

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT ON BUILDING SELF-CONFIDENCE IN ENGLISH-SPEAKING: A CASE STUDY OF THAI LEARNERS

Qisty Karamina Darus

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara
qistykaraminad@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study reports on action research on building self-confidence in English Speaking in the school environment. To assess the impact of environments on students' self-confidence developed through mixed method analysis. The researcher used a questionnaire and interviewed English teachers to collect the data. The participants in this study were 19 students at an intermediate English level. The analysis shows the successful factors in empowering students' self-confidence in speaking English. The results indicate that the school environment has a significant role in building students' self-confidence in English speaking, including the teachers, the friends, the facilities, and the extracurricular. From the results, it is evident that the teacher's claims about the school creating a suitable environment align with the data provided by the students.

Keywords: self-confidence, speaking, school environment

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini melaporkan penelitian tindakan kelas tentang membangun kepercayaan diri Berbicara Bahasa Inggris di lingkungan sekolah. Untuk menilai dampak lingkungan terhadap kepercayaan diri siswa dikembangkan melalui analisis metode campuran. Peneliti menggunakan kuesioner dan mewawancarai guru bahasa Inggris untuk mengumpulkan data. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah 19 siswa pada tingkat bahasa Inggris menengah. Analisis menunjukkan faktor-faktor keberhasilan dalam memberdayakan kepercayaan diri siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lingkungan sekolah mempunyai peran yang signifikan dalam membangun rasa percaya diri siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris, antara lain guru, teman, fasilitas, dan ekstrakurikuler. Dari hasil tersebut, jelas bahwa klaim guru tentang sekolah menciptakan lingkungan sejalan dengan data yang diberikan oleh siswa.

Keywords: kepercayaan diri, berbicara, lingkungan sekolah

I. INTRODUCTION

Seeing how English has become a crucial role in global communication is exciting. It has become a phenomenon, and compulsory educational requirements have been implemented in response. (Dash, 2022) English is widely recognized as the most commonly spoken language globally, with a significant global presence. Therefore, it is necessary for students who complete their education to gain a fundamental basic knowledge of English. This study will primarily emphasize the development of speaking abilities, often

recognized as the most essential aspect of acquiring proficiency in a foreign or second language. As reported by. As reported by (Srinivas, 2019), the acquisition of speaking skills is crucial for individuals seeking to learn English, among other skills, to advance their professional prospects, enhance company operations, develop self-confidence, accessibility enhanced opportunities for employment, engage in public speaking, participate in interviews, contribute to debates and group discussions, and deliver presentations.

Related to confidence, as the previous paragraph stated, the main objective of developing speaking proficiency is to strengthen students' self-confidence. A study conducted by (Putri et al., 2023) demonstrated a notable association between students' self-assurance and their aptitude in verbal communication. The study's results revealed that students demonstrated a high level of agreement through various nonverbal cues, such as body language, maintaining conversation, eye contact, and self-confidence, indicating that self-confidence significantly influenced students' learning abilities. (Tridinanti, 2018) assumes that students who have confidence in their capabilities have a greater chance of achieving academic success because they are more inclined to work diligently and consistently and believe in themselves. Furthermore, (Lismiyati et al., 2021) asserted that students who possess a high level of confidence are more likely to engage actively in their academic pursuits and acquire knowledge without facing significant obstacles to their academic success. Individuals with a higher level of self-confidence are likely to have a positive enhancement in their oral communication abilities.

The result of (Juhana, 2012) research is that a significant majority of English students encounter feelings of shyness when participating in verbal communication in the language. This is primarily attributed to their apprehension regarding the potential occurrence of errors during conversational interactions. Therefore, failing to address shyness in a speaking class can pose a problem. It was proved with a research conducted by (Haidara, 2016) proved that despite the learners' advanced proficiency in English vocabulary and grammar, they experienced insecurity when speaking in English. One contributing element to this insecurity was their lack of self-confidence. A lack of confidence can result in feelings of anxiety, nervousness, and difficulties in formulating coherent sentences. Thus, many students were unwilling to participate in classroom activities,

especially those requiring verbal communication. When examining this particular situation, schools must implement measures to proactively reduce this phenomenon's occurrence by establishing a suitable environment. In order to reduce the occurrence of this phenomenon, schools must establish a suitable environment. (Said & Weda, 2018) prove that creating an appropriate and relaxing environment can reduce students' anxiety throughout many language acquisition stages. This approach aims to foster active student engagement in the language learning process.

