

DESIGNING ENGLISH SPEAKING DAY FOR THIRD-GRADE STUDENTS TO PROMOTE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Developing English communicative competence from an early age has become an increasingly important objective for Vietnamese students. This study aims to design and evaluate the initial feasibility and effectiveness of an English Speaking Day (ESD) model for third-grade students, with the goal of creating a more regular and natural English practice environment in Vietnamese primary schools. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, including a survey of 33 students and parents at a language centre in Hanoi to analyse the current state of English learning, followed by a small-scale pilot with 10 students over four weeks on the "Family" theme. Results indicate that ESD produced notable improvements in students' speaking confidence (+3.4 points), fluency (+2.6 points), and accuracy (+1.4 points), while also increasing voluntary participation and learning motivation. The study provides a theoretically grounded ESD process with detailed lesson plans applicable to Vietnamese primary schools, along with specific recommendations for implementation across different school contexts. Although limited by sample size and short duration, this pilot study demonstrates the potential of ESD as an approach to creating a richer English practice environment and supporting communicative competence development in line with Vietnam's national curriculum reform objectives.

1. INTRODUCTION

English has become an essential communication tool and a significant medium for the exchange of knowledge, culture, and economic cooperation between countries (Crystal, 2018). In Vietnam, the 2018 National Curriculum designates English as a compulsory subject from Grade 3, reflecting a strategic commitment to developing a workforce with strong language skills. Despite this, data indicate that while 89% of Vietnamese primary school students study English,

only 12% have regular opportunities to practise oral communication outside formal lessons (Ngo & Tran, 2023). This gap between language study and language use reflects significant limitations in current teaching practice.

Research by Lê et al. (2023), encompassing fifty primary schools, indicated that 76% of teachers believed students lacked confidence in spoken English, a situation they linked to insufficient practical opportunities; concurrently, 82% of parents desired increased exposure to authentic communication. Conventional teaching strategies have frequently prioritized grammar and vocabulary acquisition, often at the expense of practical communication skills, thereby producing students who understand linguistic rules but are hesitant to speak, or who can communicate but lack fluency (Cameron, 2001). Given that the early years of primary school are widely considered a critical time for language learning, as proposed by the Critical Period Hypothesis (Lenneberg, 1967), a lack of sufficient practice environments during this period could potentially have lasting negative effects on how people communicate.

The English Speaking Day (ESD) model has gained international recognition as a method for fostering more consistent and authentic English language usage within educational settings. Research conducted in diverse environments has yielded encouraging results. Februansyah's (2022) research indicated that a monthly English Day program had a beneficial impact on student motivation and self-esteem. Ramarow and Hassan (2021), in their examination of 265 Malaysian pre-university students, noted decreased speaking anxiety and moderate motivation, suggesting that these findings could inform curriculum design aimed at improving English language skills. Moreover, Saad et al. (2025) explored the effectiveness of English language boot camps, which were organized according to Corporate Social Responsibility tenets, in helping Year Six ESL students in Malaysia develop learner autonomy, confidence, and language proficiency.

In Vietnam, however, academic research on ESD at primary level is limited. Most activities called "English Speaking Day" or "English Day" in Vietnamese schools are festival-oriented, infrequent, and lack a scientific basis for design or evaluation. This gap motivates the present study, which develops an ESD model grounded in second language acquisition theory, suited to the psychological and developmental characteristics of Vietnamese primary school learners, and practically implementable.

The study focuses on Grade 3 students because this is the first year of formal English instruction in Vietnamese primary schools. Children between the ages of eight and nine exhibit a pronounced capacity for imitation, alongside active memory development, and have yet to establish significant psychological impediments to the utilization of foreign languages (Lightbown & Spada, 2020). Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory of language acquisition suggests that children learn language best through meaningful social interactions. This is a condition that ESD can help create through real communicative activities. This research endeavor aims to develop and evaluate the initial feasibility and effectiveness of an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) model specifically designed for third-grade students, with the overarching aim of fostering a more consistent and authentic English language practice setting in Vietnamese primary schools. The study will examine the existing state of English language

teaching and learning for third-grade students, devise an ESP procedure along with relevant lesson plans, and implement a limited pilot program of the model to assess student involvement, preliminary changes in communicative competence, and learning dispositions. This study offers contributions to both theoretical understanding and practical application.

