

**THE EFFECT OF SPEAKING ANXIETY AND STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE
TOWARDS STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN
KUNINGAN**

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of speaking anxiety and students' confidence on students' pronunciation, aiming to determine whether both variables individually and simultaneously influence pronunciation in English learning among senior high school students. This study applied a quantitative research design with multiple linear regression analysis, involving 272 students from State Senior High School 1 Mandirancan and State Senior High School 1 Cilimus, selected through stratified proportional random sampling, with data collected using a closed-ended questionnaire. The findings revealed that speaking anxiety had a significant negative effect on students' pronunciation, while students' confidence had a significant positive effect; furthermore, both variables simultaneously influenced pronunciation, with the coefficient of determination showing that 45.9% of the variation in pronunciation was explained by these two factors. The results can be applied in the field of English language education, particularly in pronunciation teaching, as teachers may design supportive classroom strategies that reduce students' speaking anxiety and enhance their confidence to improve oral communication skills. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the simultaneous influence of speaking anxiety and confidence on students' pronunciation, offering empirical evidence that these affective factors

jointly shape pronunciation outcomes and contribute to a deeper understanding of psychological influences in English language learning.

Keywords: EFL students, pronunciation, psychological factors, speaking anxiety, students' confidence

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, English has become a vital medium of communication across nations for purposes such as education, scientific research, business, and tourism (Nadianti et al., 2024; Sigalingging et al., 2023). As a lingua franca, it serves as a bridge that enables individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to interact effectively. In Indonesia, English is considered a compulsory subject at schools and is expected to equip students with the ability to use the language both in written and oral communication (Lestari et al., 2024). Among the four language skills, speaking is arguably the most essential since it directly impacts communicative competence (Maru et al., 2020).

However, the mastery of speaking does not solely depend on vocabulary and grammar but is closely tied to pronunciation, which ensures the clarity and intelligibility of speech (Muamar et al., 2022; Maulia & Amin, 2023). Pronunciation was chosen as the main focus of this study because it is a key component of speaking that directly influences how understandable a speaker's message is. In many cases, even with accurate grammar and vocabulary, unclear pronunciation can still hinder understanding (Maulia & Amin, 2023). In Indonesia, many students encounter persistent challenges with English pronunciation because the orthographic system of English differs significantly from that of Indonesian (Ramadani et al., 2024). For example, while Indonesian is largely phonetic, English involves irregularities in spelling-sound correspondence, which often leads to confusion among learners. Research also highlights that Indonesian students frequently transfer native language pronunciation rules to English, often resulting in persistent mispronunciations (Akhmad & Munawir, 2022). These difficulties are not only linguistic but also psychological, as many students feel anxious when speaking English in front of peers or teachers (Apriani & Darma, 2024). Consequently, improving pronunciation cannot be separated from addressing psychological barriers such as speaking anxiety and lack of confidence.

A growing body of literature emphasizes that psychological factors strongly affect students' oral performance. Anxiety has long been identified as one of the main inhibitors of effective foreign language learning. Juhana (as cited in Rini et al., 2021) explains that feelings of nervousness, fear of failure, or embarrassment may hinder learners from articulating words

correctly. Similarly, Horwitz et al. (1986) proposed the Foreign Language Anxiety Theory, which outlines three dimensions of anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. When students experience high levels of these anxieties, their oral performance, particularly pronunciation, can be negatively affected (Suparlan, 2021; Nugroho et al., 2023). Recent studies also confirm that speaking anxiety results in avoidance behaviors, hesitation, and lack of fluency, which ultimately lead to pronunciation errors (Kirit et al., 2023).

Apart from anxiety, self-confidence has also been found to be a critical factor influencing speaking ability. Learners with higher confidence levels are generally more willing to speak, take risks, and practice pronunciation, leading to better performance (Fitrah et al., 2024). Conversely, students with low confidence often engage in negative self-talk, expect failure, and avoid speaking opportunities, which may worsen their oral performance (Saidah, 2024). Previous studies highlight that self-confidence not only facilitates fluency but also enhances students' willingness to participate in classroom speaking activities (Yousefabadi & Ghafournia, 2024). Thus, confidence and anxiety are interconnected: low confidence increases speaking anxiety, while higher confidence reduces it.

