



STUDENT'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS ENGLISH SPEAKS UP CLUB TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILL

by

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Abstract:

Speaking is a difficult skill; therefore, students must master its components, including grammar, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and pronunciation. As a result, most EFL students struggle to succeed. This study aims to identify whether or not the speaking club helps students improve their speaking skills. The subjects of this study were the students who joined the Sixta Speaks Up as an English-speaking club in the Vocational High School by a group of forty students. The qualitative descriptive research design was adopted in this study. The author employed questionnaires delivered to students through a Google form to gather information. According to the findings of this study, the majority of students who participate in speaking clubs make significant improvements in their English speaking skills, including enhancements in pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency in speaking English in general. The speaking activities also increase their confidence to exchange their ideas.

Keywords: *Sixta Speaks Up, speaking skill, speaking improvement*

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, English has become an important thing to have. English has spread throughout the world widely and developed as an international language for educational, economic, social, and technological purposes. English certainly plays a vital role in communication skills to compete internationally as a global language. Speaking skills are one of the essential aspects of communicating and are part of the four skills that L2 students must be mastered in English (Bangun, 2018). According to Fulcher (2003) and Gayratovna (2021), speaking is part of verbal language and interacts with humans. In general, speaking is defined as expressing something in spoken language. According to Richards (2007) in Karimy and Pishkar (2017), the speaker must evoke and convey effectively and accurately when speaking.

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Brown (2001) and Supraba (2018) state that speaking is a collaborative process of meaning construction that involves the development, confirmation, and processing of information. Besides, Harmer (2017) and Kasita Bangun (2018) stated that speakers need to understand speech events, transactional and interpersonal functions, and primary language functions.

In addition, According to Bailey and Nunan (2005), cited by Kasita Bangun (2018), speaking is defined as an interactive process in obtaining, receiving, and making information that is carried out directly, honestly, developing what comes out is not entirely predictable. In terms of speaking, several essential components must be understood. (Lander & Brown, 1995) says that the components consist of grammar, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, pronunciation, and task. These components can affect a person's speaking ability. In addition, (Weir, 2005) also conveyed that to check a person's speaking ability, several aspects need to be considered: accuracy, suitability, vocabulary adequacy, grammatical accuracy, clarity, fluency, and content relevance.

According to Tarigan (2013) in Wahyuniati et al. (2020), people will master speaking skills by training speaking skills. He also stated three goals in speaking skills: to inform, entertain, and **persuade**. Speaking purposes to information means that people will declare their ideas or share knowledge, thoughts, news to others through communication. People will express their feelings about someone else's happiness, sadness, or madness to cheer up as the purpose of speaking to entertain. The last goal of speaking is to persuade speaking skills that can convince others. From the statement above, it can be concluded that speaking skills are essential components that people must own to communicate with others.

In Learning English as a foreign language, the students must understand and produce procedures in a foreign language. Understanding entails cognitive processes and decommodification of language material, whereas output necessitates language creativity and the generation of expressive thoughts and values through the use of language tools (Elnadeef & Abdala, 2019; Sekhar & Chakravorty, 2017). According to Hadley (2001) in Elnadeef & Abdala (2019), speaking involves cognitive, physical, and psychological processes. Speaking English is a skill that requires a significant amount of language input in the form of language exposure, expression, precise classroom interactivity, and a supportive, practical environment. Most EFL

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students who take intensive English courses intuitively desire to speak English fluently, allowing them to engage in open and careful interpersonal communication.

Speaking is quite challenging for English teachers in Indonesian language classes because of the numerous limitations of both the teacher and the students. As a result, teachers need various engaging speaking skills teaching methods to encourage students to participate more in speaking and improve their speaking skills. According to Abdelmageed & Omer (2020), L2 students no longer expect their teachers to take traditional approaches to develop primarily grammatical competencies and employ previously available methodologies. So, educators nowadays need to provide operational knowledge of a foreign language to their students rather than just theory.

