

Sustained Speaking Practice through Weekly Routines: A Pedagogical Framework for Improving Oral Communication Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of weekly structured speaking routines (WSR) on the improvement of students' oral communication skills in an English language learning context. The primary aim was to assess whether these routines could enhance students' speaking fluency, confidence, and reduce speaking anxiety. A quasi-experimental design was employed, with pre-test and post-test assessments used to measure speaking proficiency before and after the intervention. Observational notes and surveys were also collected to provide qualitative insights into the students' experiences. The results indicated that weekly speaking routines significantly increased students' confidence in speaking English, with notable reductions in anxiety. Students reported enjoying the speaking activities, which encouraged active participation and peer interactions, fostering a more collaborative and supportive learning environment. However, while fluency improvements were acknowledged, the progress was less pronounced, indicating the need for additional fluency-focused interventions. The study found that structured speaking tasks helped students engage in discussions, express opinions, and use more complex language structures. This research contributes to the field by highlighting the importance of consistent, routine-based speaking practices in second language acquisition. It provides valuable insights for educators seeking to improve oral communication skills through structured speaking routines. Future research could focus on refining these routines to address specific challenges in fluency development and investigate long-term impacts on students' language proficiency.

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1. Introduction

Effective oral communication is a cornerstone of language acquisition and an

essential skill for academic, professional, and personal success in today's globalized world. Among the four main skills of language learning—listening, speaking, reading, and

writing—speaking is often considered the most challenging to master, particularly in second language acquisition. While significant attention has been devoted to reading and writing in many language programs, speaking, despite being a key component of communication, often remains neglected or underdeveloped in classroom settings (Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz, 2021; Nag et al., 2019). A major reason for this is that speaking requires not only linguistic proficiency but also the ability to navigate sociocultural contexts, overcome anxiety, and engage in spontaneous conversation (Burns, 2019; Shafiee Rad, 2024). These challenges underscore the importance of creating educational approaches that provide learners with regular, meaningful opportunities to practice speaking (Ismail, 2017a, 2017b, 2019).

Recent research has highlighted the need for consistent and sustained speaking practice in second language learning. According to Leung & Valdés (2019); O'Connor & Michaels (2019); Sharif Matthews & López (2019), one of the most effective ways to improve speaking skills is through frequent practice, as language learners need repeated exposure and engagement with the language to develop fluency. Studies have shown that learners who have access to consistent speaking opportunities tend to perform better in oral assessments, exhibit greater confidence, and are more likely to internalize the language structures they are learning (Estaji & Farahanynia, 2019; Ozdemir & Papi, 2022; Suzukida, 2024). However, in many educational settings, particularly in large classrooms with limited interaction time, speaking practice tends to be irregular and fragmented. This inconsistency hinders the development of proficiency in oral communication and makes it difficult for students to maintain steady progress in speaking.

To address this issue, researchers have advocated for the implementation of structured and routine-based approaches to speaking practice. By incorporating speaking activities into regular, predictable classroom

routines, students are provided with consistent opportunities to engage in authentic language use. This approach not only fosters regular practice but also promotes the habit of speaking in a more systematic and focused manner. Scholars such as Adem & Berkessa (2022); Amiruddin et al. (2023; Emery et al. (2021) and Zhou et al. (2019) have suggested that a well-structured pedagogical framework for speaking can significantly enhance students' speaking skills, as it allows them to focus on different aspects of oral communication and work through their speaking challenges in a supportive environment. This emphasis on routine-based speaking practices reflects a broader pedagogical shift toward active, learner-centered teaching that prioritizes student engagement and autonomy in language learning.

Despite the theoretical benefits of routine-based speaking, there remains a significant gap in practical applications of this approach, particularly within specific educational contexts. In many language programs, especially those at the tertiary level, the implementation of consistent speaking practice is often hindered by curriculum constraints, large class sizes, and a lack of dedicated speaking-focused instructional time. Furthermore, students in many English language programs are not provided with enough opportunities for sustained practice that could lead to noticeable improvements in their oral communication skills. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the potential of a routine-based pedagogical framework for improving oral communication skills, focusing specifically on the primary school teacher education program at Muhammadiyah University of Enrekang.

The primary research problem addressed by this study is whether the integration of structured, weekly speaking routines can lead to significant improvements in students' oral communication skills. While the importance of sustained speaking practice is well established in the literature, the challenge remains in how best to structure such

routines within the constraints of a formal language curriculum. The study seeks to answer the following question: Can regular, predictable speaking activities integrated into the weekly curriculum lead to enhanced speaking fluency and overall communication proficiency in language learners? Moreover, this research aims to investigate the broader implications of such an approach for language programs at universities, particularly in settings where speaking practice is often limited.

