

ENGLISH SPEAKING CONFIDENCE AMONG FLOOD-AFFECTED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan tingkat kepercayaan diri berbicara bahasa Inggris pada siswa sekolah dasar yang terdampak banjir di Kabupaten Pidie Jaya. Kepercayaan diri berbicara merupakan salah satu faktor afektif penting yang memengaruhi keberhasilan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, terutama pada peserta didik usia dini yang mengalami gangguan emosional akibat bencana alam. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif. Subjek penelitian terdiri atas 35 siswa sekolah dasar yang terdampak banjir dan dipilih menggunakan teknik total sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui angket yang disusun dalam bentuk skala Likert empat tingkat dan mencakup aspek kemauan berbicara, rasa takut melakukan kesalahan, kepercayaan diri, serta partisipasi dalam kegiatan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif berupa skor rata-rata dan persentase. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tingkat kepercayaan diri berbicara bahasa Inggris siswa berada pada kategori sedang dengan skor rata-rata keseluruhan sebesar 2,89. Aspek partisipasi kelas memperoleh skor tertinggi, sedangkan rasa takut melakukan kesalahan memperoleh skor terendah. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun siswa telah menunjukkan keterlibatan dalam pembelajaran, hambatan afektif masih perlu mendapat perhatian dalam konteks pembelajaran bahasa Inggris pascabencana.

Kata Kunci: kepercayaan diri berbicara bahasa Inggris, siswa sekolah dasar, pascabencana banjir, factor afektif, pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris

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Abstract

This study aimed to describe the level of English speaking confidence among flood-affected elementary school students in Pidie Jaya Regency. Speaking confidence was considered a crucial affective factor influencing young learners' success in learning English, particularly for students who experienced emotional disruption due to natural disasters. This research employed a descriptive quantitative design. The participants consisted of 35 flood-affected elementary school students who were selected using a total sampling technique. Data were collected through an English speaking confidence questionnaire developed using a four-point Likert scale, which covered aspects of willingness to speak, fear of making mistakes, self-confidence, and participation in English learning activities. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of mean scores and percentages. The findings revealed that the overall level of students' English speaking confidence was categorized as moderate, with a total mean score of 2.89. Classroom participation obtained the highest mean score, while fear of making mistakes showed the lowest mean score. These results indicated that although students demonstrated engagement in English learning activities, affective barriers remained a challenge in post-disaster learning contexts. Therefore, greater attention to emotional support and low-anxiety speaking activities was needed in English instruction for flood-affected elementary school students.

Keywords: English speaking confidence, elementary school students, post-flood context, affective factors, English language learning

INTRODUCTION

English has become an essential component of basic education in many non-English-speaking countries, including Indonesia, as it equips students with fundamental communication skills needed in the global era. At the elementary school level, English learning is not merely concerned with mastering linguistic elements such as vocabulary and grammar, but also with developing positive attitudes, confidence, and willingness to communicate. Among the four language skills, speaking is often regarded as the most challenging for young learners because it requires learners to actively produce language in front of others. Cameron (2001) emphasizes that young learners' success in speaking a foreign language is strongly influenced by affective factors, particularly confidence and emotional security, rather than linguistic competence alone.

Speaking confidence plays a critical role in determining students' participation in classroom interactions. Learners who feel confident are more likely to take risks, express their ideas, and engage in communicative activities, whereas those with low confidence tend to remain silent even when they understand the lesson. MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels (1998) argue that confidence is a key predictor of willingness to communicate in a second language, as learners' perceptions of their own abilities directly affect their readiness to speak. In elementary school contexts, this issue becomes more prominent because children are still developing their self-concept and emotional regulation. As a result, negative experiences, fear of making mistakes, or unsupportive learning environments can significantly reduce their speaking confidence.

The problem of low English speaking confidence is often intensified in contexts where students experience psychological distress, such as in post-disaster areas. Natural disasters, including floods, earthquakes, and tsunamis, do not only cause physical damage but also have long-term psychological impacts on children. Research in child psychology has shown that exposure to disasters may lead to anxiety, fear, emotional withdrawal, and decreased self-esteem, which subsequently affect children's academic engagement. Masten and Narayan (2012) explain that disaster-related stress can

disrupt children's emotional development and learning processes, particularly when adequate psychosocial support is lacking. In school settings, these emotional challenges may manifest as reduced participation, lack of confidence, and avoidance of communicative activities.

