

Long-Term Impact of Pesantren English Programs on Alumni Self-Efficacy and Communication Confidence

***Siti Maesaroh¹, Nurul Isra Fauziah², and Hesti Ferdalina Marwan³**

^{1,2}Universitas Terbuka, INDONESIA

³University of Bristol, UNITED KINGDOM

*sitimaees113@gmail.com

Article Information

Received:

05 May 2026

Revised:

15 June 2026

Accepted:

30 June 2026

This study explores the long-term impact of pesantren-based English language programs on alumni self-efficacy and speaking confidence. While previous studies have focused on students' immediate language development, limited attention has been given to how these programs influence graduates after leaving the institutional environment. Drawing on Bandura's self-efficacy theory, this research examines how learning experiences in pesantren contribute to sustained confidence in English communication. A qualitative method was employed, involving semi-structured interviews with six alumni and two teachers from Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa Bogor. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis based on four sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological and affective states. The findings reveal that intensive speaking practices, supportive feedback, role modeling, and emotional adaptation during pesantren education significantly contribute to alumni confidence in both academic and workplace contexts. However, challenges such as limited opportunities for real-life communication and fluctuating motivation remain evident after graduation. This study highlights that pesantren English programs not only enhance language proficiency but also foster long-term self-efficacy and communicative confidence. The findings provide important implications for developing sustainable, experience-based language learning models in similar educational settings.

Keywords: *english language, pesantren, self-efficacy, speaking confidence*

Cite this paper:

Maesaroh, S., Fauziah, N. I., & Marwan, H. F. (2026). Long-Term Impact of Pesantren English Programs on Alumni Self-Efficacy and Communication Confidence. *JOINT: Journal of Inspirational English Language Teaching*, 4(1), 146-160. <https://doi.org/10.33830/joint.v3i1.15471>

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language that is widely used across the world and has become a fundamental skill essential for mastery in education, technology, and various professional fields. In Indonesian education context, *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) have implemented English language programmes to ensure that students not only possess strong



religious understanding but also acquire adequate English language skills that enable them to adapt to the currents of globalisation (Rahman et al., 2023). The English language programmes in pesantren refer to practices that require students to use English in daily conversations, participate in intensive classroom activities, and engage in other structured language programmes. Such programmes are a strategy designed to improve students' English proficiency and to enhance their confidence in speaking.

The integration of English programmes into the curriculum of modern pesantren have developed markedly since the 2010s (Sundari & Lutfiansyah, 2021). According to Ningsih & Hosna (2024) the structured activities of the English Program Community (EPC) at Pondok Pesantren Walisongo Cukir Jombang significantly improved students' English speaking and comprehension skills. Several similar studies have also been identified. Research conducted by Irawati et al., (2025) revealed that English learning undertaken both inside and outside the classroom such as daily conversations, discussions, and presentations effectively enhanced students' speaking abilities and confidence. Nur et al., (2021) likewise reported that many pesantren have already established programmes, teacher, and learning environments that support the successful implementation of English language education. Accordingly, English language programmes in pesantren have been widely implemented to produce students who are able to communicate in English and who possess confidence in their abilities.

However, the implementation of English language programmes does not fully guarantee the development of students' confidence. As demonstrated in a study by Lestari (2025), students in Islamic schools possess adequate English speaking skills, yet they continue to experience anxiety and a lack of confidence when communicating with native speakers. A similar situation has also been observed in other contexts, a study in Gresik explains that English programmes were developed to increase the competitiveness of alumni in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, meaning that there were concerns that graduates were not sufficiently prepared to face global demands without stronger language reinforcement (Husna & Nisa', 2021). Meanwhile, research in other pesantren shows a gap between students' English language abilities and their emotional readiness to speak English in public, indicating that confidence does not always develop alongside language proficiency (Irawati et al., 2025). These findings show that the effectiveness of implementing English language programmes tends to be more visible in the aspect of language ability than in emotional aspects, such as students' confidence in using English outside the pesantren environment.

