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The Contribution of Adaptive Instructional Design in Enhancing Students' Self-Confidence in Junior High School Speaking Activities in Bengkalis Regency

Faradila Chantika[1], Mahdum[2], Supriusman[3]
[1,2,3]Universitas Riau
Correspondence e-mail: faradila203@gmail.com

Abstract:
This study aims to investigate the contribution of adaptive instructional design in enhancing students' self-confidence in speaking activities at the junior high school level in Bengkalis Regency, Indonesia. Self-confidence is a key psychological factor that influences students' willingness to actively participate in oral communication. The research employed a quasi-experimental design involving two groups: an experimental group (taught with adaptive instructional strategies) and a control group (taught using conventional methods). A validated self-confidence questionnaire was administered as the main instrument, and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and an independent sample t-test. The results revealed that the experimental group achieved a higher mean score ($M = 78.65$, $SD = 6.42$) compared to the control group ($M = 70.12$, $SD = 7.11$), with a statistically significant difference ($t(58) = 3.47$, $p < 0.01$). These findings highlight that adaptive instructional design—when tailored to students' learning needs and characteristics—plays a crucial role in fostering psychological readiness and communicative competence. This study suggests that adaptive learning strategies can be effectively integrated into language teaching to create a supportive and engaging environment for students.

Keywords: *Self-Confidence, Adaptive Instructional Design, Speaking Skills*

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Introduction

English has emerged as a global lingua franca in the twenty-first century, functioning as the primary medium of communication across international boundaries in business, education, science, and technology (Crystal, 2012). Among the four language skills, speaking is arguably the most crucial for effective interaction, as it involves not only the accurate use of linguistic forms but also fluency, confidence, and the ability to communicate ideas in real-time situations. However, speaking is also one of the most demanding skills for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). Unlike reading or writing, speaking requires immediate production and often occurs under psychological pressure, making factors such as motivation, self-esteem, and particularly self-confidence essential to success (Harmer, 2007).

Globally, the importance of English-speaking competence has been emphasized in various educational policies. Many countries in Asia, for instance, have implemented communicative approaches to improve oral proficiency among students (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Nevertheless, the results remain varied, and the ability to speak English confidently is still a challenge for many EFL learners. According to MacIntyre (2007), students' willingness to communicate is strongly affected by affective variables, with self-confidence being a major predictor of whether learners attempt to use English in authentic contexts. This highlights the urgent need for teaching strategies that not only develop linguistic competence but also address learners' psychological readiness.

In Indonesia, the urgency to improve English proficiency is evident in several large-scale assessments. The EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI 2023) placed Indonesia at rank 79 out of 113 countries, with a score categorized as "low proficiency." Similarly, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2018) reported that Indonesian students scored 371 in reading literacy, which is below the OECD average of 487 (OECD, 2019). These statistics suggest that Indonesian students, in general, continue to struggle in language skills, including the ability to communicate effectively in English. Within the classroom context, speaking tends to be the most neglected skill, as many students are reluctant to speak up. Factors such as fear of making mistakes, peer pressure, and low self-confidence contribute to students' silence in class (Fitriani, 2019; Sari, 2020).

At the local level, observations in junior high schools in Bengkalis Regency reveal a similar pattern. Interviews with teachers indicate that approximately 70% of students prefer to remain silent during speaking activities, despite having the necessary vocabulary or grammatical knowledge. This reluctance is largely rooted in low self-confidence, anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Such findings are not surprising, as language anxiety is a common phenomenon among EFL learners, but its prevalence in Bengkalis schools raises serious concerns about the effectiveness of current instructional methods. Without interventions to build students' self-confidence, many learners may continue to underperform in speaking, which could hinder their academic progress and future opportunities.

