

Students' Self-Confidence in Their English-Speaking Fluency: A Case Study at SMP Islam Terpadu Generasi Muslim Cendikia

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Article History

Received : September 06th, 2024

Revised : Oktober 17th, 2024

Accepted : Oktober 25th, 2024

Abstract: This research aims to determine how students' self-confidence is seen from their fluency in speaking English, types of self-confidence in students seen from their self-confidence, and also the strategies used by teachers to increase students' self-confidence at SMP Islam Terpadu Generasi Muslim Cendikia. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. Data were collected using observation techniques, speaking tests, questionnaires, and interviews. The subjects were 24 female students of class VIII/C at SMP Islam Terpadu Generasi Muslim Cendikia. The observations were indirect observations, where the researcher was not directly involved in the activities. A speaking rubric was used to measure the level of fluency in speaking English, and student self-confidence was determined based on self-confidence indicators during student speaking. For the questionnaire, a Likert scale is used and finally, the researcher conducted interviews were conduct is used with related teachers to determine strategies to increase student self-confidence. Based on the results of the analysis the results of the speaking test and survey questionnaire showed that students who have a high level of confidence also have high scores, and vice versa. There are 5 kinds of self-confidence in students, namely confidence in speaking in formal situations, confidence in speaking in class discussions, confidence in speaking with peers, confidence in speaking in everyday situations, and confidence in speaking in academic contexts, it is also found that there are 8 strategies that teachers can use to increase students' self-confidence.

Keywords: *Speaking, Fluency, Self-Confidence, Strategies*

INTRODUCTION

The use of English as a global language necessitates a change in teaching and usage methods and has consequences for interculturalists and language educators (Schnitzer, 1995). According to Nurman (2022), English language proficiency among students is crucial. For pupils, speaking English is essential since it is a fundamental language acquisition skill. Students should develop their bravery, master fundamental abilities, mimic and repeat, establish a language-friendly environment, and pique their interest in order to improve their spoken English (Xue-sheng, 2006). According to Stockdale (2009) as the ability of the speaker to produce speech at the same tempo without experiencing any issues like reluctance, silent pauses, full gaps, repetition, or false starts, fluency is one of the elements that enhances the success of communicating information to others. According to Kayi (2012), speaking is defined as the act of producing verbal utterances

that convey meaning to an audience. It involves not only the articulation of words but also the effective communication of ideas and emotions. It is a physical process that involves the vocal organs and complex brain operations (Kurudayıoğlu, 2011).

Setiawan & Odelia (2021) discovered that speaking abilities are significantly impacted by self-confidence. Nathaniel Branden (1969) explain that self-confidence is a person's belief in their ability to overcome challenges and achieve goals effectively including belief in personal abilities, self-acceptance, sense of competence, personal integrity, and personal responsibility. Self-confidence in students is very important to grow. It is the same that when students have self-confidence, it will be easier for them to master lessons, they believe in their ability to try to understand something being taught and are confident in teaching it. When students can teach the

things, they are being taught, it can be easier for them to understand and master the lessons being taught. Students' confidence to ask, answer, or respond as well as the confidence to teach what they have learned based on what they already understand is very important. By daring to try, they believe in themselves that they can do it. For a variety of reasons, pupils' fluency in speaking is greatly influenced by their level of self-confidence. Studies regularly demonstrate a substantial relationship between pupils' speaking skill fluency and self-confidence. In the context of language learning, where self-confidence is crucial for starting and continuing discussions, this link is especially important (Gürler, 2015). Setiawan & Odelia (2021) discovered that speaking abilities are significantly impacted by self-confidence, with a particular emphasis on fluency. Renaldi (2020) highlights the significance of self-assurance in mitigating speech reluctance and recommends that educators foster student cooperation as a means of fostering confidence. These results highlight how crucial it is to help students develop self-confidence in order to improve the fluency of their speaking skills. Netty (2020) asserts that a lack of confidence in one's ability to talk can have a wide range of effects.

