

Evaluating English Teachers' Perception of Community Language Learning in Enhancing Speaking Confidence

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Abstract

Building self-confidence in speaking is a fundamental challenge in English language learning, particularly in non-native settings. Many students experience anxiety and hesitation when asked to speak in a second language, making it essential to adopt supportive teaching approaches. Addressing this issue requires innovative and student-centered teaching methods that foster a positive and engaging learning atmosphere. This study examines English teachers' perceptions of Community Language Learning (CLL) in enhancing students' self-confidence in speaking classes. Adopting a qualitative research design, the study involved interviews with four experienced English teachers at SMP 2 Boja, who shared their insights and classroom experiences. The findings indicate that CLL creates a supportive, low-pressure classroom environment that helps reduce language anxiety and encourages active student participation. Teachers emphasized the importance of the teacher's supportive role, the use of group interactions, and the collaborative nature of CLL in boosting students' speaking confidence. The study concludes that CLL is an effective method for improving students' self-confidence in speaking activities, highlighting its potential for broader application in similar educational contexts.

Keywords: Community Language Learning (CLL), English Speaking Confidence, Teacher Perceptions

Introduction

Language is an essential tool for communication, enabling people to share ideas and interact socially. Through language, we are able to produce meaningful utterances that foster mutual understanding. Language plays a crucial role in daily

life, connecting people across cultures and contexts. As Hall defines it, language is “the institution whereby humans communicate and interact with each other utilizing habitually used oral-auditory arbitrary symbols.” This definition underlines the idea that language users engage in both habitual and intentional interactions, which shape their communication in both casual and transactional relationships (Bussman, 2006; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 2014; Wardhaugh & M. Fuller, 2015).

In the global context, English is one of the most widely studied and utilized languages, especially as a second language. Mastery of English is essential, not only for social and professional communication but also for understanding global perspectives. Learning English involves grasping various components, including grammar, structure, and skills across listening, reading, writing, and speaking. Of these, speaking is often perceived as the most challenging skill to develop, requiring fluency, confidence, and the ability to construct meaningful, culturally appropriate responses. For many learners, speaking effectively is more than just conveying ideas; it becomes a means of expressing personal identity and engaging in authentic interactions with native speakers (Hosni, 2015; Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Yee et al., 2014).

This challenge is supported by Brown and Yule, who assert that learning to speak a foreign language is often one of the most difficult aspects of language acquisition, both for learners and teachers (Brown & Yule, 1988). Mastering spoken language requires overcoming language anxiety, building confidence, and practicing fluency in a variety of contexts. Understanding how to use language effectively and intuitively is integral to communication, and in English, speaking fluently is often seen as a benchmark of proficiency. However, it can be a challenging skill for teachers to develop in their students, as fluency requires both practice and confidence.

From an empirical perspective, several methods have been explored to improve speaking skills, among them Community Language Learning (CLL). This approach emphasizes using a supportive, interactive environment in which teachers act as facilitators. CLL is designed to reduce anxiety and encourage open communication, with teachers helping students construct meaningful utterances by acting as guides rather than traditional instructors (Koba et al., 2020; Magsalin, 2023). Furthermore, the concept of understanding a single term or phrase in enhancing communication, as illustrated in the teachings of the Qur'an, emphasizes how effective language acquisition can improve clarity in daily interactions. Despite

its benefits, many studies on CLL have limited their focus to general classroom behavior rather than specific gains in students' confidence and fluency during speaking activities (Halimah, 2018; Paradewari, 2017)

While previous studies have recognized the benefits of CLL for engaging students in learning activities, few have examined its direct impact on students' self-confidence in speaking. This gap is significant, as confidence is a critical factor in language fluency and effective communication. The present study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the perceptions of English teachers on the impact of CLL on learners' self-confidence. By focusing specifically on the speaking skill, this research aims to understand how the application of CLL can help students overcome anxiety and build the assurance needed to speak fluently in a foreign language (Nety et al., 2020).

The study by Halimah (2018) highlighted that CLL significantly enhances students' ability to engage in speaking activities by reducing their fear of making mistakes. Similarly, (Leong and Ahmadi, 2017; Fayed, 2016; Liao, 2014; Wompere, 2018) emphasized the importance of creating a supportive environment for language learners, noting that reducing anxiety is key to fostering confidence. However, while studies recognize the psychological benefits of CLL, they do not delve into the specific mechanisms by which self-confidence is built or how these strategies compare across different educational settings. By addressing this gap, the present study aligns with Halimah's findings but further explores the nuanced role of teacher facilitation in confidence-building.

