



Reframing EFL Speaking Performance: Why Psychological Readiness Outweighs Vocabulary Knowledge in Indonesian High School Learners

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Abstract

As communicative competency gains prominence in English language education, it has become crucial to comprehend why numerous learners continue to exhibit reluctance or ineffectiveness in oral contact despite extensive formal instruction in English as a Foreign Language courses. Previous research has mostly focused on linguistic ability, especially vocabulary acquisition, whereas comparatively less emphasis has been placed on the impact of psychological preparedness on speaking performance. This study examined the relative impact of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and vocabulary knowledge on the speaking performance of Indonesian senior high school students. A quantitative correlational design was utilized to gather data from 30 eleventh-grade students using self-confidence and self-efficacy questionnaires, a vocabulary knowledge test, and a monologue-based speaking assessment, followed by descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression techniques. The investigation indicated that self-confidence and self-efficacy had a substantial beneficial impact on speaking performance, while vocabulary knowledge exhibited a relatively weaker and statistically insignificant predictive capability inside the regression model. These findings indicate that oral communication in EFL environments is influenced not just by lexical resources but also by learners' psychological readiness to engage, persevere, and speak amid ambiguity. This study reinterprets speaking performance as a psychologically influenced process, contributing to broader discourses on communicative competence and emphasizing the significance of affective-oriented speaking pedagogy in modern language education.

Keywords: EFL Speaking Performance; Psychological Readiness; Self-Confidence; Self-Efficacy; Vocabulary Knowledge

Introduction

The growing importance of oral communication in modern education has elevated speaking capability from a secondary classroom goal to a vital aspect of global engagement, academic advancement, and employability. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, speaking performance is often considered the most evident measure of successful language acquisition, as it demonstrates learners' capacity to utilize linguistic knowledge during real-time interactions rather than simply exhibiting passive comprehension (Cendra & Sulindra, 2022; Karim et al., 2023; Sanavi & Tarighat, 2014). The increasing focus on communicative ability has become especially important in nations where English serves not as a social language but as an academic and international medium, such as Indonesia. Despite years of formal English education, many Indonesian secondary school students still encounter difficulties in articulating ideas orally, maintaining interaction, or communicating spontaneously in English classrooms. These conditions indicate that the enduring constraints in EFL speaking ability cannot be only attributed to language inadequacy (Hadiati et al., 2026; Kafabih et al., 2025). The issue increasingly seems connected to psychological preparedness, emotional involvement, and learners' self-assessment of their communicative competence.

The challenge of cultivating speaking proficiency in EFL contexts is partially attributed to the multifaceted nature of oral communication. Speaking necessitates the concurrent coordination of lexical retrieval, grammatical processing, phonetic regulation, discourse structuring, and interactional oversight amidst cognitive strain and social scrutiny (Lambert et al., 2016; Schiller & Alario, 2023). In contrast to receptive skills, speaking situates learners in contexts where linguistic output is publicly seen, rendering emotional factors significantly impactful. In numerous Asian EFL classrooms, such as those in Indonesia, apprehension regarding negative assessment, concern over grammatical errors, and hesitance to engage in communicative risks sometimes impede students from actively participating in oral interactions (Abid, 2022; Ali et al., 2025; Safitri et al., 2020). The outcome is a persistent paradox wherein learners may exhibit adequate proficiency in vocabulary or grammar during written evaluations, yet remain incapable or disinclined to speak effectively in spoken English. This disparity has heightened academic interest in affective variables that influence the link between language proficiency and communicative performance.

Self-confidence and self-efficacy are particularly influential psychological dimensions linked to speaking success. Although frequently used interchangeably, these categories signify various yet interrelated levels of learner preparation. Self-confidence typically denotes students' comfort, courage, and emotional assurance in communication, while self-efficacy pertains specifically to learners' beliefs about their ability to successfully perform speaking tasks in challenging situations (Liao, 2025; Luo & Gan, 2022; Okyar, 2023). Both constructs affect learners' interpretation of communicative needs, their response to anxiety, their perseverance in the face of challenges, and their self-evaluation of performance. In EFL speaking contexts, students exhibiting greater psychological readiness are more likely to participate actively in classroom interactions, accept communicative imperfections more constructively, and maintain engagement despite linguistic constraints (Anandari et al., 2025; Burhanuddin et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2025). In contrast, learners with low confidence often refrain from speaking involvement while having appropriate language understanding to execute satisfactorily.

Simultaneously, vocabulary knowledge is universally acknowledged as a fundamental element of speaking proficiency. Lexical resources influence learners' capacity to generate meaning, sustain fluency, and react suitably to communicative contexts (Caro & Rosado, 2017; Kılıç, 2019; Koizumi & In'nami, 2013). Studies on vocabulary breadth and depth have repeatedly shown robust correlations between lexical proficiency and oral skills, especially in terms of fluency and communicative accuracy (Schmitt, 2014; Tong et al., 2022). Consequently, vocabulary education is crucial in numerous EFL courses. A growing issue in modern speaking research pertains to whether linguistic skill alone sufficiently predicts actual speaking performance in genuine educational contexts. In practice, students possessing extensive vocabulary knowledge do not consistently become effective speakers, whereas those with more restricted lexical resources may achieve greater success due to their enhanced willingness to communicate, stronger self-confidence, or reduced communicative anxiety. This tension prompts significant inquiries regarding the comparative impact of psychological and linguistic factors on speaking performance results.

