



THE CONTRIBUTION OF SPEAKING PRACTICE WITH THE NATIVE SPEAKER TO STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY IN SMPN 1 PAMEKASAN

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of speaking practice with native speakers on the English-speaking skills of students at SMPN 1 Pamekasan. It investigates how direct interactions with native speakers affect linguistic fluency, pronunciation, and confidence in speaking. Using a mixed-method approach, the research collected data through observations, interviews, and performance evaluations of eighth-grade students actively involved in speaking activities with native speakers. The findings reveal that regular interaction with native speakers significantly enhances students' speaking abilities, particularly in pronunciation accuracy and conversational competence. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the role of authentic language practice in boosting student engagement and motivation in learning English. These results underscore the potential benefits of integrating native speaker interactions into English language teaching programs to improve students' speaking proficiency.

Keywords: Speaking ability, Native speakers, English language learning

1. INTRODUCTION

In the globalization era, English has become a crucial tool for communication, particularly in the realms of education and professional endeavors. As one of the most widely used languages, mastering English—especially speaking skills—is essential for students to excel in academic and social contexts (Jaya et al., 2019). In Indonesia, where English is taught as a foreign language, many students encounter obstacles in developing fluency and confidence in speaking. These challenges are largely due to a lack of exposure to genuine language settings and limited opportunities for real-life practice (Gill & Baillie, 2018).

Speaking practice is a vital component of language acquisition, allowing learners to actively engage in real-life communication (Putri et al., 2023; Pakula, 2019). Interaction with native speakers, in particular, provides students with exposure to natural

pronunciation, idiomatic expressions, and cultural nuances that are often absent in traditional classroom settings (Jenks & Lee, 2020; Askhatova A, 2020; Minářová, 2022). Such experiences not only enhance linguistic competence but also build students' confidence in using the language spontaneously (Jenks & Lee, 2020)

At SMPN 1 Pamekasan, efforts have been made to improve students' English-speaking abilities by introducing opportunities to practice with native speakers. This initiative aims to address common challenges in language learning, such as limited vocabulary, inaccurate pronunciation, and lack of confidence (Namaziandost & Nasri, 2019). By engaging in direct communication with native speakers, students are encouraged to overcome these barriers and develop their speaking skills more effectively (Chen & Hwang, 2020; Sherine et al., 2020).

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This study explores the contribution of speaking practice with native speakers to the development of students' speaking abilities at SMPN 1 Pamekasan. Specifically, it examines how such interactions impact fluency, accuracy, and overall confidence in speaking English. By identifying the benefits and challenges of this approach, the research seeks to provide insights into effective strategies for enhancing English language education in Indonesian schools (Noviyenty, 2018)

2. LITERATURE REVIEW**Speaking Practice and Language Proficiency**

Speaking practice plays a vital role in enhancing students' speaking ability. According to Harmer (2007), speaking involves not just the production of sounds, but also the ability to use language effectively in various social and academic contexts. Regular practice helps students develop fluency, accuracy, and confidence in speaking. By engaging in authentic communication, learners can overcome common challenges such as limited vocabulary, grammar issues, and anxiety while speaking (Pakula, 2019).

Interaction with Native Speakers

Interacting with native speakers is among the most effective methods for enhancing speaking skills. According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), comprehensible input plays a vital role in language acquisition, and native speakers can often provide this input more effectively (Krashen, 1985). Such interactions allow students to experience authentic pronunciation, intonation, and cultural nuances that are typically missing in conventional classroom environments. Additionally, Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1996) supports the idea that meaningful communication with native speakers facilitates language development through negotiation of meaning.

Benefits of Speaking Practice with Native Speakers

1. **Fluency Development:** Studies have shown that consistent interaction with native speakers improves fluency by reducing hesitation and promoting natural language flow (Dincer & Dariyemez, 2020)
2. **Pronunciation and Intonation:** Exposure to native accents and speech patterns helps students refine their pronunciation and develop better intonation (Pratiwi et al., 2020).
3. **Cultural Awareness:** Engaging with native speakers enhances cultural competence, which is crucial for effective communication in a globalized world (Fakhrudin, 2018).
4. **Confidence Building:** Practicing with native speakers boosts students' confidence as they gain firsthand experience in real-life conversations (Minářová, 2022)

Challenges in Speaking with Native Speakers

Despite its benefits, speaking with native speakers can present challenges for learners, particularly those in rural areas such as SMPN 1 Pamekasan. Students may face limited access to native speakers, cultural differences, or fear of making mistakes, which can hinder their progress. However, integrating technology such as video calls or language exchange platforms can mitigate these challenges and provide consistent opportunities for interaction (Ehsan et al., 2019; Syofyan et al., 2024; Bawawa, 2022).