According to Raba'ah (2005) and Turco (2021), language difficulties are caused by the teaching strategies, curriculum, and environment. In addition, Nugroho and Anugerahwati (2019) argue that using the traditional teacher-centered method causes students to be unable to focus and uninterested in Speaking English. The teacher does not provide opportunities for students, and the teacher only focuses on grammar. A good teacher implements the student-centered approach and becomes a student facilitator during the teaching and learning process. Thus, student performance reflects their abilities or skills as learners, but the teacher and the environment significantly affect development and learning outcomes. Language education aims to prepare second language learners to understand, speak, and write in a foreign language. This goal will not be fully realized if language students cannot communicate in English. If teachers ignore difficulties and diversification and do not handle them appropriately, these persistent learning difficulties will have a lifelong impact on students, affecting their learning ability. Turco (2021) in another language, speaking skill acquires an important meaning.

On the other hand, speaking is not a simple subject because they frequently face various obstacles that prevent them from speaking. These include five factors: (1) a lack of exposure to language, (2) a lack of motivation, (3) student anxiety and lack of confidence, (4) a lack of English knowledge, and (5) ineffective teaching methodology (Saeed Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018). In addition, Syakur et al. (2020) said that students still have difficulty conveying ideas, thoughts, questions and using English correctly and fluently. It is happening because of many factors such as insecurity, shame, and sometimes fear. They are misinterpreted as grammar and

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vocab when expressing the idea. According to Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), speaking is essential in people's interactions because they talk everywhere. Speaking is a method of verbally communicating ideas and messages. The educators must use the language in real-life situations and ask students to do so in order to encourage them to communicate in English.

According to Mazouzi (2013), as Tumurkhuyag (2021) stated, student activities must be designed to equal fluency and accuracy of achievement. A communicative approach must include both fluency and accuracy. The teacher can improve students' communicative competence through classroom practice. As a result, they must understand how the language system works. When learning English, students must master three aspects of the language: pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. These three characteristics are reflected in four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Syakur et al., 2020).

In Indonesia cases, Wahyuniati et al. (2020) stated that Indonesian students get many problems in speaking activities, lack vocabulary mastery, limited grammar knowledge, mispronounce, shyness, nervousness, little practice, etc. However, some students cannot speak English in simple sentences. Amita and Tavriyanti (2015) said that students had problems with speaking skills due to a lack of self-confidence in speaking in front of other friends. In addition, the facts on the ground show that student achievement in speaking skills has not reached the standard of success (KKM score of 75). The measure has not been achieved due to several factors: lack of vocabulary mastery, never trying to communicate in class, and being shy to speak English (Syakur et al., 2020).

As a result, educators in schools recommend that an English club be held outside of class hours to improve their English-speaking abilities. English speaking club is defined as an extra addition to learning English outside the classroom and will focus on mastering English speaking (Yuliasari & Kusriandi, 2018). According to Elnadeef and Abdala (2019), an English club is a group of L2 students who meet regularly to join activities and share common goals or interests. Another definition from Mouleka (2013) is that the English club is a fantastic place to practice L2 students. It can be concluded that; English Club is an English learning facility that improves English speaking skills outside the classroom.

English club is usually held for an hour or two after school. According to the researcher's context, the Sixta Speaks Up Club meets two times a week for one hour on Monday and Friday.

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The English club's goal is to help students develop a positive attitude toward English and become more comfortable speaking. Rather than creating a strict set of English skills, the emphasis is on speaking English spontaneously and casually. Students in the English club participate in enjoyable activities directly related to the overall team spirit. According to Elnadeef and Abdala (2019), the benefits of joining an extracurricular English club include encouraging students to practice English authentically in real-life situational contexts, boosting self-confidence, broadening students' communicative competence during the primary socialization process and fostering a friendly social environment.