Current scholarship has offered significant evidence connecting affective variables to speaking proficiency, yet the results are theoretically disjointed and methodologically inconsistent. Numerous studies have indicated positive correlations between self-confidence and oral communication performance, suggesting that students who view themselves as competent communicators are more inclined to engage actively and articulate more fluently (Akbari & Sahibzada, 2020; Oktavira & Santoso, 2025; Waluyo & Lailatu, 2021). Concurrent studies on self-efficacy indicate that learners' perceptions of their speaking abilities markedly affect their persistence, propensity for risk-taking, and level of communicative engagement (Demirel et al., 2020; Liao, 2025). Concurrently, studies centered on vocabulary persist in highlighting lexical proficiency as an indicator of fluency and speaking precision (Deng et al., 2025; Ishikawa, 2021). While these studies collectively underscore the significance of both psychological and linguistic dimensions, the prevailing literature often isolates these variables instead of exploring their comparative or simultaneous effects within a cohesive analytical framework.

Methodological trends in previous studies further obfuscate the present comprehension of EFL speaking performance. A significant number of previous studies predominantly utilize bivariate correlation designs, constraining the capacity to ascertain the relative impact of competing predictors (Koizumi & In'nami, 2013; Plonsky & Oswald, 2016). Some focus on university-level students or metropolitan educational settings, resulting in a relative neglect of secondary school environments. Furthermore, numerous studies primarily define speaking performance using language metrics, while neglecting the influential role of learner psychology in actual classroom interactions (Li et al., 2022; Wulandari et al., 2022). Such methodologies risk perpetuating a limited perception of communicative competence, wherein speaking proficiency is primarily regarded as a result of vocabulary acquisition or grammatical expertise. Insufficient focus has been placed on investigating how psychological preparation may surpass language resources in contexts characterized by social exposure, performance pressure, and emotional vulnerability.

The unresolved challenges are particularly significant in Indonesian secondary school, where English instruction frequently emphasizes examinations and structural components. Students may amass years of vocabulary and grammar education while encountering restricted opportunities for substantive conversational contact. In such situations, communicative hesitancy may endure not due to insufficient linguistic input, but rather because students lack the psychological preparedness necessary to convert

knowledge into verbal expression. Comprehending this disparity is crucial for both theoretical elucidation and instructional reformation (Hajmi et al., 2026; Schmidt, 1992). If speaking restrictions are influenced more by emotional preparedness than by a lack of vocabulary, then teaching priorities in EFL classes may need significant reevaluation. This study examines the impact of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and vocabulary knowledge on the speaking performance of Indonesian high school students. The study investigates the interaction between linguistic and psychological variables within a multiple regression framework to elucidate the diversity in students' oral communication performance. This analysis examines whether psychological readiness is a stronger predictor of speaking performance than vocabulary knowledge in EFL contexts with restricted communicative exposure, utilizing social-cognitive perspectives on learner agency and affective-filter theory in second language acquisition.

The study empirically addresses the necessity for more comprehensive investigations that concurrently assess affective and linguistic predictors in secondary education settings. It fundamentally undermines the enduring belief that vocabulary knowledge is paramount in the development of speaking skills. The results reveal that self-confidence and self-efficacy significantly enhance students' speaking performance, but lexical knowledge shows very limited predictive capacity within the analyzed model. These results necessitate a reexamination of EFL speaking pedagogy, indicating that communicative competence cannot be comprehensively understood through linguistic dimensions alone. Speaking performance is revealed as a psychologically mediated process where learners' willingness to communicate may be more critical than the extent of their vocabulary.

This study emphasizes psychological preparation as a key explanatory factor, contributing to current discussions about communicative competence in EFL instruction. It theoretically broadens the discourse on affective variables and learner agency in oral language development. Methodologically, it provides a more comprehensive analytical framework for assessing competing predictors of speaking performance. The findings prompt educators to reassess classroom priorities by prioritizing emotionally supportive speaking environments, confidence-enhancing interactional practices, and pedagogical strategies that foster communicative willingness in conjunction with lexical advancement. The study offers insights applicable to other EFL contexts where learners encounter comparable tensions between linguistic knowledge and communicative engagement.

Research Methods

1. Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative research methodology with a correlational design to investigate the predicted links among self-confidence, self-efficacy, vocabulary knowledge, and students' speaking performance in an EFL environment. A correlational approach was deemed suitable as the study aimed to examine the degree to which changes in psychological and linguistic characteristics correlated with differences in speaking outcomes, without altering instructional conditions. Multiple linear regression analysis was utilized to ascertain the relative and concurrent effects of the independent factors to speaking performance. This predictive analytical approach allowed the study to synchronize the research questions, hypotheses, and statistical methods within a cohesive explanatory framework.

2. Research Context, Participants, and Sampling Procedure

This research was carried out at SMAN 1 Mamuju, a public senior high school situated in West Sulawesi, Indonesia, where English is mandated as a core subject in the national curriculum. In the Indonesian EFL setting, English education at the secondary level is predominantly examination-focused, with limited possibilities for genuine conversational communication. As a result, speech teaching has gained significance in enhancing communication ability and student engagement in classroom interactions. Data gathering occurred from February to April 2026. The target audience included all eleventh-grade students from two classes, XI A and XI B, totaling 60 pupils. Thirty students were selected from this demographic using simple random sampling to assure representative participation and reduce sampling bias. Participants ranged in age from 16 to 17 years and possessed comparable EFL learning backgrounds. The eligibility criteria comprised active enrollment, engagement in English-speaking activities, and availability throughout the research process.