In response to these challenges, this study proposes a pedagogical framework centered around weekly speaking routines that can be easily integrated into existing primary school teacher education programs at Muhammadiyah University of Enrekang. This framework emphasizes the use of structured speaking tasks, both individual and group-based, that are designed to provide students with consistent opportunities to practice speaking in a low-pressure environment. Drawing on insights from previous studies, this approach aims to address several common barriers to effective speaking practice, including a lack of time for speaking activities, students' fear of making mistakes, and limited exposure to real-life conversational settings (Ahkam et al., 2024; Alvarez et al., 2024; Al-Wossabi, 2024). By providing a consistent structure for speaking practice, this framework seeks to help students build confidence, develop their communicative competence, and ultimately improve their speaking skills over time (Byram, 2020; Menggo et al., 2019).

To date, much of the literature on speaking practice in second language acquisition has focused on either theoretical models or isolated classroom interventions. However, there is a need for more empirical studies that investigate the effectiveness of routine-based speaking activities in diverse educational contexts. The literature surrounding speaking practice in teacher education suggests that students benefit from consistent speaking opportunities, but there is limited research specifically examining the impact of weekly, structured speaking routines within formal language

programs at the university level. Additionally, while many studies have focused on the effectiveness of speaking practice in language centers or informal settings, fewer studies have explored how routine-based speaking can be effectively integrated into the regular curriculum in formal educational institutions. This research seeks to bridge this gap by providing a detailed investigation into how a routine-based speaking framework can be implemented and what outcomes it might produce in the context of primary school teacher education at Muhammadiyah University of Enrekang.

The purpose of this study is to explore the potential of a routine-based speaking framework to improve oral communication skills among students in the primary school teacher education program at Muhammadiyah University of Enrekang. This research is novel in that it adapts existing pedagogical principles of sustained practice to the specific needs of university students in Indonesia, a context where English language instruction is often constrained by institutional and pedagogical factors. By introducing structured speaking routines, this study aims to provide students with the opportunity to engage in meaningful, consistent speaking practice that can significantly enhance their communicative competence. The research also seeks to contribute to the broader field of second language pedagogy by providing evidence-based recommendations for incorporating speaking practice into regular language learning routines at the university level.

This study examined whether the integration of weekly, structured speaking routines into the English language program at Muhammadiyah University of Enrekang could improve students' oral communication skills. The hypothesis was that students who engaged in weekly structured speaking routines would show a significant improvement in their speaking fluency and overall communicative competence compared to those who did not participate in such routines. By filling the gap in the

literature regarding routine-based speaking practices in university language programs, the study aimed to provide valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to enhance the speaking skills of language learners. Furthermore, the research offered a practical framework that could be adapted and implemented in other educational contexts where students faced challenges in developing their speaking abilities due to a lack of regular speaking opportunities.

2. Material and Methods

2.1 Research Design

This study utilized a quasi-experimental design, employing both pre-test and post-test assessments to measure the impact of the weekly structured speaking routines on students' oral communication skills. This design was chosen to assess the effectiveness of the speaking routine intervention within the constraints of an existing educational program, where it was not possible to randomly assign students to experimental and control groups. The quasi-experimental design allowed for a comparison of students' speaking proficiency before and after the intervention.

The experimental group participated in weekly structured speaking tasks as part of their English language curriculum. These tasks included activities such as debates, presentations, and role-playing exercises, all designed to encourage active participation and facilitate the development of speaking skills. There was no control group in this study, and all participants followed the structured speaking routine.

2.2 Participants

The participants in this study were second-semester students enrolled in the Primary School Teacher Education program at Muhammadiyah University of Enrekang. A total of 30 students participated in the study, all of whom were enrolled in the English language education component of their program. The students were selected through convenience sampling, and their participation was voluntary. The participants

had varying levels of proficiency in English, with most students having intermediate proficiency based on their prior coursework.

