



Targeted Learning with Speaking Worksheets: Advancing Professional Communication Skills in EFL Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

As English becomes the lingua franca of professional communication, many higher education institutions still overlook the importance of equipping EFL learners with targeted speaking skills for real-world occupational settings. This study responds to that pressing educational need by exploring the effectiveness of structured speaking worksheets in enhancing students' speaking proficiency and overall engagement in a professional communication course. Conducted through a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design, the research involved 60 undergraduate English Education students at Tadulako University who were divided into an experimental group using speaking worksheets and a control group receiving conventional instruction. Students' speaking performance was evaluated across five critical dimensions: grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and contextual appropriateness. Engagement levels were measured using structured questionnaires. The results revealed a clear improvement in the speaking abilities of students who used the worksheets, accompanied by stronger motivation, enhanced self-confidence, and increased critical thinking. These gains, when compared to the outcomes of the control group, indicate the pedagogical value of incorporating structured, context-driven speaking materials into classroom instruction. Rather than functioning as simple practice tools, speaking worksheets emerged as dynamic resources that promoted learner agency, active participation, and deeper communicative competence. This study advances English for Professional Purposes by providing empirical support for using responsive, scenario-based materials in EFL instruction. It highlights the value of task-based, learner-centered approaches that connect academic learning with future workplace communication.

1. Introduction

In the twenty-first century, professional communication in English has become a decisive factor in determining academic advancement, employability, and workplace integration. As international collaboration across sectors continues to expand, the demand for clear, competent, and contextually appropriate spoken English has grown more urgent. For learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), this demand extends far beyond general fluency. They are now expected to speak purposefully, handle complex interactions, and engage diverse audiences. This shift requires language instruction to build both linguistic accuracy and real-world communicative competence.

The traditional goals of EFL instruction, which often focus on grammar mastery and vocabulary acquisition, are no longer sufficient. In professional settings, effective communication involves much more than accuracy. It requires adaptability, rhetorical awareness, and clarity of expression. [Salim et al. \(2023\)](#) emphasize that lexical appropriateness plays a vital role in establishing professional credibility. [Hui and Sprouse \(2023\)](#) highlight the importance of structured and coherent language use, while [Dempsey et al. \(2018\)](#) stress the significance of aligning speech with occupational roles through pragmatic and stylistic choices. These perspectives suggest a shift is needed, one that centers on communicative performance within workplace-specific discourse. In light of these insights, EFL curricula must be redesigned to cultivate

communicative competence that reflects the demands of global professional environments (Mustafa et al., 2022; Özışık et al., 2019; Vula et al., 2024; Zhi-qian, 2018; Aufa, 2016; Ifantidou, 2013).

A close review of recent literature highlights an ongoing misalignment between classroom instruction and real-world communicative needs. Numerous studies have documented learners' struggles with vocabulary retrieval, pronunciation, formal register, and overall confidence during simulated professional tasks (Halali et al., 2023; Holandyah et al., 2022; Halali et al., 2022; Sukmojati et al., 2023). Despite widespread awareness of these issues, instructional models often fail to provide adequate support. The persistent gap is not simply due to a lack of recognition, but rather the absence of pedagogical tools designed specifically to address these challenges in a systematic and targeted way. Alarmingly, such communicative weaknesses continue to surface even among graduates, indicating that existing curricula may fall short in preparing students for the pragmatic and interpersonal demands of professional engagement.

These findings are reinforced across multiple professional fields. Saifan et al. (2021) reveal how communication deficiencies among nursing students hinder interactions with clinical mentors, jeopardizing patient care and professional development. Forbes and Evans (2022) argue that inadequate training in workplace communication leaves students unprepared for collaboration and leadership roles. Lee et al. (2022) emphasize the consequences of limited community engagement, which often restricts learners from practicing real-time dialogue and negotiation. In public health, Wang et al. (2021) underscore how fragile communicative infrastructures hamper knowledge transfer during emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Hikmat (2024) attributes part of this problem to educational models that neglect soft skill development. Fu et al. (2019) advocate for pedagogical strategies like peer feedback and project-based learning to cultivate sociopragmatic awareness. These studies converge on the need for EFL instruction to embrace context-sensitive and practice-oriented teaching strategies.

The continued reliance on textbook-driven instruction presents a significant barrier to meaningful language use. As Ibrahim (2022), Paneerselvam and Mohamad (2019), and Sheerah (2018) observe, traditional methods such as grammar drills fail to capture the complexity of workplace communication. Research by Ikbal et al. (2024) and Patty and Bilung (2023) confirms that learners, particularly in underserved contexts, lack access to authentic and relevant materials. Furthermore, Su (2022) highlights how learner anxiety affects classroom participation and performance, making a strong case for student-centered approaches. Chen (2022) cautions against viewing translation as a singular marker of proficiency, while scholars such as Dziuban et al. (2018), Dalton-

Puffer (2011), and Akbaş (2020) emphasize the promise of blended learning, CLIL, and integrated writing approaches. Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Rahim (2019) call for adaptive teaching models that reflect learners' communicative realities, making these alternative strategies not only beneficial but necessary.

