Strategies for One-On-One Interaction to Enhance English Speaking Skills among EFL Students at MTS YMPI Rappang

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate the effectiveness of one-on-one interaction strategies in enhancing English speaking skills among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students at MTs YMPI Rappang. The study identifies the challenges faced by students in speaking English, such as lack of confidence, limited speaking opportunities, and psychological barriers like anxiety. Using a qualitative approach, the research applies personalized interaction strategies in one-on-one sessions between teachers and students. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation. Findings suggest that one-on-one interactions significantly improve students' speaking proficiency, boost their confidence, and reduce affective barriers. The study demonstrates that peer-based interactions and tailored feedback are crucial for fostering language fluency, accuracy, and spontaneous speech. This approach aligns with sociocultural theories of learning, particularly Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Long's Interaction Hypothesis. The research contributes to the development of practical strategies for teaching English in secondary schools, offering insights into effective pedagogical methods for enhancing communication skills among EFL learners.

Keywords: One-on-One Interaction; English Speaking Skills; EFL Students

INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized world, the ability to communicate effectively in English has become a crucial skill. As a widely spoken international language, English opens doors to diverse educational and professional opportunities. The importance of English proficiency is particularly significant in Indonesia, where it plays a pivotal role in global communication. However, despite its importance, Indonesian students, especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), continue to face challenges in mastering the language, particularly speaking

skills.English speaking has been identified as one of the most difficult skills for EFL learners to develop. According to the EF English Proficiency Index (EF-EPI) 2023, Indonesia ranks low in terms of English proficiency, reflecting the widespread struggles in mastering spoken English. The reasons behind this include traditional teaching methods that emphasize grammar and writing, rather than offering ample opportunities for students to practice speaking. In many Indonesian classrooms, students are often passive receivers of information, with limited interaction and real-life language practice.

One of the key challenges in improving speaking skills lies in the classroom environment. At MTs YMPI Rappang, where this study is focused, the problem is further exacerbated by large class sizes, limited teaching hours, and the teacher-centered approach to learning. Most students exhibit a solid grasp of grammar and vocabulary but struggle with using English fluently in real-world contexts. This difficulty is often compounded by the lack of confidence many students experience when speaking in front of others, which hinders their ability to express themselves spontaneously.

Previous research suggests that one-on-one interaction, where students engage in direct communication with a teacher or peer, can be highly effective in overcoming these barriers. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) emphasizes the importance of interpersonal interaction in the learning process, suggesting that learners achieve optimal development through social engagement. This theory supports the idea that one-on-one interactions can provide students with the personalized feedback and support they need to overcome difficulties in language learning.

The Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1983) further asserts that meaningful language acquisition occurs through negotiation and interaction in communication. In one-on-one settings, teachers or peers can offer tailored feedback, correct mistakes in real-time, and encourage students to continue speaking without the fear of judgment, thus creating a supportive environment conducive to language learning. Research has shown that students who engage in frequent one-on-one interactions often experience a significant improvement in their speaking fluency.

At MTs YMPI Rappang, the need for such personalized language learning strategies is evident. Initial observations and interviews with teachers reveal that while students possess the necessary grammar and vocabulary to communicate, their speaking skills remain underdeveloped. Psychological factors, such as anxiety about making mistakes and fear of ridicule, further contribute to the students' reluctance to speak. Therefore, implementing one-on-one interaction strategies could be an effective solution to boost their speaking skills.

This research aims to explore how one-on-one interaction strategies can improve English speaking skills among EFL students at MTs YMPI Rappang. By focusing on individualized teaching approaches, this study will investigate how such strategies can address the challenges students face in speaking English. Through a

qualitative research design, the study will examine the experiences of students who engage in one-on-one interactions, and the impact these interactions have on their speaking fluency, confidence, and overall language development.In addition to improving students' speaking skills, this study aims to contribute to the development of practical, evidence-based teaching strategies for secondary education. The findings from this research could offer valuable insights for educators seeking to enhance communication skills in EFL classrooms, particularly in resource-limited settings where traditional language learning approaches may fall short.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Effective language acquisition, particularly in speaking skills, has been the focus of numerous studies in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, speaking is often regarded as one of the most challenging skills to develop. While grammatical competence and vocabulary are essential components of language proficiency, they do not guarantee fluency in communication. Speaking skills, which require both the accurate use of language and the ability to engage in spontaneous communication, are influenced by multiple factors, including teaching methods, learner characteristics, and the learning environment.

