

Enhancing Speaking Skills through English Mini Drama Contest on Narrative Text for Junior High School

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Abstract: *Speaking skill mastery is a key component of Indonesia's English curriculum, yet many junior high school students continue to face difficulties in speaking skills. This study aimed to improve students' speaking skills through the implementation of English Mini Drama Contest (EMDC) using Classroom Action Research (CAR) among 31 third-year students at a junior high school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The data were collected through speaking tests, interviews, and observations. The speaking test rubric was validated through expert judgement involving two English education lecturers and an English teacher, while the trustworthiness of the qualitative findings was ensured through method triangulation. The results show that students' speaking scores improve from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. Observations also indicate increase students' participation. Moreover, interviews with the students revealed that EMDC fostered interest, creativity, and emotional responses. The findings suggest that EMDC is a suitable classroom innovation strategy for improving students' speaking skills, as it provides scaffolding and classroom management that create sufficient opportunities to practice the language. Future studies may investigate different types of scaffolding and classroom management practices in EMDC to further support students' speaking development.*

Keywords: *English Mini Drama Contest; Narrative Text; Speaking skills*

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INTRODUCTION

English is an international language, and mastering it provides a competitive advantage. Individuals with strong English proficiency have better opportunities for career advancement and personal growth. Language mastery has become a key requirement in education and professional life, as it encompasses not only reading and writing but also speaking and listening (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014). Speaking skills are essential in the 21st century, particularly for junior high school students in Indonesia, where English is a compulsory subject in the national curriculum (BSKAP, 2025). Mastery of speaking is crucial for achieving learning outcomes. According to the Phase D learning outcomes for junior high school students in the speaking-listening component, students are expected to express ideas using English in various types of texts orally about the topics discussed (BSKAP, 2025). However, despite the importance of English-speaking skills, many students have not yet achieved these outcomes, particularly when dealing with narrative texts. Students often require multiple repetitions to understand the content, struggle to retell the entire stories, and find it difficult to learn speaking and listening skills through narrative materials (Khoir et al., 2024).

A similar situation was observed at a junior high school in Yogyakarta. During a four-month teaching assistantship under the *Kampus Mengajar* program, several challenges in students' speaking skills were identified, particularly in learning narrative texts. One of the initial challenges observed was students' difficulty in comprehending spoken English during classroom activities, which led the teacher to use Indonesian to facilitate understanding. This aligns with previous studies in Indonesian junior high schools, which found that many students have difficulty understanding word meanings and often rely on their mother tongue during class discussions (Holandyah et al., 2022; Katemba & Barus, 2024; Rizqiyanti, 2023; Rusdin & Purwati, 2023; Sayow & Marsevani, 2024).

In addition, students frequently mispronounced English words, requiring ongoing corrective feedback from the teacher. This finding is consistent with previous studies conducted in similar EFL contexts, which report that students often experience persistent difficulties in pronunciation, require repeated correction, and struggle to accurately produce English sounds (Elisathusilawani, 2023; Fadila & Trisno, 2025; Lingga et al., 2020; Nangimah, 2020; Tikiawati et al., 2024). Another challenge identified during the learning process was students' frequent requests for assistance with vocabulary, particularly when access to mobile phones was restricted. This finding is consistent with earlier research indicating that Indonesian junior high school students generally possess limited vocabulary knowledge (Hidayati et al., 2022; M. Labib Al Halim et al., 2025; Sahid et al., 2024; Salim et al., 2023; Sihombing et al., 2025).

Students' limited speaking fluency was also evident in their tendency to pause frequently or lose track of what to say next. This is in line with previous studies reporting that students frequently face difficulties maintaining fluency and often fall silent when

speaking (Franscy & Ramli, 2022; Perkasa et al., 2022; Safitri & Misdi, 2021; Zaim et al., 2020; Zaitun et al., 2021). Students' grammatical control in spoken English also remained limited, with frequent lapses in the use of appropriate grammatical structures during speech. Earlier studies also revealed that Indonesian junior high school students tend to struggle with sentence construction and the application of correct grammatical rules (Al Awlaqi & Ghozali, 2023; Hidayat et al., 2022; Jaelani & Zabidi, 2020; Palomargareta & Astutik, 2024; Santoso & Perrodin, 2022). Based on classroom observations and teacher input, students were identified as having a predominantly kinesthetic learning style.

To address these challenges, the researcher coordinated with relevant stakeholders, including the English teacher, headmaster, and a representative of the *Kampus Mengajar* program. The discussion focused on implementing CAR to improve speaking skills. The English teacher emphasized the need for speaking activities that could stimulate students' communication, the headmaster granted permission to conduct the research, and the *Kampus Mengajar* representative confirmed the feasibility of such an activity. From these discussions, it was concluded that engaging and interactive learning activities were necessary to enhance students' speaking competence.

