

Enhancing Speaking Skills of Non-English Major Students: Evaluating the Impact of Sociodramatic Games

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Abstract

This study examines the efficacy of sociodrama games as a method for improving English speaking skills among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in Indonesia, specifically in accounting and financial institutions departments. The research utilizes a descriptive qualitative design to explore the implementation of sociodrama games by an English teacher and assess their impact on students' speaking abilities. Participants include one English teacher and three eleventh-grade students specializing in accounting and financial institutions, selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered via observations and interviews and analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive and continuous techniques for qualitative data analysis. The results reveal that sociodrama games significantly enhance students' motivation, self-confidence, active participation, and speaking skills in English language learning. Particularly noteworthy is the progress observed at SMKN 1 Rejotangan. The study concludes that sociodrama games are a compelling and effective teaching strategy, substantially benefiting students' development in English speaking proficiency.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, sociodrama games, motivation, speaking skills

INTRODUCTION

In the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, proficiency in the English language is crucial, especially for students in sectors like accounting and financial institutions, as highlighted by [Elbes and Oktaviani \(2022\)](#) and [Spöttl and Windelband \(2021\)](#). This proficiency is vital for international communication in a globalized world where clients may hail from diverse countries. However, teaching English speaking skills to EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in Indonesia is challenging, as noted by [Andini et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Pratolo et al. \(2019\)](#). Factors impeding English fluency include both linguistic aspects—such as limited vocabulary, incorrect pronunciation, and inadequate grammar ([Amoah & Yeboah, 2021](#); [Riadil, 2020](#))—and non-linguistic issues like anxiety,

embarrassment, and lack of motivation (Gürbüz & Cabaroğlu, 2021; Mulyono et al., 2019; Ritonga et al., 2020).

At SMKN 1 Rejotangan, students in accounting and financial institutions face similar difficulties, with low self-esteem and a restricted vocabulary affecting their willingness to engage in English conversation. The challenge for educators is to identify effective methods to improve these students' oral communication skills. One promising approach is sociodramatic play, as suggested by Nehe (2019), Suarni et al. (2022), and Taufan (2020). Sociodramatic play initially recognized as a form of symbolic play where children participate in group dramatizations (Celume et al., 2019; Stavrou, 2019), extends its relevance to second language acquisition for learners of all ages (Bengochea et al., 2020; Bengochea & Gort, 2022; Currin et al., 2020). This method fosters interactive learning, cultural awareness, and practical life skills (Batista, 2020; Ramalho, 2021) and helps shy students enhance their communication abilities (Lorenzetti & Kruger, 2020; Malloy, 2021; Sugiarto & Awalya, 2022). Through scenarios like handling customer complaints at a bank or managing ATM card issues, sociodramatic play engages students and aids in overcoming their English communication barriers.

This study introduces an innovative approach to teaching speaking skills in the academic fields of accounting and finance, employing sociodrama as a key methodology. This approach represents a novel direction in the academic literature, setting itself apart from the predominant focus on childhood education or individual motivation seen in previous studies. It diverges from the general emphasis on childhood education found in Loizou et al. (2019) work, as well as the concentration on motivation and personal speeches in Sawyer and Brooks's (2021) research. This study specifically explores the application of sociodrama within a financial context, aiming to bridge the gap in the existing literature by demonstrating how sociodrama can be applied in specialized and practical settings such as accounting and financial institutions.

Building upon Rama and Lubis's (2023) insights into the benefits of sociodrama for English language motivation, this research pivots to concentrate on speaking skills within the financial realm. The primary goal is to understand how sociodrama can be effectively utilized to teach speaking skills pertinent to accounting and finance. This focus addresses a notable deficiency in previous research, which has not thoroughly explored the application of sociodrama in such specific contexts. This research not only fills a gap in the literature on the use of sociodrama in accounting and finance education but also significantly contributes to the broader discourse on English language education and innovative teaching methodologies in academic settings. The unique contribution of this study lies in its specific examination of the financial context, offering fresh perspectives on teaching effective speaking skills in this area.

