

# Exploring the Development of English Club Activities in Junior High School English Language Learning

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**Abstract:** English language activities are enjoyable and respect the students' subjectivity, which stimulates their enthusiasm for using English communication. Therefore, it is widely welcomed by junior high school students. The development of the English club and their activities, such as membership, management systems, event planning, advisory lecturers, and cooperation with school management, among others, all directly affect the club activities. Therefore, it is essential to promote their club activities in junior high school English language learning. This paper analyzes the role of the English club and explores their process of conducting specific activities. It is hoped that this paper will be used as a reference for future studies.

**Keywords:** *junior high school; English language learning; English club activities; teaching research*

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## 0 Introduction

The English Society is a club organized by junior high school English enthusiasts in their school. It focuses on English language learning and aims to promote English language learning activities in school, improve the students' oral and communication skills, and also improve the utilization of the school's teaching resources. The effectiveness of their club activities depends, to a large extent, on the planning of their activities such as the theme, content, and form of the event, among others.

## 1 The role of the English club in junior high school English language learning

The English club and English language classes constitute the school's English language learning

environment. However, classroom teaching practices certain restrictions, which prevents a conducive English learning environment. It is impossible for each student to participate in English speaking and reading skills. The limited 45-min classroom session is not enough to cover the syllabus or content. Moreover, there is a discipline in classroom teaching, so students are not at ease with themselves, resulting in poor learning. The English-speaking club, on the other hand, conducts a wide range of activities, from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, and has shown to increase the students' social circle. This is achieved mainly by actively exchanging in English language learning experience, utilizing the school's teaching resources (venues, teachers, and teaching aids) and ensuring that English language learning appeals to the students' interest and practical application. The role of the English club in junior high school English language learning is reflected in three aspects.

### 1.1 Improving students' English language proficiency

It is undeniable that students who are members of the English club are interested in English language learning, and most of them possess some level of competency. Under the club, students constantly share and learn from one another, gain more English language learning experience and materials, and through modern technology such as the Internet, interact more in different places to improve the learning context and promote the language. English communication between the club members creates a conducive language learning environment, constantly transforming the students' language and thought, shortening the time taken to code-switch between their mother tongue and the English language, and improving the fluency and overall English language standards<sup>[1]</sup>.

## 1.2 Enhancing students' basic English literacy skills

English language literacy is the comprehensive ability to use the language to improve one's proficiency and enhance oneself in terms of social development. In addition to improve one's English communication skills, proficiency in the language is crucial for self-improvement as well as to interact in different social spheres. The English club is a social circle that conforms to the school management's structure, though it functions more as a social group due to its composition. It provides club members with a practical platform, resembling the general society, so that they can continuously improve their English literacy and fluency.

## 1.3 Integrating teaching resources

The English club is a student organization that is recognized and supported by the school. The school strongly supports their activities and provides and encourages the use of necessary teaching resources such as venues, teachers, and teaching aids. The school also assigns different teachers based on the frequency of activities, the interaction between teachers and students, and the teachers' level of experience on implementing teaching reforms.

## 2 The establishment of English clubs and the exploration of activities

The junior high school English club, as a student organization, has its own objectives, organizational structure as well as activity and evaluation processes. The following section comprehensively expands on the structure and activities of the English club and identifies the strengths and weaknesses to suggest effective measures for improvement.

### 2.1 The English club's membership

The continuous operation of the English club is due to its membership. Generally speaking, membership should be reviewed according to the number of applications in each student intake. To ensure the quality of the club, it is necessary to review the applicants, including their contribution to the club, English proficiency, and placement in the club that best suits their ability. This will ensure quality control and facilitate membership management. If there are too many members, it is necessary to revise the application criteria to ensure that the club membership is within reasonable limits<sup>[2]</sup>.

## 2.2 The objective and organizational structure of the English club

The objective of the English club is straightforward to organize specific activities as a student organization and to enhance students' English language proficiency. The English club should establish corresponding systems of management, membership, and work around this objective. The management system must demonstrate fairness, impartiality, and transparency. It should perform management in the form of small groups to achieve efficient club operations. The membership system is a set of requirements for members to exercise compliance with time, commitments, club regulations, school regulations, and others. The purpose is mainly to ensure the coherence of both club and school regulations. The work system is to stipulate the content of the activities to be organized, which must incorporate English language learning. To implement the above systems, it is necessary to establish an organizational structure that comprises the club's president, vice president, and program manager.

### 2.3 Selection of club activities

The English club organizes activities based on different themes according to the specific requirements of the members, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. The activities involve the itinerary of event, venue selection, structure of activities as well as the utilization of resources. The following subsection presents a comprehensive analysis and planning of club activities.

#### 2.3.1 Identifying the theme of club activities

The theme of club activities entirely depends on the needs of their members. It is necessary to cater to the interests of members to encourage their active participation. For example, activities on the theme of English speaking skills can be "crazy English conversation meeting," "let go of yourself, English sitcom contest" for English contextual aspects, whereas activities on the theme of English reading skills can be "English classics reading," and many others. The English melodrama competition involves performances, dialogs, and storytelling. Such activities can highly encourage junior high school students to participate, exert their creativity and English skills, construct a succinct short play, and engage in self-expression

and other challenges, all of which are designed for self-improvement<sup>[3]</sup>.

