

Enhancing Students' Speaking Confidence Through Daily English Conversation for the Seventh Graders of Mts. Mu'allimin NW Anjani

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Abstract: This study aims to: 1) describe the implementation of the Daily English Conversation program by the English teacher, and 2) investigate its influence on seventh-grade students' speaking confidence at MTs. Mu'allimin NW Anjani. This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach. The subjects are 24 seventh-grade students. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, and analyzed using data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that: 1) The program was implemented through seven steps: topic selection, dialogue modeling, whole-class repetition, half-class practice, pair work, voluntary performance, and positive reinforcement. The teacher addressed students' hesitation by stating that mistakes are acceptable, pairing weaker with stronger students, and giving encouragement. 2) The program positively influenced students' speaking confidence, with 56.8% of interview responses showing improvement. Students became more willing to speak and interact. Peer support and teacher encouragement were key factors. This study concludes that Daily English Conversation activities are effective in enhancing students' speaking confidence.

Keywords: Daily English Conversation, Speaking Confidence, EFL

INTRODUCTION

English has evolved into a universal means of communication that bridges individuals across different nations and cultures. It serves as a key medium in areas such as global trade, diplomacy, education, science, and technology. Due to its worldwide significance, English has been established as a compulsory subject in many educational systems, including Indonesia. The primary objective of English instruction is to develop students' proficiency in the four core language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, so that they can communicate effectively in real-life contexts. English learning in the contemporary educational context is therefore not merely concerned with the mastery of grammatical structures and vocabulary, but also with students' ability to use the language appropriately and meaningfully in interpersonal communication.

Among these skills, speaking is often regarded as both the most vital and the most challenging to master. Effective speaking requires not only grammatical and lexical knowledge but also self-confidence and fluency in conveying ideas. Speaking involves the ability to formulate ideas, select appropriate vocabulary, construct comprehensible utterances, and respond to interlocutors in real time. The interactive nature of speaking makes it different from receptive skills because learners are required to process language while simultaneously producing meaningful responses. Students who possess sufficient knowledge of English may nevertheless experience difficulties when they are required to express themselves spontaneously. Many learners experience anxiety or fear of making mistakes when speaking in front of others, which limits their opportunities for practice and hinders their speaking progress (Zondag, 2024).

Speaking anxiety can become a significant barrier to students' participation in classroom communication. Fear of incorrect pronunciation, inappropriate grammar, limited vocabulary, negative evaluation, or being laughed at by peers may discourage students from initiating or responding to conversations. Limited participation subsequently reduces the amount of meaningful language exposure and practice available to learners. This condition indicates that speaking development is influenced by both linguistic competence and affective factors. A learning environment that focuses exclusively on correcting students' errors may unintentionally strengthen their reluctance to communicate. English instruction consequently needs to provide opportunities for students to practice communication in a supportive environment in which mistakes are understood as a natural component of the learning process.

Confidence plays a central role in determining students' success in learning to speak English. Without confidence, even students with adequate linguistic knowledge may be reluctant to participate in conversation. Confidence enables learners to take risks, initiate interaction, express opinions, and respond to others without excessive concern about making mistakes. Active participation also provides learners with opportunities to receive feedback and gradually develop greater control over their language use. Therefore, teachers must establish a supportive classroom environment that fosters safety, motivation, and engagement (Project, 2025). This can be achieved by offering continuous encouragement, positive reinforcement, and meaningful opportunities to use English in daily interactions.

The development of speaking confidence is closely associated with the frequency and quality of students' opportunities to use English. Classroom activities that provide only limited oral interaction may not be sufficient to develop students' spontaneity and confidence. Students need repeated opportunities to use familiar expressions, respond to questions, exchange information, and communicate simple ideas in situations that resemble authentic communication. Regular practice can reduce the psychological burden associated with speaking because students become increasingly familiar with the process of producing English orally. Repeated interaction also enables learners to gradually develop automaticity in the use of commonly encountered vocabulary, expressions, and sentence patterns.

One effective method to build students' speaking confidence is through Daily English Conversation activities. This approach encourages students to engage in simple and realistic dialogues regularly, helping them overcome fear, improve pronunciation, and enhance confidence (Sahgal, 2024). Consistent daily interactions with peers also promote a natural use of language and reduce communication anxiety. As students practice English daily, they gradually become more confident and spontaneous in expressing their thoughts. Daily conversation activities can also provide a practical bridge between classroom learning and students' everyday experiences because the language is used for communicative purposes rather than solely for completing written exercises or demonstrating grammatical knowledge.