To overcome these challenges, adaptive instructional design has been proposed as a promising approach. Adaptive instruction refers to the practice of tailoring teaching strategies, tasks, and assessments according to the diverse needs, abilities, and learning styles of students (Tomlinson, 2017; Anderson, 2018). The theoretical foundation of adaptive instruction draws from several influential perspectives. Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) emphasizes the importance of scaffolding and supportive guidance, where students can perform better when provided with assistance that matches their developmental level. Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory further explains that confidence develops through mastery experiences, social modeling, and

positive reinforcement. Additionally, Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis highlights that a supportive learning environment can reduce anxiety and increase students' willingness to use the target language.

In practice, adaptive instructional strategies may include differentiated speaking tasks, flexible grouping, scaffolding techniques, and constructive feedback. For example, weaker students can be given simpler speaking tasks with more guidance, while stronger students may handle more challenging communicative activities. Such strategies ensure that each student experiences success, which in turn builds self-confidence. Moreover, adaptive instruction promotes inclusivity and equity by acknowledging that students learn differently and require varied forms of support to succeed. This is particularly relevant in EFL classrooms, where the range of students' proficiency levels is often wide.

Previous studies have provided empirical support for the effectiveness of adaptive and differentiated instruction. Astutik and Sukarno (2023) found that differentiated instruction significantly increased students' confidence in speaking English in a junior high school in Jember. Rahmawati and Susanti (2025) reported that role-play activities, as a form of adaptive learning, improved self-confidence and willingness to speak. Simanjuntak and Nasution (2025) also demonstrated that task-based and communicative approaches enhanced speaking confidence among elementary students. While these studies underscore the benefits of adaptive strategies, research focusing on Bengkalis Regency is still scarce, leaving a gap in understanding how such approaches might impact students in this specific context.

This research seeks to fill that gap by investigating the contribution of adaptive instructional design in enhancing junior high school students' self-confidence in speaking activities in Bengkalis Regency. Unlike conventional teacher-centered approaches, adaptive instruction prioritizes student engagement, personalization, and the creation of a psychologically safe learning environment. By implementing adaptive tasks, flexible grouping, and scaffolding, teachers can lower the barriers that typically inhibit students from speaking. The present study employed a quasi-experimental design to compare the outcomes of students taught with adaptive instructional design versus those taught with conventional methods.

The significance of this study lies in both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it integrates well-established psychological and educational frameworks—self-efficacy, ZPD, and affective filter—into the context of language learning, particularly speaking. Practically, the study provides actionable insights for English teachers in Bengkalis and beyond. If adaptive instructional design proves effective, it can serve as a model for classroom practices aimed at building self-confidence and improving oral communication skills. Furthermore, the findings may inform curriculum developers and policymakers about the importance of adopting adaptive and student-centered pedagogies in English education.

In conclusion, speaking as a language skill cannot be separated from affective variables, with self-confidence being a decisive factor. Indonesian students, particularly in Bengkalis Regency, face challenges in this area due to traditional teaching methods that often neglect psychological readiness. Adaptive instructional design offers a feasible solution by aligning teaching methods with individual needs, thus lowering anxiety and increasing confidence. Therefore, this study aims to: (1) examine whether adaptive instructional design significantly improves students' self-confidence in speaking compared to conventional methods, and (2) explore how adaptive strategies foster a

supportive classroom environment that encourages active participation in English speaking activities.

Methods

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design with a control group and an experimental group, as it aimed to investigate the effect of adaptive instructional design on students' self-confidence in speaking activities. A quasi-experimental design was chosen because it allows the comparison between groups under real classroom settings, while still maintaining experimental control over treatment and measurement. The participants of the study consisted of 60 eighth-grade students from two junior high schools in Bengkalis Regency, Indonesia. The students were divided into two groups: the experimental group (n = 30), which received adaptive instructional design, and the control group (n = 30), which received conventional teaching methods.

The data source of this research was the students' responses to a self-confidence questionnaire. The instrument was adapted from Rosenberg's (1965) Self-Esteem Scale, modified to measure students' confidence in speaking English, and validated by experts in educational psychology. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items, each measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The reliability test yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.87, which indicates that the instrument had high internal consistency. In addition to the questionnaire, classroom observations and teacher interviews were conducted to gain supporting qualitative data about students' participation and classroom atmosphere.

