

THE INFLUENCE OF THE ENGLISH DAY PROGRAM ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY

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Article info	ABSTRACT
Corresponding Author: Atrianus Toni Atrianustoni3@gmail.com Universitas Kapuas	Speaking ability is a fundamental component of English language learning; however, many students have limited opportunities to practice speaking in authentic communicative contexts. This study aimed to investigate the influence of the English Day Program on students' speaking ability at the senior high school level. The research employed a quantitative approach using a correlational design. The participants were selected through simple random sampling, and the data were collected using a questionnaire to measure students' participation in the English Day Program and a speaking test to assess their speaking ability. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment correlation, and simple linear regression. The findings revealed that the English Day Program had a significant positive influence on students' speaking ability. Students who actively participated in the program demonstrated higher levels of fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension than those with lower participation. Therefore, the English Day Program can be considered an effective strategy for improving students' English-speaking ability. Keywords: <i>English Day Program, speaking ability, English language learning, quantitative research, senior high school students.</i>
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INTRODUCTION

English has become an important means of international communication and is increasingly required in academic, professional, and social contexts. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), speaking ability is one of the most important language skills because it enables students to express ideas, communicate information, and interact with others in English. However, developing students' speaking ability remains a challenge because speaking requires not only knowledge of vocabulary and grammar but also confidence, fluency, pronunciation, and the ability to respond spontaneously in communication. In many schools in Indonesia, students have limited opportunities to use English outside the English classroom. As a result, students may understand English theoretically but experience difficulties when they are required to use it orally.

Speaking is a productive language skill that involves the ability to produce meaningful oral communication. According to David Nunan (2003), speaking is a

productive skill that involves the process of systematically producing verbal utterances to convey meaning. Similarly, Jack C. Richards (2008) explains that successful speaking involves several components, including fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, pronunciation, and the ability to convey meaning appropriately. Therefore, speaking instruction should provide students with sufficient opportunities to practice using English in meaningful and interactive situations. Classroom instruction alone may not always provide sufficient time for students to develop these abilities, particularly when the number of students in a class is relatively large and the available instructional time is limited.

This problem also occurs at SMAS Panca Setya Sintang, where students generally use Indonesian in their daily communication. Therefore, it is the responsibility of English teachers to encourage and familiarize students with speaking English. Although implementing such a practice can be challenging for both teachers and students, meaningful change requires a willingness and commitment from both sides to implement the program consistently.

One approach that can provide students with additional opportunities to practice speaking is the English Day Program. English Day is a language-learning activity that encourages students to use English as much as possible during a particular day or within a specified period. This program can create an environment in which English is not only learned as a school subject but also used as a means of communication. From the perspective of Communicative Language Teaching, language learning becomes more effective when learners are given opportunities to use the target language in meaningful communication. Jeremy Harmer (2007) emphasizes the importance of providing learners with opportunities to engage in communicative activities, while Stephen D. Krashen (1982) argues that exposure to meaningful and comprehensible language can support second-language acquisition. Therefore, the English Day Program has the potential to increase students' exposure to English and encourage them to practice speaking in real communication situations.

Theoretically, continuous practice and interaction are important factors in developing speaking competence. Students need opportunities to produce language, receive feedback, negotiate meaning, and overcome anxiety when speaking. Merrill Swain (1985), through the Output Hypothesis, argues that producing language can encourage learners to become aware of gaps in their linguistic knowledge and develop better control over their language use. In addition, interaction provides learners with opportunities to adjust their language use and respond to communication needs. Therefore, school programs that increase students' opportunities to speak English may contribute to the development of their speaking ability.

Although, theoretically, providing more opportunities for communication in English offers various benefits, several problems can still be found in EFL learning contexts. Students may be reluctant to speak English because they are afraid of making mistakes, lack confidence, have limited vocabulary, or are accustomed to using their first language in daily communication. Furthermore, English is often used intensively only during English lessons, while students tend to return to using their first language outside the classroom. This condition limits the amount of meaningful English exposure and speaking practice that students receive. Consequently, there may be a gap between students' understanding of English as a school subject and their ability to use English communicatively.