On the other hand, Paradewari (2017); Jahan (2020); and Rakasiwi et al. (2023) noted limitations in the practical application of CLL, particularly in larger classrooms where individualized attention from teachers is less feasible. This limitation underscores the need for adaptable strategies that can scale to different classroom sizes while maintaining the core principles of CLL. This study builds on these insights by examining how teachers perceive and address such challenges, offering practical recommendations for optimizing the CLL approach in diverse educational contexts.

Furthermore, while Yee et al (2014); Hosni (2015); Natalia (2017); and Daulay (2019) explored the broader benefits of interactive learning methods, they did not specifically link these methods to self-confidence in speaking activities. The present research seeks to bridge this gap by focusing on the interplay between CLL and confidence-building, providing a more targeted analysis of how this approach

impacts learners' willingness to communicate. In doing so, it contributes to the growing body of literature on effective strategies for enhancing speaking skills.

To address this focus, this research is guided by two main questions: How does CLL implementation influence students' self-confidence? What are English teachers' perceptions of CLL in enhancing speaking skills? By answering these questions, this study aims to contribute valuable insights into the practical application of CLL in language classrooms. Moreover, it seeks to highlight the importance of confidence as a key outcome of CLL, emphasizing the teacher's role as a facilitator in creating a supportive environment that encourages self-assured communication among learners.

This study presents a unique perspective by examining CLL's role in fostering self-confidence as a crucial component of speaking proficiency. This research is significant because it addresses an overlooked aspect of language learning—confidence—while offering a deeper understanding of how teachers perceive and implement CLL strategies to create a more effective speaking classroom. Through this analysis, the study aims to advance both theoretical and practical knowledge, providing a new framework for improving confidence and fluency in language learning contexts.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design to examine the impact of Community Language Learning (CLL) on students' self-confidence in speaking classes, specifically through the lens of teachers' perceptions. Qualitative research is characterized by its use of multiple methods and an interpretive, naturalistic approach to data, as defined by Newman and Benz (Newman & Ridenour, 1998). This approach allows for a more narrative and descriptive presentation of findings, providing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied. In this case, the data will be collected through observations and interviews, focusing on the implementation of CLL and its effect on students' confidence during speaking activities (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

The study targeted four English teachers from SMP 2 Boja, a junior high school, with a focus on grade IX students. These teachers, with teaching experiences ranging from 5 to 15 years, included two females and two males. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who could provide relevant insights. This selection was informed by the researcher's internship experience,

during which a noticeable lack of student proficiency in speaking activities was observed. Motivated by this observation, the researcher sought to investigate how CLL might enhance students' speaking confidence. Data collection occurred through a single online interview with the teachers during the 2020/2021 academic year's new semester.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. This method was chosen because it allows for the identification, analysis, and reporting of patterns (themes) within the data, providing a rich, detailed account of teachers' perceptions. Themes were identified through an iterative coding process, ensuring that key insights about CLL's impact on students' self-confidence were captured and categorized systematically.

To address ethical concerns, participant confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing all data and ensuring that identifiable information was not shared. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the study. Participants were informed about the study's objectives, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

The researcher assumed several crucial roles in conducting the study. First, as a data collector, the researcher gathered information through direct observation and interviews with teachers about their experiences with CLL. Second, the researcher independently analyzed the collected data, focusing on how CLL could help build students' self-confidence. The study drew on the principles of CLL as proposed by Charles Arthur Curran to explore how this model was applied and perceived in the classroom. By analyzing these principles, the researcher aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of CLL on students' language learning outcomes.

The data collection process in this qualitative study ensured reliable and comprehensive insights. Semi-structured interviews with English teachers served as the primary data-gathering tool, designed to capture teachers' detailed observations and evaluations of the CLL model's impact on students' speaking confidence. The interview questions explored teachers' perceptions of students' progress in speaking activities before and after the implementation of CLL. These interviews provided a thorough understanding of teachers' views and the effectiveness of CLL in fostering self-confidence among students. Structured interview questions ensured consistency in responses, facilitating easier analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

Findings

The Implementation of Community Language Learning to Enhance Students' Self-Confidence

The findings indicate that Community Language Learning (CLL) positively influences students' self-confidence in speaking English, as observed by the English teachers interviewed. The research shows that Community Language Learning (CLL) effectively boosts students' self-confidence in speaking English. Teacher 1 observed that students felt more comfortable engaging with native speakers, while Teacher 2 noted improved speaking grades due to increased confidence. Teachers 3 and 4 highlighted how CLL's interactive activities, like small discussions, provided regular practice that helped students feel more at ease in using English naturally.

