

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGLISH CONVERSATION HABITUATION TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILLS IN ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of English conversation habituation to improve students' speaking skills at Al Madina Elementary School. The research employed a classroom action research design involving 26 students. The intervention consisted of structured daily English conversations over several learning cycles. Data were collected through pre-tests, post-tests, observations, interviews, and questionnaires. The findings revealed significant improvement in students' fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence in speaking English. The study highlights the effectiveness of repeated English conversation practice in enhancing speaking abilities. It suggests that structured habituation can be an impactful strategy in elementary English language learning.

Keywords: English conversation, speaking skills, language habituation, elementary education.

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PENDAHULUAN

The ability to speak effectively is a fundamental skill in acquiring a second or foreign language, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. Speaking enables learners to communicate ideas, express emotions, and participate in meaningful interactions. It is not only about linguistic accuracy but also about fluency, confidence, and appropriateness within communicative contexts (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020; Nurzhanofa & Issimova, 2022). Speaking skills involve a range of elements including pronunciation,

vocabulary usage, grammatical structure, facial expressions, intonation, rhythm, and turn-taking mechanisms (Becker & Roos, 2021; Salixova, 2021). These complex features distinguish spoken language from written language and require specific instructional strategies to be effectively developed in classroom settings (Masuram & Sripada, 2020).

In Indonesia, English is considered a vital foreign language due to its global importance and its role in academic, social, and economic advancement (Zein et al., 2020). English education is now implemented across all levels, from



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elementary schools to higher education institutions. However, many students still struggle to communicate in English despite years of instruction. These challenges are attributed to limited exposure to English-speaking environments, lack of practice opportunities, and insufficient pedagogical approaches that promote active speaking (Al-Sibai, 2023; Rao, 2019).

The four primary language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—are interdependent and essential for comprehensive language proficiency. Speaking, in particular, is often identified as the most critical skill, as it directly reflects a learner's ability to use the language in real-time communication (Al-Jiboury, 2024; Miranda & Wahyudin, 2023). Yet, among these four skills, speaking is frequently the most challenging to master due to its spontaneous nature and the immediate cognitive processing it demands (Swari, 2022; Alrajafi et al., 2022). Moreover, traditional teaching methods that rely on memorization and repetition often fail to foster communicative

competence or build learner confidence (Rao, 2019; We, 2020).

Current research has shown that effective speaking instruction must move beyond rote learning toward communicative activities that engage learners in meaningful interaction (Robert & Meenakshi, 2022). Teachers are instrumental in this process, as they must design environments that encourage dialogue, self-expression, and the negotiation of meaning (Becker & Roos, 2021). The integration of conversation practice, storytelling, and task-based learning has proven to be effective in enhancing students' speaking performance (Masuram & Sripada, 2020; Swari, 2022; Alrajafi et al., 2022).

Despite the acknowledged importance of speaking skills, many Indonesian classrooms, especially at the elementary level, lack structured conversation programs that promote daily speaking habits. Observations at Al Madina Elementary School revealed a significant gap in students' ability to communicate in English due to the absence of consistent English-speaking activities and environments.



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Contributing factors include limited vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, minimal parental support, and inadequate curriculum design (Al-Sibai, 2023; Zein et al., 2020). These barriers underscore the urgent need for an effective and practical strategy to foster English speaking development in young learners.

One promising approach is the implementation of English conversation habituation, which emphasizes daily practice and routine exposure to English in natural contexts. Such habituation not only helps internalize language patterns but also builds learners' confidence and fluency over time (Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2020; Rao, 2019). This study aims to explore the impact of this method through structured implementation at Al Madina Elementary School. By addressing both instructional and environmental challenges, the research seeks to improve students' speaking proficiency and contribute to the development of more effective English teaching practices at the elementary level.

1. To what extent did the students' speaking skills improve after the implementation of English conversation habituation, as measured by pretest and posttest scores?