Conversely, several alumni have realised the significant benefits of using English during their period of study in the pesantren. As highlighted by Shobaha & Syarofi (2025) several pesantren alumni acknowledged that the use of English during their learning period provided considerable advantages in both academic and workplace environments. One participant even stated that the intensive English practice implemented in the pesantren had a greater influence on the development of her speaking ability compared with her university studies. This indicates that the use of English in the pesantren has a long-term impact on alumni after they graduate. However, the extent to which this influence persists still requires empirical verification. Previous studies conducted by Ningsih and Hosna (2024), Irawati et al., (2025),



Lestari (2025), and Husna and Nisa' (2021) have highlighted how English language programmes are implemented and their influence on students during their participation in the programmes, rather than their long-term effects once the students have become alumni. Therefore, further research is needed to examine the long-term impact of English language programmes in pesantren for their alumni.

This study relates its empirical findings to Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1997), which explains that four principal aspects underpin the development of confidence, namely mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological or affective states, which shape an individual's belief in their ability to perform particular tasks, including speaking in English. This study explores how English language experiences during pesantren education influence the speaking confidence of alumni from Pesantren Modern At- Taqwa Bogor. Specifically, it aims to explain how English speaking practices in the pesantren shape alumni's confidence in academic and workplace environments by analysing their experiences after graduation. The findings of this study are expected to provide recommendations for the development of English language curricula in pesantren, particularly those that focus on strengthening speaking skills and enhancing students' confidence in using English after graduation. In addition, this study seeks to encourage an environment-based approach to English language learning that prioritises speaking skills alongside the development of self-efficacy, enabling graduates of modern pesantren to be better prepared for the demands of global communication.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method to investigate how English speaking experiences during pesantren education at Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa Bogor influenced alumni's confidence in speaking. A qualitative approach was chosen because this research aimed to understand the meaning and depth of narratives conveyed by individuals through the four key aspects of confidence formation in Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1997), which explains that mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological or affective states shape a person's confidence in performing certain tasks, including speaking in English. Thus, a qualitative approach was deemed the most appropriate for exploring how environmental, emotional, and experiential aspects of pesantren life shape students' confidence in speaking English.

This study utilised both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained from six alumni and two teachers of Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa Bogor through semi-structured interviews. The six alumni consisted of three who continued their studies at university and three who had entered the workforce. This composition of informants enabled the researcher to explore similarities, differences, and dominant themes that emerged from the interviews. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who could provide rich and relevant insights into the phenomenon under investigation. Each informant met specific criteria: (1) active participation in English communication for a minimum of three years during her time at the pesantren; (2) current engagement in either higher education or the workforce



after graduation; and (3) voluntary willingness to participate. Interviews were conducted both online via the Google Meet platform and in person at Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa Bogor, with each session lasting approximately twenty to thirty minutes. Secondary data consisted of institutional documents, including programme guidelines, policy outlines, and evaluation reports, which supported and validated the findings obtained through the interviews. Using both primary and secondary data allowed the researcher to identify information-rich cases and to gain insights that were both in-depth and contextual. It is in line with Sugiyono (2020) who revealed that qualitative research is conducted in natural settings, with the researcher serving as the key instrument. Data collection was conducted through triangulation, the analytical process was inductive, and research findings prioritised meaning rather than generalisation.

The interview questions explored the four primary sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1997), which shaped the alumni's self-efficacy and influenced their confidence in using English in academic or workplace settings. Interview questions for teachers aimed to identify how the English language programmes were implemented in the pesantren. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent, and field notes were taken to capture contextual nuances and non-verbal cues. Additionally, the researcher conducted limited on-site observations and examined institutional documents to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the English speaking environment in the pesantren. The researcher acted as the primary instrument, supported by a semi-structured interview guide and observation sheets that were refined throughout the data collection process.

The data analysis in this study comprised three components: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, following the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994) as cited in Zulfirman (2022). The analytical process began by transcribing all audio-recorded interviews into verbatim text to ensure accuracy. The researcher then repeatedly read the transcripts to gain an in-depth understanding of their content and to identify significant segments within the participants' narratives. In the subsequent stage, the researcher assigned codes to segments of data that shared similar meanings. These codes served as part of the data reduction process, helping to simplify and focus raw data into organised units of meaning. Once the codes were established, the researcher grouped similar codes into categories representing common themes within the participants' experiences.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed several strategies: (1) credibility was maintained through triangulation techniques, such as comparing interview data across participants, field notes, and institutional documents; (2) member checking was conducted to ensure that the researcher's interpretations accurately reflected participants' intended meanings; and (3) dependability was strengthened by maintaining documentation such as interview guides, observation sheets, analytic notes, coding records, and documentation of the conclusion-drawing process. This systematic analytical process transformed the data from descriptive narratives into a deeper conceptual understanding of how the pesantren environment influenced alumni's confidence in using English in university settings and the workplace.



