IDEAS

Journal on Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature

ISSN 2338-4778 (Print)
ISSN 2548-4192 (Online)

Volume 14, Number 2, December 2026
pp. 9374 - 9389

Copyright © 2026 The Author
IDEAS is licensed under CC-BY-SA 4.0 License



Issued by English study program of UIN Palopo

The Impact of Real-Time Interaction Through Speaking-Oriented Application on English Students' Self-Confidence

Muftihaturrahmah[1], Magdahalena Tjalla [2], Arqam[3], Abdul Haris Sunubi[4], Ambo Dalle[5]
[1,2,3,4,5]Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Parepare, Sulawesi Selatan

Article Info

Received: 2025-07-06
Revised: 2026-06-09
Accepted: 2026-11-06

Keywords:
Real-Time Interaction,
Speaking-Oriented Application,
Self-Confidence,
English Education Students,
Hilokal

DOI:
10.24256/ideas. v14i2.7424

Corresponding Author:
Muftihaturrahmah
muftihareal@gmail.com
Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Parepare, Sulawesi Selatan

Abstract

Many students showed mixed perceptions of real-time speaking application; some felt their confidence improved, while others experienced little to no change in confidence or anxiety. This study was conducted to investigate the impact of real-time interaction through speaking-oriented application on English Education students' self-confidence in speaking English. Therefore, this study aimed to determine whether using an application, specifically Hilokal could enhance students' self confidence and to identify which aspects of the application were considered as the most beneficial. A qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach was employed to deeply understand students' lived experiences and the subjective meanings associated with using the application. Ten participants were selected through purposive sampling and the data collection was conducted over the study of one month using interviews and documentation. The collected data was analyzed using a qualitative data analysis, with data visualization facilitated by NVivo. The results showed that real-time speaking in the application significantly helps students feel more confident, with its table feature for live interaction, friendly people, helpful feedback, the ability to remain anonymous, and spontaneous conversations all proving beneficial. They reported feeling less nervous and more willing to speak. This gained confidence also helped them speak better in real-life situations. While this study focused solely on the aspect of self-confidence, future research is encouraged to explore other psychological dimensions, such as language anxiety, as well as the impact of real-time speaking applications on additional language skill like listening or reading.

1. Introduction

In the digital era, language learning has changed significantly and speaking-oriented application have become essential resources for students. These applications provide unique opportunities to improve speaking abilities outside of the conventional classroom. Among their various features, real-time interaction is one of their many features that is particularly important for boosting self-confidence. Self-confidence is essential to language learning since it has a direct impact on students' desire to participate in conversations. The more confident the students are in their language ability, the more they show a tendency of giving any speech individually. It means that when learners feel confident, they are more likely to actively participate and practice their language skills. On the other hand, a lack of confidence can lead to anxiety and avoidance of speaking opportunities.

Thus, enhancing self-confidence is crucial for effective language acquisition. Recent studies showed a substantial number of language learners, potentially up to 70% experience anxiety when speaking in a second language, particularly in public or unfamiliar settings. This anxiety can manifest in various ways, affecting learners' confidence and willingness to participate. Philip and George stated that self-confidence is achieved through minimization of setting talk, the exchange of names, the willingness to accept pretopical sequences, the willingness to speak regarding to topic selection. This means social interaction which also can be addressed as real-time interaction can be shaped through conversation-analytic methods.

Another research done by Saidah and Hariyadi found that self-confidence has a significant positive influence on students' intentions to use social media. Participants exhibited high levels of self-confidence, which correlated with a strong intention to engage with social media platforms. This aligns with previous research indicating that individuals with high self-confidence are more likely to use social media actively to express themselves and maintain social connections. Furthermore, self-confidence was shown to enhance individuals' willingness to share positive experiences, thereby reinforcing their self-esteem and encouraging further social media engagement.

Based on the interview the researcher did, some learners they felt this kind of application help boosted their confidence due to frequent exposure to spontaneous communication helped them become more fluent and comfortable. However, others had a more neutral stance, stating that while the application provided speaking opportunities, they did not necessarily feel a significant improvement in confidence. Some learners were unsure whether the experience had any real impact, as their anxiety levels remained unchanged. Others simply viewed the application as useful tools but not a major factor in their speaking development.

This division in perception highlights the need to explore how real-time interaction truly affects self-confidence in language learning. Understanding these differing viewpoints can help determine the effectiveness of such platforms in overcoming psychological barriers to speaking. These varying perspectives reveal a gap that there is limited understanding of how real-time speaking interactions specifically influence self-confidence in English Language learners and how this effect may differ accros individuals.