2.3 Data Collection

Data collection in this study involved both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the speaking routine. The following data collection methods were used:

Pre-test and Post-test. The primary data collection tools for this study were pre-test and post-test assessments designed to assess students' speaking fluency and overall oral communication skills. The pre-test was administered at the beginning of the semester, before the intervention, and the post-test was administered at the end of the semester, after the students had completed the weekly speaking routines. Both tests involved individual speaking tasks, including tasks such as oral presentations, answering questions, and engaging in discussions on predefined topics. The tests were scored using a rubric that assessed fluency, pronunciation, coherence, vocabulary, and overall communication effectiveness.

Observational Notes. To supplement the test results, observational notes were taken during each session of the speaking routines. The researcher observed the students' participation, engagement, and confidence during the activities. This provided qualitative data regarding the students' behavior, attitudes, and comfort level while speaking in English.

Surveys. A survey was administered to all participants at the end of the semester to assess students' attitudes toward speaking practice, their perceived improvements in oral communication skills, and their opinions on the effectiveness of the weekly speaking routines. The survey included both closed-ended questions (e.g., Likert scale items) and open-ended questions, allowing students to provide more detailed responses.

2.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the pre-test and post-test assessments were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize students' performance on the speaking tests, including measures of central tendency (mean) and variability (standard deviation). Inferential statistics, specifically paired sample t-tests, were used to compare pre-test and post-test scores within the experimental group. This analysis aimed to determine whether there were statistically significant differences in speaking proficiency within the group over the course of the study.

The qualitative data from the observational notes and surveys were analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns and themes related to students' experiences with the speaking routines, their perceptions of their speaking abilities, and the challenges they encountered during the process.

3. Results

3.1 Speaking Practice Through Weekly Routines

The descriptive analysis of the pre-test and post-test assessments revealed

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Pre-test and Post-test Scores (Main Components)

Test Components	Variable	Pre-Test Mean	Standard Deviation (Pre-Test)	Post-Test Mean	Standard Deviation (Post-Test)
Presentation Skills	Presentation Fluency	2.77	0.90	4.20	0.76
	Presentation Pronunciation	2.47	0.90	3.80	0.76
	Presentation Coherence	2.80	1.00	4.20	0.85
	Presentation Vocabulary	2.90	0.92	4.30	0.70
	Presentation Communication Effectiveness	2.33	1.03	3.90	0.84
Discussion Skills	Discussion Participation	2.77	0.86	4.20	0.81
	Discussion Engagement	2.40	0.93	4.00	0.79
	Discussion Confidence	2.43	1.01	4.10	0.88
	Discussion Coherence	2.77	0.99	4.10	0.79
Q&A Skills	Q&A Fluency	2.53	0.94	4.17	0.79
	Q&A Answer Accuracy	2.53	0.79	4.17	0.79
	Q&A Confidence	2.43	1.01	4.10	0.88
	Q&A Engagement	2.53	0.94	4.17	0.79

Table 1 summarizes the mean scores and standard deviations for key speaking components, including presentation skills, discussion skills, and Q&A skills, measured in both the pre-test and post-test. Presentation

significant improvements in students' oral communication skills across various components. This section outlines the findings, focusing on the mean scores and standard deviations for both the pre-test and post-test data, which highlight improvements in fluency, pronunciation, coherence, vocabulary, communication effectiveness, confidence, participation, and Q&A interaction.

The results are presented in two main tables: one for the main components and the other for the ratings. Both tables summarize the data based on the mean scores and standard deviations, allowing for a clear understanding of the students' performance across both tests. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics for key components of the students' speaking performance, including presentation fluency, pronunciation, coherence, vocabulary, communication effectiveness, discussion participation, engagement, confidence, and Q&A performance. The pre-test and post-test mean scores, along with their standard deviations, indicate how the students' abilities evolved after participating in the weekly speaking routines.

Skills: The mean scores for presentation fluency increased from 2.77 in the pre-test to 4.20 in the post-test, demonstrating a substantial improvement in fluency. Similarly, vocabulary and communication

effectiveness also showed notable improvements, indicating that students were able to express themselves more effectively by the end of the program. Discussion Skills: Discussion participation, engagement, and confidence all improved significantly. For example, discussion participation rose from 2.77 to 4.20, suggesting that students became more involved in discussions after the weekly routines. Q&A Skills: The Q&A performance was another area where students showed substantial growth,

particularly in fluency, answer accuracy, and engagement, all of which saw large increases from the pre-test to the post-test.

