



## IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH A ONE-HOUR DAILY ENGLISH LEARNING ROUTINE

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### ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: 13, Jan 2026

Accepted: 18, Feb 2026

Keywords :

Speaking skills;  
daily learning routine;  
English practice;  
learner autonomy;  
qualitative study

### ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the effect of a one-hour daily English learning routine on the improvement of students' speaking skills. The research employed a qualitative design involving 15 students over a three-month period. Data were collected through classroom observations and weekly semi-structured interviews focusing on students' pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and confidence in speaking. Students were encouraged to engage in various English learning activities for at least one hour each day, including listening to English music, watching English movies or videos, speaking with AI, singing English songs, and listening to English podcasts. The findings indicate that students who consistently practiced English through these routine activities demonstrated noticeable improvement in speaking performance, particularly in fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary development, and confidence. Interactive and communicative activities, such as speaking with AI and watching English-language content, showed the strongest influence on students' speaking development. The study concludes that establishing a simple and sustainable daily learning routine can effectively support speaking skill development and foster students' autonomy in learning English.*



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## A. INTRODUCTION

English has become a global language that plays a vital role in international communication. When people travel or study abroad, particularly in countries such as the United States and many European nations, English is commonly used as a medium of interaction. For this reason, English is taught as a compulsory subject from elementary school to higher education. Mastery of English is considered essential to support academic success and to prepare students for global participation.

In learning English, many students still face various obstacles. To use English effectively, learners must master four integrated language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are interconnected and support one another in the process of language acquisition. However, among these four skills, speaking is often regarded as the most challenging for students because it requires not only knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, but also appropriate pronunciation, fluency, and confidence.

This research focuses on improving students' speaking skills. Speaking is a productive skill that involves interaction between speakers and listeners to convey meaning. Even when students possess good grammatical knowledge, they may still experience difficulty expressing their ideas orally. Therefore, the ability to speak English is a crucial indicator of overall language competence. Schools play an important role as learning environments that facilitate the development of speaking skills through communicative activities and meaningful practice.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), language teaching approaches emphasize interaction as both the means and the goal of learning, highlighting the importance of developing communicative competence in authentic contexts. In line with this view, Ellis (2003) states that speaking develops effectively through authentic and meaningful task-based language learning, where learners complete communicative tasks relevant to real-life situations. These theories suggest that regular practice and continuous engagement in communicative activities are key factors in improving speaking ability.

However, students' success in developing speaking skills is also influenced by their motivation and willingness to communicate. MacIntyre et al. (2001) explain that willingness to communicate is affected by psychological, linguistic, and contextual factors. Students who have strong motivation and positive attitudes toward learning are more likely to participate actively in speaking activities, both inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, encouraging students to establish a simple but consistent

learning routine, such as studying English for one hour each day, can help build habits, increase exposure to the language, and gradually improve their speaking skills. Teachers serve as facilitators and motivators, but the primary drive to improve must come from the students themselves.

## **B. LITERATUR REVIEW**

Fluency development in a second or foreign language requires substantial exposure and frequent opportunities for practice. Nation and Newton (2009) argue that language learners need a large amount of meaningful input and output to develop fluency, and they recommend that at least one-quarter of instructional time should be devoted to fluency-focused activities. Nevertheless, the amount of practice conducted outside the classroom, particularly in the form of daily independent study, has received less attention. This gap suggests the importance of investigating simple and sustainable routines, such as studying English for one hour per day, as a strategy to enhance speaking ability.

Speaking is widely recognized as a complex and interactive process. Brown (2004) defines speaking as the process of producing, receiving, and processing information in order to construct meaning. Similarly, Thornbury (2005) emphasizes that speaking involves not only knowledge of language forms, but also the ability to process language and interact with others in real time. This means that speaking requires learners to think, organize ideas, and respond quickly, making it one of the most demanding language skills.

Several scholars have identified key components that contribute to speaking proficiency. Bygate (2001) explains that speaking involves knowledge of language (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation), knowledge of discourse (coherence and cohesion), and knowledge of the world (background knowledge and topics). However, possessing this knowledge alone is not sufficient. Learners must also be able to access and use it rapidly during communication. This ability, often referred to as automaticity, can only be developed through repeated and consistent practice.

Furthermore, Hughes (2011) highlights that effective speaking requires a balance between accuracy and fluency. Accuracy-oriented practice focuses on correct use of language forms, while fluency-oriented practice encourages learners to express ideas smoothly and spontaneously in meaningful contexts. Therefore, a daily learning routine that combines controlled practice (e.g., pronunciation drills or vocabulary review) and communicative practice (e.g., short conversations, self-recorded speaking, or role-play) can support gradual improvement in speaking skills.

Based on these theoretical perspectives, it can be concluded that regular and sustained practice is essential for developing speaking proficiency. Establishing a

routine of studying English for one hour each day provides learners with continuous exposure, repeated practice, and increased confidence, which are crucial for improving speaking skills.

### **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative research design. According to Rukajat (2018), qualitative research is a type of research in which findings are not obtained through statistical procedures or numerical measurement, but through in-depth understanding of phenomena. Similarly, Basrowi and Suwandi (2008) state that qualitative research allows researchers to explore and understand participants' experiences in their natural settings, enabling a deeper interpretation of the context, situation, and meaning of the phenomenon under investigation.

The participants of this study were 15 students. They were selected purposively because they were actively involved in English learning activities and willing to follow a daily learning routine. The focus of this research was to explore how a routine of studying English for one hour per day influences the development of students' speaking skills over a three-month period.