Existing studies have generally explored the benefits of speaking oriented applications in improving fluency or motivation, but few have focused in depth of psychological aspect of self-confidence as a primary outcome, particulary in a real-time

ISSN 2338-4778 (Print)
ISSN 2548-4192 (Online)

digital speaking environment. This study is grounded in phenomenological theory, which seeks to explore participants' lived experiences and how they interpret those experiences. A phenomenological approach is suitable for understanding subjective perceptions, such as how students feel about their self-confidence when engaging in real-time interaction. Key concepts such as lived experiences, intentionally of consciousness, and meaning making guide the analysis of how learners internalize their speaking experiences.

Due to that condition, the researcher suggests real-time interaction to enhance self-confidence by using speaking-oriented apps. Real-time interaction plays a crucial role in enhancing overall language fluency. Speaking fluency can help students develop self-confidence and can also help open doors for opportunities in a wider career field or their education as well. Tools like online speaking-oriented platforms, like Hilokal, Tandem, or HelloTalk, and many more can be alternative way which can simulate conversations and provide instant feedback, allowing users to practice speaking skills at their own pace. Technology breaks down all educational barriers, allowing students and instructors to communicate in real-time and learn in ways that transcend time and location. It is very convenient for students nowadays for practicing languages.

Furthermore, the positive impact of real-time interaction extends beyond individual confidence; it also fosters a sense of community among participants. The researcher chose the Hilokal app because of personal experience showing its positive impact on improving users' self-confidence in speaking English. While apps like HelloTalk and Tandem are more widely researched, Hilokal, which focuses on real-time voice-based conversations, is less explored. It is also considered to be more affordable and less intimidating than video-based apps, so the researcher is interested in delving deeper into its influence on developing students' self-confidence.

Referring to the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled: “The Impact of Real-Time Interaction Through Speaking-Oriented Application on English Education Students’ Self-Confidence”.

2. Method

This research design used qualitative design, following a phenomenological approach to explore how real-time interaction through speaking-oriented application enhances self-confidence by understanding participants' lived experiences. A qualitative approach is more suitable because it allows the researcher to explore learners’ personal experiences and perceptions. It helps uncover the underlying reasons behind their confidence levels and identify specific factors or application features that support their growth—insights that would be hard to capture through numbers alone. The reaserch was conducted over a period of approximately one month.

The numbers of participants in this research are 10 students which selected randomly and have these following criteria:

1. Students who are majoring in English Educations
2. An active user of Hilokal application for over two months,
3. Have been consistently using the application approximately a month, and
4. Most of the time, speaking English when engaging in conversation.

The participants consisted of 8 female and 2 male, all of whom were Indonesian citizens. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 22 years old, and all had fluent English proficiency.

This study adheres to applicable research ethics principles to ensure that the entire research process is conducted in a manner that is fair, transparent, and does not harm participants. All data obtained during the interviews will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. Participants have the right to stop or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. Participants are also free not to answer certain questions that they feel uncomfortable with without affecting their involvement in the study. Prior to participating in the study, each participant will be asked to provide informed consent via e-mail confirming that they understand the purpose, procedures, and their rights in this study.

As the interview was serve as preliminary data, it was conducted in-depth interview to further explore unclear findings and gain deeper insights. In this study, semi-structured interviews were used to explore participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the use of conversation-based applications in increasing their self-confidence. The interview question points asked are as follows:

A. Open Interview

1. How and when did you first find out about this app?
2. What made you interested in trying this kind of app?
3. How often do you use it now?
4. What features do you use the most in the app?
5. What kind of people do you usually interact with on the app?
6. Have you ever felt nervous or anxious when using the app?
7. Beside that feeling, what challenges have you faced while using the app?
8. Have you ever stopped using the app for a while? If yes, why?
9. In general, how do you feel after each session using the app?
10. Would you recommend this app to your friend?

B. Focused Interview

1. Focused Interview about real-time interaction through a speaking-oriented app enhance self-confidence in speaking English.
1. Can you describe how you felt about speaking English before using the app?
2. Since using the app, what changes have you noticed in your self-confidence when speaking English?
3. Can you describe a specific moment in the app when you felt your confidence improve?