Several empirical studies have examined the relationship between psychological factors and oral performance. Nuraeni et al. (2024) reported that nearly half of EFL students experience severe speaking anxiety, significantly affecting their fluency and pronunciation. Likewise, Karmida et al. (2024) found that low self-confidence is strongly associated with pronunciation difficulties, often stemming from a lack of practice and exposure. Ikramullah et al. (2023) further revealed that anxiety and lack of motivation exacerbate pronunciation errors in learning English vowels. Other studies have focused on coping strategies, such as using video feedback or peer support, which can reduce anxiety and improve pronunciation (Martin et al., 2022). However, most existing research tends to isolate either speaking anxiety or self-confidence as independent variables affecting general speaking ability, fluency, or overall communication skills (Dikmen, 2021; Al Habib, 2021).

Building upon these studies, the novelty of the present research lies in its focus on the combined effect of speaking anxiety and self-confidence on students' pronunciation. While previous works acknowledge the role of affective factors in speaking performance, they rarely examine pronunciation as the sole dependent variable. By analyzing pronunciation separately,

this study provides a more specific understanding of how psychological dimensions influence a crucial element of oral proficiency. Moreover, by testing both anxiety and confidence together through multiple regression, this research offers empirical evidence of their relative and joint contributions to pronunciation outcomes, thus filling an important gap in the existing literature.

In light of this background, the research problem can be formulated as follows: Do speaking anxiety and students' confidence significantly affect students' pronunciation, either individually or simultaneously? Accordingly, the study sets out the following hypotheses. The null hypotheses are: (HO1) speaking anxiety does not significantly affect students' pronunciation, (HO2) students' confidence does not significantly affect students' pronunciation, and (HO3) speaking anxiety and students' confidence do not simultaneously affect students' pronunciation. Conversely, the alternative hypotheses are: (Ha1) speaking anxiety significantly affects students' pronunciation, (Ha2) students' confidence significantly affects students' pronunciation, and (Ha3) speaking anxiety and students' confidence simultaneously affect students' pronunciation.

The purpose of this study is therefore to investigate the effect of speaking anxiety and students' confidence on students' pronunciation at senior high schools in Kuningan. By clarifying the roles of these psychological variables, the research aims to contribute to both theoretical knowledge and practical teaching strategies. Theoretically, it enriches the body of literature on affective factors in language learning by focusing on pronunciation. Practically, it provides insights for teachers on how to create supportive learning environments that reduce anxiety, foster confidence, and ultimately enhance students' ability to pronounce English words more accurately.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study applied a quantitative approach with a survey design in order to investigate the effect of speaking anxiety and students' confidence toward students' self-perceived pronunciation ability. A quantitative method was considered suitable because it allows the researcher to examine relationships among variables numerically and to test hypotheses statistically (Creswell, 2018).

The relationships among variables in this study can be illustrated in a research design diagram, which shows speaking anxiety (X_1) and students' confidence (X_2) as independent variables, both affecting students' perceived pronunciation ability (Y) either individually or simultaneously.

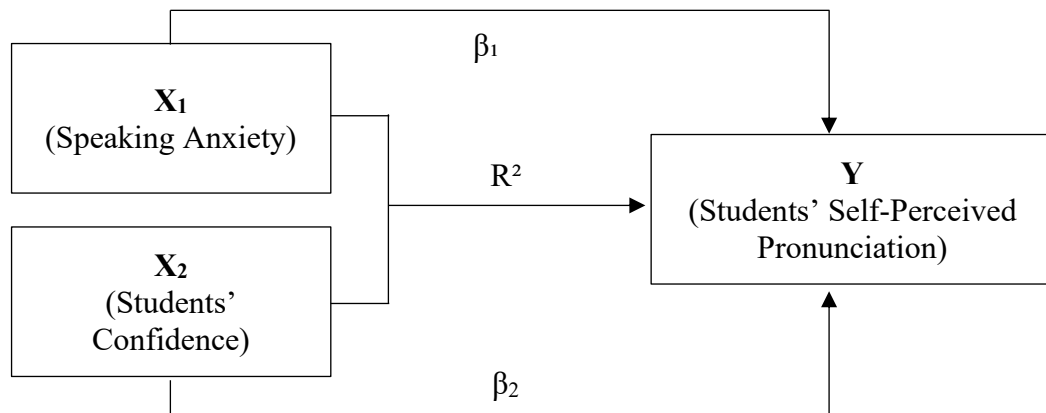


Diagram 1
Research Paradigm

The population of this study consisted of 854 eleventh-grade students from two senior high schools in Kuningan, namely State Senior High School 1 Mandirancan (430 students) and State Senior High School 1 Cilimus (424 students). This grade level was chosen because it represents a critical stage in students' English learning, particularly in speaking skills. Since it was not feasible to involve the entire population, a probability sampling technique was applied. Specifically, stratified proportional random sampling was used to ensure fair representation from both schools. Using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, the required sample size was 272 students, consisting of 137 from Mandirancan and 135 from Cilimus. Random selection was carried out within each stratum to minimize bias and enhance representativeness.

