

The Influence of Storytelling on Students' Confidence in Speaking English : Out of The Class Context

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ABSTRACT

Speaking ability is an essential skill in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), set many students still struggle to express themselves due to a lack of confidence and speaking anxiety. Although various studies have examined storytelling techniques as a learning strategy to improve speaking skills, most have focused on classroom contexts and have not specifically explored how storytelling competitions impact students' confidence and speaking anxiety outside the classroom. This study aims to investigate how participation in storytelling competitions can influence students' confidence in speaking English, reduce speaking anxiety, and identify the factors that affect students' confidence after participating in such competition. This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach with semi-structured interview and documentation methods. The subjects of the study are three junior high school students who actively participate in storytelling competitions. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques based on the six phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The findings demonstrate that self-confidence develops through four main sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1977). First, mastery experience emerged as the strongest factor, where repeated participation gradually reduced students' nervousness and built their belief in their ability to perform. Second, vicarious experience from observing peers provided both motivation and learning opportunities that encouraged self-improvement. Third, verbal persuasion in the form of support and appreciation from teachers, parents, and peers played a crucial role in strengthening students' confidence. Finally, although students initially experienced nervousness and anxiety, these feelings transformed into pride and satisfaction after performing, showing the importance of emotional regulation in public speaking. Overall, storytelling competitions not only reduce students' speaking anxiety but also enhance their confidence, fluency, and readiness to use English in real communication contexts.

Keywords: *Storytelling, Confidence, Speaking Anxiety, English Speaking Skills, Storytelling Competition.*

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an essential skill in language learning, especially in the context of English as a global language. According to Natasia and Angelianawati (2022), speaking is a fundamental skill that must be mastered in foreign language learning. This skill is often considered a benchmark for the success of language learners. Similarly, Van Huy et al. (2024) state that speaking in a foreign language requires focus and good language mastery so that interlocutors can easily understand the content of the conversation. In line with this, Setyaningsih et al. (2022) emphasizes that people commonly use English to interact with others in various situations, including everyday activities, highlighting the practical importance of speaking skills in real-life communication.

Lar and Maulina (2021) stated that speaking is a productive skill that requires various activities in the learning process. The teaching and learning activities in speaking classes can help improve students' self-confidence. However, many students struggle to express themselves confidently when speaking in English. This lack of confidence is often caused by fear of making mistakes, limited comprehension, and anxiety during oral communication (Brown, 2007). Limitations in expressing facial expressions and body movements can be an

inhibiting factor that contributes to a decrease in students' self-confidence. (Maulina & Rusli, 2019). As a result, students tend to avoid speaking in English, which hinders the optimal development of their speaking skills. Having good self-confidence can help students overcome fear and negative thoughts that inhibit their abilities. According to Marsevani and Rahman (2022), students with higher confidence levels are more likely to engage in oral activities such as class discussions or presentations. Sumarsih et al. (2022) also explain that self-confidence is an important aspect of personality, where someone can be considered confident if they are able to fully actualize their potential.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, speaking anxiety is a significant challenge because it can affect students' academic performance and motivation. Various studies have identified factors that contribute to this anxiety. Hidayat (2021) identifies nine dominant factors that cause speaking anxiety among EFL learners, such as cognitive and linguistics aspects, classroom procedures, a rigid and formal classroom atmosphere, in-class presentations, fear of making mistakes, worry about others' judgment, the role of the teacher, and linguistics difficulties like pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Suratin and Sribayak (2025), in their study found that internal factors such as low self-esteem, fear of making mistakes, lack of self-confidence, and limitations in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation are the main causes of speaking anxiety. These findings align with Sulistyowati (2023), who states that postgraduate students experience speaking anxiety that negatively impacts their academic performance, as seen in symptoms such as discomfort, lack of confidence, nervousness, and fear of speaking in English. Yunus et al. (2023) also emphasize that fear of negative evaluation and communication anxiety – including shyness, lack of preparation, and mother tongue interference are key factors in speaking anxiety among EFL students. Overall, the causes of speaking anxiety include internal factors such as self-confidence and linguistic competence, as well as external factors like classroom environment and social interaction. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of these factors is essential in developing effective teaching strategies to reduce anxiety and improve students' speaking skills in EFL contexts.