Table 1. Research Context, Participant Characteristics, and Sampling Distribution

Category	Description
Research Site	SMAN 1 Mamuju, West Sulawesi, Indonesia
Educational Context	Indonesian EFL Secondary Education
Population	60 Grade XI Students
Class Distribution	XI A (30 students) & XI B (30 students)
Sample Size	30 Students
Sampling Technique	Simple Random Sampling
Participant Age Range	16-17 Years Old
Educational Level	Senior High School (Grade XI)
Data Collection Period	February - April 2026
Inclusion Criteria	Active enrollment, participation in speaking activities, and availability during data collection

Table 1 provides a detailed summary of the research environment, participant attributes, and sample methods utilized in the study. The data reveal that the research was performed in an Indonesian EFL secondary school context, specifically at SMAN 1 Mamuju, where English serves as a mandatory academic subject. The participant distribution exhibits equitable classroom representation between Grade XI A and XI B, hence affirming the representativeness of the chosen sample. The table elucidates the demographic and procedural attributes pertinent to the investigation, encompassing participant age range, sampling methodology, and inclusion criteria. The contextual elements enhance the methodological transparency and trustworthiness of the research design.

Figure 1. Population and Sample Distribution Across Grade XI Classes

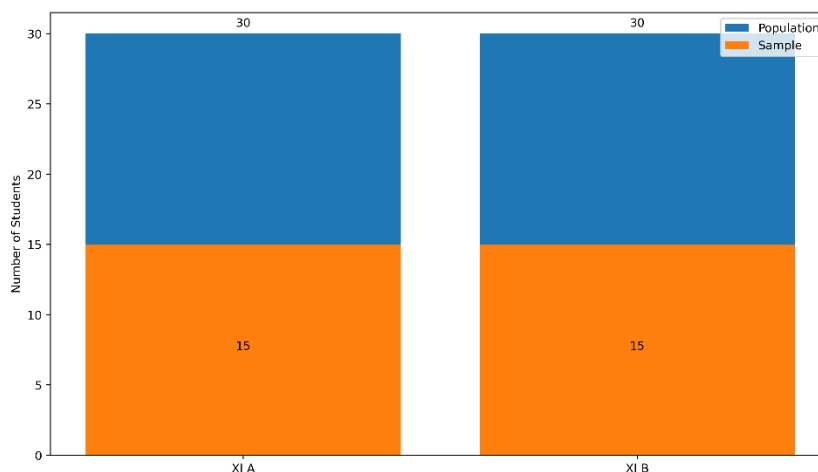


Figure 1 visually depicts the proportional distribution between the target population and the chosen sample inside the two Grade XI classrooms. The image illustrates methodological equilibrium by displaying equal representation from both XI A and XI B courses, thus mitigating sampling bias and improving internal consistency. The picture underscores the utilization of basic random sampling as a method to guarantee equity and representativeness in participant selection. The figure illustrates the correlation between population size and sample allocation, enhancing comprehension of the study's sampling framework and reinforcing the statistical validity of the employed quantitative correlational design.

3. Research Variables and Conceptual Model

This study's conceptual model had three independent variables: self-confidence, self-efficacy, and vocabulary knowledge, alongside one dependent variable, speaking performance. Self-confidence indicated students' psychological preparedness and bravery in oral communication, whereas self-efficacy denoted learners' convictions about their abilities to execute speaking activities effectively. Vocabulary knowledge served as the linguistic resource facilitating oral expression and communicative fluency. Speaking performance pertains to pupils' capacity to articulate concepts coherently, accurately, and fluently in English. The conceptual framework identified psychological readiness and linguistic competence as interrelated predictors affecting oral communication outcomes, enabling the study to investigate whether affective variables have a greater predictive impact than vocabulary-related factors in EFL speaking contexts.

4. Instruments, Validity, Reliability, and Data Collection Procedures

Data were gathered utilizing four primary instruments: a self-confidence questionnaire, a self-efficacy questionnaire, a vocabulary knowledge assessment, and a monologue speaking performance evaluation supplemented by an analytical speaking rubric. The questionnaires utilized a four-point Likert scale to evaluate psychological dimensions including courage, independence, mastery experience, social persuasion, and anxiety management, whereas the vocabulary test comprised multiple-choice items that assessed vocabulary breadth, depth, and contextual meaning. The speaking performance was assessed by a 3–5 minute monologue task, scored based on fluency, correctness, word usage, syntax, and coherence. Instrument validity was determined by expert assessment and construct validity testing, while reliability was evaluated using

Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. The data collection process encompassed preparation, administration, recording, coding, tabulation, and statistical analysis utilizing SPSS.

5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were meticulously upheld during the research process to safeguard participants' rights and welfare. Participation in the study was completely optional, and students were notified that they could withdraw at any point without academic repercussions. Before data collection, informed consent was secured from participants following an explanation of the study's aims, procedures, and purposes. Confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously maintained by encoding participant identities and excluding personally identifiable information from all study materials and analyses. The gathered data were utilized solely for academic and research objectives. These processes guaranteed ethical adherence and fostered a safe and respectful research atmosphere.