One effective approach to improving students' speaking ability is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). CLT prioritizes meaningful communication, focusing on language use rather than form, fostering fluency through real-life interaction, and emphasizing student-centred instruction (Brown & Lee, 2015; Celce-Murcia et al., 2014; Harmer, 2015; Richards, 2015). The ultimate goal of CLT is for students to develop communicative competence, which consists of linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic components (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014). In Indonesia, CLT has been found effective in enhancing speaking skills at the secondary school level (Fauzi & Ridwan, 2025; Haliwanda, 2021; Pajangu et al., 2024).

A product-based extension of CLT is the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), which is also adopted in Indonesia's English learning curriculum. GBA involves four main stages: (1) Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF): The teacher helps students build background knowledge about the topic to be discussed or written; (2) Modeling of the Text (MoT): The teacher provides text examples as references for students to produce oral or written work; (3) Joint Construction of the Text (JCoT): The teacher and students collaboratively produce the texts; and (4) Independent Construction of the Text (ICoT): Students independently create oral and written texts (BSKAP, 2025). In accordance with the Indonesian curriculum, students are required to learn various types of texts through this approach.

Among the various text types in the curriculum, third-year junior high school students are required to learn narrative texts. Narrative texts present events in the form of stories that aim to entertain and convey moral values (Derewianka & Jones, 2016). Stories in narrative texts are often associated with short stories, novels, and dramas. Research

conducted by Hanik (2020) showed that mini dramas can improve students' understanding of narrative texts.

In addition to enhancing speaking skills, mini dramas can make students more active, enthusiastic, and attentive during mini drama activities (Viranci et al., 2019). Through mini dramas, students can play roles within a short time, thereby improving their speaking performance. This strategy is also suitable for students with a kinesthetic learning style, which encourages active participation through physical movement. Kinesthetic learning involves understanding material through hands-on activities rather than merely watching or listening (Yotta, 2023).

To improve students' speaking skills, learning activities should be engaging and well-designed. A mini drama becomes more engaging when it is conducted as a competition or contest. To maximize speaking opportunities and promote autonomous language use, incorporating a competitive element, such as turning the task into a race, can be beneficial (Thornbury, 2005). Students are encouraged to prepare their performances to the best of their ability and strive to win, which in turn enhances their speaking skills.

Recent academics have been conducting mini dramas to examine students' speaking skills. Mini dramas improve students' speaking skills and active participation (Hanik, 2020; Nurnaningsih et al., 2021; Viranci et al., 2019). Moreover, mini dramas not only improve students' speaking skills but also character development, such as discipline and hard work (Heriyanto, 2018). In addition, students become more confident when performing with mini dramas and improve their speaking skills (Salsabila, 2025; Sholyhat & Nirmala, 2021). Although research on mini dramas has been conducted repeatedly, there has been no research that discusses the competition concept. Most of the research focuses on the implementation of mini dramas for classroom practices and a training program. However, this study differs from previous studies that examines the implementation of mini drama within the competitive concept. Therefore, this study aims to enhance junior high school students' speaking skills in narrative text through EMDC. To support its contribution, the study was guided by two research questions: (1) Can the implementation of EMDC enhance students' speaking skills in narrative texts? (2) How is EMDC implemented to enhance students' speaking skills in narrative texts? These questions provide a foundation for how EMDC support the development of students' speaking skills in EFL classroom as a teaching strategy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to language teaching that encourages the development of students' communicative competence through meaningful interaction. One essential characteristic of CLT is the emphasis on using language for meaningful purposes rather than focusing only on language forms (Brown & Lee, 2015).

Through this approach, students are encouraged to communicate actively, creating genuine interaction (Brown & Lee, 2015). In addition, by providing real or simulated situations, CLT enables students to practice language that supports authentic communication (Richards, 2015). The implementation of CLT can also encourage student-centered learning.

In practice, CLT creates student-centered and interactive learning situations in the classroom, which focus on meaningful activities rather than material created for teaching purposes (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014). Teachers tend to facilitate students' practice (Richards, 2015). Activities such as pair or group work can promote student-centered learning and collaborative language use among students (Harmer, 2015). Such collaborative interaction allows students to construct meaning and actively engage in communicative language (Al-Buraiki, 2025; Y. Chen & Lin, 2021). Therefore, CLT serves as the main theoretical foundation for teaching speaking skills in this study.

Speaking skills are an essential aspect of English language learning as they enable students to convey meaning orally. Speaking is a productive skill that can be directly assessed through a person's oral performance (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). Speaking competence requires not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to use language appropriately in a social context. This competence involves multiple components, including pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and task performance, all of which are applied in social communication (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). In the context of ELT, speaking instruction is essential because it allows students to apply their linguistic knowledge in communicative activities that mirror real language use and foster meaningful interaction (Y.-M. Chen, 2025; Jendli & Albarakati, 2024). Rather than limiting speaking practice to controlled drills or isolated sentences, effective speaking instruction encourages students to express ideas, respond to others, and participate in interaction (Wotring et al., 2024). To achieve this, teachers need to apply appropriate teaching strategies that facilitate meaningful speaking practice. Such strategies can support the development of students' oral communication ability by creating opportunities for active and purposeful language use (Alsyouf & Al Kayed, 2021; Robert & Meenakshi, 2022).

