

**STUDENTS PERCEPTION ON PEER INTERACTION IN EFL  
STUDENTS SPEAKING ACTIVITIES**

**THESIS**

Submitted By

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**FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY  
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**STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS ON PEER INTERACTION IN EFL  
STUDENTS SPEAKING ACTIVITIES**

**THESIS**

Has Been Approved and Submitted to the Thesis *Munaqasyah* Defense as One the Requirements to Obtain a Bachelor's Degree in the field of English Language Education

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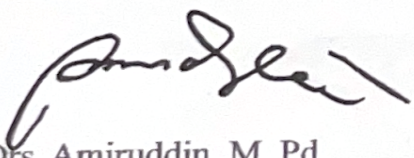
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**Students Perception on Peer Interaction in EFL**

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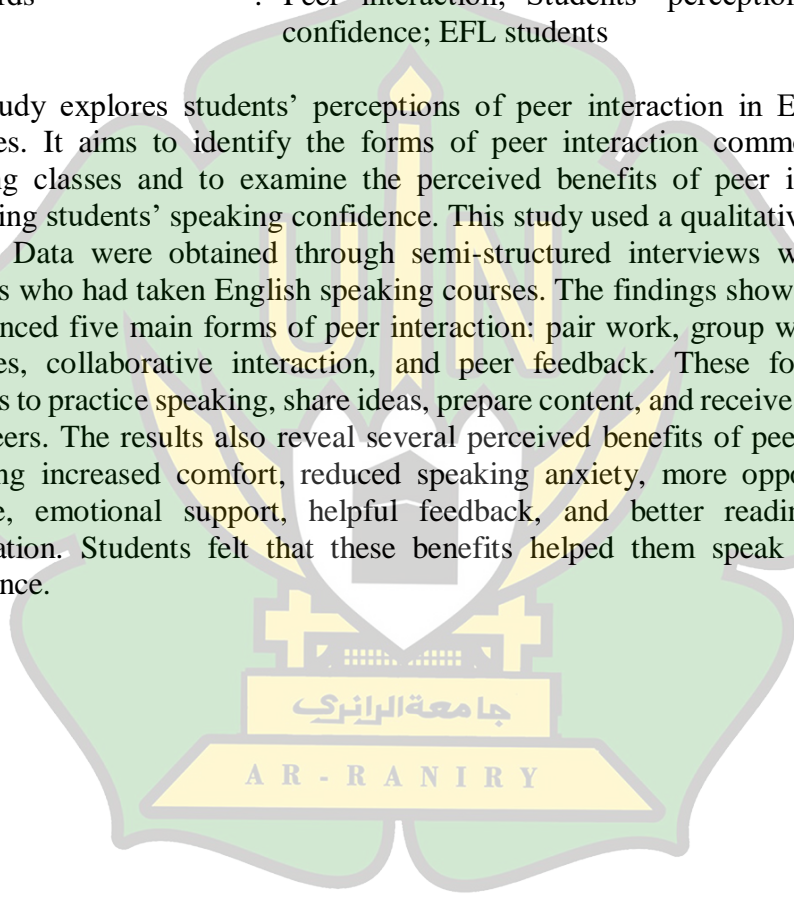
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## ABSTRACT

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This study explores students' perceptions of peer interaction in EFL speaking activities. It aims to identify the forms of peer interaction commonly used in speaking classes and to examine the perceived benefits of peer interaction in improving students' speaking confidence. This study used a qualitative descriptive design. Data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with ten EFL students who had taken English speaking courses. The findings show that students experienced five main forms of peer interaction: pair work, group work, roleplay activities, collaborative interaction, and peer feedback. These forms allowed students to practice speaking, share ideas, prepare content, and receive support from their peers. The results also reveal several perceived benefits of peer interaction, including increased comfort, reduced speaking anxiety, more opportunities for practice, emotional support, helpful feedback, and better readiness through cooperation. Students felt that these benefits helped them speak with greater confidence.

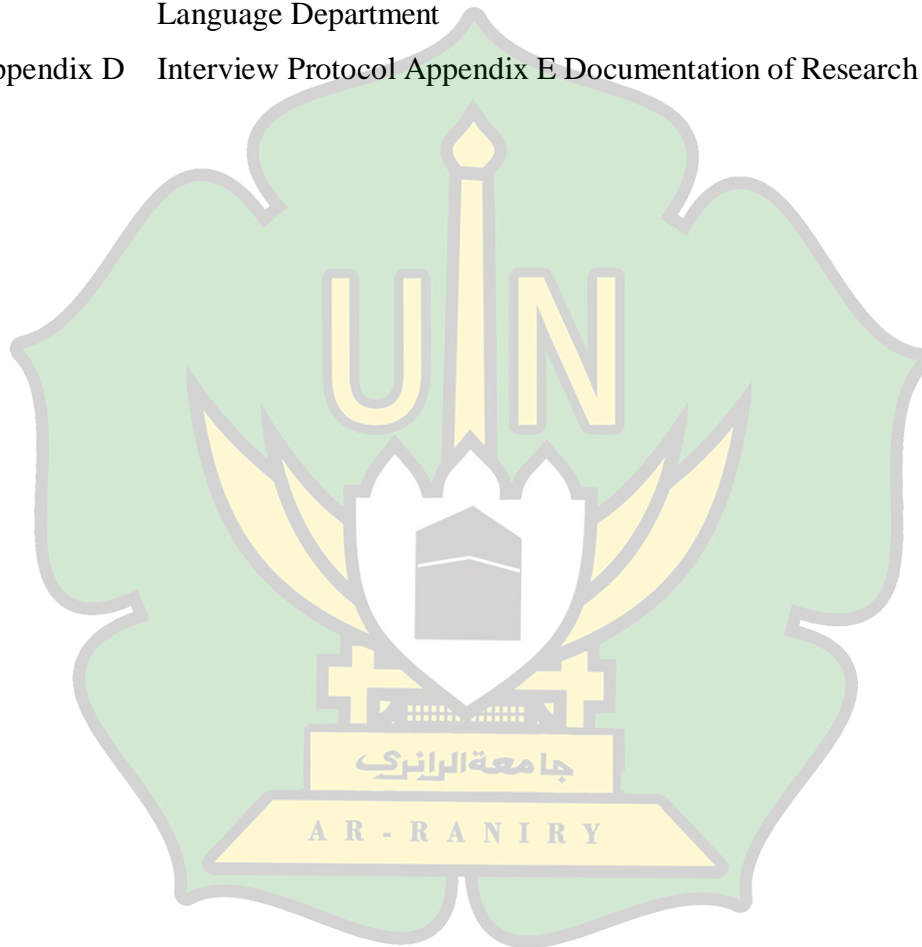


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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of study

Speaking is one of the most important skills in learning English as a foreign language. Speaking is different from reading or writing because we have to speak directly and interact with other people. Therefore, learners must know words and sentences well and be brave enough to use them when speaking. At school or at work, good speaking skills demonstrate how proficient someone is in English. Speaking is not only about mastering the language, but also about confidence and being able to communicate with others (Tang et al., 2015).

Even though speaking English is considered important, many EFL learners frequently find it difficult to communicate in English. They feel afraid or nervous when they communicate in English. They are afraid of making mistakes, being judged by others, or feeling that their vocabulary is insufficient. This is similar to the findings of Muidal Muna's (2023) research, which looked at how confident students felt when speaking in public at UIN Ar-Raniry. She founds that students' confidence was influenced by their preparation, support from those around them, and their previous experiences. However, the fear of being judged remained the biggest obstacle. From this, it is clear that a lack of confidence is a major problem that makes it difficult for students to speak English fluently.

To overcome the problem of low self confidence, a supportive learning environment is very important. One method that has been tried is interaction

between friends, namely talking and studying together with fellow students. The difference between talking with a teacher and talking with friends is that talking with friends feels more relaxed and less stressful. Basith (2021) says that when students evaluate each other through digital media, they become more confident in expressing their opinions because they are evaluating their peers, not just being evaluated by a teacher. This method helps them become more confident when speaking and makes them better at speaking English. Therefore, talking and studying with friends can be a great way to overcome fear and insecurity.

Peer interaction or talking with peers plays a very important role in learning English. When students interact with friends of the same level, they become more confident because they feel comfortable and not afraid of making mistakes. They can practice speaking, learn from friends, and get immediate feedback that helps improve their speaking skills gradually. In addition, peers can help reduce the fear of stuttering or embarrassment when speaking, so that students are more enthusiastic and confident to speak. This interaction also makes the learning atmosphere more enjoyable and effective because students are more enthusiastic and help each other (Sanako, 2021)

Besides providing encouragement and motivation, talking with friends also helps students learn vocabulary, grammar, and how to express ideas well. They can assess each other and learn from the experiences of other friends, so that their English skills continue to develop. This social interaction is important because it can make the learning atmosphere warmer, reduce anxiety, and increase students' confidence in speaking.

Other studies also say that talking with friends is important for building confidence in speaking English. Ariesta (2025), who conducted research in an English language online community on Discord, found that students who often talk there become more confident in speaking. Because they often talk with friends, they become less afraid, more courageous, and more comfortable using English. This is similar to the results of Mellisa (2024) research, which looked at how students were assessed by their friends during presentations. She found that students not only received feedback on how to speak better, but also became more confident because they were encouraged and praised by their friends.

Tauchid (2025a) has shown that peer support is very important in reducing fear of speaking and improving speaking skills in online learning. There is still little research that comprehensively discusses the various ways of talking with friends, such as direct discussions in offline learning. Most studies only focus on language skills or overcoming fear, but not many discuss how talking with friends can make students more confident in the long term. Therefore, this study aims to further examine how peers can help students become more confident in speaking English in various learning methods.

Although there have been many studies on peer interaction on EFL learning, there are still some things that have not been discussed. First, most studies only focus on fear when speaking or speaking scores, but not many have looked at confidence in speaking as the main issue. Second, various ways of talking with friends, such as group discussions, giving feedback, evaluating friends, or talking in online communities, have not been thoroughly researched in the context of offline

learning. Third, at UIN Ar- Raniry, there has been research on how students learn and the use of peer feedback, but not much has been done to directly examine the relationship between talking with friends and increased confidence when speaking.