Results and Discussion

Result

1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

A descriptive statistical analysis was performed to assess the overall distribution and achievement levels of the research variables: self-confidence, self-efficacy, vocabulary knowledge, and speaking performance. The findings indicated that students often exhibited moderate to high degrees of psychological preparedness in English speaking tasks. Self-confidence scores exhibited consistent variability, as evidenced by the mean, standard deviation, lowest, and maximum values, suggesting that the majority of participants demonstrated sufficient courage, autonomy, and anxiety regulation during oral communication tasks. Correspondingly, self-efficacy findings indicated that students generally demonstrated affirmative ideas about their capacity to accomplish speaking tasks and surmount communicative challenges.

The vocabulary knowledge assessment revealed a considerable degree of lexical proficiency, especially in vocabulary breadth and contextual meaning recognition, while certain students exhibited constraints in productive vocabulary application. The descriptive analysis revealed that students attained moderate speaking proficiency in fluency, accuracy, grammar, vocabulary usage, and coherence. The percentage classification indicated that psychological factors generally attained higher category levels than linguistic performance indicators, highlighting the significant influence of affective preparedness on oral communication in the Indonesian EFL classroom context.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Achievement Classification of Research Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Achievement Level
Self-Confidence	82	5.2	68	92	Very Good
Self-Efficacy	84	4.8	70	94	Very Good
Vocabulary Knowledge	71	6.5	58	85	Good
Speaking Performance	76	5.9	60	88	Good

Table 2 delineates the descriptive statistical distribution of the research variables, encompassing self-confidence, self-efficacy, vocabulary knowledge, and speaking performance. The findings demonstrate that psychological variables attained superior mean scores and had more consistent distributions compared to language variables. Self-confidence and self-efficacy were classified as "Very Good," although vocabulary

knowledge and speaking skills were rated as “Good.” The findings indicate that students exhibited greater psychological preparedness than linguistic proficiency in EFL speaking tasks.

Figure 2. Comparative Radar Profile of Psychological and Linguistic Variables

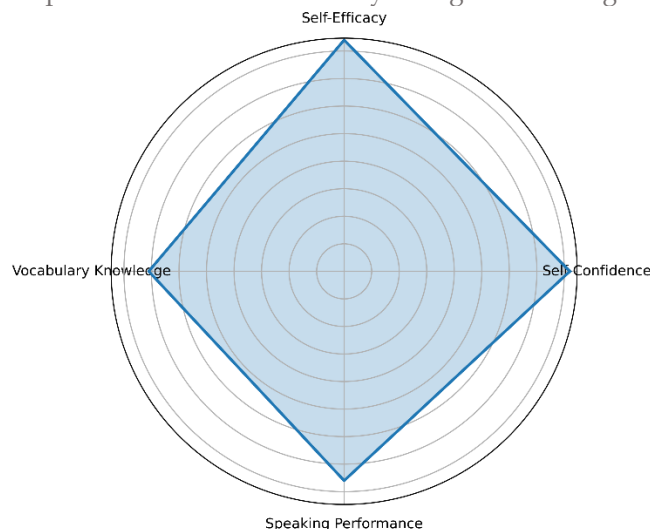


Figure 2 illustrates the comparative profile of the four research variables using a radar visualization model. The chart underscores the preeminence of psychological constructs, specifically self-confidence and self-efficacy, in relation to vocabulary knowledge and speaking performance. The asymmetrical yet balanced form of the radar chart illustrates disparities in students' emotional and linguistic growth. This visualization underscores the study's primary assertion that psychological readiness significantly impacts EFL speaking performance more than vocabulary competence alone.

2. Assumption Testing

Before executing multiple linear regression analysis, various classical assumption tests were conducted to verify the suitability and statistical integrity of the regression model. The normality test was assessed utilizing the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk methods. The results demonstrated that all variables exhibited significance values over .05, indicating that the data were normally distributed and appropriate for parametric statistical analysis. This finding validated that the residuals satisfied the normality assumption necessary for regression modeling.

Subsequent linearity testing was used to assess the correlation between each independent variable and speaking performance. The significance values derived from the deviation-from-linearity analysis surpassed the predetermined threshold of .05, signifying that self-confidence, self-efficacy, and vocabulary knowledge exhibited linear correlations with the dependent variable. Additionally, the multicollinearity analysis indicated satisfactory tolerance values exceeding .10 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values below 10, thereby affirming the lack of significant intercorrelations among predictors. The heteroscedasticity test, assessed via scatterplot distribution and significance analysis, revealed randomly distributed residual patterns devoid of systematic clustering, signifying homogeneity of variance. The data collectively indicated that the regression assumptions were adequately met, enabling reliable inferential analysis to be performed.

Table 3. Results of Regression Assumption Testing

Assumption Test	Statistical Result	Interpretation
Normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov)	$p = .200$	Normally distributed
Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)	$p = .087$	Normally distributed
Linearity	$p = .112$	Linear relationship established
Multicollinearity (Tolerance)	0.712 - 0.845	No multicollinearity detected
Multicollinearity (VIF)	1.183 - 1.405	Predictors are independent
Heteroscedasticity	No significant pattern	Homoscedastic residuals

Table 3 delineates the statistical assumption evaluations performed prior to the multiple linear regression analysis. The results indicate that the dataset met the essential assumptions necessary for inferential statistical analysis. Normality assessments revealed that the residuals were normally distributed, and linearity analysis established significant linear correlations between predictors and speaking performance. Furthermore, the acceptable tolerance and VIF values indicated the absence of multicollinearity among the independent variables. The heteroscedasticity analysis additionally demonstrated the uniformity of variance within the regression model.