Responding to this instructional gap, the present study introduces structured speaking worksheets as a pedagogical tool designed to promote targeted professional communication. These worksheets are not conceived as supplementary exercises but as core instructional resources that support guided, scenario-based speaking tasks. Rooted in real-world professional contexts, the worksheets aim to bridge theory and practice by encouraging learners to speak with confidence, respond critically, and reflect meaningfully. Unlike conventional speaking tasks, these worksheets create simulated work-related interactions that help students rehearse linguistic, pragmatic, and interpersonal strategies essential for success in the modern workplace.

The study aims to explore the impact of speaking worksheets on both speaking performance and student engagement. Through an experimental pretest-posttest design, the research compares outcomes between students who used speaking worksheets and those taught using traditional methods. Assessment focuses on grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and contextual appropriateness, while structured questionnaires gauge learners' motivation, engagement, and perception of instructional relevance. By combining quantitative performance data and qualitative feedback, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the pedagogical value of worksheet-based instruction.

The structure of this paper guides readers through a sequential exploration of theory, methodology, findings, and implications. Following this introduction, the literature review synthesizes key theoretical models and prior studies that inform the research. The methodology section outlines the research design, participant selection, instruments, and analytical techniques. The results section presents statistical findings on speaking outcomes and student engagement. The discussion interprets these findings in light of existing literature, leading to a conclusion that identifies contributions and pedagogical implications. This logical progression enables a clear understanding of how structured materials can serve as transformative tools in language education.

In conclusion, this study engages with a critical yet underexplored issue in EFL instruction: the need for materials that develop not just language proficiency, but professional communicative competence. By integrating structured speaking worksheets into classroom practice, the study offers a viable solution that aligns instructional goals with workplace realities. The findings provide strong support for a pedagogical

shift toward context-driven and learner-centered approaches in the teaching of English for Professional Purposes. They also support the development of theoretical frameworks and practical innovations that strengthen language education in preparing learners for professional communicative competence.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Learning Theory

Learning theory provides the conceptual basis for understanding how students acquire skills, including professional communication in English. Learning is viewed as an active, evolving process that influences behavior and performance. [Ramdani et al. \(2023\)](#) define it as the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes through experience, instruction, or practice. [Setya Utama \(2023\)](#) and [Yulianto \(2019\)](#) emphasize that learning results in observable cognitive transformation. This perspective supports the study's aim to assess the effectiveness of speaking worksheets in professional communication. Active learning places students at the center of instruction through engaging and meaningful tasks. [Adilah and Budiharti \(2015\)](#) and [Dewiyani and Kosasih \(2018\)](#) found that it increases motivation. Similarly, [Asmariani and Nurmadiyah \(2018\)](#) and [Mafidah \(2021\)](#) highlight its positive impact on academic outcomes. In this study, speaking worksheets serve as tools for active learning by facilitating peer interaction, real-world practice, and reflection.

Constructivist theory, introduced by Piaget and developed further by Vygotsky, views learners as active agents in building knowledge ([Muflich & Nursikin, 2023](#); [Romadhona et al., 2023](#)). Vygotsky emphasized the importance of social interaction, where dialogue and collaboration foster deeper understanding. Speaking worksheets, within this framework, are platforms for students to construct knowledge through interaction. This approach is supported by [Amahorseya and Mardliyah \(2023\)](#) and [Supinah and Nuriadin \(2023\)](#), who highlight the value of social learning in enhancing speaking abilities.

Related to constructivism is collaborative learning theory, which stresses the role of group activities in language development. Collaborative tasks improve comprehension, problem-solving, and communication skills ([Maswi et al., 2022](#); [Zulkarnaen et al., 2023](#)). Speaking worksheets that encourage group work allow students to share knowledge and improve their English through mutual support. Assessment is critical for determining instructional effectiveness. Learning evaluation should measure both outcomes and processes ([Aula, 2024](#); [R. S. Siregar, 2023](#); [Huljannah, 2021](#); [Zainal, 2020](#)). This study uses pretests, posttests, and questionnaires to examine how speaking worksheets improve students' professional communication and language development in workplace contexts.

2.2 Student Engagement in Learning

Student engagement reflects the level of attention, interest, and emotional commitment students bring to learning. It includes behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions ([Swastika, 2022](#); [Ulwan, 2017](#); [Zariayufa et al., 2022](#)). Behavioral engagement refers to active task participation, emotional engagement involves students' feelings, and cognitive engagement relates to their investment in thinking and problem-solving. This model is used to evaluate how speaking worksheets influence involvement and learning outcomes.