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey was seeking to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the current state of English oral communication learning among Grade 3 students at a language center in Hanoi, including the challenges and motivations they face?

RQ2: What ESD process and lesson plans can be designed to align with second language acquisition theories and the developmental characteristics of Grade 3 students in the Vietnamese context?

RQ3: To what extent does the piloted ESD model improve Grade 3 students' speaking skills — specifically fluency, accuracy, and confidence — and their learning attitudes over a four-week implementation?

Theoretically, it clarifies the scientific basis for designing second language activities appropriate to Grade 3, drawing on contemporary language acquisition theories and the developmental characteristics of Vietnamese children. Practically, it provides a concrete ESD model that schools can apply to improve English teaching quality, create natural communication environments, and contribute to communicative language teaching reform.

2. RELATED WORKS

2.1. *Theoretical Foundations of Second Language Acquisition in Children*

Theoretical frameworks for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) provide a crucial scientific basis to shape the instruction of English language at primary schools level. Chomsky (1965) proposed that humans have an inherent ability for language, which he called the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). This device helps children naturally learn and create language. This view emphasizes that language acquisition goes beyond just memorizing words and grammar. Instead, it requires using internal processes, which are activated by interacting with the target language in real-world situations. Furthermore, Swain (1995) expanded on input-focused theories with the Output Hypothesis. This hypothesis suggests that producing language, including both speaking and writing, is a key factor in learning a second language. Active engagement with the target language enables learners to reinforce their current understanding and pinpoint areas of weakness, thereby fostering a desire for continued learning. The ESD approach is fundamentally based on the idea of using real communication situations in English, rather than just passively receiving language input. Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis adds another important point: when learners are exposed to understandable and meaningful input in a supportive environment, at a level slightly above what they currently know ($i+1$), it helps them acquire language naturally. Therefore, ESD should include activities that are at the right level of difficulty — neither too easy, which would make students lose interest, nor too hard, which would discourage them. Also, a relaxed, low-pressure atmosphere should be maintained to reduce the "affective filter," which can hinder learning.

2.2. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

It is a widely used method in foreign language education, focusing on using language in real-world situations (Kumaradivelu, 1994). Unlike traditional teaching methods that focus on grammar and sentence structure, CLT prioritizes developing communicative competence. Nunan (1991) suggests that this teaching approach helps students learn language structures. This skill also allows for the flexible and effective use of these structures in different communication situations. Hymes (1972) expanded the notion of linguistic competence to encompass communicative competence, which integrates grammatical proficiency with the capacity to utilize language appropriately within social settings. This perspective is especially pertinent to ESD design, given that activities must provide opportunities for students to practice not only grammatically accurate speech but also culturally and contextually suitable communication.

Within CLT, the learner assumes a central position, while the teacher functions as a facilitator and guide, establishing conditions that encourage students to participate in communicative activities through authentic, real-world scenarios (Nunan, 1991). This method aligns with the psychological characteristics of elementary school children, who generally learn most effectively through active participation, play, and social interaction.

2.3. An Examination of English Speaking Day and Related Approaches

There were a number of research papers from various countries in the world on English Speaking Day (ESD). They showed positive results in developing English communication skills. Sinaga (2018) and Februansyah (2022) have both shown that English Day programs in Indonesia have positive effects on students' motivation and self-confidence.

Research conducted at Ash-Shiddiqi Islamic Boarding School, encompassing a sample of 100 students, revealed a consensus that the program facilitated students' exposure to spoken English, provided increased opportunities for language skill application, and broadened their English language comprehension. Furthermore, Ramadani and Dharmawan (2025) explored the sociolinguistic effects of an English Day program on speaking skills at SMA Global Madani in Indonesia. Employing a qualitative case study methodology, the researchers purposefully selected a cohort of 15 students and gathered data via classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The program demonstrably enhanced students' confidence and fluency, attributable to its provision of an immersive, low-stress communicative setting. Furthermore, peer interaction, teacher support, and exposure to digital media were identified as crucial sociolinguistic factors.