The data of this study were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire consisting of three sections to measure the variables under investigation. The first section measured speaking anxiety, which was adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), covering communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The second section measured students' confidence, adapted from Pangestu and Matriwati (2024), which included five indicators: optimistic attitude, ability to socialize and communicate, potential and sufficient abilities, positive attitude and calmness in self-confidence, and positive views of oneself and others. The third section measured students' perceived pronunciation ability, focusing on students' self-evaluation of how clearly, accurately, and intelligibly they can pronounce English words and sentences. All items were written in the form of statements and rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly

disagree” to “strongly agree.” The questionnaire was created and distributed using *Google Forms* to facilitate efficiency and accessibility.

The data collection procedure began with the researcher obtaining formal permission from the principals of both schools, followed by coordination with English teachers to arrange classroom distribution. Before filling out the questionnaire, students were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their participation would be voluntary and confidential. The *Google Form* link was then shared during class sessions, and students completed it individually under teacher supervision to minimize peer influence. Responses were automatically stored in *Google Forms* and later downloaded into *Microsoft Excel* for preliminary cleaning, including the removal of incomplete submissions. The cleaned dataset was subsequently exported to *IBM SPSS Statistics version 27* for further statistical analysis.

To ensure the quality of the instruments, validity and reliability tests were conducted. Content validity was established by consulting experts in English education, who reviewed the questionnaire items for relevance, clarity, and alignment with the intended constructs. Construct validity was examined statistically through item-total correlations. Reliability was measured using Cronbach’s Alpha, and values above 0.60 were considered acceptable, indicating that the items consistently measured the intended variables. The results of both validity and reliability testing confirmed that the instruments were appropriate for use in this study.

The data analysis was carried out in several stages. First, descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values were calculated to summarize the characteristics of the variables. Second, classical assumption tests were performed to ensure the suitability of multiple regression analysis. These included tests of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. After confirming that the assumptions were met, inferential analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression. This technique was used to determine the individual influence of speaking anxiety and confidence on students’ perceived pronunciation ability through the t-test, as well as their simultaneous influence through the F-test. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was also calculated to indicate the percentage of variance in perceived pronunciation ability explained by the two independent variables. All hypothesis testing was conducted with a significance level of 0.05.

Although pronunciation is generally assessed through direct performance tests, this study employed a self-reported questionnaire to measure students’ self-perceived pronunciation ability. This approach was chosen because the research focused on the psychological perception of pronunciation rather than its phonetic accuracy. Learners’ self-perceptions are closely related

to affective variables such as speaking anxiety and confidence, which were the main focus of this study. Therefore, the use of a questionnaire was considered methodologically appropriate for examining the relationships among the variables.

Through this methodological design, the study provided a systematic and replicable procedure for examining the psychological factors that influence students' self-perceived pronunciation. The use of stratified proportional random sampling ensured representativeness, the closed-ended questionnaire provided reliable data, *Google Forms* facilitated efficient data collection, and *IBM SPSS Statistics version 27* enabled robust statistical analysis. Together, these methodological elements guarantee transparency, reproducibility, and scientific rigor, offering a model that can be followed by future researchers in similar educational contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Results

To provide a clearer overview of the data, the descriptive statistics for speaking anxiety, students' confidence, and pronunciation are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Speaking Anxiety, Students' Confidence, and Pronunciation

		Statistics		
		Speaking Anxiety	Confidence	Pronunciation
N	Valid	272	272	272
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		16.32	14.23	15.36
Std. Error of Mean		.209	.208	.169
Median		16.00	14.00	15.00
Mode		16	14	16
Std. Deviation		3.454	3.424	2.791
Variance		11.929	11.721	7.789
Skewness		-.113	.473	.318
Std. Error of Skewness		.148	.148	.148
Kurtosis		.138	-.148	-.230
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.294	.294	.294
Range		20	17	15
Minimum		5	7	10
Maximum		25	24	25
Sum		4438	3871	4178

Source: Processed Data from SPSS Output, 2025

The descriptive results show that students' speaking anxiety (X_1) is at a moderate level, with an average score of 16.32 from a possible range of 5 to 25. This means that while most students often feel nervous when speaking English, the level of anxiety varies quite a lot among them. Students' confidence (X_2) is also in the moderate category, with an average of 14.23 and scores ranging from 7 to 24, suggesting that although some students believe in their ability to speak English, many others are still uncertain. In contrast, pronunciation (Y) has a slightly higher stability, with an average score of 15.36 and a narrower spread (10 to 25), showing that most students can pronounce English reasonably well. Compared to anxiety and confidence, pronunciation scores are more consistent, with less variation between students. Overall, the distribution of all three variables is still within the normal range, which means the data is reliable and can be further analyzed using regression.