Engaged learners tend to perform better and persist in academic tasks ([Aliah et al., 2024](#); [Alqudah & Khasawneh, 2023](#); [Liu et al., 2023](#); [Pradana et al., 2024](#)). The worksheets in this study are designed to promote engagement through relevant speaking activities. Research also shows that engagement improves motivation and attitudes toward learning ([Ichinose, 2016](#); [Kuchynka et al., 2021](#)). The study explores how such engagement contributes to speaking proficiency in professional settings

2.3 Fundamental Concepts of English Speaking Proficiency

Speaking proficiency involves fluency, accuracy, clarity, and contextual appropriateness in communication ([Furqon et al., 2022](#); [Thamrin et al., 2023](#); [Yuhelmi, 2022](#); [Yunita & Muharromah, 2022](#)). It requires command of grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and structure. Grammar helps organize ideas ([Tarigan & Nadhira, 2023](#)), while pronunciation ensures clarity ([Hastuti, 2020](#)). Mastery of vocabulary, including idiomatic and situational expressions, enhances speech effectiveness ([Aris, 2021](#); [Rahmah, 2023](#); [Faradillah et al., 2023](#)).

Fluency is the ability to speak smoothly and confidently ([Fadhilah, 2022](#); [Aini et al., 2023](#)). Learners also need to adapt their speech to different contexts, especially in professional environments where politeness, technical language, and cultural sensitivity are important ([Hadiyanto et al., 2023](#); [Maharani et al., 2023](#)). This study uses speaking worksheets to promote comprehensive speaking skills through guided, contextual tasks.

2.4 Factors Influencing Students' Speaking Learning Outcomes

Multiple factors affect learning outcomes in speaking, including motivation, environment, instructional methods, and prior knowledge. Motivated learners often demonstrate persistence and greater improvement ([Murdiyanto & Wijayanti, 2021](#)). A supportive environment that offers authentic speaking opportunities can improve the learning process ([Abidin & Wandi, 2023](#); [Afrianita et al., 2022](#); [Fajarwati et al., 2022](#)).

Effective teaching strategies such as group discussion and language games also play a key role (Iskandar, 2020; Nuraeni & Irawati, 2022; Ishaq et al., 2023; Maryana & Abriano, 2017; Putri et al., 2021). Initial language proficiency may influence learning speed and outcomes (Nisrina, 2023; Purwaningsih et al., 2023; Sada et al., 2023). However, consistent practice and guided support can help all students improve. This study highlights how well-structured speaking worksheets can address various learner needs

2.5 Effectiveness of Supplemental Speaking Worksheets

Speaking worksheets are designed to provide structured oral practice. Grounded in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, they offer support through manageable, scaffolded tasks (Wibowo et al., 2025). These include role-plays, vocabulary exercises, and scenario-based activities that enhance fluency and confidence (R. K. Siregar, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2022). By encouraging purposeful expression, worksheets support the development of clear and coherent speech (Sumanik et al., 2023; Nuriddinovna, 2021).

These tools offer flexibility, allowing teachers to tailor complexity to individual student needs (F. S. Siregar et al., 2021). When contextualized to professional settings, they prepare learners for real-world communication. Their effectiveness depends on teacher guidance, integration with other skills, and timely feedback (Anwar et al., 2023; Auliannisa et al., 2023; Hendrik, 2023).

2.6 Related Research and Research Gap

Previous studies affirm the benefits of structured materials and active learning in developing speaking abilities. Worksheets help bridge theoretical knowledge and practical application (Müller-Bloch & Kranz, 2015). Collaborative learning tasks also support engagement and knowledge retention (Marco et al., 2024; Sus et al., 2024; Vanda et al., 2024). Recent research explores innovative strategies to address instructional gaps (Steven et al., 2024; Supriya, 2024).

However, limited studies focus on speaking worksheets in professional communication courses. Few use controlled experimental designs to assess their impact. Although engagement is frequently mentioned, its specific role in shaping speaking outcomes remains underexplored. This study addresses these gaps by combining theory-driven instruction, empirical analysis, and student feedback to examine how speaking worksheets improve professional communication. The novelty of this research lies in its integrated focus on engagement, skill-building, and instructional design. It offers practical contributions to English language education, demonstrating how interactive materials can foster communication competence in real-world settings.

3. Method

This study employed an experimental research design to evaluate the effectiveness of speaking worksheets in enhancing students' performance in the *Speaking for Professional Context* course. Additionally, it aimed to explore student engagement with these instructional materials. To ensure methodological rigor, a Two-Group Pretest-Posttest Design was implemented.

The experimental group received instruction using speaking worksheets, while the control group was taught through conventional pedagogical methods. This design facilitated a controlled comparison of learning outcomes by assessing students' performance both before and after the intervention.

3.1 Participants and Sampling

Participants were drawn from the English Education Study Program at Tadulako University. A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure unbiased participant selection.

From a total of six available classes, two were randomly assigned as the experimental and control groups. This sampling method enhanced the internal validity of the study by minimizing potential selection bias and ensuring group comparability.

3.2 Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through a classroom-based experimental procedure and supplemented with a post-intervention survey. Two primary forms of data were gathered:

- 1) **Speaking performance data**, obtained from six structured speaking tests administered as pretests and posttests.
- 2) **Engagement data**, collected via a structured questionnaire distributed following the intervention.

The pretest measured students' baseline speaking skills across five dimensions: grammar, pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and contextual appropriateness. The experimental group then underwent instruction using specially designed speaking worksheets, while the control group continued with standard instruction. Upon completion of the instructional period, a posttest using identical evaluative criteria was conducted to assess learning gains.

