Enhancing Students' Speaking Skills Performance Through English Extracurricular Activities at Senior High School

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Abstract

This study explores the role of English extracurricular activities, particularly English clubs, in improving students' speaking skills and confidence. Using a case study approach with a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation of English club activities at SMAN 1 Samarinda. The findings indicate that extracurricular activities provide a supportive environment that enhances students' confidence, fluency, and overall speaking performance. These activities serve as effective platforms for overcoming nervousness and fostering language development.

Keywords: Speaking Skills; Extracurricular Activities; English Club

Introduction

Extracurricular English clubs serve as a vital component in fostering students' interest and improving their English-speaking abilities beyond regular classroom activities. These clubs provide students with opportunities for interactive and enjoyable language learning experiences, which are crucial for building motivation, confidence, and communication skills. Previous research highlights the effectiveness of English debates, presentations, and other club activities in enhancing critical thinking, verbal communication, and confidence in using English. For instance, studies by Zare and Othman (2013) and Krieger (2005) demonstrate the significant improvement in students' speaking skills through regular engagement in debate and verbal exchange activities.

In line with Government Regulation No.19/25 on National Educational Standards, extracurricular programs aim to develop students' competencies by accommodating their interests and talents. English extracurricular activities, including debates and storytelling sessions, create an immersive environment that encourages students to practice their speaking skills in a supportive atmosphere. These activities address common challenges such as limited vocabulary, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes, enabling students to become more confident and articulate in expressing their ideas.

Despite numerous studies highlighting the benefits of extracurricular English programs, research gaps remain in understanding how these activities can holistically enhance speaking performance within specific educational contexts, such as at SMAN 1 Samarinda. This study seeks to explore how English

extracurricular activities can be effectively designed to boost students' confidence and performance in speaking English. By integrating theoretical frameworks like Vygotsky's constructivism and Hymes' communicative competence, and leveraging innovative methods such as technology-enhanced debate activities, this research aims to offer practical insights for educators.

Ultimately, the findings of this study are expected to contribute to improving English teaching methods and fostering a generation of confident English speakers, particularly in non-English-speaking regions like Indonesia.

Speaking Performance in Language Learning

Speaking skills involve effectively communicating ideas, emotions, and information in a specific language. Zuhriyah (2017) highlights speaking as a means of interaction and self-expression, while Leong and Ahmadi (2017) stress its role in conveying messages through language mastery, including pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Fluency in English as a foreign language requires integrated skills like listening, responding, and sociolinguistic competence (Ur, 2009). Teaching speaking should prioritize meaningful conversations and create a supportive environment with diverse activities to enhance engagement and practical communication skills. Challenges like inhibition, unequal participation, lack of ideas, and reliance on the native language (Ur, 1996) can be addressed by fostering confidence and encouraging active use of English. Speaking involves language features (e.g., connected speech, grammar) and mental/social processes (e.g., language processing, social interaction). Mastery of micro-skills (e.g., pronunciation, fluency) and macro-skills (e.g., coherence, discourse management) is essential (Brown, 2004). Interactive methods like imitation, responsive dialogue, and role-playing encourage meaningful interaction and build fluency. Dynamic teaching strategies that focus on active student participation are crucial for overcoming barriers and enhancing speaking performance, equipping learners for effective communication in English.

Broadly speaking, the aim of this study is to improve students' speaking ability in English by creating a supportive learning environment, utilizing various interactive activities, and overcoming barriers such as lack of confidence, uneven participation, and limited ideas. The research focuses on developing micro skills (such as pronunciation and fluency) and macro skills (such as coherence and discourse management) through dynamic teaching strategies that encourage students' active participation, so that they can communicate effectively in English.

English Extracurricular Activities in EFL

Extracurricular activities, as outlined in various regulations and scholarly works, are structured **Extracurricular activities** are structured programs designed to enhance students' knowledge, attitudes, and skills outside regular school hours (Government Regulation No. 19/25). These activities foster students' potential, talents, and interests while encouraging self-expression, leadership, and social responsibility (Noor, 2012). They also provide flexibility and choice, allowing students to engage in activities that align with their abilities and interests (Mulyasa, 2007).

Extracurricular activities serve developmental, social, recreational, and career-preparation functions (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2013). They include categories like athletics, student governance, arts, and academic organizations (Faber, 2008). Specifically, **English Clubs** provide an informal yet structured platform for practicing language skills through discussions, presentations, and peer feedback, enhancing students' confidence and speaking performance.