ISSN 2338-4778 (Print)
ISSN 2548-4192 (Online)

4. How do you feel about speaking English now compared to before you used the app?
5. How comfortable are you speaking English with strangers through the app?
6. Do you feel more prepared to speak English outside the app (e.g., in class or in real life)?
7. How do you usually feel right before and right after finishing a session on the app?
8. Has your perception of your own speaking ability changed through the app?
9. Do you feel braver or more open to making mistakes in English through the app?
10. How does the app environment (e.g., real-time nature, casual talk) affect your confidence?
11. Have others (e.g., classmates, friends) noticed changes in your speaking confidence?
12. What do you think would happen to your confidence if you stopped using the app?
13. Do you consider the app a safe space for practicing English?
14. How important is real-time interaction in building your speaking confidence?
15. If you had to rate your confidence growth since using the app, how would you describe it?

C. Focused Interview about aspects of real-time interaction contribute most to enhancing self-confidence in speaking English.

1. Which features in Hilokal do you find most helpful for boosting your confidence?2. What features in the app do you think help the most with building confidence?
3. Does talking to real people in real time affect your confidence?
4. How does getting immediate feedback during conversations affect your self-confidence?
5. What role do native or fluent speakers in the app play in your confidence development?
6. How does the ability to choose topics or topic familiarity affect your willingness to speak?
7. How important is the speed and flow of real-time conversation in building your confidence?
8. Does the emoji/reaction given affect your confidence?
9. Have you received encouragement or validation from people in the app?
10. Are there moments when you felt discouraged or insecure while speaking through the app?
11. Does interacting in real time give you a sense of progress or growth?
12. Which part of real-time speaking do you think helped your confidence the most?

D. Focused Interview about the use of real-time interaction through a speaking-oriented app impact the self-confidence.

1. In what ways has using this app changed your self-perception as an English speaker?

2. How does the app support or challenge your confidence in spontaneous speaking?
3. What kinds of feelings do you experience while speaking through the app?
4. Has your willingness to speak increased due to this app?
5. Has your level of anxiety decreased since using the app?
6. Do you feel more expressive when speaking English now?
7. How has your speaking confidence in real-life situations been affected by the app?
8. How do you deal with mistakes while speaking in the app?
9. Does speaking frequently in the app give you a sense of fluency or comfort in expression?
10. How has the consistency of practice through the app impacted your long-term confidence?
11. How do you view yourself now compared to when you first started using the app?
12. If the app suddenly disappeared, what would happen to your speaking confidence?

In this study, data saturation was reached when interviews with participants began to show similar patterns or perceptions that almost no longer provided new information. The data collection process was conducted by interviewing 10 participants, and the researcher began to feel that data saturation occurred at the 9th and 10th participants. The more interviews were conducted, the more similar perceptions were received from the participants regarding how conversation-based apps increased their confidence. After the 10th interview, all the major themes and relevant categories were revealed. This indicated that data saturation had been reached, and further data collection would not provide any additional significant insights. Furthermore, to ensure the credibility of the findings in this study, the researcher used data triangulation as a validation procedure. Given that this study focuses on participants' perceptions, which can be very diverse, data triangulation can strengthen the findings by combining multiple data sources and perspectives.

All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and stored in NVivo for efficient coding and analysis. Additionally, documentation presented into screenshots as concrete evidence of the research process, ensuring transparency and credibility. The data analysis process followed the qualitative data analysis framework proposed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. To enhance efficiency, NVivo software utilized for data organization, coding, and visualization.

ISSN 2338-4778 (Print)
ISSN 2548-4192 (Online)

3. Results

Description of Research Results

1. Real-time interaction through speaking-oriented application enhances students' self-confidence in speaking English

	Result Findings
General Improvement and Anxiety Reduction	• Participants reported increased confidence in speaking English • Real-time interaction s reduced languange anxiety • Gradual comfort in speaking with others
Bravery in making Mistakes	• Real time conversation helped participants become more accepting of mistakes • Mistakes seen as a natural part of learning • Encouragement from peers
Impact on Real-Life Situations	• Confidence from app interactions translated to real-life conversations • Participants became more prepared and willing to engage with native or fluent speakers

a. General Improvement and Anxiety Reduction
A significant increase in English speaking confidence was reported by most participants after using the Hilokal app. Real-time interaction with fellow users provided a sense of comfort and reduced anxiety related to speaking in English. Many participants who initially felt anxious or fearful of being judged became more comfortable and emboldened to speak after a few interactions.
For example, Ziiiraaa initially felt anxious about speaking in English for fear of ridicule, but over time, she felt more confident thanks to interactions with other users on the app. This shows how repeated exposure to supportive conversations can reduce anxiety and increase confidence.