To enrich the dataset, a questionnaire was administered to collect students' perspectives, engagement levels, and preferences regarding the use of speaking worksheets. These instruments allowed for both quantitative (test scores) and qualitative (perceptual data) insights into the effectiveness of the intervention.

3.3 Instruments

The study utilized multiple data collection instruments:

- Pretest and posttest: Assessed speaking performance using consistent rubrics.
- Structured questionnaire: Captured student engagement, motivation, and attitudes toward the instructional materials.

This triangulated instrumentation provided a comprehensive understanding of both cognitive (speaking proficiency) and affective (engagement and perception) learning outcomes.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 29.0, employing both paired-sample t-tests and independent-sample t-tests. The paired-sample t-test was applied to compare the pretest and posttest scores within each group, particularly to determine the impact of the speaking worksheets on the experimental group. The independent-sample t-test was then used to compare the posttest scores between the experimental and control groups, establishing whether observed differences in performance were statistically significant.

Prior to inferential testing, the data were examined to ensure compliance with the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance, both of which are prerequisites for the validity of parametric tests. This rigorous approach to data analysis ensured the reliability and validity of the study's findings.

4. Result

4.1 Student Learning Outcomes

One of the key indicators for evaluating the success of the learning process in higher education is the learning outcomes of students. Learning outcomes reflect students' comprehension, mastery, and abilities acquired after undergoing a series of learning activities. By understanding student learning outcomes, instructors and institutions can assess the effectiveness of teaching methods, identify challenges faced by students, and design more appropriate strategies to improve educational quality. This section provides a detailed discussion of the learning outcomes of students in the *Speaking for Professional Context* course, which serves as the focus of this study. The analysis includes a comparison between the experimental class, which received the treatment, and the control class, which did not receive any specific treatment. This discussion aims to examine the extent to which the treatment had a positive impact on the students' learning outcomes.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Experimental and Control Classes

		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students Result	Pre-Test Experiment	30	50	80	67.50	7.740
	Post-Test Experiment	30	60	95	78.17	8.558
	Pre-Test Control	30	55	85	71.17	7.507
	Post-Test Control	30	70	95	81.83	6.086
	Valid N (Listwise)	30				

The "Descriptive Statistics" table presents the descriptive statistical data for the two groups, namely the experimental and control groups, during the pre-test and post-test phases. Each group consisted of 30 participants ($N = 30$). In the pre-test for the experimental group, the minimum score was 50 and the maximum score was 80, with a mean score of 67.50 and a standard deviation of 7.740. This indicates that prior to the treatment, the pre-test scores in the experimental group varied widely, ranging from 50 to 80, with an average score of approximately 67.50. After the treatment, in the post-test for the experimental group, the minimum score increased to 60, and the maximum score rose to 95, with a mean of 78.17 and a standard deviation of 8.558. The increase in the mean score from 67.50 in the pre-test to 78.17 in the post-test demonstrates a positive impact of the treatment

administered to the experimental group. However, the rise in the standard deviation suggests that the variation in scores within the experimental group widened following the treatment.

For the control group, the pre-test scores ranged from 55 to 85, with a mean score of 71.17 and a standard deviation of 7.507. The post-test scores in the control group also showed an increase, with a minimum score of 70 and a maximum score of 95, a mean score of 81.83, and a standard deviation of 6.086. The increase in the mean score in the control group, although smaller than that of the experimental group, suggests the presence of other factors contributing to the improvement in scores aside from the treatment given to the experimental group.

Overall, the data indicate that the experimental group had a lower average score in the pre-test compared to the control group but experienced a greater improvement in the post-test. This suggests the

influence of the treatment provided to the experimental group. Nevertheless, the improvement in the control group's scores should also be considered when interpreting the results.

Table 2. Normality Test Result for Experimental and Control Classes

	Experiment and Control	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Students Achievement	Pre-Test Experiment	.160	30	.048	.953	30	.201
	Post-Test Experiment	.118	30	.200*	.967	30	.458
	Pre-Test Control	.172	30	.024	.940	30	.090
	Post-Test Control	.165	30	.036	.943	30	.111

* This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The "Tests of Normality" table evaluates the normality assumption of the learning outcomes data for both the experimental group (pre-test and post-test) and the control group (pre-test and post-test). The normality test was conducted using two methods: the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test.

Based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results, the pre-test data for the experimental group showed a significance value (Sig.) of 0.048, indicating that the data did not follow a normal distribution as the significance value was less than 0.05. However, the post-test data for the experimental group, as well as the pre-test and post-test data for the control group, showed significance values greater than 0.05 (0.200, 0.024, and 0.036, respectively), suggesting that these data sets followed a normal distribution.

The Shapiro-Wilk test yielded similar findings. For the experimental group's pre-test data, the significance value was 0.201, indicating a normal distribution. Similarly, the significance values for the post-test data of the experimental group, as well as the pre-test and post-test data of the control group, were 0.458, 0.090, and 0.111, respectively, all of which indicated that these data sets followed a normal distribution.

Overall, Overall, the normality test shows that most learning outcomes for both groups are normally distributed. However, the experimental group's pre-test data did not meet this assumption based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Meeting the normality assumption is essential for applying robust parametric tests; otherwise, less powerful non-parametric tests must be used.