From the perspective of gap analysis, this difference can be understood through the concepts of *das sollen* and *das sein*. *Das sollen* refers to the ideal condition that should occur, whereas *das sein* refers to the actual condition found in the field. Ideally (*das sollen*), students who learn English should have sufficient opportunities to practice speaking English in meaningful, interactive, and communicative situations. Students should be able to use their vocabulary and grammatical knowledge to express ideas with an adequate level of fluency, accuracy, and confidence. Schools should also provide a supportive language environment that encourages students to communicate in English beyond regular classroom instruction. However, under the actual condition (*das sein*), many students still have limited opportunities to practice speaking English in authentic situations. They may understand basic English structures but remain hesitant to communicate orally, rely heavily on their first language, have limited vocabulary, and lack confidence in speaking. The gap between the expected and actual conditions indicates the need for an additional program that can create a more supportive English-speaking environment.

Previous studies have demonstrated the importance of communicative activities and English-speaking environments in improving students' oral communication. Research on English-speaking programs generally reports positive effects on students' confidence, motivation, vocabulary development, and speaking practice. Studies specifically related to English Day have also indicated that such programs can encourage students to use English beyond conventional learning activities and create greater opportunities for communication. Nevertheless, previous studies have often focused on students' perceptions, motivation, participation, or general language development rather than specifically measuring the influence of the English Day Program on speaking ability through a systematic comparison of students' speaking performance before and after the implementation of the program. In addition, some studies have examined English-speaking activities descriptively without providing quantitative evidence of changes in students' speaking ability.

Thus, the state of the art of this study lies at the intersection of communicative language teaching, language exposure, and school-based English-speaking programs. Previous literature has demonstrated that interaction, meaningful language use, and continuous opportunities to produce language are important for second-language development. However, there is still a need for empirical research that specifically examines whether a structured English Day Program can produce measurable improvements in students' speaking ability. This study seeks to address this need by positioning speaking ability as the primary outcome of the research rather than merely examining students' attitudes or participation in the program. This study also considers several important aspects of speaking ability, namely fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension, to provide a more comprehensive picture of students' speaking development.

The novelty of this study lies in the empirical examination of the influence of a school-based English Day Program on students' speaking ability using quantitative evidence. This study does not merely view English Day as an extracurricular activity or a program intended to increase motivation but also examines it as a structured intervention designed to increase students' opportunities to use English in communication. By comparing students' speaking ability before and after participating in the program, this study provides evidence of whether regular exposure and opportunities to communicate in

English can contribute to measurable improvements in speaking ability. Therefore, this study is expected to make both theoretical and practical contributions to the development of communicative English language programs in Indonesian secondary schools, particularly in contexts where students have limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research method to investigate the effect of the English Day Program on students' speaking skill. The research specification focuses on measuring changes in students' speaking performance before and after participating in the English Day Program. This study assesses several components of speaking ability, namely fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. The participants in this study were tenth, eleventh, and twelfth-grade students of Panca Setya Sintang Private Senior High School who participated in the English Day Program. The study was conducted in a school environment where students were encouraged to use English for communication during designated English Day activities.

The type of research utilized in this study is pre-experimental research with a one-group pre-test and post-test design. In this design, students were given a speaking performance test before the implementation of the English Day Program (pre-test) and another speaking test after participating in the program (post-test). This design aims to determine whether the students' speaking ability improved following their participation in the program. The research approach used is quantitative, as the data obtained from the speaking tests are presented in numerical scores and analyzed statistically to determine the significance of the improvement.

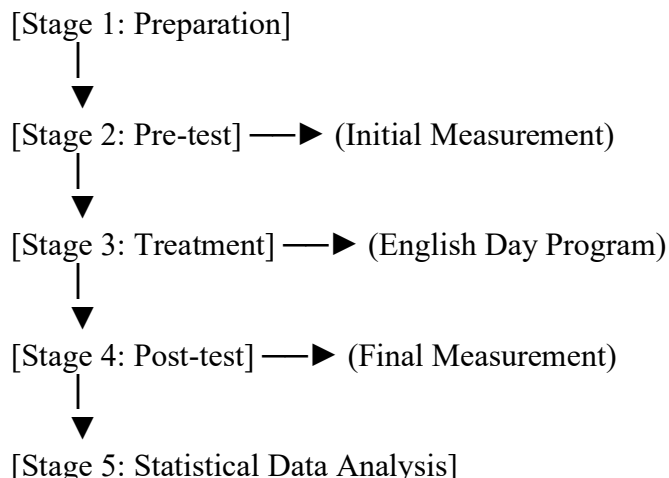
Data was collected through speaking tests and observations. The speaking test served as the primary instrument to measure students' speaking ability. In the pre-test, students performed a speaking task prior to participating in the English Day Program. They were then engaged in various English-language activities throughout the program, such as conversations, dialogues, discussions, presentations, question-and-answer sessions, and daily communication in English. Following the completion of the program, students completed a post-test using an equivalent speaking task. Students' performance was evaluated using a speaking assessment rubric that encompasses fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. Observations were also conducted during the implementation of the program to obtain supporting information regarding student participation and English language use during the activities.

