

# Online Communicative Speaking Tasks to Enhance Students' Speaking Skills

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Keywords:</b> Online speaking tasks, action research, speaking skill</p> <p><b>DOI:</b> <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v7i2.1365">http://dx.doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v7i2.1365</a></p> <p><b>How to cite:</b> Adhelia, S., Triastuti, A. (2023). Online Communicative Speaking Tasks to Enhance Students' Speaking Skills. <i>Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics</i>, 7(2), 307-324</p>	<p><i>This study aimed to know whether the use of online communicative speaking tasks can enhance the speaking skills of the ninth graders of a private junior high school in Mungkid, the Province of Central Java, and how well their speaking skills improved. This research was action research that was divided into four stages. Those were reconnaissance, plan, action and observation, and reflection. The research involved 24 students in 9A class of a private junior high school in the academic year of 2022/ 2023. The research was done in two cycles, consisting of eight meetings. The data of the research were collected through quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were from speaking tests and questionnaires. Meanwhile, the qualitative data were obtained from interviews and observation. The quantitative data were analyzed by comparing students' mean scores that were gained from students' speaking performance pre-test and post-test. The qualitative data analysis employed Miles, Huberman &amp; Saldana's (2014) interactive model that consists of data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions. The research findings showed that using online communicative speaking tasks effectively enhanced students' speaking skills and engagement. The result of the post-test showed that there were consistent improvements in students' mean scores in pre-cycle (10.48), cycle I (13.69), and cycle II (18.50). The total improvement from pre-cycle to cycle II was 8.02 points. It indicated that the students had improved in some aspects of speaking skills.</i></p>

## 1. Introduction

The English language is commonly utilized as an international language in the twenty-first century. The fact that English is used as an interaction tool by people from different countries, influences how it becomes compulsory in life. Therefore, English is taught in Indonesia to develop students' language skills. It is expected that students will have better knowledge and

opportunities if they are able to comprehend and produce English well. To achieve that goal, communicative language teaching is important to be implemented in EFL classes. According to Richards (2006), communicative language teaching is a set of guidelines on the objectives of language teaching. It relates to language learning strategies, the appropriate learning activities for the classroom, and the roles of students and teachers. As a result of communicative language teaching, students can enhance their communicative competence.

According to Celce-Murcia (2000), communicative competence is the set of competencies needed for communication using language that is formally correct and contextually suitable. In addition, Richards (2006) mentions that communicative competence is needed to use language communicatively. It means that having communicative competence is important for students to know how to learn using a language appropriately, increase classroom activities, and encourage real-life communication, in which they can communicate and interact with others with the goal of delivering information and conveying meaning.

Communicative competence becomes possible to be acquired by students if they can master all four language skills. Nevertheless, the ability to speak provides students with the most advantage in terms of communication. Nugroho et al. (2020) mention that speaking becomes the key for students to make communication and comprehension. Sari and Margana (2019) also mention that speaking is the most crucial skill to be mastered since it employs as a mean to communicate effectively. Through speaking, students have opportunities to communicate verbally by understanding, expressing, responding, and giving replies to others in classroom activities. However, learning English speaking is not easy for students. Some specific speaking issues that can be happened in the classroom are mentioned by Yulia (2013), including the lack of time to speak the language and confidence. This condition happens because teachers do not provide students with appropriate learning strategies and media that can facilitate them practicing their English speaking. As a result, students are lack of English knowledge and motivation to speak English. They are worried and afraid to make mistakes while speaking. On the other hand, Arega (2017) mentions that students' speaking problems are related to their lack of engagement during the learning process. They do not often ask questions or exchange ideas with others and the teacher. Besides, they use their mother language in doing pair or group work. In short, students are not using English in discussing, asking, and responding to questions during the learning process.

This typical case happened at a private junior high school in Mungkid, Magelang. Based on the preliminary study, some speaking problems happened during the EFL learning process. The 2013 Curriculum requires teachers to conduct a student-centered learning process in which students should actively participate in the class. Hence, most of the ninth graders were hesitant to communicate in English. Only some students bravely answered the teacher's questions, while others remained silent. Besides, students were often speaking Indonesian during the learning process. Based on the result of the teacher's interview, it was discovered that students' lack of English knowledge becomes the main problem of students' speaking skills. They faced difficulties in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, making them lose confidence and fear speaking English. These students' poor English-speaking skills obviously affected students learning engagement, which would lead to the unsuccessful English language learning process.