Table 3. Homogeneity of Variance Test Results for Experimental and Control Classes

		Levene Statistic			
			df1	df2	Sig.
Students Achievement	Based on Mean	1.153	3	116	.331
	Based on Median	.883	3	116	.452
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.883	3	111.55	.452
	Based on trimmed mean	1.138	3	116	.337

The "Test of Homogeneity of Variance" evaluates the assumption of equal variances among the groups being compared. In this case, four methods were used to test homogeneity of variances: based on mean, median, median with adjusted degrees of freedom, and trimmed mean. The results indicate that the Levene Statistic for the test based on mean is 1.153, with degrees of freedom (df1) 3 and (df2) 116, and a significance value (Sig.) of 0.331. This significant value, being greater than the commonly used alpha level (e.g., 0.05), suggests that there is no significant variance difference among the groups.

Similarly, the test based on median also shows a significance value greater than 0.05 (0.452). The same applies to the test based on median with adjusted degrees of freedom (0.452) and the test based on trimmed mean (0.337). Overall, the homogeneity of variance tests across different methods indicates no significant variance differences among the groups (e.g., experimental and control groups, pre-test and post-test data). This means the assumption of homogeneity of variances is satisfied, enabling further statistical analysis under the equal variance assumption.

Table 4. Paired Samples Test Results for Experimental and Control Classes

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-Test Experimental	-							
	Post Test Experiment	10.667	6.397	1.168	-13.055	-8.278	-9.133	29	.000
Pair 2	Pre-Test Control	-							
	Post Test Control	10.667	9.166	1.674	-14.089	-7.244	-6.374	29	.000

The "Paired Samples Test" table presents the results of the paired samples t-test conducted between pre-test and post-test scores for both the experimental and control groups. This test aims to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores within each group.

For **Pair 1** (Pre-test Experimental - Post-test Experimental), the mean difference is -10.667, with a standard deviation of 6.397 and a standard error mean of 1.168. The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranges from -13.055 to -8.278. The t-statistic is -9.133, with degrees of freedom (df) 29, and a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000. A significant value smaller than 0.05 indicates that the difference between pre-test and post-test scores in the experimental group is statistically significant.

For **Pair 2** (Pre-test Control - Post-test Control), the mean difference is -10.667, with a standard deviation of 9.166 and a standard error mean of 1.674. The 95% confidence interval for the difference ranges from -14.089 to -7.244. The t-statistic is -6.374, with degrees of freedom (df) 29, and a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000. This also indicates a statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores in the control group.

These paired t-test results reveal significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores in both the experimental and control groups, demonstrating an improvement in learning outcomes for both groups.

Table 5. Independent Samples Test Results for Experimental and Control Groups

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	t-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.				Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.924	.338	-2.183	118	.031	-3.667	1.679	-6.992	-.341
Equal variances not assumed			-2.183	116.446	.031	-3.667	1.679	-6.993	-.341

The "Independent Samples Test" table compares the learning outcomes of the experimental and control groups. Under the assumption of equal variances ("Equal variances assumed"), the Levene's test for equality of variances shows an F value of 0.924 with a significance value of 0.338. A significant value greater than 0.05 indicates that the assumption of equal variances is satisfied. Based on this assumption, the t-statistic is -2.183, with degrees of freedom (df) 118, and a significant value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.031. A significance value smaller than 0.05 indicates that the difference between the experimental and control groups' learning outcomes is statistically significant.

The mean difference between the two groups is -3.667, with a standard error of 1.679. The 95% confidence interval for this difference ranges from -6.992 to -0.341, which does not include zero, further confirming the statistical significance of the difference.

The independent samples t-test shows that the experimental group outperformed the control group, suggesting the intervention significantly improved their learning outcomes. This supports the conclusion that the treatment had a positive impact not seen in the control group.

4.2 Student Engagement

In addition to learning outcomes, the level of student engagement during the learning process is a critical indicator for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching methods or materials. Student engagement, including participation in class discussions, asking questions, and involvement in other learning activities, reflects their understanding, motivation, and enthusiasm for the subject matter.

This study presents data and analysis related to the level of engagement in the experimental class, which received a specific intervention, and compares it with the control class, which did not receive the same intervention. The goal is to determine the extent to which the intervention enhanced students' active participation during the learning process.

Understanding student engagement allows educators to assess the effectiveness of teaching methods and design more interactive and engaging learning activities for future instruction.

The questionnaire, utilizing a Likert scale, is grouped by engagement objectives to identify key aspects of engagement, streamline data analysis, improve targeted learning strategies, and provide a comprehensive evaluation of the speaking worksheet's effectiveness. This approach facilitates targeted enhancements in key areas, including speaking proficiency, self-confidence, communication abilities, critical thinking, and student motivation. At the same time, it provides structured insights that contribute to more effective and outcome-oriented teaching practices.