In short, the present study is important to conduct because it focuses on exploring how peer interaction helps EFL students develop their speaking confidence. This research highlights that communication and collaboration among peers can encourage students to speak more actively and confidently in English. The findings are expected to give useful insights for teachers in creating interactive and supportive learning environments, and for students to understand the importance of learning through peer interaction in improving their speaking performance.

## **B. Research Questions**

1. What forms of peer interaction occur among EFL students during the English language learning process?
2. What are the perceived benefits of peer interaction in improving EFL students' speaking confidence?

## **C. The aim of the study**

1. Describe the forms of peer interaction that occur among EFL students during English language learning activities.
2. Investigate how peer interaction contributes to increasing EFL students' confidence in speaking English.

## **D. Significance of the study**

### **a. For students**

This study is very helpful for students learning English. From these results, they can see that talking with friends can be a good way to overcome fear, anxiety, and lack of confidence when speaking English. Knowing that friends are important, students become more motivated to participate in class activities, help each other, and gradually become more confident. In addition, this study also makes students realize that successfully speaking English does not only depend on their own abilities, but also on a supportive learning environment.

**b. For teachers**

For English teachers or lecturers, this research is very useful for understanding the importance of creating a classroom atmosphere that encourages students to talk with their friends. Teachers can use the results of this research to create learning methods that are more conducive to conversation, cooperation, and focus on students. In addition, the results of this study also help teachers understand the difficulties students experience when speaking, and how their peers can help reduce these difficulties. Thus, teachers can use chatting with friends as a learning method to improve students' speaking skills and confidence.

**c. For future researchers**

This research hopes to be useful for other researchers who are interested in conducting further research in the area of peer interaction activities. Involving other levels of education, different cultures, or more in-depth

analysis methods. So, this research not only helps with how English is taught today, but also provides direction for future research.

## **E. Research terminology**

### **a. Peer interaction**

In this study, peer interaction refers to conversations that occur between students majoring in English Education while learning to speak, both inside and outside the classroom. These conversations can take the form of group discussions, giving feedback to friends, and working together on speaking assignments. The focus is on how students help each other, exchange ideas, and practice speaking English in a comfortable and no intimidating situations.

### **b. EFL students**

In Indonesia, learning English is commonly referred to as learning English as a foreign language. This means that they learn English in a place where people do not use English on a daily basis. EFL students in this study refer to the students of the English education department of UIN Ar – Ranirry who learn English as a foreign language.

### **c. Perceptions**

Perceptions refer to the students' personal views, feelings, interpretations, and subjective evaluations toward the use of peer interaction in EFL speaking activities. The term does not only relate to what students think, but

also how they experience, respond to, and make sense of peer interaction during speaking tasks.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **A. Peer Interaction**

##### **a. Definition of Peer interaction**

Peer interaction means talking with friends who are also studying. They share stories, exchange ideas, and learn together through conversation. Vo & Le (2022), say that peer interaction involves working together on tasks, especially those that require decision making, so that they can learn the language through conversation and helping each other. So, peer interaction is not just talking, but a way of learning the language and thinking together with friends.

Saeid (2024) says that interacting with friends while learning English is a teaching method that makes children feel safe to practice speaking. This way, they not only learn to speak, but also become better at listening to their friends. When talking with friends, children can obtain information, share stories, and become confident in using the language. Therefore, peer interaction is a conversational method that facilitates learning while also making children feel happy and comfortable.

Marlia (2025) says that interacting with friends is important for our feelings. Playing with friends can make us less afraid to speak and more confident. So, interacting with friends is not just about language practice, but also about feeling comfortable, receiving support, and being motivated to learn. Children like talking to their friends because they are on the same level, unlike talking to teachers, who

are usually more serious.

Novita Sari Hidayat et al. (2023) also say that there is an important way to interact with friends, namely by giving each other feedback. So, children help their friends to speak or use language better. This not only encourages them to talk but also hones their critical thinking skills and quickly makes their language fluent and correct. Therefore, peer interaction is an active relationship where children not only talk but also help each other learn together.

Zhang et al. (2024) say that interactions with friends also help children who are learning English as a second language to practice speaking. They explain that talking with friends allows children to practice more often in a relaxed situation that supports language learning. Therefore, interactions with friends can occur in class or in everyday life to help with language learning.

Richards, J. C.; Rodgers (2014) have long argued that interaction is a key part of language learning. Their book states that through interaction, children practice using language to converse, not just learning grammar rules. Thus, peer interaction is a direct way to implement the principle of language learning that focuses on communication.

Findings from within the country are similar. Alfian (2021) says that peer interaction, which involves talking with friends of the same age, encourages children to speak English. He found that peer interaction gives children the space to express their ideas without fear of making mistakes, because their friends understand the same situations and difficulties. Therefore, peer interaction is important for effective language and social learning.

From all these perspectives, it can be concluded that peer interaction, which

involves chatting with peers, has two functions: to practice language to become more fluent, and to build confidence and reduce fear. Therefore, peer interaction is not just an additional activity, but a very important part of learning English as a foreign language.

## **b. Types of peer interaction**

### **1. Collaborative interaction**

Explain that cooperative learning contributes significantly to the development of students' speaking abilities in EFL learning contexts. Their study shows that collaboration among peers creates a positive learning atmosphere in which students feel more confident and relaxed when practicing speaking. Through group interaction, students are able to exchange ideas, support one another, and reduce feelings of anxiety. As a result, students become more actively involved in speaking activities and show greater motivation in learning English. (Meilasari et al., 2023)

Cooperation usually occurs during classroom activities such as group discussions, role-playing, problem-solving, or doing assignments together. These activities encourage children to actively participate, exchange opinions, and help correct their friends' mistakes. Rachmawati & sari (2022) say that working together makes children more confident in using English because they can have real conversations without pressure from the teacher.

In terms of theory, cooperation is closely related to Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). In the ZPD, children

can learn faster because they have smarter friends to help them. This method is called scaffolding, which makes children develop faster than learning alone (Lei & Bakar, 2025). So, cooperation not only helps with language learning but also makes children more confident because they receive direct support from their friends.

In addition, cooperation also makes the classroom atmosphere exciting and enjoyable. Children who are usually shy about speaking can become more enthusiastic when they are in small groups rather than having to speak alone in front of all their friends. A study by Suherman & Fitriani (2020) shows that learning together can make children more active in speaking, especially those who lack confidence. This proves that cooperation is a good way to reduce the fear of speaking for children who are learning English.

Cooperation with friends is not only for practicing speaking, but also for building self-confidence. When children feel supported and accepted in a group, they are more courageous to try using English, and that makes their language, which ultimately accelerates the development of their speaking skills.

## 2. Competitive interaction

Competitive interaction occurs when friends compete to be the best. When learning English, children compete individually or in groups. This usually occurs in activities such as debates, speech contests, quizzes, or presentations, where each child or group tries to be better than the others

(Ngoc Diep et al., 2021a)

Although competitions can sometimes be stressful, research shows that competitive interactions can actually make children more enthusiastic and confident in using English. Ngoc Diep et al. (2021b) says that children who participate in competitions are usually more diligent in practicing and preparing so that they can perform well. Therefore, healthy competition can make children more confident.

However, competitive interactions also have a negative side. Not all children enjoy competitions. Children who are easily frightened or anxious may feel pressured when they have to participate in competitions. Alqarni & Adam (2021) say that competitions can make some children more confident, but they can also make others more fearful. Therefore, teachers must create balanced competitions so that they do not cause children to become stressed.

One commonly used method is to combine competitions with teamwork (group competitions). For example, children are divided into small groups, and each group is given tasks such as intergroup debates or storytelling competitions. This way, children can still participate in competitions but also receive support from their friends. Farida & Hasana (2022) say that group competitions are better for boosting confidence because children have responsibilities and also feel secure in the group.

Therefore, competitive interactions can help children learn to speak English and become more confident, as long as the competition is appropriate and suits the children's needs. Healthy competitions can

motivate children, improve their communication skills, and encourage them to use English in front of others.

### 3. Mixed or collaborative-competitive interaction

Mixed interaction, also known as cooperative interaction and competitive interaction. Here, children work together in small groups to prepare tasks, but the groups also compete with each other. Examples include group debates, language games, or group presentations that are later compared with other groups (Suherman & Fitriani, 2020).

This method is good because it combines the advantages of cooperation and competition. When cooperating, children feel comfortable and confident because they have friends who support them. When competing, children are motivated to be the best compared to other groups. Thus, this method makes learning exciting and challenging (Tuan, 2021).

Recent research shows that this mixed interaction makes children more confident when speaking. Rachmawati & sari (2022) say that children who work in groups that combine cooperation and competition are usually more active in speaking and dare to express their opinions. This is because there is a sense of security from cooperation and enthusiasm from competition.

However, teachers must be careful when using this method. If there are too many competitions, children who are easily frightened may become even more stressed. If there is too much cooperation, the competitive spirit that makes children brave enough to speak up may

disappear. Therefore, teachers need to maintain a balance, for example, between final grades and how children work together in groups (Walsh, 2021)

Thus, this mixed interaction is a balanced and flexible learning method. This method helps children practice speaking together and also builds their confidence because there is a healthy competitive situation within the group.

#### 4. Scaffolding interaction

Scaffolding interaction, also known as peer support interaction, is when a smart child helps a friend who is not yet smart. This idea comes from Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which says that children can learn faster with the help of people who understand more, including friends (Walsh, 2021).

In learning English, scaffolding interaction can take the form of giving each other feedback, correcting friends, tutoring friends, or giving examples of how to speak correctly. Children who are not yet fluent can learn from friends who already are. Friends who help also gain a deeper understanding because they are teaching their friends (Suherman & Fitriani, 2020).