The data type consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were collected from the pre-test and post-test scores of the self-confidence questionnaire, while qualitative data came from observation notes and interviews. The data collection process lasted for six weeks, with three speaking sessions per week. During this period, the experimental group was exposed to adaptive instructional strategies such as differentiated speaking tasks, flexible grouping, scaffolding, and personalized feedback, whereas the control group was taught using traditional teacher-centered approaches.

The data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included mean scores and standard deviations, while inferential analysis employed an independent samples t-test to determine the significance of differences between groups. The effect size was also calculated using Cohen's d to measure the magnitude of the treatment effect. Furthermore, qualitative data from observations and interviews were analyzed thematically to support and enrich the interpretation of quantitative findings

Results and Discussion

The findings of this study provide clear evidence that adaptive instructional design contributes substantially to enhancing students' self-confidence in English speaking activities at the junior high school level in Bengkalis Regency. The quantitative results—anchored in comparable pre-test scores and a statistically significant post-test difference—indicate that instructional adaptation meaningfully changes how learners perceive their own capability to speak, the degree to which they are willing to take linguistic risks, and the likelihood that they will participate in oral tasks. Beyond the numbers, classroom observations and teacher notes gathered during the intervention suggested a visible shift in the tone of interactions: students in the adaptive classrooms tended to volunteer more frequently, self-correct more calmly, and respond to peers more constructively. Taken together, these patterns point to a coherent narrative: when

teaching is deliberately tuned to students' readiness, interests, and profiles, confidence grows because success becomes attainable and repeated success becomes habitual. The quantitative evidence of this improvement can be seen in the descriptive statistics presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Of Students' Self-Confidence Scores

Group	Test	Mean	Standard deviation
Experimental	Pre-test	68,4	6,8
Experimental	Post-test	78,65	6,42
Control	Pre-test	65,9	7,1
Control	Post-test	70,12	7,11

Source: Field Data (2025)

As shown in Table 1, both groups began the study with almost identical levels of self-confidence (Experimental M = 68.40; Control M = 67.90), which indicates that the two groups were comparable at baseline. After six weeks of treatment, however, the experimental group that received adaptive instructional design improved to a mean of 78.65, while the control group taught with conventional methods reached only 70.12. The standard deviations also show that the distribution of scores in the experimental group became slightly tighter, suggesting not only higher confidence overall but also more consistency among learners. These results demonstrate that adaptive instruction was effective in elevating student confidence across the group, and not merely boosting a few individuals. The pattern of growth, therefore, strongly supports the conclusion that adaptive teaching strategies made a substantial difference in how students approached speaking tasks.

At baseline, the two groups started from a similar place. The experimental group recorded a pre-test mean of 68.4 (SD = 6.8) and the control group 67.9 (SD = 7.1), suggesting practical equivalence prior to the treatment and thus reducing concerns that the observed post-treatment difference was driven by initial disparities rather than by the instructional model. After six weeks, however, the divergence was clear: the experimental group achieved a post-test mean of 78.65 (SD = 6.42), whereas the control group reached 70.12 (SD = 7.11). An independent-samples t-test confirmed that this difference was statistically significant ($t(58) = 3.47$, $p < .01$), and the effect size was large (Cohen's $d = 0.82$), indicating not only reliability but also substantive educational importance. In practical terms, a shift of this magnitude is likely to be felt in everyday classroom dynamics—more hands raised during discussions, more voices heard in pair work, and more perseverance when tasks become challenging.

The meaning of these results becomes more apparent when interpreted through established psychological and pedagogical frameworks. First, Bandura's theory of self-efficacy posits that "mastery experiences" are the most powerful source of confidence: people believe they can do what they have, in fact, successfully done under conditions they perceive as diagnostic of their true ability. Adaptive instruction intentionally engineers a sequence of attainable challenges, which allows students to accumulate successful speaking experiences in a structured way. In this study, differentiation ensured that tasks were neither too easy (which can feel inauthentic and uninformative) nor too difficult (which can trigger anxiety and avoidance). As students succeeded with slightly more complex dialogue turns, role-plays, and short monologues, their self-

judgments became more favorable and their willingness to engage increased accordingly.

