

***Students' Self-Confidence and Learning Motivation Toward English Speaking in
EFL Context at SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan at Sidareja***

**Kepercayaan Diri Dan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Terhadap Kemampuan Berbicara
Bahasa Inggris Dalam Konteks EFL Di SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan Di Sidareja**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the interplay between student attitudes toward English language learning, self-confidence, and motivation within an Indonesian EFL context, focusing on SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan. Grounded in a qualitative descriptive framework, the research seeks to elucidate how students' perceived self-efficacy and intrinsic and extrinsic motivations influence English speaking achievement, as well as the psychosocial and contextual factors shaping their learning trajectories. Data were collected through a triangulated approach comprising classroom observations, in-depth interviews with students and English teachers, and supporting documentary evidence (e.g., rubrics and learning artifacts), enabling a rich description of the dynamic relationship between affective factors and speaking performance in real classroom settings. Preliminary analyses indicate that higher self-confidence is associated with greater willingness to participate in speaking activities and higher intrinsic motivation, while lower self-confidence coincides with anxiety, avoidance of speaking opportunities, and reduced motivation. The findings underscore the interdependence of affective constructs and suggest that instructional interventions promoting supportive classroom climates, collaborative speaking activities, and constructive feedback can enhance both motivation and speaking proficiency. The study contributes to the literature on language learning psychology in Indonesian EFL contexts and offers practical guidance for curriculum design, teacher professional development, and guidance services aimed at fostering sustained motivation and confidence in English speaking among high school students.

Keywords: *Self-Confidence, Learning Motivation, Speaking Ability, EFL Context.*

ABSTRAK

Studi ini menyelidiki interaksi antara sikap siswa terhadap pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, kepercayaan diri, dan motivasi dalam konteks EFL Indonesia, dengan fokus pada SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan. Berdasarkan kerangka deskriptif kualitatif, penelitian ini berupaya menjelaskan bagaimana persepsi efikasi diri siswa serta motivasi intrinsik dan ekstrinsik memengaruhi prestasi berbicara bahasa Inggris, serta faktor psikososial dan kontekstual yang membentuk lintasan pembelajaran mereka. Data dikumpulkan melalui pendekatan triangulasi yang terdiri dari observasi kelas, wawancara mendalam dengan siswa dan guru bahasa Inggris, dan bukti dokumenter pendukung (misalnya, rubrik dan artefak pembelajaran), yang memungkinkan deskripsi yang kaya tentang hubungan dinamis antara faktor afektif dan kinerja berbicara dalam pengaturan kelas nyata. Analisis awal menunjukkan bahwa kepercayaan diri yang lebih tinggi dikaitkan dengan kemauan yang lebih besar untuk berpartisipasi dalam kegiatan berbicara dan motivasi intrinsik yang lebih tinggi, sementara kepercayaan diri yang lebih rendah bertepatan dengan kecemasan, penghindaran kesempatan berbicara, dan penurunan motivasi. Temuan ini menggarisbawahi saling ketergantungan konstruk afektif dan menunjukkan bahwa intervensi instruksional yang mempromosikan iklim kelas yang suportif, aktivitas berbicara kolaboratif, dan umpan balik konstruktif dapat meningkatkan motivasi dan kemampuan berbicara. Studi ini berkontribusi pada literatur tentang psikologi pembelajaran bahasa dalam konteks EFL Indonesia dan menawarkan panduan praktis untuk desain kurikulum, pengembangan profesional guru, dan layanan bimbingan yang bertujuan untuk menumbuhkan motivasi

dan kepercayaan diri yang berkelanjutan dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris di kalangan siswa sekolah menengah.

Kata Kunci: Kepercayaan Diri, Motivasi Belajar, Kemampuan Berbicara, Konteks EFL.

1. Introduction

In today's globalized world, effective communication is essential, and strong speaking skills are crucial to success across fields; however, Indonesian EFL learners often struggle to translate knowledge into fluent spoken performance, a challenge intensified by affective factors such as speaking anxiety and negative attitudes toward language learning, as well as limited opportunities for authentic speaking practice in school settings (Nurdiansyah et al., 2024; Widagdo, 2020). This study situates itself within the Indonesian high school context, specifically SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan, to investigate how internal dispositions—namely self-confidence and learning motivation—relate to English speaking achievement, with the aim of informing instructional interventions that reduce anxiety and bolster intrinsic motivation, ultimately enhancing curriculum design, teaching methods, and guidance programs for improved communicative competence.

