

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF "ENGLISH TIME" PROGRAM TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS: A CASE STUDY IN ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDIES OF UIN BANDUNG

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Abstract

This study examines students' perceptions of the "English Time" program designed to enhance speaking skills among English Education students at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. A qualitative case study approach was employed, using questionnaires, interviews, and observations to collect data from 30 participants. The findings indicate that the program effectively fosters confidence and speaking ability through structured activities such as group discussions, storytelling, and role-playing. These activities promote active language use, peer interaction, and consistent practice, which help students overcome challenges such as anxiety and improve their proficiency. Additionally, the study explores the role of the learning environment and instructional strategies in facilitating language acquisition. The results suggest that students benefit significantly from the structured nature of "English Time," which provides a supportive and immersive context for practicing English. Furthermore, the study highlights key challenges, including initial reluctance and vocabulary limitations, while also identifying strategies students used to overcome these barriers. The study concludes that the "English Time" program represents a successful model for improving speaking skills through structured and student-centered activities. The insights gained from this research can serve as a reference for educators and curriculum developers seeking to enhance English language learning programs through similar interactive and practice-based approaches.

Keywords: Speaking Skills, English Time, Student Perception

INTRODUCTION

Speaking proficiency is a crucial aspect of language learning, especially for students in English education programs. The ability to communicate effectively in English not only enhances academic performance but also increases career prospects in a globalized world. However, many students struggle with confidence and fluency due to a lack of practice and supportive learning environments. Various studies highlight that consistent speaking practice and interactive learning activities can significantly improve language proficiency.

The "English Time" program at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung was implemented to address these challenges. It aims to create an immersive language environment where students actively participate in structured activities to enhance their speaking skills. By engaging in discussions, storytelling, and role-playing, students are encouraged to use English in real-life situations, thereby improving their confidence and competence. This study investigates students' perceptions of the program and its impact on their speaking abilities.

While previous research has focused on traditional classroom learning, this study explores the effectiveness of extracurricular language programs such as "English Time." By analyzing students' experiences, challenges, and the overall impact of the program, this research contributes to the understanding of best practices in language learning. The findings provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers in designing effective English-speaking programs to support student development.

METHOD

A qualitative case study approach was adopted to gain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences with the "English Time" program. The study involved 30 participants from the English Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung. Data collection methods included questionnaires, interviews, and observations.

The questionnaire was distributed using a Likert-scale format to gather quantitative insights into students' perceptions. It consisted of various statements assessing their experiences with the program, focusing on aspects such as confidence, engagement, and perceived improvement in speaking skills. The questionnaire responses were then analyzed statistically to identify patterns and trends in students' attitudes toward the program.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 students to obtain more detailed responses. These interviews allowed participants to share their personal experiences, highlighting specific activities that helped them develop their speaking skills. The interviews also provided insights into challenges faced by students and their suggestions for improving the program. Thematic analysis was used to categorize common themes emerging from the interview data.

Additionally, observations were conducted to assess students' participation in "English Time" activities. The researcher attended multiple sessions, noting students' level of engagement, interaction with peers, and their use of English in real-life situations. Observational data complemented the findings from questionnaires and interviews, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how the program was implemented and its effectiveness in enhancing speaking skills.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study reveal various aspects of student perceptions and program effectiveness.

1. Explore students' perceptions of the "English Time" program

The findings indicate that students generally view the program positively, as it has helped them build confidence and develop their speaking abilities. Students appreciated the interactive nature of the program, which encouraged them to practice English in a non-threatening environment. However, some participants mentioned that the initial stages were challenging due to their fear of making mistakes in front of their peers.

Questionnaire Results

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The "English Time" program has improved my speaking skills.	36.7%	60%	3.3%	0%
I enjoy participating in the "English Time" activities.	33.3%	53.3%	13.3%	0%
I feel more confident speaking English since joining the program.	13.3%	76.7%	10%	0%
The benefits of the program outweigh the challenges.	20%	73.3%	6.7%	0%
I often feel anxious when speaking English during the program.	6.7%	46.7%	40%	6.7%
Regular practice during "English Time" is essential for my improvement.	36.7%	60%	3.3%	0%
The program meets my learning needs effectively.	20%	73.3%	6.7%	0%

In this study, the researcher used the Naturalistic observation method; this is appropriate because the researcher can see the situation in the observation area naturally and know how the "English Time" program takes place. There were 4 observations in the study on 23,30 October and 6,13 November 2024. This study answers the second research question about the implementation of the "English Time" program to improve speaking skills.