b. Bravery in making Mistakes
One of the notable findings was how participants became more accepting of their mistakes in speaking English. The app creates a supportive environment, where mistakes are considered a natural part of the learning process. The hands-on experience with speaking makes participants no longer afraid of making mistakes, whether in terms of grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary.
The example of Ziiiraaa, who expressed that "Mistakes are natural because English is not our mother tongue," shows that the app was successful in shaping a more positive mindset towards mistakes. Similarly, Jan said that she felt more relaxed in speaking without worrying about mistakes because there was no face-to-face interaction, which made her feel freer.

c. Impact on Real-Life Situation
The confidence gained from the real-time interactions in the app not only impacted on in-app speaking, but also on real-life situations. Some participants felt more prepared to speak in English with native speakers or more fluent people in everyday situations.

The examples of Sunflower who felt confident enough to teach English classes after improving her skills on the app, as well as Ziiiraaa who successfully spoke to a native speaker and received compliments, show that the confidence built on the app had a direct impact on their social and professional lives.

However, although many experienced positive changes, one of the students, Jan, felt unable to apply the skills acquired on the app due to the lack of real-life English speaking opportunities. This indicates that while apps provide many benefits, opportunities to practice in real-world situations remain an important factor in honing English speaking skills.

Overall, these findings suggest that real-time English interaction in apps like Hilokal can help participants overcome anxiety, accept mistakes, and improve their speaking skills in real life. However, apps should also consider the need for more personalized support and real-world practice opportunities for maximum impact.

2. Aspects of real-time interaction that contribute the most in enhancing students' self-confidence in speaking English

	Positive Experiences	Negative/Neutral Experiences	Result Findings
Real-Time Interaction Features (Table)	Facilitates direct interaction with people from diverse backgrounds, encouraging more practice.	Some participants preferred human interaction over AI.	Direct interaction provides opportunities for authentic conversations that support language development. However, preferences for AI vs humans vary.
Supportive Environment and Constructive Feedback	Come to the table with a positive atmosphere of encouragement, feedback without judgment, and praise.	Positive feedback can sometimes add pressure to speak up.	A supportive environment is helpful in reducing fear and encouraging active participation. However, the pressure of excessive praise can reduce comfort.
Topic Familiarity	Participants feel more confident talking about topics they are good at, such as music or psychology.	Some participants get bored with small conversations or uninteresting topics.	Topic familiarity helps reduce cognitive load and increases comfort in speaking. However, monotonous topics can decrease motivation to speak.
Anonymity and Spontaneity	Anonymity makes participants feel freer and unencumbered by judgment, encouraging a more fluid conversation.	Some participants struggled with spontaneity and preferred more structured conversations.	Anonymity and spontaneity allow for a more free and direct conversation, although for some, this can feel confusing or nerve-wracking.
Role of Native or Fluent Speakers	The eloquent speaker provides meaningful support, corrects mistakes, and motivates to do better.	Some participants felt pressured by the expectation of fluent speakers which led to stilted communication.	Interacting with a fluent speaker is very beneficial for most participants, but can be stressful for some if they feel the

ISSN 2338-4778 (Print)
ISSN 2548-4192 (Online)

	communication becomes too rigid or demanding.

From the table above, we can see that several factors contributed significantly to the increase in confidence in speaking English. The real-time interaction feature, especially the use of "tables," allows for valuable live conversations. Participants feel more comfortable with authentic interactions that occur in live conversations, which provide more opportunities for practice. The preference for human interaction over AI suggests that engagement with real people favors learning.

A supportive environment and constructive feedback are also very important in boosting self-confidence. Participants who felt accepted and praised, as expressed by Ziiiraaa and Sunflower, felt more comfortable and motivated to speak. However, it is important to note that overly positive or excessive feedback, as Jan perceived, can add psychological pressure for some participants.

Familiarity of topics plays a key role in helping participants feel more confident. Discussions that focus on familiar topics, such as music or psychology, reduce vocabulary-related anxiety and allow participants to express themselves more easily. Even so, it is important to maintain a diversity of topics to keep the conversation interesting and not monotonous.

The anonymity offered by the app makes room for participants to feel freer in speaking without concerns about their personal identity. This contributes to more spontaneous conversations and is not hindered by the fear of judgment. However, for some participants, highly spontaneous conversations can feel challenging, due to the lack of time to think or prepare answers.

