


## A Study on Self-Confidence Impact of ELF Students' Speaking

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### ABSTRACT

Self-confidence plays a crucial part in speaking English, and many students are still less confident when speaking, which causes them to not engage more in speaking activities. This research aimed to know how self-confidence works in students speaking to ninth-grade students, specifically at SMP Negeri 9 Palu, and the factors that contributed to their lack of confidence. For the topic, 30 students were selected as the sample and given twelve questions from the questionnaire and five interview questions. The research method was a descriptive qualitative method. The results that the researcher has done are self - confidence indeed works on students' speaking. Students' lack of confidence is caused by some factors, which are afraid of making mistakes when they speak, they still have lack of vocabulary, lack of grammar, feel of under pressure every time the teacher asks them to speak, shyness, nervous, feel of uncomfortable, not enjoying when they attempt to speak, insecurities of their friends who have the good ability more than them. This study is expected to contribute to developing students' speaking ability and solve students' problems by knowing their speaking and what factors contribute to their unconfident. Moreover, this study also may help teachers treat students so they can participate actively in class without being constrained with self-confidence.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

English as a lingua franca is essential in communication because it is used by almost all the country, whether as their native or second language. People speak English to make interactions and communication with people from various countries simpler because almost all countries understand English well [1]–[3]. In short, language helps people share everything effectively. Speaking is the process of using the urge of speech to pronounce vocal symbols to share information, knowledge, idea, thoughts, and opinion. Speaking Skill is a crucial skill to develop one's English from the beginning of language study [4]–[7]. As the most demanding Skill among others, everyone wants to be fluent in speaking English, especially students that have been learning English since elementary school [8]–

[10]. Although students already have learned English as a foreign language from elementary school, students might face difficulties such as a lack of confidence, lack of vocabulary, lack of pronunciation, grammatical errors, or even feelings of discomfort it has similar to Manurung et al. [11] said that although some learners in non-native English-speaking countries have studied English for some years, their speaking performance is still limited.

In order to speak fluent English, students need self-confidence to handle it. Self-confidence refers to rating their capability, usually made by an individual to maintain their value to themselves. In short, self-confidence depends on students' self-assured self [12]–[14]. When students already believe in their capability, they will be able to face any difficulties. Self-confidence is the conviction of a work that people can finish, depending on whether they have succeeded [15]–[18].

Speaking requires high self-confidence, which means doing something without being shy and aggressive in social situations. If students do not have self-confidence, it will affect their learning process [19]–[22]. Lack of self-confidence also becomes a significant problem affecting students' speaking performance [23]. Many students found problems with their low confidence. They feel low confidence in the structure, the pronunciation, or even their intonation while speaking [24]. Lack of self-confidence is a circumstance that makes people unable to speak in a good way; the lack of self-causes an obstacle – confidence such as uncomfortable, anxiety, and inability to arrange sentences well. It is in line with what Annisa [25] argues: many students are not reluctant to contribute to English classroom activity, especially in speaking activity because they are not confident.

However, regarding how self-confidence could affect students' speaking, Febriyani et al. [23] conducted a similar study, and the results show that students' confidence in speaking is reasonably good. It was found to study the level of confidence and analysis scores on students' confidence through the descriptive method. Nevertheless, those studies were conducted at the university and high school levels in different places. Consequently, the researcher was interested in determining whether the same results would be obtained when conducted at the junior high school level, specifically with students at SMP Negeri 9 Palu.

More specifically, this study focuses on how self-confidence affects students' speaking ability and the factors behind their lack of confidence by elaborating it more specifically into a descriptive one. This research is expected to contribute to developing students' speaking ability and solve students' problems by knowing what they are in speaking and what factors contribute to their confidence. Moreover, this study also may help teachers treat students so they can participate actively in class without being constrained with self-confidence. In addition, this study is expected to contribute to other researchers who might want to conduct the same studies at different class levels and places by considering other variables such as students' motivation or teachers' involvement.

The researcher focuses on students in junior high school. This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. Does self-confidence affect the students' speaking ability?
2. What are the factors that influence students' lack of self-confidence in speaking?

## 2. METHOD

This study used descriptive qualitative methods to provide straightforward descriptions of experiences and perceptions, as it is often used by research because it can provide richly detailed insights and contextual explanations [26].

The subject of this research was students in class E, grade nine, at SMP Negeri 9 Palu. The researcher used to join the PLP program there and taught that class. This researcher collected the data by giving questionnaires with 12 questions and four interviews. The researcher used a purposive sampling technique and took 30 students as respondents. After that, the researcher also chose 3 of 30 students to be interviewed because of qualitative method usually only uses a small number of samples.