Figure 3. Statistical Assumption Stability Profile of the Regression Model

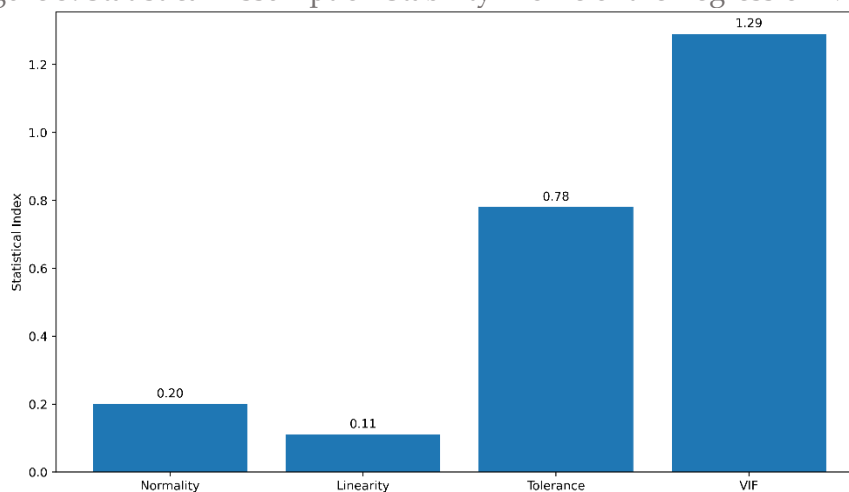


Figure 3 illustrates the comprehensive stability profile of the regression assumptions via comparable statistical metrics. The figure illustrates the satisfactory fulfillment of assumptions for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and residual variance. The visualization underscores the strength of the analytical model and verifies that the statistical prerequisites for multiple regression analysis were adequately met. This graphical representation enhances the methodological validity of the study and corroborates the reliability of subsequent inferential conclusions concerning predictors of EFL speaking performance.

3. Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis utilizing the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation method was performed to investigate the links among self-confidence, self-efficacy, vocabulary knowledge, and students' speaking performance. The analysis indicated a robust

positive association between self-confidence and speaking competence, suggesting that pupils with elevated confidence levels exhibited superior oral communication skills. The correlation coefficient indicated a statistically significant association, implying that confidence is crucial in facilitating fluency, involvement, and communicative assertiveness in speaking activities.

Likewise, self-efficacy shown a positive and significant association with speaking performance. The correlation magnitude suggested that students with greater confidence in their speaking abilities were more likely to excel in oral communication challenges. This discovery strengthens the hypothesis that psychological readiness significantly influences communicative persistence and speaking engagement in EFL classrooms.

Conversely, language knowledge exhibited a less robust positive association with speaking performance than the psychological variables. While lexical knowledge facilitated students' expression of ideas and communication, its statistical impact seemed comparatively minimal. This research indicates that mastery of vocabulary alone may not adequately forecast successful speaking performance when students lack confidence or self-efficacy in authentic classroom interactions.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Analysis Between Research Variables and Speaking Performance

Variable Relationship	Pearson Correlation (r)	Significance (p)	Interpretation
Self-Confidence ↔ Speaking Performance	0.821	0	Strong Positive
Self-Efficacy ↔ Speaking Performance	0.847	0	Strong Positive
Vocabulary Knowledge ↔ Speaking Performance	0.392	0.041	Weak Positive

Table 4 displays the Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficients among self-confidence, self-efficacy, vocabulary knowledge, and speaking performance. The findings indicate robust positive correlations between psychological characteristics and oral communication ability, especially for self-efficacy and self-confidence. Conversely, language knowledge had a diminished association, although it remained statistically significant. The findings suggest that psychological readiness significantly influenced students' speaking achievement more than linguistic knowledge alone in the studied Indonesian EFL classroom context.

Figure 4. Comparative Correlation Strength of Psychological and Linguistic Predictors

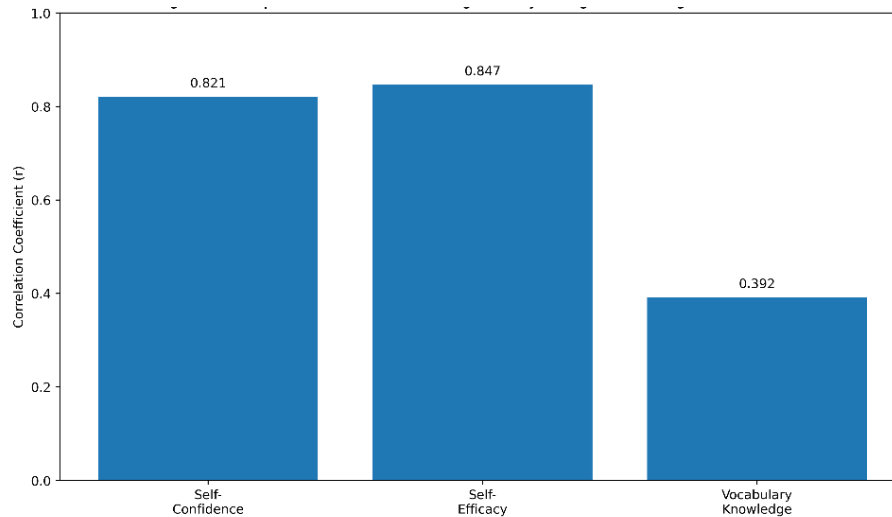


Figure 4 illustrates the correlation strength between psychological and linguistic factors related to speaking performance. The figure distinctly demonstrates the superiority of self-efficacy and self-confidence in elucidating oral communication outcomes compared to vocabulary knowledge. The significant disparity in coefficient magnitude underscores the greater influence of affective preparedness relative to lexical ability. This image underscores the study's primary assertion that effective EFL speaking performance is more closely linked to student psychology than to vocabulary proficiency alone.