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Drawing on the data obtained through in-depth interviews with two English language programme instructors and six alumni of Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa, as well as direct observations of the structure and implementation of language activities, this study found that the English language programmes at the *pesantren* were carried out in a structured manner and focused on enhancing students' speaking abilities. The data indicate that the programmes comprised a series of intensive practices based on structured curriculum adjusted to students' diagnostic test results. It also has a peer- and teacher-monitoring system with weekly language activities and authentic communication practice during study tours. Meanwhile, the findings from the alumni show that their experiences while participating in the English language programmes contributed significantly to the development of self-efficacy in speaking English, although several challenges were still encountered in academic and workplace environments, such as the limited availability of communication partners and reduced confidence when speaking with individuals perceived as more proficient. Altogether, these data point to four major themes derived from Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory namely mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences through role models, and the ability to regulate emotional states which are elaborated in greater detail in the subsequent sections.

Overview of the Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation of the English Language Programs at Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa

The findings demonstrate that the English language programmes at Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa were not implemented as incidental extracurricular activities, but rather as a systematically organized language-learning ecosystem. The use of pre-tests, proficiency grouping, progressive levels, and performance-based evaluation reflects principles of differentiated instruction and communicative language teaching (CLT). This suggests that the *pesantren* attempted to create a learning environment where language acquisition occurred through continuous exposure and authentic use rather than through grammar memorization alone.

The placement system based on diagnostic pre-tests can also be interpreted as a mechanism that supports equitable learning opportunities. By categorizing students according to their initial abilities, instructors were able to reduce disparities in classroom participation and anxiety levels. Students with lower proficiency were not immediately pressured to perform at the same level as more advanced learners, which potentially minimized feelings of inferiority and language anxiety. At the same time, students with higher proficiency levels were challenged with more complex speaking tasks, enabling continuous skill development. A language instructor (AF) stated:

“We have been developing this programme for a long time, and every year we make revisions to determine what needs to be improved and what should be removed. This learning programme is designed to help students practise their English-speaking skills. We conduct a pre-test when new students first enter the *pesantren*, and the results are later discussed together to group the students according to their levels.



This classification helps the teachers determine the appropriate materials to be taught in each class.”

The practice of using a pre-test was consistent with Soraya (2023) who emphasized that placement tests are essential in language programs because they allow learners to be grouped according to similar proficiency levels so that instruction can be more focused and interaction in the classroom can run more effectively. After the students had been placed according to their proficiency levels, the next stage involved the instructors preparing and delivering learning materials and methods that were appropriate to the students' proficiency levels. The language instructor (AF) explained that first-year students were usually divided into two classes, namely Basic Level 1 and Basic Level 2, and that each class would progress to the next level every six months or one semester. AF added:

“The class placement is based on the results of the pre-test. Usually, Grade 10 is divided into two classes, but the number of classes varies each year depending on the number of students and their pre-test results. For Grade 10, there are two levels: Basic 1 and Basic 2. Students whose pre-test results show that they already have a fairly good command of English are placed in Basic 2. After that, they move up one level every semester.”

The following provides a simple overview of the levels and materials taught. However, AF emphasized that this table was flexible and could be adjusted at any time in accordance with the learning evaluation results for each semester.