The data found during the interview section helped clarify and look for more answers. In the questionnaire, three measurement scales are agreed, neutral, and disagree, adopted by Kate & Brinley [27]. The researcher used three steps to analyze data: reducing data, data display, and drawing a conclusion. The researcher selects and summarizes data to decide and classify notes from information sheets. Next, the researcher will describe the data in sentence form after reducing it.

Furthermore, the last step, concluding, becomes the final step in data analysis. The conclusion is putting all the information together into one powerful statement. In this step, the researcher writes down the conclusion based on the interview and questionnaire data. After that, both questionnaire and interview data will be analyzed in descriptive form to explain data more specifically and transparently.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Results

These results were obtained from questionnaires and interviews.

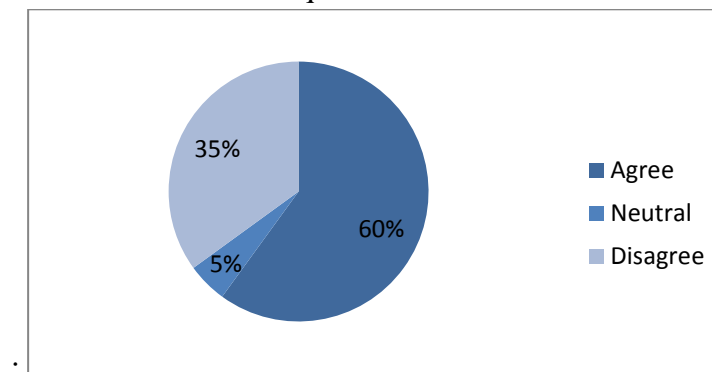


Figure 1. Students' self-confidence

Figure 1 shows the results of students' self-confidence in Speaking English, mainly about their feeling when asked to speak in front of the class.

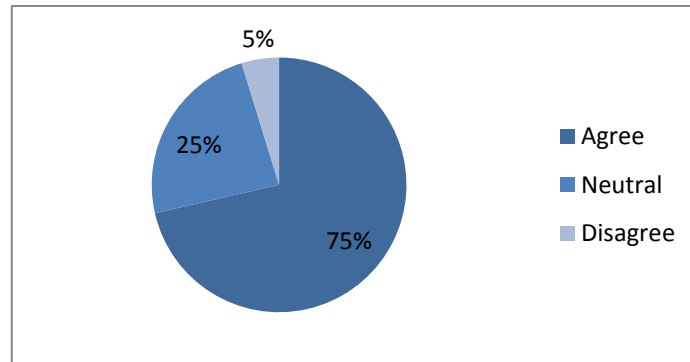


Figure 2. Students' obstacle

Based on Figure 2 above, fear of making mistakes and feeling pressured are obstacles to self-confidence in speaking English.

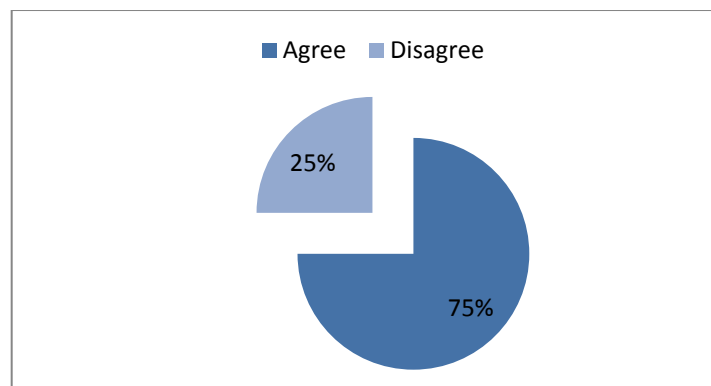


Figure 3. Students' preference

Figure 3 is about whether students prefer to listen to their friends rather than they are speaking or not.

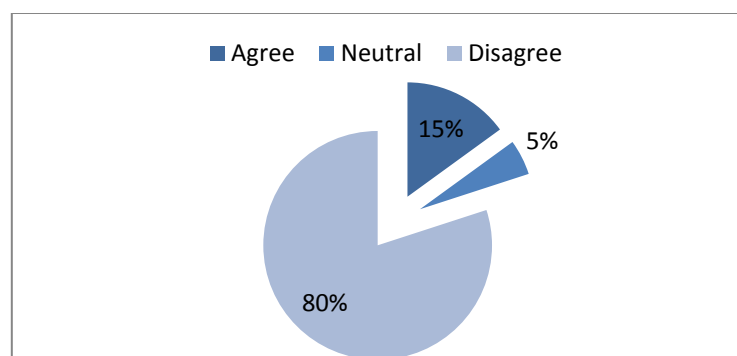


Figure 4. Students' feeling towards Speaking English

In Figure 4, the researcher focused on showing the percentages of students feeling when they speak English, whether they are relaxed and comfortable or not when they speak.

