

English Peer Counseling to Engage Students' Speaking Confidence and Motivation in Higher Education

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Speaking Skill;
Peer Counseling;
Confidence;
Motivation

Article history:

Received 2022-01-12

Revised 2022-02-09

Accepted 2022-04-03

ABSTRACT

Textbook-based teaching commonly used in the ELT context in Indonesia results in a complex stimulation for students to speak more since the focus is reading skills. Activating peers' activities through English peer counseling in teaching speaking is one of the effective ways to promote students' confidence and Motivation in speaking. It is an activity conducted by peers that focuses on developing fundamental skills, especially speaking. This research aims to know the students' thoughts about English peer counseling toward their confidence and Motivation in speaking. This research is qualitative research with a case study design. The researcher used a questionnaire as an instrument to collect the data. The questionnaire was given to 115 students of the English Education Program who joined the activity. The result shows that the first indicator reached 58,1%, which belongs to the neutral category. In comparison, the second indicator reached 91,4%. The final score for indicator one and indicator two was 79,8%. It indicates that students positively perceive English peer counseling to increase their speaking confidence and Motivation. The activity encourages students to be more active in small conversations and discussions. They have better confidence in talking to their peers, which also gains their Motivation. Similar research about English peer counseling for different skills, e.g., reading, writing, and listening, is highly possible to conduct.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Encouraging students to speak is a challenging effort in EFL teaching in Indonesia. Even though the students have been at a higher education level, they still feel shy, lack vocabulary, and are afraid of making mistakes (Nurlita, 2018). Ur (1996) and Abdullah et al. (2019) stated that speaking involves the active use of language to express meaning. Therefore, students need to be encouraged in their confidence and Motivation to speak English. An effective strategy needs to encourage students, especially higher-

level ones. One strategy suitable for the development phase of higher education level is peer counseling. Peer counseling tends to have higher possibility of being applied because the higher education level students believe their same-age friends. Many teenagers feel that adults cannot understand what they feel. This situation often makes them an exclusive group because they believe that only fellow teenagers can understand each other. Besides that, Bett (2013) argues that peer counseling can be a booster of good relationships between peers, which can help the development of teenagers' social aspects usually. Furthermore, Wang (2006) assumes that it will raise their confidence and Motivation to build networking and communication with other people.

In some cases, peer counseling is used to give counseling and maintain mental health for university students, as Prince (2015) studied. In addition, Britt et al. (2015) said that peer counseling could be used to help manage the financial stress of college students. Other than that, the research conducted by Njeru (2020) shows that peer counseling can be used to maintain the discipline and academic achievement of secondary school students. Even though peer counseling can increase the academic achievement of higher-level students, no peer counseling is used to motivate and engage English students' speaking confidence, as identified from previous studies. Therefore, it is needed to determine the effectiveness of peer counseling for college students' English speaking confidence. Peer counseling is the alternative for adolescents' need to identify problems and find solutions with their peers, especially in building English-speaking confidence and Motivation.

His/her proficiency in speaking strongly supports the ability to produce talk. Bailey (2005) states that speaking is a process of interaction where speakers intend to build meaning through producing, receiving, and processing information. It is a skill to use language appropriately to express someone's ideas, opinions, or feelings to give or get information and knowledge from other people who communicate. There are three essential aims of speaking. They are to inform; the speaker wants to share ideas, information, process feeling or opinion to the hearer and give knowledge as well in a particular purpose, to entertain; the speaker wants to make the hearer feels happier with the material which is selected primarily based on their entertainment value, and to discuss; the speaker wants to discuss something because the purpose of speaking is to make some decisions and planning (Tarigan, 2008). Gilakjani (2016) further defines that speaking deals with some aspects which build a comprehensible input for the listener, e.g., pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and comprehension. While Nirmawati (2015) argues that the ability to speak is difficult to be improved if the speaker has the lack of Motivation and confidence to produce the idea.