The implementation of Daily English Conversation can be designed through short and structured communicative routines. Students may be encouraged to greet one another, introduce themselves, ask and answer questions, describe daily activities, express preferences, discuss familiar topics, or respond to simple classroom situations. Such activities allow students to encounter recurring language patterns while simultaneously developing their ability to respond appropriately to interlocutors. Gradual progression from highly guided conversations to more spontaneous interaction can help accommodate differences in students' proficiency levels. The teacher's role in this process is not limited to providing linguistic input but also includes facilitating interaction, encouraging participation, providing constructive feedback, and creating an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable communicating.

Peer interaction is particularly relevant in developing students' confidence because speaking practice does not always have to occur directly between teacher and student. Pair and small-group conversations can provide a less intimidating setting for learners who are hesitant to speak before the entire class. Such interaction increases students' opportunities to produce language and allows them to learn from their peers. Students can observe alternative ways of expressing ideas, negotiate meaning, clarify misunderstandings, and respond to different communication styles. These processes contribute to the development of communicative competence while simultaneously creating more opportunities for active participation.

The Indonesian educational context presents a particular challenge in this regard. Although English has been taught as an important foreign language, students' exposure to authentic English communication outside the classroom remains limited in many contexts. English is generally not used as the dominant language in students' daily social interactions, meaning that classroom activities become an important space for providing meaningful

opportunities to practice oral communication. When classroom instruction emphasizes grammar, vocabulary memorization, and written exercises more heavily than interactive speaking, students may understand linguistic rules without developing sufficient confidence to apply them in spontaneous communication. The gap between knowing English and using English can consequently become more visible when students are asked to communicate orally.

Despite the theoretical emphasis on communication-based learning, many schools in Indonesia still prioritize grammar and written exercises over oral practice. Consequently, students often lack real opportunities to practice authentic communication, resulting in low speaking confidence. This situation highlights the importance of instructional practices that integrate language knowledge with regular communicative use. Daily English Conversation offers a relatively simple and practical activity that can be incorporated into classroom routines without requiring complex instructional procedures or extensive learning resources. Its regular implementation may provide students with continuous exposure to oral English and create a classroom culture in which speaking becomes a normal part of learning rather than an occasional performance task.

The context of Islamic junior secondary education is also relevant because English learning takes place within an educational environment that combines general academic objectives with religious and character-oriented education. Students require opportunities to develop communication skills while maintaining learning activities that are compatible with their educational context. Daily English Conversation can be adapted to students' familiar experiences, school routines, social interactions, and values. The use of relevant and contextual topics may make speaking activities more accessible and meaningful while encouraging students to communicate using language that is connected to their everyday lives.

The effectiveness of speaking activities should therefore be considered not only from the perspective of students' linguistic performance but also from changes in their willingness and confidence to communicate. Speaking confidence can be reflected in students' willingness to initiate conversations, respond to questions, maintain interaction, express ideas, and participate without excessive fear of making mistakes. Observable changes in these aspects can provide an important indication of whether regular communicative activities are contributing to a more supportive speaking environment. Examining these dimensions is particularly important for junior secondary students, who are still developing their basic English communication skills and may experience considerable differences in confidence and participation.

Based on these considerations, there is a need for classroom-based approaches that provide students with continuous, manageable, and meaningful opportunities to speak English. Daily English Conversation represents an accessible approach because it can be integrated into regular classroom activities and adjusted according to students' proficiency levels and communicative needs. Regular practice is expected to reduce students' hesitation, encourage active participation, and strengthen their confidence in using English. The approach also provides teachers with opportunities to observe students' speaking difficulties and provide immediate support during the learning process.

This study, therefore, seeks to address that gap by examining how structured Daily English Conversation activities can effectively improve students' speaking confidence within the context of Islamic junior secondary education. The study focuses on the role of regular conversational practice in creating opportunities for oral interaction and strengthening students' confidence in using English. The findings are expected to provide empirical evidence concerning the use of Daily English Conversation as a practical classroom strategy and to contribute to the development of English teaching practices that place greater emphasis on meaningful communication, active participation, and students' affective readiness to speak.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Speaking Confidence

Speaking confidence is a fundamental aspect of language acquisition, especially in developing oral communication skills. It reflects learners' belief in their capacity to convey thoughts effectively in a foreign language. Students who possess higher confidence are more likely to speak fluently and take linguistic risks without excessive fear of errors. Confidence grows through consistent practice and constructive feedback from teachers and peers (Lebagi & Hasyim, 2025). Moreover, self-efficacy theory highlights that learners who trust their abilities tend to perform better in communication-related tasks. Therefore, fostering speaking confidence is essential for achieving communicative competence and language mastery.