English Mini Drama Contest in Teaching Speaking

A mini drama is a short performance with a limited duration (Rainer & Lewis, 2004). Performance in mini drama involves role play and dialogue that enable students to practice speaking through interactive activities. Activities such as creating dialogue based on stories or performing role-plays allow students to practice language meaningfully (Moosa et al., 2024). This promotes students' personal participation in learning activities, in which they are actively involved in roles (Kaygısız & Akar, 2025). This aligns with CLT principles that emphasize student interaction and collaborative language use.

In this study, narrative texts are used as instructional materials that provide meaningful content and structure for mini dramas activity. A narrative text is defined as a

text that entertains readers through the presentation of a story with a structure consists of orientation, complication, resolution, and re-orientation (Derewianka & Jones, 2016). The structure of narrative texts can help students organize their ideas and support in delivering spoken language. Students can be encourage to retell, adapt, or perform stories, allowing them to use spoken language in a meaningful and engaging way (Gillon et al., 2023; Puteri & Asfihana, 2024). In support of engaging learning activity, this study implements a contest-based activity.

A contest is defined as a competition in which participants compete within a set time or score to determine a winner (Sugar & Sugar, 2002). Contest-based activities can increase students' participation in learning tasks (McGuire, 2025). By integrating mini dramas with a contest concept, this activity can foster students' participation in speaking practice. Therefore, English Mini Drama Contest serves as a teaching strategy for enhancing students' speaking skills through collaborative and meaningful language use.

METHOD

Research Design

The present study is a CAR following the Kemmis and McTaggart model (Kemmis et al., 2014). CAR was selected because it emphasizes critical self-reflection and collaboration among practitioners to improve educational practices through a dynamic cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In this study, the collaborator was the English teacher at the school. CAR is suitable for achieving the objective of this study, which aimed to improve students' speaking skills through the EMDC.

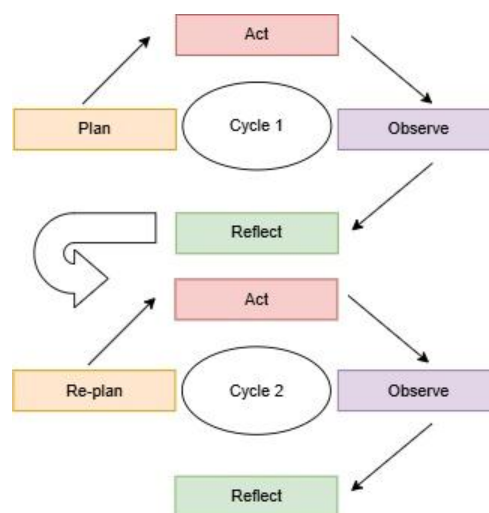


Figure 1. Classroom Action Research cycles adapted from Kemmis et al. (2014)

Participants

This study was conducted at a junior high school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The participants were 31 third-year students from the 2025/2026 academic year, comprising

17 males and 14 females. The participants were selected based on feasibility. The observation indicated that the students had relatively low speaking scores. Permission was obtained from the school principal and the English teacher before conducting the research. Students were informed about the research purpose, and their participation was voluntary. All data were kept confidential and used only for research purposes.

Research Procedure

The research began with a pre-cycle conducted in one meeting to identify students' initial speaking skills in narrative texts through an "Act for Respect" activity. In this activity, students engaged in group oral conversations to construct and deliver a narrative topic without acting elements. The researcher then assessed students' individual performances to obtain their initial speaking scores. The "Act for Respect" activity functioned as a speaking assessment task used to evaluate students' speaking performance. This activity was implemented consistently across cycles to ensure comparable assessment results, while the EMDC served as the learning intervention aimed at improving students' speaking skills. After the pre-cycle, Cycle 1 was conducted in two meetings following the stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection through the implementation of the EMDC. The second meeting implemented the "Act for Respect" activity to assess students' speaking performance, similar to the activity conducted in the pre-cycle. After the evaluation of Cycle 1, Cycle 2 was conducted in two meetings. The first meeting involved re-planning, action, observation, and reflection through the implementation of EMDC, while the second meeting implemented the "Act for Respect" activity. The cycles were evaluated until the predetermined learning criteria were achieved.

Instruments

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in this study. Quantitative data were obtained through the "Act for Respect" activity, in which students' speaking performance was assessed using an analytic rubric adapted from Brown & Abeywickrama (2019), including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and task performance. The speaking rubric was validated through expert judgements involving two English education lecturers and an English teacher. Each component was scored on a five-point scale, and total scores were categorized based on Brown (2004).

Qualitative data were gathered through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The observation sheet was adapted from Pambudi (2021), focused on students' participation and responsiveness during preparation, rehearsal, performance sessions. The interview form, adapted from Maghfiroh (2022), explored students' opinion of the EMDC and its impact on their speaking development. Additionally, a drama rubric adapted from Pepler et al. (2023) was used as a learning guide for students' performance, including speaking skills, movement, teamwork and stage presence.