To assist English speaking proficiency, peer activity can be conducted for learners in the context of a class project or independent activities. (Brunello (2010) informs that peer activity could be an effective organizational medium for encouraging, clarifying, and guiding students' participation in planning academic and social classroom activities. At the same time, Duys (2000) and Mashudi (2020) found that peer counseling programs contribute to a significant improvement in self-confidence and Motivation. In terms of self-confidence, an internal sense or belief exists in an individual that convinces them that the individual can complete a task or goal in his life (Rahmawati et al., 2019). In line with this, another opinion states that self-confidence is a prerequisite for a beautiful and productive relationship because confidence can instill certainty in individuals in doing something (Azmandian, 2010). Another opinion from Harmer (2001) said that with peers is easier to share material, speak quietly, and less informally. This is reinforced by Backlund et al. (2015), in his opinion, and self-confidence is the ability that an individual has to achieve goals in doing a job well. Individuals will find self-confidence and self-esteem along with the emergence of assertive behavior. In line with this opinion, other experts state that assertiveness training can be of great use for self-development. Individuals with assertiveness skills will demonstrate honesty and effective communication, can increase self-awareness and increase self-confidence (Bishop & Verleger, 2013). These self-confidence and motivation senses will be encouraged through English peer counseling activity.

English peer counseling is an activity that focuses on students' confidence and Motivation to speak. In English peer counseling, they can discuss possible solutions, and they also could have more sharing

about their English proficiency. The students can interact, ask a question, and elaborate on the topic with peers more frequently. Peer counseling appears with the peer support concept started in 1939 to help alcoholics (Carter, 2005). In that concept, it is believed that individuals who ever addicted to alcohol and have successful experiences overcoming the addiction can be more effective in helping other individuals who are trying to overcome alcohol addiction. From year to the concept, year of peers continues to penetrate several settings and sound issues in academic and non-academic contexts. According to Carr 1981 (Suwarjo, 2008), peer counseling is a way for the students (teenagers) to learn how to pay attention and help other teenagers and apply it in daily life. It is a variety of helpful behavior performed by non-professional individuals trying to help others. Tindall & Gray (1985), peer counseling includes valuable relationships done individually (one-to-one helping relationship), group leadership, discussion leadership, giving considerations, tutorials, and all human interpersonal activity to help or help. Peer counseling is a form of psychological education, intentional and systematic. It allows students to have the skills to use implemented experience of independence and the ability to control one, which is very meaningful for young people. In particular, peer counseling does not focus on content evaluation but process thinking, feeling processes, and retrieval process decisions. Therefore, peer counseling contributes to having the substantial experience teenagers need, namely respect, Motivation, and confidence. Peer counseling is considered necessary because most teenagers talk about problems with peers than with parents or teachers at college. This study aimed to find out students' perspectives toward peer counseling activity in learning English to increase their confidence and Motivation.

2. METHODS

This study used a qualitative design in the case study. Creswell (2014) states that qualitative research is a research with an approach to understanding the meaning of an individual or group to explore human problems. Furthermore, according to Ritcie et al. (2003), qualitative research is an interpretative approach study that aims to understand the phenomenon's meaning. While Morreale et al. (2007) write that qualitative is a study of each individual or group's phenomenon, social activity, attitude, event, and perception by describing and analyzing. The data source of students' perception of English Peer Counseling toward their speaking Confidence and Motivation is taken from students of the English Education Program as the subject of this research.

Therefore, the purposive sampling technique was applied to take the research sample. As Sugiyono (2015) stated, the purposive sampling technique is a standard procedure used in qualitative research that identifies crucial informants or people with specific knowledge about the topic being studied. The type of purposive sampling depends on the purpose of the study and the researcher's need. The researcher took 115 students from the students of English Education Program at Universitas Muria Kudus. The researcher used a close-ended questionnaire to collect the data adapted from La'biran (La'biran et al., 2019) with some modifications. The total questions are forty.