Another problem that arise was the monotonous speaking tasks given by the teacher. The teacher often gave conventional speaking tasks, such as reading aloud texts from books and practicing dialogues in front of the class. She never integrated the use of technology in teaching speaking. Somehow, it leads to the lack of students' knowledge of correct English speaking because they were not supported by rich exposure of spoken tasks. Besides, students had low enjoyment to speak English when they were only given such a monotonous task.

To solve these problems, teachers should provide the appropriate way that could facilitate students' speaking skills and engagement improvement. Changing the classroom environment for teaching speaking could be the appropriate way to transform the situation. It could be done by integrating technology into the classroom. According to Garcia-Sanchez (2016), technology can offer opportunities to modify instruction, transform the assessment and enhance learning. The integration of technology in education today would give a good impact since it is gaining popularity among students. In addition, as cited in Mohammadi and Safdari (2015), mobile technology is a new revolution in language teaching and learning that fosters a more dynamic environment in the classroom.

Moreover, Geçkin (2022) affirmed that foreign language teachers need to give understanding and working knowledge of communicative competence for students to ease communication in the target language and also to act as role models for their students. One of the ways to increase students' understanding of a target language is by implementing task-based activities. According to Nunan (2004), a task is classroom work that requires students to comprehend, work with, generate, and communicate in the target language. Providing students with an exciting communicative speaking task can enhance students' motivation and involvement to communicate effectively during the learning process.

Previous studies have confirmed that using communicative speaking tasks can enhance students' speaking skills. Govindasamy and Shah (2020) explored that through speaking tasks, students were motivated, confident, and critical. Students believed that speaking tasks influence their improvement of speaking skills. Another study by Waluyo (2019) discovered role play as a communicative task that can develop students' communicative competence. He confirmed that communicative tasks promote students' oral language production, create conversational interactions, and enable them to connect the use of target language both within and outside of the classroom.

Regarding the important role of speaking tasks and technology integration in the class, the researcher decided to include mobile phone use in the classroom and implement online communicative speaking tasks to solve students' speaking problems since it would facilitate them with interesting features and opportunities to learn English-speaking. Baralt and Morcillo Gomez (2017) stated that some features of online platform instruction may improve the process of learning a language. Many studies have investigated that the use of online speaking tasks in language learning can increase students' speaking abilities (Mohammadi & Safdari, 2015; Vurdien, 2019; Sari & Margana, 2019; Amirulloh et al., 2021; Alastal et al., 2022; Kaniadewi, 2022; Iftanti 2022). Mohammadi and Safdari (2015) have confirmed that online mobile-assisted task-based activities via WeChat application could improve Iranian intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills. They developed higher speaking ability in English after performing the speaking post-test. In the same line,

research by Vurdien (2019) has found that using online platforms via the internet application (Zoom) as media to perform speaking task-based activities significantly affected the average score between the pre-and post-test of students at a private language school in Spain.

Sari and Margana (2019) found that utilizing Youtube as a learning media could improve students' speaking skills and their autonomy in learning a language. It helped them to be responsible in completing their tasks together with their friends. Amirulloh et al. (2021) confirmed that Flipgrid as the platform to upload students' speaking videos could enhance students' speaking performance and help them to practice their speaking. Alastal et al. (2022) examined that Padlet application helped students to speak fluently and motivate them to be more active in group discussions. On the other hand, other studies have confirmed that students have a positive attitude toward the use of online platforms in learning speaking (Kaniadewi, 2022; Iftanti, 2022). A study by Kaniadewi (2022) revealed that the utilization of Zoom videoconferencing improved students' speaking ability and majorly students had a positive perception of Zoom in improving their speaking. Iftanti (2022) found that learning to speak through online teaching-learning platforms is helpful in their speaking skills improvement although some challenges happened during the process. In particular, all these previous studies showed that speaking task-based online activities had a good impact on students' attitudes and speaking skills improvement.

However, these previous studies discussed only limited students' speaking skills improvement and do not particularly highlight that online speaking tasks are able to increase students' engagement during the learning process. It was also not mentioned that giving corrective feedback on students' work can support improving their speaking skills. Furthermore, the previous studies rarely used junior high school students as their research subject. This present study focused on how online communicative speaking tasks could enhance junior high school students' speaking skills and engagement. The online communicative speaking tasks will be done by applying various online platforms: Quizlet, Padlet, and Flipgrid. Therefore, this study was conducted to answer how can the use of online communicative speaking tasks enhance the speaking skills of ninth-grade students? to what extent is the improvement of speaking skills of ninth-grade students after using online communicative speaking tasks?

