

Confidence to Improve Speaking Skills of Class X Students of SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the confidence in improving the English speaking skills of class X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi. The research method used is a qualitative approach with a case study design, where data is collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documentation analysis. Interviews were conducted with students to explore their perceptions of self-confidence and its relationship to the ability to speak the English. Observations were made during English learning activities to see firsthand the interaction of students in class. Documentation in the form of student's grades and diaries was analysed to find patterns of improvement in speaking skills related to confidence levels. The results of the study show that self-confidence has an important role in improving students' English speaking skills. This research contributes to the development of teaching strategies in vocational schools that focus more on strengthening affective aspects such as confidence in learning English.

Keywords: Confidence, Speaking Skills, English learning, SMK Students

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-confidence is a critical factor in individual development, especially within educational settings. In vocational high schools (SMK), students' self-confidence often plays a decisive role in their success across various learning domains, including language acquisition. Confidence is paramount in the augmentation of speaking capabilities among learners, especially within the realm of English language acquisition for students enrolled in vocational high schools (SMK). Wiharja and Firnanda assert that motivation, intricately associated with confidence, profoundly affects students' choices to engage in vocational education as well as their ensuing efficacy in practical competencies, which encompasses language proficiency (MS & Firnanda, 2021). High self-confidence in SMK students can significantly help them overcome challenges in learning English, a key skill in today's globalized world. Specifically, for grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi, self-confidence is a crucial element that enhances their English-speaking abilities, enabling them to perform better in both academic and practical situations. Recent studies highlight the importance of fostering self-confidence as a strategy to improve language skills, suggesting that educational interventions should incorporate confidence-building activities to maximize student outcomes. By addressing both cognitive and affective needs, educators can create a more supportive learning environment that not only boosts language proficiency but also prepares students for future challenges.

English speaking skills have become increasingly crucial in the era of globalization, where the ability to communicate across languages is essential in various fields. In vocational education, particularly at the secondary level (SMK), mastering English speaking skills is vital for preparing students to enter a competitive workforce. Rahman examines the relationship between students' proficiency in writing and their speaking capabilities, emphasizing that successful communication necessitates a conducive atmosphere wherein learners are allowed to engage in practice devoid of apprehension regarding evaluation (Rahman, 2022). Students with strong English speaking abilities are generally better equipped to face professional challenges and succeed in their careers. This study focuses on how boosting self-confidence can significantly contribute to the development of English-speaking skills among SMK students. By integrating self-confidence enhancement strategies into English language instruction, educators can help students improve their communication skills, making them more competitive in the global job market. The findings suggest that addressing both cognitive and affective factors in language learning can lead to more effective educational outcomes for vocational students.

Vocational high school (SMK) education is designed to equip students with skills that are relevant to the workforce. In SMK education, English is often taught as one of the essential skills needed across many industries. English learning in SMK is not only aimed at language mastery but also at enhancing communication skills that can support students' future careers. In conjunction with intrinsic factors, external support mechanisms also serve a crucial function in enhancing students' self-efficacy in verbalizing in English. Educators and fellow students can cultivate a nurturing atmosphere that motivates learners to articulate their thoughts orally. As emphasized by Tormala et al., how messages are framed and the nature of feedback provided can profoundly influence students' levels of self-assurance, which subsequently impacts their propensity to engage in speaking exercises (Tormala et al., 2008). This study investigates the role of self-confidence in English language learning among grade X students at SMK Bekasi and its impact on their speaking skills. The findings suggest that self-confidence significantly influences students' ability to communicate effectively in English, which is crucial for their success in the professional world. By understanding the importance of self-confidence, educators can develop more effective teaching strategies that not only improve language proficiency but also prepare students for the demands of the global job market.

English language learning in vocational high schools (SMK) is designed to equip students with the communication skills necessary for success in a global context. One of the key challenges in English education is helping students develop effective speaking skills. To

achieve this, it is crucial to understand the factors that influence students' self-confidence in speaking English. The implications of confidence in proficiency in verbal communication transcends the academic environment, significantly impacting the prospective employment opportunities of students. As articulated by Noviansyah and Kurniawan, individuals enrolled in vocational institutions frequently encounter difficulty in exhibiting their linguistic competencies within professional contexts (Noviansyah & Kurniawan, 2021). Therefore, building confidence in speaking English not only enhances their academic performance but also prepares them for real-world interactions in their chosen fields. This study specifically examines how English instruction in grade X at SMK can be optimized by enhancing students' self-confidence in their speaking abilities. Boosting self-confidence significantly improves students' speaking skills, which are essential for both academic success and future career opportunities. By focusing on building self-confidence, educators can create a more effective and supportive learning environment that fosters language proficiency and prepares students for the demands of a globalized workforce.