It was shared using Google form with fourth-semester students of the English Education Department Universitas Muria Kudus. Every statement from the questionnaire was labeled with each scale, and this scale was used to calculate the percentage of each question. There are five predetermined answers on a scale of 1-5.

Table 1. Range Scale of Statement

Answers	Scale
Strongly Agree (SA)	5
Agree (A)	4
Neutral (N)	3
Disagree (D)	3
Strongly Disagree (SD)	1

Analyze the data from the close-ended questionnaire and it was calculated using percentages and scores.

Formula:

$$\% = \frac{\text{Frequency}}{\text{Number of Students}} \times 100$$

The data analysis was based on the following indicators;

Table 2, Indicators of Questionnaire

Indicator	Aspect	Question Number
Indicator I	Students' perception on English Peer Counseling toward their speaking self-Confidence and Motivation	1,4,5,6,9,10,11,12,14,15,18,19, 20,21,22,24,25,28,29,30,31,36,37,40
Indicator II	Students' speaking skill through English Peer Counseling	2,3,7,8,13,16,17,23,26,27,32,33,34, 35,38,39

The result is then categorized into negative, neutral, or positive perceptions (Arikunto's thought (2009)).

Table 3. Table of Category range

Percentage Interval	Category
< 60%	Negative
60 – 75 %	Neutral
>75%	Positive

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In any educational system, the counseling department is usually responsible for motivating and guiding students to achieve some aspects of their educational area, such as academic achievement. Peer counseling provides someone of equal standing or similar age to the students. In addition, peer counseling inherently acknowledges adolescents' skills and abilities, role as part of the solution to a problem, and willingness to contribute constructively. One of the aspects that can use peer counseling to solve a problem is English-speaking confidence called English peer counseling.

English peer counseling in this research is used to conduct peer counseling to motivate and increase the English speaking confidence. In conducting the peer-counseling technique, several activities can be carried out, such as one-on-one counseling, peer tutoring, peer mediation, peer education, brief or ongoing support groups, and training social, listening group leadership, and counseling skills. The questionnaire is distributed and analyzed to know the effectiveness of English peer counseling to motivate and increase students' English speaking confidence.

After the data from the questionnaire analyzed based on two different indicators, it was then calculated the average percentage of each indicator. The data from two indicators show that the first indicator reached a score of 58,1%, which was categorized as neutral. In contrast, the second indicator reached 91,4%, categorized as positive. The average result from those two indicators was 79,8%, categorized as positive. This implies that students' perception of the English Education Program towards English peer counseling in the speaking self-confidence and Motivation is positive. The result

from the questionnaire distributed virtually to students is served in the following table for indicator 1 (Students' perception of English Peer Counseling toward their speaking self-Confidence and Motivation) and indicator 2 (Students' speaking skills through English Peer Counseling).

Table 1. indicator 1 (Students' perception of English Peer Counseling toward their speaking self-Confidence and Motivation)

No	Questions	SA (5)		A (4)		N (3)		D (2)		SD (1)		Total score	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	F x n	%
1	English peer counseling has a great contribution to my interest in learning	32	28%	64	56%	16	14%	2	2%	0	0%	205	82%
4	The activity in English peer counseling does not disturb my schedule in college	28	24%	48	42%	39	34%	0	0%	0	0%	195	78%
5	I prefer to choose English peer counseling rather than Formal class	18	16%	25	22%	51	44%	12	10%	9	8%	164	65,6%
6	Outdoor class activities in English peer counseling are more interesting than formal class	25	22%	53	46%	32	28%	0	0%	5	4%	191	76,4%
9	I believe that English peer counseling can improve my speaking skill	32	28%	62	54%	18	16%	2	2%	0	0%	204	81,6%
10	the activity in English peer counseling are joy and fun	32	28%	60	52%	23	20%	0	0%	0	0%	204	81,6%
11	English peer counseling motivated me to study more	32	28%	41	36%	37	32%	2	2%	2	2%	193	77,2%
12	I feel more enjoy to express my idea by joining English peer counseling	23	20%	48	42%	44	38%	0	0%	0	0%	191	76,4%