Table 1. Levels and Materials Taught in the English Language Programmes at Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa (2025)

Level	Core Competencies	Materials
Basic 1	Mastery of basic expressions and initial speaking confidence	a. Greetings and self-introduction b. Simple personal information c. Basic classroom expressions d. Simple WH-questions e. Simple dialogues
Basic 2	Development of simple sentences and thematic vocabulary	a. Daily routines b. Describing people and objects c. Expressing likes and dislikes d. Basic directions
Intermediate 1	Thematic conversation fluency and expressing opinions	a. Narrating past experiences b. Stating opinions c. Making and responding to suggestions d. Short presentations (2–3 minutes) e. Functional dialogues (restaurant, shop, public services)



Level	Core Competencies	Materials
Intermediate 2	Idea organization and complex interaction	a. Giving reasons and basic arguments b. Detailed storytelling c. Problem-solving discussions d. Interview practice with follow-up questions e. Short speeches (3–5 minutes) f. Authentic Communication Practice during study tour

The overview of the material showed gradual progression from Basic 1 to Intermediate 2 indicates that the *pesantren* adopted a scaffolded learning approach. Students first developed basic communicative competence before advancing toward more cognitively demanding tasks such as argumentation, storytelling, interviews, and public speaking. This progression aligns with Vygotskian perspectives on learning, in which students gradually internalize higher-order skills through guided practice and social interaction.

Another important aspect is that the programme emphasized authentic communication rather than isolated linguistic drills. Activities such as study tours and interactions with foreigners during outdoor learning created meaningful communicative contexts. Such activities are important because they expose learners to real-world unpredictability in communication, thereby helping them transfer classroom learning into actual social interaction. This finding suggests that communicative competence develops more effectively when students are positioned as active language users rather than passive learners.

The program was designed to support students in practicing English speaking within the *pesantren* environment. As previously expressed by AF, “We organise this learning programme to help students carry out English- speaking practice”. The measurement of learning achievement was conducted through students’ ability to perform direct practice, such as Daily Conversation Sessions, *Muhadharah* (formal speech practice) every two weeks, Telling Daily Activities and Telling Past Experiences every Friday evening, as well as Authentic Communication Practice carried out during study tours. All of these activities aimed to establish an intensive routine of speaking practice, enabling students not only to speak in English, but also to develop courage and confidence in various communicative situations, because the classroom learning reinforced through immediate practical application. Speaking practice was also implemented through a peer-monitoring system known as “I see you and I hear you”. This system assigned each student as a monitor for their peers to ensure the use of English within designated areas. A language teacher (NS) explained that the programs were implemented gradually, beginning with a requirement to speak 25% English, which then increased to 100%. NS added that when students did not know certain expressions, they were allowed to ask using the phrase “How to say?”, and they would be assisted by either friends or teachers. This system not only reduced students’ avoidance of



practice but also provided opportunities for collaborative learning and peer modelling in using English. Meanwhile, the reinforcement of grammatical knowledge was provided more intensively through academic instruction during English classroom session, rather than through the language programs in the *pesantren*.

Although the programs had a clear structure and were implemented effectively, both language instructors reported that their success rate remained at approximately 70%. One of the main challenges of the programs was that the implementation of their activities was not directly linked to academic assessment in the school report. The programs were designed solely to support students' habitual practice of speaking English, both formally and informally. As a result, some students perceived the speaking activities as an additional task that carried no grade-related consequences. This perception affected their level of discipline, particularly when interacting with close friends who were similarly unmotivated to use English. In situations where no teachers or language supervisors were present, many students felt free to use Indonesian or local languages, leading to inconsistent speaking practice. Such inconsistency caused the rhythm of English use to become unstable and reduced opportunities to strengthen natural English-speaking habits. Consequently, the learning objective of improving spoken fluency could not be achieved optimally.

The Four Principal Factors Self-Efficacy Influencing the Formation of Alumni's Confidence in Using English

The main framework used to analyze and determine themes from the Alumni interview findings was Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory, which highlights four sources that shape self-efficacy, namely mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological and affective states. These four sources influence a person's level of belief or confidence in performing a task, including speaking in English. The following analysis illustrates how each source of self-efficacy was formed during the English language learning process in the *pesantren*, and how these sources affected the alumni's confidence in using English within university settings and in the workplace.

a. Mastery Experiences as a Determinant of English-Speaking Confidence among Alumni

The mastery experiences gained during *pesantren* education were identified as the most dominant factor in shaping alumni's confidence in speaking English both in university settings and in the workplace. The structure of the English language program had a significant impact by providing various practical activities, such as Daily Conversation Sessions, *Muhadharah* or formal speech practice, Telling Daily Activities, Telling Past Experiences, and Authentic Communication Practice. These activities encouraged students to continue practicing spoken English in both formal and non-formal contexts, thereby resulting in observable progress in their abilities. One Alumni (ND) stated that her frequent experience of being appointed as an MC during *Muhadharah* (formal speech practice) and *Telling Daily Activities* at the *pesantren* contributed to her increased confidence in using English. ND expressed:

“One of the things that made me more confident was that I was often assigned to be the MC.