All teachers agreed that CLL's supportive environment played a crucial role in fostering students' self-assurance, which is essential for real-life communication. CLL's student-centered approach enabled active participation, helping students build the confidence needed for effective language use. The explanation shows as the table below.

Teachers observed that CLL significantly contributed to students' confidence. Table 1 presents their responses:

Table 1. Teachers' Perceptions of CLL and Confidence

No	Question	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4
1	Do you see any significance in CLL implementation? Prove it with some authentic data!	Yes. My students became more confident, actively speaking even with native speakers.	Yes. Speaking practice scores have increased.	Yes. Speaking practice scores have increased.	Yes. Students now engage in English conversations after learning CLL techniques.

Teachers emphasized the role of self-confidence in achieving proficiency in speaking. Table 1 illustrates their insights:

Table 2. Teachers' Insight of Confidence as Key to Speaking Skills

No	Question	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4
1	Do you think that self-confidence is the main key to speaking skills? Why?	Yes. Without self-confidence, students won't use their language skills effectively.	Yes. Confidence empowers students to use language skills in real contexts.	Yes. Confidence is essential for speaking, as it enables free expression.	Yes. Confidence is crucial; learners must be mentally

and physically
 ready to
 perform.

English Teachers’ Perceptions of the Implementation of Community Language Learning in Teaching Speaking Skills

Before implementing Community Language Learning (CLL), teachers observed that students generally lacked confidence in speaking English and displayed hesitation and anxiety. Teacher 1 noted that most students felt intimidated when asked to speak in English, struggling to express themselves effectively. Similarly, Teacher 2 observed a general lack of confidence among students, who needed further capacity-building to develop speaking skills. Teacher 3 reported that students were particularly challenged when speaking independently, often appearing confused and limited by their vocabulary. Meanwhile, Teacher 4 highlighted that prior to CLL, students rarely engaged in English communication and required structured guidance to build their self-assurance in the language. These responses suggest a consistent perception among teachers that, initially, students needed both encouragement and systematic support to overcome their fear and engage in English-speaking activities confidently. The explanation shown as the table below.

Table 3. Teacher Perception on Students’ Initial Confidence in Speaking (Before CLL Implementation)

No	Question	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4
1	How would you perceive students' abilities in the speaking field before applying CLL?	My students mostly feel intimidated when asked to speak in English and lack the confidence to express themselves.	Most students lack confidence in speaking English and need to develop their capacity.	Students lack confidence, especially when speaking English; they often seem confused and lack vocabulary.	Before applying CLL, my students rarely engage in English; they need systematic guidance to build their confidence.

Discussion

The Implementation of Community Language Learning to Enhance Students' Self-Confidence

In examining the application of the Community Language Learning (CLL) approach to improve students' self-confidence in speaking, responses from the English teachers at SMP 02 Boja Semarang provide a nuanced understanding of its effectiveness. Teacher 1 shared that through the CLL approach, students became noticeably more confident and active in expressing themselves in English. For instance, during a school event with native English speakers, students willingly engaged in conversation, demonstrating their courage to practice speaking despite imperfect grammar. This interaction was well-received by both their peers and teachers, underscoring that grammatical precision was secondary to the students' newfound bravery to communicate. The supportive environment cultivated through CLL allowed students to focus on communication rather than perfection, suggesting that self-confidence can play a greater role in language acquisition than initial linguistic accuracy. This finding supported the studies from Zaswita (2019); Ramadhani (2020); and Surahman et.al (2021) that revealed by participating in CLL, students have built confidence in speaking English, making them more inclined to incorporate the language into their daily routines.

Teacher 2's insights corroborate these findings, as they noticed an improvement in students' speaking scores following the implementation of CLL. The approach not only encouraged students to engage verbally but also provided a structured setting where they could consistently practice their skills. This steady practice helped students become accustomed to speaking English in front of others, thus reducing the anxiety often associated with speaking a foreign language. By frequently speaking in various scenarios, students internalized the patterns of spoken English, leading to a gradual increase in their competence and confidence. This process highlights CLL's potential in promoting confidence by normalizing verbal expression as part of everyday classroom dynamics.

