

## Exploring EFL Students' Perspectives on Speaking Competence and Self-Confidence

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the perspectives of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students regarding their speaking competence and self-confidence. The research investigates how EFL students assess their speaking abilities and the factors influencing their perceptions. Additionally, it examines the frequency and types of speaking practice outside the classroom. The study also explores the level of self-confidence among EFL students when speaking English, both within and outside the classroom, and identifies the factors that contribute to their self-confidence. Furthermore, the research investigates the strategies employed by students to overcome self-confidence issues in speaking English. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights into EFL students' perspectives on speaking competence and self-confidence, contributing to the development of effective language teaching approaches and support mechanisms.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak English proficiently plays a crucial role in the success of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in cross-cultural communication and their professional development. However, EFL students often face challenges in developing speaking competence and self-confidence in English speaking.

These may be caused by the lack of vocabulary, limitation to speaking practice, or psychological factor which influences the use of English to communicate with each others. Speaking in a foreign language is a complex process because of two reasons (Brown, 1994 in Celce-Murcia, 2001:103). McIntyre (2004) suggested that self-confidence significantly contributes to the learner's willingness to communicate in a foreign language. Speaking requires a high level of self-confidence that means the state of being sure of doing something, and not being shy and aggressive in social situations (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English). Lee's (2009) results showed that students' English proficiency, individual difference, and classroom atmosphere are factors that may influence US graduate students' speaking poor performance.

A This research aims to explore the perspectives of EFL students regarding their speaking competence and self-confidence. By understanding their perceptions, we can identify the factors that influence speaking abilities and levels of self-confidence within the context of English language learning.

Previous research has highlighted various factors that can impact speaking competence and self-confidence among EFL students, including a lack of practice opportunities, self-doubt, inadequate understanding of grammar and vocabulary, and low motivation. However, it is important to engage directly with the perspectives of EFL students to gain a more comprehensive understanding of these issues.

It is anticipated that the findings of this research will provide valuable insights for English language instruction and the development of more effective curricula. By understanding the perspectives of EFL students, appropriate learning approaches can be designed to enhance speaking competence and build self-confidence in English communication.

## 2. METHOD

In this study, we will collect data through questionnaires and Interview to EFL students. The collected data will be analyzed to identify patterns and trends that emerge in their perceptions of speaking competence and self-confidence. Additionally, we will explore the frequency and types of speaking practice undertaken outside the classroom, as well as the strategies employed by students to overcome self-confidence issues in English speaking.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

These are some of the results from the questionnaire questions from google form in 7 EFL students :



There were 7 EFL students as participants in this questionnaire, around 85.7% of them rated their English speaking skills as lacking, rarely practiced outside of class, lacked confidence when they spoke English in front of other people, often experienced difficulties in expressing themselves while speaking English, and 14.3% considered them good at speaking English and having good self-confidence as well.

And there are some of the results from the Interview in 3 EFL students :

Question 1 : Do you often have difficulty expressing yourself when you speak English? If yes, state the type of difficulties you often experience.

Participant 1 : Yes, it's hard for me to concentrate and it's also hard for me to speak English clearly

Participant 2 : Excessive fear of mispronunciation

Participant 3 : The difficulty is because the vocab is minimal so it tends to get confused assembling sentences.

Question 2 : How do you overcome your lack of confidence in speaking English?

Participant 1 : practice more often

Participant 2 : Looking for opportunities to speak English with foreigners

Participant 3 : taking English courses or training.

Question 3 : Is there a difference in your level of confidence when speaking English in class and outside of class? If yes, explain why.

Participant 1 : Yes, because maybe if you are in class to speak, you have to be clear and to the point. If outside the class the impression is rather relaxed

Participant 2 : Yes, because talking to someone known as a classmate, would make me more embarrassed.

Participant 3 : Outside the classroom it's more flexible because I learn independently using the application so I'm not afraid of being embarrassed when I make a mistake.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the study "Exploring EFL Students' Perspectives on Speaking Competence and Self-Confidence" aimed to delve into the views of English as a foreign language (EFL) students regarding their speaking competence and self-confidence. The research analyzed students' perspectives on their speaking proficiency in English and their level of self-assurance in using the language.

Based on the findings, several important conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, speaking competence in English significantly influences students' self-confidence. Students who perceive themselves as having good speaking skills in English tend to have higher levels of confidence in using the language.

Secondly, other factors also contribute to students' perceptions of speaking competence and self-confidence. These factors include the learning environment, teaching methods, social support, and communication experiences in English. A conducive learning environment, effective teaching methods, positive social support, and opportunities for active communication in English can enhance students' speaking competence and self-assurance.

In summary, this study highlights the importance of exploring students' perspectives in developing speaking competence and self-confidence in English. Educators and policymakers can utilize the findings to improve English language teaching and learning, create supportive learning environments, and strengthen students' confidence in communicating in English.

However, it is important to acknowledge that this study has certain limitations, such as a limited sample size or a focus on the EFL context. Therefore, further research and studies involving more representative samples and broader contexts can provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' perspectives regarding speaking competence and self-confidence in English.

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