Even though I still received corrections—whether it was about inappropriate word choices or incorrect pronunciation. I felt that being an MC meant leading the flow of the event. So, when I was chosen, it made me feel that I was considered capable. And honestly, once I became confident performing in front of people, I felt embarrassed that in my daily life I didn't practise it consistently."

Other Alumni, such as SR, RF, and HR, stated that daily conversations served as a crucial practice that developed their fluency while strengthening their mastery of common vocabulary and expressions. This finding aligns with Septiany & Zuraida (2025) who emphasised that routine English conversations help students expand general vocabulary and improve speaking fluency. For SR, Authentic Communication Practice during study tour was the activity she enjoyed the most. She stated:

"There was a moment that made me a little scared but also really happy. When I was in the third year of senior high school, there was an outdoor learning activity that I had to join. My friends and I went to the Geological Museum in Bandung, and we were asked to interact and have a light conversation or a short interview with a foreign visitor. At that time, I gathered the courage to speak with a foreigner who turned out to be from Australia. In that moment, I felt so happy because I realised that my English was understood by a native speaker, and that was when I felt that public speaking could actually be very enjoyable."

These mastery experiences fostered the Alumni's confidence in using English, enabling them to feel more prepared to face both formal and informal communicative situations. KN stated that although she rarely used English in the workplace due to the absence of suitable speaking partners, her successful experiences in daily conversations allowed her to provide private English tutoring for primary school pupils in her neighborhood. ND also noted that she often opened meeting sessions with her colleagues in English, as the procedure was largely similar to the way she had opened events when serving as a master ceremony during dormitory activities. A similar experience was expressed by HR:

"When I'm in class, especially because I'm majoring in English Education, there is a speaking course that I have to take. I feel that the course isn't too difficult because the material is mostly about daily conversations and describing everyday activities. In the mid-term exam, I even got a pretty good score because I used to speak English quite often back in the pesantren. However, I still sometimes feel nervous when speaking English with my lecturer."

The mastery experiences were consistent with Bandura's (1997) view that mastery gained through direct experience constitutes the strongest and most enduring source of self-efficacy. Although HR continued to experience nervousness when speaking with individuals whom she perceived as more proficient, she was still able to obtain a good score in her mid-term examination, indicating that the nervousness she experienced could still be managed effectively. This demonstrates that the alumni's confidence remained a prominent aspect of their English-speaking performance after graduation.



b. Verbal Persuasion and Social Support in Building Alumni Confidence

The findings indicate that verbal persuasion was effective because it occurred within a non-threatening and collaborative environment. Social support in the form of verbal encouragement and positive correction from teachers and peers strengthened the alumni's confidence in speaking English. All six alumni (SR, RF, HR, ND, GR, and KN) reported that the English learning environment in the *pesantren* was not negatively competitive, but instead highly supportive and constructive. The implementation of the "I see you and I hear you" system provided opportunities for students not only to practice speaking actively and interactively but also to serve as learning partners for one another. Linguistic errors were not viewed as embarrassing; rather, they were regarded as a natural and expected part of the learning process. As expressed by one alumnus (SR), "There is no judgement regardless of whether what I say is right or wrong, and that helps me gain confidence".

Other alumni similarly emphasized that teachers corrected mistakes in a calm and non-judgmental manner, which encouraged them to continue speaking without fear. This condition aligns with Ani (2019) who argued that positive feedback enhances students' motivation, confidence, self-efficacy, and academic skills.

This finding is particularly significant in the Indonesian EFL context, where students often experience fear of negative evaluation. In many foreign language classrooms, speaking anxiety emerges because errors are associated with embarrassment or public failure. However, the *pesantren* environment appeared to redefine mistakes as opportunities for improvement rather than indicators of incompetence. Consequently, students became more willing to participate in communicative practice even after graduation and when they enter the workplace.