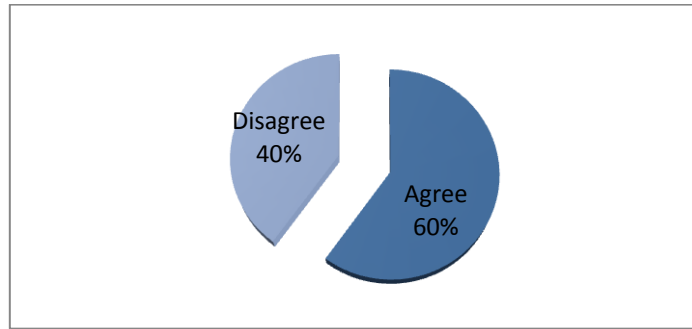


Figure 5. Students' participation in classroom

Here, in Figure 5, students were asked about their participants in class using English.

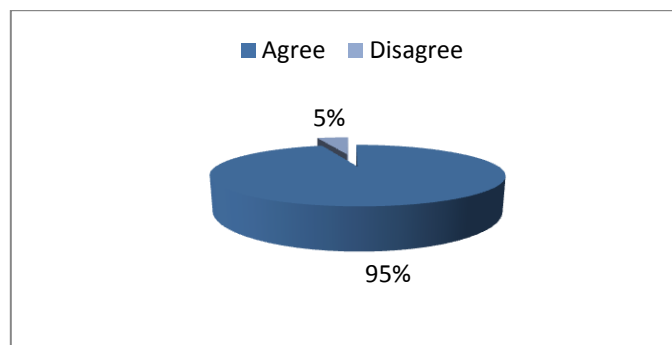


Figure 6. Students' self-confidence rating

Moreover, figure 6 shows how high self-confidence could help students to reach their goals, and it also can foster a sense of optimism in students.

All mentioned were data from the questionnaire, and now the other data resulted from interviews using some questions, including students' difficulties, feelings, and self-confidence. The researcher has elaborated on the students' responses based on the following:

*The researcher: what do you feel when the teacher asks you to speak English in front of the class?*

“I feel nervous, scared, and embarrassed in front of my classmates, and I am afraid to make mistakes when I speak.” **(Student 1)**

“Nervous and uncomfortable at the same time, I feel afraid of making mistakes on say words, sentences, and pronunciation.” **(Student 2)**

“I doubt myself because my ability to speak English is not that good. Apart from that, since I was in elementary school, English lesson was not good. The teachers rarely came in. Even when they do it, they would only give us an assignment. Besides, I still lack vocabulary and cannot make it when speaking.” **(Student 3)**

This topic is about students' feelings when speaking English. Based on the data, it clearly shows how students feel nervous, not enjoy, and uncomfortable because of the teacher's demand that asking them to speak. However, it also happens because student three states that the teacher rarely comes into the class because students practice their speaking skills less, which is why they feel those feelings. Although the teacher's demand suits students as they can practice their Skills, they still cannot manage how to deal with their feelings.

*The researcher: Do you enjoy speaking English every time? Why?*

“No, I feel scared and insecure because there are so many of my friends that have a good ability than me in speaking English.” (Student 1)

“No, I am not because there are still so many vocabularies I have never known or heard about. I feel uncomfortable when speaking because of that. I can handle it if it is about introducing and daily conversation. Other than that, I cannot stand it. I still have a lack of confidence.” (Student 2)

“I am not enjoying it because of some factors such as I am afraid of making mistakes, being judged by my friends, and I always get nervous whenever I am trying to speak English.” (Student 3)

Based on the interview above, students do not enjoy speaking English every time, which happened because of some factors based on what students already face. They are: 1). Students still do not know much vocabulary, so they can only do basic conversation. 2). the other one is afraid of making mistakes; consequently, they are afraid of being judged by their friends as they are worried about receiving negative evaluations from their peers. Those factors indeed led students to a lack of self-confidence.

*“The researcher: Do you think self-confidence plays an essential role in Speaking English?”*

“Self-confidence is what makes us enjoy speaking English more. It is like if we have confidence in what we are going to talk about, it will go smoothly without stuttering.” (Student 1)

“Yes, it is. If we have self-confidence, we will not be embarrassed when speaking in front of the class or public places. And with confidence, we will not feel nervous or stiff when speaking.” (Student 2)

“Yes, it is essential. If we do not have it, it will be difficult for us to grow even better” (Student 3)

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Based on the interview above, all students have acknowledged that self-confidence is an important aspect that supports good speaking. Students also have admitted that with self-confidence, their speaking will improve and improve to be good.