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for the ratings given to various speaking components, including fluency, pronunciation, coherence, vocabulary, communication effectiveness, confidence, engagement, participation, and Q&A interaction. These ratings reflect the overall assessment of the students' speaking skills, providing a clearer view of their progress.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics for Pre-test and Post-test Ratings

Rating Components	Pre-test Mean	SD (Pre-test)	Post-test Mean	SD (Post-test)
Fluency	2.77	0.90	4.20	0.76
Pronunciation	2.47	0.90	3.80	0.76
Coherence	2.80	1.00	4.20	0.85
Vocabulary	2.90	0.92	4.30	0.70
Communication Effectiveness	2.33	1.03	3.90	0.84
Confidence	2.43	1.01	4.10	0.88
Engagement	2.40	0.93	4.00	0.79
Participation	2.77	0.86	4.20	0.81
Q&A Interaction	2.53	0.94	4.17	0.79

Table 2 focuses on the ratings for various speaking components, providing a clearer insight into how students performed in specific areas such as fluency, pronunciation, coherence, vocabulary, communication effectiveness, confidence, engagement, participation, and Q&A interaction. Fluency and Pronunciation Ratings: There was a substantial improvement in the fluency rating, which increased from 2.77 to 4.20, indicating that students became much more confident and fluid in their speaking. Similarly, the pronunciation rating increased from 2.47 to 3.80, reflecting better articulation of words and clearer speech. Coherence and Vocabulary: The coherence rating, indicating how well students organized their ideas, improved from 2.80 to 4.20, showing significant progress in structuring their responses. Vocabulary also saw a noticeable improvement from 2.90 to 4.30, suggesting that students enriched their lexical resource.

Communication Effectiveness and Confidence: Communication effectiveness improved from 2.33 to 3.90, highlighting that

students were able to convey their ideas more clearly and effectively after participating in the weekly routines. The confidence rating also showed a significant increase, from 2.43 to 4.10, which suggests that students became more self-assured in their speaking abilities. Engagement and Participation: The engagement and participation ratings increased significantly, with participation rising from 2.77 to 4.20, demonstrating that students were more actively involved in discussions and speaking activities by the end of the program. Q&A Interaction: Lastly, the Q&A interaction rating showed notable improvement, moving from 2.53 to 4.17, indicating that students became more adept at engaging in spontaneous question-and-answer sessions.

To visually represent the improvements in students' speaking abilities, Figure 1 provides a bar chart comparing the mean scores for each key component in the pre-test and post-test. The chart highlights the areas with the most significant improvements, such as fluency,

pronunciation, vocabulary, and Q&A interaction.

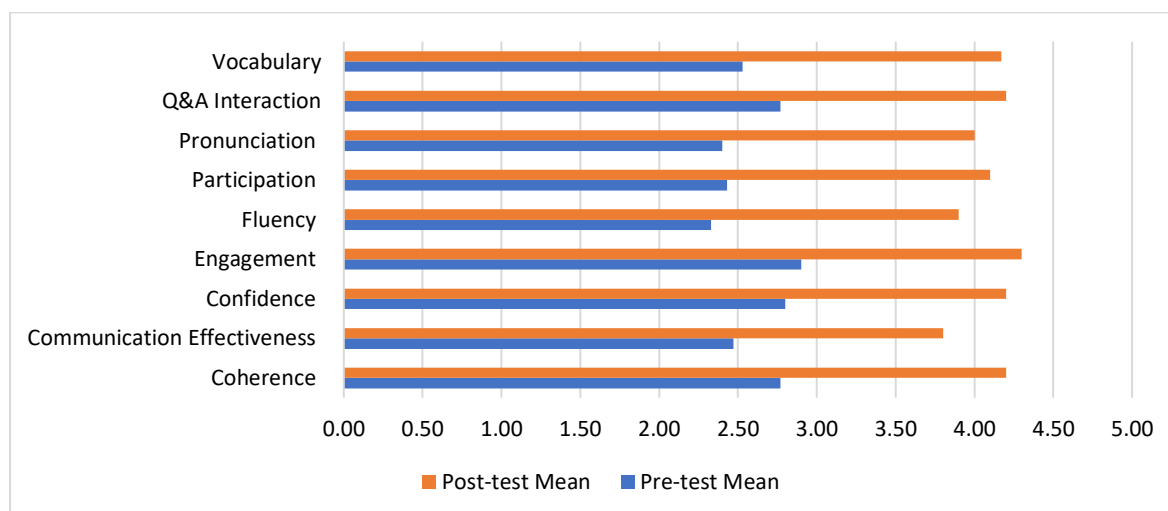


Figure 1 Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Mean Scores

The descriptive statistics indicate a general improvement across all measured components in both the pre-test and post-test assessments. Fluency and confidence ratings saw the most significant increase, suggesting that the weekly speaking routines successfully addressed these areas, making students more comfortable and self-assured when speaking. Improvements were also observed in Q&A skills and discussion

engagement, indicating that students not only enhanced their individual speaking skills but also their ability to interact with peers in group discussions and question-answer sessions. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and communication effectiveness also showed steady improvements, reinforcing the idea that regular speaking practice can lead to holistic development in language skills.