As part of efforts to improve students' speaking skills, storytelling is one of the techniques used. This technique is considered an innovative and effective teaching strategy for enhancing speaking abilities, as it encourages creativity while improving fluency and self-confidence. Utami et al. (2024) state that storytelling is one of the most widely used methods in the learning process. Through storytelling, students can practice speaking in a more relaxed and creative atmosphere, which helps them feel more confident in expressing their ideas and opinions. According to Ambarita et al. (2022), this technique helps students improve their speaking skills. Additionally, storytelling contributes to the development of self-confidence, as students are trained to organize ideas, tell stories, and speak in front of an audience.

Storytelling is a teaching technique that uses narrative structures to convey messages and develop language skills. Ghafar (2024) explains that storytelling is more effective than traditional teaching materials such as textbooks. Rahmadhania et al. (2022) add that this technique allows students to actively participate in building both social and academic stories. Salono et al. (2024) also mention that storytelling functions as a communicative strategy because it helps students improve their English speaking skills. Moreover, this method enhances students' motivation and engagement during classroom learning. With storytelling, students not only improve speaking fluency but also refine pronunciation, intonation, and vocabulary, as they are required to deliver stories in an expressive and engaging manner. According to Alisoy (2023), storytelling offers various benefits in language learning. First, it enhances listening and comprehension skills. Second, it strengthens memory by providing meaningful context. Third, it encourages creativity and fluency by offering space for authentic language use. Fourth, storytelling boosts motivation and engagement through enjoyable learning experiences. Fifth, it also provides cultural insights that enrich students' understanding of the target language and culture.

Apart from that storytelling also plays a role in improving students' listening skills. By listening to stories told by peers or teachers, students become familiar with various pronunciations, intonations, and sentence structures in English. Putri et al. (2023) state that

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speaking skills are closely linked to vocabulary development, which can be acquired through reading and listening activities. Therefore, storytelling not only trains speaking skills but also supports overall listening comprehension. This technique has also proven effective in helping students overcome fear or anxiety when speaking in English. Febrina (2021) states that the implementation of storytelling can boost students' self-confidence and speaking abilities. Storytelling provides a clear topic, allowing students to focus on conveying the story content without worrying too much about grammatical or pronunciation errors (Oktanisia & Susilo, 2021; Putra et al., 2022). Consistent practice using this method helps students feel more comfortable speaking in English and reduces pressure in oral communication. In addition to improving language skills, storytelling creates a supportive environment that fosters students' personal development, particularly in building confidence in verbal communication.

Self-confidence in speaking English is a crucial aspect of language learning. Lar and Maulina (2021) mention that self-confidence is one of the key factors in students' success in learning and speaking English. Similarly, Asniani et al. (2025) also emphasizes that confidence in speaking English is an important aspect that supports students' success in language learning. Self-confidence involves belief in one's own abilities and self-assessment in completing tasks effectively.

According to Bandura (1977), there are four main sources that influence a person's level of self-confidence. First, mastery experience is the most influential factor; successfully completing tasks can enhance self-confidence, while repeated failures may lead to a fear of trying again. Second, vicarious experience is gained through observing the success of others, which then serves as a reference point for self-evaluation. Third, social persuasion, such as praise and positive encouragement, can boost motivation, whereas negative criticism—especially when delivered in public—can lower self-confidence. Fourth, physical and emotional conditions, such as nervousness, tension, and other bodily symptoms, can interfere with speaking ability and reduce focus. These four factors are interrelated and collectively shape a person's level of self-confidence.

In the context of speaking English, confidence reflects students' belief in their ability to speak fluently and without fear. Branden (1969) adds that self-confidence is the individual's belief in their capability to face challenges and achieve goals, including accepting themselves and taking responsibility for their actions. Factors that influence students' self-confidence in speaking English include speaking experience, vocabulary mastery, and grammar knowledge. Dianelo et al. (2023) state that using storytelling can improve students' vocabulary and pronunciation. Direct speaking experiences, such as through storytelling or presentations, help students feel more comfortable when speaking. Setiawan and Sulhan (2021) emphasize that self-confidence and vocabulary mastery are crucial factors in developing one's speaking skills.