There are several things that can contribute to a lack of confidence when speaking English, such as shyness, nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and vocabulary deficiencies. One of the teachers of SMP Islam Terpadu Generasi Muslim Cendikia was interviewed, and during the interview, she mentioned that one of the issues he encountered in the classroom was the students' lack of Self-confidence, which prevented them from participating fully in class. The main causes of the students' lack of participation in this lesson are their lack of vocabulary, timidity, and fear of making mistakes. Arifin (2017) stated that psychological issues may arise as a result of this lack of confidence. This subject is crucial for further study because it is one of the primary determinants of students' speaking fluency. Innovative assessment instruments can be the focus of novelty study on students' self-confidence in their ability to speak English fluently utilizing the Speaking Test Method and Likert Scale.

This research has the potential to evaluate self-confidence more comprehensively by introducing speaking test and Likert scale. Students can measure their level of confidence both before and after the test using the Likert scale, which yields rich data on shifts in perception. In order to

provide additional light on the connection between speaking ability and self-perception, this study can also compare speaking exam results with self-reported confidence levels. It is anticipated that the findings of this research will aid in the creation of more efficient teaching strategies that emphasize raising students' self-assurance when speaking English.

METHODS

This research used a qualitative descriptive method. According to Sugiyono (2015), a descriptive qualitative method is a type of qualitative research designed to explore and describe phenomena comprehensively and contextually. The population in this study was 24 students, and the sample used was total students in Class VIII/C, totaling 24 students. The data source used was primary data. Primary data for this study were gathered from class VIII/C female class of SMP Islam Terpadu Generasi Muslim Cendikia through observation and interview. There were 4 research instruments used in this study, namely a survey questionnaire, recorder, observation assessment form, and interview.

First, the researcher conducts observations to determine the types of self-confidence in students, related to the results of observations made by the researcher. The researcher conducts non-participatory observations. According to Herbert Blumer (1969) When using non-participatory observation, the researcher does not take part in the interaction or situation being observed directly. According to him, researchers can maintain impartiality and prevent behavioral changes in their subjects by using non-participatory observation rather than direct involvement. So, when conducting observations, researchers assess student behavior and interactions in the classroom from an outside perspective. Second, students be examined for their self-confidence in their English speaking fluency. At this stage, students asked to come to the front of the class and then recorded to speak using English related to a predetermined topic. At this stage, researchers assess the level of student's English-speaking fluency based on the English-speaking fluency

assessment rubric and researchers also see students' self-confidence when speaking in front of the class using English. Students also will be given a survey questionnaire to see their level of self-confidence in speaking English. After the researcher obtains the results of the interview from the students, the researcher then analyze the data that has been obtained. In analyzing student speaking data, researchers use a speaking rubric, while in analyzing the results of the survey questionnaire, researchers analyze based on criteria and Likert scale data analysis. Then to analyze the interview results, researchers analyze using three stages, namely data compression, data presentation, and also conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on the research conducted at SMP Islam Terpadu Generasi Muslim Cendikia used 2 types of data collection, the first using a speaking

test and the second using a survey questionnaire. The speaking test was conducted to see the level of fluency in speaking English in students and their confidence when going forward in front of the class, while the survey questionnaire was used to see the level of student confidence when speaking using English. By using the speaking test rubric and survey questionnaire, the results obtained from students who have high speaking test scores, the self-confidence scores on the survey questionnaire are also high, and vice versa. The "Speaking Rubric" used was developed by Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, & Hughey (1981).

Students' Speaking Test Levels

Figure 1 below shows the students' speaking test levels based on the previously determined assessment rubric.