This research explores how participation in English extracurricular activities improves students' communication skills, fostering their overall academic and personal growth.

English Club

An English Club is an extracurricular activity aimed at improving students' English skills, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Kathleen & Smedley, 2015). These clubs provide a platform for students to practice English in an informal, stress-free environment, fostering motivation and confidence (Mouleka, 2013). Through activities like skits, debates, storytelling, and role plays, members enhance their language proficiency while engaging in creative and collaborative tasks (Rusli, 2014; Malu & Smedley, 2016).

The English Club also serves as a forum for students to exchange ideas, share new vocabulary, and discuss challenges in learning English, promoting solutions collectively. Its objectives include improving communication skills and building self-confidence, even when students make grammatical errors (Akerman & Neale, 2011).

Activities such as "Show and Tell," "Storytelling," and games like "Taboo" and "The Hammer Game" engage students in fun, interactive learning (Rusli, 2014). These practices significantly increase speaking time, encourage independence, and foster cooperation (Harmer, 2001).

While English Clubs have advantages like moral support, increased engagement, and broader knowledge exchange, challenges such as financial constraints, lack of trained facilitators, and logistical issues may hinder participation (Chalageri & Yarriswami, 2018). Despite these challenges, English Clubs remain an effective avenue for enhancing students' language skills, confidence, and social interactions.

Therefore, this study examined whether extracurricular English can improve the speaking ability of senior high school students and the extent of extracurricular English on student engagement. There are three research questions answered in this study:

1. How can English extracurricular activities be designed to sustain enhancing students' speaking skills in the class?

2. In what ways are English extracurricular activities able to improve students' speaking skills?

3. What are students' speaking skills like in their speaking class after their attendance in their school English extracurricular program

Research Method

In this study, the researchers employed a descriptive qualitative approach combined with a case study method (Stainback, 1988). The study aims to report and describe the responses gathered from both students and teachers regarding the English Club. The process of learning speaking skills through the English Club, an extracurricular activity at SMAN 1 Samarinda, is examined using three main techniques: (1) Observation, where the researcher conducted direct observations by visiting the school and witnessing the events firsthand; (2) Interviews, where the researcher interviewed English teachers to gather relevant data and insights about English Club activities; and (3) Documentation, which involved using audiovisual recording devices, capturing photographs, and collecting extracurricular program proposals to support the research.

The data was collected through field research and subsequently analyzed and described using an interactive model, which includes three concurrent streams of activity: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. To ensure the validity of the findings and minimize bias, triangulation was applied by combining multiple data collection methods, such as observation and interviews. Triangulation involved cross-referencing observation checklists and photographic evidence

with the information provided by informants, ensuring consistency with the actual conditions of the English Club activities.

Findings and Discussion

At this stage, the researcher collected data to determine the problems in the classroom's English teaching procedures, especially in speaking. This was done by conducting observations and interviews in the extracurricular English class. The interviews were conducted on two different occasions. The research entailed an initial interview with the extracurricular teacher and a subsequent interview with the students. The interviews were conducted immediately after the observations were made on 18 November 2024. The diagram illustrated is a comprehensive outline of the approach used for English language teaching and acquisition.

It is the result of the researcher's observations in the classroom during the teacher's implementation of the learning process.

I= Research

ET= English Teacher

S= Student

Observation

Thursday/November, 2024

The ET entered the classroom and greeted all students. Most students are still busy preparing books and tidying up the table. ET repeatedly greeted the students. Only a few students answered the greeting.

The atmosphere in the classroom was quiet, too quiet for an extracurricular debate session. Some students sat slouched in their seats, their heads resting on their hands, their eyes drooping as if sleep was just moments away. Despite the teacher's vigorous attempts to generate enthusiasm, the room felt lethargic.

At the front of the room, the teacher asked a question to provoke discussion: "Why do you think learning English is important for your future career?" The question hangs in the air, unanswered. The students avoided eye contact, their faces blank or distracted, and the silence was awkward. One student scribbled in the corner of his notebook, while another stared blankly at the ceiling.

Occasionally, the teacher calls out to individual students, trying to coax them to answer. One shy student mumbled a barely audible answer, struggling to form a coherent sentence. Another student uttered only one word - "important" - and quickly averted his eyes as if fearing a follow-up question. The rest remained unengaged, not reacting to their peers' participation attempts.

Energy levels remain low when the group is divided into smaller groups for brainstorming. In one group, some students leaned back in their chairs, arms crossed, waiting for someone else to speak. "I don't know what to say," muttered one student, his voice tinged with frustration. "It's too hard to think of ideas." The others nodded in agreement, staring at the blank paper to write down their thoughts.