Last, the role of native or fluent speakers in the learning process is significant, but can also affect participants' confidence. Fluent speakers often provide direct support and motivate participants to keep improving. However, high expectations from fluent speakers can lead to pressure and feelings of inadequacy, as Jan felt.

Overall, to increase confidence in speaking English, it is important to create a balance between direct interaction, a supportive environment, the choice of relevant topics, and the way feedback is given. In addition, giving participants space to develop in an atmosphere free from excessive pressure will go a long way in helping them feel more comfortable and confident in communicating.

3. The use of real-time interaction through speaking-oriented application impacts the students' self-confidence

	Result Findings
Self-Perception as an English Speaker	Most of the participants felt a significant increase in their confidence in speaking English. They acknowledged that the app helped them feel more confident in conversation. However, Jan felt there were more minor changes that had more to do with speaking comfort rather than expressiveness.
Handling Mistakes and Learning from Them	All participants, except Jan, showed a more open attitude towards mistakes. They not only accepted mistakes as part of the learning process, but also actively sought feedback to improve their English. In

Increased Willingness and Expressiveness in Speaking	this case, strategies such as asking for confirmation or reflecting on mistakes through notes were helpful. Most participants reported an increased desire to speak, which encouraged them to be more active in communication. Ziiiraaa, Sunflower and Breeze even began to feel more expressive in speaking English. However, Jan did not feel a significant increase in expressiveness, even though he spoke more often.
Consistency of Practice and Long-Term Impact	Some participants noted that consistent practice through the app was crucial to building and maintaining their confidence in speaking English. While Breeze felt that taking a break from practicing could lower her confidence, Jan felt that the speaking habits formed by the app made it easier for her to speak English in real life.
Nuances and Challenges	Despite the perceived benefits, participants also faced challenges, such as nervousness when meeting new people or difficulty speaking with more fluent speakers. They also reported encountering some uncomfortable interactions, either due to the difficult personalities of other users or differences in learning objectives. Jan also experienced boredom due to difficulty finding appropriate conversations.

Overall, the speaking app provided significant benefits for most participants in improving their confidence and speaking skills. However, as seen in Jan's and some other participants' experiences, challenges such as difficulty in finding suitable conversations and differences in speaking ability levels can reduce the impact of the app, which suggests that language learning experiences can vary significantly depending on the individual and the context in which the app is used.

4. Discussion

This discussion aims to provide a deeper understanding of how real-time interaction through speaking-oriented applications impacts English Education students' self-confidence in speaking English.

1. Real-time interaction through speaking-oriented application enhances students' self-confidence in speaking English

The findings in this study confirm the important role of real-time interaction through a conversation-based app, Hilokal, in increasing students' confidence in speaking English. These results support the broader theory of self-efficacy, which suggests that learners who feel capable of performing a task are more likely to actively engage in activities that support learning and improve their abilities. The increase in confidence seen in the participants, such as Sunflower's improvement from an initial score of zero to seven out of ten, Ziiiraaa's reaching nine out of ten, and Psyche's rising from five to eight out of ten, illustrate the positive impact of using the app consistently. This improvement is in line with the theoretical perspective that students with high self-confidence are more likely to take academic risks, engage in discussions, and bounce back from setbacks, all of which are important for language development.

ISSN 2338-4778 (Print)
ISSN 2548-4192 (Online)

However, while these findings show strong support for the idea that confidence can be enhanced through such platforms, it is important to consider the more nuanced experiences of the participants, especially those who reported more neutral outcomes. For example, Jan's observation that the app did not have a significant impact on her confidence - citing her preference for face-to-face interactions - raises critical questions about individual variations in response to digital learning tools.

These contradictions suggest that factors such as learning preferences, comfort levels with technology and even social dynamics (such as the tendency to value non-verbal cues more) can greatly influence the effectiveness of these platforms. This suggests that while technology can help dismantle many educational barriers, not all students may benefit equally from voice-based platforms. This diversity in experience demands a more personalized approach to learning that takes into account individual preferences, especially in the context of communication tools that aim to simulate authentic interactions.

Additionally, this study supports existing literature on language anxiety, by confirming that low self-confidence often triggers anxiety, leading students to avoid speaking opportunities. This avoidance can hinder language learning, as anxiety serves as a barrier to effective communication. This finding is in line with previous research which suggests that real-time interaction can help reduce such anxiety by providing immediate feedback and creating a more supportive learning environment. However, while this study highlights the positive impact of voice-based applications, it does not fully address the limitations of such tools, particularly their inability to convey non-verbal cues that are often important in face-to-face communication. This limitation might explain why some participants, such as Jan, felt that in-person interactions provided more meaningful engagement, which could provide richer contextual feedback and a more direct emotional connection compared to voice-based platforms.