The main advantage of scaffolding interaction is that it creates a comfortable and supportive learning environment. Alqarni & Adam (2021) say that children feel more comfortable and less afraid of making mistakes when learning with friends than when learning only from teachers. This makes children more confident in speaking.

In addition, scaffolding interactions can help children reduce their fear of speaking. Children who are usually shy can become brave because they have friends who help and accompany them. Rachmawati & sari (2022) say that children who lack confidence become more courageous to participate because they know that their friends support them.

However, scaffolding interactions must be balanced. If too much help is given, the child being supported may become lazy. If too little help is given, the child may become confused and stressed. Therefore, teachers must be able to adjust their support to suit the child's needs (Walsh, 2021).

In short, scaffolding interaction is not only for helping children learn to speak, but also for building their confidence through peer support. By helping each other, children learn to be more courageous in trying and using English more actively.

##### 5. Practice-based interaction

Practicing with friends is when children frequently practice languages together through activities such as role-playing, talking in pairs, drama, or playing language games (Balakrishnan, 2021). The important thing is not only the result, but also the continuous practice process.

When learning English, practicing with friends is very important because children rarely use English outside of class. Through this practice, children can try new words, practice speaking, and become more fluent without fear of their teacher (S.W, 2020)

Research by J. S. Lee & Taylor (2024) states that practicing with

friends not only helps language skills but also makes children more confident in speaking. Children can speak often, make mistakes, and correct their mistakes in a safe space. Thus, this practice makes children not afraid to make mistakes when speaking in formal classes.

Practicing with friends also makes the learning process more exciting and makes children more active in playing a leading role in language activities. (S.W, 2020) say that talking in pairs or practicing drama makes children more creative, able to work together, and good at speaking in a relaxed situation.

However, these exercises must be made interesting. If the exercises are repetitive and awkward, children may get bored. Therefore, teachers must create different exercises, not only focusing on correct speech but also on helping children become fluent and confident. For example, use storytelling activities while asking questions, pair conversations, or small drama projects to make the exercises more exciting (Balakrishnan, 2021)

Therefore, practicing with friends is very suitable for helping children learn to speak and become more confident. By practicing together often, children can master the language naturally and not be afraid of making mistakes anymore.

#### 6. Exploratory peer interaction

Exploratory interaction occurs when children talk together to find ideas, understand together, and learn together through open discussion. Unlike repetitive exercises, here children are allowed to think critically, try

out arguments, and express their opinions in a cooperative context (Hiratsuka, 2004).

When learning English, this interaction usually happens when children work on problem-solving tasks, projects, debates, or group discussions. Anggraini et al. (2022) says that here, children don't just use language to talk, but also to think. In line with Mercer's idea of exploratory talk, children help each other by providing constructive arguments.

Hasanah (2022) found that exploratory interactions can make children more confident in speaking because they are used to sharing ideas in front of their friends. When their opinions are valued, they become more courageous in speaking. Moreover, these interactions also reduce the fear of speaking because what is important is not only the language itself, but also the exchange of ideas.

J. Lee (2021) says that exploratory discussions also allow children to correct and explain the language used to each other. This is very important for learning a second language because it helps children understand more deeply and use the language properly.

However, for this interaction to be successful, teachers must create a fun learning situation and give realistic and interesting assignments. Without clear guidance, discussions can become unfocused or even silent. Therefore, it is the teacher's job to help keep the discussion going and focused in order to hone the children's speaking skills (Putri; Hidayat, 2023).

Thus, exploratory interactions are a great way to help children learn to speak English with confidence. Through conversations and exchanging

ideas, children not only practice the language but also learn to think critically, work together, and speak confidently.

#### 7. Instructional peer interaction

Peer teaching interaction is when children become teachers or mentors to their friends. This is also called teaching or guiding friends, where children who understand better help other friends understand lessons or language exercises (Tuan, 2021).

When learning English, these activities can include:

1. Children explaining new words to friends in a group.
2. Giving examples of correct sentences or dialogues.
3. Helping friends during role-playing or storytelling exercises.

Research shows that peer teaching interactions not only help those who are learning, but also help those who are teaching to understand better, speak more fluently, and become more confident (Balakrishnan, 2021).

In addition, this method makes learning more child-centered. Children become more active, learn to manage conversations, and have good communication skills. S.W (2020) says that children who often teach their friends are also more confident in speaking and participating in class discussions because they are used to giving and receiving instructions from their friends.

However, in order to be successful, teachers must monitor and provide guidance. Teachers need to ensure that the children who become tutors understand the lesson correctly so that those being taught also

receive the right information. When guided properly, this interaction is very effective in improving children's speaking skills and confidence (Putri; Hidayat, 2023).

In short, peer teaching interactions help children learn by teaching their peers, strengthen their understanding, and boost their confidence because they gain teaching experience and receive direct feedback from their peers.

#### 8. Evaluative peer interaction

Peer evaluation interaction is when students give each other feedback or assess their friends' abilities. This is not just about speaking practice, but also helping friends identify mistakes and how to correct them in a positive and supportive manner (Mercer, 2020b).

In an English class, for example, students can evaluate their peers' presentations or dialogues, comment on vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation, and offer suggestions to help their peers speak more fluently.

This interaction provides mutual benefits. Students who receive feedback can understand their mistakes and correct them immediately. Meanwhile, students who provide feedback will improve their analytical, observational, and communication skills. Farida and Hasanah (2022) mention that regular evaluation activities make students more confident because they are actively involved in the learning process, not just receiving instructions.

In addition, evaluative interactions create a reflective and supportive learning environment. Students learn how to give constructive criticism, respect their peers' opinions, and accept criticism with an open mind. This is important for building self-confidence because students learn to deal with feedback without fear of being wrong or feeling belittled (J. Lee, 2021).

However, for peer evaluation interactions to be effective, teachers need to provide guidance. Teachers must teach students how to give clear, polite, and constructive feedback. Without this guidance, students may give comments that are too negative or unclear, thereby lowering their peers' motivation (Putri; Hidayat, 2023)

Thus, peer evaluation interactions not only improve speaking skills but also develop students' reflective abilities, critical thinking, and self-confidence. This activity complements other forms of peer interaction, making English language learning more comprehensive and meaningful.

### **c. Benefits of peer interaction**

Interacting with friends is very important for learning English, especially for helping children become brave enough to speak. Confidence makes children want to speak actively, and interaction with friends has been proven to help increase their confidence (Alqarni & Adam, 2021).

First, peer interaction provides a comfortable and safe space for practicing English. Unlike talking to a teacher, which can sometimes be nervous, talking to friends is more relaxed, so children dare to try to speak, make mistakes, and correct themselves. Farida & Hasana (2022) say that children who often participate in

discussions or speaking exercises with friends become more confident.

Second, through interactions with friends, children receive direct input, commonly referred to as feedback. Examples include grading friends, giving input, or helping friends who are struggling. In this way, children understand their mistakes and can correct them, while also gaining more confidence in speaking (Putri; Hidayat, 2023).

Third, peer interaction can help children cooperate and engage in healthy competition, which makes them support and encourage each other to be better. There are also those who combine cooperation and competition, so children feel challenged but still receive support from their friends (Tuan, 2021).

In addition, interactions with friends provide opportunities for practice speaking truly through activities such as role-playing, drama, or group projects. Children become accustomed to speaking in front of friends, dare to give ideas, and learn to exchange thoughts. This boosts confidence because children feel ready and comfortable speaking English (Balakrishnan, 2021).

Peer interaction also helps children learn about social skills and emotions. Children learn to respect their friends' opinions, work together, and have a positive attitude toward learning languages. This supportive learning environment boosts children's confidence because they know their friends are always ready to help and give feedback (Mercer, 2020b).

Therefore, peer interaction is not only for language practice, but also an important way for children to gain confidence in speaking English. The combination of peer support, practice, positive feedback, and cooperation creates a

learning situation that is conducive to building children's confidence. Therefore, it must be well organized according to the needs and abilities of the children in order to achieve maximum results (Moorhouse, B. L., Li, Y., Walsh, 2021)

## **B. EFL Students**

### **a. EFL Concept**

Learning English as a foreign language (EFL) means learning English in a country where it is not the everyday language. English is used here for learning and work, not for everyday conversation Santosa (2021) This is different from ESL, where English is used every day. Therefore, the EFL learning method must be different, usually through classroom lessons, speaking exercises, and activities that make children use English frequently, even outside the classroom.

The goal of EFL learning is for children to master the four main skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, the difficulty of learning EFL is that children rarely use English in their surroundings, so they lack practice in speaking English directly. Therefore, teachers must use appropriate methods, such as using digital media, chatting with friends, and working together in class, to make learning English more fun and effective (Richards, J. C.; Rodgers, 2014)

### **b. EFL Learners' characteristics**

1. Different Levels of Intelligence: Children who learn English have different abilities, from beginners to experts. This means that learning methods must also be different. For example, beginners need more frequent practice, while experts can learn with friends (Lightbown & Spada, 2021).
2. Different Levels of Motivation: Children learn English for different reasons.

Some learn because they want to be able to speak the language themselves, while others learn because they need it for school or work. Children who learn because of their own motivation are usually more diligent and active (Dörnyei, 2020).

3. **Culture and Environment:** The way children understand lessons and talk in class can differ because their cultural backgrounds and environments are also different. For example, children from cultures that value caring for others' feelings are sometimes shy about asking questions or speaking in front of the class (Byram, 2021).
4. **Different Learning Styles:** Children have different learning styles. Some like to look at pictures, some like to listen, and some like to move around while learning. If teachers understand how children learn, they can teach in a way that is easier to understand (Oxford, 2020).

**c. Challenges Faced.**

1. Children who learn English do not use English every day, so they rarely practice speaking and listening directly. This makes it very difficult for them to become better at speaking Harmer (2022).
2. The way of speaking English is different from their own language, so sometimes it is difficult for them to pronounce words correctly. In addition, children can also feel awkward and afraid to speak in front of their friends (Brown, 2020).
3. Children often find it difficult to form long sentences because they know only a few English words and rules. This makes it difficult for them to write

and speak well

4. Many children feel afraid and embarrassed when they have to speak English in class. If this fear is not overcome, children can become lazy and do not want to participate in practice (Az Zahra et al., 2023)
5. Not all children have devices such as cell phones or computers that can help them learn on their own with fun applications or videos (Oxford, 2020). Therefore, they have fewer opportunities to practice on their own at home.