Despite the teacher's encouragement and attempts to guide the discussion, the students seemed stuck. Their lack of critical thinking was evident as they struggled to develop arguments or support

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their points with examples. Some students reverted to vague or repetitive statements, needing help to delve deeper into the topic.

By the end of the session, the mood of the class had not improved. While some students showed a little interest, most left the room looking just as uninspired as when they arrived. Though optimistic, the teacher couldn't help but reflect on the challenges of breaking through boredom, arousing curiosity, and encouraging students to share their ideas confidently. Clearly, new strategies were needed to liven up the debate club and help students find joy in exchanging ideas.

The researcher identified several issues encountered while teaching and learning English through observations and interviews. Addressing these issues is essential to achieving the goals of English language education.

English Extracurricular Activities Can Be Designed to Maintain Enhancing Students' Speaking Skills in the Class

The results of student interviews highlight a shared understanding of how these activities significantly contribute to improving speaking skills within the broader context of language learning. As stated in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia No. 62 of 2014 regarding extracurricular activities, these programs aim to maximise students' potential, talents, interests, abilities, character, teamwork, and independence, thereby supporting the broader goals of national education. This regulatory framework underscores the importance of extracurricular activities in nurturing essential skills and values beyond academic achievement.

The role of English extracurricular activities is particularly significant in developing speaking skills, as they create a relaxed and supportive environment where students can practice English without the pressure of formal classroom settings. Activities such as debates, drama, storytelling, and English clubs allow students to communicate meaningfully, fostering their confidence and fluency. Additionally, these programs expose students to diverse topics and contexts, broadening their knowledge and equipping them with positive values such as collaboration, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. This comprehensive approach ensures that students improve their language skills and develop life skills that contribute to their personal and academic growth. Thus, by aligning extracurricular activities with classroom objectives, schools can create a holistic learning environment that supports enhancing speaking skills while promoting lifelong learning.

R: Menurut kamu, apakah dengan mengikuti kegiatan tersebut dapat membantu kamu meningkatkan kemampuan Bahasa inggris? Bagaimana kamu melakukannnya? (Do you think participating in these activities can help you improve your English skills? How did you do it?)

S1: Iya, karena dengan mengikuti ekstrakurikuler Bahasa inggris dapat mengimprove diri dan mencari relasi untuk berbicara Bahasa inggris (Yes, because participating in extracurricular English can improve yourself and find relationships to speak English.)

S2: Menurut saya, saya mengikuti kegiatan ini untuk menambah skill berbahsa inggris dan agar mudah ngomong Bahasa inggris juga(In my opinion, I participated in this activity to increase my English skills and to make it easier to speak English too.)

S3: Untuk mengimprove speaking biat bisa komunikasi Bahasa inggris lebih enak(to improve my speaking so I can communicate better in English.)

Based on the results of interviews with several students, they generally stated that participating in extracurricular English activities positively improved their English language skills, especially in speaking. The first student explained that through this activity, they were able to improve their ability to speak English and establish relationships with other people that support the practice of speaking in English. According to her, the environment created by extracurricular activities helped her to be more confident in speaking the language. The second student added that her motivation for participating in this activity was to improve her English language skills, especially to be more fluent and easily communicate. She felt that the regular practice in extracurricular activities allowed her to practice English realistically. The same thing was also conveyed by the third student, who revealed that his main goal of participating in this activity was to improve his speaking skills and be more comfortable communicating using English. Overall, all three students agreed that extracurricular English played an essential role in helping them improve their speaking skills, providing a supportive environment, and fostering confidence in their daily use of English.

The Different Ways Extracurricular English Activities Can Increase Students' Speaking Skills

Research has revealed several effective ways for extracurricular English activities to improve students' speaking skills. One of the most popular methods is implementing interactive and dynamic learning strategies. Extracurricular English activities, mainly through clubs, play a crucial role in enhancing students' speaking skills in various ways, as highlighted by experts in the field. Research indicates that participation in English clubs creates a supportive learning environment, encouraging students to engage actively in speaking activities. For instance, Mayasari (2013) found that the English-speaking club improved students' speaking performance by fostering a positive atmosphere where members felt relaxed and motivated to practice their language skills. For example, debate activities are an excellent example of improving students' speaking skills. Through debates, students are invited to speak spontaneously, consider their opponents' arguments and contest the validity of their ideas. This makes students more comfortable and confident when speaking in front of large groups, even if they face their opponents directly.