Making a suitable environment can require a multifaceted way. (Meriläinen & Piispanen, 2014) Mention such environments using five different perspectives, which can be used to contemplate the different elements of the environment: physical spaces, teaching and learning approaches, social and collaborative aspects supporting learning, technologies used, and contextual learning places outside the class. Thus, teachers must know how to choose appropriate activities based on what their students like and dislike because this will lead to enjoyment in the teaching and learning process, resulting in attentive participation in the class (Samperio, 2017). In line with the research conducted by (Alotumi, 2021), communication in English all the time with teachers and classmates might increase their self-confidence, boost their motivation, and enhance their English speaking". Additionally, this can be achieved through extracurricular activities. (Rita et al., 2023) support this statement; the students can get motivated to speak English and play roles to have different experiences as if they participate in actual English activities. Overall, the school environment is a multifaceted entity that, when effectively managed, can bolster students' self-confidence and proficiency in English speaking, leading to improved communication skills and self-confidence.

Throughout the research composition process, it became evident that while multiple studies have explored the influence of the environment on enhancing students' self-confidence in English speaking skills, only a few of them have delved into the mechanisms employed by schools to attain this objective, nor have they assessed the efficacy of such measures from the student's perspective. Hence, the main goal of this study is to focus on how the school

establishes a suitable environment that can encourage students' self-confidence in English oral communication among students, as well as identify the extent to which students perceive the impact. This research is expected to provide readers with significant insights into the significance of cultivating self-confidence in English-speaking and the role of the school environment in facilitating this objective.

II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This research used a mixed-method approach. Mixed methods research combines qualitative and quantitative components to solve a research issue. Utilizing a mixed method design allows the researcher to gain a comprehensive grasp of a study subject (Margareth et al., 2017).

The study was conducted at Darul Uloom School, Thailand. The study included 19 students majoring in English. The researcher selected 19 individuals from various classes as a sample for a questionnaire, depending on input from the researchers and their English teachers at school. The participants were briefed on the research to make informed decisions regarding their participation. Respondents are students who willingly choose to engage in interviews for their convenience. Meanwhile, the researcher interviewed one English teacher.

The researcher conducted a qualitative teacher interview and used a closed-ended questionnaire for students as quantitative research in this study. Questionnaires were used to collect data on the impact of environments on students' self-confidence. The teacher's interview was conducted to validate the data collected from the students' questionnaires. The questionnaire's validity was assessed using the Product-Moment Formula, while the reliability test used the Alpha Cronbach method for questionnaire instruments. The data was analyzed using Linear Regression Analysis in SPSS. The research utilized Product Moment and Multiple

Linear regression formulas for hypothesis testing.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Result

These findings were obtained from questionnaires and interviews.

Questionnaire

Reliability Statistics

<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>N of Items</i>
.850	13

The Cronbach's Alpha value provided is 0.850. *Cronbach's Alpha* is a statistical metric that quantifies the reliability of a scale or a group of items, with values ranging between 0 and 1. An alpha coefficient of 0.850 indicates a strong level of internal consistency within the 13 items being assessed in this instance.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
01	30	1,00	4,00	3,2333	,62606
02	30	1,00	4,00	3,3333	,66089
03	30	1,00	4,00	2,9667	,66868
04	30	1,00	4,00	3,2000	,71438
05	30	1,00	4,00	3,3000	,74971
06	30	1,00	4,00	3,1333	,77608
07	30	1,00	4,00	2,9667	,96431
08	30	2,00	4,00	2,8667	,62881
09	30	2,00	4,00	3,0333	,49013
10	30	2,00	4,00	3,2000	,76112
11	30	2,00	4,00	3,5333	,62881
12	30	2,00	4,00	3,2000	,71438
13	30	2,00	4,00	3,2667	,52083
TOTAL	30	23,00	49,00	41,1000	5,24141
Valid N (listwise)	30				

Frequency Table

School environment supports the development my English-speaking skill

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 = "Strongly Disagree"	1	3,3	3,3	3,3
	3 = "Agree"	20	66,7	66,7	70,0
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	9	30,0	30,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

The teachers play a crucial role in building my confidence in speaking English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 = "Strongly Disagree"	1	3,3	3,3	3,3
	3 = "Agree"	17	56,7	56,7	60,0
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	12	40,0	40,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

My classmates at this school help me improve my speaking skills in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 = "Strongly Disagree"	2	6,7	6,7	6,7
	2 = "Disagree"	1	3,3	3,3	10,0
	3 = "Agree"	23	76,7	76,7	86,7
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	4	13,3	13,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

This school provides ample opportunities to speak in English during school activities		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 = "Strongly Disagree"	1	3,3	3,3	3,3
	2 = "Disagree"	2	6,7	6,7	10,0
	3 = "Agree"	17	56,7	56,7	66,7
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	10	33,3	33,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

I feel encouraged to actively participate in English speaking activities at school.		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 = "Strongly Disagree"	1	3,3	3,3	3,3
	2 = "Disagree"	2	6,7	6,7	10,0
	3 = "Agree"	14	46,7	46,7	56,7
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	13	43,3	43,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