#### **d. The Role of Peer Interaction for Students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL)**

Peer interaction is one of the key strategies in supporting EFL learning. This interaction allows students to learn collaboratively, share ideas, and practice English in a more natural context. Some of the important roles of peer interaction include:

1. **Improved Speaking and Listening Skills:** By discussing and practicing with peers, students have the opportunity to improve their pronunciation, understand spoken expressions, and develop their listening skills (Sanako, 2021).
2. **Increased Confidence:** Interaction in small groups or pairs can reduce shyness and anxiety, making students more confident in using English (Sanako, 2021)
3. **Developing Ideas and Presentation Skills:** Group discussions provide space for students to hone their critical thinking skills, construct arguments, and present their ideas in front of their peers (Murtini & Rasyki, 2025).
4. **Social and Emotional Support:** Students can motivate, provide feedback,

and offer emotional support to one another. This collaborative learning environment increases student engagement and comfort in learning languages (Mahardika, 2024).

Thus, peer interaction plays a crucial role in creating an active, supportive learning environment that facilitates optimal language skill development.

### **C. Speaking confidence**

#### **a. Definition Speaking Confidence**

In learning English as a foreign language (EFL), confidence in speaking means being sure that one can speak English fluently, even if one makes mistakes sometimes. This confidence is not only about knowing grammar or vocabulary, but also about being brave enough to face criticism and nervousness. In a study on speaking confidence among Islamic education students, researchers assessed confidence based on speech, eye contact, posture, voice, engagement, and use of filler words. The results showed that structured speaking guidelines made students more prepared and less nervous (Ramdhano, 2025).

Furthermore, from the perspective of psychological theory on self-confidence, confidence in speaking is a belief in oneself that makes a person continue to try to speak even when there are difficulties. For example, Darmawan et al. (2021) found that pre-professional students learning English had high speaking confidence scores (79%) when they believed that effort, previous experience, and peer support helped their speaking skills.

Therefore, speaking confidence is not just about “fear of speaking,” but a combination of belief in one's own abilities and emotional readiness to face

speaking situations. This is important because research shows that students with higher confidence usually have better speaking results (Arlinda, 2021)

### **b. Factors Affecting Speaking Confidence**

Confidence in speaking English as a foreign language does not come easily to children. Confidence is formed by many internal and external factors that influence each other. Here are five important things that make children more confident when speaking English, based on research and theory.

1. **Self-Efficacy:** Self-efficacy is how confident someone is that they can do something, such as speaking English. If children are confident that they can express their thoughts in English, they will usually be more courageous in speaking, even in front of many people. Darmawan et al. (2021) found that children with high self-efficacy are more active in speaking in class and are not easily afraid of making mistakes. Their research also shows that 82% of children feel confident in their speaking abilities, even though their language skills are not yet perfect. This confidence encourages them to keep practicing and not give up easily when they encounter difficulties while speaking.
2. **Speaking anxiety:** Fear or nervousness when speaking is one of the things that makes children lack confidence. Many children feel tense, afraid of making mistakes, or afraid of being criticized by teachers and friends. Because of this, they prefer to remain silent rather than try to speak. In a study by Colleagues (2023), it was found that many children learning English feel fear or nervousness to a high degree when they have to speak

in class. This fear makes children less confident and unable to show their true speaking abilities. Fear also often arises due to previous bad experiences, such as being laughed at for saying something wrong or not receiving constructive feedback from the teacher.

3. **Learning Environment and Social Support:** External factors also have a significant impact on children's confidence in speaking. Examples include the classroom atmosphere, the teacher's teaching style, and support from teachers and friends. If the classroom is comfortable and does not make children afraid of getting bad grades, they will be more confident in speaking. Ramasari and Ardayati (2024) say that classes that use appropriate teaching materials and often encourage children to talk with their friends can boost children's confidence. When children know that making mistakes is normal and part of learning, they become more courageous to try and participate actively. In addition, support from friends through group work or casual conversation also makes children more comfortable and confident when speaking.
4. **Motivation (Internal and External):** Motivation, whether internal or external, is very important in building children's confidence in speaking. Children who have clear goals, such as wanting to learn English to continue their education, work abroad, or talk to people from many countries, are usually more enthusiastic about practicing speaking. Widodo (2023) found that children with high motivation to learn are usually more confident than children with low motivation. In addition, encouragement from teachers, rewards, or grades can also boost children's confidence, but motivation

from within is usually stronger and more lasting. Motivation keeps children enthusiastic and prevents them from easily becoming afraid or giving up when learning to speak English.

5. **Learning Strategies and Peer Interaction:** The way teachers teach influences children's confidence when speaking. If teachers use exciting methods such as role- playing, group presentations, and chatting with friends, children have many opportunities to practice speaking in a relaxed but meaningful environment. Qoni'ah (2023) proved that with regular interaction with friends in two learning sessions, children's speaking scores increased from 67.4 to 75.8. Activities like this make children support each other, give feedback, and learn from their friends' mistakes. Because children feel that they are not alone in facing the difficulties of speaking; their confidence grows naturally and continuously.

Therefore, confidence in learning English is not only about being able to speak the language, but also about how children view themselves, how they overcome their fears, and how the learning environment helps them communicate. If teachers understand this, they can develop better and more friendly teaching methods so that children are not only good at speaking but also confident in using English every day.

### **c. Indicators of Speaking Confidence**

Confidence when speaking is not only seen from how well a child can speak, but also from several signs that show how the child feels and behaves when speaking English. These signs are important for knowing how confident a child is when speaking.

1. Initiative and readiness to speak are the main signs of confidence.

Confident children are usually more active in class discussions, presentations, or casual conversations. They don't just wait for their turn, but look for opportunities to express their opinions and ideas. Ramdhano (2025) found that confident children dare to join in conversations even when the topic is difficult, which is proof of their courage.

2. Controlling emotions when speaking is also important. Confident children can resist nervousness, remain calm, maintain eye contact, and speak clearly so that their message is received by their friends or teachers. Mahmud (2023) said that nervous children usually have difficulty speaking fluently, which hinders communication.
3. Fluency and the ability to change the way you speak when necessary are also signs of confidence. Confident children can speak fluently without long pauses and can still convey their ideas even if there are grammatical or pronunciation errors. Widodo and friends (2023) say that children who are comfortable using English are usually more confident because they focus on conveying the message, not just the details of the language.
4. Attitude towards mistakes is also important. Confident children are not afraid of making mistakes and can accept criticism well. They know that mistakes are part of learning and use feedback to improve. Qoni'ah (2023) say that children who are patient in facing mistakes can become more confident, especially when learning with friends.
5. Desire to participate in conversations in various places is also a sign of

confidence. Confident children are usually active not only in class but also seek opportunities to speak outside of class, such as in extracurricular activities, language communities, or chatting with foreigners. Aulia & Apoko (2022) say that this is a sign that children have mature confidence and strong motivation to learn English.

Therefore, signs such as initiative to speak, emotional control, fluency, attitude towards mistakes, and active conversation in many places are good ways for teachers to gauge how confident a child is. By knowing this, teachers can help children learn in ways that are appropriate for them so that their confidence can grow.

#### **D. The Relationship Between Peer Interaction and Speaking Confidence in EFL Students**

##### **a. Sociocultural Theory**

Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory focuses on how social interaction and scaffolding from more capable individuals mediate the learning process so that students can reach what is known as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the zone between what students can do on their own and what they can achieve with assistance. In the context of EFL, peer interaction between peers has the potential to be a form of scaffolding, especially when more proficient students help less proficient students through discussion tasks, pair work, or group activities. For example, the study *A Look at Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (SCT) : The Effectiveness of Scaffolding Method on EFL Learners' Speaking Achievement* found that the experimental group taught using the scaffolding method showed

a significant improvement in speaking results compared to the control group. Wiley Online Library Scaffolding in speaking tasks not only helps students develop linguistic skills (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) but also reduces anxiety and boosts confidence because students feel social support in their learning. Through peer interaction, students access help in a more relaxed context, allowing them to practice in a less intimidating environment than in a teacher-centered situation.

### **b. Peer Interaction as a Mediator**

Peer interaction is not only an alternative method or strategy, but can also function as a mediator between students' internal factors (e.g., self-efficacy, speaking anxiety) and the development of speaking confidence. As a mediator, peer interaction provides a space for students to practice collaboratively, receive feedback from peers, and learn through observation and imitation. For example, in the study Tauchid (2025), peer support (which includes student-to-student interaction) was found to reduce speaking anxiety and increase speaking proficiency in online settings; thus, peer interaction mediates the relationship between anxiety and speaking performance. Peer interaction as a mediator also appears in research that looks at how structured peer interaction helps students not only in linguistic aspects, but also in psychological aspects, such as the courage to take risks in speaking and feeling “safe” in class

### **c. Empirical Evidence**

Here are some recent studies that explain the real relationship between peer interaction and speaking confidence in EFL students:

1. The Implementation of Peer Interaction to Enhance Students' English

### Speaking Skills (Qoni'ah, 2023)

This classroom action research shows that after two cycles of peer interaction, the average speaking score increased from 67.4 to 75.8. These results indicate that systematic peer interaction can improve students' speaking skills and, implicitly, their confidence in speaking.

2. Using Peer Interaction to Improve Listening and Speaking Skills in Secondary EFL Context (Saeid, 2024).

A quantitative study in secondary schools in the Kurdish region found that peer interaction, including debates, discussions, peer feedback, and reflection, was effective in improving speaking and listening skills. In addition, students reported that peer interaction helped reduce anxiety and strengthened their confidence in using English.

3. Teachers' Perceptions of Speaking Confidence Strategies: Case Study at Cambridge English School, Makassar (Ulpa et al., 2025).