In the context of English language learning, such psychological conditions can create additional barriers to speaking development. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) identify communication apprehension as one of the main components of foreign language anxiety, which often leads learners to avoid speaking in class due to fear of negative evaluation. This anxiety is closely related to low self-confidence and is more likely to occur among learners who feel emotionally insecure. Krashen (1982) further explains through the Affective Filter Hypothesis that negative emotions, such as fear, anxiety, and low confidence, raise learners' affective filters, thereby preventing language input from being effectively processed. Consequently, even simple speaking tasks may become challenging for students who are emotionally affected by traumatic experiences.

Several studies have highlighted the importance of addressing affective factors in English learning, particularly for young learners. Research conducted by Pinter (2006) indicates that elementary school students require supportive and emotionally safe learning environments to develop confidence in speaking a foreign language. Similarly, a study by Al-Hosni (2014) found that lack of confidence was one of the main reasons why young learners were reluctant to speak English in classroom interactions. These findings suggest that speaking confidence is not an isolated issue but is closely connected to learners' emotional well-being and classroom experiences.

Despite the growing attention to affective factors in language learning, empirical studies focusing on English speaking confidence among elementary school students in post-disaster contexts remain limited, particularly in Indonesia. Most existing research has been conducted at the secondary or tertiary level, while studies involving younger learners are relatively scarce. Moreover, research that specifically examines the impact of disaster-related experiences on students' speaking

confidence is still underrepresented in the field of English language education. Peek (2008) points out that children affected by disasters often experience changes in social behavior and self-confidence, which may influence their classroom participation if not adequately addressed. However, such issues are rarely explored in relation to foreign language learning at the primary level.

The significance of this research stems from the need to provide empirical evidence on the level of English speaking confidence among flood-affected elementary school students in Pidie Jaya. By focusing on this specific context, the study aims to capture the unique challenges faced by young learners who have experienced disaster-related disruptions. As stated by Creswell (2012), descriptive research plays a crucial role in providing a clear picture of existing phenomena, particularly when limited information is available. Through a descriptive approach, this study seeks to identify the general level of students' speaking confidence and highlight aspects that require further attention.

Furthermore, this research is expected to contribute to the development of more inclusive and emotionally responsive English teaching practices. Understanding students' speaking confidence can help teachers design learning activities that are not only linguistically appropriate but also emotionally supportive. According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), effective language teaching should consider learners' affective needs in order to create meaningful and engaging learning experiences. In post-disaster educational settings, such considerations become even more important, as schools play a vital role in supporting children's psychosocial recovery.

In conclusion, English speaking confidence is a critical factor in elementary school students' language development, particularly in post-disaster contexts where learners face additional emotional challenges. Although previous studies have acknowledged the importance of affective factors in language learning, research focusing on flood-affected elementary school students remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the English speaking confidence of flood-affected elementary school students in Pidie Jaya, with the aim of providing insights that may inform English teaching practices and contribute to the

broader field of primary English education in post-disaster contexts.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design aimed at examining the level of English speaking confidence among flood-affected elementary school students in Pidie Jaya. A descriptive approach was selected because the study did not intend to test causal relationships or measure the effectiveness of an intervention, but rather to describe students' existing affective conditions related to speaking English. Descriptive research is appropriate for capturing participants' characteristics and experiences in a specific context where limited prior empirical data are available (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The research was conducted from 8 to 10 January 2026 at SDN 3 Merah Dua in Pidie Jaya Regency, Aceh, an elementary school affected by flooding that occurred on November 26, 2025. The setting was chosen due to its relevance to the research focus on post-disaster educational contexts and accessibility to participants. The target population of this study consisted of elementary school students affected by flooding in Pidie Jaya. The research subjects were 35 students who were present and willing to participate during the data collection period. The participants were selected using total sampling, as all available students who met the criteria were included.

The research procedure was conducted in several stages. First, the researcher obtained permission from school authorities and informed students about the purpose of the study in simple and age-appropriate language. Second, the speaking confidence questionnaire was administered to the students in a guided manner to ensure comprehension of each item. The researcher provided explanations when necessary without influencing students' responses. Finally, the completed questionnaires were collected and prepared for data analysis. The primary data of this study were students' responses to an English speaking confidence questionnaire. The instrument was adapted from established constructs of speaking confidence and willingness to communicate in second language learning. The questionnaire consisted of 20 Likert-scale items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree), focusing on aspects such as willingness to

speak, fear of making mistakes, self-confidence, and participation in English activities. Likert-scale questionnaires are widely used to measure affective variables in educational research due to their reliability and ease of interpretation (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010).