3. METHODS**Research Design**

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design to analyze the contribution of speaking practice with native speakers to students' speaking abilities. The design is chosen to gain a deeper understanding of how interactions with native speakers influence

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students' speaking skills, including fluency, accuracy, and confidence (Leonard, 2019; Brown, 2004).

Research Setting and Participants

The study is conducted at SMPN 1 Pamekasan, a junior high school located in Pamekasan, Indonesia. Participants consist of 25 students from the eighth grade, selected purposively based on their involvement in a speaking program that includes practice sessions with native speakers. Additionally, one English teacher and one native speaker involved in the program are interviewed to provide insights into the program's implementation and impact (Kani & Yilmaztürk, 2021).

Data Collection Methods

Data collection for this study included observations during speaking practice sessions to assess student engagement, interviews with students and teachers to gather insights on their experiences, speaking performance assessments to evaluate improvements in fluency and pronunciation, and document analysis of materials like lesson plans and progress records to provide additional context on the impact of native speaker interaction.

Data Analysis

Data collected from observations, interviews, speaking assessments, and document analysis are analyzed using thematic analysis. The steps include:

1. **Data Familiarization:** Reviewing all data to gain a comprehensive understanding.
2. **Coding:** Identifying recurring themes related to the benefits and challenges of speaking practice with native speakers.
3. **Theme Development:** Grouping codes into broader categories, such as fluency improvement, pronunciation enhancement, confidence building, and challenges encountered.

4. **Interpretation:** Interpreting the themes in the context of existing theories and previous studies to draw meaningful conclusions.

Ethical Considerations

- **Informed Consent:** Permission is obtained from participants, their parents, and school authorities before conducting the study.
- **Confidentiality:** Participant identities are anonymized to ensure privacy.
- **Voluntary Participation:** Students and teachers are informed that participation is voluntary, and they can withdraw at any stage without consequences.

Limitations

The study's scope is limited to a single school and a small sample size, which may affect the generalizability of its findings. Future studies could expand by involving multiple schools and larger participant groups to gain more comprehensive insights. This approach would offer a more systematic examination of how speaking practice with native speakers influences students' speaking abilities at SMPN 1 Pamekasan.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Results****1. Improvement in Speaking Skills**

The study found that students at SMPN 1 Pamekasan made notable improvements in their speaking abilities after participating in practice sessions with a native speaker. These improvements were evident in several key areas. First, fluency improved as students showed less hesitation and were able to express their ideas more smoothly. Many participants noted that they were able to construct sentences more spontaneously during conversations, reflecting enhanced fluency. In terms of pronunciation, consistent interaction with the native speaker helped students achieve more accurate pronunciation and better intonation patterns, which are critical for

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effective communication. The practice also contributed to an expansion of students' vocabulary, particularly with colloquial expressions and idiomatic phrases that are often absent in traditional classroom settings. Lastly, confidence levels soared, as many students reported feeling more self-assured when speaking English, both in classroom settings and during one-on-one practice sessions.

These findings align with recent research highlighting the benefits of interacting with native speakers. found that EFL learners who communicated with native English speakers exhibited significantly higher self-confidence in their language proficiency compared to those who did not have such interactions (Alberth, 2023).

Additionally, Kit et al. (2024) emphasized that increased exposure to English language input outside the classroom, including interactions with native speakers, positively correlates with improved language proficiency among students.

Furthermore, research Tran et al. (2024) demonstrated that virtual exchange programs, which often involve communication with native speakers, can enhance EFL learners' speaking and listening skills, leading to improved language proficiency.

Collectively, these studies underscore the significant role that interaction with native speakers plays in enhancing various aspects of language proficiency, including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and confidence.

2. Positive Feedback from Students

Interviews with students revealed that most found the sessions with the native speaker enjoyable and beneficial. They appreciated the opportunity to practice real-life conversations, which differed from traditional classroom activities. Students highlighted that the native speaker's corrections were constructive and non-intimidating, encouraging them to participate actively.