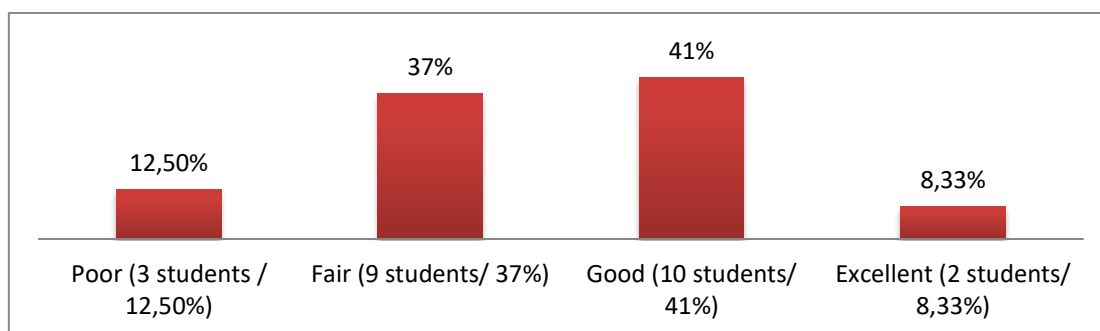


Figure 1. The Students' Speaking Levels based on the Previous Test

Figure 1 illustrates that the average student in class VIII/C falls into the "good" category, demonstrating fluency with only minor acceptable pauses. Within the speaking test results, 3 students (S3, S7, and S13) are categorized as "poor," while 9 students (S1, S6, S8, S12, S14, S16, S17, S18, S20) fall into the "fair" category. Additionally, 10 students (S2, S4, S9, S10, S11, S15, S19, S21, S22, S23) are classified as "good," and 2 students (S5 and S24) achieved an "excellent" rating.

Students' Speaking Confidence Levels

The accompanying questionnaire assesses self-confidence in speaking English and is adapted from the work of MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998). Table 1 below displays the students' speaking confidence levels based on a survey conducted using a Likert scale.

Table 2. Speaking Confidence Level Criteria

Percentage (%)	Criteria
0% - 19,99%	Strongly Inconfident
20% - 39,99 %	Inconfident
40% - 59,99%	Fairly Confident
60% – 79,99%	Confident
80% – 100%	Strongly Confident

Table 2 outlines the criteria for interpreting speaking scores based on percentage ranges. Scores from 0% to 19.99% indicate “Strongly Inconfident,” while scores from 20% to 39.99% reflect “Inconfident.” A range of 40% to 59.99% signifies “Fairly Confident,” scores between

60% and 79.99% denote “Confident,” and scores from 80% to 100% represent “Strongly Confident.”

Figure 2 below displays the shows students’ speaking confidence levels.

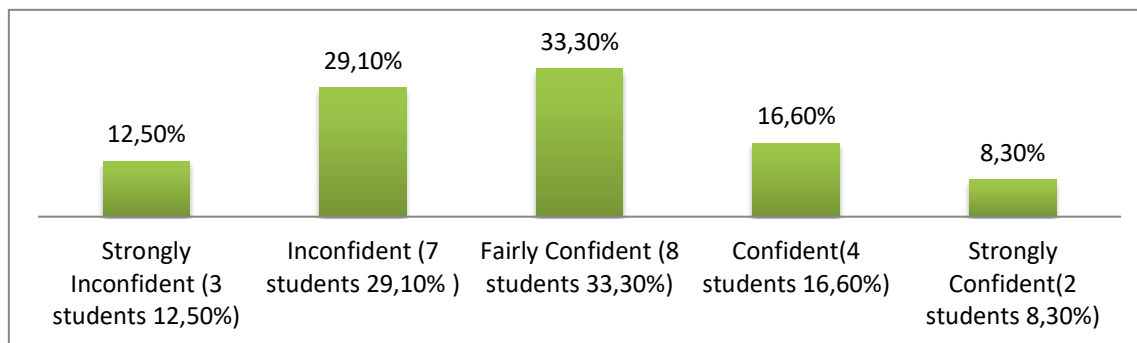


Figure 2. Students' speaking confidence levels

Figure 2 shows that the average student in class VIII/C falls into the “Fairly Confident” category when speaking English. Among the students, 3 are categorized as “Strongly Inconfident” (S3, S7, and S13), while 7 students are “Inconfident” (S1, S6, S8, S12, S14, S16, and S17). Additionally, 8 students are classified as “Quite Confident” (S2, S4, S9, S10, S11, S15, S18, and S20), and 4 students are deemed “Confident” in their English speaking abilities (S19, S21, S22, and S23).