The background literature indicates that engagement in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts fosters better application of grammar and vocabulary, which in turn supports comprehension and listening skills, yet non-native speakers frequently encounter difficulties in developing speaking proficiency (Akhter et al., 2020; Kadamovna, 2021). In the Indonesian setting, research highlights the scarcity of authentic speaking practice, insufficient vocabulary instruction, and resource limitations as primary barriers to speaking success (Winnie et al., 2023; Panggabean, 2024). Consequently, this study seeks to address a gap in understanding how self-confidence and motivation operate within these constraints to affect speaking outcomes, and to identify instructional strategies that mitigate anxiety while promoting sustained engagement in speaking activities.

The central purpose is twofold: theoretical, to advance the literature on language learning psychology in Indonesian EFL settings; and practical, to inform curriculum design, classroom practices, and guidance services that support learners' progression toward higher English speaking proficiency. To achieve this, the study articulates specific research questions: (1) How do students at SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan perceive their self-confidence toward English speaking? (2) How do they perceive their learning motivation toward English speaking? (3) What challenges do EFL students at SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan face in developing their speaking skills? (4) What factors motivate these students to practice and improve their speaking?" The hypothesis posits that higher self-confidence and greater intrinsic motivation are positively associated with English speaking achievement, with this relationship partially mediated by reduced anxiety and increased classroom engagement.

Attitude in language learning refers to students' dispositions, behaviors, and responses toward the learning environment, teachers, peers, and the subject matter, encompassing both positive elements such as motivation, self-confidence, engagement, and curiosity, and negative aspects like indiscipline or resistance; in the present theoretical review, emphasis is placed on examining how students' attitudes toward self-confidence and learning motivation influence their English speaking performance, given evidence that a positive stance toward lessons and instructors correlates with higher learning outcomes and greater willingness to engage in learning activities (Lauster; Fakeye; Abidin et al.). This framing aligns with the notion that affective factors shape learners' willingness to participate and persist, thereby impacting language development and speaking proficiency in EFL contexts.

Self-confidence is conceptualized as a belief in one's own abilities and potential, encompassing traits such as optimism, responsibility, and the propensity to express opinions without hesitation; foundational theories (for example Bandura's self-efficacy) explain how confidence underpins motivation and performance across tasks, including language learning. In

English learning, self-confidence emerges as a critical driver of speaking achievement, as students who perceive themselves as capable are more likely to engage in speaking activities, manage anxiety, and persist through challenges; empirical insights from diverse contexts suggest a positive association between self-confidence and speaking performance, highlighting the need to foster autonomous decision-making, positive self-perception, and proactive communication within instructional designs.

Learning motivation comprises intrinsic and extrinsic drivers that energize, direct, and sustain learning behavior, with distinct roles described in the literature: motivation activates effort, guides goal-directed actions, and supports persistence in the presence of obstacles; intrinsic motivation reflects internal interest and enjoyment of the task, while extrinsic motivation involves external incentives and environmental factors such as task characteristics, teacher behavior, and educational context. In the perspective of EFL speaking development, motivation shapes students' engagement with speaking tasks, vocabulary building, and the willingness to participate in classroom discourse, thereby influencing speaking outcomes; the literature further identifies indicators of learning motivation, including perseverance, resilience, sustained engagement, and independence in learning. This theoretical synthesis foregrounds how Bloom's taxonomy and related pedagogical frameworks can be leveraged to design activities that strengthen both motivation and confidence, ultimately enhancing English speaking proficiency.

2. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design to illuminate the motivations and self-confidence of EFL students in learning English and to describe how these affect speaking proficiency within the SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan context. The qualitative descriptive approach is well suited for capturing participants' lived experiences, classroom interactions, and the nuanced meanings they assign to language learning processes, enabling a detailed portrayal of how internal dispositions interact with instructional practices to shape speaking outcomes. Data sources include classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with students and English teachers, and relevant documentary evidence (e.g., learning rubrics and student work). The study also triangulates data across multiple informants and data types to enhance credibility and transferability, following systematic procedures for thematic analysis that allow emergent patterns to be mapped onto an analytic framework addressing self-confidence and motivation in language learning.