4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

A multiple linear regression analysis was used to investigate the simultaneous and partial influences of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and vocabulary knowledge on students' speaking performance. The regression model summary indicated a robust correlation between the independent variables and speaking performance, as evidenced by a high R value. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .850$) indicated that 85% of the variance in students' speaking skill was collectively explained by the three predictors, with the remaining 15% affected by external variables not incorporated in the model. These data demonstrate significant explanatory capacity within the suggested regression framework.

The partial effect analysis (t-test) indicated that self-confidence had a positive and statistically significant impact on speaking performance, corroborating the relevant research hypothesis. The regression coefficient demonstrated that increased communicative confidence correlated with enhanced oral performance results. Likewise, self-efficacy exhibited a notable positive impact and emerged as one of the most robust predictors in the model, indicating that students' confidence in their speaking abilities significantly improved communicative engagement and fluency. Conversely, vocabulary knowledge did not exhibit a statistically significant impact on speaking performance, although it indicated a positive regression trend. This finding indicates that lexical proficiency alone may not adequately predict successful oral communication when psychological readiness is constrained in EFL classroom interactions.

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of Psychological and Linguistic Predictors on Speaking Performance

Model Statistic	Value
R	0.922
R ²	0.85
Explained Variance	85%

Predictor	Regression Coefficient (β)	t-value	Significance (p)	Hypothesis Decision
Self-Confidence	0.472	4.912	0	Significant
Self-Efficacy	0.511	5.274	0	Significant
Vocabulary Knowledge	0.118	1.102	0.277	Not Significant

Table 5 encapsulates the regression model and the individual impacts of each predictor on speaking performance. The results reveal that self-confidence and self-efficacy substantially influenced students' oral communication performance, whereas vocabulary knowledge did not exhibit a statistically significant impact, despite its positive coefficient direction. The elevated R and R² values further validate the significant explanatory capacity of the model. These findings underscore the significance of psychological preparedness as a primary determinant of EFL speaking ability.

Figure 5. Comparative Regression Influence Profile of Psychological and Linguistic Predictors

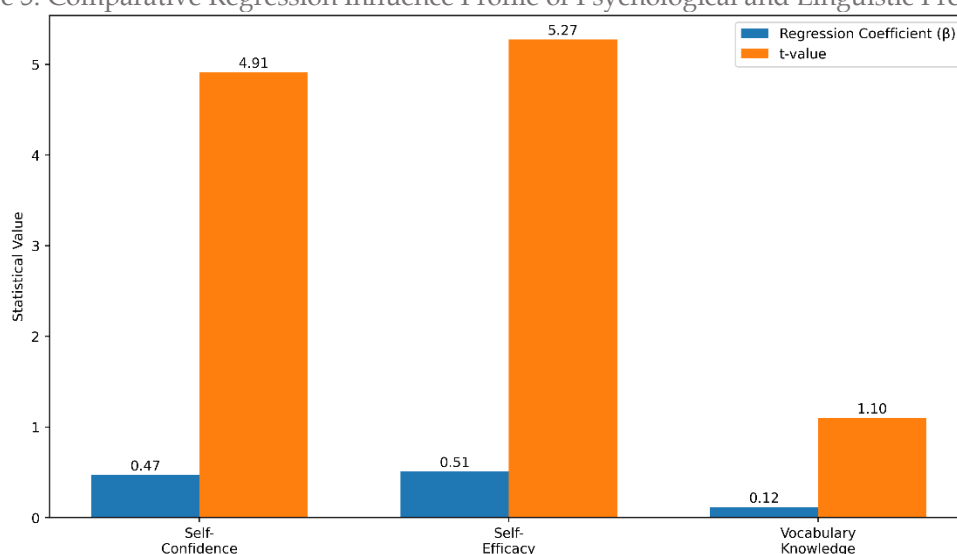


Figure 5 provides a visual comparison of the regression coefficients and t-values related to the three independent variables. The graphic distinctly demonstrates the greater statistical impact of self-confidence and self-efficacy relative to lexical knowledge. The differing characteristics of psychological and linguistic predictors emphasize the crucial importance of learner affective preparedness in influencing communicative results. This picture reinforces the study's assertion that speaking performance in EFL schools is predominantly influenced by psychological readiness rather than solely by lexical proficiency.

5. Simultaneous Effects of Predictors (F-test)

The concurrent influence of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and vocabulary knowledge on students' speaking performance was analyzed using the F-test inside a

multiple regression framework. The analysis indicated that the overall regression model was statistically significant, as evidenced by the F-value and significance level below the threshold of .05. This finding illustrates that the three predictors collectively had a substantial impact on students' speaking performance in the Indonesian EFL classroom context.