In resonance with the findings, the researcher believes that providing students with online communicative speaking tasks could foster language teaching-learning. It was expected that students could enhance their confidence, engagement, and English-speaking skill. This present study would be a challenge and an opportunity for the researcher to prove that students are able to enhance their speaking skills by using online communicative speaking tasks.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Speaking**

Speaking is used to express the ideas and opinions of people. It is the most natural way to communicate and interact. Consequently, this competence should be mastered by language learners. According to Brown (2003), speaking is an interacting process of creating meaning that involves information production, reception, and processing. In other words, speaking is a process that focuses on producing verbal language that happens to convey the meaning, where the listeners use it to receive information and interact with each other.

Another definition is from Luoma (2004) who states that speaking is a meaningful form of people interaction. In addition, Cameron (2001) states that speaking is an active expression of meanings through language so that people can understand them. He also adds that to speak, people need to find the most appropriate words to convey meaning accurately and precisely. It implies that speaking is the way for the speakers to affect their listeners. Moreover, Baker and Westrup (2003) state that speaking uses language for a purpose. Speaking is used to express and construct ideas as a response while doing a conversation. It aligns with Anderson and Nunan (2003), who said speaking is a productive oral skill that produces systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. From those definitions, it can be concluded that speaking becomes a bridge to delivering information to others. It is the act of creating certain words or phrases to express feelings, ideas, and meanings.

In the EFL context, the ability to speak English is important for students to develop since communication and interaction happened during the learning process. They are supposed to speak English to their friends and teacher while doing discussions in class. Communication will happen if they can understand and respond to what is conveyed by others (Sari & Margana, 2019). Furthermore, English-speaking ability benefit students not only in school but also in real-life circumstances. Suvarnaphaet and Suvarnaphaet (2023) declared that speaking ability must be developed by students since it is essential for efficient communication. If students can speak well, it indicates how well they can communicate with others. It is the ability how they can share ideas, questions, and solutions.

## **2.2 Communicative Speaking Task**

According to Nunan (2004), a communicative task is classroom work that focused on mobilizing students' grammatical knowledge in order to express meaning, which is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form. It implies that tasks are needed for communicative purposes, making students understand the target language and how they interact using it to achieve effective communication. Furthermore, Luoma (2004) states that speaking tasks are activities to use language to accomplish a certain purpose or objective in a specific speaking circumstance. It emphasizes that speaking task is goal-oriented language use and meaning rather than form. By doing the speaking tasks, students are expected to comprehend the message during the activities while also reflecting on the context and function of a message every time they are doing it.

Implementing various speaking tasks can increase students' speaking skills. Roleplay, debate, information gap, and jigsaw are examples of speaking tasks that have been done in previous studies (Waluyo, 2019; Gloriez, 2022). These kinds of speaking tasks can make the learning process more enjoyable and effective since the students are not only focusing on how to speak English but also getting the new situation in learning.

Based on those explanations, communicative speaking tasks can be varied according to the student's needs in the learning process. Nevertheless, it should lead students to express themselves contextually and manage communication in real-life circumstances. The students can learn the language used in a given context through the speaking tasks. Thus, the teacher should emphasize students use the language, where they should engage and communicate with each other, to achieve the goal of language learning.

### **2.3 Online Communicative Speaking Task in EFL Classroom**

Integrating technology in language teaching has increased today. The number of applications and platforms that can be used online provides an opportunity for teachers to improve students' language skills by giving assignments to students. Arslanyilmaz (2012) stated the rapid development of technology, including internet access, which integrates graphics, sound, and text, helps to provide interactive, motivating, highly contextualized, task-oriented, and authentic online activities. Online tasks are created to reinforce students' communication skills and facilitate interactions using online platforms. It also encourages students to focus on form as part of the foreign language learning process to express and exchange ideas. Ziegler (2016) stated that performing online tasks promotes students' motivation, independence, confidence in using the target language, and readiness to communicate. It implies that language teachers may provide students with online tasks to practice their language skills in order to have good communicative competence.