Data collection proceeds in four parallel streams. First, nonparticipant and participant observations of English language lessons will be conducted to document instructional strategies, student engagement, and spontaneous speaking opportunities. Second, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with ten students selected to represent diverse achievement levels, along with several English teachers, to explore perceptions of self-confidence, learning motivation, and speaking challenges. Third, open-ended questionnaires will be administered to capture broader indicators of self-confidence and motivation that complement interview data and support triangulation. Fourth, documentary evidence (e.g., rubrics, lesson plans, and classroom artifacts) will be collected to contextualize observed behaviors and school practices. Data analysis will follow Miles and Huberman's framework: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, with coding conducted iteratively to identify themes related to confidence, motivation, and speaking performance. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw, will be strictly observed in accordance with institutional guidelines.

The population comprises all students enrolled in English language courses at SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan, with focus on class X students who exhibit varied levels of English proficiency and achievement. A purposive sampling strategy will select ten students from five classes (F1–

F5), ensuring representation across a range of self-reported confidence and motivational profiles as well as distinct speaking performance levels. Additionally, several English teachers who have sustained engagement with these students over time will be invited to provide classroom perspectives on instructional practices and student attitudes that influence speaking development. Given the qualitative design, sample size is determined by information-rich cases and the depth of data obtained through triangulated methods, rather than by statistical power considerations. All participants will be informed about the study's aims and procedures, with assurances of anonymity and data confidentiality, and ethical clearance will be secured from the appropriate institutional review board prior to data collection.

3. Result and Discussion

Research Findings

The researcher employed a qualitative descriptive method, following the framework established by Miles and Huberman (2014). To gather data, three research instruments were utilized: observation, in-depth interviews with participants using open-ended questions, and follow-up interviews conducted through online Zoom meetings. After collecting the data, processing and analysis were performed in line with the three elements of Miles and Huberman's theory: data reduction, data presentation and selection of key elements, and data summarization and verification.

Data Processing and Analysis

Observation

Field observation data were collected by the researcher through direct observation during a school visit, as well as through documentation provided by the English teacher, one of the key informants. The observations focused on the situation, condition, behavior, and activities of the students during the visit. Specifically, the researcher observed one classroom during the English language learning process. Within this setting, the researcher had the opportunity to closely monitor the students' learning experiences, their activities, and their behavior during the lesson.

In addition to classroom observations, the researcher noted students engaging in animated conversations outside of class during breaks or other school hours. These observations provided insight into how students enjoyed their interactions, often joking with one another and occasionally using short phrases and sentences in English. For instance, several female students were observed having casual conversations outside of class and responding to each other with English phrases like, "*Yes, I know!*", "*Yup, you are right!*", or simply "*No*".

Another significant observation made during the learning process was related to English projects. Students gathered in groups to discuss their project work. In this collaborative environment, every student was encouraged to actively participate in the discussion, allowing all members to share their ideas and thoughts in contributing to the project. The subject teacher indicated that these English projects help students enhance their reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills while fostering teamwork and building confidence. Moreover, these projects aim to encourage students to apply their language skills in real-world contexts and promote creativity, collaboration, and communication.



Figure 1. Students discuss about English Project activity

Another data collection in class activity is English group presentation. According to the subject teacher, through English group presentation activity, its positively influence students' self-confidence. Action research by Kawamura (2019) demonstrated that interventions like peer discussions, self-reflection, and teacher guidance during group presentation projects lead to a significant positive change in students' attitudes and reduce perceived difficulties related to group work and public speaking.



Figure 2. English Group Presentation Activity

During a day of the official visit to the school, the researcher had wonderful and insightful experience of the visit, directly observation to collect data for the research give the researcher best experience, real-time insight into classroom dynamics, teaching methods, and student behavior as events unfold naturally, and understanding the environment of learning. Unlike only relying on secondhand reports or interview, with direct observation allows the researcher to see authentic interactions and practices, which provides richer, and more accurate data.



Figure 3. Classroom Observation

and competitions enhanced confidence through public speaking experience. Despite ongoing fear and comparisons with peers, students showed strong self-awareness and motivation to improve. Differences in proficiency levels and the influence of the mother tongue added complexity to English speaking development.