Data Collecting Technique

Data were collected through the EMDC during pre-cycle, Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. In the pre-cycle, the “Act for Respect” activity was used to gather quantitative data using the speaking rubric assessment. Then, the English teacher completed an observation sheet to provide qualitative data on students’ participation. Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 followed similar steps: in each cycle, qualitative data were collected in the first meeting using an observation sheet, and in the second meeting, the “Act for Respect” activity and interview form were employed to assess students’ speaking score and gather student feedback on the EMDC.

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis employed quantitative and qualitative techniques. The scoring rubric for test activities, adapted from Brown & Abeywickrama (2019), was analyzed using mean scores to compare students’ speaking skills improvement across cycles. Observation sheets adapted from Pambudi (2021) were analyzed through simple percentages. Additionally, students’ interviews were analyzed following the procedure outlined by Miles et al. (2020), including data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The interview data were coded systematically to ensure clarity and confidentiality. Codes such as Interview C1.1-C2.3 represent the first to third interviews in Cycle 1, while Interview C2.1-C2.3 represent the interviews conducted in Cycle 2, following the same coding pattern. Moreover, this study used triangulation by Creswell & Poth (2018) to guarantee the validity of qualitative data. Through student interviews and classroom observations, method triangulation was used to validate the results from various data collection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the results of the study concerning students’ speaking skills before and after the implementation of the EMDC. The discussion is organized according to the research questions and the cycles of the CAR.

Results

The findings are presented in the form of students’ speaking test scores, classroom observation results, and students’ interviews. The data are organized according to the pre-cycle, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2 to show changes in students’ speaking performance.

Pre-cycle

Table 1.

Activity on Pre-cycle

Meeting	Activities	
	Teacher	Students
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing guiding questions related to the social issues 2. Giving random topics of the "Act for Respect" activity 3. Allowing students time to prepare their dialogues 4. Scoring the students using speaking rubric assessment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Forming groups consisting of four to five students 6. Constructing the dialog based on the given topics 7. Practicing the dialogue with groups members 8. Performing the dialog without acting elements

The pre-cycle phase aimed to assess students' initial speaking skills and identify their challenges in delivering narrative texts, with a target minimum score of 76, based on the school's passing grade. An initial speaking test was administered using the "Act for Respect" activity before implementing EMDC to obtain students' scores and classroom participation. At the beginning, the researcher provided guiding questions on students' opinions of social issues such as bullying, harassment, and intolerance, then asked them to form groups of four to five students. Each group were assigned one of several topics, including bullying, intolerance, or harassment, which then developed into narrative text dialogue and was presented in the classroom without acting elements. The researcher assessed students' individual speaking performance in terms of fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, and task performance to obtain the quantitative data. Meanwhile, the English teacher evaluated students' participation to obtain qualitative data. The speaking test score from the pre-cycle can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2.

Pre-cycle Test Results

No	Category	Span of Score	Freq	Sum of Score	Percentage (%)	Mean of Score
1.	Very Good	85-100	4	347	13	
2.	Good	70-84	3	233	10	
3.	Fair	60-69	8	507	26	
4.	Poor	50-59	5	263	16	54.95
5.	Very Poor	1-49	11	353	35	
SUM			31	1,703	100	Poor Category

Table 2 shows that the average class score was 54.95, categorized as Poor, which indicate limited speaking ability with frequent errors in components of speaking. Moreover, only 19% of the students achieved the passing grade of 76. Most students fell into the Fair to Very Poor categories, indicating that their speaking performance was still relatively low. These categories occurred because students relied heavily on reading their scripts during

the activity, which reduced the natural flow of their speech. As a result, their speaking scores was negatively affected.

Classroom observations (see Appendix 8) revealed that students' participation was moderate, with an average rate of 58%. Specifically, 68% of students showed enthusiasm during the learning process; however, only 52% demonstrated a clear understanding of the material. This suggests challenges with speaking narrative texts, such as confusion during performances and a reliance on scripts rather than spontaneous delivery, which affected their level of participation.

The findings indicate that most students have low speaking skills and moderate participation. This occurred because confusion of the script makes a lot of students still lack enthusiasm in the learning process, which affects their speaking score and level of participation. From those results, Cycle 1 for the next meeting was formulated based on the problems identified at the pre-cycle by implementing the EMDC.

Cycle 1

Table 3.