Q1. Students’ self-confidence is seen from their English speaking fluency

Several similarities and differences stood out among the students when taking the speaking test. Some of them are:

1. Students who are in the excellent category when speaking English appear calmer and speak with fewer pauses, and their pronunciation is clearer. It can be seen from their body gestures when they come forward to speak in English in front of the class, there are two students who have an upright posture, dare to look at the audience, and sometimes also do some hand movements to strengthen their verbal message, their facial expressions look calm, their breathing looks stable (not out of breath) even though sometimes the tone of their voice is unstable but clearly audible.
2. Students in the “Good” category when speaking in front of the class in English

appear a little nervous and speak with slightly longer pauses. Their volume is lower than those in the excellent category, some of them also appear to lower their heads while speaking. So when viewed from their body gestures, students who are in the "Good" category appear to lower their heads and avoid eye contact with the audience, when they have difficulty conveying a word, they appear to make several hand movements, their expressions look calm, their breathing remains stable, their tone of voice is less stable but clearly audible.

3. Students in the “Fair” category have many pauses when they speak, they also hesitate about some of the words they say, so some of the words spoken are less clear to hear, their volume is also lower and almost all of them look embarrassed and almost all of them do not dare to make eye contact with the teacher and their friend. So when viewed from their body posture, students who are in the "fair" category when speaking English in front of their class appear to lower their heads, avoid eye contact with the audience, and some of them even appear to put their hands in their shirt pockets (not making hand movements), their expressions look nervous, their breathing is less stable, and their tone of voice is less or even very unstable so that the words spoken are less clear to hear.

4. Students in the “Poor” category when they speak have many pauses and hesitations so that understanding becomes difficult. The volume of the voice is almost inaudible and most of the words spoken are not quite right. They do not dare to make eye contact with the teacher or their friends. So when viewed from their body gestures when speaking English in front of the class, students who are in the “poor” category appear to be slightly hunched or lowering their heads, avoiding eye contact with the audience, not making any hand movements or certain gestures at all, their facial expressions appear nervous, their breathing is less stable and they speak in a very low tone of voice and the words they say are not clear so that the meaning they want to convey is sometimes difficult to understand.

The results show that there are 12.50% of students who are strongly inconfident, 29.10% of students who are strongly inconfident, 33.30% of students who are quite confident, 16.60 students who are confident, and 8.30% of students who are very confident when speaking English. And when doing the speaking test, and there were several similarities and differences that stood out among the students.

It can be concluded from the results of the speaking test and survey questionnaire that self-confidence influences students' fluency in speaking English. From the data presented above, it can be seen that students who have high self-confidence scores have better speaking test scores. And vice versa. The names of students who get high scores or are in the very confident category in the survey also get high scores on their speaking tests. There are 2 students who are in the very confident category, although the scores obtained are different, namely 90% and 85%. Likewise, 3 students who are in the strongly inconfident category, get different scores but are included in the same category based on the predetermined value criteria. The three students with the lowest scores are 18%, 16%, and 18%.

Q2. What Kinds of Self-Confidence Seen from Students' English Speaking Fluency

The observation form in the context of self-confidence in speaking English is adapted

and adjusted based on the theory of Stephen Krashen (1985). Based on the observations that have been carried out, there are 2 school programs to help students learn English at school. The first program is muhadarah that is held every Tuesday, after the Ashar prayer. Students in grades VII and VIII gather based on their classes to learn English. It appears at the beginning of the activity that the teacher starts the English learning activity by singing with students using English songs and doing some movements that match the song lyrics. In this Muhadarah, students are taught to communicate in everyday life. In this Muhadarah activity, several students are active in asking and answering questions given by the teacher. Students are also given the opportunity to come forward to introduce themselves and tell stories about their experiences using English. Several students also appear to be discussing the topic of the lesson that has been given.