Observing student’s learning motivation on their speaking skill

1. Perseverance in Learning

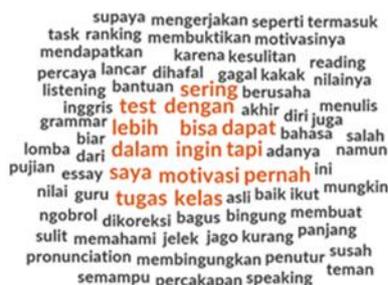


Figure 5. Word Cloud Result of Students’ Perseverance in Learning by Nvivo Software

Students’ perseverance in learning English is driven by a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. They are motivated to improve academic outcomes such as grades, tests, and assignments, while external factors like praise, competition, and recognition also play an important role. Although students recognize difficulties in grammar, pronunciation, and speaking, emerging intrinsic motivation encourages them to keep trying and improving. Overall, students at SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan show strong enthusiasm for learning English despite facing learning challenges.

2. Tenacious in the Face of Adversity

Students demonstrate strong tenacity through continuous practice and persistence in learning English, particularly in speaking skills. Fear and shyness are common obstacles, but students strive to overcome them through repeated practice and bravery. Social support from friends, group discussions, and family plays a crucial role in sustaining motivation. Students are also motivated by visible progress in grades and skill improvement, reflecting a strong never-give-up attitude.

3. Interest in the Lesson

Students show high interest in learning English, especially speaking, which is enhanced by engaging and relevant activities such as songs, games, debates, and short stories. Curiosity and enjoyment contribute to intrinsic motivation, while teachers and a supportive learning environment are seen as essential in maintaining interest. Students also recognize the importance of English for their future, including career opportunities and international communication.

4. Desire to Learn

The desire to learn English is driven by personal goals and future aspirations, such as communicating internationally, understanding media, pursuing scholarships, and working abroad. Engagement with global culture through films, music, and digital media further strengthens motivation. Students show perseverance and independence by continuing to learn English in enjoyable and meaningful ways despite challenges.

5. Independence in Learning

Students demonstrate independence by taking initiative in learning English on their own using various resources such as online tools, podcasts, novels, diaries, and flashcards. They aim to improve all language skills, including vocabulary, pronunciation, reading, writing, and listening. While valuing independence and flexibility, students also acknowledge the importance of support from teachers, peers, and family when needed.

Self-Confidence and Learning Motivation, interview results indicate that self-confidence strongly influences students' motivation and participation in learning English. Eight out of ten students reported that confidence encouraged active engagement in discussions and assignments. This finding aligns with Lauster's (2006) Personality Test theory and Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, which emphasize that confidence enhances motivation and persistence. However, self-confidence fluctuates depending on topic difficulty, supporting Lauster (2006). Students with high self-confidence actively participate and persist in learning, while those with moderate confidence require support. Students with low self-confidence experience anxiety and lower motivation, particularly in the EFL speaking context.

Impact of motivation in learning activities

The interviews revealed intrinsic and extrinsic factors driving students' engagement. Intrinsically motivated students described learning as a source of personal satisfaction and curiosity, stating;

"I like to learn because it helps me understand the world better."

Conversely, extrinsic motivators such as grades, teacher praise, and parental encouragement also played a crucial role, especially for those with lower initial confidence. Students with higher self-confidence tended to exhibit stronger intrinsic motivation, indicating that confidence may foster deeper engagement with learning content. This finding is consistent with Sadirman (2020) which emphasizes that it is a crucial driving force behind students' engagement in educational activities.

Through official visits to schools conducted by researchers to conduct direct interviews with students, researchers can find out and analyze and understand how students' self-confidence greatly influences learning activities, especially related to speaking English. Where in the process of conducting research, when researchers use English to interview, some of the students use English with high self-confidence even though they are not fluent and not proficient. Some students also often use two languages or are bilingual, Indonesian and English. However, they are calm and confident when speaking and answering all questions. The researcher conducted interviews with selected students in the school library, accompanied by the English subject teacher, for approximately two hours.

During the interview process with students, the researcher noticed how the students seemed to enjoy the atmosphere. It was seen when the researcher asked open-ended questions, although not all of them were able to answer well, they answered them confidently. They were accompanied by jokes and laughter when they found it difficult to respond and needed friends to help them understand the researcher's questions. Apart from a direct interview with the students, the researcher also observes the students' activities outside the classroom, randomly asking some questions to a few students who were gather around outside the class to see their response and perspective about English speaking. One student stated;

"I have a big interest in learning how to speak English fluently, I use to listen to Western Music, watch English Movies in Cinema with friends, and sometimes I speak a bit of English when hang out with friends."