In this qualitative study, teachers reported that peer-based interaction environments, such as small group discussions, role plays, and peer interviews, along with praise and positive feedback, were very helpful in building students' confidence. Teachers also observed that when students felt that the classroom was a safe, peer-based environment, they were more willing to take risks in speaking.

4. Exploring Students' Perceptions of Peer Interaction in Developing English Speaking Skills (Ky Nhan, 2024).

Research on the perceptions of English major students found that peer interaction through structured tasks (role-play, tasks relevant to real life)

provides more opportunities for language practice, improving fluency, vocabulary mastery, and self-control in speaking. Students feel that peer interaction helps reduce their fear of making mistakes and motivates them to speak more actively.

From the above theory and empirical evidence, it is clear that peer interaction has a strong relationship with EFL students' speaking confidence. Through the sociocultural theory framework (ZPD & scaffolding), peer interaction is not only an additional strategy, but also a mediator that can bridge the gap between students' internal conditions (such as anxiety and self-confidence) and speaking performance. Empirical evidence from quantitative research and classroom action shows that structured peer interaction supported by a safe environment can significantly improve students' speaking skills and confidence.

#### **E. Previous study**

Many previous studies, both internationally and nationally, have discussed the role of peer interaction in developing the speaking skills and confidence of students learning English as a foreign language (EFL). In general, these studies show that peer interaction can greatly help to increase student confidence by creating a supportive, collaborative, and non-pressurized learning environment.

At the international level, Saeid (2024) research shows that the use of peer interactions such as discussions, debates, and group reflections is effective in improving the speaking skills and confidence of EFL students in secondary schools. In this study, students felt more comfortable and confident speaking English when interacting with peers than with teachers. Additionally, research by Cao, Xiao, and

Yao (2024) in China also confirms that an inclusive learning environment, including peer interaction, as well as a teaching approach based on World English, can help boost students' confidence. This study emphasizes the importance of learning designs that make students feel that various forms of English are valid and that they should not IComas Arnau (2024) hesitate to express themselves.

At the national level, Qoni'ah (2023) conducted classroom action research at Sabilunnajah Islamic High School and found that the application of peer interaction during two learning cycles significantly improved students' average speaking scores, as well as creating a more supportive learning environment. Meanwhile, Aulia & Apoko (2022) examined the relationship between self-confidence and speaking skills at the junior high school level and found a strong positive correlation, namely that students with high self-confidence tended to have better speaking skills. Widodo (2023) also emphasized the importance of self-efficacy in oral communication skills, where confident students are more active and dare to speak.

In addition, Tauchid (2025) examined the role of teacher and peer support in reducing speaking anxiety and improving the speaking skills of EFL students, particularly in online learning. The results show that peer support is very helpful in reducing nervousness and improving speaking skills. This proves that peer interaction not only impacts technical aspects of learning, such as grammar and vocabulary, but also the emotional aspects that are important in building students' confidence.

Other studies also emphasize the importance of casual conversations with friends as a way to build confidence in speaking English. Ariesta (2025), who

researched online English communities on Discord, found that students who frequently chat there become more confident because they are accustomed to speaking, are not afraid, and feel comfortable using English. This is in line with Mellisa (2024) research, which looked at how students received feedback from friends during presentations. The results showed that students not only received feedback to improve their speaking skills, but also felt more confident because they received support and praise from their friends.

However, even though a lot of research has shown the benefits of peer interaction, there are still some shortcomings that need to be addressed. Most studies focus more on improving general speaking skills without specifically examining how peer interaction can shape confidence as a separate psychological aspect. Most studies also use short-term designs, so they cannot yet show the long-term impact of peer interaction on students' confidence in speaking. Variations in context and measurement methods also make it difficult to obtain a complete picture of the role of peer interaction in EFL classrooms, especially in Indonesia.

This study aims to fill this gap by providing a deeper and more contextual understanding of how peer interactions can build students' confidence in speaking English as a foreign language in a continuous learning process.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **A. Research design**

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of describing in depth how peer interactions play a role in building confidence in speaking among English Education students at UIN Ar-Raniry. The qualitative approach is chosen because it is in line with the research objective, which is to understand social phenomena from the participants perspective in a contextual and holistic manner Creswell (2014). This study does not focus on measuring numbers or statistical relationships, but rather on understanding the meaning, experiences, and perceptions of students regarding the interactions among peers that they experience in speaking and learning activities.

A descriptive design is used to present a systematic, factual, and accurate picture of the facts and characteristics of specific individuals or groups (Bogdan & Biklen (2017). The researcher acts as the main instrument in the data collection and analysis process, while maintaining reflective engagement with the research context.

#### **B. Research Participants**

The subjects in this study are active students of the English Education Study Program at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, who are currently taking or have taken speaking skills courses. The number of

participants is 10 people using purposive sampling, which is the selection of participants based on certain criteria considered relevant to the research objectives (Patton M Q, 2002).

The criteria for participants in this study included:

1. Being an active student in semester 3 or above,
2. Having taken or currently taking speaking courses,
3. Being actively involved in activities that involve interaction with peers (such as group discussions, peer feedback, and group presentations),
4. Being willing to provide information voluntarily.

This technique is considered appropriate in qualitative research because it allows researchers to select informants who can provide in-depth information (Miles, 2014). The limited number of participants allows researchers to explore the data in greater depth and focus.

### **C. Data collection**

The data in this study were collected through semi-structured interviews. This technique is chosen because it allows researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences, perceptions, and views on how interactions with peers play a role in building their confidence in speaking English.

The interviews are conducted face to face using a handphone to record and last approximately 30–45 minutes. The interview questions are open-ended and flexible, allowing participants to express their views freely, while the researcher is able to explore topics that arose during the interview in greater depth .

All participants receive an explanation of the research objectives and their

rights as participants, including the freedom to withdraw at any time without any consequences. Written consent is obtained before the interview process is carried out.

#### **D. Data analysis**

The data in this study are analyzed using thematic analysis developed by . This technique involves the process of identifying, organizing, and interpreting patterns or themes that emerge from the interview data.

The stages of data analysis include:

1. Reading and understanding all interview transcripts to obtain a comprehensive overview of the data,
2. Performing initial coding of relevant parts of the data,
3. Searching for potential themes based on emerging patterns,
4. Reviewing and refining themes in accordance with the research focus,
5. Determining and naming the final themes,
6. Compiling a systematic and interpretative analysis report.

Data validity is maintained through source triangulation and member checking techniques. Source triangulation is done by comparing information from various participants to see the consistency of answers, while member checking is done by asking participants to confirm the researcher's interpretation results to ensure the accuracy of the meaning obtained.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings and discussion based on the data collected from the interview sessions. The findings section describes the results that directly answer the two research questions of this study, namely the forms of peer interaction that occur among EFL students and the perceived benefits of peer interaction in improving their speaking confidence. Following the findings, the discussion section interprets these results by connecting them with relevant theories and previous studies.

#### **A. Research Findings**

To answer the two research questions of this study, the researcher collected data through semi-structured interviews with ten EFL students who had participated in English speaking classes. The interview consisted of ten questions focusing on the forms of peer interaction that commonly occur during speaking activities and the perceived benefits of peer interaction in improving students' speaking confidence. After analyzing the interview transcripts, several key findings emerged. The findings that answer each research question are presented in detail in the following sections.

##### **a. What forms of peer interaction occur among EFL students during the English language learning process?**

Based on the interview results, the researcher identified several forms of peer interaction that students commonly engage in during speaking activities. These

forms include pair work, group work, roleplay activities, collaborative interaction, and peer feedback. Each form is presented in detail below.

### 1. Pair Work

Pair work appeared as the most frequent form of peer interaction experienced by the participants. PB mentioned that practicing with only one partner feels less threatening and helps her warm up before larger speaking tasks. She stated, Pair work makes her feel more relaxed. When she practices with her friend, it is easier to speak, and she is not nervous. Similarly, NR highlighted that pair work encourages her to speak more because the interaction becomes more balanced. She explained that, in pairs, both of them get the chance to talk, and she feels comfortable because only one person is listening. The US also noted that pair work helps her focus on specific weaknesses, especially pronunciation. When practicing in pairs, her partner can tell her directly if she mispronounces something. It helps her improve faster. These responses show that pair work provides students with meaningful space to practice, negotiate meaning, and receive support before performing more demanding speaking tasks.

### 2. Group Work

Group work was also frequently reported by participants as a common interaction pattern during speaking activities. For example, BZ stated that group discussions help her get many ideas. When someone shares something, it also helps her understand what she wants to say later. AM also noted that being in a group allows students to support one another. In a group, if she doesn't understand something, others will explain it. It makes her more prepared for speaking tasks. ZF

reported that group interaction helps her feel more confident when presenting because she has already reviewed the material with her peers. When they discuss in a group, she gets a clearer picture. Later, she doesn't feel confused when speaking. These findings indicate that group work serves as an important medium for generating ideas, clarifying content, and building shared understanding before students engage in speaking.

### 3. Roleplay Activities

Roleplay activities emerged as another significant form of peer interaction mentioned by the participants. NR explained that roleplay makes speaking feel more natural because it is performed in context. Roleplay feels like a real conversation. It helps her speak more smoothly because they practice the dialogue many times. PB mentioned that the repetitive nature of roleplay contributes to her fluency. When they repeat the script several times, she becomes more confident, and my speaking becomes more fluent. BZ highlighted that roleplay helps reduce the pressure usually felt in formal speaking tasks. Roleplay is fun, so she doesn't feel too nervous. It helps her speak more freely. These responses demonstrate that roleplay provides meaningful rehearsal opportunities and encourages students to speak in a relaxed and interactive environment.

### 4. Collaborative Interaction

Collaborative interaction refers to students working together to complete speaking-related tasks, such as planning content, constructing arguments, or organizing their presentations. ZF stated that collaboration helps her complete speaking tasks more easily because responsibilities are shared. When they

collaborate, they divide the parts and help each other. It makes the speaking task more manageable. US also noted that collaboration helps her structure ideas more effectively. Her friends guide her on what should be included. It helps her organize my thoughts before speaking. AM expressed that collaborative work gives her the confidence to speak because she does not prepare alone. Working together makes her feel supported. She doesn't feel confused because they plan everything as a team. These findings show that collaborative interaction supports students both cognitively and emotionally by providing collective preparation for speaking tasks.