Some previous studies have raised this issue; Wahyuniati et al. (2020) study results showed that students who join the English club have better speaking skills and emphasize vocabulary and vocabulary. Elnadeef & Abdala (2019) conducted a study on students in Saudi Arabia. The study concluded that the English club relieves Saudi students of language anxiety and boring routine classroom activities, allowing them to practice speaking English happily. The English club encourages students to develop critical thinking, persuasive, and argumentative skills. Moreover, Melviza et al. (2017) stated that it is vital in assisting students in their oral communication skills. All the previous studies, as mentioned above, were significantly different from this study. Most of them discussed the English-speaking club held in Senior High School and University Students. However, this study focuses on improving the speaking skills of vocational high school students who participate in the English Speaks Up club program. The research questions are as follows:

1. What are students' perceptions of how a speaking club can help them improve their speaking ability?
2. How do students perceive the difficulties and consequences of joining a speaking club?

METHOD

Design

This study aims to find out students' perceptions of English-speaking clubs. The descriptive qualitative research design was adopted in this study. Thus, the focus was on the students' thoughts about joining English-speaking clubs. The data from this study was at the

level of agreement under the work of a scholar (Sugiyono, 2016). This study traced the prior research through a survey model with quantitative descriptive data output (Turmudi, 2015).

Participant

Participants of this study were the eleventh-grade students at Vocational High School. They were chosen because they joined the Sixta Speaks Up. Thus, the 49 students who attended Sixta Speaks Up as an English Club were taken as purposive sampling since they were identified as members of the Sixta Speaks Up.

Instrument and data source

This study used a questionnaire to gather information about students' attitudes toward students' perception in the Speaks Up club. The questionnaire was chosen by adopting the research from Wahyuniati et al. (2020). In the questionnaire, there are four measurement scales. The questionnaire consisted of 12 statements in terms of agreement and disagreement: "strongly agree," "agree." Twelve multiple-choice questions in English were included in the survey. The questionnaire was translated into Bahasa Language to ensure that the participants could understand it easily. To see the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, researchers conducted a pilot survey and used statistical techniques to be verified by two experts. Thus, the data sources of this research are the students' perceptions of the impact of English clubs on their English-speaking skills.

Data Collecting Technique

This study was carried out in the stage of the pandemic COVID-19 outbreak; all the students were not present at the research site. The identity of the students was not displayed for ethical reasons. Firstly, the researchers asked permission from the school authority, i.e., the chair of a group or their English mentor. This is a part of ethical clearance. Second, the researchers informed the mentor of English and the target students that there would be a survey. Due to the pandemic of Covid 19, the questionnaire was designed online using Google Forms. This questionnaire was delivered to the surveyed participants through the Whatsapp group of

Sixta Speaks Up Club. In this case, the researchers sent the link to Google Form through the WhatsApp group. The target respondents filled out and submitted the questionnaire online.

Data Analysis Technique

To analyze the study's data, researchers use tabulating the data. All answers in the submitted questionnaires are recapped and tabulated based on the frequency of the statements (Rahmania & Mandasari, 2021). Overall, the researchers analyzed the data in several stages, such as (1) tabulating the data, (2) summarizing the data, (3) analyzing the contents, (4) analyzing data for concluding. Finally, intext citation and list of references employ an "offline automatic system by using Mendeley desktop which is compatible with MS Word older than Word 365" (Turmudi, 2020, p. 59).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

The analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire aimed to answer the research question: 1. What are students' perceptions of how a speaking club can help them improve their speaking ability? 2. How do students perceive the difficulties and consequences of joining a speaking club? The analysis focused on the students who joined English speaking club in a vocational high school.

Forty-nine students from Vocational High School respond to the questionnaire as the Sixta Speaks Up as English-speaking Club members. The questionnaire's data has been distributed in the following table.