Activities on Cycle 1

Meeting	Teacher	Activities	Students
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BKOF: Providing guiding questions and reviewing narrative text material 2. MOT: Providing explanation of dialogue organization and clarifying the drama performance criteria 3. JCOT: Guiding student groups in collaboratively constructing dialogues and providing feedback during rehearsal 4. ICOT: Facilitating rehearsal monitor and assessing final EMDC performance using the drama rubric assessment 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BKOF: Responding to guiding question and identifying key narrative elements to be developed into spoken dialogue 2. MOT: Analyzing dialogue structure and understanding how narrative elements are expressed orally 3. JCOT: Constructing dialogues in groups and dividing roles 4. ICOT: Rehearsing and performing the EMDC in groups
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing random topics for the "Act for Respect" activity 2. Allowing students time to prepare their dialogues 3. Assessing students' speaking performance using the speaking rubric assessment 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Constructing the dialogues based on the given topics 2. Practicing the dialogue with groups members 3. Performing the dialog without acting elements

Cycle 1 aimed to improve students' speaking performance through the development and performance of narrative dialogues during the EMDC. To achieve this objective, several learning targets were established: (1) students can demonstrate an understanding of narrative elements in spoken dialogue, (2) students can collaboratively developed narrative dialogue, and (3) students can perform the dialogues based on the drama rubric assesment.

Cycle 1 was considered complete once the average score reached the Fair category, which indicated a basic but acceptable level of speaking performance before entering the Cycle 2. Moreover, Cycle 1 aimed in increasing the average score above 54.95 and improving their participation from moderate to high levels. Initially, a lesson plan (*Rencana Pembelajaran Mendalam/RPM*), an observation sheet, an interview sheet, a drama rubric assessment, and a recording device were prepared to support the activity. The implementation follows a genre-based approach teaching cycle, BKOF, MOT, JCOT, and ICOT. In BKOF, students reviewed narrative texts that had already been taught by the English teacher in the writing class. In MOT, the researcher explained dialogue construction and the expected criteria for drama performance. In JCOT, students gathered with their pre-cycle groups to select a narrative text (for example, such as Malin Kundang, Snow White, Jack and the Beanstalk and so on) and then developed it into a dialogue. In the ICOT, students presented it creatively in class to demonstrate speaking skills, movement, teamwork, and stage performance. Students were permitted to act or use props as desired to compete with other groups. The drama rubric assessment was then used to determine the first, second, and third place winners. The speaking test scores from Cycle 1 can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4.
 Cycle 1 Test Results

No	Category	Span of Score	Freq	Sum of Score	Percentage (%)	Mean of Score
1.	Very Good	85-100	10	910	32	69.46
2.	Good	70-84	8	603	26	
3.	Fair	60-69	5	317	16	
4.	Poor	50-59	3	157	10	
5.	Very Poor	1-49	5	167	16	
SUM			31	2,153	100	Fair Category

Table 4 showed that the average class score was 69.46, categorized as fair, which indicates that students are able to express their ideas but still show noticeable errors in several components. Moreover, 45% of students achieving scores of 76 or higher, which there was an increase in the number of students reaching Good and Very Good categories compared to the pre-cycle. However, a portion of students still scored within Fair to Poor levels, indicating that the passing grade of 76 had not yet been fully achieved. Although reliance on reading scripts decreased from the pre-cycle, some students continued to use scripts during their speaking performance.

Qualitative data from classroom observation (see Appendix 9) indicated an increase in students' participation compared to the pre-cycle. The findings demonstrated improved participation, with an average score of 75%. Additionally, 90% of students paid attention to guidance, and 80% actively participated in the learning process. This improvement was

attributed to the competitive nature of the activity, in which students were encouraged to perform better to win the contest.

The students' interviews revealed their feedback on the implementation of EMDC during the learning process. From 10 questions, this study focused on three key themes, including students' interests, creativity, and emotional responses, as best captured by students' learning feedback. Interviews were conducted with three students selected based on their level of participation; one highly active, one moderately active, and one less active, as detailed below.

Students' Interests

The interview results reveal varied student responses toward the implementation of the EMDC in Cycle 1, particularly regarding students' interest in the speaking activity. One student explained that the activity was interesting because it taught her learn how to speak English well and also public speaking (Interview C1.1). Another student stated that the activity was interesting because it was both exciting and challenging, as she had to compete with other groups to become the winner (Interview C1.2). However, one student mentioned a moderate level of interest because he was still confused about understanding the script (Interview C1.3).

These responses indicated that most students showed interest in the EMDC. They mentioned that the EMDC provided a fun, competitive atmosphere that encouraged them to practice speaking more actively. However, not all students shared the same level of enthusiasm toward the EMDC. Most participants found the activity engaging and enjoyable, but one student showed moderate interest. This variation indicates that confusing material results decreased interest in the learning activity.

Students' Creativity

The interview findings reveal that students shared similar responses regarding the role of the EMDC in fostering students' creativity during speaking performance. One student explained that the activity made her more creative because she could act or use props based on her imagination (Interview C1.1). Another student stated that the activity made her more creative because it allowed her to act according to her role (Interview C1.2). Additionally, one student mentioned that the activity helped him express himself through acting, such as pushing, which can improve his creativity (Interview C1.3)

The responses showed that all students agreed that the EMDC encouraged them to be more creative and expressive. They felt the activity allowed them to use their imagination and perform in unique ways while practising English. This indicates that the EMDC provides students with opportunities to develop not only their language skills but also their creativity in expressing ideas through performance.