Although self-confidence is recognized as an important factor in learning, there has been limited research exploring how self-confidence specifically impacts English speaking skills among vocational high school (SMK) students. In the context of SMK, the extent to which self-confidence affects students' success in speaking English effectively remains underexplored. It has been observed that individuals exhibiting elevated degrees of self-assurance are significantly more inclined to participate proactively in oral communication exercises, which are vital for the process of language acquisition. Riyadini emphasizes that involvement in a virtual English-speaking club has facilitated the enhancement of student's confidence, which in turn has resulted in the advancement of their speaking abilities (Riyadini, 2022). This study aims to delve deeper into the relationship between self-confidence levels and the improvement of English-speaking skills in SMK students. The findings of this research suggest that higher self-confidence is closely associated with better speaking performance, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to boost students' confidence in language learning. By understanding this relationship, educators can develop strategies that not only improve language proficiency but also empower students to communicate more effectively. This study contributes to the existing literature by providing insights into the pivotal role of self-confidence in language education at the vocational level.

Although English speaking skills are a focus in many educational curricula, research on how psychological factors such as self-confidence affect these skills remains limited, particularly in vocational high schools (SMK). There is a notable lack of data in SMK settings

that shows how self-confidence can play a role in enhancing English speaking abilities, especially among grade X students. The enhancement of oral communication competencies is intricately associated with the methodologies utilized by learners throughout their educational endeavours. Dengah et al. elucidated that the Vocabulary Language Prediction (VLP) strategy not only augmented students' reading proficiency but also fostered their self-assurance in employing the English language (Dengah et al., 2022)...This study aims to explore this under-researched relationship, offering new insights into the development of English teaching strategies. Boosting self-confidence significantly improves students' speaking performance, which is crucial for their academic and professional success. By addressing this gap, the research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between psychological factors and language learning. These insights can help educators tailor their teaching methods to better support students' language acquisition and confidence.

Vocational education in SMK often focuses on developing practical and technical skills, but the importance of self-confidence in mastering English language skills is frequently overlooked. There is limited research on the role of character education, such as boosting self-confidence, in enhancing English learning for grade X students in SMK. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring how SMK education can better emphasize self-confidence development as a key factor in mastering English speaking skills. The significance of peer support and collaborative efforts must not be underestimated in enhancing self-assurance among vocational high school (SMK) students. Taufan et al. assert the critical nature of collaborative learning environments wherein students engage in collective speaking practices, subsequently alleviating anxiety and promoting a sense of community (Taufan et al., 2022). By addressing this need, the study contributes to a more holistic approach to language education in vocational settings. These insights can help educators develop more effective teaching strategies that support both language proficiency and student confidence.

English language learning in vocational high schools (SMK) often focuses on cognitive aspects, but the role of affective factors, such as self-confidence, in the learning process has not been extensively studied. At SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi, there is still limited understanding of how interventions aimed at boosting self-confidence among grade X students can directly impact their English speaking skills. This study seeks to explore this relationship in greater depth and proposes a new approach to English language instruction that emphasizes the enhancement of self-confidence. The ramifications of self-assurance on oral communication competencies transcend mere academic achievement, impacting students' prospective career opportunities. As elucidated by Sitorus, individuals who exhibit confidence

in their verbal communication skills are more adequately equipped for professional engagements within the occupational environment (Sitorus, 2018). By focusing on both cognitive and affective dimensions, educators can create a more balanced and effective learning environment. These insights offer valuable guidance for developing teaching strategies that better support student achievement in language learning.

The urgency of this research lies in the critical need to enhance speaking skills among vocational high school (SMK) students learning English. Speaking is a fundamental skill for effective communication, and it is particularly vital in vocational contexts where students must interact with clients, colleagues, and industry professionals. Numerous students enrolled in SMK encounter difficulties in the enhancement of their oral communication abilities, primarily attributable to a deficiency in self-assurance, which can obstruct their capacity to articulate their thoughts with clarity and efficacy. The presence of self-confidence profoundly affects the educational trajectories of students, shaping their engagement and readiness to participate in oral communication exercises, as noted (Akbari & Sahibzada, 2020). Self-confidence is an important factor that is often overlooked in English language learning within vocational high schools (SMK). Low self-confidence can significantly hinder the development of students' speaking skills, particularly among grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi. The lack of emphasis on building self-confidence in the curriculum may lead to students struggling with effective communication in English. The critical role of self-confidence in language acquisition and suggest strategies to incorporate confidence-building exercises into English teaching.