From a pedagogical point of view, these findings emphasize the importance of integrating a mix of digital and face-to-face interactions in language education. Educators can utilize apps like Hilokal to give students the opportunity to practice live communication and get instant feedback, but also need to create space for more traditional learning experiences, involving non-verbal communication. Moreover, the implications for language learning pedagogy are clear: building confidence in students is not only about linguistic competence, but also about building a sense of agency and willingness to take risks in communication. This requires a pedagogical approach that emphasizes experiential learning, practical communication, and a supportive environment where students feel comfortable making mistakes and learning from them.

While this study supports the idea that real-time interaction in speaking can increase confidence, it also highlights the importance of recognizing individual differences and the complexity of the relationship between digital tools and language learning. Educators should consider integrating different communication approaches, blending digital tools with traditional face-to-face interactions, and tailoring learning experiences to individual preferences and cultural contexts.

2. Aspects of real-time interaction that contribute the most in enhancing students' self-confidence in speaking English

The findings from this study show that real-time interaction in conversation-based applications such as Hilokal significantly improves students' confidence in speaking English. The main feature that supports this development is the "table" which allows spontaneous conversations with various users. This feature is in line with Social Affordances theory which states that technological tools that facilitate social interaction support language learning more effectively. The presence of live interactions with various user backgrounds enriches the learning experience and provides space for students to practice flexibly anytime and anywhere, which also supports the principle of learning tailored to individual needs in technology-based learning.

In addition, a positive social environment is instrumental in building self-confidence. Interaction with users who share the same learning intentions creates a supportive atmosphere, which contributes to increased confidence, in line with Vygotsky's theory that emphasizes the importance of social interaction in the learning process. This collaborative learning experience, where students feel encouraged by peers, strengthens their confidence in speaking. However, it is important to note that this effect may vary depending on the social and cultural context of the participants, as well as individual preferences for the type of interaction.

Constructive feedback has also been shown to play a key role in the development of self-confidence. Feedback delivered in a supportive and non-judgmental way helps students see mistakes as part of the learning process, which is in line with growth mindset theory that emphasizes the importance of facing challenges and learning from mistakes. However, some participants reported neutral or low-impact experiences, indicating that the style and frequency of feedback may need to be adjusted to meet the needs of different types of learners.

The anonymity in this app also plays an important role in reducing social anxiety, in accordance with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which states that emotional factors, such as anxiety and self-confidence, affect the language acquisition process. Anonymity creates a safer space for learners to experiment with language without fear of judgment, which is especially helpful for those who tend to feel shy or anxious when speaking in public.

In addition, the spontaneity of real-time interaction promotes speaking fluency, which is important in language learning. This supports Swain's Output Hypothesis, which emphasizes that language production in authentic conversational situations helps students improve their speaking. These experiences develop speaking fluency, listening skills and better inter-language comprehension. However, this experience is not always positive for all participants, especially those who feel pressured to speak spontaneously or who are not used to direct interaction in the target language.

Last, relevant topics and students' personal interests played a role in boosting their confidence. This finding supports the theory that intrinsic motivation, triggered by interest in the topic, can strengthen students' speaking ability. It is also consistent with the findings in the previous study which showed that the selection of relevant topics increased students' engagement and confidence in conversations.

ISSN 2338-4778 (Print)
ISSN 2548-4192 (Online)

Overall, while real-time interaction through apps like Hilokal provides many benefits, the findings also show that the impact of using such apps can vary based on individual and sociocultural factors. Although the app facilitated anxiety reduction and increased confidence in speaking, differences in participants' experiences, such as difficulties in spontaneous speaking or preference towards face-to-face interactions, suggest that app design needs to pay more attention to variations in students' learning styles and needs. This study also underscores the need for further research examining the influence of sociocultural factors in digital language learning as well as the effect of the type of feedback provided on student learning outcomes.

3. The use of real-time interaction through speaking-oriented application impacts the students' self-confidence

The findings from this study show that sustained engagement in real-time interaction through a conversation-based app has a profound and multifaceted impact on students' self-confidence. The use of the app not only changed students' self-perception of their English speaking ability, but also increased readiness to communicate, developed effective strategies in dealing with mistakes, and reduced anxiety, which contributed to a long-term increase in confidence.