Table 6. Respondent Data

Objectives	Response	Frequency
1 Developing Speaking Skills	Agree	64
	Neutral	26
	Disagree	0
	Total Response	90
2 Enhancing Self-Confidence	Agree	20
	Neutral	10
	Disagree	0
	Total Response	30
3 Encouraging interactive communication	Agree	43
	Neutral	17
	Disagree	0
	Total Response	60
4 Developing critical thinking skills	Agree	46
	Neutral	14
	Disagree	0
	Total Response	60
5 Enhancing learning motivation	Agree	51
	Neutral	9
	Disagree	0
	Total Response	60

Table 6 provides a detailed summary of respondent data categorized by engagement objectives, presenting the frequency of responses across three Likert scale options: Agree, Neutral, and Disagree. This data serves as a reflection of the effectiveness of the speaking worksheet in addressing key areas of student engagement and learning. For the objective of developing speaking skills, 64 out of 90 respondents

agreed, 26 were neutral, and none disagreed, indicating that the worksheet significantly contributed to improving students' speaking abilities. In enhancing self-confidence, 20 out of 30 respondents agreed, while 10 were neutral, and no disagreements were recorded, showing a moderate but positive influence on students' confidence levels during the learning process.

The objective of encouraging interactive communication received 43 agreements, 17 neutral responses, and no disagreements out of 60 respondents, demonstrating that the intervention effectively fostered interaction among students. Likewise, the data reveals significant progress in developing critical thinking skills, with 46 out of 60 respondents agreeing, 14 responding neutrally, and no disagreements recorded, indicating that the worksheet successfully stimulated critical thinking abilities. Finally, the objective of enhancing learning motivation saw 51 agreements, 9 neutral responses, and no disagreements out of 60 respondents, suggesting that the worksheet played a

crucial role in increasing students' enthusiasm and drive for learning.

Overall, the consistent absence of disagreement across all objectives, combined with the high frequency of "Agree" responses, underscores the speaking worksheet's comprehensive effectiveness. These findings suggest that the worksheet not only supports specific learning outcomes, such as communication and critical thinking, but also fosters a holistic improvement in student engagement. The insights from this data provide valuable guidance for designing future teaching materials and strategies to further enhance student learning experiences.

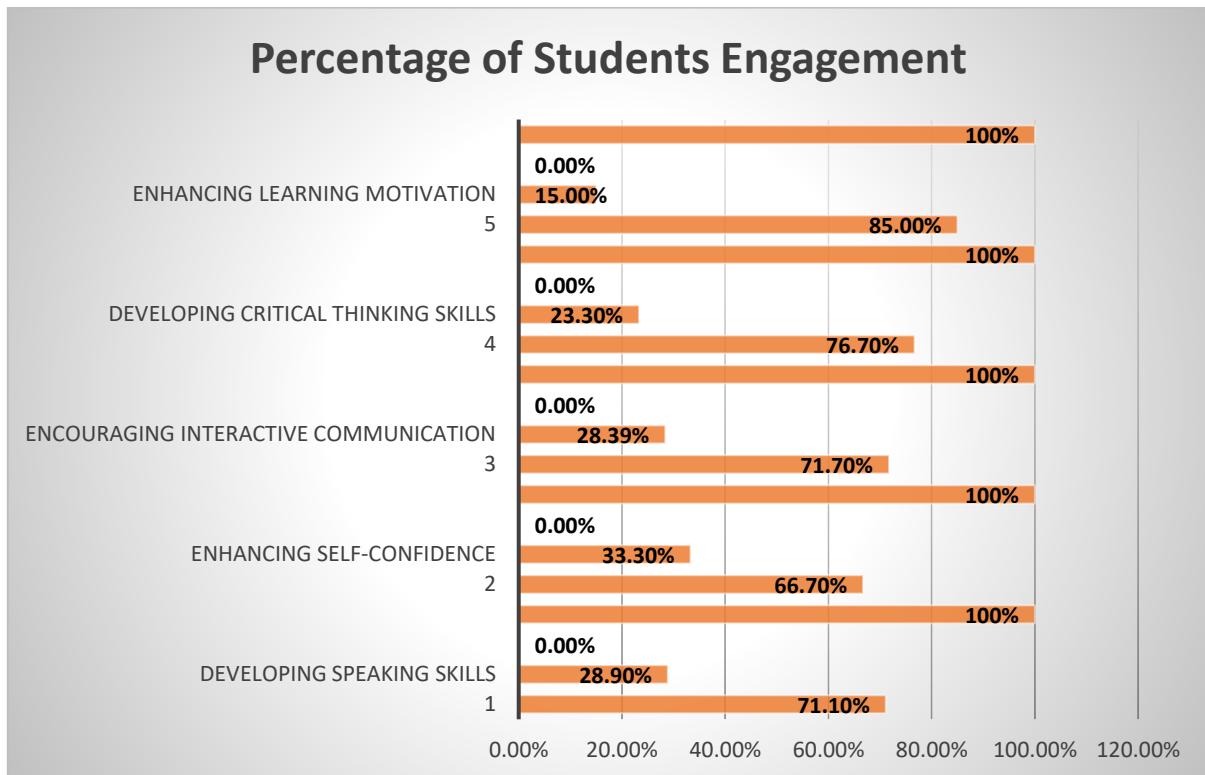


Chart 1. Percentage of Respondent Data

The chart presents the distribution of respondents' agreement percentages across five primary engagement objectives, based on responses collected using a Likert scale. The results are divided into three categories: Agree, Neutral, and Disagree.