2. How was the situation when English conversation habituation was engaged in the class?

KAJIAN TEORETIK

A study titled "The Effect of Conversation Practice on Speaking Skills of EFL Learners" shows that structured conversation practice contributes significantly to the improvement of learners' speaking skills. Through consistent engagement in conversational activities, EFL students demonstrated enhanced fluency, better vocabulary usage, and more confidence in using English. The research suggests that creating daily opportunities for conversation allows students to internalize linguistic structures more naturally.

A study titled "Mengajar Bahasa Inggris di Era 5.0 untuk Generasi Z" emphasizes the importance of 21st-century skills as core competencies



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required for effective education in the digital era. Among these skills, communication is identified as a crucial component, alongside critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. The research highlights that communication is not only a fundamental language skill but also a vital life skill that must be nurtured through engaging and meaningful classroom practices. In the context of teaching English to young learners, such as Generation Z or Alpha students, incorporating interactive strategies like daily conversation habituation supports the development of this skill. The study suggests that to meet the demands of modern learners, English instruction must focus on creating active, student-centered speaking opportunities that promote both fluency and confidence.

Moreover, the research "Improving Speaking Skills through Task-Based Language Teaching" emphasizes that task-based instruction, particularly those incorporating conversation habituation, enables learners to practice language in real-life contexts. Students participating in task-based

speaking activities tend to be more engaged and perform better in spontaneous speaking situations. The study concludes that combining tasks with conversation routines leads to more meaningful learning experiences and measurable progress in oral communication.

In addition "The Role of Repetition in Language Learning," the researcher discusses how repeated exposure and rehearsal of language structures are essential in acquiring speaking fluency. Repetition, especially in a supportive classroom setting, allows students to become familiar with sentence patterns, reduce hesitation, and improve pronunciation. The findings reinforce the idea that habituation through repetition is a foundational method in language acquisition.

Furthermore the study "Enhancing Speaking Skills through Interactive Learning" explores how creating a communicative environment fosters active participation. By integrating conversation practices into interactive learning models, students are encouraged to express opinions,



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negotiate meaning, and develop social language skills. This approach supports the notion that learning is most effective when students are actively involved in meaningful communication rather than passive repetition.

Moreover the study about "The Impact of Teacher Feedback on Students' Speaking Skills" examines the role of teacher guidance during conversational activities. The study reveals that constructive feedback helps students identify their mistakes, refine their speaking strategies, and build self-confidence. When teachers provide regular, encouraging, and targeted feedback, students become more motivated to participate in speaking tasks and show improved performance over time.

Moreover, the study titled "Employing Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) Strategy to Improve Students' Reading Comprehension by Fuad Abdul Baqi" highlights the effectiveness of classroom action research cycles (planning, acting, observing, and reflecting) in improving students' skills through structured interventions. The

research demonstrates that continuous reflection and adaptation in each cycle contribute significantly to better learning outcomes. By systematically implementing these phases, the study ensured that instructional strategies were evaluated and improved based on real-time classroom observations and student responses, making the learning process more responsive and effective.

In conclusion repetitive English conversation habituation has a significant impact on improving the speaking skills of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students. Conversation practice encourages students to use the language actively in real-life contexts (task-based learning), reinforces understanding through repetition, and creates an interactive and communicative learning environment. Moreover, the involvement of teachers in providing constructive feedback has been proven to enhance students' confidence and accelerate their speaking skill development. Therefore, these five studies collectively affirm that continuous,



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interactive, and teacher-supported conversation strategies are an effective approach to developing students' speaking abilities, particularly at the elementary school level.

METODE PENELITIAN

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design based on the model of Kemmis and McTaggart, "The design of it was an action research by covering three cycles, and every cycle comprises five meetings. Planning, acting, observing, and reflecting were implemented in every cycle to get a clear data"(Baqi, 2014). The research was conducted at SD Al-Madina Inklusif Berkarakter, Serang, Banten, involving 26 students from grades 1 to 3 as participants.