One of the key findings was the change in students' self-perception as English speakers. This finding is in line with the identity theory proposed by Bonny Norton, which states that in language learning, identity develops along with language development, where positive interactions consistently contribute to the internalization of a more competent self-image in language. Active engagement in communication, where students get positive feedback and feel valued, allows them to see themselves as more confident and competent speakers. Furthermore, this finding is also in line with MacIntyre's Willingness to Communicate (WTC) theory, which emphasizes the importance of psychological readiness to engage in communication in a learned language. Students who feel more confident tend to show a higher willingness to speak and engage in conversation, which improves their speaking performance.

The app creates an environment that facilitates students to go beyond passive engagement to active production, which increases their readiness to speak in English without embarrassment or hesitation. However, despite the significant improvement, some students also developed a more effective approach and were less fearful in the face of mistakes. This is consistent with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis theory, which suggests that emotional factors such as anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation play an important role in language acquisition. The app serves as a tool that reduces emotional barriers, by creating a safe space for students to see mistakes as learning opportunities rather than obstacles.

Moreover, the positive influence of the app was also reflected in real-life speaking situations, indicating a confident transfer to more authentic contexts. This supports the theory that fluent speaking can open up more opportunities in career and education. The confidence built through continuous interaction in the app is an important asset for students' success in communicating more effectively. However, the findings also show that while sustained engagement in the app contributes to long-term confidence gains, there are also concerns related to dependency on app use. Some students revealed that a break from using the app could lead to a temporary drop in their confidence, indicating

the need for consistent engagement to maintain the level of confidence that had been achieved.

While the overall impact was positive, the findings also revealed more complex challenges and nuances. Some participants reported anxiety, intimidation from more fluent users, or frustration with uncooperative users. This diversity in interaction quality led to experiences that were not always positive for all participants. For example, Jan's "so-so" experience and the feelings of boredom or social fatigue she experienced underscore that individual preferences for the type of interaction and quality of communication strongly influence the effectiveness of the app. This finding suggests that while these apps generally create a supportive environment, negative interactions or different learning preferences may affect students' perceptions of these apps.

Sociocultural factors should also be considered in this analysis. English education in Indonesia tends to focus more on grammar-based learning and less on providing opportunities for students to practice speaking actively in real contexts. This often leaves students with high communication anxiety when it comes to speaking in English outside the classroom. The use of these conversation-based apps can help address this gap, but the negative experiences of some participants may reflect that these apps have not fully replaced the need for more hands-on and contextualized learning experiences, involving face-to-face interactions or more in-depth cultural experiences.

Overall, while this conversation-based app demonstrated a very positive impact on increasing confidence in speaking English, it is important to recognize that this experience is not universal. Various factors-including the quality of the interaction, individual preferences, and social and cultural context-may influence the effectiveness of these apps in improving students' speaking ability and confidence. Further research that considers these aspects, including sociocultural differences and individual learning styles, would be valuable in developing more inclusive and effective learning apps.

From the discussion above, it is clear that conversation-based apps such as Hilokal can have a positive impact on students' confidence in speaking English, but results may vary depending on individual preferences and socio-cultural context. For educators, the implication is the importance of integrating digital tools like this app with traditional learning methods that involve face-to-face interaction and non-verbal communication. Educators can use apps to give students the opportunity to practice speaking and receive immediate feedback, but also need to create space for more holistic learning experiences, such as group discussions or presentations, that allow students to practice verbal and non-verbal communication in greater depth.

For app developers, the findings suggest that they design platforms that are more adaptive to the needs of diverse users, for example by providing options to set difficulty levels or feedback types tailored to user characteristics. In addition, developers should also consider adding features that facilitate virtual face-to-face interaction, to overcome the shortcomings of apps that cannot provide non-verbal cues.

These findings provide very useful insights for language learning pedagogy, especially in terms of students' confidence building. Educators need to realize that confidence development depends not only on students' linguistic abilities, but also on their sense of control and readiness to communicate in the target language. Therefore, a pedagogical approach that incorporates experiential learning, where students are given opportunities to actively practice speaking in real contexts, is essential. In addition,

ISSN 2338-4778 (Print)
ISSN 2548-4192 (Online)

creating a supportive learning environment, which allows students to feel safe and free from excessive judgment, will help them feel more comfortable making mistakes and learning from them. Integrating technology in language pedagogy needs to be done carefully, given that not all students respond in the same way to digital applications, and it is important to consider individual preferences and needs in designing more inclusive and effective learning experiences.