Beside analyzing the result of the interview, the researcher also collected data through Zoom meetings by asking several questions in the research questionnaire column. The researchers conducted face-to-face interviews with students and English teachers to collect data by asking correspondents the questions, namely four students with different levels of achievement. The researcher carried out comparisons and correlations among the four students regarding the relationship between their self-confidence and learning motivation and the learning achievements they achieved. For each student, the factors that motivate them to master English lessons are very diverse. This can be seen from the results of direct interviews via Zoom meetings conducted by researchers, so it can be concluded that self-confidence and high learning motivation can increase student learning achievement.

Student1: “Emphasized the importance of revisiting and reviewing the materials covered by the teacher, engaging in frequent reading, and practicing independently to enhance understanding of the lessons”.

Student 2: “Highlighted the significant role that familial support plays in academic achievement and proficiency in mastering English coursework. She articulated that consistent practice, exposure to English through songs and videos, and occasional conversations in English with family and friends have facilitated her learning process”.

Student 3: “Pay close attention to what the teacher says; if you don't understand, ask other teachers or friends. Spending time with other English-speaking friends can provide encouragement and drive to improve your English skills”.

Student 4: “English is an intriguing subject, however the most difficult of the four English skills for me is speaking. This is because I am not particularly comfortable speaking English. I am nervous of speaking English because I am afraid of being laughed at by friends or the person I am conversing with”.



Figure 6. Interview Students Through Zoom Meeting Online

In research activities, the researcher strives to show accurate and objective data. Using the student's overall score given by the English subject teacher. The researcher can check and present data in reports as qualitative data descriptions using words or sentences. Data validity is determined by using reference materials in the form of interactions carried out by researchers with students and attaching documentary evidence during the research. Another credibility test is in the form of a member check. Member check is the process of checking data obtained by researchers with data providers or informants. This aims to determine how well the data received matches what the informant gave, and the data collection results are shown after the interview.

According to the results of the perception and response of the students when the researchers interviewed about the extent to which they had an interest in English, their answers and responses varied considerably. It can be concluded that most of them have an interest and interest in English. Although they have difficulties, especially in speaking English, in reality, their motivation to learn English is very high. The students also have strong self-confidence in trying to improve their speaking skills and learn English in hopes of achieving success in learning.

The researcher also can examine through the teacher and students' observation checklist. For teacher, it provides standardized way to assess presentations fairly and consistently, and can help focus on observable behaviors rather than subjective impressions,

allowing for precise feedback. The inclusion of comment sections enables personalized advice, which is crucial for student growth. As for students. The checklists clarify expectations and learning goals. Knowing the specific criteria helps them prepare more effectively and self-assess their performance. The transparency reduces anxiety and motivates improvement. Checklist also encourage reflection by highlighting strengths and areas needing work, fostering a growth mindset. With students' observation checklist, its helps teacher understands the learning progress, monitoring things like participation in class, focusing on the detail observations of a learner's behaviors and their attitudes during the learning process.

These findings show the importance of supporting students' self-confidence to enhance their motivation and academic performance. Teachers should consider strategies such as positive feedback, scaffolded challenges, and opportunities for mastery experiences to build students' confidence. Furthermore, recognizing the interplay between confidence and motivation can help tailor interventions to individual students' needs.

4. Conclusion

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that students' self-confidence and learning motivation are closely linked to English speaking achievement among EFL learners at SMA Negeri 1 Patimuan. Students who reported higher levels of self-confidence tended to participate more actively in speaking activities and showed greater intrinsic motivation, while those with lower self-confidence frequently experienced anxiety and hesitation that impeded speaking performance. These findings corroborate the theoretical premise that affective factors play a pivotal role in language learning, particularly in speaking, and underscore the necessity of addressing both cognitive and affective dimensions within classroom practice. The results further suggest that fostering a supportive learning environment and designing speaking tasks that cultivate autonomy and positive self-perception can enhance students' communicative competence in English.

Suggestions

To translate the findings into practice, it is recommended to create a supportive, non-judgmental classroom climate that encourages risk-taking and values effort over perfection. Incorporating collaborative speaking activities, such as pair and small-group tasks, can reduce anxiety by providing peer support and meaningful opportunities for interaction. Providing timely, constructive feedback and offering a variety of engaging speaking tasks—including role-plays, real-life simulations, and multimedia-supported activities—can bolster both confidence and intrinsic motivation. Implementing gradual exposure to higher-stakes speaking tasks will help students build resilience and sustain progress over time. Finally, it is essential to integrate guidance services that address affective factors and to align instructional strategies with broader curriculum goals to support students' ongoing development in English speaking proficiency.

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