Table 1. Percentage and number of respondents according to responses

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1	The English-Speaking Club is extremely important to me	35%	65%	0%	0%
2	The English-Speaking Club had an impact on my ability to communicate fluently.	37.5%	57.5%	0%	5%
3	The English-Speaking Club helps me to improve my	45%	55%	0%	0%

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	pronunciation when I'm speaking.				
4	My accuracy in speaking is affected by my participation in the English-Speaking Club.	30%	62.5%	0%	7.5%
5	The Sixta Speaks Up as an English-Speaking Club has helped me improve my understanding of grammar.	40%	60%	0%	0%
6	My vocabulary knowledge grows due to my participation in the English-Speaking Club.	60%	40%	0%	0%
7	English Speaking Club helps me to get better interpretation.	47.5%	52.5%	0%	0%
8	My confidence has grown due to my participation in English Speaking Club activities.	75%	25%	0%	0%
9	The English-Speaking Club helps me improve my ability to communicate and exchange ideas.	80%	20%	0%	0%
10	The Sixta Speaks Up as an English-speaking club enables its members to engage in practical speaking exercises.	52.5%	47.5%	0%	0%
11	The activities at the English-Speaking Club are enjoyable for me.	37.5%	62.5%	0%	0%
12	Making mistakes in the English-Speaking Club isn't something I'm worried about.	30%	70%	0%	0%

The first statement refers to the importance of the respondents' participation in a speaking club. A majority of respondents (26%) believe that a speaking club can help them improve their public speaking skills. That is not all: Only 14 (35%) of the participants strongly agreed with this statement. As a result, it can be concluded that speaking club is beneficial to all 40 students.

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Statement number two is made concerning the impact of the Sixta Speaks Up program on the students' ability to communicate effectively. There are 23 respondents (57.5 percent) who agree that speaking club impacts their ability to communicate fluently. When it comes to agreeing with this statement strongly, 15 respondents (37.5 percent) express strong agreement. On the other hand, two respondents (5 percent) disagree with the statement. It means that the vast majority of them believe that joining a speaking club will improve their communication ability in English.

According to the third statement, 18 respondents (45%), a speaking club can help improve pronunciation in speaking, and 22 respondents (55%) strongly agree. Consequently, it can be assumed that joining a speaking club will help them improve their pronunciation, and it is a statement that no one disagrees or strongly disagrees.

Speaking clubs directly impact the accuracy of respondents' speech, as stated in statement number four. A total of 25 respondents (62.5% of the total sample) agreed with this statement, with 12 respondents (30%) strongly agreeing and three respondents (7.5%) strongly disagreeing. That was the previous statement, which said that everyone agreed: this is a new one. Attending a speaking club does not affect the accuracy of those who disagree with this statement.

According to the results, most people strongly agree with the fifth statement. According to the survey, 16 respondents (40 %) strongly agree, and 24 respondents (60 %) agree. Most of them report improving their grammar understanding after joining Sixta Speak Up as a speaking club.

Speaking club was thought to be beneficial in increasing vocabulary mastery by 26 respondents (65%) who strongly agree with this statement. Furthermore, 26 respondents (65%) strongly agree with the sixth statement, and the remaining 14 respondents (35%) agree. There is no doubt in their minds that participating in a speaking club can help them improve their vocabulary.

Speaking club can help students improve their interpretation and understanding of what they are saying, according to 19 respondents (47.5%) who strongly agree. The remaining 21 respondents (52.5 %) agree. It can be concluded that most students believe that participating in a speaking club will help them communicate more effectively.

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The respondents' self-confidence can be increased through participation in a speaking club, which is related to statement number 8. 30 respondents (75%) agree with this, and ten respondents (25%) disagree. The activities in a speaking club effectively build confidence, particularly in public speaking skills.

Following that, speaking club impacts the ability of the respondents to exchange relevant ideas, as evidenced by the fact that 32 respondents (80 %) and eight respondents (20%) agree that it does so. No one believes that the speaking club does not affect them.

Based on statement number 10, we can see that when the respondents are asked to complete the efficient speaking exercise, they provide a variety of responses. Strongly agree and agree were expressed by 20 respondents (50%) and 16 respondents (40%), respectively. Four participants do not believe this to be the case (10 %), and it is something that the majority of them believe the statement.

The respondents can then delight in the atmosphere created by the speaking club. The results of statement number 11 show that 15 respondents (37.5 percent) strongly agree with the statement, while 25 respondents (62.5 percent) strongly disagree. In actuality, the environment of the speaking club has an impact on the students' ability to communicate verbally because of its supportive nature.