Students' Emotional Responses

The interview data demonstrate that students perceived diverse responses toward their feelings during the implementation of the EMDC. One student stated that the activity was enjoyable and made English feel easier to learn (Interview C1.1). Another student explained that she felt happy to participate in EMDC and to win the activity, although she also mentioned that script was difficult to memorize (Interview C1.2). However, one student reported that he did not feel very happy because he still had difficulty understanding the script (Interview C1.3).

The responses showed that students generally expressed positive feelings toward the EMDC. They found the activity exciting and enjoyable, especially because the learning process was made easier and more engaging. However, one student mentioned experiencing difficulty, such as memorizing scripts, which made the activity slightly challenging.



Figure 2. sample of students performing the EMDC in Cycle 1

The researcher and the English teacher discussed the results of Cycle 1, which highlighted both successes and challenges in the implementation of EMDC. Several obstacles were identified during the process for reflection. *First*, many students were distracted, focusing on their group's preparation instead of watching others, which made the class less conducive. *Second*, the group that always performed first complained that starting earlier than others was unfair. *Third*, several students frequently asked about pronunciation and showed limited comprehension of the script.

From the problem mentioned above, the researcher suggested several improvements for Cycle 2. The English teacher agreed that in the next cycle, only the group performing should remain in the classroom, while the other groups wait outside to reduce distractions and create a more conducive learning environment. Furthermore, to ensure fairness in the order of performances, the researcher planned to use a technology tool called a spin wheel to randomly determine which group would perform first, second, and so on. In addition, the researcher checked the students' scripts, then added translations and audio pronunciation models to help them overcome difficulties with pronunciation and comprehension.

Cycle 2

Table 5.

Activities on Cycle 2

Meeting	Teacher	Students
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BKOF: Providing guiding questions and reviewed students' narrative scripts with translation guidance and pronunciation audio models 2. MOT: Explaining the preparation and rehearsal of mini drama performance using translation guidance and pronunciation audio models 3. JCOT: Guiding and providing feedback during rehearsal 4. ICOT: Facilitating in-class performances using the spin wheel and assessing using drama rubric assessment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BKOF: Responding to guiding questions and reviewing the narrative scripts while listening to pronunciation audio models and discussing the meaning of the dialogue 2. MOT: Understanding the preparation and rehearsal process for drama performance using translation guidance and pronunciation audio models 3. JCOT: Rehearsing the mini drama in groups and improving their performance based on the feedback 4. ICOT: Performing the mini drama in class based on the spin wheel turns
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Providing random topics for the "Act for Respect" activity 6. Allowing students time to prepare their dialogues 7. Assessing students' speaking performance using the speaking rubric assessment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Constructing the dialogues based on the given topics 9. Practicing the dialogue with groups members 10. Performing the dialog without acting elements

Cycle 2 aimed to further improve students' speaking performance by addressing several obstacles identified in Cycle 1. To achieve this objective, several learning targets were set: (1) students can understand how to pronounce the dialogue using the audio pronunciation models, (2) students can understand the meaning of the script through the translation guidance, and (3) students were able to perform the mini drama in well-organized manner due to classroom management supported by the use of spin wheel. Cycle 2 was considered complete once the average score reached the Good category, which indicate that most of students were able to demonstrate the speaking components appropriately. Thus, this cycle attempts to increasing the average score above 69.46 and improving their participation compared to Cycle 1. The teaching cycle followed a procedure similar to that in Cycle 1. However, in Cycle 2, the researcher supported the students' narrative text script by providing Bahasa Indonesia translations and audio pronunciation models for the dialogue. This helps students learn the pronunciation from the audio, and the students know the meaning in the narrative text. The researcher also used a spin wheel to select the performance sequence more fairly. Then, the selected group remained in the classroom to perform, while the other groups waited outside to make the class conducive. The researcher assessed the EMDC performances inside the classroom, while the English

teacher observed student preparation outside and monitored their performances during their turn. The speaking test score from Cycle 2 can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6.
 Cycle 2 Test Results

No	Category	Span of Score	Freq	Sum of Score	Percentage (%)	Mean of Score
1.	Very Good	85-100	17	1,590	55	
2.	Good	70-84	7	527	23	
3.	Fair	60-69	2	133	6	81.61
4.	Poor	50-59	5	280	16	
5.	Very Poor	1-49	0	0	0	
SUM			31	2,530		Good category

Table 6 showed that the average class score increased to 81.61, categorized as Good, which indicates that students show good speaking ability with only minor errors. Moreover, 68% of students achieved scores of 76 or higher. The majority of students are achieving Very Good and Good categories, and no students are remaining in the Very Poor level. This indicated progress from Cycle 1, as most students surpassed the passing grade and performed their dialogues more spontaneously. Reading from scripts was noticeably reduced compared to previous cycles.