5. Conclusion

This study investigated the impact of real-time interaction through speaking-oriented applications on English Education students' self-confidence in speaking English. The findings strongly indicate a significant positive impact of real-time interaction, particularly through the Hilokal app, on students' self-confidence in speaking English.

Research Limitation & Suggestion

This study paves the way for further research into the role of sociocultural factors in app-based language learning. While this study shows the benefits of using apps in improving students' confidence, it is important to explore how differences in students' cultural backgrounds and learning habits may affect their experiences with these apps. Therefore, future research should include more participants from different cultural backgrounds to see how this variability affects the app's effectiveness in improving speaking. Also, delving deeper into how personal factors, such as social anxiety or self-confidence, may affect students' responses to the type of feedback provided in the app, would be very useful in improving the digital learning experience.

6. References

Bejtic, Z. (2024). "Nurturing feedback and its impact on self-efficacy, empowerment, and professional growth in educational and corporate environments". *International Journal of Advance Corporate Learning, 17*(2), 5. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijac.v17i2.45237

Bakhtiar, M. R., & Suwandi. (2022). "The psychological factors impacts on students' speaking skill". *English Education Journal, 12*(3), 360. DOI:10.15294/eej.v12i3.58338

Demil, A. J., & Kozikowski, R. (2022). "Language learning through interaction: Online and in the classroom". *The Coastal Review: An Online Peer-reviewed Journal, 12*(1), 4. https://doi.org/10.20429/cr.2022.120103

Dery, A. (2023). "The relationship between self-confidence and public speaking ability of students of the Faculty of Education Ahmad Dahlan University Yogyakarta". In *Proceedings International Conference on Business, Economics & Management, 1*(1), 170. https://doi.org/10.47747/icbem.v1i1.1274

Haleem, A, et al. (2022). "Understanding the role of digital technologies in education: A review". *Sustainable Operations and Computers, 3*, 280. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.susoc.2022.05.004

Li, Q. (2024). "English learning in virtual environments: A theoretical analysis of language acquisition in the digital age." *Region: Educational Research and Reviews, 6*(12), 118. https://doi.org/10.32629/rerr.v612.3011

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *An expanded sourcebook: Qualitative data analysis*

(2nd ed.). US America: Sage Publications.

Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Pham, A. T., et al. (2021). "The relationships between students' self-confidence and their English-speaking performance: A case study of English-majored students at a private university in Vietnam". *European Journal of Education Studies, 8*(9), 32.

Pannell, J., et al. (2017). "The output hypothesis: From theory to practice." *TESOL Working Paper Series, 15*, 127.

Purwanto, M. B., et al. (2024). "Psychological traits of willingness to communicate: An assessment of students' speaking performance". *Jurnal CULTURE (Culture, Language, and Literature Review), 11*(2), 63.

Rambe, I. H. (2024)." Using Fondi application to escalate the speaking ability of EFL high school students". *Journal of English Language and Education, 9*(5), 14–15.

S. Wati and N. Afrida, (2021) "Higher Education Students' Foreign Language Anxiety: A Case Study At English Education Department of IAIN Langsa", Jurnal Education And Development, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 37-42

Saidah, L. N., & Hariyadi, S. (2023). "From doubt to digital presence: Insecurity and self-confidence on intentions to use social media in students". *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan, 15*(4), 6530.

Supriyanto, A. C. (2024). "Exploring factors influencing speaking confidence among secondary school students". *Channing: Journal of English Language Education and Literature, 9*(2), 72.

Susanti, E. (2019). "Willingness to communicate in foreign language acquisition". *Edukasi Lingua Sastra, 17*(2), 58.

Tran-Hoang-Thu. (2009). "The interaction hypothesis: A literature review". *ERIC: Education Resources Information Center*, 2.

Wati, D., et al. (2025). "Enhancing students' speaking fluency through conversation practice: Students' voices". *The Journal of English Education: Applied Research on English Education, 3*(1), 37.

Widiastuti, A.,et al. (2023). "Application of Lev Vygotsky's theory in social studies learning using social action projects based on creative pedagogy to increase student engagement". *Al-Islah: Jurnal Pendidikan, 15*(3), 4165.

Xue, S., Wang, C., & Muhaimaiti, M. (2023). "Examining the affordances of an online learning platform: A usefulness theoretical perspective. *Sage Journal, 3*(4), 4.

Zulkarnain, & Widiawati, B. (2023). "Self-confidence, self-efficacy and speaking ability in support of successful English language learning". *Transformasi: Journal of Management, Administration, Education, and Religious Affairs, 5*(1), 205.