Out of the classroom context, storytelling can also be an effective approach to building students' confidence in speaking English more freely and spontaneously. Yulianawati et al. (2025) state that storytelling is an effective method to create a positive and interactive learning environment that encourages students to speak with greater confidence. Outdoor storytelling activities have also proven to enhance students' storytelling skills. Gunadi and Lubis (2021) show that students' storytelling skills improved after participating in outdoor learning compared to conventional classroom instruction. Furthermore, storytelling competitions provide a beneficial platform for language development. These competitions require participants to tell stories orally in front of an audience or judges, with assessment criteria including fluency, content mastery, facial expression, and delivery techniques. According to Anggarini et al. (2023), storytelling competitions can enhance participants' speaking skills, particularly in fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary use, and grammatical structure. These competitions also train various skills such as creativity, self-confidence, and public speaking. Mardhiah et al. (2024) found that using digital storytelling, especially with local folktales, can effectively improve the speaking skills of EFL students in Indonesia. Miao and Li (2024) also reported that digital storytelling enhances students' engagement, creativity, and independence in English learning.

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A supportive learning environment also plays a crucial role in boosting students' self-confidence in storytelling competitions. Emotional support from teachers, positive peer interaction, and an inclusive, fear-free classroom atmosphere can help students feel more comfortable and confident. Gabejan (2021) suggests that strategies such as providing constructive feedback and creating a supportive environment can increase students' active participation in speaking activities. This is supported by Andriani et al. (2024), who found that psychological factors, including the learning environment, influence students' speaking performance, where a positive environment helps reduce anxiety and boost confidence. In storytelling competitions, key elements assessed include emotional expression through facial gestures and voice intonation, supportive body movements, audience interaction through eye contact, clear articulation, and effective time management during the performance. Peng et al. (2023) noted that students' multidimensional engagement in digital storytelling positively impacts their motivation and encourages active participation in English speaking activities. Thus, both inside and outside the classroom, storytelling in various forms can significantly enhance speaking ability, self-confidence, and overall language development among students.

Based on previous research, there are several studies that support the influence of storytelling on students' confidence in speaking English. In Indonesian context, research by Rahmawati et al. (2025) shows storytelling significantly boosts confidence, fluency, and motivation, but also reveals areas for improvement in addressing emotions challenges. Furthermore research by Warmansyah and Nirwana (2023) found that there is an interaction between the storytelling method and self-confidence, which generally has a significant impact on children's expressive language skills. Apart from that research by Tifani et al. (2020) found that using the storytelling technique through webtoons helped boost students' confidence in speaking English. Many of them became more engaged and active during classroom speaking activities. In conclusion, incorporating storytelling via webtoons proved effective in enhancing students' speaking confidence. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers apply this method in teaching speaking skills to their students. In global context, research by Hien and Phuong (2023) show that most participants significantly enhanced their speaking abilities through the use of storytelling techniques, which contributed to improved speaking proficiency. Additionally, the questionnaires revealed that combining storytelling with students' motivation led to increased confidence and a greater willingness to speak. Apart from that research by Nguyen et al. (2022) showed that Using real-life materials in storytelling activities encourages students to share their personal experiences, which helps develop their overall EFL writing abilities and boosts their confidence in using English in practical, real-world contexts. Furthermore research by Kaet et al. (2023) found that storytelling was effective in improving students' speaking abilities as well as boosting their confidence in speaking English.

There are some studies on self-confidence and English-speaking skills, most have not specifically discussed how participating in storytelling competitions affects students' speaking anxiety likely nervousness out of the classroom context. Most studies only examine the use of storytelling in classroom settings, not in of the context of a competition. Moreover, factors such as environmental support, understanding of the story material, and public speaking experience are still rarely the main focus, even though these factors have the potential to enhance students' self-confidence after participating in storytelling competitions.

Therefore this study aims to answer several key questions related to the influence of storytelling on students' confidence in speaking English. First, it will also explore how storytelling can help reduce nervousness or anxiety when speaking, which is often a major barrier to English-speaking ability ? Second, this study will identify what are factors that influence students' confidence after participating in storytelling competition, such as the support of the learning environment, the ability to understand the material, and previous experiences in public speaking.

The objective of this study is to determine how confident students are in speaking English after participating in storytelling. This study aims to explore whether participating in storytelling activities can help reduce students' nervousness or anxiety when speaking

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English, to identify the various factors that influence students' confidence in speaking English after participating in a storytelling competition, including the support of the learning environment, their ability to understand the material, and their previous experiences in public speaking. This study focuses on students who have participated in English storytelling competitions out of the class context. The research is limited to exploring how storytelling affects students' anxiety or nervousness when speaking English, and identifying the factors that contribute to their speaking confidence after the competition.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at deeply describing the role of storytelling in influence students' confidence in speaking English. In this study, data was collected through direct stories from students who had participated in storytelling competitions, in order to explore their experiences related to the increase in confidence when speaking in public. According to Creswell (2014), the qualitative approach will allow researchers to explore the meaning, understanding, and interpretation of human experiences in real-life situations. Therefore, through in-depth interviews, researchers gained a more comprehensive understanding of how storytelling will affect students' confidence when speaking in English.