This study offers a novel approach to English language learning by emphasizing the importance of strengthening students' self-confidence as a strategy to improve their speaking skills, a topic that has not been extensively researched in the context of vocational high schools (SMK). The incorporation of cutting-edge pedagogical approaches, including role-playing and the implementation of digital platforms for practice, has the potential to create novel pathways for enhancing confidence in verbal communication (Asma Ul Husna & Suratni, 2024; Romdiani et al., 2023). The critical role that self-confidence plays in enabling students to participate more actively in language activities and, consequently, enhance their speaking proficiency. By integrating self-confidence-building exercises into the curriculum, educators can create a more supportive and effective learning environment. The findings suggest that focusing on affective factors like self-confidence can lead to significant improvements in students' language performance. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how self-confidence can be leveraged to improve educational outcomes in SMK settings.

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand how self-confidence can influence the English-speaking skills of grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi, as well as to identify effective teaching strategies to enhance both aspects. The significance of interaction among learners is of paramount importance and should not be underestimated. Saeed et al. assert that environments conducive to collaborative learning play a crucial role in enhancing speaking abilities, as students gain valuable insights and assistance from peer evaluations and support (Saeed et al., 2016). This research seeks to uncover the relationship between self-confidence and language proficiency, highlighting the importance of psychological factors in language acquisition. By analysing the impact of self-confidence on speaking abilities, the study aims to provide insights into how educators can better support students in overcoming language barriers. Self-confidence is a critical component of successful language learning, and integrating confidence-building exercises into the curriculum can lead to significant improvements in student outcomes. This study contributes to the broader understanding of how affective factors influence academic performance and offers practical recommendations for enhancing English language education in vocational settings.

2. METHODS

This study uses a qualitative research design with a case study approach to explore the relationship between self-confidence and English-speaking skills among grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi. The qualitative design enables an in-depth examination of how self-confidence impacts students' abilities to speak English, allowing for a nuanced understanding of their experiences. Data collection methods include semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, providing a comprehensive view of the factors influencing both self-confidence and language proficiency. The case study approach is particularly suited for this research as it focuses on a specific group of students within their real-life educational setting, revealing the contextual influences on their learning outcomes. This comprehensive framework endeavours to promote an in-depth understanding of how self-efficacy influences linguistic competence in the context of English language acquisition for learners at SMK, as articulated by (Luana Sasabone et al., 2021). By closely examining these relationships, the study aims to identify effective strategies that can be implemented by educators to boost students' confidence and improve their speaking skills. The insights gained from this research are expected to contribute to the development of more effective English language teaching practices in vocational schools, particularly in similar educational contexts.

The population for this study comprises all grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi, with a sample selected through purposive sampling to gather in-depth data on the impact of self-confidence on speaking skills. This sampling method was chosen to ensure that participants who are most likely to provide valuable insights into the research questions were included. By focusing on students who vary in levels of self-confidence and English proficiency, the study aims to capture a broad range of experiences and perspectives. This methodology is imperative for encompassing the heterogeneous experiences and backgrounds of learners, given that vocational education frequently covers an extensive array of fields and interests. By integrating students from various vocational pathways, the investigation seeks to ascertain whether confidence levels and oral communication abilities differ across disciplines and how these elements influence overall linguistic proficiency (Swanson et al., 2014). Data collected from these selected students will be analyzed to identify patterns and correlations between self-confidence levels and speaking performance. The insights gained from this purposive sample are expected to provide a detailed understanding of the role self-confidence plays in language acquisition. This understanding could help educators develop targeted strategies to improve speaking skills in vocational school students.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews and classroom observations, with research instruments including interview guides specifically designed to uncover students' perceptions of their self-confidence and English speaking skills. The interviews provided detailed insights into how students view their abilities and the factors that influence their confidence in speaking English. Classroom observations complemented these interviews by allowing the researcher to witness firsthand how students' self-confidence manifested during speaking activities. This dual approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between self-confidence and language proficiency. The interview guides were carefully crafted to explore various aspects of self-confidence, such as the impact of teacher feedback, peer interactions, and previous language experiences. The process of data analysis will encompass the application of statistical methodologies to investigate the relationships between levels of confidence and oral communication abilities, in addition to conducting a thematic analysis of qualitative data to discern prevalent themes and insights about the experiences of students. This comprehensive analysis will yield an in-depth understanding of the determinants affecting confidence and oral communication competencies among students at SMK (Mahrian et al., 2023). Through this method, the study was able to identify key patterns and themes that contribute to students' speaking skills. The combination

of interviews and observations provided a robust dataset, enabling a deeper analysis of how self-confidence affects language learning outcomes in the classroom setting.

