the control class followed the PPP model, which primarily emphasized language explanation and mechanical practice. Although this approach supports the acquisition of linguistic forms, it provides limited opportunities for meaningful communication and output development. Finally, a comparative analysis was conducted on the post-experiment oral topic test scores of both groups, focusing on differences in speaking rate, pause appropriateness, coherence of expression, self-correction frequency, and discourse length to evaluate the effectiveness of the situational teaching approach. The specific instructional designs for both groups are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Teaching Design.

Period	Teaching Module	EC (Situational Teaching Approach)	CC (PPP Teaching Approach)
1	Unit 1 Career Talks	After introducing a professional context, students complete a presentation task assessed primarily on fluency.	Vocabulary and grammar are explained, followed by repetition and substitution drills, and finally recitation with error correction.
2	Unit 2 Growing Pains	Role-play activity: students produce oral output first and then engage in self-correction.	Key phrases and verb tenses are explained, followed by mechanical drills, paraphrasing practice, and memorization.
3	Unit 3 Teamwork	Students collaboratively present their group design with an emphasis on fluent and uninterrupted speech.	Modal verb rules are explained, followed by sentence pattern exercises, reading aloud, and memorization.
4	Unit 4 Helping Others	Scenario-based tasks are created in which students act out helping situations; performances are evaluated for coherence and clarity.	Conditional mood structures are explained, followed by sentence rewriting exercises and a teacher-led Q&A session.
5	Unit 5 Nature Exploration	Real-life scenarios are introduced, followed by small-group dialogue competitions to promote fluent speaking.	Object clause structures are explained, followed by sentence formation practice and text retelling.
6	Unit 6 Living with Nature	A scenario-based introduction to the theme of integrity is provided, followed by oral presentations focusing on steady speech rate.	Object clauses are explained, followed by reading and translation practice, and whole-class recitation.
7	Daily Plan	Students complete information-gap tasks and engage in authentic communicative interaction.	Sentence patterns are introduced through listening and dictation, followed by rote practice.
8	Shopping	Role-play activities simulate real shopping situations, requiring students to conduct full dialogues in groups.	Functional expressions are memorized and practiced through group reading and repetition.
9	Directions	Students simulate a tour guide giving directions during a field activity.	Sentence patterns for giving directions are practiced, followed by recitation and translation exercises.
10	My Best Friend	A situational prompt is introduced to guide free discussion; students describe their friends individually, followed by feedback and correction.	Vocabulary and sentence patterns are provided in advance, followed by structured evaluation activities.

4. Results

This chapter presents an analysis of all data collected from both the experimental and control classes and discusses the main findings of the study. First, the oral topic test scores of the two classes are analyzed to examine the impact of the situational teaching approach on junior high school students' oral fluency. Second, the questionnaire results of both groups are compared to determine whether the situational teaching approach is more effective than traditional teaching methods in improving oral fluency in junior high school English. Finally, a summary discussion of the overall findings is provided.

4.1 Results and Discussion of the Oral Topic Tests

4.1.1 Pre-test Scores of the Oral Topic Test in the EC and CC

Prior to the experiment, topic-based oral tests were administered to both the experimental class (EC) and the control class (CC), and all performances were scored immediately after completion. The resulting scores from both groups were collected and subjected to descriptive statistical analysis. To determine the initial level of oral English fluency in the two classes, a descriptive analysis of the pre-test scores was first conducted. The results showed that the experimental class obtained a mean score of 15.70 (SD = 2.33), while the control class achieved a mean score of 16.00 (SD = 2.74). The difference between the two means was minimal, indicating that the two groups were comparable in their initial oral English fluency levels prior to the intervention. This comparability provides a sound basis for the subsequent experimental analysis.