For the objective of *enhancing learning motivation*, 85% of respondents agreed, 15% remained neutral, and no respondents disagreed, indicating strong success in fostering motivation. In *developing critical thinking skills*, 76.7% of respondents agreed, while 23.3% were neutral, showing substantial progress in this area with no disagreement recorded.

Regarding *encouraging interactive communication*, 71.7% of respondents agreed, 28.3% were neutral, and no respondents disagreed, reflecting effective engagement in promoting interaction among learners.

For *enhancing self-confidence*, 66.7% of respondents agreed, 33.3% were neutral, and there were no disagreements, demonstrating moderate improvement in building students' confidence.

Finally, the objective of *developing speaking skills* shows that 71.1% of respondents agreed, 28.9% were neutral, and no respondents disagreed, indicating a favorable impact of the intervention on speaking ability development.

Overall, the chart underscores the effectiveness of the intervention in achieving all engagement objectives, as evidenced by the consistently high percentages of agreement and the absence of disagreement across all categories. This supports the conclusion that the speaking worksheet positively influenced students' engagement and learning outcomes.

5. Discussion

This study explored the use of structured speaking worksheets to enhance speaking proficiency and student engagement in a professional communication course for EFL learners. It specifically examined three core aspects: the effectiveness of the worksheets, the differences in learning outcomes between the experimental and control groups, and the role of student engagement in influencing language development. These three components are discussed thematically to ensure clarity and depth in addressing each research objective.

5.1 Effectiveness of Implementing Speaking Worksheets

The results of this study confirmed a statistically significant improvement in the speaking proficiency of students who used speaking worksheets. The mean score in the experimental group increased from 67.50 in the pretest to 78.17 in the posttest. This improvement exceeded the gains observed in the control group, which followed conventional teaching methods. Although the control group also experienced a rise in scores, the magnitude of improvement was smaller, pointing to the impact of structured and context-based worksheet activities.

These findings support earlier work that emphasized the importance of practice aligned with real-world communication needs (Iskandar, 2020; Murdiyanto & Wijayanti, 2021; Nuraeni & Irawati, 2022). The worksheets allowed learners to engage in meaningful and realistic speaking situations, which contributed to their fluency and communicative competence. As noted by Johnson (2022), structured exercises that mirror professional contexts provide substantial gains in language acquisition, particularly in speaking performance.

Motivation emerged as a critical element that amplified the success of the worksheet intervention. Murdiyanto and Wijayanti (2021) argued that motivated learners tend to sustain their efforts in developing speaking skills despite psychological and linguistic barriers. In line with this, the speaking worksheets promoted persistence and active involvement in classroom tasks. The positive learning environment further enhanced outcomes, reflecting insights from Abidin and Wandi (2023) and Afrianita et al. (2022) who highlighted the importance of authentic learning activities such as role-playing and peer discussions.

Moreover, the integration of small group discussions and technology-assisted exercises contributed to the development of oral proficiency, as supported by previous studies (Ishaq et al., 2023; Maryana and Abriano, 2017; Putri et al., 2021). These findings reinforce the role of interactive, learner-centered strategies in enhancing language performance in higher education.

5.2 Significant Differences in Learning Outcomes

The statistical comparison of posttest results between the experimental and control groups revealed a significant difference in favor of the experimental group. The use of an independent t-test produced a value of $t = -2.183$ with $p = 0.031$, confirming the statistical significance of the observed learning gains. While both groups experienced an identical increase of 10.67 in their mean scores, the experimental group began with a lower average and ended with greater improvement, highlighting the effectiveness of the intervention.

This result validates the pedagogical role of speaking worksheets in supporting professional language development. The worksheets created opportunities for learners to participate in authentic and targeted speaking tasks, which echoes the arguments of Iskandar (2020) and Nuraeni and Irawati (2022) regarding the importance of experiential language use. Similarly, Murdiyanto and Wijayanti (2021) emphasized the value of supportive instructional tools in reinforcing learner engagement.

From a theoretical lens, the findings are consistent with the constructivist approach to language learning. Brown and Campione (2022) observed that learning tools aligned with learners' cognitive frameworks enhance knowledge internalization. Johnson et al. (2021) also confirmed that structured instructional design improves learners' confidence and speaking accuracy, reinforcing the value of worksheet-based learning.

The key contribution of this section lies in its demonstration of the synergistic relationship between pedagogical design, engagement, and performance. The results not only confirm the practical benefits of speaking worksheets but also establish their relevance as core instructional instruments in English for Professional Purposes.

5.3 Student Engagement in the Implementation of Speaking Worksheets

The third finding of the study focused on the relationship between student engagement and the use of speaking worksheets. Learners who participated in the experimental group reported higher levels of motivation, confidence, critical thinking, and interactive communication. Questionnaire data showed strong agreement across all engagement objectives, with no recorded disagreement, indicating the perceived effectiveness of the intervention.