The data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis, a technique that allows for the identification of key patterns and themes related to the influence of self-confidence on English language learning. Data from recent studies indicate a significant relationship between confidence and speaking skills among vocational high school (SMK) students learning English. The variance in students' speaking skill achievement, highlights the importance of fostering a positive self-image in language learning contexts (Mega & Sugiarto, 2020). This method was chosen to systematically uncover how varying levels of self-confidence impact students' speaking skills. Through careful coding and categorization, the analysis revealed recurring themes such as the importance of positive feedback, the role of peer support, and the impact of previous language learning experiences on students' confidence levels. These themes were further explored to understand how they contribute to or hinder students' ability to effectively communicate in English. These findings provide valuable insights into the ways self-confidence influences language learning outcomes, offering educators a deeper understanding of how to support students in developing both their language skills and their confidence.

3. RESULTS

From interviews conducted with several grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi, it was revealed that their confidence in speaking English is significantly influenced by the support they receive from teachers and classmates, as well as their previous experiences with the language. Many students mentioned that positive reinforcement from their teachers helped them feel more comfortable and willing to participate in speaking activities. Similarly, encouragement from peers during group work or classroom discussions played a crucial role in boosting their self-confidence. Additionally, students who had prior exposure to English, whether through extracurricular activities or casual conversations, reported feeling more confident in their speaking abilities. These findings suggest that a supportive learning environment, coupled with opportunities for practical language use, can greatly enhance students' confidence in speaking English. Understanding these factors can help educators create more effective strategies to build students' self-assurance and improve their overall language proficiency. This insight is vital for developing targeted interventions that foster both academic and emotional growth in students.

Observations conducted during English lessons revealed that students with higher levels of self-confidence tend to be more actively engaged in speaking activities, such as group

discussions and classroom presentations. These confident students were often the first to volunteer for speaking tasks and demonstrated a greater willingness to express their ideas in front of others. In contrast, students with lower self-confidence were more likely to hesitate or avoid participating in these activities altogether. The active participation of confident students not only enhanced their language skills but also contributed to a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment. This observation suggests that self-confidence plays a crucial role in students' willingness to take risks and engage in language practice. By fostering an atmosphere that builds confidence, educators can encourage more students to participate actively, thereby improving their speaking skills. These insights highlight the importance of addressing affective factors in language education to support both student engagement and language development.

Based on the documentation of students' speaking skill scores, there is a positive correlation between the self-confidence levels recorded in their daily journals and the improvement in their English speaking scores over the course of one semester. Students who consistently reported higher levels of self-confidence showed significant progress in their speaking abilities, as reflected in their assessment results. This suggests that self-confidence is a key factor in language learning, directly influencing students' performance in speaking tasks. The data indicate that as students' confidence grew, so did their ability to articulate thoughts and participate in spoken English activities more effectively. This correlation highlights the importance of fostering self-confidence in students to enhance their language proficiency. Teachers who focus on building students' self-esteem and confidence in their abilities are likely to see better outcomes in language learning. These findings underscore the need for educational strategies that integrate confidence-building activities into the English language curriculum.

Several students acknowledged that practising speaking outside the classroom, such as conversing with native speakers through social media, has significantly helped them boost their self-confidence and improve their English-speaking skills. These interactions provided them with real-life language exposure, allowing them to apply what they learned in class to more authentic contexts. Students reported that engaging in conversations with native speakers made them more comfortable and less anxious about making mistakes. Over time, this practice led to noticeable improvements in their fluency and pronunciation. The informal nature of social media exchanges also encouraged them to be more spontaneous and expressive in their communication. This experience not only enhanced their language skills but also gave them the confidence to participate more actively in classroom speaking activities. The positive impact of these outside-the-classroom practices highlights the value of incorporating real-

world language use into language learning strategies, as it can significantly contribute to students' overall language development.