Daily English Conversation as a Method

Daily English Conversation refers to a systematic approach that provides learners with regular opportunities to use English in authentic communication. This method involves activities such as greetings, brief dialogues, role plays, and discussions that simulate real-life interaction. Continuous engagement in these activities enables students to internalize vocabulary and sentence patterns naturally, reducing anxiety and improving fluency. The approach aligns with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes meaningful communication and learner participation. Through consistent daily practice, students gradually build confidence in expressing their ideas orally (Bondarchuk et al., 2025).

The method is fundamentally different from traditional grammar-translation approaches that focus on memorizing rules and completing written exercises, as it prioritizes active language use over passive knowledge acquisition. By creating a classroom environment where English is used as a tool for real communication rather than merely an object of study, Daily English Conversation transforms language learning from a theoretical exercise into a practical, lived experience that students can apply in their daily lives.

One of the primary reasons why Daily English Conversation is effective as a method is its ability to address the affective filter, the emotional barrier that prevents learners from acquiring language input. According to (Wang & Xu, 2023), learners who experience high anxiety, low motivation, or lack of self-confidence have a "mental block" that prevents them from processing language input effectively. When the affective filter is high, learners may understand the input intellectually but fail to internalize it. Daily English Conversation directly targets this barrier by creating a low-anxiety, supportive environment where students feel safe to take risks and make mistakes.

The Teacher's Role in Enhancing Confidence

Teachers play a pivotal role in cultivating students' speaking confidence. They function as facilitators and motivators who design communicative activities, give constructive feedback, and maintain a supportive classroom environment. When teachers provide encouragement and engaging learning experiences, students become more comfortable expressing themselves in English and are less fearful of making mistakes (Waluyo & Rofiah, 2021). This supportive atmosphere significantly contributes to the development of self-assurance and communicative competence.

In the Daily English Conversation program, the teacher's role is multifaceted and intentional. The teacher acts as a model, demonstrating correct pronunciation, intonation, and body language through dialogue modeling. The teacher serves as a facilitator, designing activities that gradually move students from controlled practice to freer practice. The teacher functions as a motivator, using positive reinforcement such as verbal praise, applause, and tangible rewards to encourage effort and participation. By praising effort over accuracy, the teacher sends a powerful message that trying is more important than being perfect, which reduces anxiety and encourages students to take risks.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design. The qualitative method is employed because the study aims to explore and understand the natural phenomenon of how Daily English Conversation activities enhance students' speaking confidence among the seventh graders of MTs. Mu'allimin NW Anjani. Instead of focusing on numerical data, this research emphasizes detailed descriptions, observations, and interpretations of students' experiences and behaviors in the classroom (Turale, 2020).

The research takes place at MTs. Mu'allimin NW Anjani, an Islamic educational institution located on Jl. Raya Mataram-Labuhan Lombok Km 49, Anjani Village, Suralaga District, East Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province. The participants are 24 seventh-grade students (all male, aged 12–13 years) during the 2026/2027 academic year. This group was chosen based on the English teacher's recommendation, as initial observations revealed that many students exhibited low self-confidence when speaking English.

Data were collected through three main techniques: observation, interview, and documentation. Observation was conducted to obtain direct information about how Daily English Conversation was carried out in the classroom, focusing on teacher implementation, student participation, classroom interaction patterns, non-verbal responses, and classroom atmosphere. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the English teacher and selected students to gather in-depth information about their experiences and perceptions. Documentation included lesson plans, students' speaking activity records, classroom photos, and reflection notes.

The data were analyzed using an interactive model involving three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. To ensure credibility and trustworthiness, this study applied several qualitative validity techniques, including triangulation (methodological and source triangulation), member checking, prolonged engagement, and peer debriefing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the Daily English Conversation Program

The implementation of the Daily English Conversation program at MTs. Mu'allimin NW Anjani involved seven steps: (a) selecting relevant topics; (b) modeling the dialogue; (c) whole-class repetition; (d) half-group practice; (e) pair work; (f) voluntary performance; and (g) positive reinforcement with gentle error correction.

The teacher selected topics closely related to students' daily lives, including Greeting and Leave-taking, Introducing Myself, Talking about Hobbies, Asking for Help, and Expressing Likes and Dislikes. Each session followed a consistent routine: the teacher greeted students warmly in English and asked simple questions to the whole class; the teacher introduced a short dialogue model on a daily life topic written on the whiteboard; the teacher read the dialogue aloud at a slow and clear pace, followed by choral repetition; students practiced in pairs while the teacher circulated to provide encouragement; and one or two pairs performed the dialogue in front of the class, receiving positive feedback focused on effort rather than accuracy.