In short, during Muhadaroh, there are several activities carried out, namely singing together in English, students coming forward to introduce themselves, that there is a Q&A activity, then students talking about their experiences continue with another Q&A session and a discussion using English related to the topic given by the teacher at the end. English club is an extracurricular activity held every Monday after Asr prayer. In this English club, students are taught to give speeches in English. In the initial activity, students are not immediately ordered to come forward and give a speech in front of the class, but students are taught to make a speech text first, then when students have finished making several parts of the speech text, the teacher orders students to come forward and try to give a speech in English in front of the class.

Based on the observation results obtained, there are 5 types of self confidence in students when speaking English:

1. Confidence in Speaking in Formal Situations. This can be seen during the English club extracurricular activity where students are taught to give speeches and try to give speeches in front of the class.
2. Confidence in Speaking in Class Discussions. This is evident when students actively discuss when the teacher instructs students to discuss with their

friends regarding their assignments. Although they seem to be slightly hampered by the limited vocabulary they master, they still try to discuss with the vocabulary they understand and express some words in Indonesian when they do not know the meaning in English.

3. Confidence in Speaking with Peers. This was evident when the Muhadarah activity was taking place, not a few students spoke English with their friends next to them, talking about the topic given by the teacher using English.
4. Confidence in Speaking in Everyday Situations. After the muhadarah activity was finished, there were several students who tried to practice what they had learned before. While walking back to the dormitory, several students were heard saying to their friends "I want to take a bath" to their friends.
5. Confidence in Speaking in Academic Contexts. This is evident when students discuss the lessons given by the teacher during muhadarah. There are students who ask their friends next to them with the question "do you understand?" then their friends try to tell the answer related to the question given by the teacher.

Those are the five self-confidences in students that I found when conducting research, but what I did not find was the sixth type of self-confidence, namely Confidence in Speaking in Virtual Environments. Because all students live in dormitories and one of the rules when students live in dormitories is not to use mobile phones. therefore it is very difficult for students to access the internet there except on holidays. The computer lab room is only used when students are about to take exams and when certain lessons use computers only.

Q2. Strategies Used by Teachers To Improve Students' Self- Confidence in Speaking

Observations in this study were conducted 2 times. The first observation was conducted on Monday, September 2, 2024, for muhadarah and on Tuesday, September 3, 2024 for the English Club extracurricular. As previously discussed, muhadarah specifically teaches English, which is used in everyday life, while in the English Club extracurricular, students are taught to speak in English.

For research question number 3, the researcher conducted an interview with the English teacher in the class. The teacher's name is Mrs. Maulia Pujiana. The following is a transcript of the conversation between the researcher and Mrs. Maulia Pujiana:

- Researcher: *Good morning ma'am. How are you today?*
- Mrs. Maulia Pujiana: Good morning, Nisa. I'm fine thank you. How about you?
- Researcher: I'm good ma'am. In relation to my research, can I interview you about what strategies do you think teachers can use to improve students' self-confidence??
- Mrs. Maulia Pujiana: Yes, sure. So far the students weakness in speaking, include the confidence and then their fair to make a mistake. So how to increase, how to improve their confidence is give them more change to practice their English and then if they can not speak first, we as a teacher try to ask them and then try to make the environment more active and try to make interesting activity which can increase or improve their ability their wants to speak English.
- Researcher: is that all, ma'am?
- Mrs. Maulia Pujiana: The last maybe I try to make a competition, especially the female students. They try to trying the competition to get the score, to get the price
- Researcher: What a about sing a song ma'am. Do you think it can improve students' self-confidence in speaking English ?
- Mrs. Maulia Pujiana: Yes, sometimes I try to keep them to listen to the song. Sometimes, if the day or in the afternoon extracurricular I try to give them song. But we can not give them as much as we can. they have the teacher to give them chance to listen to music and listen to a song because they can not listen by themself.
- Researcher: What about storytelling and role play? Do you think it can improve students' self-confidence in speaking English?
- Mrs. Maulia Pujiana: in some cases in some materials it is successful to make them active to speak in English but again it depends on the materials. We can not

use storytelling every day in every meeting. so it just depends on the materials and the objective of the study.