The appropriate technology and task must be chosen and designed by considering students' communicative skills during the English teaching-learning process. The activities should involve active participation by students and be monitored by teachers to achieve both cognitive and communicative goals (Garcia-Sanchez, 2016). Various technological tools can be used by teachers in teaching speaking online to students. Ng (2020) mentioned that online teaching-learning can use some communication platforms similar to face-to-face tasks, such as web-video conferences, like Skype and Zoom, providing real-time communication through a combination of audio, video, and chat. Applications such as Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Padlet, and Quizlet are also proven to have beneficial English language skills for students (Ipek & Ustunbas, 2021). The students had positive attitudes towards language learning since the use of those applications is motivating and helped them to practice English.

From those explanations, it can be concluded that there are important points about the online communicative speaking task. The online communicative tasks should be authentic, where the focus is that students can effectively communicate with the target language. Besides, with the development of technology, the communicative speaking task can be implemented through several platforms as learning media for students to increase their motivation, engagement, and communicative goals.

## **3. Research Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study used action research design since it aims to solve problems in teaching practice and improve the teaching-learning process. It focused on increasing the conditions of the English learning process in a private junior high school, particularly the speaking skills of students. Kemmis, McTaggart, and Nixon's model (2014) was implemented as the procedure of the research, which involves four main steps that are (1) planning, (2) action, (3) observation, and (4) reflection. In this research, the researcher divided this research into Pre-Cycle, Cycle I, and Cycle II.

### **3.2 Participants**

The researcher collected the data at a religious-based private junior high school in Mungkid, Magelang, in the academic year of 2022/ 2023. This research involved twenty-four students of the ninth grade from 9A class. This class was chosen based on the English teacher's

suggestion. She suggested this class due to students' English-speaking skills need to be improved.

### **3.3 Instruments**

This research used a pre-test, post-test, questionnaire, interview guidelines, and field notes to obtain the data. The pre-test was used to know the initial condition of student's speaking skills and at the end of each cycle, the researcher provided a post-test to know students' speaking improvement. The questionnaire was adapted from Alzamil (2021) and Tuyet and Khang (2020). It was presented in the form of 15 statements to collect information based on the teaching-learning process. The students had to give their responses by fourth Likert-like scale. The questionnaire was used to know students' opinions of the use of online communicative speaking tasks. Next, interview guidelines were used to interview the English teacher. The researcher did structured interviews in the reconnaissance and reflection stages. The researcher asked eleven questions to the teacher in the reconnaissance stage and eight questions in the reflection stage. Last, field notes were used as a form of classroom observation to know the teaching-learning process in the classroom.

### **3.4 Data Analysis Procedures**

The result of students' speaking scores in the pre-test and post-test were analyzed by using the mean score formula and then compare to know students' speaking scores' improvement. The result of the interview and observation were analyzed by using data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

## **4. Findings**

The actions and reflections were implemented in two cycles. The actions which were implemented are: 1) building students' vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge; 2) applying various online communicative speaking tasks; 3) enhancing students' engagement in the learning process; and 4) giving appreciation and feedback on students' works. All those actions successfully enhanced the ninth-grade students' speaking skills. The findings could be inferred from the interview with the teacher and observations during the learning process. These are students' improvements after implementing the actions in Cycle I and Cycle II.

Table 1: The Actions and Students' Improvement in Two Cycles

The actions	Cycle I	Cycle II
Building students' vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The students enjoyed learning the materials using Quizlet.</li><li>• The teacher still had to guide students to learn.</li><li>• Some students still mispronounced some words.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After implementing Quizlet in two cycles, it was helpful to build students' vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation, and grammar.</li><li>• Students could learn by themselves through Quizlet.</li><li>• Students were way better at pronouncing, choosing, and ordering the words in sentences.</li></ul>

Applying various online communicative speaking tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The speaking tasks provided in Flipgrid improved students' attention.</li> <li>Various speaking tasks provided chances for each student to practice speaking more.</li> <li>Some students were still mispronouncing the words and stumbling while speaking.</li> <li>Some students still lacked of confidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The speaking tasks provided in Padlet were more challenging and communicative. Students had gained more confidence. Their fluency, pronunciation, and expression while speaking were very good.</li> </ul>
Enhancing their engagement in the learning process.	Students' engagement was better than before the action was implemented. There was an improvement in students' interaction and participation.	Most students had high engagement and enjoyed the learning process. Using online platforms as learning media successfully attracted their attention. Besides, the p work made students mingle with each other better.
Giving appreciation and feedback on students' work.	The appreciation and feedback encouraged students to speak more confidently. They knew how to pronounce the words correctly so they knew their own improvement.	The students got enthusiastic because of the appreciation. They could improve their speaking performance and confidence.