Teacher 3 emphasized the value of active, practical exercises facilitated by CLL, such as small group discussions or peer-led interviews. These interactive learning activities helped students feel more comfortable using English in academic contexts. Through peer interactions and teacher-guided discussions, students could engage in meaningful conversations, thereby reinforcing their vocabulary and fluency. For instance, Teacher 3 arranged interviews where students asked

questions in English, fostering a supportive environment where students could experiment with their language skills. The teacher noted that these exercises empowered students to voice their thoughts more freely, nurturing a positive mindset toward speaking and diminishing the fear of making mistakes. This collaborative learning setup encouraged students to see their peers as supportive partners in learning rather than as competitors or evaluators.

Teacher 4's response further highlights CLL's role in building students' self-confidence, especially in formal classroom activities like small talks with the teacher or group conversations on teacher-assigned topics. The teacher observed that such sessions helped students become familiar with structured speaking opportunities, preparing them for broader social interactions in English. By regularly engaging in English dialogues, students grew comfortable with conversational norms and gained the courage to articulate their thoughts. Teacher 4 emphasized that confidence in speaking required both mental preparedness and resilience, which CLL fostered by gradually introducing students to real conversational scenarios.

The collective insights from Teachers 1 through 4 suggest that self-confidence is not merely a byproduct of language learning but an essential catalyst. All teachers concurred that without confidence, students are unlikely to use their language skills in real-world situations. Teacher 1 pointed out that students' language abilities might remain dormant if they lack the confidence to practice them. Teacher 2 agreed, noting that confidence emboldens students to take risks and speak up in various contexts. Teacher 3 underscored that confidence liberates students to use English freely without overthinking potential errors, while Teacher 4 highlighted that confidence enhances both the mental and physical readiness to engage in communication. This collective perspective underscores the essential role of self-confidence in acquiring speaking skills, as it drives students to actively apply their language knowledge.

The teachers' responses emphasize that CLL's supportive and interactive nature is particularly effective in cultivating self-confidence. By facilitating continuous practice, offering structured speaking activities, and creating an encouraging environment, CLL empowers students to overcome their fear of mistakes and gradually build their linguistic competence (Hosni, 2015). The teachers' agreement on the importance of confidence as the key to speaking ability reinforces that CLL not only enhances students' language skills but also prepares them to use English proactively in diverse real-life scenarios. This approach,

therefore, serves as a holistic strategy to develop both the linguistic and psychological readiness necessary for effective communication.

English Teachers' Perceptions of the Implementation of Community Language Learning in Teaching Speaking Skills

The implementation of Community Language Learning (CLL) by English teachers revealed a transformative impact on students' confidence in speaking English, especially for those who initially struggled with low self-assurance (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Teacher 1 observed that, prior to using CLL, her students were often hesitant to speak English, describing them as feeling “threatened” by speaking tasks. This hesitancy stemmed from their lack of confidence, which manifested as an unwillingness to engage in oral activities due to a fear of making mistakes. When asked to perform speaking tasks, students found it difficult to begin, often becoming visibly anxious and reluctant. Teacher 2 shared similar observations, noting that most students lacked the confidence to speak more in English. She felt this was due to their perception that speaking in a foreign language was challenging and that they needed substantial support and encouragement to improve.

Teacher 3 also identified a significant barrier in students' limited vocabulary, which prevented them from expressing themselves confidently in English. This lack of vocabulary made students hesitant, especially when expected to speak independently. They often seemed confused, sometimes struggling to find the right words, which led to a sense of frustration and a reluctance to participate. Teacher 4 noted that before introducing CLL, her students had some of the lowest levels of English-speaking engagement, often finding it challenging to carry out even basic speaking tasks. When faced with oral assignments, students seemed overwhelmed and needed guidance to help them engage actively in class. This lack of confidence and difficulty with vocabulary highlighted the necessity for a method that could address both linguistic and psychological barriers, allowing students to feel secure as they developed their speaking skills.

In addition to addressing low self-confidence, the teachers highlighted the significance of speaking skills for students' lives beyond the classroom. Teacher 1 emphasized that being able to communicate effectively in English is essential for real-life interactions, which enables students to maintain communication with others. Teacher 2 noted that having strong speaking skills allows students to interact with people more comfortably, making it easier for them to engage in

social exchanges and connect meaningfully. Teacher 3 reinforced this view, stating that speaking skills contribute significantly to students' ability to communicate and interact confidently in everyday situations. Teacher 4 added that developing speaking competence is crucial in helping students prepare for real-world situations, where they might need to communicate in English in professional or social contexts. This shared perspective highlighted the value of speaking skills as a foundational component for students' future interactions.