Table 3 Paired *t*-test results, $p < 0.05$.

Test	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	p.
Pre-test	2.5936	.19142	16	-55.744	.000
Post-test	4.1036	.14464	16		

The results of the paired sample *t*-test indicate a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. Specifically, the *t*-statistic for this analysis is -55.744, which is significantly negative, indicating that the post-test scores are consistently higher than the pre-test scores.

The mean scores for the pre-test and post-test are 2.5936 and 4.1036, respectively. This indicates a noticeable improvement in students' performance from the pre-test to the post-test. The standard deviations for the pre-test (0.19142) and post-test (0.14464) are relatively low,

suggesting that the students' scores were consistent.

The degrees of freedom (df) are 16, and the *p*-value is 0.000, which is much smaller than the conventional significance level of 0.05. This strongly suggests that the improvement from the pre-test to the post-test is statistically significant.

These results provide strong evidence that the intervention (weekly speaking routines) had a significant positive impact on students' speaking proficiency. Specifically, the improvement in students' performance across various speaking components, including fluency, pronunciation, and

communication effectiveness, was statistically significant. These results highlight the effectiveness of integrating structured, routine-based speaking activities into language learning programs. The data suggests that regular speaking practice fosters improvement in a wide range of oral communication skills, including fluency, confidence, vocabulary, and interaction skills.

3.2 Findings from Observations

The thematic analysis of the observational and survey data revealed four central themes that were crucial to understanding the students' experiences during the speaking routines. These themes provide insights into students' progress in speaking skills, their perceptions of their abilities, and the challenges they encountered throughout the intervention.

Increased Confidence. A prominent theme observed throughout the speaking routines was the significant increase in students' self-confidence. Initially, many students exhibited hesitation in speaking and participating in class discussions. However, as the weekly speaking routines progressed, students gradually became more comfortable speaking in front of their peers. This increased self-assurance was especially noticeable in their willingness to engage in conversations, ask questions, and contribute more actively during group discussions. The confidence boost appeared to be directly linked to the consistent speaking practice, which helped students overcome their initial anxiety.

Active Participation. Another key theme was the increased active participation of students, particularly those who had been more passive at the beginning of the study. Over time, these students became more involved in discussions, asking questions, offering their opinions, and contributing more significantly to group conversations. This transformation was particularly evident after several sessions, where students appeared more comfortable participating in a variety of speaking activities. The regular, structured speaking practice seemed to

encourage students to take on more active roles, which in turn promoted a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment.

Engagement in Discussions. Students who had initially been less engaged in discussions demonstrated notable changes in their involvement. These students gradually felt more comfortable contributing their ideas, leading to more open and collaborative dialogues with their classmates. The shift from initial disengagement to active participation highlighted the positive impact that the weekly speaking routines had on fostering a more inclusive and participatory classroom atmosphere. As students became more comfortable speaking in class, they were able to engage in more in-depth and meaningful discussions.

Peer Interaction. A significant increase in peer interaction was observed throughout the speaking sessions. Many students who were previously more reserved began to assist their peers in understanding the topics better and provided support during group activities. This improvement reflected not only enhanced speaking skills but also a growth in students' social and teamwork capabilities. Peer interaction, facilitated by the group-based speaking tasks, contributed to the development of a supportive classroom community where students were more likely to help each other succeed.

Memorable Classroom Changes. A particularly notable change was the increase in active participation, especially among students who had previously been quiet or reserved. Students such as CA, WRRJ, MZ, and IN initially struggled to contribute to class discussions, but over time, they became more vocal, contributing their opinions and encouraging their peers to share their thoughts. This shift in behavior underscores the effectiveness of the structured speaking routines in helping students overcome anxiety and develop confidence in their speaking abilities.