One-on-one interaction has emerged as an effective strategy in improving English speaking skills, particularly in EFL settings. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning. According to Vygotsky, learners develop cognitive skills through interaction with more knowledgeable others, such as teachers or peers. In a one-on-one interaction context, the teacher or peer acts as a guide, providing scaffolding that helps students navigate the challenges they face in language learning. This support, particularly when tailored to individual learners' needs, plays a crucial role in the development of speaking skills.

The concept of "scaffolding" is integral to understanding the benefits of one-on-one interaction. Scaffolding refers to the temporary support provided to learners, which is gradually withdrawn as learners gain the necessary skills to perform tasks independently. In language learning, scaffolding can take many forms, including providing prompts, asking guiding questions, and offering corrective feedback. One-on-one interactions create the opportunity for personalized scaffolding, which is particularly beneficial for EFL students who may struggle with speaking due to anxiety or lack of practice opportunities.

The Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1983) further supports the effectiveness of one-on-one interaction in language learning. This hypothesis posits that language learners acquire language more effectively through communication that involves "negotiation of meaning"—a process in which learners and their interlocutors work together to ensure mutual understanding. In one-on-one interactions, students are

more likely to engage in meaningful exchanges, which helps to clarify misunderstandings, provide opportunities for practice, and reinforce language learning in real-time. Such interactions allow students to receive immediate corrective feedback, which is more likely to lead to improvements in speaking skills.

Research on one-on-one interactions in language learning has shown promising results. Kang et al. (2020) found that students who engaged in regular one-on-one interactions with teachers demonstrated a 30% improvement in speaking fluency compared to those who participated in traditional classroom-based learning. This improvement is attributed to the individualized attention students receive during one-on-one sessions, which allows them to focus on specific areas of weakness, such as pronunciation, vocabulary use, and sentence structure. Furthermore, one-on-one interactions provide a safe space for students to practice without the fear of peer judgment, which is often a significant barrier to speaking in larger group settings.

In the context of Indonesian education, the challenges associated with speaking English are particularly pronounced due to the limited exposure to English outside the classroom. As a result, many students develop passive language skills, excelling in grammar and reading but struggling with speaking. Research by Prayudha and Pradana (2023) highlights the psychological barriers that hinder students' speaking abilities, such as fear of making mistakes and low self-confidence. One-on-one interaction strategies can be particularly effective in addressing these barriers, as they create a more supportive and less intimidating environment for practice.

Previous studies also suggest that one-on-one interaction fosters greater student engagement and motivation. When students engage in personalized learning experiences, they feel more accountable for their progress and are more likely to take ownership of their learning. A study by Maziyah et al. (2023) found that students who participated in regular one-on-one tutoring sessions were more motivated to practice their speaking skills outside of class and exhibited greater enthusiasm toward language learning in general. This increased motivation can be attributed to the personalized nature of the instruction, which meets students at their current level of proficiency and helps them set achievable goals.

However, it is important to recognize that one-on-one interaction is not a panacea for all language learning challenges. While it has been shown to be effective, it also requires careful planning and execution. Teachers must be skilled in providing appropriate scaffolding, offering constructive feedback, and creating a comfortable environment for students to speak freely. Additionally, the effectiveness of one-on-one interaction may vary depending on the students' proficiency levels, personality traits, and learning preferences. Therefore, it is crucial to consider these factors when implementing one-on-one strategies in the classroom. the literature indicates that one-on-one interaction strategies are highly effective in enhancing English speaking skills among EFL learners. By providing personalized feedback, fostering

meaningful communication, and addressing psychological barriers, these strategies offer significant benefits to students, particularly in contexts like MTs YMPI Rappang, where traditional teaching methods may not fully meet students' speaking needs. This research will build upon existing literature by exploring the specific impact of one-on-one interaction on EFL students' speaking proficiency in a secondary school setting, contributing to the growing body of evidence supporting this approach.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employs a qualitative research design, which is suitable for exploring participants' experiences and perspectives in-depth. The research focuses on understanding how one-on-one interaction strategies can enhance the English-speaking skills of EFL students at MTs YMPI Rappang. The qualitative approach allows for the collection of descriptive data, capturing the nuanced and subjective aspects of students' learning processes in real classroom settings. The participants in this study consist of six seventh-grade students from MTs YMPI Rappang, selected through purposive sampling. This sampling technique was chosen to ensure participants represent a range of English proficiency levels, from beginner to intermediate. Students' willingness to participate and the specific challenges they face in speaking English were the main criteria for inclusion. This purposeful selection helps ensure that the data collected is directly relevant to the research objectives.