At the same time, persistent difficulties in vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation accuracy, grammatical competence, and speaking apprehension suggested that immersion alone does not ensure comprehensive proficiency development. The researchers advocate for the integration of structured pedagogical assistance with the program, encompassing corrective feedback mechanisms and explicit vocabulary instruction, to maximize the efficacy of the intervention.

Ramarow and Hassan's (2021) study examined English speaking anxiety and motivation in a cohort of 265 Malaysian pre-university students. The findings indicated that speaking

anxiety was low, while motivation was at a moderate level; moreover, external factors appeared to have a slightly stronger influence than internal ones. A weak, yet statistically significant, positive correlation was observed between anxiety and motivation. Gender did not significantly affect either variable. However, a notable difference in language anxiety was observed among racial groups, even though motivation levels were similar across these groups. The authors propose that these results can guide curriculum development designed to mitigate anxiety and facilitate the advancement of English proficiency. Saad et al. (2025) examined the impact of English language boot camps, which were based on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) principles, on Malaysian Year Six ESL students, specifically assessing enhancements in learner autonomy, self-confidence, and language proficiency. Employing a quantitative methodology, the researchers distributed a structured questionnaire to a purposively chosen cohort of 75 participants, drawn from a larger population of 163 students.

The analysis, which included descriptive and inferential statistical techniques such as t-tests and regression, revealed that the boot camps produced significant improvements in both learner autonomy and language proficiency. Furthermore, the study found that gamified elements and collaborative activities were crucial for increasing motivation and engagement. In contrast, confidence in oral communication showed lower levels, suggesting an area that needs more attention. The study's conclusions are based on Constructivist Theory and Self-Determination Theory, and its recommendations align with the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013–2025.

2.4. Context in Vietnam and the Research Gap

In Vietnam, while some private schools have organised activities called "Ngày hội tiếng Anh" or "English Speaking Day," academic research on such models at primary level remains limited. Most available accounts describe activities without providing experimental evaluation of outcomes. The study by Lê et al. (2023) across 50 primary schools identified challenges in communicative English teaching but did not propose scientifically grounded solutions.

Several gaps remain. First, there is no standardised ESD model with established frequency, content, and methods suited to the psychological and developmental characteristics of Vietnamese primary school students. Second, age-appropriate assessment tools for evaluating ESD activities have not been developed. Third, no experimental study has evaluated ESD's impact on speaking skill development, learning attitudes, or student confidence in the Vietnamese context. Fourth, the teacher's role and the competencies required to facilitate ESD effectively have not been systematically studied.

This study addresses part of these gaps by developing a theoretically grounded ESD model suited to the Vietnamese context, and by providing initial evidence of the model's feasibility and effectiveness through a small-scale pilot.

3. PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The present investigation employs a mixed-methods methodology, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, to facilitate a thorough assessment of the ESD model. The

study's structure encompasses three principal stages: a needs assessment, model formulation, and a limited-scale pilot implementation.

Initially, the research undertakes a survey of the existing conditions of English language acquisition among Grade 3 pupils, utilizing a questionnaire to ascertain both the obstacles and the prospects inherent in the cultivation of communicative competencies. Based on the survey results and relevant theories, this study then creates an ESD procedure and lesson plans. These plans include age-appropriate activities designed to fit the cognitive and developmental needs of third-grade students. Finally, the model undergoes piloting and evaluation, employing both quantitative and qualitative metrics.

3.2. Participants and Scope

The study was conducted at a private language centre in Hanoi during Semester 1 of the 2025–2026 academic year, from September to December 2025. The survey phase included 33 Grade 3 students and their parents. The initial phase of the study included ten students over a four-week period. This small group is appropriate for a pilot study, which aims to evaluate the model's feasibility, gather initial qualitative data on student involvement and reactions, and allow for close monitoring with the ability to make changes during the implementation.