One memorable session focused on a debate about the impact of technology on education. At the outset of the debate, many

students were unsure of how to structure their arguments or express their viewpoints clearly. However, as the weekly routines continued, students like NM, who had initially struggled with public speaking, became more articulate and confident. The classroom atmosphere was charged with energy as students exchanged ideas, asked questions, and debated with one another. These activities not only improved their speaking abilities but also encouraged the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which were further enhanced through peer interactions and debates.

Positive Shifts in Learning Environment.
Even those students who had been less vocal

in the past started to take more risks in their learning. They experimented with new vocabulary, incorporated complex sentence structures, and engaged in spontaneous conversations. This marked improvement highlights the positive impact of the weekly speaking routines, where learning was viewed as a collective and supportive effort rather than an individual task. The shift from hesitation to active engagement demonstrated that the speaking routines fostered a positive learning environment conducive to student growth.

3.3 Response of weekly speaking routines (WSR) experiment

Table 4 Overall Mean with SD on the students' *Response of weekly speaking routines (WSR)*

Statements	Mean Score	Standard Deviation (SD)	Perception
1. I feel more confident speaking in English now compared to the beginning of the semester.	4.17	.913	A
2. The weekly speaking routines have helped me improve my speaking fluency.	3.93	.868	N
3. I find the speaking activities in class enjoyable and engaging.	4.10	.759	A
4. I believe that regular speaking practice is essential for language proficiency.	3.90	.712	N
5. I feel less anxious when speaking in front of others.	4.00	.643	A

Description: SD (Strongly Disagree): 1.00 - 1.99; D (Disagree): 2.00 - 2.99; N (Neutral): 3.00 - 3.99; A (Agree): 4.00 - 4.99; SA (Strongly Agree): 5.00

The table presents the mean scores, standard deviations, and corresponding perceptions for five key statements related to students' experiences with the speaking routines. Confidence in Speaking. *The statement "I feel more confident speaking in English now compared to the beginning of the semester"* showed a mean score of 4.17, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.913, categorizing the response under the Agree (A) perception. This indicates that students felt a noticeable increase in confidence in their speaking abilities over the course of the semester. This result underscores the positive effect of the weekly speaking routines on students' self-assurance when speaking English. *Fluency Improvement.* Regarding the statement *"The weekly speaking routines have helped me*

improve my speaking fluency," the mean score was 3.93 with a standard deviation of 0.868. The perception here was categorized as Neutral (N), indicating that while students acknowledged the benefit of the routines on their fluency, the overall impact was not as pronounced as on other aspects such as confidence. This may suggest that some students still faced challenges in achieving greater fluency despite the regular practice.

Enjoyment of Speaking Activities. For the statement *"I find the speaking activities in class enjoyable and engaging,"* the mean score was 4.10 and the standard deviation was 0.759, with the perception categorized as Agree (A). This suggests that students found the speaking activities to be both enjoyable and motivating, a critical factor for sustaining engagement in language practice. The high

level of enjoyment is likely to have contributed positively to the overall success of the speaking routines. *Importance of Routine Practice.* The statement "*I believe that regular speaking practice is essential for language proficiency*" showed a mean score of 3.90 with a standard deviation of 0.712, falling under the Neutral (N) perception. While students generally agreed with the importance of routine practice for language proficiency, the neutral perception suggests some ambiguity regarding the effectiveness of the weekly speaking routines in reinforcing this belief. Some students may still require more structured interventions or clearer guidance on how to integrate these routines into their broader language learning processes.

Reduced Anxiety in Speaking. Lastly, the statement "*I feel less anxious when speaking in front of others*" yielded a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.643, with a perception of Agree (A). This result highlights that, overall, students experienced a reduction in speaking anxiety due to the weekly routines. The consistent exposure to speaking activities in a supportive environment likely contributed to greater comfort and reduced fear of speaking in front of others, an essential factor in fostering oral communication skills.

In addition to the quantitative data, students provided open-ended responses, offering valuable insights into the improvements in their speaking skills, challenges faced, and suggestions for further enhancement. These qualitative responses further corroborate the quantitative findings, shedding light on the specific areas where students experienced growth and the ongoing difficulties they encountered.

Improvements in Speaking Skills. Students reported significant improvements in various aspects of speaking, with many noting enhanced fluency, vocabulary usage, and confidence. For example, Student 1 mentioned that their fluency and vocabulary usage improved, while Student 3 indicated an increased ability to speak without hesitation. Additionally, several students highlighted improvements in pronunciation and the use

of complex sentences, underscoring the benefits of regular speaking practice.