R: Menurut kamu, jenis kegiatan apa yang dapat membantu kamu meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa inggris kamu dalam program ekstrakurikuler? (What types of activities do you think can help you improve your English skills in the extracurricular program?)

S1: Menurut saya yang paling mudah itu bisa mulai dari newscast Dan juga kita baca gitu Dan juga kita cuma perlu melatih performa aja kalau untuk di tengah-tengah menurut saya speech sih Ya pidato Kalau untuk mulai yang susah-susahnya itu debate Karena itu perlu mikir juga ya (I think the easiest thing is to start from the newscast And also we read like that And also we only need to practice performance if for the middle I think it is speech anyway Yes speech If to start the hardest thing is debate Because it needs to think too)

S2: Speech tapi kalau saya daily ya pribadi nonton film sama main game karena kalau di game misal kita mau reply sama orang lain percaya diri juga gitu ngomong-ngomong bahasa Indonesia walaupun nggak seberapa tapi percaya diri itu penting jadi dari game bisa

S6: Menurut saya untuk membiasakan diri ngomong sama orang-orang sih Kak jadi kayak real kalau langsung dipraktekkan(I think it's to get used to talking to people, so it's like real life if you put it into practice.)

R: Apakah kamu senang berbicara bahasa inggris? kenapa atau kenapa tidak? (Do you enjoy speaking English? Why or why not?)

S4: Senengnya gitu saya kalau berbahasa Inggris itu bisa lebih mengekspresikan apa yang ingin saya katakan kalau mungkin agak terbatas pada kosa kata tapi yang ingin saya sampaikan itu bisa di

ekspresikan yang penting sama-sama paham (I'm happy that if I speak English, I can express what I want to say more if maybe it's a bit limited in vocabulary but what I want to say can be expressed, the important thing is that both of you understand.)

S3: Senang karena bisa belajar bahasa baru dan lebih ngerti banyak hal yang dimana di luar bahasa Indonesia sendiri Apalagi informasi dari luar itu kan banyak banget yang gak semua itu bisa ditranslate-in Plug translate gitu Kalau pakai bahasa Inggris, ngerti bahasa Inggris, jadi ya banyak pengertian yang baru juga bisa diperhatikan(I'm happy, because I can learn a new language and understand more things that are outside of the Indonesian language itself Moreover, there is a lot of information from outside that not all of it can be translated into English, understand English, so many new understandings can also be considered.)

S5: Kalau saya sendiri senang sih Kak, karena saya kan suka baca buku gitu Terus kadang tuh saya sering liat buku-buku bagus itu pake bahasa Inggris Terus saya jadinya lebih mudah untuk membacanya (I'm happy, because I like reading books and sometimes I often see good books that are in English so it's easier for me to read them.)

The results of the interviews with some students show that they have a favourable view of speaking in English, which aligns with the definition and views of experts regarding the importance of speaking in this language. Student S4 revealed that they feel more able to express themselves when using English, although sometimes limited in vocabulary. This reflects the opinion of Atul Runthala, an education expert, who stated that the ability to speak English allows students to communicate their thoughts and emotions more clearly and confidently. Student S3 added that learning English opens up access to new information that can only sometimes be translated from Indonesian, showing how mastering English can broaden students' horizons and understanding of the outside world. This aligns with the view that English proficiency provides significant academic advantages, including a better understanding of subject matter and opportunities for higher education abroad. S5 students also perceived the benefits of reading English books, making it easier to enjoy quality literature. This is supported by research showing that speaking skills in English boost students' confidence and enrich their overall learning experience. Overall, these interviews confirmed that speaking skills in English are essential for students, not only for daily communication but also for their personal and academic development.

Students' Speaking Skills in Their Speaking Class after Their Attendance in Their School English Extracurricular Program

This section shows that participating in extracurricular English programs at school significantly improved students' speaking ability. Research conducted by Mayasari (2013) highlighted the positive impact of English extracurricular programs, particularly English clubs, on students' speaking ability. The study revealed that participating in these clubs significantly improved students' fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary and speaking performance. Through engaging activities such as debates, storytelling, and speeches, students experienced a supportive learning environment that fostered confidence and reduced anxiety related to speaking English. Findings showed that students felt more relaxed and motivated in the club environment, encouraging them to practice their speaking skills more often. This supportive atmosphere improves their language competence and fosters respect and friendship among peers, further enhancing their learning experience. Overall, this study underscores the effectiveness of English language clubs as an essential platform for developing students' speaking skills in a collaborative and fun way.