Qualitative data from classroom observation (see Appendix 10) showed peak participation with an average rate of 91%. All students (100%) actively participated in the learning process, and 97% demonstrated high enthusiasm. This improvement is attributed to the successful implementation of the revised plan from the previous cycle, which resulted in a more organized and engaging learning environment. Furthermore, Interviews with three selected students revealed several key themes consistent with those identified in Cycle 1, including students' interests, creativity, and emotional responses, as detailed below.

Students' Interest

The interview results reveal similar student responses toward the implementation of the EMDC in Cycle 2, particularly in relation to their interest in the speaking activity. One student expressed that the activity was interesting because it was exciting and fun (Interview C2.1). Another student commented that the activity was interesting because it had never been implemented before (Interview C2.2). In addition, one student stated that the activity was interesting because it helped him learn to speak English (Interview C2.3).

The responses revealed that all students showed a strong interest in the EMDC after the revised plan. They expressed that the activity was exciting, fun, and provided a new

learning experience that had never been done before. The students also mentioned that the EMDC helped them learn to speak English in a more enjoyable way.

Students' Creativity

The interview findings reveal that students expressed similar views on the role of the EMDC in fostering students' creativity during speaking performance. One student explained that the activity made him more creative because it allowed him to express her role more clearly (Interview C2.1). Another student stated that the activity fostered his creativity because it was easier for him to share what he wanted to say through acting (Interview C2.2). In addition, one student mentioned that the activity made him more creative because he could play the role based on the story (Interview C2.3).

The interview results showed that all students agreed that the EMDC encouraged their creativity and self-expression. They stated that the activity made it easier for them to express their ideas and feelings in English. This shows that creative speaking tasks can provide students with opportunities to use authentic language and personal expression.

Students' Emotional Responses

The interview data demonstrate that students expressed similar feelings during the implementation of the EMDC. One student expressed that he felt happy because the activity was very interesting (Interview C2.1). Another student stated that he felt happy performing with his friends and laughing (Interview C2.2). In addition, one student mentioned that he felt happy because he preferred practical activities such as EMDC (Interview C2.3)

The interview results revealed that all students expressed positive feelings toward the EMDC. They described the activity as fun, interesting, and enjoyable, particularly because it allowed them to perform with their friends in a supportive atmosphere. The sense of enjoyment and collaboration appeared to enhance their comfort and confidence in speaking English.



Figure 3. sample of students performing the EMDC in Cycle 2

The results from Cycle 2 indicated an improvement in students' speaking skills. Students' participation also increased, and they perceived positive feedback during the interviews conducted in this cycle. These findings suggest that the EMDC successfully

addressed the weakness identified in Cycle 1. After discussing the results with the English teacher, Cycle 2 was determined to be the last cycle because the classroom average score had reached the good category, and more than half of the total students had achieved the passing grade of 76. Overall, the strategies implemented in Cycle 2 supported the achievement of the research objectives, as students' speaking skills improved by the end of the cycle.

Students' Speaking Scores across the Cycles

Table 7.

Comparison of Students' Speaking Scores in the Pre-Cycle, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2

Stage	Mean Score	Students \geq 76 (%)
Pre-cycle	54.95	19
Cycle 1 test	69.46	45
Cycle 2 test	81.61	68

Table 7 presents the comparison of students' speaking test scores in the pre-cycle, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2. The mean score increased from 54.95 in the pre-cycle to 69.46 in Cycle 1 and further improved to 81.61 in Cycle 2. This shows an increase of 14.51 points from the pre-cycle to Cycle 1 and 12.15 points from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. In terms of learning achievement, the number of students who reached the passing grade benchmark of 76 also increase across the cycles, from 6 students (19%) in the pre-cycle to 14 students in Cycle 1 and 21 students (68%) in Cycle 2. These results indicate a gradual improvement in students' speaking performance.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the EMDC led to improvement in students' narrative text speaking skills, including pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and task performance. In the pre-cycle, students relied heavily on reading scripts, which showed that they lacked comprehension. This lack of comprehension influenced other components of speaking skills and resulted in the average classroom score falling into the Poor category. In Cycle 1, students competed with other groups, which encouraged them to perform better the mini dramas in the classroom. As a result, some students were able to perform without reading the script. However, many students in Cycle 1 were still observed bringing their phones and reading the script during the performance. Consequently, in the speaking test conducted in the second meeting, the students' performance showed mixed results. In cycle 2, after the implementation of the revised plan, which included adding translation and audio to the students' scripts, the majority of students were able to perform the mini dramas without reading scripts. This improvement was reflected in students' speaking test performance and was accompanied by improvements in several speaking components in the second meeting. As a result, the average classroom score reached the Good category.