Table 2: Normality Test Result of Speaking Anxiety and Students' Confidence towards Students' Pronunciation

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	
	Unstandardized Residual
N	272
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c	.200 ^d

Source: Processed Data from SPSS Output, 2025

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test showed a significance value of 0.200, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that the data are normally distributed and therefore meet the assumption of normality required for regression analysis.

Table 3: Linearity Test Result of Speaking Anxiety and Students' Confidence towards Students' Pronunciation

Variable	Significance Value	Decision	Description
Speaking anxiety (X_1) towards Students' pronunciation	0.184	If sig. value > 0.05, H_a accepted.	A significant linear relationship exists between X_1 and Y
Students' confidence (X_2) towards Students' pronunciation	0.142		A significant linear relationship exists between X_2 and Y

Source: Processed Data from SPSS Output, 2025

The linearity test results show that both independent variables have a linear relationship with pronunciation. For speaking anxiety (X_1) and pronunciation (Y), the deviation from linearity produced a significance value of 0.184, which is greater than 0.05, indicating a significant linear relationship. Similarly, for students' confidence (X_2) and pronunciation (Y),

the deviation from linearity resulted in a significance value of 0.142, also greater than 0.05, confirming that the data meet the assumption of linearity required for regression analysis.

Table 4: The result of Multicollinearity Test

Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Decision	Description
Speaking Anxiety	0.868	1.152	If tolerance value > 0.10 and VIF < 10	No
Students' Confidence	0.868	1.152		Multicollinearity

Source: Processed Data from SPSS Output, 2025

The results of the multicollinearity test indicate that there is no multicollinearity between the independent variables. This is shown by the tolerance values for both speaking anxiety (X_1) and students' confidence (X_2), which were above 0.10, and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, which were below 10. These results confirm that the regression model meets the assumption of multicollinearity, meaning that the two predictors are independent and can be used simultaneously in the regression analysis.

Table 5: The result of the Heteroscedasticity Test

Variable	Sig. value	Decision	Description
Speaking Anxiety	0.138	If sig. value > 0.05, there is no heteroscedasticity	There is no heteroscedasticity
Students' Confidence	0.967		

Source: Processed Data from SPSS Output, 2025

The heteroscedasticity test results show that the data meet the assumption of homoscedasticity. This can be seen from the significance values of both speaking anxiety (X_1) and students' confidence (X_2), which were greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the regression model is free from heteroscedasticity problems and is appropriate for further analysis.

Multiple Linear Regression

After confirming that the data met all regression assumptions, the analysis continued with multiple linear regression to test the research hypotheses.

Table 6: Model Summary and Anova

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	F	Sig.
1	0.678	0.459	0.455	114.321	0.000

Source: Processed Data from SPSS Output, 2025

The regression model was found to be significant, as shown by the F value of 114.321 with a significance level of 0.000 (< 0.05), which confirms that speaking anxiety and students' confidence together have a meaningful impact on students' pronunciation. Based on this result, the null hypothesis (H_{03}), which states that speaking anxiety and students' confidence do not simultaneously affect pronunciation, is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis (H_{a3}) is accepted. The model summary further shows that the coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.459, indicating that 45.9% of the variation in pronunciation can be explained by the two predictors, while the remaining 54.1% is influenced by other factors outside the model. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.678 reflects a moderately strong positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables, and the adjusted R^2 value of 0.455 suggests that the model is stable and not overfitted.

Table 7: Regression Coefficient

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	9.996	0.994	10.061	0.000
Speaking Anxiety	-0.110	0.039	-2.820	0.005
Students' Confidence	0.503	0.039	12.814	0.000

Source: Processed Data from SPSS Output, 2025

The coefficient results in Table 7 indicate that speaking anxiety (X_1) has a negative and significant effect on pronunciation, with a regression coefficient (B) of -0.110 and a significance value of 0.005 (< 0.05). This means that for every one-point increase in speaking anxiety, students' pronunciation scores decrease by 0.110 points, assuming other variables remain constant. Accordingly, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_{a1}) is accepted.

In contrast, students' confidence (X_2) shows a positive and highly significant effect on pronunciation, with a regression coefficient (B) of 0.503 and a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05). This implies that a one-point increase in confidence raises students' pronunciation scores by 0.503 points. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_{a2}) is accepted.