The teacher played an active role in creating a safe and supportive atmosphere. Before every session, the teacher stated: "Do not be afraid of making mistakes. Mistakes are a normal part of learning any new language. The most important thing is that you try to speak, no matter how small your attempt is." The teacher used non-verbal communication such as nodding, smiling, and thumbs-up gestures. When students made pronunciation errors, the teacher gently repeated the correct form without direct criticism. A simple reward system was implemented: every student who made an effort to speak received a small star sticker on a publicly visible chart.

Two main challenges arose during implementation. First, approximately six students consistently refused to participate during the second week. The teacher addressed this by pairing each reluctant student with a more confident classmate who acted as a helper. Second, time management became an issue when many pairs wanted to perform. The teacher limited performances to two or three pairs per meeting and implemented a rotation system.

Influence of Daily English Conversation on Students' Speaking Confidence

The Daily English Conversation program had a positive influence on students' speaking confidence in several ways:

Anxiety Reduction. Ten of the twenty-five students interviewed reported feeling less anxious and less afraid when speaking English. Observation data showed that students changed from speaking quietly and avoiding eye contact to speaking more audibly and maintaining eye contact. One student (7A-007), who initially sat at the back and never raised his hand, volunteered to perform a dialogue in front of the class by week five. He reported feeling "a little braver than before."

Increased Participation. The teacher's daily notes indicated a consistent increase in active participation. During the first week, only about 20% of students (5 out of 24) voluntarily raised their hands or spoke out loud. By the fifth week, that percentage had increased to approximately 60% (14 students).

Higher Self-Rated Confidence. Based on students' weekly reflection sheets, their level of confidence increased gradually from week to week. Students reported that repeating short dialogues daily made certain phrases feel automatic, reducing the cognitive burden of speaking.

Spontaneous Practice. By the third week, some students began practicing dialogues voluntarily before class without direct instruction from the teacher. This indicates that the program successfully fostered intrinsic motivation.

Beneficial Peer Dynamics. Most students reported that working with a partner made them feel safer and more comfortable. Students with higher confidence felt pleased to help their peers, which further enhanced their own confidence.

Teacher's Encouragement as the Most Influential Factor. All interviewed students explicitly stated that the teacher's positive feedback, supportive encouragement, and tolerant attitude toward minor mistakes were the main reasons they felt more confident speaking English.

Gradual Mastery through Daily Repetition. The short and repetitive format helped students memorize dialogues and speak more automatically, allowing them to focus more on delivering their message.

Discussion

The findings align with previous research on speaking confidence. (Sayow & Masevani, 2024) found that role play improves fluency and confidence, but daily conversation has practical advantages: it requires less preparation time, no props, and can be done in 15–20 minutes daily. (Mustakim et al., 2025) emphasized that weekly speaking routines improve fluency and confidence; the present study extends this by demonstrating that daily practice is even more effective. Zondag (2024) used improvisation activities and found that they reduce fear of mistakes; the present study shows that even scripted dialogues can build automaticity needed for later spontaneous production.

Supriyanto et al., (2024) identified teacher support, peer interaction, and classroom environment as factors influencing speaking confidence. The present study provides causal evidence that when these factors are present through daily conversation with error-friendly teacher support, confidence increases. (Sahgal, 2024) implemented an error-friendly environment with tourism academy students and found it increases confidence; the present study replicates this finding with early adolescents, suggesting that explicit and repeated

statements about the acceptability of mistakes may be even more necessary for adolescents due to their heightened sensitivity to peer judgment.

The study also makes theoretical contributions. It shows that the affective filter and self-efficacy theories interact: daily conversation practice lowers the affective filter (reduces anxiety), which then allows self-efficacy to develop through repeated success. The study specifies which teacher behaviors matter most for speaking confidence: explicit error-friendly statements, non-threatening error correction, and immediate intervention against peer teasing. It also highlights that early adolescents have specific needs regarding peer judgment, suggesting that age should be included as a moderating variable in theoretical models of speaking confidence.

CONCLUSION

The Daily English Conversation program at MTs. Mu'allimin NW Anjani was implemented through seven steps: topic selection, teacher modeling, whole-class repetition, half-class practice, pair work, voluntary performance, and positive reinforcement with gentle error correction. The teacher successfully addressed initial student hesitation and mixed proficiency levels by repeatedly stating that mistakes are acceptable, pairing weaker with stronger students, and giving private encouragement. The Daily English Conversation program positively influenced students' speaking confidence. Based on the interview results, 56.8% of the responses were positive. The findings showed that students became more willing to participate in conversations, speak in English, and interact with their peers and teacher. Peer support and the teacher's encouragement were important factors in developing students' speaking confidence. The study confirms that daily, short, error-friendly conversation practice lowers the affective filter and builds self-efficacy through repeated success. Limitations include short duration, single-gender context, lack of control group, and limited generalizability.

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