3.3. Data Collection Tools

Three primary instruments were used to gather multi-dimensional data about the effectiveness of ESD. A 22-item questionnaire, employing a 5-point Likert scale, was administered to gauge the frequency of English usage, communication challenges encountered, and students' perspectives and aspirations concerning English language acquisition. This instrument was developed in accordance with prior investigations into language anxiety and learning motivation (Ramarow & Hassan, 2021; Februansyah, 2022), with modifications implemented to accommodate the Vietnamese educational setting and the primary school demographic. Furthermore, an observation checklist was utilized to document four dimensions of student conduct during English for Specific Purposes (ESD): participation level (quantified by the frequency of verbal contributions and interactions), confidence (assessed through vocal projection and nonverbal cues), communication quality (measured by fluency and grammatical accuracy), and learning attitude (evaluated through engagement and collaborative efforts). Each dimension was assessed using a three-tiered descriptive scale: Below Standard, Meets Standard, and Good, thus facilitating educators' capacity to monitor and document student performance throughout the activities without causing disruption. A speaking skills rubric was developed, incorporating three criteria assessed on a 1–10 scale: Fluency, which gauged the capacity to speak continuously with minimal interruptions; Accuracy, which assessed pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar at a Grade 3 level; and Confidence, which entailed observing voice projection, eye contact, and overall conduct during speaking exercises. The rubric was developed by adapting international speaking assessment rubrics (Saad et al., 2025), with adjustments.

3.4. Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the survey and speaking assessments were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Given

the small sample size in the pilot phase ($n = 10$), inferential statistical tests were not applied. Analysis focused on describing trends in the indicators before and after ESD participation.

Content analysis was employed to examine qualitative data derived from the observation checklist, thereby revealing patterns in participation, student responses, and significant occurrences throughout the practice sessions. This methodology serves to illuminate dimensions that resist quantification, including shifts in attitude, the nature of spontaneous interaction, and the overall classroom environment.

3.5. Experimental Procedure

The pilot was conducted over four weeks, with one 60-minute ESD session per week on the topic of "Family." This topic was selected because it connects directly to students' personal experience, allowing them to draw on background knowledge when participating in communication.

Each ESD session followed a three-part structure. The warm-up phase (10 minutes) included greeting activities, group singing (Finger Family Song), and a quick vocabulary check to establish a positive atmosphere and prepare students mentally. The main part of the lesson, lasting forty to fifty minutes, included three main activities: Family Vocabulary Matching, Introduce My Family — Show and Tell, and Family Role Play. These activities were designed to help students practice vocabulary, sentence structures, and their ability to communicate. The wrap-up and feedback phase (10–15 minutes) included teacher comments, student sharing, and acknowledgement of participation. Before the pilot began, all 10 students completed a pre-test speaking assessment using the rubric. Over the four-week period, educators documented advancements through the weekly observation checklist. Following the conclusion of the fourth week, students undertook a post-test speaking assessment designed to evaluate shifts in Fluency, Accuracy, and Confidence.

3.6. Reliability and Research Ethics

To strengthen reliability, the study used data triangulation by combining multiple information sources: survey data, observation records, and speaking assessments. This method combined different types of information, including survey results, observational notes, and assessments of oral skills. Assessment instruments underwent preliminary testing with a limited cohort, followed by modifications to ensure their appropriateness for the participants' age and language proficiency. The educator, who was experienced in teaching English to children, carried out both the observation and assessment procedures. The supervising lecturer then verified these procedures to ensure consistency. Concerning ethical considerations, the research adhered to established guidelines for studies involving child participants. Before the study began, the language center approved the project, and parents were fully informed about the study's goals, methods, and what would happen. Parents could remove their child from the program at any time. All student data was kept private, used solely for research purposes. Each ESD activity was meticulously designed to prioritize safety, be appropriate for the participants' ages, and prevent any possible psychological distress.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. *Current State of English Communication Learning in Grade 3*

Survey results from 33 students and parents provide a fairly comprehensive picture of the current state of English communication learning at one language centre in Hanoi. The majority of students (84.8%) attended supplementary English classes outside school, reflecting parental concern for improving children's English proficiency. However, daily English use among students did not reflect the volume of supplementary learning time invested.

Regarding frequency of English use, results show that most students used English only occasionally in both daily life and in class. The number of people who communicated regularly was small, while a large group rarely or never used English outside of formal classes. This suggests that students didn't have many chances to practice, and they hadn't developed a consistent habit of using the language.

The students' listening comprehension skills were generally basic, with many only able to understand simple sentences spoken by the teacher. When asked how well they understood English spoken in class, only 21.2% of the students said they understood everything. In contrast, 75.8% said they understood some of it, and 3% reported significant difficulty. These results highlight the students' limited listening abilities and suggest a need for more varied listening activities.