4.1.2 Post-test Scores of the Oral Topic Test in the EC and CC

Based on the post-experiment oral topic test scores of the two classes, descriptive statistics and an independent samples t-test were conducted to examine whether a significant difference existed between the groups after the intervention, thereby evaluating the effectiveness of the situational teaching approach. The results showed that the experimental class achieved a higher post-test mean score (M = 19.25, SD = 2.78) than the control class (M = 17.38, SD = 2.91). The difference between the two groups was statistically significant ($t = 2.138$, $df = 40$, $p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that, following the instructional intervention, students in the experimental class demonstrated significantly better overall oral English fluency performance than those in the control class. This suggests that the situational teaching approach can, to a certain extent, effectively enhance junior high school students' oral English fluency and contribute positively to instructional outcomes.

4.1.3 Comparison of EC Pre-test and Post-test Oral Topic Test Scores

After obtaining the oral topic test scores of the experimental class, a paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare students' performance between the pre-test and post-test. The results are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Paired Samples t-Test of the Oral English Test Scores of EC in Pre-test and Post-test.

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	t value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Probability
EC Pre-test	22	15.7	2.33	-3.55	-13.377	21	<.001
EC Post-test	22	19.25	2.78				

The results showed that the post-test mean score of the experimental class (M = 19.25, SD = 2.78) was significantly higher than the pre-test mean score (M = 15.70, SD = 2.33), with the difference reaching a highly significant level ($t = -13.377$, $df = 21$, $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that, after a period of situational teaching instruction, students' oral English fluency improved significantly. Overall, the results suggest that the situational teaching approach can effectively enhance students' oral expression ability, improve the coherence and fluency of language output, and play a positive role in developing junior high school students' oral English fluency. In addition, the findings further support the effectiveness of contextualized language input and authentic communicative environments in oral English instruction.

4.1.4 Comparison of CC Pre-test and Post-test Oral Topic Test Scores

After obtaining the oral topic test scores of the control class, a paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare students' performance between the pre-test and post-test. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Paired Samples t-Test of the Oral English Test Scores of CC in Pre-test and Post-test.

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	t value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Probability
CC Pre-test	20	16	2.74	-1.38	-6.419	19	<.001
CC Post-test	20	17.38	2.91				

The results showed that the mean post-test score of the control class (M = 17.38, SD = 2.91) was higher than the mean pre-test score (M = 16.00, SD = 2.74), and the difference was statistically significant (t = −6.419, df = 19, p < 0.001). These findings indicate that, after a period of conventional English instruction, students' oral English fluency improved. This suggests that regular classroom instruction contributes to the development of students' oral English skills to some extent. However, compared with the experimental class, the magnitude of improvement in the control class was relatively limited, indicating that the traditional teaching model has constrained effectiveness in enhancing oral English fluency. This further highlights the advantages of the situational teaching approach in oral English instruction.

4.1.5 Comparison of Dimensional Scores in the Pre-test and Post-test Oral Topic Tests of the EC and CC

An analysis of the pre-test and post-test scores across different dimensions of the oral topic proficiency test for the two classes reveals clear differences between the experimental class and the control class. The results are presented in Figures 1–3 below:

Figure 1: Changes in Mean of Each Dimension in the Pre-test and Post-test of EC

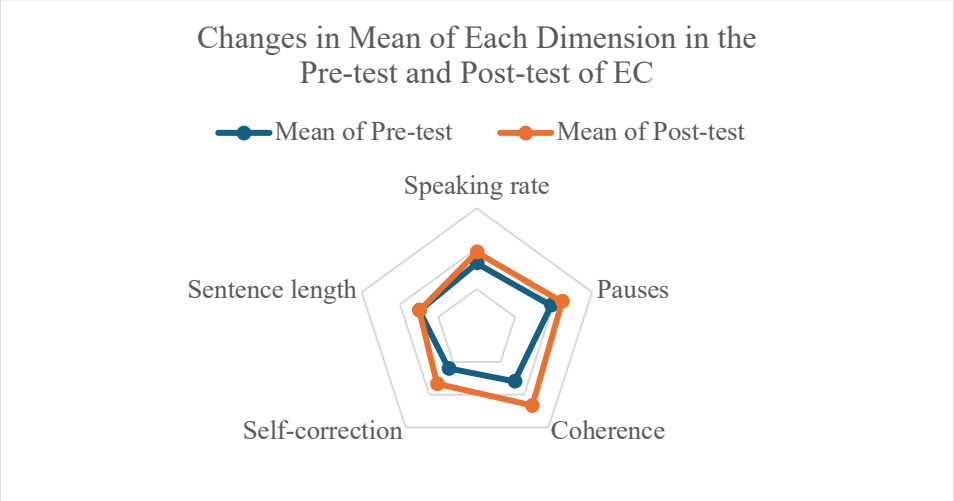


Figure 2: Changes in Mean of Each Dimension in the Pre-test and Post-test of CC

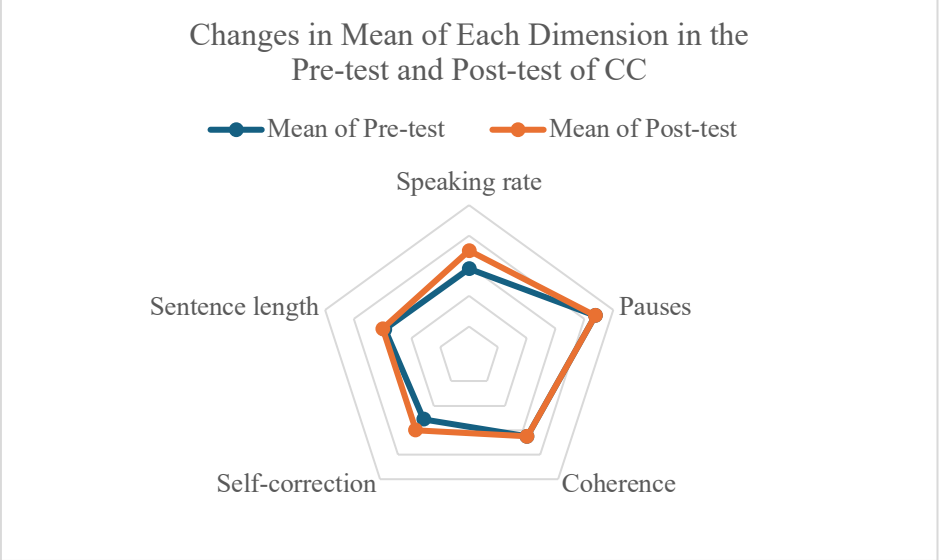
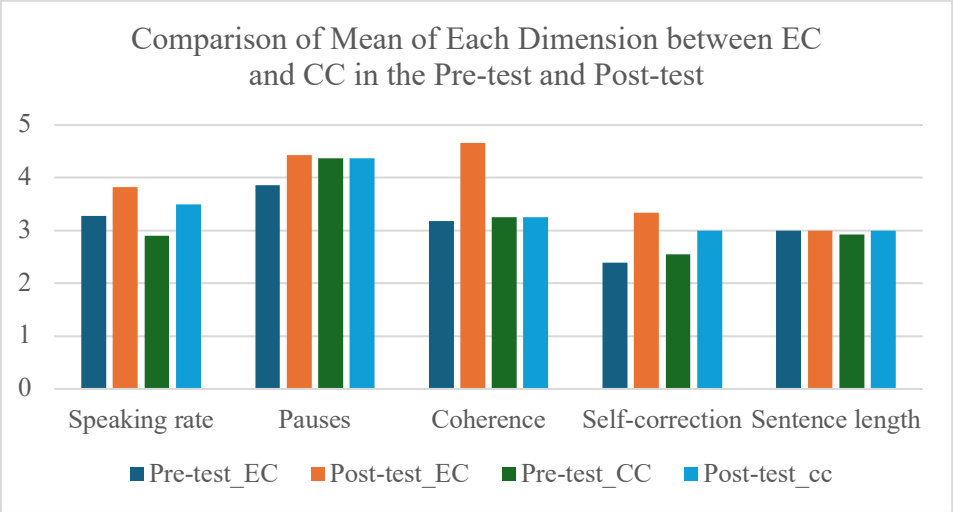