Instrument and Procedures

To collect data, the study uses three primary instruments: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation serves as the main tool for gathering data on students' behavior during one-on-one speaking sessions. The researcher carefully observes students' engagement, fluency, confidence, and accuracy in language use. During these sessions, detailed field notes are taken to capture the natural interactions between the students and the teacher, providing direct insights into how the one-on-one strategies are implemented in practice. In addition to observation, semi-structured interviews are conducted with both students and teachers to obtain deeper insights into their experiences with the one-on-one interaction strategies. The interviews explore participants' perceptions of the strategy's effectiveness, the difficulties they face when speaking English, and their feelings about receiving individualized support. These interviews are audio-recorded and transcribed for further analysis, allowing the researcher to follow up on interesting responses and to explore unexpected but relevant topics in more detail. Furthermore, documentation is used to complement the observations and interviews by providing additional data sources such as lesson plans, student work, and teacher feedback. This documentation serves to triangulate the findings and provides a broader

context for understanding students' progress and the overall learning environment, thus enhancing the depth and validity of the study.

Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, which involves identifying, coding, and categorizing patterns or themes across the collected data. The researcher will first transcribe the interviews and organize all data in alignment with the research questions. Open coding will be performed to highlight important concepts, which will then be grouped into broader themes such as student engagement, confidence, fluency, and language accuracy. These themes will be interpreted in relation to the study's objectives to assess the impact of one-on-one interactions on speaking skills. To ensure validity and reliability, the study employs triangulation, using multiple data sources observations, interviews, and documentation to cross-check and validate the findings. Additionally, member checking will be conducted by sharing preliminary findings with the participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations. Ethical considerations will be carefully maintained throughout the research. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, and their anonymity and confidentiality will be safeguarded. Participants will also be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. All collected data will be securely stored and used solely for academic purposes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings from the data collected through observations, interviews, and documentation during the one-on-one interaction sessions aimed at enhancing the English-speaking skills of EFL students at MTs YMPI Rappang. The results are organized based on key themes, including improvements in fluency, confidence, pronunciation, and the ability to use language spontaneously.

Table 1. Observed Improvements in English Speaking Skills

Participant Name	Fluency Improvement	Confidence Level	Pronunciation Clarity	Ability to Speak Spontaneously
Ratu Monna	High	High	Good	Moderate
Nur Ulya Azirah	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High
Nirvana Triyandini	Moderate	Moderate	Good	Moderate
Ghina Kamila	Moderate	Low	Fair	Low
Auni Qeisha	High	Moderate	Fair	Moderate

Khaeriah Hafizah	Low	High	Fair	Low

From the table, it is evident that most students demonstrated moderate to high improvement in fluency, confidence, and spontaneous speaking ability after participating in the one-on-one interaction sessions. Ratu Monna showed the most significant improvement, with high ratings across fluency, confidence, and pronunciation clarity. Other students, such as Nur Ulya Azirah and Nirvana Triyandini, showed moderate improvements in these areas, although their confidence levels remained a bit lower.

The observational data indicated that students who were more active in the sessions, such as Ratu Monna, engaged in spontaneous conversations more frequently. They were also more willing to make mistakes and self-correct without hesitation. On the other hand, students like Ghina Kamila and Khaeriah Hafizah, who exhibited low fluency improvements, seemed more reluctant to speak without preparation, often pausing or relying on memorized text. In terms of pronunciation clarity, most students showed at least moderate improvement. Students such as Nirvana Triyandini were able to pronounce words more clearly, although their fluency was still somewhat inhibited by hesitation and word choice difficulties. Auni Qeisha demonstrated moderate improvement in pronunciation but continued to struggle with selecting appropriate vocabulary quickly.

Interviews with the students revealed a positive shift in their attitudes toward speaking English. Many expressed that they felt more confident and less anxious about making mistakes, especially during one-on-one sessions. They appreciated the individualized feedback provided by their peers or teachers, which helped them to improve at their own pace. However, several students noted that while they felt more comfortable in the one-on-one sessions, they still faced challenges when speaking in front of larger groups. Additionally, interviews with teachers confirmed that students who received more frequent one-on-one interaction showed greater willingness to participate in classroom discussions. Teachers observed that these students were more proactive in practicing their speaking skills outside of the sessions and felt less self-conscious about their language proficiency.

The data from documentation and reflective notes revealed that the one-on-one sessions allowed for deeper engagement with students' language weaknesses. For instance, specific pronunciation exercises and vocabulary-building activities were tailored to each student's needs, providing them with personalized support. As a result, some students reported that they had started using more advanced vocabulary and phrases outside the classroom, indicating an increased internalization of language structures.