#### 5. Peer Feedback

The final form of peer interaction identified in this study is peer feedback. US said her friends correct her when she pronounces something wrong. It helps her improve before presenting. BZ also explained that peer feedback helps her identify areas that need improvement. She receives comments from her friends, so she knows what to fix. PB added that peer suggestions help her express ideas more naturally. Her friends give suggestions on how to say something better, and it helps her when speaking. These responses indicate that peer feedback plays an essential role in refining students' speaking performance and supporting their learning process.

#### **b. What are the perceived benefits of peer interaction in improving EFL students' speaking confidence?**

The second research question investigates the perceived benefits students gain from engaging in peer interaction during speaking activities. Analysis of the interview responses revealed that peer interaction offers multiple psychological,

linguistic, and social benefits that contribute directly to increasing students' speaking confidence.

#### 1. Safe and Comfortable Environment

One of the clearest benefits of peer interaction is the creation of a safe, supportive, and comfortable speaking environment. PB noted that when she speaks with her friends, it feels normal and natural. She doesn't feel the pressure that she usually feels when speaking in front of the class. This sense of comfort was echoed by NR, who explained that she doesn't worry about being judged when she speaks with her peers. The atmosphere feels safe, and that makes it easier for her to express herself. Other participants mentioned that peer interaction allows them to speak without fear of embarrassment or negative evaluation. AM mentioned, the environment with peers is relaxed. Even if she makes mistakes, she knows her friends will not judge her. These responses indicate that the supportive nature of peer interaction allows students to speak more freely and confidently. The safe atmosphere functions as an important prerequisite for confidence-building, as students become more willing to take risks in speaking.

#### 2. Reduced Speaking Anxiety

Closely related to the safe environment is the reduction of speaking anxiety, which was mentioned by nearly all participants. US described her experience clearly. When she speaks in front of the class, she gets nervous, and her mind goes blank. But when she speaks with friends, she doesn't feel that anxiety. Similarly, ZF expressed that peer interaction makes speaking tasks feel less intimidating. She feels less tense when speaking with peers. The anxiety disappears because she

knows they won't laugh at her mistakes. Several participants mentioned that the absence of pressure encourages them to participate more. AM stated with peers, she feels calm. she doesn't get the same nervous feeling she gets when the lecturer is watching. These findings highlight that reduced anxiety is one of the strongest and most consistent benefits of peer interaction. By lowering the emotional barriers that hinder speaking confidence, peer interaction creates an easier pathway for students to practice and improve.

### 3. Increased Opportunities for Speaking Practice

Another major benefit identified in the data is the increased number of opportunities for speaking practice. BZ stated that when she works with her friends, she speaks much more often. It gives her constant practice, and that improves her confidence. NR also emphasized the importance of repeated practice. The more she speaks with her peers, the more comfortable she feels. It trains her to speak without overthinking. AM added, speaking with peers lets her practice many times before the real presentation. These testimonies show that peer interaction enables students to engage in frequent, low-pressure speaking practice, which gradually enhances their confidence.

### 4. Emotional and Social Support

Peer interaction also offers emotional and social support, which participants described as a key factor in building speaking confidence. PB explained that her friends always support her. When she forgets what to say, they help her. It makes her feel confident to continue speaking. Similarly, ZF highlighted the importance of peer reassurance. If she feels stuck or unsure, her friends encourage her.

They tell her it's okay and help her with ideas. US also shared that being surrounded by supportive peers reduces the fear of making mistakes. she feels safe because her friends never make her feel bad for making mistakes. These findings show that emotional support from peers fosters a sense of belonging and security, which serves as a psychological foundation for speaking confidence.

#### 5. Helpful Feedback for Improvement

Many participants stated that peer interaction provides feedback that helps them improve their speaking performance. US stated that her peers correct my pronunciation before she speaks in front of the class. Their feedback really helps her improve. BZ mentioned that she receives suggestions from her friends about which words or sentences sound better. It makes her feel more prepared. NR also shared that peer guidance helps her avoid repeated mistakes. When her friends correct her, she remembers it and feels more confident next time. Feedback from peers appears to help students refine their speaking skills, which in turn contributes to confidence in performance-based tasks.

#### 6. Improved Readiness and Confidence Through Cooperation

A final benefit identified in the data is the increase in readiness that comes from cooperative work. ZF explained, Working together makes her feel prepared because they plan everything as a team. AM added, Cooperation helps her understand what she should say. It gives her mental preparation before speaking. PB also emphasized the role of teamwork in boosting confidence. When they prepare together, she feels ready. She knows what to say because they already discussed it. These findings suggest that cooperation not only supports idea development but also reinforces students' mental and emotional readiness to speak.

## B. Discussion

This section discusses the findings of the study by connecting them with the theories and previous studies presented. The discussion is organized based on the two research questions: what forms of peer interaction occur during EFL speaking activities, and what are the perceived benefits of peer interaction in increasing students' speaking confidence.

### 1. Forms of Peer Interaction in EFL Speaking Activities

The findings revealed five major forms of peer interaction pair work, group work, roleplay activities, collaborative interaction, and peer feedback. Overall, these forms align strongly with the theoretical foundation discussed, indicating that peer interaction naturally emerges through structured activities that support communication.

First, pair work appeared as the most dominant interaction pattern. This finding is consistent with view Harmer (2015) that pair work increases student talking time and reduces the anxiety associated with whole-class performance. In this study, students described a pair work as more comfortable and less intimidating, which supports Richards (2008) argument that pair work encourages more meaningful language production. The participants' descriptions of rehearsing ideas, practicing pronunciation, and preparing before speaking to larger audiences reflect the core principles of pair work outlined in previous literature.

Second, group work also emerged as a frequently experienced form of interaction. Brown (2020) emphasizes that group work promotes negotiation of meaning, cooperation, and shared responsibility, elements that were clearly

reflected in the participants' responses. Students discussed how group work helped them access diverse ideas, clarify difficult content, and strengthen their preparation for speaking tasks. This aligns with Jacobs & Mccafferty (2006) assertion that group learning enhances comprehensibility through collective effort. The current findings confirm that group work not only assists in idea generation but also supports students cognitively by allowing them to process information collaboratively.

Third, roleplay activities were reported as a common practice in speaking classes. This finding supports Harmer (2015) who argues that roleplay simulates real world communication and allows repeated practice that enhances fluency. The participants' descriptions of feeling more natural, less pressured, and more fluent when engaging in roleplay reflect these theoretical claims. The enjoyment expressed by the students also align with Harmer's notion that roleplay increases motivation by encouraging creativity and engagement.

Fourth, the findings showed that students frequently engage in collaborative interaction, which is consistent with Johnson's cooperative learning theory. Collaborative interaction, as described by the participants, provides shared responsibility, joint problem-solving, and collective planning, all of which support deeper cognitive engagement. The participants explained that collaboration helped them structure their ideas and organize content before speaking, which supports the idea that collaboration contributes to both cognitive processing and performance readiness.

Finally, peer feedback was identified as an essential form of peer interaction.

The participants' experiences align with J. Topping (2017), who emphasize the role of peer feedback in increasing linguistic awareness and improving accuracy. Students reported receiving feedback on pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar, which helped them refine their speaking performance. The findings support the claim that peer feedback enhances speaking preparation through immediate and supportive correction.

## 2. The Benefits of Peer Interaction in Increasing Students' Speaking Confidence

The findings revealed several key benefits of peer interaction that contribute directly to increasing students' speaking confidence.

These include a safe environment, reduced speaking anxiety, increased opportunities for practice, emotional and social support, helpful feedback, and improved readiness through cooperation. Each of these benefits corresponds strongly with the theories presented.

The most prominent benefit reported by students was the creation of a safe and comfortable environment. This finding aligns with Hasanah (2022) and Alqarni & Adam (2021), who state that peer interaction fosters a relaxed and non-threatening setting for communication. Students described feeling less judged and more comfortable speaking with peers than in front of the entire class or lecturer. This supports the argument that psychological safety plays a crucial role in fostering speaking confidence.

A closely related benefit is the reduction of speaking anxiety, which was consistently mentioned across participants. This aligns with the affective filter hypothesis, which asserts that anxiety inhibits language production. The current

findings support previous studies indicating that peer interaction lowers affective barriers and encourages students to take risks in speaking. Participants described feeling calmer and more relaxed when speaking with peers, confirming that reduced anxiety contributes significantly to confidence-building.

Another benefit identified was increased opportunities for speaking practice. This finding supports Balakrishnan (2021) and Wahyuni et al. (2020), who emphasize that repeated practice strengthens fluency and confidence. The participants' reported experiences, such as speaking more often, rehearsing multiple times, and engaging in continuous practice, demonstrate how frequent peer interaction can lead to stronger speaking performance.