Data analysis was conducted quantitatively. First, the students' pre-test and post-test scores were calculated to obtain the mean, minimum value, maximum value, and standard deviation. The improvement in students' speaking ability was then determined by comparing the pre-test and post-test results. To ascertain whether the difference between the two sets of scores was statistically significant, a paired-samples t-test was used because the same students were tested before and after the treatment. The significance level was set at 0.05. If the significance value (p) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there is a statistically significant difference in the students' speaking ability before and after participating in the English Day Program. Conversely, if the significance value is greater than 0.05, the difference is considered statistically non-significant. The

results of the statistical analysis were subsequently interpreted to determine the extent to which the English Day Program affects students' speaking skill.

Research Procedure

The procedure of this study is divided into four main stages: Preparation, Execution (Pre-test & Treatment), Post-test, and Data Analysis.



Step 1: Preparation of Instruments and Participants

1. Participant Selection:

Compile the list of target students from grades X, XI, and XII at Panca Setya Sintang Private Senior High School participating in the English Day Program.

2. Instrument Development:

- Design equivalent speaking tasks for both the pre-test and post-test.
- Prepare a speaking assessment rubric covering five primary components: fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension.
- Develop an observation sheet to record student engagement and English language usage throughout the program.

Step 2: Pre-test Administration (Initial Measurement)

1. Explain the instructions and objectives of the pre-test to all participants.
2. Administer the initial speaking task to the students prior to the launch of the English Day Program.
3. Evaluate and record students' speaking performance using the five-component assessment rubric to establish baseline scores.

Step 3: Implementation of Treatment (English Day Program) & Observation

1. Program Implementation:

- Require and encourage students to communicate in English within the school environment during designated English Day activities.
- Actively engage students in various interactive activities, including: Conversations and dialogues; Group discussions; Presentations; Question-and-answer (Q&A) sessions; and Daily communication in English

2. Conducting Observations:

- Perform direct observation throughout the execution of the English Day activities.

- Record students' participation levels and English language usage on the observation sheets as supporting data.

Step 4: Post-test Administration (Final Measurement)

1. Administer a post-test involving a speaking task of equivalent difficulty to the pre-test after the program is completed.
2. Re-assess students' speaking performance using the same five-component assessment rubric.
3. Record and compile the post-test scores.

Step 5: Quantitative Data Analysis

1. Descriptive Statistics:

- Calculate the mean, minimum value, maximum value, and standard deviation for both pre-test and post-test scores.
- Compute the mean difference/gain score to determine improvement in students' speaking performance.

2. Hypothesis Testing (Inferential Statistics):

- Perform a **Paired-Samples T-test** at a significance level of $\alpha=0.05$.
- **Decision Rule:** If $p<0.05 \rightarrow$ **Reject H_0** (there is a statistically significant difference/effect before and after the program). If $p>0.05 \rightarrow$ **Fail to reject H_0** (the difference is statistically non-significant).

3. Interpretation and Conclusion:

- Interpret the statistical results alongside observational data to conclude the extent of the English Day Program's effectiveness on students' speaking skill.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of this study were obtained from the students' speaking performance before and after the implementation of the English Day Program. The pre-test was administered to determine the students' initial speaking ability, while the post-test was conducted after the students had participated in the English Day activities. The speaking performances were assessed based on five components: fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension.

The results indicated an improvement in students' speaking ability after participating in the English Day Program. In the pre-test, several students experienced difficulties in expressing their ideas fluently and confidently. They tended to pause frequently, use limited vocabulary, make grammatical errors, and mispronounce several English words. Some students also depended on their first language when they encountered difficulties in expressing their ideas in English. These conditions demonstrated that the students' initial speaking ability was still relatively limited.

After the implementation of the English Day Program, the students demonstrated better speaking performance. The improvement was particularly noticeable in their fluency and confidence. Students were able to produce longer utterances, participate more actively in conversations, and respond to questions with less hesitation. Their vocabulary use also became more varied, while improvements in pronunciation and grammatical accuracy were observed in their speaking performances. The students also demonstrated better comprehension when responding to questions and communicating with their classmates.