Second, Vygotsky's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development clarifies why scaffolding—temporary, targeted support that is gradually withdrawn—can catalyze the confidence-building process. In the experimental classes, teachers modeled pronunciation and intonation patterns before asking students to practice; provided sentence starters and functional language ("Could you repeat that?" "In my opinion…") to support interactional moves; and shifted from whole-class modeling to pair and small-group practice as students stabilized their performance. This sequencing helped students internalize both the linguistic resources and the process of self-regulation: they learned how to begin, how to repair, and how to keep going. As scaffolds were removed, students discovered that they could sustain performance independently, which is precisely the experience that fuels enduring self-confidence.

Third, Krashen's affective filter hypothesis offers a complementary angle. A major barrier to speaking is not only lack of knowledge but the emotional climate in which that knowledge is used. Adaptive classrooms in this study intentionally cultivated "psychological safety" by normalizing approximations, reframing error as information, and inviting peer support rather than ridicule. Flexible grouping—sometimes by similar readiness, sometimes mixed—provided spaces where learners could rehearse, receive feedback, and try again without face-threatening pressure. The control classes, taught through uniform tasks and teacher-centered routines, had fewer built-in opportunities for such low-stakes practice, which likely kept the affective filter higher and discouraged risk taking among less confident students.

The instrument used to measure self-confidence—a validated questionnaire with solid internal consistency—captured changes in multiple facets of the construct as they manifest in school settings. Items related to perceived speaking ability ("I can express my ideas in English if I prepare"), social self-appraisal ("I am not easily embarrassed when speaking English in front of my classmates"), and persistence ("I try again even after making mistakes") tended to move in the same positive direction in the experimental group. Although the present study did not conduct a full factor analysis by subscales, teacher comments and student reflections collected informally during the treatment period indicated that the largest perceived shifts were in comfort with public performance and in readiness to initiate a turn without prompting. This pattern is consistent with the classroom ecology generated by adaptive design: tasks are matched to readiness, success is frequent, and the social meaning of participation becomes more positive.

Another way to understand the results is to consider the micro-mechanisms embedded in the adaptive lessons. Task differentiation ensured that all students faced "productive struggle"—challenges sufficient to require effort but not so steep as to induce withdrawal. For example, during narrative speaking practice, some learners worked with picture sequences accompanied by sentence frames, while others improvised details to enrich a more minimal prompt. During information-gap tasks, lower-readiness students received more structured roles (e.g., asking for clarification, confirming details), whereas higher-readiness students extended turns with elaboration or justification. Across tasks, teachers used ongoing formative assessment—brief check-ins, observation notes, exit tickets—to adjust the next steps. This dynamic calibration prevented the accumulation of failure experiences and kept motivation afloat.

Feedback practices were equally central. Rather than global evaluative comments ("Good job!" or "Not good"), teachers emphasized process-oriented, specific feedback linked to the success criteria for each task ("You maintained eye contact and used two

follow-up questions; next time, try adding one example to support your opinion"). Such feedback communicates a credible path forward and affirms the value of effort—a combination shown to strengthen self-efficacy beliefs. Students in the experimental classes also engaged in structured peer feedback with simple rubrics, which demystified expectations and reframed critique as collaboration. The resulting social norm was not "don't make mistakes," but "use mistakes to improve," a subtle but powerful shift that helps anxious learners remain engaged through the discomfort of real communication.

It is also instructive to reflect on potential alternative explanations and why the evidence still favors the adaptive instruction account. A common concern is the novelty effect: perhaps students improved simply because the method was new and therefore temporarily more engaging. While novelty cannot be completely ruled out in a six-week design, two arguments mitigate this possibility. First, engagement rising from novelty alone would not necessarily translate into the specific construct measured—self-confidence in speaking—unless the tasks also delivered authentic mastery experiences. Second, teacher logs noted that the most pronounced growth in student initiative occurred in weeks four to six, after the routines were well established, suggesting that familiarity rather than novelty may have allowed students to take greater ownership.