14	English peer counseling push me up to study more diligently	18	16%	51	44%	44	38%	2	2%	0	0%	187	74,8%
15	The positive environment in English peer counseling has any effect on developing my speaking skill	30	26%	62	54%	21	18%	2	2%	0	0%	202	80,8%
18	English peer counseling increase cooperation among the learners	12	10%	83	72%	21	18%	0	0%	0	0%	196	78,4%
24	I become active students in a class after joining English peer counseling	12	10%	46	40%	53	46%	2	2%	2	2%	177	70,8%
25	I have more motivated to learn speaking when I join English peer counseling	28	24%	55	48%	30	26%	2	2%	0	0%	197	78,8%
28	In general, I am satisfied with the activity in English peer counseling	21	18%	53	46%	41	36%	0	0%	0	0%	191	76,4%
29	The counselor in English peer counseling delivered the material well	18	16%	64	56%	28	24%	2	2%	2	2%	191	76,4%
30	The activities in English peer counseling support the learning process	21	18%	60	52%	28	24%	7	6%	0	0%	191	76,4%
31	By joining English peer counseling can increase my good mood in studying	23	20%	35	30%	53	46%	5	4%	0	0%	183	73,2%

36	The speaking tips from counselor are easy to understand	23	20%	60	52%	30	26%	0	0%	2	2%	194	77,6%
37	I enjoyed the activities in English peer counseling	32	28%	64	56%	16	14%	0	0%	2	2%	204	81,6%
40	The time allotment to join English peer counseling are very flexible	23	20%	60	52%	28	24%	2	2%	2	2%	193	77,2%
Average of Indicator 1													58,1%

Table 2. Indicator 2 (Students' speaking skills through English Peer Counseling)

2	English peer counseling improves my speaking skill	23	20%	71	62%	16	14%	5	4%	0	0%	199	79,6%
3	Learning speaking by joining English peer counseling make me feel more enjoyed	28	24%	69	60%	18	16%	0	0%	0	0%	196	78,4%
7	Learning speaking through activities in English peer counseling are fun and enjoyable	39	34%	58	50%	18	16%	0	0%	0	0%	209	83,6%
8	Learning speaking through group discussion is easier than individually	32	28%	64	56%	14	12%	5	4%	0	0%	204	81,6%
13	The activities in English peer counseling encourage me to speak	30	26%	55	48%	30	26%	0	0%	0	0%	200	80%
16	English peer counseling enables me to do self-reflection about my speaking skill	23	20%	69	60%	21	18%	2	2%	0	0%	199	79,6%

17	English peer counseling makes me more active in group discussions	16	14%	60	52%	37	32%	2	2%	0	0%	189	75,6%
19	English peer counseling increases my softskill well	23	20%	69	60%	18	16%	2	2%	2	2%	197	78,8%
20	Kinds of activities in English peer counseling are fun	39	34%	53	46%	23	20%	0	0%	0	0%	207	82,8%
21	English peer counseling uses the proper techniques to motivate students to speak	25	22%	53	46%	35	30%	0	0%	2	2%	193	77,2%
22	The activities in English peer counseling encourage me to practice speaking	25	22%	67	58%	23	20%	0	0%	0	0%	201	80,4%
23	By joining English peer counseling, I feel comfortable in learning speaking	28	24%	55	48%	32	28%	0	0%	0	0%	198	79,2%
26	I get the best experience in learning speaking by joining English peer counseling	28	24%	64	56%	21	18%	2	2%	0	0%	201	80,4%
27	The activities in English peer counseling are effective and efficient	18	16%	53	46%	39	34%	2	2%	2	2%	186	74,4%
32	By joining English peer counseling, i got some tips to have a good puclic speaking	30	26%	48	42%	32	28%	2	2%	2	2%	194	77,6%
33	The activities in English peer	21	18%	64	56%	30	26%	0	0%	0	0%	196	78,4%