Challenges Faced. Despite the positive changes, students also faced challenges, including difficulty with vocabulary recall and hesitation while speaking. For instance, Student 2 mentioned still feeling nervous in group discussions, while Student 7 highlighted trouble speaking without hesitation. Pronunciation and grammar accuracy were also common challenges for many students, suggesting that focused practice in these areas could further improve their speaking skills.

Suggestions for Improvement. Several students provided suggestions for improving the weekly speaking routines. Common recommendations included more spontaneous speaking exercises, small group discussions, and pronunciation practice. Students also expressed a desire for more interactive and real-life speaking opportunities, such as mock presentations and peer evaluations. These suggestions align with the findings from the quantitative data, particularly in the areas of fluency improvement and anxiety reduction, indicating that students would benefit from more dynamic and varied speaking tasks.

4. Discussion

The results from the weekly speaking routines (WSR) experiment provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of structured, routine-based speaking practices in enhancing students' oral communication skills. Drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data, this section discusses the key findings in relation to the research objectives and theoretical frameworks outlined in the introduction.

Confidence in Speaking

A prominent theme observed throughout the study was the significant increase in students' confidence when speaking English. The quantitative data showed a mean score of 4.17 (Agree), indicating that the majority of students reported feeling more confident speaking in English compared to the beginning of the

semester. This finding is consistent with previous studies that highlight the role of consistent speaking practice in reducing language anxiety and improving students' confidence in their speaking abilities Leung & Valdés (2019); O'Connor & Michaels (2019); Sharif Matthews & López (2019). In particular, the weekly routines allowed students to practice speaking in a low-pressure environment, which gradually helped them overcome their initial hesitation.

The increase in confidence observed in this study mirrors findings from (Byram, 2020; Menggo et al., 2019), who emphasized the importance of creating environments where students are given regular opportunities to speak. These routines, which incorporated both individual and group-based tasks, fostered a space where students felt more comfortable taking risks in their language production, which, in turn, led to improvements in their fluency and communicative competence. This shift in behavior reflects the broader pedagogical shift toward active, learner-centered teaching that encourages engagement and student autonomy (Adem & Berkessa, 2022; Amiruddin et al., 2023; Emery et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2019).

Fluency and Speaking Skills Development

Fluency improvement, although acknowledged by students, did not show the same level of consensus as confidence, with a mean score of 3.93 (Neutral) for the statement "The weekly speaking routines have helped me improve my speaking fluency." While students recognized the positive effects of regular speaking routines, many still faced challenges in achieving greater fluency. The relatively low standard deviation (0.868) suggests that, although fluency improvements were reported, the impact was less pronounced for some students.

This finding aligns with the literature on language fluency, where sustained practice can lead to incremental improvements over time but may require more focused interventions to make

substantial progress (Estaji & Farahanynia, 2019; Ozdemir & Papi, 2022; Suzukida, 2024). Despite these challenges, the improvement in fluency observed in some students highlights the potential of routine-based practices to foster speaking skills, but it also points to the need for continued emphasis on specific fluency-building exercises, such as spontaneous speech tasks, which could further enhance fluency development.

Enjoyment and Engagement in Speaking Activities

Another noteworthy finding is the high level of student enjoyment in the speaking activities, with a mean score of 4.10 (Agree) for the statement "I find the speaking activities in class enjoyable and engaging." This finding reinforces the importance of maintaining student engagement in language learning activities, as enjoyment plays a crucial role in sustaining motivation (Lamb, 2017; Nida, 1956; Sun, 2023). The structured, yet varied, nature of the weekly speaking routines seemed to make the tasks more appealing to students, as they were encouraged to explore different modes of speaking, including debates, presentations, and role-playing exercises.

The engaging nature of the activities helped create an interactive learning environment, where students were not only practicing their speaking skills but also actively collaborating with peers. This collaborative aspect is crucial, as it promotes peer learning and fosters a sense of community in the classroom, which can further enhance motivation and participation (Tseng & Kuo, 2014; Webb, 2009). The engagement levels noted in this study suggest that routine-based speaking tasks, when carefully designed to be interactive and engaging, can significantly improve the quality of students' language practice.

Importance of Regular Speaking Practice

The statement "I believe that regular speaking practice is essential for language proficiency" yielded a mean score of 3.90

(Neutral), which suggests that students recognize the importance of consistent speaking practice but may still have some reservations about its effectiveness. This perception could stem from the fact that students often encounter challenges in fully integrating routine speaking practices into their broader language learning strategies. The relatively lower rating indicates that while students acknowledge the importance of practice, they may not fully understand how to optimize the speaking routines for maximum language development.