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis. Students' responses were calculated in terms of mean scores and percentages to determine the overall level of speaking confidence. The results were then categorized into three levels: high, moderate, and low confidence. This categorization aimed to facilitate clear interpretation of the findings. Descriptive statistical analysis is suitable for summarizing and presenting quantitative data in a meaningful way without making inferential claims (Cohen et al., 2018).

Ethical considerations were taken into account throughout the research process. Participation was voluntary, and students' identities were kept confidential. The research was conducted in a manner that respected students' emotional conditions, particularly considering their experiences in a post-disaster context.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data were obtained from a speaking confidence questionnaire administered to 35 elementary school students. The questionnaire measured four main aspects of speaking confidence: willingness to speak, fear of making mistakes, self-confidence, and participation in English learning activities. The analysis focused on mean scores and percentage distribution to determine students' overall confidence levels.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Students' English Speaking Confidence

Aspect of Speaking Confidence	Mean Score	Category
Willingness to Speak	2.95	Moderate
Fear of Making Mistakes	2.70	Moderate
Self-Confidence	2.88	Moderate
Classroom Participation	3.02	Moderate
Overall Mean	2.89	Moderate

As shown in Table 1, the overall mean score of students' English speaking confidence was 2.89, which falls into the **moderate category**. This finding indicates that most students demonstrated a reasonable level of confidence in speaking English, although they still experienced hesitation and emotional barriers in certain situations. Among the four aspects, classroom participation obtained the highest mean score (3.02), suggesting that students were relatively willing to engage in speaking activities when supported by the learning environment. In contrast, fear of making mistakes showed the lowest mean score (2.70), indicating that anxiety remained a notable factor influencing students' speaking behavior.

The moderate level of English speaking confidence found in this study reflects the complex emotional conditions of elementary school students in post-flood contexts. Although the students had resumed school activities, their confidence in speaking English was not fully developed. This finding supports previous research suggesting that emotional experiences significantly influence young learners' willingness to communicate in a foreign language. Peng and Woodrow (2019) argue that learners' confidence is closely related to their emotional comfort and perceived classroom support, which directly affects their participation in speaking activities.

The relatively higher score in classroom participation suggests that students were more confident when speaking tasks were conducted in supportive and familiar settings. In post-disaster environments, such supportive conditions may help students gradually regain a sense of safety and normalcy, which contributes to increased classroom engagement.

However, the moderate score in the fear of making mistakes aspect indicates that many students still experienced anxiety when using English orally. This condition may be attributed to students' limited exposure to communicative English use and their emotional vulnerability following the flood. Teimouri, Goetze, and Plonsky (2019) explain that speaking anxiety often emerges from fear of negative evaluation and low self-confidence, which can persist even when learners possess basic language knowledge. For flood-affected students, these feelings may be intensified by broader

psychological stress, leading to cautious and hesitant speaking behavior.

The findings also suggest that students' self-confidence in speaking English was developing but not yet stable. This supports the view that confidence is not a fixed trait but a dynamic condition influenced by learning experiences and emotional states. Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) highlight that learners' confidence can fluctuate depending on how emotionally supported they feel in the classroom. In the context of this study, the moderate confidence level may indicate that students were in a recovery phase, gradually rebuilding their confidence after experiencing disruption caused by the flood. Overall, the results demonstrate that flood-affected elementary school students in Pidie Jaya possessed a moderate level of English speaking confidence, with both positive engagement and emotional challenges evident. These findings answer the research objective by providing a clear description of students' speaking confidence levels and highlighting areas that require further support. The results imply that English instruction in post-disaster contexts should place greater emphasis on emotional safety, encouragement, and low-anxiety speaking activities to support students' confidence development.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the English speaking confidence of flood-affected elementary school students in Pidie Jaya is generally at a moderate level. The students show willingness to participate in speaking activities; however, fear of making mistakes and limited self-confidence remain key challenges that hinder their oral communication. These findings indicate that affective factors play a significant role in shaping students' speaking confidence, particularly in post-disaster learning contexts.

Therefore, it is recommended that English instruction at the elementary level incorporate supportive and interactive learning strategies to foster students' confidence in speaking. Future studies are encouraged to explore instructional interventions that specifically target affective aspects of language learning and to involve broader samples for more comprehensive findings.

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