The "English Time" program has positively impacted students' cognition, affection, and conation/psychomotor aspects of learning English. In terms of cognition, questionnaire results indicate that most students feel their speaking and overall English skills have improved, aligning with Swain's (2001) emphasis on integrating different types of knowledge in second-language learning. Affection-wise, while many students enjoy the program and feel more confident, some still experience anxiety, highlighting the importance of peer support and a motivating environment in reducing apprehension and fostering growth (Kiefer et al., 2015). Confidence is a central theme in interviews, with students attributing progress to continuous practice, social interaction, and a supportive atmosphere. The conation/psychomotor aspect is reflected in students' increased motivation and positive attitudes toward English learning, as shown in questionnaire charts, with most participants recommending the program. Interviews reinforce that peer influence, daily practice, and interactive activities like debates help students transition from anxiety to fluency, demonstrating the role of social interactions in developing language skills (Efiong, 2016).

2. How the implementation of "English Time" contributed to students' speaking skill development.

The observations and interview responses suggest that structured speaking activities, such as group discussions and peer feedback, played a crucial role in students' progress. The program's emphasis on real-life conversational topics also made speaking practice more engaging and practical. Despite its effectiveness, students recommended additional grammar-focused sessions and pronunciation drills to complement their speaking practice.

Interview results

Question	Summary of Responses
What aspects of the "English Time" program helped improve your speaking skills?	Most students cited regular practice, peer interaction, and structured activities such as storytelling and group discussions as key contributors.
What challenges did you face when participating in "English Time"?	Some students struggled with vocabulary selection, grammar accuracy, and anxiety when speaking in front of peers.
How has the program changed your confidence in speaking English?	Most of students reported increased confidence and willingness to speak English in various settings.
What improvements would you suggest for the program?	Suggestions included adding more grammar-focused sessions, pronunciation drills, and incentives for participation.

Interview feedback highlights the importance of the supporting environment and motivation to promote confidence and improve English speaking skills. The influence of colleagues, daily practice and commitment to activities such as debate and public discussion is essential to help students overcome timidity, reduce anxiety and improve control. The confidence has emerged as a periodic topic, the respondent associates it with better verbal control and security feels in different contexts. Many people have emphasized the role of continuous practice and interactive learning to make language skills apply to realistic situations. In addition, the progress of initial anxiety to control highlight the transformation of continuous efforts and study cooperation on public speaking capacity and communication. The learning and mental processes are deeply affected by social and cultural interactions, which shows that cognitive capacity is not only the inherent characteristics but also developed by dynamic and rich experiences in the context with the surrounding environment (Effiong, 2016).

Observation

Observational data revealed that students actively engaged in discussions and speaking exercises during "English Time" sessions. The researcher noted that most students demonstrated enthusiasm and a willingness to participate, even if they initially faced difficulties. Students who were initially hesitant to speak gradually became more confident through peer encouragement and consistent practice.

Moreover, the observations highlighted that structured activities such as role-playing and group discussions significantly contributed to students' speaking improvements. Some students were seen helping their peers with pronunciation and grammar, reinforcing a collaborative learning environment. However, occasional reluctance from a few students was observed, particularly those who lacked confidence in their vocabulary and grammar usage. Encouraging these students through additional support mechanisms could further enhance the program's impact.

The implementation of the "English Time" program has significantly contributed to improving students' speaking skills, as observed through naturalistic observation and supported by questionnaire and interview data. The program encouraged students to engage in English communication across various campus settings, such as the canteen, classrooms, and parking areas, providing real-life practice opportunities. It is related to an assertion on the importance of verbal communication in social and academic contexts (Malandrakis et al. 2016). Additionally, multimodal communication, incorporating speech, gestures, and facial expressions, enriched interactions, as described by Kessous et al. (2010). The findings highlight high enthusiasm and participation, with students using English even in extracurricular activities, demonstrating the program's broad acceptance. Beyond participation, the program led to notable improvements in speaking abilities, transitioning English from a program requirement to a natural part of communication, which aligns with Pulido's (2003) observation that integrated language programs enhance second-language familiarity. The program's inclusive and supportive environment, fostering constructive feedback and non-judgmental interactions, helped students gain confidence, reinforcing Farooq's (2007) perspective that interaction is key to communicative competence. Moreover, the program influenced students' attitudes toward English, fostering a collaborative learning culture where students supported peers struggling with the language, consistent with Larsen–Freeman's (2007) emphasis on the social and cognitive aspects of second-language acquisition. Overall, the "English Time" program effectively enhanced students' speaking skills and attitudes toward English, demonstrating its potential as a model for language acquisition programs in similar educational settings.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study confirm that the "English Time" program has had a positive impact on students' speaking abilities. Students reported increased confidence, greater fluency, and enhanced peer interaction as key benefits of participating in the program. The structured activities provided a platform for consistent practice, which helped students develop their skills in a supportive environment.

Despite its success, some challenges were identified, such as initial anxiety, difficulties in vocabulary selection, and the need for additional grammar-focused sessions. Addressing these concerns through tailored support measures, such as pronunciation workshops and structured feedback, could further enhance the program's effectiveness.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of extracurricular language programs in developing speaking skills. The insights gained can be used to refine existing initiatives and inform future efforts to support students in improving their English proficiency. By fostering an engaging and practice-oriented learning environment, institutions can equip students with the confidence and skills necessary for effective communication in English.

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