Figure 3: Comparison of Mean of Each Dimension between EC and CC in Pre-test and Post-test



After a two-week instructional intervention, a dimension-by-dimension analysis revealed that coherence of expression showed the most significant difference between the two groups, with the experimental class achieving a substantially higher post-test mean score than the control class. In addition, the experimental class outperformed the control class in speaking rate and self-correction frequency. However, no significant differences were observed between the two groups in pause appropriateness or sentence length. Overall, these results indicate that, compared with traditional teaching models, the situational teaching approach leads to more pronounced improvements in key aspects of oral fluency, particularly coherence of expression, speaking rate, and self-correction, among junior high school English learners.

4.2 Results and Discussion of the Questionnaire Survey

4.2.1 Pre-experimental Questionnaire Results in the EC and CC

Before the experiment, students in both classes completed the same questionnaire, which was collected immediately after completion. An independent samples t-test was conducted on the questionnaire data from the two groups, and the results are presented in Table 4:

Table 4: Independent Samples t-test of Pre-experiment questionnaire between EC and CC.

Dimension	Class	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Probability
Current oral fluency	CC	20	3.275	0.678	0.307	40	0.76
	EC	22	3.212	0.649			
Experiences with traditional oral teaching	CC	20	3.41	0.932	0.617	40	0.541
	EC	22	3.236	0.892			
The effectiveness of situational teaching	CC	20	3.2	0.943	-0.122	40	0.903
	EC	22	3.236	0.983			
Degree of improvement	CC	20	2.4	1.142	-0.273	40	0.786
	EC	22	2.5	1.225			

The results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between the two classes in pre-experiment scores across the four core dimensions: current oral fluency, experience with traditional oral teaching, perceived effectiveness of situational teaching, and degree of improvement ($t = 0.307, 0.617, -0.122$, and -0.273, respectively; $df = 40$; all $p > 0.05$). These findings suggest that, prior to the intervention, the baseline levels of the two groups were comparable across all measured variables, indicating satisfactory intergroup homogeneity and providing a solid methodological foundation for subsequent comparative analyses.

4.2.2 Post-experimental Questionnaire Results in the EC and CC

At the same time, students in both classes completed the same questionnaire prior to the experiment, and the responses were collected immediately after completion. An independent samples t-test was then conducted on the questionnaire data from the two groups, and the results are presented in Table 5:

Table 5: Independent Samples t-test of Post-experiment questionnaire between EC and CC.

Dimension	Class	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Probability
Current oral fluency	CC	20	3.275	0.812	-3.579	40	0.001
	EC	22	4.045	0.573			
Experiences with traditional oral teaching	CC	20	3.29	1.006	-2.968	34.244	0.005
	EC	22	4.1	0.724			
The effectiveness of situational teaching	CC	20	3.15	0.843	-2.883	40	0.006
	EC	22	3.827	0.677			
Degree of improvement	CC	20	2.45	1.276	-2.53	33.662	0.016
	EC	22	3.318	0.894			

Consequently, the results indicated statistically significant differences in post-intervention questionnaire scores between the two classes across four core dimensions: current oral fluency, experience with traditional oral teaching, perceived effectiveness of situational teaching, and degree of improvement ($t = -3.579$, -2.968, -2.883, and -2.530, respectively; all $p < 0.05$). The differences in the first three dimensions reached a higher level of significance ($p < 0.01$), with the control class scoring significantly lower than the experimental class across all dimensions. These findings suggest that, following the intervention, clear intergroup differences emerged on the measured variables, indicating that the situational teaching approach may be more effective than traditional teaching methods in promoting oral English fluency among junior high school students.