Moreover, to know the further improvement of students' speaking skills, the collaborator and the researcher assessed students' grammar, fluency, comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, and tasks in pre- and post-test through a speaking assessment rubric. Besides, the researcher also gave questionnaires to students in order to know the impact of online communicative speaking tasks on them.

#### 4.1. Students' Speaking Test Scores

Online communicative speaking tasks became a way for students to improve their speaking skills. To know students' initial conditions, the students conducted a pre-test. In pairs, they had to perform a dialogue consisting of expressions of congratulations, hope, and wishes with the teacher's given situation. Then, at the end of each cycle, the students also had to perform a dialogue as their post-test I and II. With similar learning materials, the students also had to carry out a conversation with congratulations, hope, and wish expressions, but with different situations on each test. By completing this post-test, the researcher can know students' speaking improvement. Students' improvement would affect their speaking scores. In assessing students, the researcher worked together with the English teacher as a collaborator. The following table presents the students' speaking mean scores on each aspect in the pre-test, post-test I, and post-test II.

Table 2: The Result of Pre-Test in Each Aspect of Speaking

Rater	Aspects					
	G	F	C	P	V	T
English teacher	1.71	1.63	1.67	1.46	1.75	2.13
Researcher	1.67	1.75	1.83	1.29	1.96	2.13
Combined	1.69	1.69	1.75	1.38	1.85	2.13



Table 3: The Result of Post-Test I in Each Aspect of Speaking

Rater	Aspects					
	G	F	C	P	V	T
English teacher	2.33	2.33	2.13	2.08	2.33	2.50
Researcher	2.25	2.25	2.29	1.96	2.38	2.54
Combined	2.29	2.29	2.21	2.02	2.35	2.52

Table 4: The Result of Post-Test II in Each Aspect of Speaking

Rater	Aspects					
	G	F	C	P	V	T
English teacher	3.04	3.29	2.92	3.21	2.96	3.54
Researcher	2.92	3.17	2.92	3.04	2.83	3.17
Combined	2.98	3.23	2.92	3.13	2.90	3.35

The aspects of speaking assessed were grammar, fluency, comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, and task. According to Brown (2003), the score ranged from 1 to 5 on each aspect. Thus, the maximum score would be 30.

As can be seen, the pre-test results of the students still showed poor speaking performance. It shows that students had shortcomings in several aspects of speaking, especially in pronunciation aspect which had the lowest score. The score was 1.38 points. It was indicated that almost all students' scores were below average, with the highest score for each aspect being 5 points. Different from the score in the pre-test, the score of each aspect in post-test I and II had increased. That means the students' speaking skills have improved. The results of the pre-test show that students still lacked confidence when speaking English, as evidenced by the mistakes they made. However, the students performed better and enjoyed themselves on the post-test because they were more assured. The pre-test, post-test I, and post-test II mean scores for students are shown in the following table.

Table 5: The Comparison of Students' Mean Score

	Pre-Test	Post-Test I	Gain Score (PTI-PT)	Post-Test II	Gain Score (PTII-PT <sub>1</sub> )
Mean Score	10.48	13.69	3.21	18.50	4.81

The pre-test mean score for the students was 10.48, while the post-test I mean score was 13.69. It could be said that the speaking scores of students had improved from the pre-test in the post-test I. 3.21-point improvement was made in post-test I. The mean score for students on post-test II was 18.50. From post-test I to post-test II, there was a 4.81-point improvement overall. It showed that the students' speaking abilities had significantly improved. The following graph shows how the students' speaking abilities have improved.