### **2.3.2 Deciding the schedule of club activities**

The frequency of general club activities, based on different themes, is twice a week, which is in line with the schedule of junior high school students and teachers. “Let Go of yourself, English sitcom contest” involves rehearsals, performances, and selections; thus, a corresponding timetable must be established in advance. To improve the quality of the club activities, other themed activities can be conducted during the preparation period. After a group rehearsal is completed, followed by a unified rehearsal, the students can then enter the performance stage.

### **2.3.3 Deciding the venue for club activities**

Small-scale events do not require a large venue; even a classroom may suffice. However, large-scale events require the support of the school to use the collective auditorium, campus playground, and other larger venues. Activities that require extensive space and a convenient power supply are more suited for the auditorium. After the venue is determined, the seating arrangement, décor, and the like can be performed, whereas the furniture can be arranged to best accommodate the planned activities and participants. The venue selection for “let go of yourself, English sitcom contest” is different from the promotion of the event. During the group rehearsal stage, classrooms, lecture halls, or other larger areas should be allocated for students and groups to rehearse their performance in private. During the final performance stage, the school should coordinate with other school activities in the collective auditorium and accommodate feedback from all teachers and students.

### **2.3.4 Determine the form of club activities**

The theme and form of activities should correspond with each other. The texts and scripts must be appropriately selected and be in line with the objective of the activities. This will help students understand the purpose and end result of the said activities. For example, “crazy English conversation meeting” does not require a collaborative effort or social meetings; “English classics reading” may take the form of a seminar about introducing English classics and other famous works; and “let go of yourself, English sitcom contest” is a competition that is solely based on short plays and performances.

### **2.3.5 Deciding the content of club activities**

The content of activities relies on the selected theme; for example, the content for “crazy English conversation meeting” is definitely a collective social activity that contains personal dialog, creative dialog, and so on. The specific content of “English classics reading” is for participants to introduce to other students respected English literary works such as novels, essays, poetry, and so on. The content of “let go of yourself, English sitcom contest” is a light comedy that reflects school life, especially English language learning.

### **2.3.6 Deciding the organizing committee of club activities**

The organizing committee for activities such as “crazy English conversation meeting” depends on the scale of event. However, it is essential to involve the president, vice president, program manager, leaders of the participating groups, and corresponding team members. To highlight the formality of each activity, posters must mention the event organizers, planners, and other patrons. In fact, formal events enhance in students a sense of accomplishment and can further positively influence their creativity and psychology. English teachers are also essential to club activities and can request for support from the school management based on the activities’ purpose and scale.

## **3 Current problems concerning junior high school English club activities**

### **3.1 Repetitive themes of club activities**

The main problem concerning the English club activities is the repetition of themes, which no longer attracts students’ interest. As a result, student participation is inadequate, causing a decline in the quality of activities. In addition, there is a lack of discipline and a decline in membership, increasing the likelihood of the club’s closure. This situation is mainly due to the lack of planning club activities<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **3.2 Insufficient organization of club activities**

Despite the available infrastructure, the current students’ personality and non-compliance to discipline have resulted in insufficient organization of activities. The activities that do take place are unorganized and occur at random. The club currently comprises a gathering of small groups that are no longer enthusiastic

about English language but rather on discussions about fashion and other matters<sup>[5]</sup>.

### **3.3 Loss of school support**

The English club originally existed as a subsidiary of the school management. The purpose was to improve students' English proficiency. However, after the formation of several other English clubs, the activities carried out by the English club were deemed unfavorable by the school management, after which they discontinued their support. The main reason behind this is the club's imperfect organizational systems.

## **4 Suggestions for improving the efficiency of junior high school English club activities**

### **4.1 Improve the English club's planning ability**

As a student club, it is necessary to identify appropriate themes, forms, and content of activities intended for members, followed by meticulous planning under the supervision of the club's president and vice president to ensure effective cooperation between the club and the school. In addition, club members must ensure the learning and practical effectiveness of their activities to secure resources.

### **4.2 Develop a solid organization chart**

To ensure the English club carried out on a common template base, we should clarify the purpose of the English club, establish a reasonable structure, implement a detailed charter system, and create specific activity process rule. Besides these suggested measures, the English club must increase the creativity and features of activities with specific focus on English language learning. Finally, feedback and opinions by members must be considered seriously to invigorate them to participate actively.

### **4.3 Cooperate with school management**

The school management controls all resources. Therefore, the English club must abide by the school

rules and regulations to gain its support and resources. Furthermore, club members must also abide by their club's own rules and regulations. It can also seek guidance from teachers on conducting effective activities to improve students' English language proficiency and ensuring the club's continued existence. The club can also enhance their own prestige, in the eyes of the school management, by increasing English language proficiency among students.

## **5 Summary**

In the development of English club activities in junior high school English learning, the English club must first comply with the school management system and organize different thematic activities concerning English language learning. The activities must be designed to increase the students' creativity while the form and content of activities must meet the English language learning needs of the students and increase their enthusiasm and participation. To make the club activities more organized and disciplined, it is necessary to set a reasonable organizational structure, implement democratic management, adopt new ideas based on feedback, increase comradery among club members, ensure the healthy development of the club, and, most importantly, provide a platform for students' English language learning.

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