

Article

Convergent Parallel Study on Factors Affecting English Speaking Skills of Students at Mamatid National High School

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Abstract: This study examines the factors influencing the English-speaking proficiency of junior high school students at Mamatid National High School. Using a mixed-method approach, surveys and interviews explored challenges in fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, cultural exposure, socioeconomic background, instructional techniques, motivation, and the educational environment. Findings indicate that fluency ($M = 2.27$), vocabulary ($M = 2.40$), and pronunciation ($M = 2.47$) are at a low level, with minimal cultural and socioeconomic impact. Interviews highlight psychological barriers such as lack of confidence, fear of mistakes, and limited exposure to English outside school. In contrast, motivation ($M = 3.68$), instructional techniques ($M = 3.68$), and the educational environment ($M = 3.68$) positively impact proficiency. Teacher guidance and peer interactions were found to encourage students to practice speaking English more confidently. Students also expressed a need for more interactive and real-life opportunities to develop their speaking skills beyond the classroom. Additionally, they acknowledged that regular engagement in English conversations helped them gradually build confidence and fluency. The overall mean of 2.99 suggests that while instructional strategies and motivation improve language skills, external challenges persist. To address these, the study recommends structured vocabulary programs, pronunciation exercises, and more opportunities for real-life practice.

Keywords: English-Speaking Skills, Fluency, Instructional Techniques, Motivation, Mixed-Method Research

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1. Introduction

English-speaking proficiency is a vital skill for students in an increasingly globalized world, yet many learners in non-native English-speaking countries struggle to develop oral communication abilities (Karim et al., 2023). In the Philippines, English is an official language and a primary medium of instruction, but students in public schools often face challenges in achieving fluency due to limited speaking-focused instruction, resource constraints, and psychological factors (Dadulla, 2023; Putri & Ahmad, 2020). Research highlights gaps in current pedagogical approaches, emphasizing the need for structured interventions that foster oral proficiency (Cabaltica & Arcala, 2021). This study aims to identify the factors affecting English-speaking skills among junior high school students at Mamatid National High School and propose strategies to enhance their oral communication abilities.

2. Materials and Methods

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design to analyze the factors influencing English-speaking proficiency among junior high school students at

Mamatid National High School. The quantitative phase involved a structured survey questionnaire designed specifically for this study to assess students' speaking proficiency, vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and socio-economic background. The qualitative phase included structured interviews to explore students' experiences, challenges, and attitudes toward English-speaking tasks. A random sample of 251 Grade 10 students was selected from a population of 1,001 to ensure representation.

For quantitative analysis, descriptive statistics such as mean, median, mode, and measures of variability like standard deviation and variance were computed. Frequency and percentage distributions were used to categorize proficiency levels and demographic characteristics. Inferential statistical tests included t-tests for comparing group differences, ANOVA for analyzing instructional impacts, Pearson's correlation coefficient for assessing relationships between confidence levels and proficiency, and multiple linear regression to determine predictive factors affecting speaking skills. Statistical significance was determined at $P < 0.05$, while highly significant results were marked at $P < 0.01$.

Qualitative analysis followed Tesch's Eight-Step Method. Narrative synthesis ensured alignment with quantitative findings, and triangulation validated results by comparing survey and interview data.

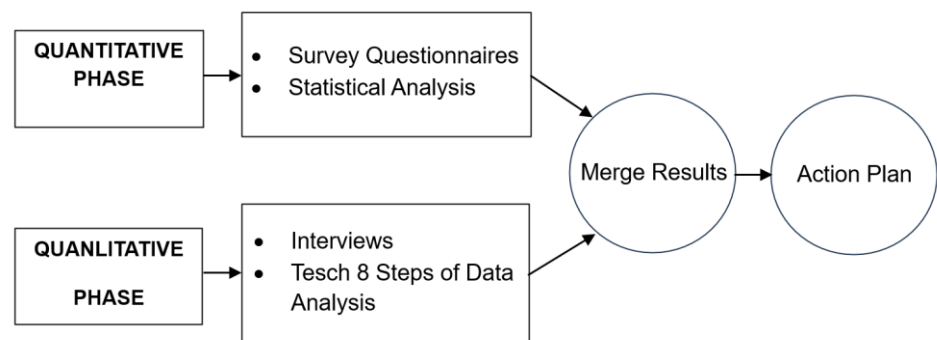


Figure 1. Research Paradigm.