4.2.3 Comparison of Pre-experimental and Post-experimental Questionnaire Results in the EC

To compare the experimental class's perceptions of the situational teaching approach and their oral fluency before and after the experiment, a paired-samples t-test was conducted on the pre- and post-experiment questionnaire data. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Paired Samples t-Test of Pre-experiment questionnaire and Post-experiment questionnaire of EC.

Dimension	Stage	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	t value	Significance Probability
Current oral fluency	Pre	22	3.12	0.83	0.45	0.78	21	-8.6	0
	Post	22	3.57	0.86					
Experiences with traditional oral teaching	Pre	22	2.95	0.77	0.38	0.72	21	-7.23	0
	Post	22	3.33	0.8					
The effectiveness of situational teaching	Pre	22	3.2	0.89	0.32	0.75	21	-4.58	0
	Post	22	3.52	0.91					
Degree of improvement	Pre	22	3.02	0.78	0.28	0.71	21	-2.95	0.007
	Post	22	3.3	0.82					

The results showed that, across the four core dimensions—current oral fluency, experience with traditional oral teaching, perceived effectiveness of situational teaching, and degree of improvement—the post-experiment questionnaire scores were significantly higher than the pre-experiment scores (t-values ranged from -8.60 to -2.95, $df = 21$, all $p < 0.01$). Specifically, improvements in current oral fluency and experience with traditional oral teaching reached a highly significant level ($p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that the situational teaching approach significantly improved oral English fluency among students in the experimental class, while also contributing to a more positive learning experience.

4.2.4 Comparison of Pre-experimental and Post-experimental Questionnaire Results in the CC

To compare the control class's perceptions of the situational teaching approach and their oral fluency before and after the experiment, a paired-samples t-test was conducted on the pre- and post-experiment questionnaire data. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Paired Samples t-Test of Pre-experiment questionnaire and Post-experiment questionnaire of CC.

Dimension	Stage	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation	t value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Probability
Current oral fluency	Pre	20	3.275	0.678	0.000	0.329	0.000	19	1.000
	Post	20	3.275	0.812					
Experiences with traditional oral teaching	Pre	20	3.410	0.932	0.120	0.369	1.453	19	0.163
	Post	20	3.290	1.006					
The effectiveness of situational teaching	Pre	20	3.200	0.943	0.050	0.282	0.793	19	0.437
	Post	20	3.150	0.843					
Degree of improvement	Pre	20	2.400	1.142	-0.050	0.887	-0.252	19	0.804
	Post	20	2.450	1.276					

Furthermore, the results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between pre-experiment and post-experiment scores across the four core dimensions: current oral fluency, experience with traditional oral teaching, perceived effectiveness of situational teaching, and degree of improvement (t-values ranged from −0.252 to 1.453, df = 19, all $p > 0.05$). This suggests that, during the experimental period, the control class, which did not receive the intervention, maintained stable levels across the measured variables, with no meaningful variation. Overall, these findings indicate that the traditional teaching model did not produce a significant effect on students' oral fluency in junior high school English during the study period.