- Researcher: okay ma'am. Thank you.
- Mrs. Maulia Pujiana: Okay Nisa.

Based on the answers given by Mrs. Maulia Pujiana an English teacher in the class, there are 8 strategies that teachers can do to increase students' confidence in speaking English. There are several strategies that can be used by teachers to increase students' confidence (give more chances to practice English, ask students what causes them to lack confidence when speaking English, make a more active environment, make an interesting activity, make a competition, singing, storytelling, and roleplay).

Discussion

The results of this study align with numerous previous studies indicating a positive correlation between self-confidence and English speaking fluency. For instance, both the research by Adhityo Kuncoro et al. (2020) and the study by Iful Rahmawati Mega and Dody Sugiarto (2021) reaffirm that higher self-confidence leads to improved speaking skills. This finding is echoed in this study, where students with elevated confidence levels achieved better scores in speaking tests.

Moreover, the identification of five types of self-confidence among students—such as confidence in formal situations and confidence in academic contexts—mirrors the concerns highlighted in the study by Gaya Tridinanti (2022), which discussed the impact of speaking anxiety on self-confidence and achievement. The notion that students often feel shy or fearful of negative evaluations from peers, as noted in the studies by Lalu Jaswadi Putera et al. (2020), further supports the current research. These psychological barriers, including fear of embarrassment and low speaking volume, are consistent across various settings, emphasizing the need for effective teaching strategies to bolster self-belief.

The use of a Likert scale to measure self-confidence also aligns with findings from other studies, reinforcing the subjective nature of self-assessment in speaking abilities. This methodological consistency across studies highlights the importance of measuring self-confidence in a way that captures students'

perceptions of their skills, which has been shown to correlate positively with their speaking performance.

While many findings support existing literature, some aspects of this study diverge from previous research. For example, previous studies, such as those conducted by Tridinanti (2022) and Cohen and Norst (1999), emphasize that anxiety significantly hinders students' speaking fluency. However, this study did not find a direct correlation between anxiety levels and speaking performance among the observed students. Instead, the focus on specific self-confidence types provided a more nuanced understanding of how confidence manifests in various speaking contexts, which may not have been sufficiently addressed in earlier studies.

Additionally, the unique strategies identified for enhancing self-confidence among students may not have been explored in depth in previous research. While earlier studies primarily discussed the impact of psychological factors, this study highlights eight specific strategies employed by teachers that directly target self-confidence enhancement. This suggests a gap in the literature regarding practical approaches for educators to foster a supportive learning environment, which merits further investigation.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study reveals five distinct forms of self-confidence among students: confidence in speaking in formal situations, during class discussions, with peers, in everyday contexts, and in academic settings. The analysis indicates a clear correlation between self-confidence and speaking proficiency; students who exhibit higher confidence levels tend to achieve better scores on speaking assessments. Notably, both similarities and differences emerged between confident and less confident students in their English speaking abilities. To enhance students' self-confidence, eight effective strategies are recommended for teachers: providing more opportunities for English practice, identifying factors that contribute to students' lack of confidence, fostering an engaging classroom environment, incorporating interesting activities, organizing

competitions, and utilizing singing, storytelling, and roleplay.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Thank you to the two Supervisors and the examiner who have guided me in completing my research in this journal, thank you also to the principal and Mrs. Maulia Pujiana, the English teacher at the Integrated Islamic Middle School of Generasi Muslim Cendikia who have facilitated the implementation of the research at the Integrated Islamic Middle School of Generasi Muslim Cendikia.

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