Data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. Classroom observations were conducted at the beginning of the study to identify students' initial speaking ability, particularly in terms of pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and grammar. These aspects were used as indicators to describe changes in students' speaking performance. Observations were also carried out continuously during the research period to monitor students' progress.

In addition, students were asked to report their weekly learning routines, describing the English activities they performed during their one-hour daily practice, such as speaking practice, listening to English audio or videos, reading English texts, and writing short reflections. These reports helped the researcher understand how students implemented the routine and how consistently they practiced.

The second data collection technique was semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted weekly with the students to explore their experiences, difficulties, and perceptions regarding the one-hour English study routine. The interview questions focused on students' speaking development, their motivation, and the types of activities they found most helpful. Data from observations and interviews were analyzed qualitatively by organizing, categorizing, and interpreting recurring patterns related to improvements in speaking skills.

### **D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the results of classroom observations and weekly interviews conducted over a three-month period. The findings describe how

students implemented a routine of studying English for at least one hour per day and how these activities contributed to the development of their speaking skills. Based on the data, students engaged in several routine activities, including: (1) listening to English music, (2) watching English movies or videos, (3) speaking with AI, (4) singing English songs, and (5) listening to English podcasts.

Overall, the results indicate that students who consistently practiced English through these activities demonstrated noticeable improvement in pronunciation, vocabulary usage, fluency, and confidence when speaking. Each activity is discussed in the following subsections.

### 1. Listening to English Music

Listening to English music was one of the routine activities chosen by students because it is easy to do and can be performed anywhere. Through listening to songs, students were exposed to new vocabulary, pronunciation patterns, and natural expressions. In addition, music made the learning process more enjoyable and reduced students' anxiety toward English.

From the 15 participants, only three students reported listening to English music for approximately one hour every day. The others preferred listening to local songs, Batak songs, viral songs, or Korean songs. This finding reflects differences in musical preferences among students, particularly among Generation Z, who tend to favor Korean popular music. Although not all students used English music regularly, those who did showed better pronunciation awareness and increased familiarity with common English expressions. This supports the idea that repeated exposure to authentic input contributes to speaking development.

### 2. Watching English Movies or Videos

Watching movies or videos in English was another common activity. Most students preferred using smartphones to watch content on platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, or streaming applications, while only two students still regularly watched television. Eight students reported watching English videos through their smartphones for about one hour a day.

At the beginning of the study, some students mainly watched Indian or Korean films and did not consider watching English movies important for improving their English. After receiving guidance, students were encouraged to select films or videos that used English as the main language. The types of content watched included animated cartoons, documentaries, drama series, and popular films.

Students who regularly watched English content demonstrated better listening comprehension, richer vocabulary, and improved ability to imitate

pronunciation and intonation. These improvements positively influenced their speaking performance, especially in terms of fluency and confidence.

### 3. Speaking with AI

One of the most influential activities reported by students was speaking with AI. Students used AI-based applications or chat platforms to practice short conversations, ask questions, and simulate real communication in English. This activity allowed students to practice speaking without fear of being judged by others.

Students reported that speaking with AI helped them gain confidence, improve sentence construction, and become more familiar with everyday expressions. This finding aligns with the idea that frequent interaction, even in virtual environments, can support the development of speaking skills.

### 4. Singing English Songs

Singing English songs was chosen by only one student as a daily one-hour activity. This student had a strong interest and talent in singing and frequently sang English songs, particularly songs by Taylor Swift. Through singing, the student practiced pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation.

However, most students did not choose singing as a routine activity because they felt they did not have good singing ability or lacked confidence. Although limited in participation, this activity still demonstrates that personal interests can play an important role in sustaining a learning routine and supporting speaking development.

### 5. Listening to English Podcasts

Listening to English podcasts was another activity used by two students. Students stated that podcasts provided not only listening practice but also useful information on various topics such as daily life, education, and social issues. Podcasts were considered interesting because they present authentic conversations and natural speech. Students who listened to podcasts regularly showed better listening comprehension and increased awareness of spoken English structures, which later supported their speaking performance.

The findings indicate that establishing a routine of studying English for one hour per day provides students with continuous exposure and practice opportunities, which are essential for developing speaking skills. Activities that combine listening input and speaking practice, such as watching English videos and speaking with AI, appear to have the strongest impact on students' speaking improvement. In line with Nation and Newton's view on fluency development and Hughes's emphasis on balancing fluency and accuracy, the routine activities allowed students to gradually improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and confidence.

Moreover, students' motivation and personal preferences influenced their choice of activities and consistency. This supports the idea that sustainable learning routines should consider students' interests to ensure long-term engagement.

## E. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore how a routine of studying English for one hour per day contributes to the improvement of students' speaking skills over a three-month period. Based on classroom observations and weekly interviews, the findings indicate that consistent daily practice provides meaningful exposure and opportunities for speaking development.

Students engaged in various routine activities, including listening to English music, watching English movies or videos, speaking with AI, singing English songs, and listening to English podcasts. Among these activities, interactive practices such as speaking with AI and watching English-language content had the most noticeable impact on students' fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary development, and confidence. Although not all students chose the same activities, those who practiced consistently showed gradual improvement in their speaking performance.

The findings also highlight the important role of self-motivation. The primary responsibility for improvement lies with the students themselves. Teachers act as facilitators and motivators; however, sustainable progress occurs when students develop intrinsic motivation and make English practice part of their daily routine. When learning becomes a habit rather than a classroom obligation, students are more likely to enjoy the process and achieve better outcomes.

Therefore, establishing a simple yet consistent routine—such as studying English for one hour each day—can help students practice beyond the classroom and gradually enhance their speaking skills. This approach encourages continuous engagement with the language and supports the development of communicative competence in a practical and sustainable way.

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