R: Apakah menurut kamu kemampuan berbahasa inggris kamu telah meningkat sejak kamu mulai berpartisipasi dalam kegiatan ekstrakurikuler? dalam hal apa?

S5: Lebih meningkat sih karena dari kosa kata juga kita lebih tau kosa kata yang memang agak sulit dibilang sih tapi kita lebih tahu kan (It has improved because we know more about vocabulary, which is a bit difficult to say, but we know it better.)

S3: Meningkat, krna kosa katanya lebih banyak kan krna SMA lebih rumit tapi enggak sesignifikan SMP (increased, because the vocabulary is more, because high school is more complicated but not as significant as junior high.)

S1: Menurut saya kemampuan berbahasa Inggris saya meningkat sh kak setelah saya ikut kegiatan ekstrakurikuler. Saya jadi lebih percaya diri kalau ngomong dengan teman-teman, seperti saat presentasi atau diskusi. Kegiatan seperti debat sangat membantu saya dalam mengembangkan kemampuan berbicara dan memahami percakapan dalam bahasa Inggris.

This shows that the results of interviews with several students regarding improving their English language skills after participating in extracurricular activities showed a significant positive trend. According to Dr Maria Hartati, a language education expert, participation in extracurricular activities such as the English club improves students' linguistic skills and builds their confidence and communication skills. Dr Hartati explains that the social interactions in these activities allow students to practice active speaking and receive feedback from peers, which is crucial for their language development. Overall, this interview reflects how extracurricular activities can effectively improve students' English proficiency in various aspects.

In conclusion, participation in extracurricular English activities plays a significant role in enhancing students' speaking skills. These activities create a supportive and relaxed environment where students can practice speaking English confidently without the pressures of formal classroom settings. Through activities such as debates, storytelling, speeches, and English clubs, students improve their fluency and vocabulary and their ability to express themselves and engage in meaningful communication. The experiences shared by students indicate that these activities help increase vocabulary, build confidence, and promote active engagement in language use. Additionally, these programs align with national educational goals by fostering personal development, teamwork, and critical thinking. Therefore, integrating extracurricular English programs into school curricula supports a holistic approach to language learning, benefiting students academically and personally.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the substantial benefits of incorporating English extracurricular activities into speaking practices to improve various aspects of English language learning. The research explored the challenges and potential solutions in improving students' speaking skills, especially through extracurricular activities. It identifies key barriers such as low student engagement, lack of confidence, and limited vocabulary, which hinder active participation and effective communication in English. These issues are particularly prominent in extracurricular settings such as debate clubs, where students express their reluctance to participate because they fear making mistakes and struggle with argumentation.

This research underscores the important role of well-structured extracurricular activities, such as debate, drama, and English clubs, in providing a supportive and low-pressure environment where students can practice speaking skills. These activities offer valuable opportunities for students to engage in meaningful communication, which fosters their confidence and fluency in English. By aligning with the broader educational goals of Indonesia's national framework, which emphasizes student potential, teamwork, and independence, extracurricular programs play an important role in improving students' speaking skills.

Insights from student interviews revealed that participation in these activities leads to improved confidence, vocabulary and fluency. The students reported that the structured speech activities and interaction with the external debating community helped them overcome initial doubts and enabled them to express their ideas more effectively. These findings confirm that extracurricular programs, if well

designed, can meet a variety of student needs and offer real-world language use that enhances their skills beyond the classroom.

The research identified some barriers to engagement, such as limited vocabulary and lack of confidence. However, later meetings provided opportunities to address these issues more effectively by introducing structured argumentation, partnership with external debaters, and vocabulary-building games. These actions contributed to increased student participation, improved vocabulary, and increased confidence in speaking. The positive impact of this intervention highlights the importance of creating an inclusive and interactive learning environment that encourages student engagement and self-expression.

Despite its successes, this study also recognizes some limitations. The data used was limited to a small sample of students from one institution, and the findings may not be generalizable to other contexts. In addition, the short timeframe of data collection limited the ability to explore the long-term effects of the intervention. Future research should involve a larger and more diverse sample, a longer timeframe, and additional cycles to further refine the strategies and assess the sustained impact on students' speaking skills.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the understanding of how extracurricular activities, particularly debate, can improve students' speaking skills by overcoming their fears and building their confidence. Although this study showed promising results, further investigation with more extensive data and longer time is needed to fully assess the long-term benefits of this intervention in fostering effective communicators and confident speakers.

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