Respondent

Students who actively participated in storytelling activities, such as extracurricular participants, who selected through purposive sampling based on their abilities and participation. The sampling was conducted using purposive sampling to ensure that only students who are genuinely active in storytelling activities were selected. Based on the information obtained, there were three students who meet the criteria as research subjects.

Instruments

This research instrument consists of two main parts. The first part was an interview question list, which contained a series of open-ended questions aimed at encouraging students to share in-depth experiences about their participation in storytelling competitions. These questions cover various important aspects, including the use of storytelling in English language learning and the extent to which this activity contributes to enhancing students' self-confidence in speaking English. These guidelines contain targeted questions designed to examine the factors contributing to students' low self-confidence, specifically focusing on mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological and emotional conditions. These four aspects were consistently addressed with each participant. In addition, the interview questions list were validated by expert to ensure content appropriateness, clarity of language, and relevance to the research objectives. The second part was a storytelling activity documentation form that contains supporting data derived from certificates of participation or awards received by the students in storytelling competitions.

Data Collection

The data collection in this research consists of two main parts. First, face-to-face interviews were conducted with each participant to capture their expressions and body language, which are important in assessing comfort and confidence while speaking. During the interviews, participants' answers were recorded and later summarized in a structured manner. Second, documentation of storytelling activities was collected in the form of certificates of participation or awards received by the students. This combination of interview and documentation ensured that both verbal responses and supporting evidence were obtained to strengthen the findings of the study.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used in this study, Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes that emerge within the data. The initial step of data analysis in this study was conducted using the thematic analysis approach, which consists of six phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). First, the researcher familiarized yourself with the data by repeatedly reading the interview transcripts to gain a deep understanding of the context. Second, initial coding was carried out

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manually by identifying keywords or significant meanings that emerged from the participants' responses. Third, the initial codes were grouped into several themes relevant to the focus of the study, namely students' confidence in speaking English through storytelling. Fourth, the identified themes were reviewed to ensure their consistency with the overall data set. Fifth, the themes were named and clearly defined to ensure they were representative and easy to understand. Finally, the established themes were used as the foundation for analyzing the findings and drawing conclusions in this study.

Table 1. Participants' Demographic Profile and Storytelling Experience

No	Participant	Gender	Storytelling Experiences	Year	Place
1.	A	Female	Participated several times in school storytelling competition	2024	SMPN 1 KENDARI
2.	R	Female	Participated in both school and inter-school storytelling competition	2024	SMPN 1 KENDARI and UNIVERISTAS HALUOLEO
3.	M	Female	Participated several times in school storytelling competition	2024	SMPN 1 KENDARI



Figure 1. Student Certificate of Storytelling Participation

Figure 1 presents documentation in the form of a participation certificate obtained by students in the storytelling competition. This certificate serves as concrete evidence of the participants' involvement in the competition and strengthens the interview data. With this document, the researcher can demonstrate that the students' participation in storytelling is not merely a personal experience but is also officially recognized through the awards they received.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on the interviews with three participants (A, R, and M), data were obtained regarding their experiences in participating in storytelling competitions and its impact on their self-confidence in speaking English. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and categorized according to the four sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1977), namely mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological & emotional states.

Mastery Experiences

All participants reported that repeated experiences of participating in storytelling competitions enhanced their self-confidence.

A : *"Before joining the competition I often felt doubtful, but after joining I became more confident."*

R : *"After the competition, whether I win or not is secondary, the important thing is that I have already performed and that is good enough."*

M : *"Before joining storytelling I could be considered shy. But after participating in storytelling, became more confident."*

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The three participants consistently expressed that participating in storytelling competitions contributed positively to their self-confidence. A emphasized that her initial doubts were reduced after gaining experience, R highlighted that the act of performing itself – regardless of the outcome – was already a meaningful achievement, and M revealed a personal transformation from being shy to becoming more confident. These responses illustrate that mastery experience through repeated participation plays a central role in developing students' self-efficacy.

Vicarious Experience

Participants also mentioned that observing the achievements of their peers had an impact on their self-confidence. They reflected on how friends' success could be both a source of encouragement and, at times, a cause of self-doubt.

R : "Seeing my friends' success motivates me because I feel that if they can do it, I can too. But sometimes, it also makes me feel a little inferior."