Lastly, by participating in a speaking club, respondents no longer have concerns about making mistakes, as evidenced by nine respondents (22.5 percent) strongly agree, and 28 respondents (70 percent) agree with this. However, three respondents (7.5 percent) expressed concern about making mistakes while practicing speaking skills.

Discussion

The first discussion is whether or not speaking club helps students improve their public speaking skills. According to Wahyuniati et al. (2020), their research findings indicate that students who participate in a speaking club can improve their English-speaking abilities. The researcher discovered that the speaking club benefits students by encouraging and motivating them to practice public speaking. The speaking club attracted students who were more interested in practicing their English-speaking skills than any other activity.

As evidenced by the findings, the researcher discovered a wide range of responses from students regarding the speaking club after distributing the questionnaire. Following the

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completion of the questionnaire, the author concluded that all students had a favorable attitude toward the speaking club. The majority of them expressed satisfaction with their progress toward learning English via a speaking club that encouraged their willingness to practice. They demonstrated their willingness to speak up in class during the discussion (one of the club's speaking activities), and they completed all of the assigned work. According to Melviza et al. (2017), most students believe that practicing in an English club is more beneficial than practicing in regular class because students can practice English without feeling afraid, are motivated, and have the opportunity to exchange their opinions through the English club. However, 5% (five percent) of the students responded that they disagreed with the statement "The English-Speaking Club impacted my ability to communicate fluently," which means some had difficulty communicating fluently.

The researcher discovered that students benefited from participating in an English-speaking club in response to the second research question. As indicated in the questionnaire, one of the benefits of joining a speaking club is boosting participants' confidence when speaking English in public. Similarly, participation in a speaking club can result in other positive outcomes. According to Elnadeef and Abdala (2019), an English club facilitates a familiar social environment that supports the development of self-confidence and colleague acquaintance.

The student's positive outcomes align with Elnadeef and Abdala (2019). The enthusiastic participation in club activities influences the effectiveness of English-speaking club activities. Additionally, they stated that speaking activities through presentations and seminars should be incorporated in the English club to promote the students' academic skills. Moreover, it is critical for students to feel at ease participating in and speaking the target language. Without practice, achieving any level of proficiency is impossible. As a result, students require numerous opportunities for language practice.

As demonstrated in the table above, students benefit significantly from participating in an English-speaking club. They have improved their English pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency, and they were confident in their ability to communicate freely in English. In comparison, their difficulties in joining a speaking club are that their teachers or classmates do not provide adequate opportunities to practice speaking English. It can be concluded that joining a speaking club helps students improve their public speaking skills, particularly in using

appropriate vocabulary, developing critical thinking skills, being courageous in sharing their ideas, and encouraging them to communicate actively with others.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

According to the findings of the research and the results of the questionnaires mentioned above, it can be concluded that participating in a speaking club helps students improve their English communication skills. The majority of students expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to participate in the speaking club. The students convey that this speaking club is significant and beneficial because they believe that their pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency in speaking English have improved. After all, they participated in the English-speaking club. They, too, were confident in their ability to communicate in English without being concerned about making mistakes. English speaking club activities can encourage them to be more motivated and spirited to practice speaking English with their peers who are also members of the English-speaking club.

Limitation

In conducting the study, the researcher realized that the investigation is limited to the English-speaking club that held four meetings of online activities. Therefore, different results may occur if the study participants attend the speaking club in face-to-face activities.

Implication

Having the information gathered through the questionnaire, the researcher would like to make the following recommendations. For students to practice in their club consistently, English teachers should ensure that they have sufficient resources in their club. They should provide guidance or recommendations to other students interested in joining the English-speaking club. Then the instructors of the speaking club should choose an interesting topic for the students to learn about and provide adequate facilities for them to learn about speaking activities. As a result, students will be more motivated to engage in speaking practice. Because students can improve their vocabulary, pronunciation, and confidence in speaking English by participating in a speaking club, they will not be afraid of making mistakes in the future.

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