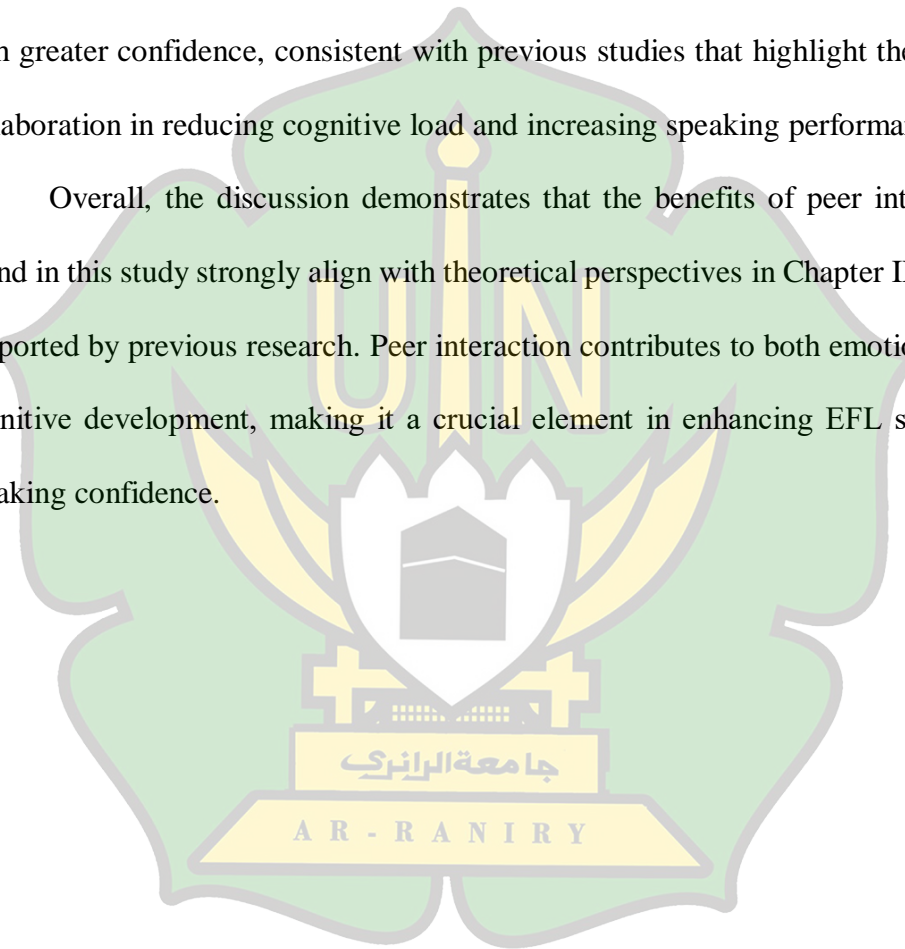
The findings also highlighted the importance of emotional and social support, which aligns with Mercer (2020) theory on relational support in language learning. Participants explained that peers encourage, reassure, and assist them when they encounter difficulties. This emotional support reduces fear of mistakes and promotes a willingness to participate. The presence of supportive peers appears to serve as a foundation for confidence, validating the theoretical claim that social relationships play a critical role in language development.

Another major benefit was the presence of helpful feedback, which enhanced students' linguistic accuracy and overall readiness. This finding corresponds with J. Lee (2021) who states that peer feedback increases learners' awareness of errors and provides opportunities for immediate correction. Participants reported that feedback from peers improved their pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary use, leading to greater confidence before performing

speaking tasks.

Finally, the findings revealed that cooperation enhances readiness, supporting Johnson's cooperative learning principles. Students described feeling more prepared when working collaboratively to plan content, organize ideas, and rehearse together. This shared preparation helps students engage in speaking tasks with greater confidence, consistent with previous studies that highlight the role of collaboration in reducing cognitive load and increasing speaking performance.

Overall, the discussion demonstrates that the benefits of peer interaction found in this study strongly align with theoretical perspectives in Chapter II and are supported by previous research. Peer interaction contributes to both emotional and cognitive development, making it a crucial element in enhancing EFL students' speaking confidence.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study based on the findings discussed in the previous chapter. It also provides several recommendations for teachers, students, and future researchers related to the use of peer interaction in EFL speaking activities.

#### A. Conclusions

This study aimed to investigate the forms of peer interaction that occur during EFL speaking activities and the perceived benefits of peer interaction in increasing students' speaking confidence. Based on the interview data collected from ten EFL students, several important conclusions can be drawn.

First, the findings show that peer interaction in speaking activities appears through five main forms: pair work, group work, roleplay activities, collaborative interaction, and peer feedback. These forms represent structured and meaningful patterns of communication that enable students to engage actively with their peers. Pair work and group work were the most frequently mentioned, indicating that students often rely on peers to rehearse ideas, share knowledge, and prepare before speaking in front of a larger audience. Roleplay activities also emerged as a key form of interaction that provides authentic practice and enhances students' fluency. Collaborative interaction was found to support students in constructing ideas and organizing content, while peer feedback played an important role in helping students identify linguistic weaknesses and revise their performance.

Second, the findings revealed several benefits of peer interaction that directly contribute to increasing students' speaking confidence. Peer interaction creates a safe and comfortable environment where students feel less judged and more willing to participate. It also significantly reduces speaking anxiety, allowing students to speak more freely and with less fear of making mistakes. Furthermore, peer interaction offers more opportunities for speaking practice, which strengthens fluency and familiarity with the language. Emotional and social support from peers encourages students to take risks, while constructive feedback helps them refine their accuracy and readiness. Cooperative preparation also enhances students' mental readiness before speaking tasks, enabling them to perform with greater confidence.

Overall, this study concludes that peer interaction plays a crucial role in supporting EFL students' speaking development. It provides not only linguistic practice but also emotional and cognitive support, all of which contribute to increased speaking confidence. Peer interaction should therefore be considered an essential component in the teaching and learning of speaking in EFL classrooms.

## **B. Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several recommendations are proposed for teachers, students, and future researchers.

Teachers are encouraged to design speaking activities that integrate structured peer interaction, such as pair work, group discussions, and roleplay. Since peer interaction creates a low-anxiety environment, teachers should maximize opportunities for students to practice with their peers before performing

in front of the whole class. Teachers should also guide students in giving constructive feedback to ensure that peer correction remains supportive and beneficial. Incorporating collaborative learning strategies may also help students prepare better and build stronger confidence in speaking tasks.

Students are encouraged to actively participate in peer interaction during speaking activities. They should take advantage of pair and group work to rehearse ideas, reduce anxiety, and gain confidence. Students are also encouraged to seek and provide peer feedback to enhance their speaking accuracy. Engaging consistently in peer interaction will help students build fluency, increase motivation, and become more comfortable speaking English in various contexts.

Future researchers may explore peer interaction using a larger sample size or incorporating classroom observations to provide a richer description of interaction patterns. Researchers may also investigate other variables related to peer interaction, such as its impact on speaking fluency, vocabulary acquisition, or learner autonomy. Additionally, future studies could compare peer interaction across different proficiency levels or learning environments to gain a broader understanding of its effectiveness.

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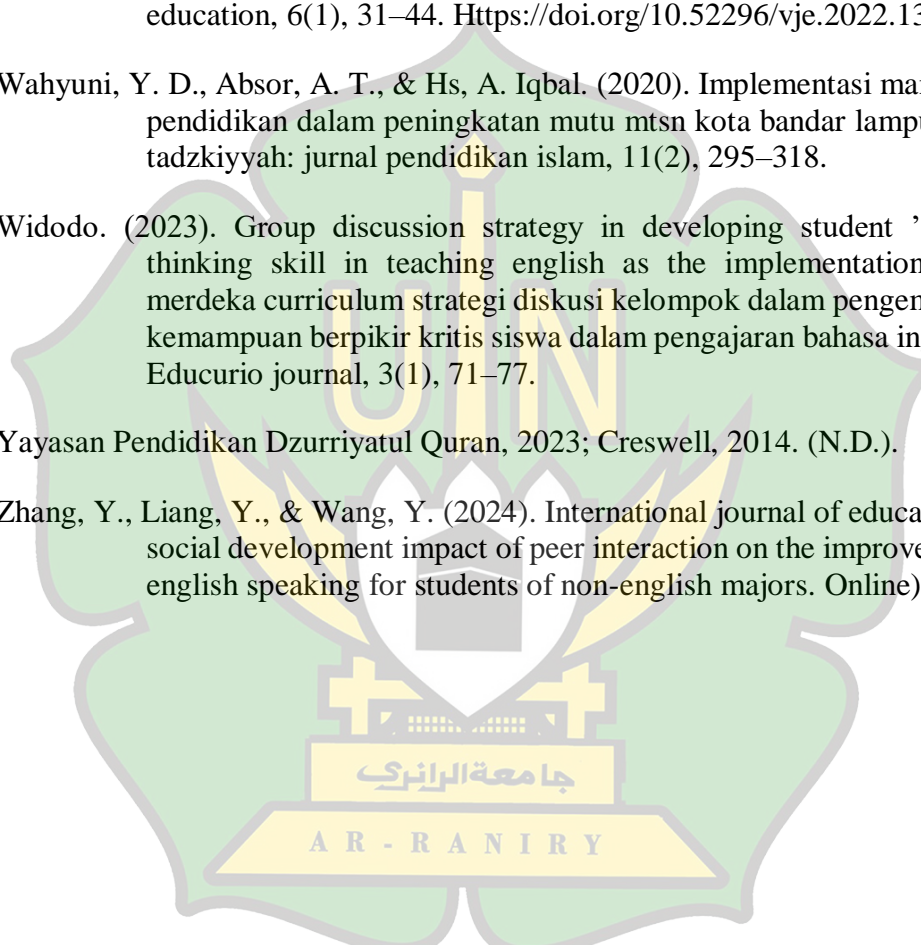
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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Appointment Letter of Supervisor



KEPUTUSAN DEKAN FAKULTAS TARBİYAH DAN KEGURUAN UIN AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH  
NOMOR: 1479 TAHUN 2025