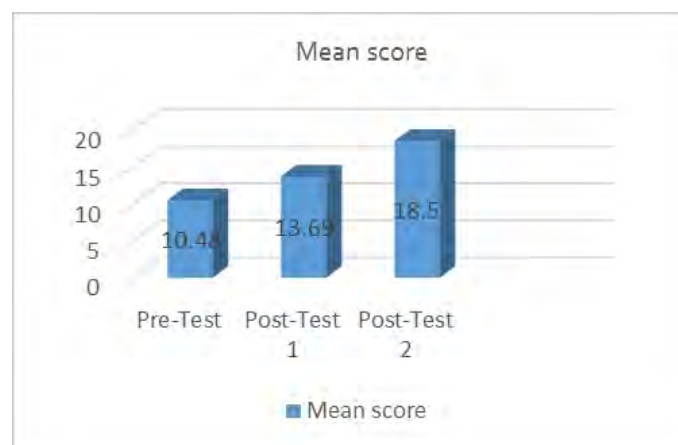


Figure 1: Students' Mean Score

During the class activities, students' speaking abilities were enhanced by the use of online communicative speaking tasks. It explains how speaking tasks could benefit students' language skills. The following tables provide students' mean scores for each speaking aspect of the online speaking tasks.

Table 6: Students' Mean Score of Speaking Tasks in Cycle I

Aspects	Mean Score		Gain Score
	Task 1	Task 2	
Grammar	1.82	2.27	0.45
Fluency	1.77	2.36	0.59
Comprehension	2.00	2.50	0.50
Pronunciation	1.55	2.36	0.81
Vocabulary	1.77	2.41	0.64
Task	2.05	2.50	0.45

Table 7: Students' Mean Score of Speaking Tasks in Cycle II

Aspects	Mean Score		Gain Score
	Task 3	Task 4	
Grammar	2.75	2.83	0.08
Fluency	2.50	2.83	0.33
Comprehension	2.83	3.17	0.34
Pronunciation	2.67	3.00	0.33
Vocabulary	2.46	2.78	0.22
Task	2.92	3.22	0.30

After conducting Cycle II, the students significantly improved their speaking skills. Online communicative speaking tasks helped the students enhance their engagement and speaking skills. Because the improvement had reached the desired goal, the action was ended in Cycle II.

#### 4.2. The Impact of Online Communicative Speaking Tasks

The researcher used post-questionnaires to gain students' opinions and responses to the use of online communicative speaking tasks during the learning process. In the questionnaire, the student's responses were classified according to the four Likert-like scales. The result of the

questionnaire was to know the students' perceptions of online communicative speaking tasks implementation during the actions. The result of students' questionnaires can be seen in the following table.

Table 8: Students' Opinion of Online Communicative Speaking Tasks

No	Statement	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)
1.	I can be a better speaker by using technology to deliver my speaking tasks.	0%	0%	71%	29%
2.	Using online speaking tasks to practice English helped me increase my cooperation and communication with my classmates and teacher.	0%	17%	75%	8%
3.	I am less afraid to make mistakes while learning English speaking through the use of online speaking tasks.	0%	42%	42%	17%
4.	Online speaking tasks has helped me reduce my nervousness to speak.	0%	17%	58%	25%
5.	Online speaking tasks helped me speaking English more fluently.	0%	21%	71%	8%
6.	Online speaking tasks helped me to improve my pronunciation.	0%	4%	83%	13%
7.	Using online speaking tasks to practice English helped me recognize my mistakes.	0%	17%	54%	29%
8.	Recording my speaking tasks allows me to improve my speaking as I have the opportunity to repeat them.	0%	25%	54%	21%
9.	I like to receive my teacher's comments for my speaking tasks via online learning platforms.	8%	58%	33%	0%
10.	I can express my opinion clearly and effectively through online speaking tasks.	0%	13%	83%	4%
11.	I can improve my grammar knowledge while speaking English.	17%	4%	71%	25%
12.	Interaction via the online platforms helped me to become active in English language activity.	0%	33%	58%	8%
13.	I can respond to a conversation or questions.	0%	38%	63%	0%
14.	I can use the proper vocabulary to speak.	0%	13%	83%	4%
15.	I can improve my speaking skills by doing online speaking tasks.	0%	17%	75%	8%

Based on the result above, it can be assumed from the questionnaire that the students agreed that technology as the learning media to do the speaking tasks helped them in learning speaking. All the students agreed that online speaking tasks allowed them to be better speakers. Then, more than half of the students also agreed that using online speaking tasks contributed to changing their speaking skills, such as increasing their confidence and reducing their nervousness while speaking English.