A mixed-methods approach was used, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding. Quantitative data were gathered through pre-tests and post-tests to assess students' speaking abilities, focusing on five criteria: fluency, clarity, vocabulary, grammar, and interaction. The data were analyzed

using descriptive statistics and t-test to measure the improvement. Qualitative data were collected through classroom observations, interviews, and questionnaires to explore students' engagement, perceptions, and the classroom environment during the implementation of the English conversation program. The research applied two sorts of data collecting: qualitative and quantitative data. Observation, interview & kuesioner were done to gain qualitative data, while the quantitative data was gained through test (Baqi, 2014).

The intervention applied was English Conversation Habituation, a method in which students practiced structured conversations regularly using real-life themes (e.g., going to the zoo, weekend activities, classroom routines). Each learning session was divided into three stages: pre-conversation, while-conversation, and post-conversation, encouraging students to actively participate and build confidence in speaking English.

The Classroom Action Research was carried out in three



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cycles, and each cycle included the following stages:

□ Planning: The researcher collaborated with the English teacher to design lesson plans, select appropriate conversation topics, prepare instructional materials (e.g., visuals, prompts), and develop observation sheets and assessment tools. Pre-tests were also administered at this stage to establish baseline data.

□ Acting: The planned activities were implemented in the classroom. The researcher, who also functioned as the teacher, conducted conversation sessions in which students were guided through dialogue modeling, paired practice, and group presentations. Real-life topics were used to stimulate meaningful conversations and engagement.

□ Observing: During the implementation, the researcher and collaborator observed classroom activities, recorded student behavior, participation, and speaking performance. Observation sheets, field notes, and audio recordings were used to collect data on student

responses and classroom interactions.

□ Reflecting: After each cycle, the researcher and teacher analyzed the outcomes based on observation and test results. Strengths and weaknesses were identified, and necessary adjustments were made to improve the teaching strategy in the next cycle. This reflective process ensured continuous improvement in both teaching methods and student learning outcomes.

The data analysis used an interactive model (Miles & Huberman), involving data reduction, data display, and verification, allowing the researcher to draw conclusions systematically. The combination of qualitative insights and quantitative measurements provided a comprehensive evaluation of how English conversation habituation affected students' speaking skills in a primary school setting.

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

The implementation of English Conversation Habituation at SD Al-Madina significantly improved



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students' speaking skills over three cycles of Classroom Action Research. The improvement was measured using pre-tests and post-tests, alongside observations, interviews, and questionnaires.

In Cycle 1, many students were still hesitant to speak and relied heavily on memorization. The average post-test score was 65.7, and participation remained low. Observational data showed that students lacked confidence, and their vocabulary and pronunciation were limited.

The Result of Pre-Test compared with Post-Test in Cycle 1

Elemenets	The Main Score	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Fluency	68.5	74.5
Clarity	58.5	65
Vocabulary	61.5	66.5
Grammar	55	60
Interaction	62	67

From the results of the post-test in Cycle 1, 20 students scored above or equal to 78, which corresponds to the Passing Grade (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal / KKM) for elementary school set at 78. This indicates that approximately 77% of the students passed the passing grade.

Specifically, two students scored 73.3, two students scored 73.6, three students scored 73.4, and one student scored 77.7. The highest score recorded was 77.7, and the lowest score was 64.1. In comparison, during the pre-test, only 7 students, or approximately 27%, scored above or equal to 70, indicating a significant improvement in students' speaking performance after the implementation of English conversation habituation.

In Cycle 2, students began to engage more actively. They demonstrated better fluency, vocabulary recall, and interaction during the conversation practices. The average post-test score increased to 74.6, indicating moderate improvement. The use of real-life conversation themes, repetition, and peer interaction contributed positively to their progress.

The Result of Post-Test Cycle 1 compared with Post-Test in Cycle 2

Elemenets	The Main Score		
	Preliminary reserach	Post - Test Cycle 1	Post Test Cycle 2
Fluency	60	74.5	76,7



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Clarity	53	65	68,3
Vocabula ry	61.5	66.5	73,3
Grammar	48.1	60	61,9
Interactio n	55.2	67	70,3

Referring to the results of the post-test in Cycle 2, there were 20 out of 26 students who scored above or equal to 78. According to the Minimum Passing Criteria (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal / KKM) for the class, which is set at 78, this means that approximately 77% of the students passed the passing grade. The highest score recorded was 87, and the lowest score was 57. The students' scores in the second cycle showed an increase compared to the post-test scores in Cycle 1, where only 14 out of 26 students, or approximately 54%, scored above or equal to 70. However, the target of 80% of students achieving the passing grade has not yet been met.