3. Challenges Faced by Students

Despite the significant benefits observed in the speaking abilities of students, several challenges emerged during the practice sessions with the native speaker. Initial anxiety was one of the primary obstacles, as many students felt nervous during their first interactions, fearing they might make mistakes or misunderstand the native speaker. This anxiety often affected their willingness to participate fully in the conversations. Additionally, limited listening comprehension posed a challenge for some students, especially in the early stages of the program. The native speaker's accent, as well as the pace of speech, made it difficult for certain students to keep up with the conversation, hindering their ability to engage effectively. Finally, inconsistent participation was noted, as a few students struggled to maintain active involvement in the sessions due to a lack of confidence or inadequate preparation.

These challenges are consistent with findings from recent studies. Study Yousefabadi et al. (2022) highlighted that anxiety often inhibits language learners from fully engaging in oral communication, particularly in the presence of native speakers. Similarly, a study by Rao (2019) found that listening comprehension issues were common among EFL learners when interacting with native speakers, especially when faced with unfamiliar accents or rapid speech patterns. Furthermore, study by Pratiwi et al. (2020) emphasized that low self-confidence and insufficient preparation often result in reduced participation during language practice sessions. These findings confirm that while interaction with native speakers is beneficial, students often encounter psychological and

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comprehension challenges that need to be addressed for more effective learning outcomes.

4. Teacher and Native Speaker Observations

Both the English teacher and the native speaker observed significant progress in students' speaking skills throughout the duration of the program. The teacher noted that the program complemented traditional classroom instruction by offering authentic communicative practice, which helped bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical language use. The native speaker also observed that students became more engaged and were increasingly willing to initiate conversations as their confidence grew.

These observations align with previous research on the benefits of authentic language practice. Study by Namaziandost & Nasri (2019) found that interaction with native speakers provides students with opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in real-world contexts, enhancing their communicative competence and confidence. Similarly, a study by Dincer & Dariyemez (2020) highlighted that students participating in language exchange programs with native speakers demonstrated improved speaking skills and greater motivation to engage in English conversations. Furthermore, a study by Alberth (2023) supported the idea that authentic interactions with native speakers encourage more spontaneous communication and foster higher levels of student engagement and participation. These studies confirm that consistent exposure to native speakers not only improves language skills but also boosts students' willingness to actively engage in conversations.

Discussion

The study's findings underscore the significant contributions of speaking practice with native speakers to students' fluency and accuracy, aligning with Krashen's (1985) Input

Hypothesis, which emphasizes the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition. The real-time feedback and natural language models provided by the native speaker helped students internalize language patterns and improve their speaking proficiency, leading to increased fluency and accuracy. These interactions allowed students to engage with authentic language, which is essential for language development (Krashen, 1985).

The boost in students' confidence also highlights the importance of supportive learning environments, as interaction with the native speaker created a non-judgmental space where students felt safe to take risks and learn from their mistakes. This finding is in line with Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis, which stresses that meaningful communication, particularly in low-stress environments, is crucial for language learning. The supportive, interactive nature of the sessions allowed students to build confidence and become more willing to engage in conversations, further enhancing their language skills (Long, 1983).

In terms of practical implications for SMPN 1 Pamekasan, the study suggests that incorporating regular speaking practice with native speakers into the curriculum could greatly enhance students' speaking abilities. To maximize the benefits, the school could increase the frequency of such sessions to ensure continuous improvement. Additionally, integrating technology through video calls or language exchange platforms would allow more students to participate and extend the learning experience beyond the classroom. Finally, offering preparatory lessons that focus on building confidence and improving listening comprehension before practice sessions would help students better engage during interactions with native speakers, as recommended by previous research (Derakhshan et al., 2016). These strategies could provide a more comprehensive approach to improving students' speaking skills.

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that engaging in speaking practice with native speakers plays a crucial role in enhancing the speaking abilities of students at SMPN 1 Pamekasan. This improvement is particularly noticeable in areas such as fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and confidence. The interactive and authentic nature of communication with native speakers offers students a dynamic and practical method to develop their English-speaking skills beyond the conventional classroom environment. Additionally, the sessions provided students with opportunities to engage in real-life conversational situations, promoting cultural awareness and improving their ability to use English in meaningful and practical contexts. Although students initially faced challenges such as nervousness and difficulty understanding spoken English, they gradually adapted and showed significant progress, demonstrating the effectiveness of this approach. In summary, practicing with native speakers not only enhances students' linguistic capabilities but also boosts their confidence, equipping them for effective communication in both academic and real-world scenarios. This method shows great promise for broader application in language learning programs.

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