This pattern is aligned with Amelia et al. (2023), who documented that well-structured speaking worksheets can sharpen both academic and professional speaking competencies. The insights from Murdiyanto and Wijayanti (2021) further emphasize that educational tools fostering active participation

contribute significantly to speaking improvement. This view is echoed by [Adilah and Budiharti \(2015\)](#) and [Dewiyani and Kosasih \(2018\)](#), who asserted that active learning methodologies drive student-centered engagement.

Grounded in constructivist theory, the speaking worksheets functioned as mediational tools that supported collaborative dialogue and reflective learning. Through group-based tasks and scenario simulations, learners engaged in knowledge construction consistent with the principles introduced by Piaget and Vygotsky ([Amahorseya & Mardliyah, 2023](#); [Supinah & Nuriadin, 2023](#)). These experiences allowed students to build communicative competence in a manner that reflects the demands of real-world interactions.

The landscape of performance-based English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction is attracting increasing scholarly attention, especially concerning the use of instructional materials such as speaking worksheets designed to address professional communication needs. However, studies employing rigorous experimental designs to evaluate the effectiveness of these materials remain limited, with much of the existing research focusing on general speaking activities that often overlook occupation-specific requirements ([Pawlak, 2018](#)). This oversight reduces the relevance of EFL instruction in professional contexts. Additionally, there is a notable lack of studies investigating learner engagement as a distinct variable influencing speaking outcomes, despite evidence suggesting that active learning strategies, including engaging worksheets, enhance students' conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills across disciplines ([Suryani et al., 2018](#); [Sari et al., 2020](#)). To address these gaps, the present study integrates empirical analysis with qualitative student feedback, offering a holistic evaluation of the impact of speaking worksheets. While prior research has often emphasized measurable outcomes, it has frequently ignored learners' perceptions and engagement levels, which are crucial to effective language acquisition ([Majid & Mohamad, 2024](#); [Eambaipreuk & Unyapot, 2023](#)).

Instructional materials that promote independent learning and cognitive engagement have demonstrated success in fostering student motivation and deeper involvement in learning activities ([Setiyani et al., 2023](#); [Alfiana, 2023](#); [Makena, 2023](#); [Lentika & Admoko, 2022](#)). Furthermore, incorporating real-world, profession-specific scenarios into worksheets enhances the transferability of linguistic skills to authentic communication settings ([Margareta & Savitri, 2023](#); [Haerani et al., 2023](#)). Studies have underscored the importance of needs-based instructional design to ensure materials are both contextually relevant and aligned with learners' future professional roles ([Lestari et al., 2023](#); [Shallcross et al., 2025](#)). By combining quantitative results with qualitative insights, this study

contributes to the growing discourse on performance-based EFL instruction, highlighting the practical and pedagogical value of specialized worksheets in equipping learners for success in increasingly competitive global environments ([Yulianti & Putra, 2023](#); [Anjani et al., 2023](#)).

The originality of this study resides in its comprehensive integration of professional scenarios, learner engagement metrics, and constructivist pedagogy into the design and implementation of speaking worksheets. These worksheets were not designed as mere supplementary materials, but as primary instructional tools that aligned closely with students' future workplace communication needs. The evidence presented supports the claim that such worksheets promote not only skill development but also learner agency and self-regulation.

In terms of pedagogical implications, the findings advocate for a paradigm shift in EFL teaching practices. Language educators, particularly in higher education, are encouraged to adopt scenario-based and interactive instructional models that bridge classroom learning with professional expectations. This study offers actionable insights for curriculum designers and teachers seeking to improve the relevance and impact of English for Professional Purposes courses.

Future studies should explore the long-term effects of speaking worksheets on learners' communication competence beyond the academic environment. Longitudinal tracking of graduates' workplace performance could reveal whether the skills developed through worksheet-based instruction translate into professional success. Additionally, researchers are encouraged to investigate the adaptability of these materials in specialized domains such as medical English, legal communication, intercultural negotiation, or digital professional interactions. Comparative studies across institutions and cultural contexts could further enrich the understanding of how structured speaking materials function in diverse learning ecosystems.

5. Conclusion

This study has provided compelling evidence that speaking worksheets, when thoughtfully designed and implemented, significantly enhance students' speaking proficiency and engagement in professional communication contexts. Key findings reveal that learners in the experimental group demonstrated substantial improvements in grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and contextual appropriateness, supported by statistically significant differences in post-test scores compared to the control group. Beyond linguistic gains, the worksheets also fostered higher levels of student motivation, critical thinking, and interactive participation, as indicated by overwhelmingly positive responses in engagement metrics.

The novelty of this research lies in its integration of active learning, constructivist principles, and professional scenario-based tasks into worksheet design, making it a pedagogical innovation within English for Specific Purposes (ESP). These insights carry significant implications for EFL instruction, particularly in higher education, where responsive and contextually relevant teaching strategies are essential for preparing students to meet workplace communication demands. Future research is encouraged to explore the longitudinal impact of speaking worksheets on students' professional readiness post-graduation, or to adapt and evaluate similar interventions across other domains such as intercultural communication, collaborative negotiation, or digital professional interaction.

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