Moreover, this study is of great importance for education in the fields of accounting and finance. It provides educators with new ideas for incorporating sociodrama into financial education curricula, promoting a more interactive and engaging learning experience. The research underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to financial education, one that encompasses both theoretical knowledge and the development of vital communication skills required in today's financial world. Hence, the primary contribution of this research is to expand the use and application of sociodrama within financial

education, presenting an innovative and effective method for teaching essential speaking skills in the contemporary accounting and finance sectors.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive methodology, a type of study that accurately describes events or phenomena without modifying the conditions observed in field research (Creswell, 2008; Sugiyono, 2018). The study was conducted at SMKN 1 Rejotangan, focusing on an English teacher and three students from the accounting and financial institution department's eleventh grade. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the research sample, chosen due to the small number of subjects. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the information and a detailed understanding of the interaction dynamics between the teacher and students, which is essential for grasping the nuances of the learning process.

Data collection methods included observation and interviews. The data analysis was conducted using an interactive and continuous process for qualitative data analysis (Miles et al., 2019). This technique involves three key steps: (1) Data Reduction, where data is simplified, selected, and focused, particularly on the main themes emerging from observations and interviews concerning the use of sociodrama in teaching. (2) Data Display, which involves presenting the reduced data in a comprehensible format, such as narratives, to facilitate pattern and relationship identification. (3) Conclusion Drawing/Verification of Data, where conclusions are drawn from the data. This stage involves evaluating the data to understand the impact of sociodrama games on teaching speaking skills in the accounting and financial institution departments and assessing their benefits. The analysis aimed to examine the process and impact of implementing sociodrama games in teaching speaking skills within this specific department, providing insights into their effectiveness and the dynamics of their application in an educational setting.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Observation

Teaching Activity Using Sociodramatic Games Sociodramatic games have been chosen for speaking lessons at SMKN 1 Rejotangan. During interviews, the teacher explained the process of using sociodramatic games in teaching as follows:

Before commencing the teaching process, I always greet my students and check attendance. I also provide a brief explanation of the learning objectives. Then, I begin to explain the material briefly through a PowerPoint presentation. I elaborate on how they engage in speaking activities through sociodramatic games, providing them with examples. I divide the students into groups and ask them to note down important points they may want to convey during the sociodramatic enactment according to the specified theme. Once the preparations are complete, I instruct the students to practice orally in the classroom and appreciate their roles according to the theme. In the concluding activity, after the practice session, we reflect on the teaching and learning activities that have taken place. (T-P1)

Classroom observations were conducted to witness the teaching and learning process directly utilizing sociodramatic games, as well as to understand the benefits of sociodrama in this context.

In the classroom, the teacher introduced handling customer complaints at banks using a PowerPoint presentation, setting the stage with a sociodrama scenario. This approach sparked engaging discussions among students on topics like failed transfers and ATM issues. Students were then grouped to delve into creating their own sociodramas, actively participating in crafting scenarios that mimicked real-life banking situations. The teacher's involvement in guiding these discussions ensured that each student was engaged, fostering an inclusive and collaborative learning environment. (Class-Observation)

During the sociodrama sessions, students role-played scenarios involving customer complaints at a bank, taking on various roles, such as customers, bank officers, and supervisors. Their performances, enriched with realistic dialogues and actions, demonstrated effective complaint handling and communication under pressure. After each presentation, the class engaged in a constructive feedback session, where both peers and the teacher assessed problem-solving skills, communication clarity, and acting. (Class-Observation)

This exercise not only honed their acting skills but also emphasized teamwork and collaborative problem-solving. Students worked together to create storylines, assign roles, and support each other, simultaneously developing critical thinking and active listening skills vital for their future professional endeavors.

The Benefits of Using Sociodramatic Games in Teaching Speaking Skills.

In education, innovative and engaging teaching methods are crucial for enhancing the quality of learning. One such method is the use of sociodramatic play in teaching speaking skills. This method has received positive feedback from both the teacher and students. The teacher explains the rationale for using this method in the learning process as follows:

I feel that using sociodrama can train students in solving problems they will encounter in their future work environment. When they are placed in positions that simulate the real world, such as a workplace and receive training for it, it can help them, especially when dealing with customers and the surrounding environment. Thus, the ability to communicate and handle situations becomes important. (T-P2)

From the interview, the teacher conveyed that the use of sociodrama in teaching speaking skills provides significant benefits. Students are placed in positions that allow them to practice speaking and interacting in ways that closely resemble real-life experiences. This is seen as a valuable training opportunity for handling communication situations in the workplace, especially in interactions with customers and community members. The teacher believes these skills are crucial for success in the workplace, and using sociodrama is an innovative way to help students develop them. Based on observations, students showed a marked increase in participation and engagement in learning through sociodrama activities focused on banking scenarios. In one activity,

students took on the roles of bank staff and customers facing these banking issues. Those playing bank staff had to overcome various challenges and complaints from customers, as portrayed by other students.