R : "When a friend wins, at first there's a feeling of envy, but I try to learn what made them succeed."

M : "Seeing others succeed makes me believe that I can also do it."

The participants explained that the success of their peers had a noticeable influence on their confidence. M admitted that while seeing friends succeed motivated her to believe she could also achieve the same, it sometimes made her feel slightly inferior. R shared that a friend's victory initially created feelings of envy, but she turned it into an opportunity to learn from their success. Similarly, A expressed that witnessing others' achievements strengthened her belief that she was also capable of accomplishing the same. These responses highlight the role of vicarious experience, where observing peers serves as both motivation and a learning opportunity, ultimately supporting the development of self-confidence.

Verbal Persuasion

Social support proved to be an important factor in building students' self-confidence.

M : "Every time I perform, what comes to my mind are the words of encouragement from my parents and teachers."

A : "Compliments make me feel proud and appreciated."

R : "If there is a lack of support, I feel less confident. So, feedback is very important."

The interview results show that social support plays an important role in building students' self-confidence when participating in storytelling competitions. M emphasized that motivational words from parents and teachers always serve as encouragement that she remembers every time she performs. Similarly, A stated that the compliments she received made her feel proud and appreciated. Meanwhile, R added that a lack of support could decrease her confidence, making constructive feedback very important. These findings indicate that positive encouragement from parents, teachers, and peers not only provides motivation but also strengthens students' psychological readiness to perform in public.

Physiological & Emotional States

All participants experiences nervousness, anxiety, and fear before performing, but after completing their performance, they felt relieved, proud, and happy.

A : "Before performing, I felt nervous and anxious... but after performing, I felt proud."

R : "Before performing, I was very nervous, especially seeing other participants perform well, but after performing, it was not as bad as I thought."

M : "Nervousness made me speak hesitantly or less fluently."

The interview findings revealed that all participants experienced physiological and emotional symptoms such as nervousness, anxiety, and fear before performing in the storytelling competition. A stated that she felt nervous and anxious before her performance; however, after completing it, she felt proud of herself. Similarly, R explained that her nervousness intensified when watching other participants who she thought performance better, yet after finishing her own performance, she realized that the situation was not as bad as she had imagined. Meanwhile, M noted that the nervousness she experienced directly affected her performance, making her speak hesitantly and less fluently.

Disussions

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The results of this study indicate that storytelling competitions play a substantial role in enhancing students' confidence in speaking English. The interview data revealed that students' self-confidence developed through four interrelated aspects as suggested by Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy framework: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Each of these sources is reflected in the participants' experiences and is consistent with findings from previous research on storytelling and language learning.

The most significant factor that shaped students' confidence was mastery experience. All three participants acknowledged that their first storytelling competition brought feelings of doubt, nervousness, or shyness. However, repeated participation gradually transformed these negative emotions into confidence. For example, A explained that her initial doubts were replaced by self-belief after performing, while R emphasized that participation itself was a meaningful achievement regardless of winning or losing. Similarly, M described her personal transformation from being shy to becoming more confident after gaining performance experience.

This finding confirms Bandura's (1977) notion that successful task completion strengthens self-efficacy, while repeated engagement in the same task leads to habituation and greater confidence. The participants' experiences also resonate with studies by Rahmawati et al. (2025) and Marsevani & Rahman (2022), which show that consistent involvement in storytelling activities enhances students' fluency and reduces speaking anxiety. In the competition context, mastery experiences were not only about winning prizes but also about completing the performance in front of an audience, which students perceived as personal success.

The second important factor is vicarious experience, or learning from observing others. Participants admitted that watching their peers perform successfully inspired them to believe in their own potential. For instance, M stated that seeing her friends succeed made her think that she could also achieve the same. However, she also confessed that sometimes this observation created a sense of inferiority. R expressed that initially she felt envious when her peers won, but later used that experience as motivation to learn and improve. A similarly felt that others' success strengthened her belief that she was also capable.

These findings highlight both the motivational and comparative dimensions of vicarious experience. While positive modeling by peers boosts confidence, it can also trigger self-doubt if students negatively compare their performance. This dual effect aligns with Warmansyah & Nirwana (2023), who found that self-confidence in storytelling is influenced by peer modeling, and with Nguyen et al. (2022), who emphasized that observing peers in real-life storytelling activities fosters learning and boosts confidence in language use.