3. Results

This study highlights the intricate interplay of factors influencing the English-speaking proficiency of junior high school students at Mamatid National High School. While students from higher socio-economic backgrounds benefit from access to private tutoring, English books, and digital media (Alinsub & Celorico, 2020), quantitative analysis suggests that fluency ($M = 2.27$, $SD = 1.17$), vocabulary ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 1.19$), and pronunciation ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.17$) remain at low levels. However, motivation ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.12$), instructional techniques ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.10$), and the educational environment ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.11$) significantly enhance proficiency.

Although socioeconomic background ($M = 2.33$, $SD = 1.19$) and cultural exposure ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.17$) exhibit minimal impact on speaking abilities, targeted strategies are essential for improvement. Eslit (2023) emphasizes pronunciation as a key factor in speaking performance, enabling students to communicate effectively across various contexts.

Psychological barriers such as lack of confidence and fear of mistakes further hinder engagement. While Pajarit (2024) found that students display confidence despite fluency challenges, limited exposure to English outside the classroom reinforces reliance on their first language. Teacher encouragement and structured peer interactions play a crucial role in fostering communication skills, though frustration over pronunciation difficulties and scarce learning resources remains a concern.

Given the intertwined relationship between language and culture (Mohammed, 2020) and the school's pivotal role in language acquisition (Igbinovbo, 2023), interventions such as vocabulary-building activities, pronunciation exercises, and real-world practice opportunities are necessary. The proposed S.P.E.A.K. and E.N.G.L.I.S.H. enhancement program offers a structured approach to sustained language development. The findings underscore the importance of integrating teacher-led guidance with interactive student-centered methodologies to optimize proficiency.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the multifaceted challenges affecting junior high school students' English-speaking proficiency at Mamatid National High School. Consistent with previous research, the results confirm that fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation remain significant barriers to effective communication. Low exposure to English beyond the classroom and reliance on the first language contribute to these difficulties, mirroring similar studies that emphasize the role of environment in language development.

Psychological factors, such as low confidence and fear of making mistakes, were prominently reported in student interviews. This aligns with existing research that identifies anxiety as a major impediment to language learning, reinforcing the importance of fostering supportive learning environments. Additionally, limited access to resources such as books and internet materials restricts students' ability to independently strengthen their English skills. Socioeconomic factors play a role in shaping language experiences, though they had less impact than instructional techniques and motivational aspects.

The positive influence of motivation, teacher encouragement, and peer interactions reflects previous findings that structured learning environments enhance spoken English proficiency. Both teacher-centered and student-centered approaches were found to be effective, emphasizing the need for a balanced instructional strategy. The study underscores the importance of integrating real-life practice opportunities and targeted language programs to strengthen students' confidence and ability.

Given these insights, interventions focusing on increasing English exposure, improving instructional strategies, and addressing psychological barriers are essential in bridging the gap in oral proficiency. Future studies may explore more comprehensive approaches to overcoming these challenges in diverse educational settings.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to explore the factors influencing the English-speaking proficiency of junior high school students at Mamatid National High School, identifying key challenges and proposing effective interventions. The findings confirmed that fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation remain significant barriers, exacerbated by limited cultural exposure, financial constraints, and a lack of real-life language practice. Additionally, psychological barriers such as low confidence and fear of making mistakes further hinder students' ability to engage in English conversations.

Despite these challenges, motivation, instructional techniques, and the educational environment emerged as strong contributors to students' language development. Teacher-centered and student-centered approaches, alongside peer interactions, played a vital role in enhancing confidence and proficiency. However, disparities in access to resources highlight the need for more inclusive support systems.

By linking the results to the study's initial aim, it is evident that structured interventions, including vocabulary programs, pronunciation exercises, and authentic communication activities, are essential to bridge the proficiency gap. The proposed enhancement program, S.P.E.A.K. and E.N.G.L.I.S.H., offers a practical framework to

foster fluency and confidence, ensuring that students can develop their English-speaking skills effectively.

Ultimately, this study reinforces the importance of a balanced instructional strategy that integrates exposure, motivation, and structured learning experiences to empower students in their language development journey. Future initiatives should focus on strengthening accessibility and engagement in real-world English communication to support long-term proficiency.

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