The existence of extracurricular programs or additional activities at this school helps me to improve my English-speaking skills		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 = "Strongly Disagree"	1	3,3	3,3	3,3
	2 = "Disagree"	4	13,3	13,3	16,7
	3 = "Agree"	15	50,0	50,0	66,7
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	10	33,3	33,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

I feel comfortable speaking in English in front of my friends at school		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 = "Strongly Disagree"	4	13,3	13,3	13,3
	2 = "Disagree"	2	6,7	6,7	20,0
	3 = "Agree"	15	50,0	50,0	70,0
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	9	30,0	30,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

The school environment provides sufficient support for the use of English outside of class hours		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 = "Disagree"	8	26,7	26,7	26,7
	3 = "Agree"	18	60,0	60,0	86,7
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	4	13,3	13,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

The school environment motivates me to continue practicing speaking in English		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 = "Disagree"	3	10,0	10,0	10,0
	3 = "Agree"	23	76,7	76,7	86,7

	4 = "Strongly Agree"	4	13,3	13,3	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

Projects or assignments that involve English speaking at this school help me in learning		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 = "Disagree"	6	20,0	20,0	20,0
	3 = "Agree"	12	40,0	40,0	60,0
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	12	40,0	40,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

I feel that mastering English speaking skill can be an asset for me in the future		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 = "Disagree"	2	6,7	6,7	6,7
	3 = "Agree"	10	33,3	33,3	40,0
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	18	60,0	60,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

The cultural aspects at this school support the development of English-speaking skill		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 = "Disagree"	5	16,7	16,7	16,7
	3 = "Agree"	14	46,7	46,7	63,3
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	11	36,7	36,7	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

The school provides support in overcoming my barriers in speaking English		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 = "Disagree"	1	3,3	3,3	3,3
	3 = "Agree"	20	66,7	66,7	70,0
	4 = "Strongly Agree"	9	30,0	30,0	100,0
	Total	30	100,0	100,0	

Interview

The Teacher's interview has 7 questions, including what role does the school play in enhancing students' confidence in speaking English, how does the school establish a suitable learning environment, and what methods are used to put it into practice.

1. *The researcher: How does the school environment facilitate students' improvement in English speaking skills?*

"The school environment provides a structured and supportive framework for students to learn and practice English speaking skills. Effective instruction, interaction with peers, cultural exposure, and various resources contribute to students' language development. However, it's essential to note that individual motivation, effort, and practice outside of school also play

a significant role in improving English-speaking abilities.

2. *The researcher: As an English teacher, what strategies do you employ to boost students' confidence in speaking English?*

“As an English teacher, there are several strategies and approaches you can employ to help students feel confident when speaking English:

- a. Start with simple speaking tasks like introducing themselves and progress to more complex tasks like debates and presentations. Gradually building their skills can boost confidence.
- b. Foster a positive and inclusive classroom atmosphere where students feel safe and encouraged to express themselves in English.
- c. Actively listen to your students when they speak and show genuine interest in what they have to say.
- d. Incorporate small group activities or pair work to reduce the pressure of speaking in front of the whole class. This allows students to practice in a less intimidating setting.]
- e. Use role-playing and simulations to create real-life scenarios where students can practice English in context. This can boost their confidence in using the language for practical purposes.
- f. Teach students useful vocabulary and expressions for different situations, such as greetings, discussions, debates, or presentations.

Knowing what to say can boost their confidence.

- g. Incorporate technology like language learning apps, pronunciation tools, or online language communities to supplement classroom instruction and provide additional practice opportunities.”

3. *The researcher: How do you create an environment where students feel at ease conversing in English with their peers at school?*

“Here are some strategies I do to achieve this:

- a. Encourage group activities that require students to work together in English. This can include group projects, discussions, debates, or collaborative learning tasks. Working in teams fosters a comfortable environment for using English with peers.
- b. Establish language clubs or conversation groups where students can meet outside of regular classes to practice speaking English in a relaxed setting. These clubs can focus on specific topics or interests to make conversations more meaningful.
- c. Set aside dedicated class time for speaking practice. Create a supportive environment where students are encouraged to speak freely and share their thoughts and ideas.
- d. Encourage students to help each other improve their English-speaking skills. When students see their friends as valuable resources for learning, they may be