These findings suggest that higher speaking anxiety lowers pronunciation performance, while greater confidence improves it. Moreover, the effect of confidence is stronger than that of anxiety, highlighting its role as the dominant predictor of pronunciation in this model.

B. Discussion

The findings of this study provide strong evidence that psychological factors such as speaking anxiety and students' confidence play a crucial role in determining students' pronunciation performance. The results show three main points. First, speaking anxiety has a significant negative effect on pronunciation. Second, students' confidence significantly improves their pronunciation. Third, both variables together contribute significantly to students' pronunciation outcomes, with the model explaining 45.9% of the variance. These findings demonstrate that pronunciation, as an aspect of speaking skill, is not only determined by linguistic knowledge but also by psychological readiness.

The negative effect of speaking anxiety on pronunciation is consistent with the theory proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986), who explain that foreign language anxiety is a form of situational anxiety that arises during oral communication. When students feel anxious, they tend to focus more on their fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation rather than on producing accurate speech. As a result, their pronunciation becomes less accurate and fluent. The present study's findings also align with Tsang (2022), who found that learners with higher anxiety in oral presentations had weaker self-perceived pronunciation skills. Similarly, Mora et al. (2024) showed that speaking anxiety, especially in more complex tasks, negatively affected oral production, including pronunciation accuracy. These studies reinforce the conclusion that high anxiety undermines learners' ability to pronounce words correctly in English.

In contrast, students' confidence was found to have a strong positive effect on pronunciation, making it the dominant predictor in this study. This finding supports Horwitz et al. (1986), who emphasize that self-confidence enables learners to communicate more effectively in a foreign language. Confident learners are less afraid of mistakes and more willing to take risks in speaking activities, which allows them to practice more and develop better pronunciation. The results of this study are in line with Rosyad (2024), who reported that self-confidence positively influenced speaking abilities, especially pronunciation. Similarly, Kulsum (2025) found a significant positive connection between self-confidence and speaking performance, with students who had higher confidence showing better fluency and accuracy. Together, these findings confirm that self-confidence is a critical factor in improving pronunciation performance in EFL contexts.

The simultaneous analysis also showed that speaking anxiety and confidence together significantly affect pronunciation, explaining 45.9% of the variance. This indicates that psychological factors as a whole have a substantial impact on students' pronunciation. Almost half of students' performance can be explained by how anxious or confident they feel, while the rest is likely influenced by other factors such as exposure to English, classroom interaction, and individual motivation. This demonstrates that anxiety and confidence are not isolated but interactively contribute to students' language learning outcomes.

One interesting finding is that although both variables are significant, confidence has a much stronger effect than anxiety. The standardized regression coefficient of confidence is more than four times larger than that of anxiety. This suggests that while anxiety does lower students' performance, confidence can more effectively raise it. Students with high confidence are more likely to overcome the negative effects of anxiety and perform well in pronunciation tasks. This highlights the importance of confidence-building strategies in language classrooms.

These results also reflect the practical implications of Horwitz et al. (1986), who state that reducing anxiety and increasing self-confidence are key elements in foreign language learning. Teachers should therefore focus on creating supportive classroom environments that reduce students' fear of negative evaluation and encourage active participation. When students feel supported, they are less likely to experience anxiety and more likely to build confidence, which in turn improves their pronunciation.

In summary, this study confirms that speaking anxiety negatively affects pronunciation, while confidence positively affects it. Together, these two factors significantly influence students' performance, with confidence emerging as the stronger predictor. The findings align with previous theories and studies, including those of Horwitz et al. (1986), Tsang (2022), Mora et al. (2024), Rosyad (2024), and Kulsum (2025). They highlight the importance of considering psychological variables in the teaching of pronunciation and suggest that teachers should adopt strategies that reduce anxiety and build confidence to support students' success in learning English pronunciation.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that speaking anxiety and self-confidence play a significant role in shaping students' pronunciation ability. The findings show that speaking anxiety negatively influences pronunciation, while self-confidence contributes positively to improving students' performance. These results are in line with previous studies that emphasize the importance of psychological factors in second language acquisition.

Furthermore, when considered together, both variables account for a substantial proportion of students' pronunciation outcomes. This indicates that pronunciation development is not determined solely by practice, but also by learners' psychological conditions. Pedagogically, this suggests that teachers should incorporate strategies that reduce students' anxiety and strengthen their confidence, creating a more supportive classroom environment that facilitates better oral communication skills.

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