The teacher acted as an observer and provided constructive feedback, helping students understand and improve their communication and problem-solving skills. As a result, students not only gained a deep understanding of banking operations but also developed vital skills like empathy, conflict resolution, and effective communication. This activity also provided insight into the dynamics of the banking sector's workplace, better preparing them for their future. Thus, this method contributes positively to student learning, preparing them for future challenges. From the student's perspective on the benefits of implementing sociodrama in terms of learning motivation, one student explained:

Engaging in sociodramatic play has significantly boosted my motivation to actively participate in class, particularly in practicing English. The interactive nature of these activities compels me to converse in English with my classmates, enhancing my language skills and engagement. (S1-P3)

From the students' viewpoint, the implementation of sociodrama offers positive benefits, particularly in enhancing learning motivation. This occurs because they need to speak English with their peers during the sociodrama practice. This is supported by observations conducted, where the application of the sociodrama method in English language learning in the classroom appears to have a significant positive impact. Students show increased motivation and engagement in the learning process. They are more enthusiastic about participating in learning activities, especially when they are directly involved in sociodrama games. A specific example observed was when students played roles in a short drama themed around everyday life related to customer complaints at a bank. Through the roles they played, students had to speak in English, indirectly training their speaking and listening abilities. Thus, sociodrama enhances the learning spirit and motivates students to participate more actively in the learning process. Regarding the benefits of implementing sociodrama from the perspective of self-confidence, one student elaborated:

The sociodramatic approach has significantly boosted our enthusiasm and confidence. Engaging in these lively classroom activities has not only made learning more enjoyable but has also remarkably diminished our nervousness. This method has transformed our approach to tackling complex issues, fostering a more confident and proactive attitude in us. (S2-P4)

In this quote, the student describes that the implementation of sociodrama is beneficial for their confidence levels. They feel more enthusiastic and confident because classroom activities become more enjoyable, especially through sociodrama games. Students note that this experience helps reduce their nervousness, increasing confidence and participation in learning. Observation results related to the benefits of implementing sociodrama in the classroom show an increase in students' learning spirit and motivation in the learning process. In its application, sociodrama provides space for students to develop their communication skills, build self-confidence, and overcome discomfort in

speaking publicly. Thus, viewed from its benefits, sociodrama can influence classroom dynamics and its positive impact, as explained by the teacher:

Teaching through sociodramatic play also makes it easier for me to convey content and achieve learning objectives because students are more likely to understand and remember the material when they are not only receiving it but also practicing it. (T-P5)

Involving students in sociodrama games makes the teaching process more effective. The teacher states that students tend to understand and remember learning materials more easily when they are not just passively receiving information but actively practicing or playing sociodrama. Based on observations, in accounting and finance learning, students can engage in sociodrama that simulates common banking situations, such as handling failed transfers, errors in mobile banking, and ATM PIN blocking. Students playing the role of bank employees have to handle these various scenarios, serving 'customers' also played by other students. Through these active roles, students not only understand theoretical concepts but also apply their knowledge in practical situations often encountered in the banking world. This approach positively impacts their understanding of everyday financial operations, as well as developing interpersonal skills and problem-solving abilities. This is also supported by a student through the following interview:

This teaching method using sociodrama has greatly enhanced our grasp of daily financial operations, and it's been instrumental in developing our interpersonal and problem-solving skills. As one student noted in an interview, 'The learning experience through sociodramatic play is highly effective. My classmates and I find the material more accessible, and it also offers us a valuable opportunity to practice our English-speaking skills in class. (S3-P5)

From the statements of the teacher and students regarding sociodrama, it's evident that it can enhance classroom dynamics. Students also confirm this benefit by stating that learning through sociodrama makes understanding the material easier and provides opportunities to practice speaking English in class. Thus, it is clear that sociodrama enriches the learning experience and improves students' English communication skills. In summary, integrating sociodramatic play in teaching speaking skills offers significant benefits from both the teachers' and students' perspectives. From the teacher's viewpoint, this method effectively trains students to solve problems and communicate, especially in the workplace context. The teacher believes that real-life situations provide valuable training for facing future communication situations. From the student's side, sociodrama increases learning motivation as students feel more active and involved in practicing speaking English with their peers.