According to the English teacher's observation, student participation increased from 58% in pre-cycle to 91% in Cycle 2. In the pre-cycle, many students showed limited enthusiasm and struggled to understand the narrative text they had constructed. Students were observed struggling to understand their own scripts, which led all students to bring their phones and read the script while performing the dialogue in the "Act for Respect" speaking test. This situation negatively affected their participation in the classroom. In Cycle 1, students attempted to compete with other groups, which encouraged better preparation compared to the pre-cycle. However, this condition also caused students to focus excessively on preparation, resulting in a less conducive classroom environment. In Cycle 2, the revised plan was implemented by using a spin wheel to randomly select the performing groups, which only the selected group stayed inside the classroom while other groups prepared outside. As a result, students who performed were observed to be more focused and able to perform to the best of their ability. Meanwhile, groups that prepared outside the classroom were able to practice more productively, as they had more space to rehearse with their group members.

Interview results showed mixed feedback in Cycle 1; some students found the EMDC fostered creativity and emotional responses, while others struggled with script comprehension and felt less enthusiastic. However, after revisions in Cycle 2, such as randomized performance, reducing classroom distractions, and adding audio and translations of the script, students perceived the EMDC as offering enjoyable activities that fostered expressive speaking.

The improvement in students' performance appeared to be related to consistent speaking practice supported by classroom management and scaffolding in Cycle 2. The EMDC followed preparation, rehearsal, and performance stages, allowing students to repeatedly practice speaking before performing. This staged structure helped students build familiarity with the dialogue. During the preparation stage, students were able to understand the script and meaning of the dialogue, while the rehearsal stage allowed them to practice and interact with their group members. As a result, students appeared more prepared during the final performance.

The contest structure also played an important role in encouraging students' engagement. Because the activity was designed as a contest, students tended to take the task more seriously and showed greater effort in preparing their performances. The presence of a clear goal makes students practice their dialogue more actively.

After reflection on Cycle 1, Cycle 2 is supported by scaffolding, providing translation guidance and pronunciation audio models. Translation guidance helped students understand the meaning of the dialogue and reduced their uncertainty when delivering the lines. Meanwhile, pronunciation audio models provided examples of correct pronunciation and intonation, enabling students to imitate the sounds and improve the clarity of their speech.

The use of a spin wheel to determine the performing group also encouraged students to remain prepared throughout the activity. Because the performing group was selected randomly, students needed to be ready to perform at any time. In addition, a classroom management adjustment in which only the performing group remained in the classroom created a more focused performance environment. This arrangement reduced distractions and allowed students to concentrate better during their performance.

These findings are in line with previous research showing that mini dramas enhance students' speaking skills. Hanik (2020), Nurnaningsih et al. (2021), and Viranci et al. (2019) reported that mini dramas improve students' speaking skills and increase active participation, which is consistent with the improvement in student speaking scores and participation observed in this study. Similarly, Heriyanto (2018) found that mini dramas not only improve students' speaking skills but also character development, such as discipline and hard work, while this study found that students showed their discipline and hard work through their consistent practice, which enabled them to perform without text in Cycle 2. In addition, Salsabila (2025) and Sholyhat & Nirmala (2021) showed that mini dramas help students become more confident. In this study, by the end of Cycle 2, students were able to perform without text, showing their spontaneity and confidence. However, this study differs from previous studies in its implementation of mini drama within the competitive concept, leading to results that earlier studies have not fully discussed. Based on thematic analysis of students' interviews, the EMDC fostered students' interest, creativity, and positive feelings in the learning process. This showed that the EMDC enabled students to express ideas creatively and boosting positive emotional responses, which students perceived as interesting. These outcomes are in line with the objectives of Indonesia's curriculum, which emphasize students' ability to express their ideas in various types of texts or topics discussed (BSKAP, 2025).

Based on the findings, students' participation increased in each cycle, as evidenced by a greater number of participants actively involved in the learning process, which influenced development of their speaking skills. From this, it can be seen that the implementation of EMDC aligns with the key principles of CLT, which emphasize meaningful communication and interaction (Brown & Lee, 2015; Celce-Murcia et al., 2014; Harmer, 2015; Richards, 2015). Students were able to perform without text, which highlights meaningful communication and interaction through the EMDC. This indicates that the EMDC supported CLT by promoting authentic language use, which led to improvement in students' speaking skills.

This study contributes to language teaching by providing evidence of improved students' speaking scores and participation. These results support previous studies showing that mini dramas enhance students' speaking skills, participation, confidence, and character development. This study also adds new insights by integrating the competitive concept into mini dramas that fosters students' interest, creativity, and positive feelings in

the learning process. Overall, the EMDC offers a student-centred and interactive strategy for pedagogical innovation.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that students' speaking skills in narrative texts improved. The use of EMDC in teaching this text supported students in the stages of preparation, rehearsal, and performance through pronunciation audio models, translation guidance, and the use of a spin wheel as a classroom management tool. Students demonstrated measurable improvements in speaking performance, accompanied by increased classroom participation in Cycle 2. In addition, students perceived that EMDC fostered their interest, creativity, and positive learning experiences. However, this study is limited in the implementation of EMDC, as the scaffolding and classroom management provided were restricted due to limitations of time and resources. Future research may investigate different types of scaffolding and classroom management within EMDC to further support the development of students' speaking skills.

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