Confidence in peer communication was also low. Most students were reluctant to interact or used English only in familiar contexts. Psychological factors were the main obstacles to spoken communication. Specifically, 54.5% of the students reported difficulties with pronunciation. In addition, 36.4% of the participants expressed concern about making mistakes and being ridiculed, and 39.4% reported feeling self-conscious when speaking. Furthermore, 30.3% of the students indicated challenges in understanding their interlocutors, thereby highlighting limitations in listening comprehension.

Regarding the most challenging aspect of English communication, 54.5% of the students pinpointed communicative reflexes, implying that a majority had not cultivated the capacity to process language with flexibility in dynamic contexts. Listening comprehension was the second most frequently cited difficulty, at 45.5%. In contrast, only 24.2% of the students considered speaking itself to be the most challenging skill. This suggests that they found the creation of simple sentences less difficult than the ability to quickly understand or respond. Notably, only 39.4% of the students reported having a practice partner for spoken English. This indicates that most students didn't have a natural setting for communication outside of class. As a result, this situation hindered the development of speaking reflexes, the practice of correct pronunciation, and the establishment of regular language interaction habits. Despite these challenges, the survey also revealed positive signals regarding student attitudes and motivation. The majority of students reported positive experiences with speaking exercises, displayed enthusiasm for in-class practice, and expressed a preference for increased opportunities to utilize the language. Students showed they understood how important communication is for learning English, considering it a basic skill. Furthermore, the high level of interest in participating in an extended program like

"English Speaking Day" indicated that students were not merely interested but were actively pursuing interactive learning environments.

4.2. ESD Design Process and Outputs

Drawing on theoretical foundations and survey findings, the study developed an ESD organisational process consisting of two main phases with five specific steps.

The preparation phase comprises two steps. The first step is defining the objectives of the activity, in which the teacher analyses students' entry-level competence and identifies the type of speaking skills to be practised, the specific focus, sentence structures that can be applied, and appropriate communicative situations. Objectives must align with the Grade 3 English curriculum, the cognitive abilities of the students, and the requirements for developing communicative competence. The next step is to create speaking assessment criteria that cover three main areas: Fluency, Accuracy, and Confidence, with each area scored on a scale from 1 to 10.

The implementation of the activity is then divided into two separate stages. The initial stage encompasses warm-up exercises and the activation of pre-existing knowledge. This involves a warm-up game intended to cultivate positive emotional engagement, a lead-in activity that employs a concise video, picture book, or image-based queries to introduce the core theme, and language input delivered through vocabulary, sentence structures, or uncomplicated dialogues. The subsequent stage centers on communicative practice, utilizing a variety of formats including Pair Talk/Group Talk, Role Play, and Mini Presentation. At this stage, the instructor's main role is to observe and offer help, rather than directly correcting mistakes. This approach aims to prevent interruptions in the natural flow of speech. The concluding phase necessitates the provision of feedback and the reinforcement of acquired knowledge. This is achieved through direct feedback, which specifically targets prevalent errors, and indirect feedback delivered via mini-games. Subsequently, students engage in the consolidation of their understanding and acknowledge their involvement. The result of this stage is a thorough ESD lesson plan, focused on the "Family" theme, specifically designed for third-grade students. This plan outlines a 60-minute lesson, which includes several activities: an introductory segment comprising Greeting and Getting Ready (3 minutes), Song and Action — Finger Family (5 minutes), and Quick Check — Point and Say (2 minutes); a central activity section featuring Family Vocabulary Matching (8–10 minutes), Introduce My Family — Show and Tell (12–15 minutes), and Family Role Play (10–12 minutes); and a concluding segment for student feedback and teacher observations. Each activity is carefully structured with clearly defined objectives, comprehensive organizational guidelines, and sample teacher language, thus ensuring its practical utility in genuine classroom settings.

4.3. Pilot Results

The four-week pilot program, which included ten students, showed clear improvements in both English communication skills and attitudes toward learning. An analysis of the data, based on tests given before and after the program, revealed significant progress in all three areas of speaking that were evaluated. In terms of vocabulary retention and recognition, most students

showed a strong ability to remember words from the "Family" thematic unit. Those who learned the material quickly were able to correctly identify words after seeing them once. In contrast, other students needed to see the words several times before they could recall them accurately.