Moreover, almost all students (71% agreed and 8% strongly agreed) also think online communicative speaking tasks helped them to speak fluently. No students strongly disagree

that practicing their speaking through online speaking tasks helped them recognize and correct their mistakes. On average, as a result, more than half of the students agreed that through online communicative speaking tasks, they could improve their pronunciation and grammar, use proper vocabulary, and respond to a conversation or question from the teacher. It also shows that the students were engaged and active during the learning process by doing the tasks. However, 58% of students did not like receiving feedback through online platforms. They preferred to get it directly from the teacher. Fortunately, the students got the feedback orally or directly told by the teacher in the class. Last, 83% of students agreed that they could improve their speaking skills by doing online communicative speaking tasks.

Furthermore, classroom observation shows that students were enthusiastic about doing online communicative speaking tasks. They were interested in the online platforms (Quizlet, Flipgrid, Padlet) and enjoyed completing the tasks since it was their first time doing it. It creates a lively classroom atmosphere when students enjoying the lesson. Then, after implementing the actions, it also can be known that students' confidence, motivation, and participation were way better than before. At the beginning of the research, students were not confident in speaking English while asking the teacher or answering the teacher's questions. Through time, students become more confident in expressing their ideas and answering the teacher's questions without being afraid to make mistakes. Besides, the students were passive during the first meeting during the learning process. At the end of the research, they were more active in participating in the learning activities.

The choice of using online communicative speaking tasks was appropriate to motivate and engage students by providing authentic speaking tasks to communicate in the target language. As a result, the researcher could manage students' speaking problems. Providing authentic opportunities for students to produce language through technology could develop students to become independent and responsible in their learning. Moreover, by involving students during the research, the classroom learning process can transform from teacher-centered learning to student-centered learning.

## **5. Discussion**

The purpose of this research is to know whether the use of communicative speaking tasks can enhance the speaking skills of ninth-grade students and the extent of students' speaking skills improvement. This section is discussing the findings of the research and its connection to the relevant studies.

### **5.1 Online communicative speaking tasks can enhance the speaking skills of ninth-grade students.**

The speaking test was conducted before and after the actions to check if there was progress in the student's performance. Through the test, the researcher aimed to find answers to the research questions. The researcher analyzed the score of students' speaking performance on the pre-test and post-test after obtaining the research data. It was discovered that students' speaking performance's mean scores had greatly improved. The total improvement from the pre-test to post-test II was 8.02 points. Aligned with the findings on students' speaking score improvement after using online communicative speaking tasks, this present study supports previous studies which confirmed that online communicative speaking tasks significantly improved students' speaking scores in pre-and post-test. (Mohammadi & Safdari, 2015; lino et al., 2016; Vurdien, 2019; Amirulloh et al., 2021; Alastal et al., 2022; Subiana et al., 2022).

The students could improve their speaking skills because the researcher applied various communicative speaking tasks through online platforms during the lesson that promoted their participation and speaking performance. Table 5 shows the students' speaking improvement in each test. This result was consistent with the increase in speaking test scores of students in the study by Mohammadi and Safdari (2015). Students' speaking abilities considerably increased after using WeChat mobile application, which is beneficial for the study's use of speaking task-based activities. In comparison to the pre-test score, the post-test scores improved. It indicates that using online speaking-based activities helps students improve their speaking abilities. However, as shown in Table 6 and 7, this study discovered that students had improved all aspects of their speaking skills. The students' mean speaking scores in terms of grammar, fluency, comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, and task all showed considerable improvement.

The findings were also in line with the study by Vurdien (2019). He stated that videoconferencing can support students in improving their communication skills. The mean scores before and after the use of videoconferencing were different. Three criteria—discourse management, lexical resource, and interactive communication—were used to evaluate the students, and those who participated increased their scores. In addition, lino et al. (2016) confirmed that giving students task-based teaching via videoconferencing enhanced their speaking abilities in terms of fluency and lexical variety. They used task-based instruction with the intention of having students do role-play tasks via videoconferencing. The statistical analysis revealed a substantial difference between the pre-and post-test results.

Moreover, a study by Alastal et al. (2022) showed that students' speaking scores in the post-test were way better than in the pre-test after implementing online speaking tasks. It can be proven that their sub-speaking skills such as word choice, pronunciation, relevance, grammar, and fluency have significant improvement after they used online speaking tasks through Padlet. In the same line, the study by Subiana et al. (2022) also showed that students' speaking scores increased from pre-test to post-test after implementing Flipgrid as the medium to do speaking tasks.