5. Discussion

This study empirically examined the impact of the situational teaching approach on the oral English fluency of eighth-grade students in an educational training institution. Overall, the findings were consistent with the research hypotheses and aligned closely with previous studies. First, the two groups demonstrated comparable proficiency prior to the intervention. Independent-samples t-test results from the pre-experimental questionnaire indicated no significant differences between the experimental and control classes across the four dimensions examined, including current oral fluency, experience with traditional teaching, perceptions of situational teaching effectiveness, and self-evaluated improvement. This confirms the equivalence of the two groups at baseline and provides a reliable foundation for evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention. Second, highly significant improvements were observed within the experimental class. Paired-samples t-test results showed that post-experimental scores across all dimensions of oral fluency were significantly higher than pre-experimental scores. These findings suggest that the situational teaching approach can effectively enhance students' confidence in oral expression, discourse coherence, and willingness to communicate. This result supports the central proposition of situated cognition theory that knowledge is more readily transformed into communicative competence when learning occurs within authentic contexts [4]. Furthermore, intergroup comparisons demonstrated that the experimental class significantly outperformed the control class in terms of oral fluency, learning experience, and perceived instructional effectiveness. In contrast, no significant changes were observed in the control class. These findings indicate that traditional imitation-based teaching is less effective in promoting fluency development. This result is consistent with Yang's conclusion that interactive and contextualized teaching strategies can reduce speaking anxiety and improve oral fluency [11]. In addition, the experimental class demonstrated substantial improvements in speaking rate, pause appropriateness, coherence of expression, and self-correction. These findings suggest that situational teaching not only improves overall performance scores but also enhances the quality of oral production. By contrast, students in the control class relied primarily on mechanical repetition and sentence-pattern drills, which facilitated the acquisition of linguistic forms but provided limited support for coherent discourse production. This finding echoes Zhu's argument that language intuition should be cultivated within meaningful contexts [7]. Importantly, by focusing on eighth-grade students in a private educational training institution, this study addresses a notable limitation in previous research, which has predominantly concentrated on public-school settings and often lacks empirical evidence from the private training sector [9]. Consequently, the study provides a practical model for implementing short-term and intensive oral English interventions. Nevertheless,

several limitations should be acknowledged. The intervention lasted only two weeks, making it difficult to assess long-term effects. In addition, the sample was drawn from a single educational training institution, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, no subgroup analyses were conducted based on gender, proficiency level, or other learner characteristics. Future research may benefit from extending the intervention period, expanding sample size and diversity, and incorporating classroom observations and interviews to gain deeper insights into the mechanisms through which situational teaching promotes oral fluency.

6. Conclusion

Using a quasi-experimental design, this study investigated the effects of the situational teaching approach on the oral English fluency of eighth-grade students in an educational training institution and reached the following conclusions. First, the situational teaching approach demonstrated clear short-term effectiveness in improving junior high school students' oral English fluency. Following the intervention, the experimental class achieved significantly higher scores on both the oral topic tests and questionnaires compared with their pre-intervention performance and the post-intervention performance of the control class. The most substantial gains were observed in core fluency indicators such as coherence, speaking rate, and self-correction, indicating that authentic contexts and communicative tasks can effectively facilitate fluent and stable language production. Second, the traditional teaching model exhibited relatively limited effectiveness in improving oral fluency. Although the control class showed statistically significant improvement between the pre-test and post-test oral assessments, the magnitude of improvement was considerably smaller than that observed in the experimental class. This finding suggests that mechanical reading, grammar instruction, and sentence-pattern drills alone are insufficient for substantially enhancing students' communicative fluency. It further highlights the potential limitations of placing excessive emphasis on linguistic accuracy at the expense of fluent expression. Third, situational teaching contributes positively to students' learning experiences and perceptions of instructional effectiveness. Students in the experimental class reported greater acceptance of the instructional process, lower levels of speaking anxiety, and stronger willingness to participate in oral communication. These findings suggest that situational teaching effectively integrates skill development with emotional support, thereby aligning with the core literacy requirements outlined in the new curriculum standards.

Several practical implications emerge from the study. Oral English instruction in junior high schools should reduce reliance on mechanical drills and increase the use of authentic scenarios and communicative tasks. Activities such as role-playing, information-gap tasks, and topic discussions can provide students with comprehensible input and meaningful opportunities for language output. Educational training institutions may also incorporate situational teaching into regular classroom practice, utilizing short-term, high-frequency interventions to improve oral fluency. In addition, teachers should strive to balance fluency and accuracy by encouraging fluent expression before offering appropriate corrective feedback, thereby reducing learner anxiety and enhancing communicative confidence. Given the relatively small sample size and short intervention period, future studies should consider adopting multicenter longitudinal designs and mixed-methods approaches to explore more systematically the mechanisms underlying the effectiveness of situational teaching. Overall, the situational teaching approach demonstrates considerable effectiveness and practical value in junior high school oral English instruction, providing empirical support for ongoing teaching reform and classroom optimization.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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