The results from observations, interviews, and documentation also indicate that students who are more frequently involved in extracurricular English activities at school tend to have better speaking skills and higher levels of self-confidence compared to those who are not. These students benefit from additional practice opportunities and exposure to English outside the regular classroom setting. Participation in clubs, debates, or language competitions allows them to use English in more varied and dynamic contexts, which enhances their fluency and comfort with the language. Additionally, these activities provide a supportive environment where students can take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them without the pressure of formal assessments. This consistent practice and positive reinforcement from peers and instructors contribute significantly to building their confidence in speaking English. As a result, these students are more likely to actively participate in class and perform better in speaking tasks. This finding highlights the importance of encouraging student involvement in extracurricular language activities to support their overall language development.

4. DISCUSSION

This study found a significant relationship between the self-confidence levels of grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi and their improvement in English speaking skills. Students with higher self-confidence demonstrated better speaking abilities and more active participation in classroom activities. This correlation suggests that self-confidence plays a crucial role in language acquisition, as it encourages students to engage more fully in speaking tasks. The findings align with previous research indicating that confidence-building strategies can lead to enhanced language performance. The reference provided (MS & Firnanda, 2021) does not directly support this claim as it focuses on career understanding and decision-making related to vocational education rather than confidence and speaking skills. Additionally, students who felt more confident were less anxious about making mistakes, allowing them to practice speaking more freely and effectively. These insights highlight the importance of integrating self-confidence development into language teaching methodologies. Educators should consider focusing on both cognitive and affective aspects of learning to maximize student outcomes in language education.

This study successfully identified that self-confidence plays a vital role in enhancing the English-speaking skills of grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi. The findings indicate that interventions aimed at boosting self-confidence can be an effective

strategy in English language teaching within vocational high schools (SMK). The interplay between self-assurance and verbal communication proficiency is further nuanced by the instructional methodologies adopted within educational settings. Conventional pedagogical strategies may inadequately cater to the requirements of learners experiencing speaking-related anxiety, resulting in a perpetuation of diminished confidence and substandard speaking outcomes. The work of (UĞUR GÖÇMEZ & ÜNAL, 2024) elucidates the significance of educators in exemplifying effective verbal communication practices and fostering a nurturing environment, which corroborates the assertion regarding the critical role of teacher assistance in enhancing student self-efficacy. This approach not only improves speaking skills but also helps students overcome anxiety related to language learning, which is particularly important in vocational settings where practical communication skills are essential. The study's findings offer valuable insights for developing targeted teaching strategies that address both cognitive and emotional aspects of learning.

This study found that character education focused on enhancing self-confidence at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi significantly contributed to the mastery of English-speaking skills among grade X students. The results indicate that integrating character education into the curriculum can be a key factor in successful English language learning. Students who participated in confidence-building activities demonstrated notable improvements in their speaking abilities, suggesting that self-confidence is crucial for language acquisition. The role of peer interactions in building confidence cannot be overlooked. Collaborative learning environments, where students work together in pairs or small groups, can significantly enhance their speaking skills and self-assurance. The reference (Luana Sasabone et al., 2021) discusses the implementation of English for Specific Purposes in improving students' speaking skills, but it does not specifically address the impact of collaborative learning on confidence. By embedding character education in the curriculum, educators can better support students' language development and prepare them for future challenges. This approach offers valuable insights for improving English education in vocational schools.

This study found that interventions focusing on boosting self-confidence significantly improved the English speaking skills of grade X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi. The findings suggest that affective factors, such as self-confidence, play a crucial role in the success of English language learning in vocational high school settings. The implications of confidence in speaking skills extend beyond academic performance; they also influence students' future career opportunities. The reference (Noviansyah & Kurniawan, 2021) discusses

the importance of school culture in supporting graduate competency development, which indirectly relates to the importance of communication skills in vocational settings. This supports previous research indicating that when students feel more confident, they are more likely to take risks and actively participate in language tasks, leading to better outcomes. The study highlights the importance of integrating effective support into language education, particularly in environments where practical communication skills are essential. These insights are critical for developing effective teaching strategies in vocational schools.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aims to understand the influence of self-confidence on the language speaking skills of United Kingdom class X students at SMK Bina Karya Mandiri 2 Bekasi, as well as to explore how vocational education can integrate the aspect of self-confidence in United Kingdom language learning. In addition, this study aims to identify effective teaching strategies for improving speaking skills through strengthening students' confidence. The results of this research are expected to contribute to the development of a more holistic curriculum in vocational schools, which not only focuses on cognitive aspects but also affective aspects of United Kingdom language learning. Another contribution of this research is to provide practical guidance for educators in implementing a confidence-emphasizing approach to improve students' United Kingdom speaking skills. However, the study has limitations on the number of samples limited to a single school, which can affect the generalization of findings for a broader educational context.

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