In Cycle 3, students showed substantial development in all assessed areas: fluency, clarity, vocabulary, grammar, and interaction. The final post-test average rose to 85.6, surpassing the minimum competency threshold. Students

could express ideas more independently and confidently. The classroom atmosphere also became more interactive, and students showed enthusiasm during speaking activities.

The Result of Post-Test in Cycle 3 compared with post-Test in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

Elemenets	The Main Score			
	Preliminary reserach	Post- Test Cycle 1	Post Test Cycle 2	Post Test Cycle 3
Fluency	60	74.5	76,7	80.7
Clarity	53	65	68,3	78.5
Vocabulary	61.5	66.5	73,3	78.3
Grammar	48.1	60	61,9	74.7
Interaction	55.2	67	70,3	80.3

Based on the result of the post-test in Cycle 3, there were 21 out of 26 students (80%) who scored equal to or above 78, referring to the Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) for speaking skills. This indicates that the class successfully achieved the target of 75% of students reaching the passing grade. The highest score obtained was 90, and the lowest was 57, showing a significant improvement compared to the post-test results in Cycle 2.

Quantitative Results:



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The average student speaking score improved significantly across the three cycles. For example, from a pretest average of 54.8 to a posttest average of 75.3 in the third cycle. Key areas of improvement included fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

Qualitative Findings

The qualitative data in this study were obtained through classroom observation, interviews with teachers and students, and questionnaires distributed to both groups. These sources provided a comprehensive understanding of the implementation process and the students' engagement during the English conversation habituation activities.

Based on the observation sheet conducted on April 2, 2025, the researcher noted that the implementation of English conversation habituation was partially consistent. The teacher demonstrated the conversation model on the board and guided students to repeat the expressions together, which reflects an effort to provide scaffolding in speaking practice. However, the students' paired practice appeared

limited, and the activities were not always conducted regularly according to schedule. These indicators received a majority of low to moderate score, indicating that while efforts were made, consistent habituation had not yet been fully established.

In terms of student response, some students showed enthusiasm and engagement, with a few willing to speak in English, especially during guided activities. Yet, the level of confidence and spontaneity was still relatively low. The observation also highlighted that improvements in fluency were present but not evenly distributed across all students.

The classroom environment was only moderately supportive of English usage. While the teacher provided motivation and gave positive feedback, the use of English was not fully integrated into the classroom setting. For example, there were limited visual aids, English labels, or consistent exposure to English outside the structured activities. This suggests that although the teacher's role was constructive, the environment still lacked full immersion



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elements essential for language habituation.

Data from interviews supported these findings. The teacher admitted challenges in maintaining student consistency and acknowledged that time constraints and varying student motivation levels made daily conversation practice difficult. Several students expressed that they enjoyed the activities but felt shy or unconfident speaking in front of peers.

Responses from the student and teacher questionnaires further confirmed the mixed levels of engagement and effectiveness. While a majority of students agreed that the conversation activities helped them speak better, only a few reported feeling confident speaking English independently. Teachers indicated that the program was beneficial but required more structure, materials, and parental support to sustain it.

Overall, the qualitative data suggest that while the implementation of English conversation habituation showed positive initial outcomes, it still faced several limitations in consistency, student participation, and environmental support. These

findings highlight the need for strengthening the routine, increasing speaking opportunities, and enhancing the classroom's English-rich atmosphere to achieve more significant speaking skill improvements.

SIMPULAN

The implementation of English conversation habituation significantly improved the students' speaking skills at SD Al Madina. The consistent use of English through structured conversations increased fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence. These results suggest that conversation habituation is a practical and effective method for improving speaking skills in elementary education settings.

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