Discussion

Based on interviews with the teacher and students regarding the benefits of using sociodrama games in teaching speaking skills, it is evident that both the teacher and students have provided positive feedback. The teacher has stated that sociodrama games can ignite students' enthusiasm, and students appear to enjoy classroom activities more. This positive view aligns with [Nehe's \(2019\)](#) research, which shows that learning through

sociodrama games effectively encourages students to speak in groups and boosts learning motivation. Previous research also emphasizes the importance of student enthusiasm as an indicator of quality learning and effective teaching (Berliani & Wangid, 2022; Gani & Zulaikhah, 2022; Rosyad et al., 2022).

The teacher also revealed that sociodrama games help students become more active and confident in class. This is supported by student interview results, which indicate that they feel more spirited, confident, and active by participating in class exercises. Identified challenges, such as limited opportunities for students to express emotions and thoughts in class, hinder students' enthusiasm for speaking English (Richards, 2022). Emphasizes the importance of teachers finding the right strategies to develop students' speaking skills, particularly considering their future careers (Jackson & Tomlinson, 2020; Poláková et al., 2023; Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2020; Listyani & Kristie, (2018)). Therefore, the teacher using sociodrama games in the classroom is considered a strategy to improve speaking skills and overcome these challenges.

The teacher also explained that teaching through sociodrama games makes it easier for them to convey material, a statement supported by student interviews indicating that they understand the material better through the teaching and learning process that involves sociodrama games. They emphasized that classroom activities focus not only on delivering material but also on practical exercises. Therefore, this research offers significant advantages over previous studies that used sociodrama games to improve speaking skills. Unlike the research by Loizou et al. (2019), which focused on the role of teachers in sociodrama games for young children, and Sawyer and Brooks (2021) on the impact of sociodrama on personal speech and preschoolers' motivation, this study specifically examines the effects of sociodrama on motivation and speaking skills among older students. Furthermore, this study goes beyond the scope of the experimental research of Rama and Lubis (2023) with limited samples, providing broader insights into the effects of sociodrama on activity, self-confidence, and enjoyment in learning, contributing to improving students' motivation and speaking skills. Thus, this study provides more comprehensive evidence of the effectiveness of sociodrama in education, especially in the context of learning speaking skills, which is a crucial aspect of language education.

Consequently, this research has significant implications in the context of teaching speaking skills through the use of sociodrama games. The positive findings from interviews with the teacher and students suggest that sociodrama enhances students' spirit and enthusiasm and helps them become more active, confident, and enjoy classroom activities. These implications create opportunities for developing more effective learning strategies, particularly in increasing student motivation to develop their speaking skills. Additionally, emphasizing the practical aspects and enjoyable teaching shows that integrating sociodrama games can offer a more holistic and engaging approach to delivering lesson material. These implications can contribute to designing more innovative curricula and teaching methods, focusing on developing students' interpersonal skills. Furthermore, this research opens the door for deeper studies and practical applications of this learning strategy at various educational levels.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of sociodrama in SMKN 1 Rejotangan has shown significant results in enhancing the speaking skills of students, particularly in the Accounting and Financial Institutions department. This method has been effective in building enthusiasm, self-confidence, and active participation among students, as well as aiding them in understanding concepts related to their future careers in the sector. The use of structured strategies, such as greetings, attendance checks, clear communication of learning objectives, and the utilization of PowerPoint, has enriched the students' learning experience. The implications of these findings indicate that sociodrama can be a valuable learning tool, not only in this context but also in various other educational settings. However, this study also faced some challenges and limitations. Firstly, the research has not yet fully elucidated how sociodrama affects various aspects of student learning holistically. Secondly, there are limitations in measuring the improvement of speaking skills objectively, given the complexity and subjectivity in assessing language skills. Therefore, further research is recommended to employ more systematic and comprehensive assessment methods. Involving a broader and more diverse sample would help strengthen the validity of these findings. By acknowledging these limitations, this study not only contributes significantly to educational practice but also paves the way for further research that can expand and deepen our understanding of the effectiveness of sociodrama in education.

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