	counseling are very interesting												
34	By joining English peer counseling, my speaking fluency has improved	25	22%	48	42%	39	34%	2	2%	0	0%	192	76,8%
35	By joining English peer counseling my pronunciation are greatly increased	21	18%	58	50%	37	32%	0	0%	0	0%	193	77,2%
38	By joining English peer counseling, I am able to identify my speaking ability	21	18%	67	58%	28	24%	0	0%	0	0%	197	78,8%
39	The speaking technique that has been given to me is really valuable	16	14%	71	62%	25	22%	2	2%	0	0%	194	77,6%
Average of Indicator 2												91,4%	

In conclusion, the final result of the table above shows is specified in the following table to show different results from the two indicators of the questionnaire.

Table 3. Result of Questionnaire

Indicator	Item of questionnaire	Percentage	Category
I. Students' perception of English Peer Counseling toward their speaking self-Confidence and Motivation	24 items	64,2%	Neutral
II. Students' speaking skill through English Peer Counseling	16 items	98,6%	Positive
1. Average	40	81,4%	Positive

The result indicated that English peer counseling significantly contributed to students' interest in learning. It means that students can be motivated to speak English through peer counseling. Peer counseling is popularly accepted as an essential contributor to behavior change among learners in learning institutions. It utilizes role-playing and modeling to change behavior (Mulhern, 2020).

Besides that, peer counseling takes the form of coaching, peer education, modeling, mentoring, and behavior modification (Hines et al., 2020). It typically involves using members of the same age group to affect change among other members. Peer counseling addresses change both at the personal and social levels. It attempts to modify a person's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, behavior, and group norms and stimulate collective action, leading to changes in programs and policies (Milfayetty, 2018). Therefore, according to this research, this activity increased their participation or engagement in peer discussion. They felt free to express their ideas and feelings in English peer counseling. Furthermore,

students believe they were motivated to collaborate and share with others (peers). The activity contributes to students becoming more aware of their opinions or issues.

Furthermore, students agreed that English peer counseling activities made them more enjoyable to learn to speak, especially activities of games, discussion, and outdoor personal sharing. They felt a new atmosphere in learning to speak, making it easier to produce ideas orally. The students obtained confidence and Motivation to speak during and after the English peer-counseling activity. Because increasing self-confidence, especially English-speaking confidence, needs help with a self-improvement program, the peer counseling program is suitable for this term (Yoon & Ju, 2017). With counseling, individuals can be helped to gain confidence because counseling individuals will get very meaningful and valuable feedback to improve their appearance (Hamzah et al., 2020). The most effective feedback for a person can be obtained by individuals from their interactions with a one-on-one partner. Thus, the form of counseling that may be more appropriate for adolescents is peer counseling (Hogan, R., Fox & Barratt-See, 2017).

However, it should be maintained that students should be guided to choose their peers with caution to enhance their English-speaking confidence adjustment. This should be a function of all the major stakeholders in the development of the adolescent, such as parents, lecturers, and counselors, just to mention a few. The study identified that peers have a more significant influence on each other. Besides, they would want to share their most distressing problems with their friends more than adults. Hence, being in the company of well-behaved students or peers is likely to impact one's life and vice versa positively. Therefore, this English peer counseling could effectively increase and motivate students' English-speaking confidence.

4. CONCLUSION

This study indicates that English peer counseling activities stimulate students to speak more. They are motivated to have a discussion with their peer and feel free to share ideas with fewer barriers. In conclusion, students have positive perceptions about English peer counseling toward their confidence and Motivation in speaking. It means that students can be motivated to speak English through peer counseling. Peer counseling is popularly accepted as an essential contributor to behavior change among learners in learning institutions. The result of this research is hoped to find a strategy to increase and motivate students' English confidence. Other than that, further research is needed to implement this strategy in higher-level students.

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