The integration of visual cues and paired practice sessions was shown to be effective. Concerning the employment of communicative sentence structures, the majority of students demonstrated accurate utilization of fundamental patterns when introducing family members. Roughly 40% of the cohort successfully expanded their introductions by incorporating supplementary details, including age, hobbies, or succinct descriptions, thereby illustrating not only linguistic reproduction but also adaptable application within genuine communicative scenarios.

Figure 1: Week 1 vs Week 4 Speaking Scores

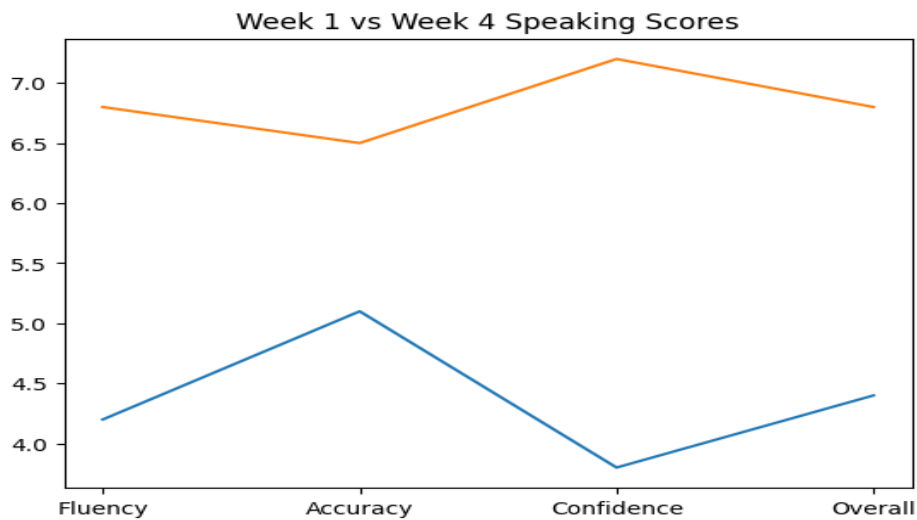
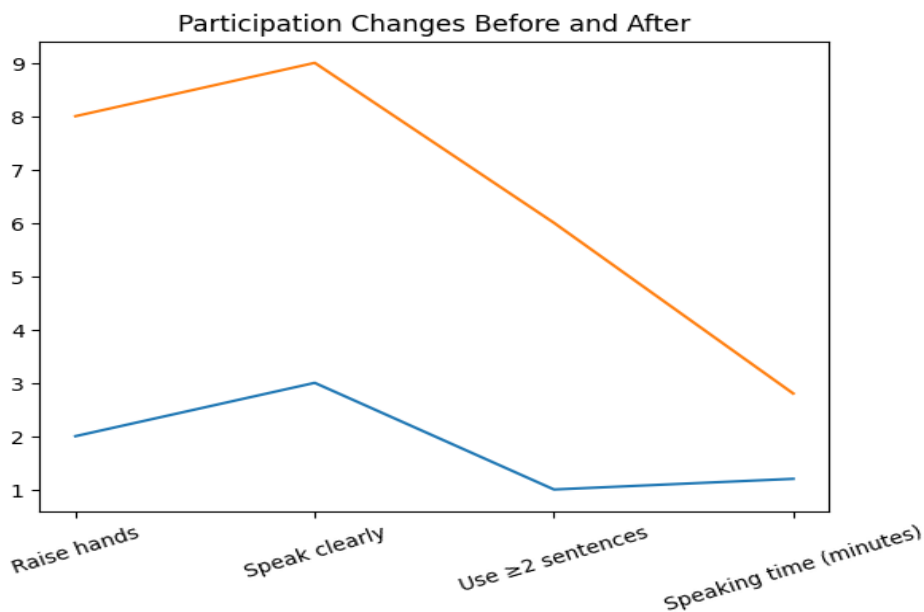