*“The researcher: do you think being fluent in speaking is essential? Why?”*

“It is important because English is the language of unity. So, with English, it will be easier to communicate with other people from another country. Like a teacher, good English will help us get a job easily.” **(Student 1)**

“It is essential because English is the language of unity. Wherever we go, we can use English as a tool of communication, and if we are fluent in English, it looks great.” **(Student 2)**

“Yes, it is, and it should be. Because if we are not fluent in English, it is a bit difficult to explore more” **(Student 3)**

The last topic is how being fluent in English is essential for students. It can be concluded that being fluent in English is essential as they already mention that they can easily communicate with everyone without fear of not being understood. They also state that they could explore more if they were fluent in English.

### **3.2 Discussion**

This section analyzed the findings about students' self-confidence in speaking along with three outlines consisting of students' self-confidence, difficulties, and preference in speaking. Based on Figure 1, it can be concluded that most students are still afraid when they are required to speak in front of the class, in the range of 60%, as students face some difficulties when it comes to speaking, such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, hesitation, and fluency.

The effect of students' lack of confidence as the obstacle is that they tend to perform with less effectiveness and satisfaction. This part will also answer and clarify the research problem: whether self-confidence affects students' speaking skills. This case indicates that self-confidence indeed can manage how students speak because speaking indeed requires a high level of self-confidence. If students do not have self-confidence, it will affect their learning process. Lack of self-confidence also becomes a significant problem affecting students' speaking performance [23]. However, chart 6 states how high self-confidence could help students in speaking because self-confidence can provide learners with motivation and energy to become optimistic about their learning [28]. It is in line with the interview result; the students have acknowledged how self-confidence works. It makes them enjoy speaking activities more. About 95% of Students, or most, agreed that self-confidence affects their speaking ability.

The following finding is about how much students participate in class using English. About 60% of them cannot do it, and 40% of students can participate well in English class. Then, refer to chart two, which will answer the second research problem

about the factors that influence students' lack of self-confidence in speaking. Students' lack of confidence exists according to some factors. They are afraid of making mistakes, feel under pressure, feeling not comfortable when they attempt to speak English, and it is the same as interview data confirmed that students cannot get involved well because of those factors. The responses were that about 80% of students feel that way.

Meanwhile, the rest of them, 20%, do not feel it. These problems relate to each other because students cannot participate well with the constrained of those feelings. It is also because students still lack a lot of vocabulary and grammar. Students that feel limited in their language abilities tend to protect themselves or their image by not participating in class communication so that they not getting negative comments from their classmates [28].

Third, findings visualized students' preference for speaking English. Based on the questionnaire's answers, students prefer to listen and manage to stay silent rather than speak. Most of the students, in the range of 80%, choose to agree. This indicates that they must encourage themselves to speak comfortably in the classroom more. Although some learners in non-native English-speaking countries have studied English for years, their speaking performance is still limited [11]. The rest 20% of students can speak without any obstacles.

The fourth finding was about how students sometimes doubt and consider themselves unable to do things because of anxiety, insecurity, embarrassment, and fear, despite knowing that being fluent in English is good for them, as students already said in the first topic in the interview. The students mainly described that their problems made them remain silent in class. They tend to be passive, or if any, only give little participation in speaking English. This result was also similar to the research by Nety et al. [28], declaring that some factors were found that cause students' self-confidence, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, shyness, and lack of vocabulary. This study still has limitations regarding research design. The researcher hopes this study could be a model to support students literacy. Future researchers should explore more about the topic in case there are some problems that the researcher has not discussed.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

To sum up, there are many differences between Indonesian and English, so students that learn English as not native speakers have difficulty learning it, especially speaking. Students have proven to have many deficiencies in those components. That is what causes students to lack confidence in speaking.

This current study results have shown how self-confidence works on students speaking ability. All participants cooperated in this study to answer questions related to their level of confidence in speaking English clearly showed students' difficulty in speaking English. The results are self – confidence indeed affects students speaking ability. Besides that, there is a lack of confidence factors that contribute to students speaking ability: nervousness, embarrassment, fear of making mistakes, lack of vocabulary and grammar, fear, and insecurity. Furthermore, there are essential points in order to improve

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students' self-confidence in speaking. Students themselves must need to do lots of practice. Next, teachers have to pay attention and encourage students who lack confidence, and it can be successful if there is great teamwork between students and students to their teacher in the classroom. Teachers can also make individual approaches to the students by discussing with the students and giving them motivation and enlightenment. Those ways could finally be effective ways of dealing with students' self-confidence in speaking English.

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