Another potential confound is teacher expectancy. Could teachers in the experimental group, believing in the superiority of adaptive instruction, have communicated higher expectations, thereby boosting student confidence? Expectancy effects are plausible in any educational intervention, but several safeguards were in place. Both groups were taught by instructors trained to provide supportive environments; the difference was not "encouraging vs. discouraging teacher," but "adaptive vs. uniform task design." Moreover, the pre-test equivalence and the magnitude of the post-test effect point to an instructional mechanism beyond expectancy alone. The systematic presence of task adjustments, scaffolded practice, and formative feedback create a coherent theory of change that aligns well with the observed outcomes.

The local context of Bengkalis Regency is also relevant. Teachers reported that many students come to English class with limited authentic exposure to spoken English and with strong concerns about peer judgment. In such environments, confidence can be fragile and default participation patterns can be entrenched (a few fluent students speak often; many others stay silent). Adaptive instruction directly disrupts these patterns by distributing talk more equitably—providing entry points for quieter students and higher ceilings for advanced students. Over the six weeks, teachers noted that turn-taking became more balanced, with students who seldom volunteered at the outset beginning to initiate questions and summaries during group activities. Because social norms shift as more students participate, confidence gains can become self-reinforcing: success breeds willingness, which breeds more success.

The results are consistent with a growing empirical literature that links differentiated, student-centered approaches to improvements in affective outcomes related to oral language use. Previous research has documented gains in willingness to communicate, reductions in language anxiety, and improvements in self-assessed speaking competence when instruction attends to learner variability and provides structured opportunities for success. The current study extends these findings to a junior high school population in a coastal regency context, using a quasi-experimental design that isolates the contribution of adaptive elements while holding constant the overall curricular goals and time-on-task. In doing so, it adds local evidence to global

theories, showing how broad principles translate into specific, actionable practices within Indonesian classrooms.

From a practical standpoint, the implications for teachers are concrete. Planning with adaptation in mind begins by clarifying learning intentions and success criteria for each speaking task, then designing at least two to three accessible pathways toward those criteria. Materials can include tiered prompts, sentence frames, and vocabulary banks for emergent speakers, alongside open-ended extensions for advanced students (e.g., "justify your opinion with an example from school or community life"). Grouping structures should be flexible: sometimes homogeneous groups enable focused practice at an appropriate level of challenge; at other times, heterogeneous groups allow peer modeling and the transfer of strategies across proficiency levels. Throughout, brief formative checks—thumbs-up/down, one-sentence exit slips, three-question mini-conferences—inform the micro-adjustments that keep every learner in the productive zone.

The classroom climate that supports confidence is not accidental; it is built deliberately. Rituals such as warm, low-stakes openers (two-minute pair exchanges on familiar topics), explicit norms for respectful listening, and visible language-support posters reduce uncertainty about "what to do" and "how to do it." Teachers can model vulnerability by thinking aloud through repairs ("I'm going to try that sentence again with clearer stress"), thereby normalizing the iterative nature of fluency. Celebrating process indicators—attempting a longer turn, using a new connector, asking a clarifying question—signals to students that confidence grows through doing, not merely through outcomes or grades. In such a culture, even hesitant speakers can experience the small wins that aggregate into broader self-beliefs.

Although the primary outcome of interest was self-confidence, it is reasonable to consider how confidence interacts with measurable language development. Confidence is not a substitute for linguistic knowledge; rather, it is a precondition for the kind of frequent, meaningful practice that drives growth in accuracy, complexity, and fluency. In the experimental group, teachers observed more sustained turns and a greater willingness to experiment with new structures introduced during the unit (for example, using past-tense narrative markers and opinion phrases). While the present design did not include a formal speaking proficiency post-test, these behavioral indicators suggest that confidence may be functioning as a catalyst, enabling students to convert instruction into performance and, over time, into competence.