The comparison between the pre-test and post-test results showed that the mean score of the students increased after participating in the English Day Program. This improvement indicates that the program provided students with greater opportunities to practice English orally. The English Day activities encouraged students to use English not only during formal classroom instruction but also in everyday interactions with teachers and classmates.

To determine whether the improvement was statistically significant, a paired-samples t-test was conducted. The analysis showed that the significance value was lower than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This result indicates that there was a statistically significant difference between students' speaking ability before and after participating in the English Day Program. Thus, the findings provide evidence that the English Day Program had a positive influence on students' speaking ability.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the English Day Program can contribute positively to the development of students' speaking ability. The improvement in students' speaking performance can be associated with the increased opportunities to use English in meaningful communication. During the program, students were encouraged to communicate using English through conversations, discussions, presentations, question-and-answer activities, and other interactive tasks. These activities provided students with opportunities to practice producing English in situations that were more communicative and less dependent on conventional teacher-centered instruction.

The improvement in fluency suggests that repeated opportunities to speak English can help students become more accustomed to producing language spontaneously. Before the program, students tended to hesitate because they were concerned about making mistakes. However, continuous speaking practice allowed them to become more familiar with expressing their ideas in English. This finding is consistent with the view that language production and interaction are important components of second-language development. Through regular opportunities to produce language, learners can recognize gaps in their linguistic knowledge and gradually develop greater control over their language use.

The improvement in vocabulary was also related to the students' frequent exposure to English during the program. When students communicated with their peers and teachers, they encountered and used English words repeatedly in meaningful contexts. This repeated exposure helped students recall and apply vocabulary more effectively. Rather than memorizing vocabulary in isolation, students were able to learn and use words as part of actual communication.

Pronunciation also showed improvement after the implementation of the program. Frequent oral practice gave students opportunities to hear English expressions from other speakers and to reproduce them. Feedback from teachers and peers could further help students recognize and correct pronunciation problems. This indicates that an English-speaking environment may provide useful opportunities for students to develop greater awareness of English pronunciation.

In terms of grammar, students demonstrated improvement although grammatical errors were still found in some performances. This suggests that increased speaking

practice does not immediately eliminate grammatical errors but can encourage students to apply grammatical knowledge while communicating. In this context, the primary purpose of the English Day Program was not to provide intensive grammar instruction but to encourage students to use English communicatively. Therefore, grammatical development may occur gradually as students repeatedly use English and receive corrective feedback.

The findings also indicate an improvement in students' comprehension. Students became more capable of understanding questions, instructions, and responses during English interactions. This development may have resulted from increased exposure to spoken English. When students regularly listen to and respond to English in meaningful situations, they receive more opportunities to develop their ability to process spoken language.

Overall, the findings support the argument that an English Day Program can help reduce the gap between the expected and actual conditions of English learning. Ideally, students should have sufficient opportunities to use English for authentic communication, but in reality, their exposure to English may be limited to regular classroom lessons. The English Day Program addresses this gap by creating an additional English-speaking environment within the school. Consequently, students have more opportunities to practice, interact, make mistakes, receive feedback, and gradually improve their speaking performance.

The results also strengthen previous research emphasizing the importance of communicative language use and interaction in developing speaking ability. However, this study contributes additional evidence by specifically examining changes in students' speaking performance through a pre-test and post-test comparison. The significant improvement found in the present study suggests that English Day should not merely be viewed as a supplementary school activity but can also function as a practical strategy for creating an English-speaking environment.

Therefore, the findings provide an answer to the research problem: the English Day Program significantly influences students' speaking ability. The program gives students greater opportunities to use English, increases their exposure to spoken English, encourages active participation, and supports the development of fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the program depends on consistent implementation, students' active participation, teacher support, and the creation of a supportive environment in which students are not afraid of making mistakes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the English Day Program has a positive and significant influence on students' speaking ability. The comparison between the pre-test and post-test results showed an improvement in students' speaking performance after participating in the program. The improvement was reflected in several aspects of speaking, including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. The statistical analysis also indicated a significant difference between students' speaking ability before and after the implementation of the English Day Program. This finding suggests that providing students with regular opportunities to use English in meaningful and interactive situations can increase their confidence, participation, and ability to communicate orally. Therefore, the English Day Program can be considered an

effective strategy for supporting the development of students' speaking ability and creating a more supportive English-speaking environment at

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