The results indicate that the regression model had substantial collective predictive capability in elucidating variations in speaking achievement. The interplay of psychological and linguistic factors significantly influenced students' oral communication results, with psychological readiness being the predominant aspect of the model. The results indicate that speaking performance should not be viewed exclusively through linguistic competence, but as a multidimensional construct influenced by the interplay of communicative self-efficacy, emotional readiness, and lexical resources in classroom communication activities.

Table 6. Simultaneous Regression Analysis (F-Test) of Predictors on Speaking Performance

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Significance (p)
Regression	1452.316	3	484.105	49.273	0
Residual	256.684	26	9.872		
Total	1709	29			

Table 6 displays the ANOVA outcomes of the multiple regression model analyzing the concurrent influences of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and vocabulary knowledge on speaking performance. The substantial F-value indicates that the combined factors significantly impacted students' oral communication performance. The regression model accounted for a significant amount of variance in speaking performance, demonstrating robust collective predictive ability and underscoring the multifaceted aspect of EFL speaking competence in the studied educational setting.

Discussion

This study's findings indicate a continuous pattern: students' speaking performance in the Indonesian EFL classroom was more significantly influenced by psychological preparation than by vocabulary knowledge alone. While lexical competence positively influenced oral communication, self-confidence and self-efficacy proved to be significantly better indicators of speaking performance. This pattern indicates that effective speaking in EFL environments is influenced not only by learners' linguistic understanding but also by their emotional preparedness and communicative confidence required to convert information into verbal interaction. The study substantiates the idea that oral communication is inherently both a linguistic and psychological activity.

The substantial impact of self-confidence on speaking performance underscores the need of emotional stability in classroom communication. Students who perceived their ability to talk without undue anxiety were more likely to engage actively, provide lengthier verbal responses, and exhibit enhanced fluency in communication. These findings strongly correspond with affective-filter theory, which posits that worry, dread, and emotional insecurity can hinder language output, despite learners having sufficient input and linguistic expertise (Krashen, 1985) as cited in (Chew & Chen, 2021; Wang et al., 2022). In the current study, pupils exhibiting greater confidence had a heightened

willingness to endure communication imperfections, enabling them to maintain conversation despite grammatical deficiencies or sporadic lexical hesitancy. This mechanism is especially pertinent in Indonesian EFL classes, where speaking opportunities are frequently subject to social evaluation and significantly linked to the apprehension of public errors.

The correlation between confidence and speaking competence also mirrors the wider communicative dynamics linked to willingness to communicate (WTC). Individuals who view themselves as proficient communicators are more inclined to initiate interactions, offer comments, and partake in communication risk-taking. Thus, self-confidence serves both as an emotional condition and as a behavioral catalyst influencing the frequency of participation and exposure to oral practice. These findings augment previous research indicating favorable correlations between confidence and speaking performance (Al-Hebaish, 2012; Moreno & Kilpatrick, 2018). The current study enhances prior information by showing that confidence maintained substantial predictive value even when linguistic variables were concurrently incorporated into the regression model. This indicates that psychological preparation may function autonomously rather than simply acting as a subordinate effect of language proficiency.

Self-efficacy exhibited a more robust predictive role, underscoring the significance of learner belief systems in oral communication performance. From a social-cognitive standpoint, self-efficacy influences learners' interpretations of problems, emotional regulation, and perseverance in arduous tasks (Abbasi & Nosratinia, 2018; Liao, 2025; Raofi et al., 2012). Students who perceived their ability to execute speaking activities well demonstrated more resilience in the face of communication challenges, allowing them to sustain involvement despite uncertainty or linguistic deficiencies. Such learners exhibited a reduced propensity to disengage from interaction and were more inclined to view speaking tasks as feasible rather than intimidating. In EFL courses with little communicative exposure, this intrinsic sense of competence becomes especially significant, as learners frequently depend on self-regulation rather than substantial real-world speaking experience.

This study highlights the importance of self-efficacy, aligning with prior research that underscores the influence of learner agency and communicative persistence on oral language development (Abbasi & Nosratinia, 2018; Abdolrezapour et al., 2023; Ying et al., 2023). Nonetheless, the current findings offer a more refined view by establishing self-efficacy as a principal explanatory construct within a comparative predictive framework. Previous research often investigated self-efficacy in isolation or employed basic correlational methodologies. In contrast, the present research reveals that self-efficacy retained statistical significance even after accounting for vocabulary knowledge and self-confidence, suggesting that learner belief may have a more extensive impact on communicative behavior than previously recognized.

One of the most theoretically relevant conclusions pertains to the relatively modest role of language knowledge. Despite vocabulary exhibiting a positive correlation with speaking skill, its predictive influence was statistically weaker and finally non-significant inside the regression model (Alharthi, 2019; Uchihara & Saito, 2016). This finding does not imply that vocabulary is insignificant in speaking growth; instead, it suggests that lexical knowledge alone may not guarantee communicative success. Numerous students seemed able to recognize or comprehend vocabulary without being psychologically equipped to utilize it in real-time interactions. The differentiation between lexical possession and communicative deployment is essential, as EFL training

often presumes that an expansion of vocabulary will inherently enhance speaking proficiency.