This finding is consistent with the challenges outlined by Leung & Valdés (2019); O'Connor & Michaels (2019); Sharif Matthews & López (2019), who noted that even though learners recognize the significance of speaking practice, they often struggle to apply it in a consistent and purposeful manner. In this study, students expressed a desire for more structured guidance on how to integrate speaking practice with other areas of language learning, such as grammar and vocabulary. This suggests that while the routines provided valuable speaking practice, further alignment between speaking tasks and overall language development goals could help bridge this gap (Timpe-Laughlin et al., 2022).

Reduced Anxiety in Speaking

Finally, the data revealed that students felt less anxious when speaking in front of others, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.00 (Agree) for the statement "I feel less anxious when speaking in front of others." This reduction in anxiety is a key finding, as it underscores the effectiveness of the weekly speaking routines in providing a supportive environment for students to practice speaking without the fear of making mistakes. Previous research has demonstrated that consistent practice in a low-stakes environment can significantly reduce speaking anxiety and foster a more comfortable classroom atmosphere (Estaji & Farahanynia, 2019; Ozdemir & Papi, 2022).

The results of this study support these claims, with students noting that the weekly

routines helped them feel more at ease when engaging in discussions and activities. This reduction in anxiety is critical, as it encourages students to take risks in their speaking and engage in more spontaneous conversation, which is essential for developing fluency and communicative competence.

Qualitative Insights: Student Feedback

The qualitative data from the open-ended responses provided additional insights into the specific areas where students experienced growth and the challenges they faced. Many students reported improvements in fluency, vocabulary, and confidence. For instance, Student 1 mentioned improvements in fluency and vocabulary usage, while Student 3 highlighted increased ability to speak without hesitation. These qualitative responses align with the quantitative data, which indicated significant improvements in vocabulary and communication effectiveness.

However, several students also reported challenges, particularly with vocabulary recall and hesitation during speaking tasks. These challenges were consistent with the findings from the literature, which suggests that while routine-based speaking practices can help build fluency over time, students may still struggle with specific aspects of language production, such as vocabulary retrieval and sentence formation (Boavida et al., 2014; Hurtado, 2023; Vilnita & Marnauza, 2024).

In terms of suggestions for improvement, students recommended more spontaneous speaking exercises, small group discussions, and pronunciation practice. These suggestions highlight areas where students felt they needed further support, particularly in developing fluency and accuracy. This feedback is valuable for improving the weekly speaking routines, suggesting that a greater focus on impromptu speaking tasks and pronunciation exercises could help address these concerns.

Implications for Pedagogy

The findings from this study have important implications for language teaching, particularly in the context of second language acquisition. The integration of routine-based speaking activities into language curricula can be an effective way to enhance students' speaking skills, improve their confidence, and reduce anxiety. However, as the data suggest, there are still areas that need further attention, including fluency development and vocabulary enhancement. The qualitative data from students also point to the need for more structured interventions, particularly in smaller group settings or through more spontaneous speaking opportunities.

5. Conclusion

This study explored the effectiveness of weekly structured speaking routines (WSR) in improving students' oral communication skills, focusing on their confidence, fluency, engagement, and anxiety reduction. The results demonstrated that the weekly speaking routines significantly enhanced students' confidence and reduced anxiety when speaking in front of others. However, while the routines were effective in fostering fluency, the improvement was less pronounced for some students, indicating that fluency development may require more targeted interventions. Additionally, the study highlighted that students found the speaking activities enjoyable and engaging, which contributed positively to their participation and willingness to practice.

The thematic analysis of observational data revealed increased active participation, peer interaction, and engagement in discussions, suggesting that the weekly routines helped create a more inclusive and supportive classroom environment. The study contributes to the body of knowledge by reinforcing the importance of consistent speaking practice and routine-based approaches to language learning, particularly in second language acquisition contexts.

This research provides valuable insights for educators looking to integrate

speaking routines into language curricula. It also underscores the need for future studies to explore specific aspects of fluency development, such as vocabulary acquisition and impromptu speaking tasks. Further research could focus on refining speaking routines to address challenges related to vocabulary recall and hesitation, as identified in student feedback, and investigate the long-term impact of routine-based speaking practices on language proficiency.

Ethical considerations

Research approval has been granted by the research and Community Service Institute of Universitas Muhammadiyah Enrekang, Indonesia.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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