Verbal persuasion in the form of social support also emerged as a strong contributor to students' confidence. M noted that encouragement from parents and teachers gave her mental strength before performing, A felt proud when she received compliments, and R emphasized that a lack of support reduced her confidence, making constructive feedback essential.

These findings align with Cadiz-Gabejan (2021), who argues that teachers' supportive feedback plays a crucial role in encouraging students' participation in speaking activities. Similarly, Andriani et al. (2024) highlight that psychological factors such as peer support and classroom atmosphere significantly affect students' speaking performance. In the context of storytelling competitions, verbal persuasion not only boosted motivation but also helped students maintain psychological readiness, especially when dealing with performance anxiety.

The final factor is physiological and emotional states, which appeared strongly in all participants. They admitted to feeling nervous, anxious, or fearful before performing. A expressed nervousness and anxiety before her turn, but later felt proud. R explained that seeing others perform well increased her nervousness, but after her performance she realized it was not as difficult as she imagined. Meanwhile, M said her nervousness caused hesitation and reduced fluency.

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This pattern illustrates Bandura's (1977) point that emotional and physical conditions can weaken or strengthen self-efficacy. The findings also correspond with Sulistyowati (2023) and Yunus et al. (2024), who explain that speaking anxiety is common in EFL learners but can decrease with practice and supportive experiences. Importantly, the emotional transformation from anxiety to pride after performing demonstrates that storytelling competitions can help students reframe their nervousness into positive self-evaluation once they accomplish the task

Table 2. Thematic Analysis of Students' Self-Confidence in Storytelling

Theme (Bandura's Self-Efficacy Sources)	Subthem	Description
Mastery Experience	• First competition experience	Students initially felt shy, doubtful, or anxious, but their first experience became a turning point for gaining confidence.
	• Repeated participation	The more frequently students joined competitions, the less nervous and doubtful they felt; repeated experience created habituation.
	• Personal Achievement	Completing the performance was considered a personal success even without winning a prize.
Vicarious Experience	• Learning from peers	Observing peers' success inspired students and gave them insight into strategies for improvement.
	• Motivation effect	Seeing friends succeed encouraged students to believe they could also succeed.
	• Inferiority effect	Peer success sometimes caused students to feel less confident about their own abilities.
Verbal Persuasion	• Teachers and parents support	Motivational words from teachers and parents provided mental strength before performing.
	• Appreciation	Praise after performing gave students a sense of pride and being valued.
	• Peer encouragement	Positive comments from peers reinforced their confidence and courage to performance.
Physiological & Emotional States	• Nervousness	Students experienced nervousness, fear of forgetting the text, mispronunciation.
	• Effect on performance	Nervousness affected fluency and speech delivery.
	• Emotional transformation	After performing, nervousness and anxiety turned into relief, pride, and satisfaction.

Thematic analysis of the interviews demonstrates that storytelling competitions positively influence students' self-confidence through the four sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1977). Mastery experience emerged as the most dominant factor, as repeated participation gradually reduced students' nervousness and transformed initial doubts into confidence. Vicarious experience also played an important role, where observing peers' success inspired motivation, although at times it triggered feelings of inferiority. Verbal persuasion, particularly in the form of encouragement from teachers, parents, and peers, consistently strengthened students' belief in their ability to perform. Finally, the analysis of physiological and emotional states highlighted how nervousness and anxiety before performing often shifted into pride and relief afterward, indicating emotional growth and resilience. Taken together, these findings confirm that storytelling competitions provide a supportive platform that helps students overcome fear, build confidence, and develop speaking skills outside the classroom context.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that participation in storytelling competitions has a significant influence on students' confidence in speaking English outside the classroom context. The findings indicate that students' self-confidence developed through four main sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1977), namely mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological as well as emotional states. Repeated participation in competitions not only reduced students' nervousness and anxiety but also transformed their doubts into self-assurance. Observing peers' achievements served as both motivation and a learning opportunity, while social support from teachers, parents, and peers further strengthened their readiness to perform. Moreover, although nervousness and fear were common before performing, students experienced a positive emotional transformation after completing their performances, feeling proud and satisfied with their achievement. These findings highlight that storytelling competitions can create meaningful opportunities for students to practice public speaking, overcome speaking anxiety, and gradually build confidence in using English. Therefore, storytelling should be considered not only as a classroom teaching strategy but also as an extracurricular activity that provides authentic contexts for language practice. Teachers and educators are encouraged to integrate storytelling competitions as part of language learning activities, as they effectively enhance students' speaking confidence, reduce anxiety, and support overall English language development.

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