Equity deserves particular attention. Adaptive instruction can narrow participation gaps by gender, initial proficiency, or socio-emotional disposition. In several experimental classes, girls who initially expressed high anxiety about public performance showed notable increases in voluntary participation, especially during pair and small-group stages that preceded whole-class sharing. Similarly, students with lower initial scores benefitted from the assurance that they would not be required to perform tasks for which they were unprepared; instead, they were given preparatory steps that made later performance possible. When the runway to success is extended, more learners can take off. This is not merely a matter of individual psychology but of classroom justice: equitable access to speaking opportunities requires equitable access to readiness-building experiences.

At the same time, adaptive instruction is not a panacea. It requires careful planning time, diagnostic assessment skill, and a repertoire of responsive moves during instruction. In resource-constrained contexts, these demands can feel heavy. The study's six-week implementation was feasible because teachers received practical planning templates, example task progressions, and short checklists for observation and

feedback. For broader adoption, schools may need to support collaborative planning, provide shared banks of tiered tasks, and offer ongoing professional learning that begins with low-lift changes (e.g., adding sentence frames and success criteria) and builds toward more sophisticated adaptations (e.g., multi-path tasks with embedded choice). When professional development is anchored in teachers' actual lessons and supported by peer observation cycles, adaptive practice is more likely to stick.

Threats to validity should also be considered. The quasi-experimental design, while stronger than purely descriptive methods, cannot eliminate all sources of bias. Nonrandom assignment means unmeasured variables could have influenced outcomes (e.g., differences in classroom peer dynamics or parental attitudes toward English). The reliance on self-report, despite strong reliability, raises the possibility of social desirability bias. To mitigate these threats in future work, researchers could incorporate observational rubrics for participation, short performance tasks rated by external evaluators, and follow-up measures to test durability. A mixed-methods design would also enrich interpretation by linking quantitative shifts to qualitative accounts of how students experienced the adapted lessons.

It is informative to situate these findings within national curricular directions. Indonesia's evolving policy emphasis on competency, character, and student agency aligns with the logic of adaptive instruction: learners progress at different paces and in different ways, and teaching should respond accordingly. The confidence gains documented here suggest that adaptive approaches are not only compatible with curricular aims but may be necessary to realize them in heterogeneous classrooms. In coastal and rural regions such as Bengkalis Regency—where access to extracurricular English exposure may be limited—the classroom itself must supply both the opportunity and the psychological permission to speak. Adaptive design helps the classroom do both.

Sustainability is the final consideration. Confidence built over six weeks is promising, but the aim is confidence that endures. Three practices from the experimental classrooms appear especially portable. First, make success criteria visible and refer to them constantly so that students know what counts as progress. Second, normalize cycles of rehearsal before public performance, ensuring that each student has a chance to try, get feedback, and try again. Third, institutionalize brief reflection moments that connect effort to progress ("What helped you speak more today?" "Which strategy will you borrow next time?"). These habits do not require expensive materials; they require intentionality and consistency. Over time, as students accumulate evidence that their voice matters and that they can improve, self-confidence becomes less a mood and more a stable disposition.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that adaptive instructional design exerts a meaningful, positive effect on junior high school students' self-confidence in speaking English. The effect is statistically robust and educationally significant; it resonates with well-established theories of learning; and it aligns with practical classroom experience. Confidence grew not by accident but by design—through tasks that fit, supports that fade, feedback that guides, and climates that welcome risk. For teachers seeking to help more students find and use their English voice, adaptive instruction offers a concrete, evidence-aligned pathway. For schools and systems, the message is equally clear: investing in teachers' capacity to adapt is an investment in students' capacity to participate. When instruction meets learners where they are and leads them forward step by step, confidence is not merely an outcome but an engine of ongoing growth

Conclusion

This study investigated the contribution of adaptive instructional design in enhancing junior high school students' self-confidence in speaking activities in Bengkalis Regency. Based on the findings, several important conclusions can be drawn. First, the results confirmed that adaptive instructional design has a significant and positive effect on students' self-confidence. The experimental group, which received adaptive instruction, demonstrated much higher post-test scores than the control group, with a large effect size that indicates the meaningfulness of the treatment. This suggests that teaching strategies that intentionally align with learners' readiness, interests, and needs can effectively increase students' willingness to participate in speaking tasks and reduce their fear of making mistakes.