Last, the implementation of online communicative speaking tasks in teaching speaking to students was effective to conduct. Students' improvement of speaking skills in terms of vocabulary and grammar could happen since they have to select the words and expressions they want to say before recording their audio/ videos to Flipgrid and Padlet. The pronunciation and fluency aspects also increased because the students practiced before recording the audio/video. This fact was consistent with the study by Amirulloh et al. (2021), who elaborated that using Flipgrid as the speaking forum for students could enhance their speaking performance. It was discovered that using Flipgrid had enhanced their facial expressions, gestures, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

## **5.2 The increase of students' engagement after being taught using online communicative speaking tasks.**

As explained above, online communicative speaking tasks could enhance students' speaking skills. The use of online speaking tasks also benefits students in their engagement. The results obtained in Table 8 show that online communicative speaking tasks contribute to building students' confidence while speaking English. Most students admitted that after learning experience using online communicative speaking tasks, their speaking skills in English were

better than before (statement 1). Furthermore, the students agreed that their speaking and interaction skills improved after completing online speaking tasks. It was different from their situation before implementing online communicative speaking tasks, in which they were not confident to speak English. The following statement from students' questionnaires supports this: "I am less afraid to make mistakes when learning English speaking through the use of online speaking tasks." This situation was in line with a study by Vurdien (2019) that confirmed the task design using videoconferencing positively affected students' confidence, leading to increased motivation and learning performance.

This present study also obtained data that the students agreed that practicing English using online speaking tasks has helped them increase their cooperation and communication with classmates and teachers (see Table 8 statement 2). It was in line with a study by Loranc-Paszylk (2015) that confirmed that task-based projects via videoconferencing affected students' learning motivation. The task made students more motivated to communicate with their peers via videoconferencing than standard conversations in the class. It contributed to building up students' engagement during the learning process.

Last, the present study shows that more than half of students agreed that recording the speaking tasks allows them to improve their speaking as they have the opportunity to repeat them (see Table 8 statement 8). This finding was consistent with the study by Maulidah (2017) that stated students can learn independently while using vlogging as a task-based learning technique. They are free to control the ideas they have about their learning process. It means that online speaking tasks promote students' self-confidence and allow them to do autonomous learning. They could practice and improve their English speaking by recording audio/ video during the task completion with less teacher help.

Overall, this study revealed that students had higher confidence, motivation, interaction, and participation after being taught using online communicative speaking tasks. It attracted and engaged students' attention toward the lesson, which was proven by the increase in students' participation in classroom activities, such as pair work and asking questions to the teacher. As seen in Table 8, most students (58%) agreed that interaction via online platforms helped them become active in English language activity (statement 12). 63% of students also agreed with "I can respond to a conversation or questions" (statement 13). In short, the increase in students' motivation, confidence, interaction, and participation becomes a good sign that students' engagement has improved.

## **6. Conclusion**

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that online communicative speaking tasks were effective in enhancing the speaking skills of ninth-grade students through the use of three online platforms (Quizlet, Flipgrid, Padlet). The communicative speaking tasks successfully improved students' speaking skills in terms of grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. It is shown that students' mean score in post-test II (Cycle II) was higher than the mean score in pre-test and post-test I (Cycle I). The mean score in the pre-test was only 10.48 points. Meanwhile, in post-test I was 13.69 points and in post-test II was 18.50 points. The total improvement score from the pre-test until post-test II was 8.02 points. Besides, the students have improved their confidence, motivation, interaction, participation, and engagement in the classroom. Those improvements made students enjoy and involved in every activity during the learning process by having discussions and working in groups. At the

end of the research, the students were able to learn independently with less of the teacher's help and had a better classroom atmosphere than before.

This study gives contribution to English language learning, especially for the teacher to facilitate and support students' speaking skills improvement. By using online communicative tasks, teachers can help students to be more confident in their speaking and get more engaged during the English learning process. Besides, the use of online communicative speaking tasks can be learning support for students in learning specific expressions in real-life contexts. They knew how to speak correctly and confidently because they were exposed to speak English. Last, implementing online communicative speaking tasks was new learning media for students. The learning process of using technology made the students enthusiastic, and it was enjoyable to join the lesson. The students' interaction, participation, and engagement during the learning process would increase because the various online speaking tasks made the learning process more engaging for students to speak.

The researcher expects that this research can be helpful for other researchers in the future and those who will conduct this similar research. Therefore, the researcher suggests that the following researchers can try other online platforms based on the need of their research subject and be ensured to understand the online platforms or applications that will be used.

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