Various contextual considerations may elucidate this outcome. In numerous Indonesian classrooms, vocabulary acquisition is predominantly linked to memorization, written tasks, and exam preparation, rather than to spontaneous verbal usage. As a result, students may enhance their receptive vocabulary knowledge without concurrently improving their communicative confidence or speaking independence. In these circumstances, learners frequently exhibit hesitation during oral interactions, while having enough lexical resources (Foster, 2020; Hilton, 2008; Salem, 2019). The current findings contradict linguistically deterministic views of speaking competence by indicating that vocabulary is more effective when bolstered by robust emotive readiness and communicative self-confidence.

The research further contributes to current theoretical discussions regarding communicative ability in second language acquisition. Conventional models often emphasize grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation as primary indicators of speaking proficiency. Although these characteristics are significant, the current findings indicate that communicative competence ought to be perceived more comprehensively as an interplay between linguistic resources and psychological mediation (Elder et al., 2017; Hulstijn, 2011). Speaking performance is not merely a reflection of vocabulary proficiency but is influenced by social and emotional factors, including learner confidence, perceived competence, and readiness to communicate. The study underscores the importance of learner psychology as a fundamental element of good language performance, rather than merely a secondary affective aspect.

These findings have significant implications for EFL teaching approaches. Instruction in speaking that only emphasizes vocabulary acquisition and grammatical correction may insufficiently tackle the emotional obstacles hindering students' oral engagement. Consequently, educators must establish learning environments that promote risk-taking, diminish the fear of negative assessment, and normalize communicative flaws (Cancino, 2025; Hussain et al., 2025). Activities that foster confidence in speaking, collaborative interaction tasks, constructive peer feedback, and psychologically safe classroom environments may significantly enhance speaking growth more than education focused solely on vocabulary. Educational institutions should acknowledge that speaking competence encompasses emotional preparation in addition to linguistic skill, especially in environments where exposure to English outside the classroom is restricted.

Notwithstanding its contributions, the study has numerous shortcomings that warrant acknowledgment. The sample size was relatively small and confined to a specific secondary school scenario, hence diminishing greater generalizability. The cross-sectional design assessed students' psychological and linguistic states at a single moment, neglecting to investigate developmental changes. The study predominantly utilized quantitative measures, which may inadequately represent learners' emotional experiences and communication perspectives. Fourth, external variables such as speaking anxiety, classroom environment, instructor interaction style, and motivation were excluded from the analytical model, despite their possible impact on speaking performance.

Future study may mitigate these limitations by employing longitudinal designs to investigate the evolution of psychological preparation across prolonged educational durations. Mixed-method approaches that include interviews, classroom observations, and learner reflections can yield deeper insights into the emotional processes that

underpin EFL communication. Further research could examine the interplay of technology-mediated speaking contexts, AI-assisted oral contact, or willingness-to-communicate frameworks with self-efficacy and communicative confidence. Broadening research across various educational regions and proficiency levels would enhance comprehension of psychological readiness in diverse EFL contexts.

This study ultimately illustrates that speaking performance cannot be comprehensively understood through vocabulary knowledge alone. Oral communication in EFL contexts is significantly influenced by learners' confidence, perceived competence, and emotional readiness to participate in interactions. By emphasizing psychological readiness as a primary explanatory framework, the study enhances existing interpretations of communicative competence and contests educational assumptions that linguistic proficiency alone ensures successful speaking. These findings extend beyond the Indonesian context, contributing to wider academic discussions on the significance of emotive elements in language acquisition, providing theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical insights pertinent to EFL instruction worldwide.

Conclusion

This study investigated the comparative impact of self-confidence, self-efficacy, and vocabulary knowledge on the speaking performance of Indonesian EFL students, focusing on whether psychological readiness has a greater predictive capacity than linguistic competence in classroom communication. The results indicate that speaking performance is influenced more by learners' willingness, confidence, and perceived competence to participate in oral engagement than by mere vocabulary possession. Self-confidence and self-efficacy proved to be the most significant factors in facilitating communicative fluency, participation, and speaking persistence, whereas vocabulary knowledge exhibited a relatively minor impact when psychological readiness was inadequate.

These findings enhance current discourse on communicative competence by redefining speaking performance as a psychologically mediated process instead of a solely linguistic result. The study enhances the understanding of EFL oral communication by illustrating that learners' affective states serve not only as supportive variables but also as fundamental mechanisms that dictate the efficient activation of linguistic knowledge in authentic interactions. The methodological integration of psychological and linguistic predictors within a cohesive regression framework provides a more thorough perspective for analyzing speaking performance in secondary EFL education.

The ramifications beyond the specific Indonesian setting. In numerous EFL classes worldwide, language training persists in emphasizing grammar and vocabulary acquisition, while neglecting the emotional aspects of communication. The above findings indicate that speaking-focused pedagogy should transition to psychologically supportive learning environments that foster communicative confidence, learner autonomy, and risk-taking behavior, in addition to lexical advancement. Educators, curriculum developers, and academic institutions may need to reevaluate the conceptualization, assessment, and facilitation of speaking competency in modern language education.

The study also establishes significant avenues for future research regarding the interplay between learner psychology, communicative behavior, and the transformation

of educational settings, encompassing digitally mediated speaking behaviors and technology-enhanced oral communication. The importance of this study resides in its challenge to traditional beliefs regarding speaking development: effective communication in EFL contexts relies not solely on learners' knowledge, but also on their confidence in utilizing that knowledge meaningfully. This study emphasizes psychological readiness as a critical aspect of speaking performance, promoting a more human-centered perspective on language learning that is pertinent to international EFL education, communicative pedagogy, and the future of learner development in multilingual societies.

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