Figure 2: Participation Changes Before and After



Mean scores across the 10 students show steady improvement over four weeks. For Fluency, the mean increased from 4.2 ± 1.3 (Week 1) to 6.8 ± 1.1 (Week 4), a gain of 2.6 points. For Accuracy, scores increased from 5.1 ± 0.9 to 6.5 ± 0.8 , a gain of 1.4 points. Confidence

showed the highest improvement at 3.4 points, rising from 3.8 ± 1.5 to 7.2 ± 1.0 . The overall mean improved by 2.4 points, from 4.4 ± 1.2 to 6.8 ± 0.9 . Qualitative observation data document substantial changes in participation behaviour. The number of students volunteering to speak increased from 2 out of 10 (20%) in Week 1 to 8 out of 10 (80%) in Week 4. The number speaking audibly and clearly increased from 3 to 9 out of 10. The number using two or more sentences in their introductions increased from 1 to 6 out of 10. Mean speaking time per student also increased substantially, from 1.2 minutes to 2.8 minutes. Regarding confidence, observation records show clear changes. Students actively volunteered, stood up more readily to speak, and spoke more clearly than in regular lessons. Students who had previously been reticent also showed progress when practising in pairs before presenting to the class. The use of real family photographs helped students feel at ease, producing a relaxed psychological state when speaking about a familiar topic. Learning attitudes and engagement also improved substantially. Student feedback in the end-of-session sharing phase showed that students enjoyed ESD activities, liked talking about their families, enjoyed listening to their classmates' presentations, and found the sessions relaxed but engaging. Classroom energy remained positive, with students actively participating throughout each session.

4.4. Discussion

4.4.1. Effectiveness of the ESD Model on Communicative Skills

Preliminary results indicate that the ESD model exerted a beneficial effect on the English communicative proficiency of Grade 3 students, particularly with respect to psychological and behavioral changes. The most notable result was the improvement in Confidence, which saw a 3.4-point increase; this finding is consistent with the observations of Sinaga (2018) and Februanayah (2022), who emphasized the importance of stable practice settings in reducing language-related anxiety. This is particularly important, given that confidence is fundamental to the acquisition of other communicative skills and represents the primary obstacle for primary school students when using English. Furthermore, the improvement in Fluency, with a 2.6-point increase, indicates that students began to exhibit a greater capacity for sustained speech and a reduction in hesitation. This finding supports Swain's (1995) Output Hypothesis. This hypothesis suggests that producing language helps learners strengthen their understanding and improve their ability to use language in real-world situations. Within the ESD paradigm, exercises such as family introductions and role-playing scenarios offered avenues for both prolonged and concentrated speaking practice.

Accuracy improved by a more modest 1.4 points, which is lower than the gains in Confidence and Fluency. This may reflect the fact that developing precision in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar requires a longer timeframe and more detailed teacher feedback. The improvement nonetheless indicates that ESD had a positive effect on language quality, supporting not only more frequent speech but also more accurate speech. The substantial increase in voluntary participation (from 20% to 80%) and in mean speaking time (from 1.2 to 2.8 minutes) reflects changes in motivation and learning attitude. In accordance with Ramarow and Hassan's (2021) findings regarding the influence of authentic practice settings on fostering

student autonomy, the incorporation of the "Family" theme, which directly relates to personal experiences, facilitated student comfort and engagement in sharing. This approach aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) assertion that language acquisition is optimized through significant social interactions.

4.4.2. How This ESD Model Differs from Similar Models

Compared with the "English Day" activities currently used in some Vietnamese private schools, this ESD model has several distinctive characteristics. First, regarding frequency, the model proposes regular weekly or monthly implementation rather than one or two events per year, which supports continuity in practice and the formation of stable English use habits. Moreover, the model's focus on small groups, consisting of 10 to 15 students, rather than the entire school, ensures that each student has a real chance to participate and receive focused attention. Third, regarding objectives, the model is practice-oriented rather than performance-oriented, reducing psychological pressure on students. Fourth, regarding evaluation, the model includes clear assessment criteria and progress tracking, measuring effectiveness systematically rather than simply organising activities.

A further distinguishing feature is that this model is grounded in second language acquisition theory and communicative language teaching methodology, combined with an analysis of Vietnamese students' English learning conditions. The activities are crafted to align with the developmental stage of third graders. This approach guarantees a suitable level of difficulty, fostering engagement through games, interactive elements, and subjects they already know.