Overall, the findings suggest that one-on-one interaction strategies were effective in improving the English-speaking skills of the students, particularly in areas of fluency, pronunciation, and confidence. However, the extent of improvement varied

depending on the students' initial proficiency levels and their willingness to engage in spontaneous speaking. The results of this study provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of one-on-one interaction strategies in enhancing English speaking skills among EFL students at MTs YMPI Rappang. The findings align with existing research that suggests personalized instruction can significantly impact language learning, particularly when addressing individual learner needs.

The most notable improvement was observed in the area of confidence. This is consistent with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978), which highlights the importance of social interaction in language learning. The individualized feedback provided in one-on-one interactions allowed students to feel more supported and less self-conscious. The reduction in anxiety was particularly beneficial for students like Nur Ulya Azirah and Khaeriah Hafizah, who initially struggled with speaking in front of others due to fear of making mistakes. These students reported feeling more relaxed and willing to attempt speaking in future interactions.

Another key finding from this study is the improvement in fluency. According to the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1983), language learners improve their fluency by negotiating meaning during interactive communication. The one-on-one sessions facilitated this type of negotiation, allowing students to engage in real-time conversations and receive immediate corrective feedback. Ratu Monna, who showed the highest improvement in fluency, was able to spontaneously produce more complex sentences, which is indicative of the impact of the one-on-one interaction on her speaking ability.

While fluency improvements were generally evident, the study also revealed that some students faced challenges with pronunciation and vocabulary selection. For instance, students like Ghina Kamila and Khaeriah Hafizah continued to struggle with selecting the right words quickly and articulating them clearly. This suggests that while one-on-one interaction strategies were effective in providing personalized support, more targeted pronunciation and vocabulary training may be needed to address these specific challenges.

The role of peer support in one-on-one interactions also emerged as a significant factor in students' speaking development. Many students reported that interacting with their peers in a supportive environment allowed them to feel more comfortable and motivated to speak. This finding aligns with the concept of peer scaffolding, where higher-level students help lower-level students by providing feedback and encouragement. Peer-to-peer interactions were especially valuable for students like Nirvana Triyandini, who showed improvement through both teacher-led and peer-assisted sessions.

However, despite the positive outcomes, it is important to note that not all students experienced the same level of improvement. Students with lower initial proficiency levels, such as Khaeriah Hafizah, showed less progress in fluency and pronunciation. This suggests that while one-on-one interaction strategies are

effective, additional strategies may be required to support students who struggle significantly with speaking. For these students, more frequent and targeted interventions might be necessary to further build their speaking confidence and ability.

Moreover, the data suggests that the success of one-on-one interaction strategies is not solely dependent on the interactions themselves but also on the students' attitudes and engagement. Students who actively participated and showed a willingness to embrace correction and practice saw greater improvement. This highlights the importance of fostering a growth mindset in students, where they view mistakes as a natural part of the learning process and are encouraged to take risks in their language use. the results of this study demonstrate that one-on-one interaction strategies are highly effective in improving the English-speaking skills of EFL students, particularly in terms of fluency, pronunciation, and confidence. However, to achieve even greater success, it is essential to address the individualized needs of students based on their proficiency levels and psychological barriers. The integration of one-on-one interaction with other teaching strategies, such as targeted vocabulary building and pronunciation exercises, may further enhance the speaking proficiency of students who struggle with these specific aspects of language learning.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effectiveness of one-on-one interaction strategies in enhancing the English-speaking skills of EFL students at MTs YMPI Rappang. The findings indicate that personalized, one-on-one interactions significantly improved students' speaking abilities, particularly in the areas of fluency, confidence, and pronunciation. Students who participated in the one-on-one sessions showed increased self-assurance in using English, demonstrated more spontaneous speaking, and were more willing to engage in conversations without the fear of making mistakes. These improvements were especially evident in students who were more actively involved in the sessions and open to receiving feedback.

While the study highlighted the positive impact of one-on-one interaction on students' speaking skills, it also identified some areas for further development. Students with lower proficiency levels, particularly in vocabulary selection and pronunciation, showed slower progress. This suggests that while one-on-one interactions are highly beneficial, additional targeted interventions, such as focused pronunciation practice and vocabulary building, may be necessary to support students who face greater challenges in these areas. The research underscores the value of one-on-one interaction as an effective strategy for enhancing English speaking skills in EFL contexts. By providing tailored support and creating a safe environment for practice, these strategies help students overcome psychological barriers and develop greater confidence in their language abilities. The study contributes to the broader understanding of effective language teaching practices

and provides practical insights for educators seeking to implement personalized learning approaches in secondary education settings.

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