TENTANG:  
PENGANGKATAN PEMBIMBING SKRIPSI MAHASISWA  
DENGAN RAHMAT TUHAN YANG MAHA ESA

DEKAN FAKULTAS TARBİYAH DAN KEGURUAN UIN AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH

- Menimbang : a. bahwa untuk kelancaran bimbingan skripsi mahasiswa pada Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh maka dipandang perlu menunjuk pembimbing skripsi;  
b. bahwa yang namanya tersebut dalam Surat Keputusan ini dianggap cakap dan mampu untuk diangkat dalam jabatan sebagai pembimbing skripsi mahasiswa;  
c. bahwa berdasarkan pertimbangan sebagaimana dimaksud dalam huruf a dan huruf b, perlu menetapkan Keputusan Dekan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.
- Mengingat : 1. Undang-Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003, tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional;  
2. Undang-Undang Nomor 14 Tahun 2005, tentang Guru dan Dosen;  
3. Undang-Undang Nomor 12 Tahun 2012, tentang Pendidikan Tinggi;  
4. Peraturan Presiden Nomor 74 Tahun 2012, tentang perubahan atas peraturan pemerintah RI Nomor 23 Tahun 2005 tentang pengelolaan keuangan Badan Layanan Umum;  
5. Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 4 Tahun 2014, tentang penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Tinggi dan Pengelolaan Perguruan Tinggi;  
6. Peraturan Presiden Nomor 64 Tahun 2013, tentang perubahan Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh menjadi Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
7. Peraturan Menteri Agama RI Nomor 44 Tahun 2022, tentang Organisasi dan Tata Kerja UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
8. Peraturan Menteri Agama Nomor 14 Tahun 2022, tentang Statuta UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh;  
9. Keputusan Menteri Agama Nomor 492 Tahun 2003, tentang Pendelegasian Wewenang Pengangkatan, Pemindahan dan Pemberhentian PNS di Lingkungan Depag RI;  
10. Keputusan Menteri Keuangan Nomor 293/KmK.05/2011, tentang penetapan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh pada Kementerian Agama sebagai Instansi Pemerintah yang menerapkan Pengelolaan Badan Layanan Umum;  
11. Surat Keputusan Rektor UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Nomor 01 Tahun 2015, Tentang Pendelegasian Wewenang kepada Dekan dan Direktur Pascasarjana di Lingkungan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh.
- MEMUTUSKAN
- Menetapkan : Keputusan Dekan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh tentang Pembimbing Skripsi Mahasiswa.
- KESATU : Menunjuk Saudara :  
**Drs. Amiruddin, M. Pd**  
Untuk membimbing Skripsi  
Nama : Syadza Azhari  
NIM : 220203152  
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Judul Skripsi : Students' Perceptions of Peer Interaction in EFL Speaking Activities
- KEDUA : Kepada pembimbing yang tercantum namanya diatas diberikan honorarium sesuai dengan peraturan perundang-undangan yang berlaku;
- KETIGA : Pembiayaan akibat keputusan ini dibebankan pada DIPA UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Nomor SP DIPA-025.04.2.423925/2025 Tanggal 02 Desember 2024 Tahun Anggaran 2025;
- KEEMPAT : Keputusan ini berlaku selama enam bulan sejak tanggal ditetapkan;
- KELIMA : Keputusan ini berlaku sejak tanggal ditetapkan dengan ketentuan bahwa segala sesuatu akan diubah dan diperbaiki kembali sebagaimana mestinya, apabila kemudian hari ternyata terdapat kekeliruan dalam Surat Keputusan ini.

Ditetapkan di : Banda Aceh  
Pada tanggal : 30 Oktober 2025  
Dekan,

  
Saiful Muluk

#### Tembusan

1. Sekjen Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
2. Dirjen Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
3. Direktur Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Kementerian Agama RI di Jakarta;
4. Kantor Pelayanan Perbendaharaan Negara (KPPN), di Banda Aceh;
5. Rektor UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh di Banda Aceh;
6. Kepala Bagian Keuangan dan Akuntansi UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh di Banda Aceh;
7. Yang bersangkutan;
8. Arsip.



**Appendix B: Recommendation Letter from *Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan*  
to conduct the research**



**KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY BANDA ACEH  
FAKULTAS TARBIYAH DAN KEGURUAN**

Jl. Syeikh Abdur Rauf Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh Telp/Fax. : 0651-752921

Nomor : B-9155/Un.08/FTK.1/TL.00/11/2025

Lamp : -

Hal : ***Penelitian Ilmiah Mahasiswa***

Kepada Yth,

Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh  
Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry dengan ini menerangkan bahwa:

NIM : 220203152

Nama : SYADZA AZHARI

Program Studi/Jurusan : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

Alamat : Mangga Meusara agung Gue gajah

Saudara yang tersebut namanya diatas benar mahasiswa Fakultas Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan bermaksud melakukan penelitian ilmiah di lembaga yang Bapak/Ibu pimpin dalam rangka penulisan Skripsi dengan judul ***STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF PEER INTERACTION IN EFL SPEAKING ACTIVITIES***

Banda Aceh, 25 November 2025

An. Dekan

Wakil Dekan Bidang Akademik dan Kelembagaan



Prof. Dr. Buhori Muslim, M.Ag.


NIP. 197508152001121002

Berlaku sampai : 31 Desember 2025

جامعة الرانيري

A R - R A N I R Y

### Appendix C: Confirmation Letter from English Education Department



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI AR-RANIRY  
**FAKULTAS TARBİYAH DAN KEGURUAN**  
**PRODI PENDIDIKAN BAHASA INGGRIS**  
Jln Syekh Abdur Rauf Kopelma Darussalam Banda Aceh  
Email : [pbi.fk@ar-raniry.ac.id](mailto:pbi.fk@ar-raniry.ac.id). Website : <https://ar-raniry.ac.id>

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**SURAT KETERANGAN**  
Nomor: B-622/Un.08/PBI/Kp.01.2/12/2025

Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Darussalam Banda Aceh menerangkan bahwa yang nama tersebut di bawah ini:

Nama : Syadza Azhari  
NIM : 220203152  
Prodi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris  
Alamat : Keutapang, Aceh Besar

Benar telah melakukan pengumpulan data untuk penelitian pada Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh dalam rangka penyusunan Skripsi yang berjudul:

***"Students' Perceptions of Peer Interaction in EFL Speaking Activities"***

Demikianlah Surat Keterangan ini kami buat agar dapat dipergunakan seperlunya.

Banda Aceh, 15 Desember 2025  
Ketua Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris,



Syarifah Dahliana

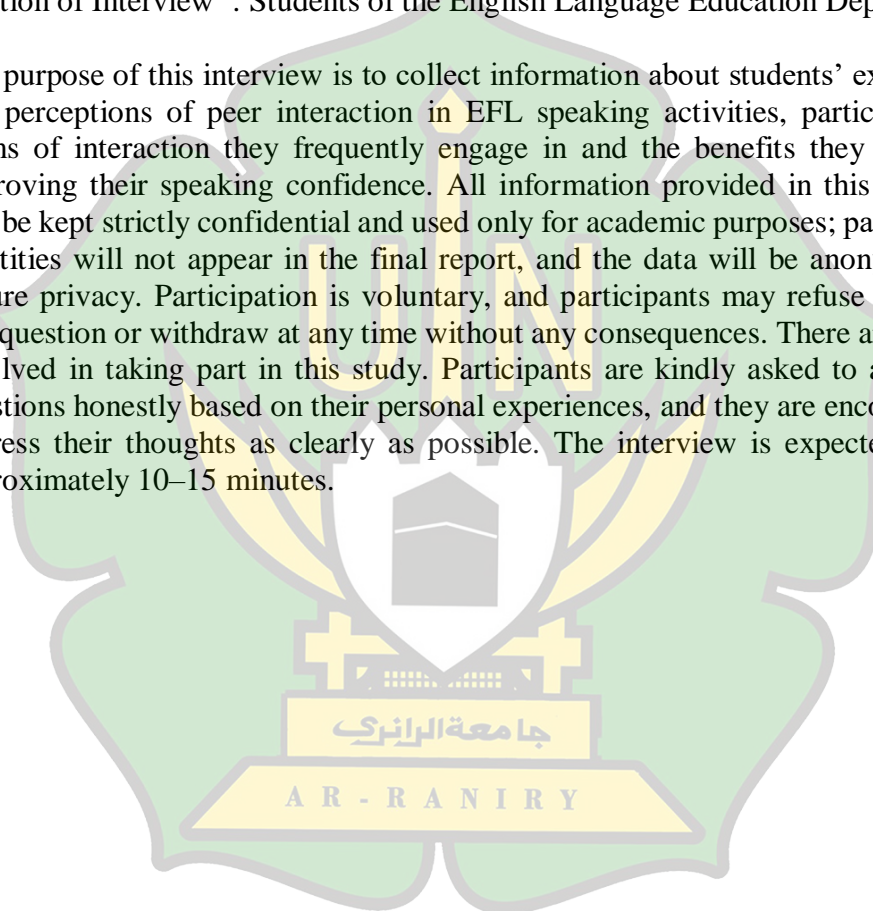
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## Appendix D: Interview Protocol

### Interview Protocol

Project : Students Perceptions on Peer Interaction in EFL Students Speaking Activities  
 Time of interview :  
 Date :  
 Place Interviewer : UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh Participant :  
 Position of Interview : Students of the English Language Education Department

The purpose of this interview is to collect information about students' experiences and perceptions of peer interaction in EFL speaking activities, particularly the forms of interaction they frequently engage in and the benefits they feel from improving their speaking confidence. All information provided in this interview will be kept strictly confidential and used only for academic purposes; participants' identities will not appear in the final report, and the data will be anonymized to ensure privacy. Participation is voluntary, and participants may refuse to answer any question or withdraw at any time without any consequences. There are no risks involved in taking part in this study. Participants are kindly asked to answer all questions honestly based on their personal experiences, and they are encouraged to express their thoughts as clearly as possible. The interview is expected to take approximately 10–15 minutes.



**Questions:**

1. Can you describe your overall experience in speaking classes at PBI?
2. What kinds of peer interaction activities have you participated in during speaking classes?
3. How often do you work with peers during speaking activities?
4. How do you usually feel when interacting with peers in speaking tasks?
5. In what ways do you think peer interaction helps (or does not help) your speaking performance?
6. What specific benefits do you get from working with peers in speaking activities?
7. What challenges or difficulties do you face when interacting with peers?
8. Does peer interaction influence your speaking confidence? If yes, how?
9. Do you feel any difference in anxiety levels when speaking with peers compared to speaking in front of the whole class or lecturer? Please explain.
10. Which peer interaction activity (pair work, group discussion, roleplay, peer feedback, etc.) is the most helpful for you? Why?
11. How does peer feedback from classmates affect your speaking development?
12. What suggestions do you have to improve peer interaction activities in speaking classes?

**Appendix D: Documentation of Research**