When asked about their views on the implementation of CLL and its effect on students' confidence, each teacher had positive reflections on the method's effectiveness. Teacher 1, for instance, found that CLL allowed her to support not only students' language acquisition but also their emotional and psychological readiness to speak. Acting as a "counselor" rather than a traditional teacher, she was able to provide personalized support, guiding students to recognize and address their speaking challenges, and helping them overcome their fears. This counselor role enabled her to focus on individual needs, offering targeted encouragement and fostering an atmosphere in which students could feel secure in trying new language skills.

Teacher 2 agreed with the benefits of CLL, noting that it allowed her to encourage students to express themselves more freely. She observed that CLL helped students become more comfortable in speaking activities, reducing their anxiety and making them more willing to participate. This increased comfort led to a more active engagement in speaking tasks, as students felt less intimidated by the prospect of speaking in English. Teacher 3 emphasized the value of CLL in promoting confident student interactions by allowing them to experience authentic language use. This real-world interaction made the students feel more connected to their learning and helped them gain practical skills in communication. Teacher 4 added that CLL's structured and supportive facilitation helped students build their confidence progressively. By allowing students to begin speaking in their native language as they transitioned to English, CLL provided a familiar base from which students could gradually extend their communication skills. This scaffolding approach helped them overcome initial insecurities and develop the confidence to engage more freely in English-speaking tasks.

Overall, all four teachers agreed that CLL's emphasis on interaction and the teacher's role as a supportive guide played an essential role in improving students' confidence. This approach allowed students to feel more at ease with speaking in

English, as they were given space to navigate their challenges with continuous support from their instructor. Teachers observed that this model allowed them to address not only linguistic obstacles but also to address students' anxieties and self-doubt, making CLL a powerful tool in fostering students' self-confidence. However, the study does not specify why these four teachers were selected and how they are representative of the broader teaching population. Including details about their teaching experience, backgrounds, or the diversity of their teaching contexts could provide clarity and strengthen the generalizability of the findings.

The implementation of Community Language Learning (CLL) was seen as highly effective by the teachers in building students' self-assurance in English-speaking activities. By creating an environment where students felt supported and understood, CLL provided a foundation for them to engage more freely, overcoming initial hesitations and building the confidence needed to practice English effectively. Through CLL, students were able to experience language learning as a collaborative and supportive journey, one in which they could gradually build their skills and confidence in a structured, empathetic setting.

This approach demonstrated that, beyond language acquisition, fostering confidence is essential for students to realize their potential as effective communicators in English. Furthermore, the skills and self-assurance developed through CLL may have broader implications for lifelong learning. By instilling confidence in communication and problem-solving, CLL prepares students to navigate diverse social and professional contexts where English proficiency is an asset. The collaborative and reflective nature of CLL encourages learners to adopt a growth mindset, equipping them with the resilience and adaptability needed for continuous learning and effective participation in a globalized world.

Conclusion

This research concludes that Community Language Learning (CLL) is an effective approach for enhancing students' self-confidence and speaking skills in English. Through CLL, students who initially struggled with confidence and vocabulary became more engaged and motivated, thanks to a supportive environment that encouraged active participation. Teachers facilitated this growth by tailoring guidance to students' needs, promoting a shift from passive to active engagement in classroom discussions and authentic language interactions.

CLL also motivated students to speak naturally and confidently, while providing teachers with opportunities to refine learner-centered methods. This approach enabled students to overcome hesitations, engage meaningfully in English, and apply their skills in real-life situations.

Beyond the studied context, these findings can inform teaching practices and education policies aimed at improving communicative competence in diverse settings. By emphasizing learner-centered strategies and fostering emotional support, schools and policymakers can adopt CLL principles to promote confidence and participation in other subject areas and among various learner demographics. Additionally, integrating CLL-inspired practices into teacher training programs can equip educators with effective tools to address linguistic and psychological barriers, enhancing teaching efficacy across educational systems. This study underscores CLL's potential as a holistic framework that not only enhances language acquisition but also prepares students for active, confident participation in broader social and professional contexts.

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