

## IMPROVING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS OF STUDENTS OF SDN 094136 THROUGH CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

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### Abstract

This study aims to improve students' English-speaking skills at SD Negeri 094136, Sait Buttu Village, by implementing innovative classroom activities such as role-play, group discussion, language games, and presentation. These activities were designed to address the challenge of low English skills due to lack of facilities, qualified teaching staff and exposure to English in the students' environment. This study used a pretest-posttest design with qualitative and quantitative approaches to evaluate the effectiveness of the methods. The respondents were students in grades 2, 3, and 4. The results showed a significant improvement in students' speaking fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and vocabulary acquisition. In addition, there was an increase in students' self-confidence although the challenge of speaking anxiety was still present. The study concluded that communicative and interactive classroom activities were effective in improving students' speaking skills. Research recommendations include the integration of speaking activities in the educational curriculum and the need for further research in various contexts to explore the effectiveness of this method more widely.

Keywords: *Speaking Skills, English, Role-Play, Group Discussion, Language Games, Presentation, Primary Education.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is an important aspect of human resource development, especially in the increasingly competitive era of globalization. In a global context, English language proficiency is a much-needed skill, as it serves as a cross-cultural link and source of information. English, as an international language, plays a crucial role in opening up access to information, further education and employment opportunities around the world. However, in many remote areas in Indonesia, including Sait Buttu Village, students' English language skills are still relatively low.

This condition is caused by various factors. First, the lack of adequate supporting facilities, such as libraries with English-language book collections and limited internet access, is an obstacle in the learning process. According to Kurniawan (2018), remote areas in Indonesia often experience infrastructure limitations that impact on the quality of education. Secondly, the lack of qualified teaching staff often leads to ineffective teaching methods. Many teachers do not have special training in teaching English, so the approach used tends to be monotonous and less interesting for students (Hasan, 2020). Thirdly, students in remote areas are often not exposed to the use of English in everyday life, which causes them to feel less confident and are not used to communicating in the language.

At SD Negeri 094136, the English learning process is often unable to facilitate students to practice speaking well. Many students feel awkward and reluctant to speak in English, so their speaking skills are not well developed. Previous research shows that speaking is one of the most difficult skills to master, especially if it is not supported by interesting and interactive learning methods (Rini, 2019). Without sufficient practice and the right method, students will find it difficult to develop their speaking skills.

Given these conditions, concrete efforts are needed to improve students' English speaking skills. One solution that can be implemented is through innovative and fun classroom activities. These activities can include various approaches, such as role plays, group discussions, and presentations, which can encourage students to more actively participate in learning. According to Supriyanto (2020), the use of varied classroom activities can increase students' motivation and engagement, so that their speaking skills can develop better. By creating a conducive and fun learning atmosphere, students are expected to be more courageous to practice speaking in English.

This program not only aims to improve students' speaking ability, but also to build their confidence in using English. Through support from teachers and the introduction of appropriate learning methods, SD Negeri 094136 students are expected to become more proficient in English, so that they can compete with students from other regions. This improvement in speaking skills will have a positive impact not only in the academic context but also in students' daily lives.

Through this research, the author hopes to make a positive contribution to the development of English learning methods at SD Negeri 094136, as well as improving the quality of education in remote areas such as Sait Buttu Village. By improving students' speaking skills, it is expected that they will have more opportunities in the future, both in education and in the world of work. Thus, this research is expected to provide new insights and solutions that can be applied in other schools facing similar challenges.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach is used to deeply understand the context of English learning at school, while the quantitative approach is used to measure the improvement of students' English skills after the application of a particular method. The purpose of this Classroom Action Research (CAR) was to improve the English language skills of primary school children by using an engaging activity-based teaching methodology. The study used a pretest-posttest design with an experimental group. In the initial stage, students' English proficiency was measured using a test (pretest). After that, some learning methods were applied for one week. Finally, students' English proficiency was measured again using the same test (posttest) to see the changes and developments that occurred. The population in this study was all students in grades 2, 3, and 4 at SD Negeri 094136. The research sample was randomly selected using the random sampling method to get a good representation of the population.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

In an effort to improve students' speaking skills, various classroom activities were designed and implemented during the research period. The implementation of classroom activities designed to improve speaking skills can result in several positive impacts:

- 1) Improved Speaking Ability.  
Students who regularly engage in speaking activities will experience improvements in their speaking ability, both in terms of fluency, pronunciation accuracy and grammar.
- 2) Increased Self-Confidence  
With frequent opportunities to speak, students will feel more confident in using English. This will encourage them to more actively participate in discussions or other social situations that require English.
- 3) Increased Motivation to Learn  
Engaging and interactive activities will make students more motivated to learn English, as they feel the immediate benefits of the skills they are learning.
- 4) Vocabulary Mastery  
Speaking activities also help students to master more vocabulary and understand how to use it in the right context.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

Speaking is one of the four main skills in language learning, in addition to listening, reading and writing. In the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), speaking has a very important position because:

- 1) Direct Communication  
Speaking ability allows students to communicate directly and expressively. This is a skill that they will need in their daily lives, both in the school environment and outside of school.
- 2) Contextualized Learning  
Speaking involves using language in a more natural and practical context. It helps students understand how language is used in different situations, thus improving their overall understanding.
- 3) Increases Self-Confidence  
When students are able to successfully communicate in English, it can boost their confidence, which in turn motivates them to continue learning and practicing.
- 4) Social Interaction  
Good speaking skills allow students to interact with others, including classmates, teachers or native English speakers, which enriches their learning experience.

## CHALLENGES IN DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS

Developing English speaking skills at the primary level has its challenges. Some of them are:

- 1) Limited Exposure  
In many primary schools, English is only taught a few hours per week. This means students have limited time to practice speaking.
- 2) Lack of Speaking Opportunities  
In conventional teaching, students often do more listening or written exercises than speaking. The lack of structured speaking activities makes students unaccustomed to using English actively.
- 3) Speaking Anxiety  
Many students feel anxious or afraid of being wrong when speaking in English. These feelings often prevent them from participating in classroom speaking activities.
- 4) Ability Variation  
Students in a class usually have varying levels of English proficiency. This can make it difficult for teachers to design activities that are suitable for all students.

## EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILLS

To overcome these challenges, teachers can implement various classroom activities specifically designed to improve students' speaking skills. Here are some examples of activities that can be done:

- 1) Role-Play  
One of the most effective activities in encouraging students to speak is role-play. In this activity, students are given specific roles and scenarios that they have to act out in English. For example, they can pretend to be a customer and a cashier in a shop, or a tourist and a tour guide in a tourist attraction. This activity not only encourages students to use the vocabulary and grammar they have learned, but also helps them to speak more naturally and confidently.
- 2) Group Discussions:  
Small group discussion is also an important activity for developing speaking skills. In these discussions, students are given a topic relevant to their daily lives, such as "favorite holiday" or "favorite food". They are then asked to talk in their groups, share their opinions, and listen to each other. Group discussions help students to develop their listening and oral response skills, as well as improve their ability to think critically and speak spontaneously.
- 3) Language Games:  
Language games like "Simon Says" or "Guess Who" are a fun and effective way to encourage students to speak in English. In these games, students have to listen to instructions or

prompts in English and respond with actions or words. These games not only improve speaking, but also strengthen listening and comprehension skills.

#### 4) Presentations:

Students are also required to make a short presentation on a topic of their own choosing. These presentations provide an opportunity for students to speak in front of the class and develop public speaking skills. Teachers provide positive feedback to boost students' confidence and motivate them to keep practicing.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that the classroom activities designed in an interactive and communicative manner significantly improved students' speaking skills. From the observation results, there was an increase in the frequency and quality of students' participation in speaking activities. Students became bolder to speak in English and more confident in expressing their opinions.

Analysis of the video recordings showed that students who were initially passive and reluctant to speak began to actively engage in classroom activities after several sessions. They started using new vocabulary and improved their grammar through hands-on practice. Interviews with teachers also confirmed that students became more enthusiastic in learning English and showed improvement in their speaking skills.

Nonetheless, there were some challenges faced during the implementation of this activity. For example, some students still feel anxious about speaking in front of their friends, especially when they have to speak in English. To overcome this, teachers need to continue providing support and constructive feedback, as well as creating a safe and supportive classroom environment.

The results of this study are in line with previous research showing that communicative classroom activities can improve students' speaking skills. However, this study also emphasizes the importance of adapting activities to students' ability levels and the local context, which are important factors for successful implementation.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, this study shows that communicatively designed classroom activities can effectively improve primary school students' English speaking skills. Activities such as role-play, group discussion, language games, and presentations provide students with opportunities to practice speaking in a supportive and safe environment. Despite some challenges encountered, the results of this study provide evidence that this approach is effective in improving students' speaking skills.

For wider implementation, it is recommended that teachers in primary schools integrate speaking activities more frequently in their curriculum. In addition, further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of these activities in different contexts, such as in schools in rural areas or among students with highly varied ability backgrounds.

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