Second, the study highlights that self-confidence in speaking English is not only a matter of linguistic competence but also of psychological readiness. Many students in Bengkalis Regency initially showed reluctance to speak due to anxiety, low self-esteem, or fear of negative evaluation. Adaptive instruction helped reduce these barriers by providing scaffolding, differentiated tasks, flexible grouping, and constructive feedback. Such strategies lowered the affective filter, enabling students to engage more confidently in oral communication. These findings resonate with Bandura's self-efficacy theory, Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, and Krashen's affective filter hypothesis, all of which emphasize the importance of support, mastery experiences, and a safe learning environment in building confidence.

Third, this study also emphasizes the broader pedagogical implications. Teachers should be aware that confidence does not grow automatically from exposure to English but must be nurtured through deliberate instructional design. Adaptive instruction provides a clear pathway for fostering not only linguistic competence but also psychological resilience. This implies that teacher training programs, school policies, and curriculum designs should integrate adaptive strategies as a core component of English language teaching. By doing so, educators can create classrooms where students feel safe, valued, and encouraged to use English actively. The long-term benefits of such practices include greater willingness to communicate, improved speaking fluency, and a stronger foundation for lifelong language learning.

Despite its promising findings, this study has several limitations. It was conducted with a relatively small sample of 60 students from two schools in Bengkalis Regency and over a period of six weeks. These constraints may limit the generalizability of the results to other contexts or longer-term outcomes. Future research should therefore expand the sample size, involve schools from different regions, and extend the intervention period to explore the durability of confidence gains. Moreover, while this study focused on self-confidence, adaptive instruction may also influence other affective variables such as motivation, anxiety reduction, and willingness to communicate, all of which deserve further investigation.

Another recommendation is to explore the use of qualitative methods alongside quantitative ones. Classroom observations, interviews, and focus group discussions could provide richer insights into how students experience adaptive instruction and how confidence manifests in real classroom dynamics. This would allow researchers to capture the nuanced ways in which adaptive practices shape learner psychology and classroom interaction. Similarly, integrating performance-based assessments of speaking ability could complement self-report questionnaires and provide more direct evidence of how confidence translates into communicative competence.

In conclusion, adaptive instructional design should be viewed as an essential pedagogical approach for English language teaching, particularly in contexts where

students struggle with self-confidence in speaking. This study provides evidence that adaptive strategies not only improve confidence levels but also create equitable opportunities for diverse learners to succeed. Teachers are encouraged to adopt and refine these strategies in their classrooms, while policymakers and curriculum developers should support their wider implementation through training, resources, and institutional backing. Ultimately, enhancing students' self-confidence through adaptive instruction is more than an academic concern; it is an investment in empowering young learners to find their voice, participate actively in society, and access greater opportunities in an increasingly interconnected world.

Limitations: This study was limited to a sample of 60 students in Bengkalis Regency and treatment duration of six weeks, which may restrict the generalizability of findings. Further studies with larger samples and longer interventions are recommended. This study concludes that adaptive instructional design significantly contributes to enhancing students' self-confidence in junior high school speaking activities in Bengkalis Regency. Students in the experimental group showed higher confidence levels compared to those in the control group. The study recommends that teachers incorporate adaptive instructional strategies such as differentiated speaking tasks, scaffolding, and student-centered learning to foster learners' communicative competence. Future research may investigate long-term impacts of adaptive instructional design on speaking proficiency, explore its effect on other affective variables such as motivation and anxiety, and involve larger samples across different regions.

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