4.4.3. Limitations and Future Directions

The study has several limitations that bear on the interpretation of results. First, regarding representativeness, the sample was drawn from a private language centre where students have the means to attend supplementary classes. The sample does not encompass public school students, those from rural locales, or individuals representing diverse socioeconomic strata. Variations in resources, teacher proficiency, and learning environments could significantly alter the outcomes within these settings. Moreover, regarding statistical validity, the small sample size ($n = 10$) prevents the utilization of inferential statistical techniques or the extrapolation of findings. The results are exploratory in nature, suggesting initial improvement trends; they do not establish the statistical superiority of ESD relative to other methodologies.

In addition, the absence of a concurrent control group presents a challenge in attributing the observed progress to ESD, rather than to factors such as students' intrinsic development, the impact of other learning experiences, or the Hawthorne effect, which is the improvement resulting from students' awareness of being observed.

Fourth, the brief timeframe of four weeks is inadequate for evaluating the enduring effects of ESD on overall English proficiency or the retention of acquired skills. Fifth, the restriction to a single thematic focus (My Family) does not assess the model's efficacy across diverse subjects or throughout a complete academic year. Consequently, these constraints necessitate that the findings be interpreted as preliminary indications of viability and promise, rather than definitive

proof of efficacy. Future studies should include a larger group of participants, ideally 80 to 120 students, from at least four different schools. This should include two public schools and two private schools.

The study's timeframe should be extended to 8–12 months, and it should incorporate well-defined experimental and control groups. Assessment should utilize more rigorous methodologies, including standardized pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests, thorough interviews with educators and parents, and systematic observation protocols that exhibit established inter-rater reliability. Monitoring students' English language proficiency over one and two years subsequent to the commencement of ESD would enable the evaluation of the durability of observed improvements. Furthermore, a comparative analysis of ESD against alternative instructional approaches, such as Task-Based Language Teaching or CLIL, while controlling for extraneous variables, would yield valuable insights.

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

This study developed an English Speaking Day process and lesson plan suitable for Grade 3 students, and provided initial evidence of the model's feasibility in the context of a Vietnamese language centre. Drawing on theoretical foundations in second language acquisition, communicative language teaching, and the developmental characteristics of primary school learners, the study produced a systematic ESD model with a clear organisational procedure, concrete assessment tools, and detailed lesson plans ready for immediate application. The pilot results show that ESD had a positive effect on students' confidence, fluency, and learning attitudes over a short period. Speaking scores improved across all three criteria, with Confidence showing the highest gain at 3.4 points. The substantial increases in voluntary participation, speaking time, and communication quality reflect the potential of the model to create a natural English practice environment and reduce psychological barriers to foreign language use.

However, given the limitations of sample size ($n = 10$), duration (four weeks), and the absence of a control group, these results are exploratory and cannot be generalised. The study cannot establish ESD's long-term effectiveness or compare it with other methods. Future research should expand the scale, extend the timeframe, and use more rigorous experimental designs with clear control groups to provide more persuasive evidence.

The main contribution of this study lies in developing a theoretically grounded, contextually appropriate ESD process for Vietnam, providing detailed sample lesson plans for immediate use, collecting real data on the state of English communication learning among Grade 3 students, and proposing a development roadmap with specific implementation recommendations for different school types.

The model has potential as a useful approach to strengthening English practice environments in primary schools, helping students move closer to using English as a regular communication tool rather than simply a school subject. Achieving this sustainably requires

long-term investment in teacher training, materials development, and institutional commitment. Schools with conditions similar to private schools and language centres can pilot the model following the developed procedure, starting at monthly frequency and increasing over time. For public schools with larger classes and more limited resources, the ESD format should be adapted within regular lesson time, dividing classes into small groups and minimising materials requirements. A sustainable development pathway should proceed through three stages: piloting and adjustment in the first six months, scaling up in the following six months, and maintaining and developing the model from the second academic year onwards.

This study opens further research directions on English Speaking Day in Vietnamese primary education and provides a practical basis for the reform of communicative English language teaching, contributing to improvements in foreign language education quality and the development of a workforce with the competences needed for international engagement.

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