- more willing to communicate in English.
- e. Give students conversation starters or discussion prompts to make it easier for them to initiate conversations with their friends. This can be particularly helpful for shy or introverted students.
 - f. As the teacher, model fluent and natural English in your interactions with students. Be approachable and supportive when students speak in English, and provide positive reinforcement.
 - g. Creating a comfortable and supportive environment for students to speak English with their friends is essential for fostering language development and helping students become more confident English speakers. It's also important to celebrate their progress and successes, no matter how small, to motivate them to continue using English in social settings."
4. *The researcher: Does the school provide any after-school English programs? (If so, how do these programs help students enhance their English language skills?*
 "Yes, we have.
- a. After-school English programs offer students extra opportunities to practice speaking English, reinforcing what they've learned during regular classes.
 - b. These programs often have smaller class sizes, allowing for more personalized attention and focused instruction on speaking and communication skills.
- c. Some programs may include cultural components, exposing students to the customs, traditions, and nuances of English-speaking countries, which can make language learning more immersive and engaging.
 - d. Students may have the chance to interact with native speakers or fluent English speakers, providing authentic language practice and improving their pronunciation and fluency.
 - e. Specialized programs can introduce students to industry-specific or topic-specific vocabulary, depending on the program's focus.
 - f. With the reduced pressure of regular classroom assessments, after-school programs can help students build confidence in their English-speaking abilities.
 - g. Extracurricular English programs often incorporate enjoyable activities, games, and projects, making learning fun and motivating students to actively engage with the language."
5. *The researcher: Do you think the school's culture affects students' English-speaking skills?*
 "Yes, the school's culture can significantly impact students' English-speaking skills. A positive and supportive school culture can foster an environment where students feel motivated and confident in using English."
6. *The researcher: How does the school support students in*

overcoming challenges when speaking English?

“Schools tend to hire proficient language teachers who are equipped to tackle the difficulties students encounter in learning English. These educators offer guidance, feedback, and personalized instruction. Schools can organize cultural exchange programs that include interactions with native English speakers or students from English-speaking countries. These encounters are beneficial for practicing language skills. Participation in speech and debate clubs or extracurricular activities can enhance students' proficiency in public speaking and argumentation in the English language. Schools also have the ability to evaluate students' language proficiency levels and design personalized language development plans to address particular areas needing improvement. Utilizing technology, such as language learning apps or online resources, to enhance classroom instruction and offer extra practice opportunities. Educators and school personnel are essential in providing support and valuable feedback to enhance students' English-speaking confidence.”

7. *The researcher: Have you talked to students about why it's important to learn English for their future?*

“Indeed, I have. I consistently communicate with students on the significance of certain topics for their future. English is among the most commonly spoken languages globally. Mastering English enables pupils to interact with individuals from various linguistic backgrounds, creating possibilities for global connections and partnerships. English is the major

language of communication for numerous global enterprises and organizations. Being proficient in English can enhance students' competitiveness in the labour market and improve their employment opportunities.”

B. Discussion

The questionnaire results emphasize the school environment's significant impact on students' development of English-speaking abilities. Teachers are acknowledged for their substantial impact on skill enhancement. Many students recognize their classmates' beneficial impact on improving their English-speaking skills. The school encourages students to participate in English-speaking activities through extracurricular programs and projects.

Notably, students show confidence in speaking English with their friends and see English knowledge as a valuable advantage for their future. The positive mention of cultural aspects at the school is also evident. The questionnaire shows that the school environment is inclusive, which helps individuals who may struggle with English proficiency.

Notably, the questionnaire results correspond to findings from interviews. Teachers provided detailed explanations in interviews on how the school enhances students' confidence in speaking English. The questionnaire confirms that students comprehend this role and experience an advantageous impact on their English-speaking skills. Results from the interview and the questionnaire corroborate one another, demonstrating how successful the educational setting is

in fostering students' confidence and English proficiency.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study has shown the crucial role of the educational environment in influencing students' self-confidence and competency in English speaking skills. English's global importance as a means of communication and Thailand's dedication to updating English education while maintaining its cultural traditions has resulted in a mandatory educational mandate. English competence, especially in speaking skills, is essential for students to excel internationally.

The research used a mixed-method approach, incorporating qualitative teacher interviews and quantitative student questionnaires. The research constantly emphasized the beneficial influence of the school environment on students' English-speaking skills. Teachers, classmates, and extracurricular activities were seen as significant variables that enhanced students' confidence and skills.

The study is valuable as it examines the school environment's impact and the strategies schools use to accomplish this goal. The congruence of findings from both interviews and questionnaires supports the efficacy of the educational environment in nurturing students' confidence and English language skills.

This research enhances the current knowledge by offering detailed insights into how the educational environment might boost students' self-confidence and proficiency in English speaking skills. The study suggests that educational institutions should focus on establishing supportive and inclusive environments, recognizing the complex character of these environments, encompassing physical spaces, teaching methods, social dynamics, and technology utilization. Ultimately, these endeavors will improve students' communication abilities, aiding their achievements in a progressively interconnected worldwide environment.

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