Alumni acknowledged that a supportive learning environment where constructive feedback was normalized helped them become more willing to express their opinions in English, interact with foreign speakers, and use English in the workplace, even if they were not yet fully proficient. It is because they have developed a mindset that mistakes are not obstacles but inherent components of the learning process.

Importantly, the findings suggest that verbal persuasion was effective not because students were constantly praised, but because feedback was constructive and emotionally safe. This distinction is crucial. Excessive praise without meaningful guidance may not strengthen self-efficacy sustainably. In contrast, constructive correction accompanied by encouragement helped students perceive errors as manageable and improvable.

c. The Contribution of Vicarious Experiences to Alumni's Speaking Confidence

The role of vicarious experiences in this study reveals that students' confidence was shaped not only by their own achievements but also by observing the achievements of others. Teachers, peers, motivational speakers, and successful alumni functioned as symbolic representations of what students believed they could potentially become.

The influence of alumni role models is especially important because the models were socially relatable. Students were not merely observing distant public figures; they were



observing individuals who came from similar educational and social backgrounds. This relatability likely increased the persuasive power of the role models because students perceived the achievements as realistically attainable.

All alumni referred to language instructors and proficient peers as influential models who encouraged them to improve their speaking abilities. KN mentioned that the *pesantren* also organized an inspirational talk show featuring the motivational speaker Sherly Annavita Rahmi as a role model who could inspire the students. KN expressed that:

“During the talk show, Kak Syerly shared that she also once lost her motivation, which caused her to lose focus on the things she wanted to achieve. Instead, she became focused on what other people expected of her. So, I believe that everyone will face their own challenges, but those challenges are not a reason to give up. They should become a reason for us to rediscover ourselves in a better version.”

In addition, GR stated that *pesantren* regularly invited alumni who had successfully pursued their studies abroad to provide real-life insights into the importance of English for adaptation and learning a new language in another country. Witnessing these achievements made students feel that similar abilities could be attained through consistent English-speaking practice. GR expressed: “KA is one of the alumni who became my role model; she worked for her own scholarship, managed to study in Turkey, and has been able to travel to many countries”.

One alumna (RF) stated that she was inspired by her English teacher and her more proficient peers. Other alumni also reported that they became more confident after observing the fluent speaking style of their peers, who were unafraid of making mistakes. Thus, modelling was not only derived from teachers but also from peers, aligning to Bandura's (1997) theory that observing the successful performance of others can increase one's belief in performing similar actions.

This experience had a considerable impact on fostering self-motivation among alumni. Through observing alumni who had achieved one of their aspirations, the alumni became more capable of carrying themselves and distinguishing between effective and less appropriate communicative behaviors, both at university and in the workplace, thereby enabling them to become more adaptive individuals. In line with this, Nakanishi et al., (2019) stated that the presence of role models constitutes a form of positive psychological functioning that can play a central role in shaping self-regulation during individual developmental stages.

d. Physiological and Affective States in Shaping Speaking Confidence

Physiological and affective states also served as a determining factor in the successful use of English. At the outset, most alumni reported feeling anxious, afraid of making mistakes, or lacking confidence when speaking with more advanced speakers. However, because they repeatedly faced anxiety and continuously tried to overcome it, they gradually developed emotional habituation, which enabled them to better regulate their nervousness. HR stated that she still felt nervous when speaking English with her teacher, but she



expressed the view that:

“Feeling nervous is normal, especially because we’re not used to having formal communication with our teachers. I believe that the more often we face situations like that, the more accustomed we become. To deal with it, just pause for a moment, take a deep breath, and refocus on the conversation.”

One alumnus (ND) stated that environmental support gradually reduced feelings of anxiety, as all students were in the same situation, namely going through the learning process together.

Nonetheless, several psychological challenges were identified. HR and GR explained that some students lacked internal motivation, intentionally violated English-speaking rules, and even labelled compliant peers as attention-seekers. Moreover, the point-deduction mechanism was not seen as an effective means of promoting disciplinary behavior among students. GR stated:

“Maybe the reason my ability is lower than some of my friends is because I was often too afraid to practise—not because I couldn’t do it, but because some friends thought I was acting ‘overly English’. So, whenever I talked with them, I chose to use Indonesian instead.”

Despite these obstacles, the ability to manage anxiety, supported by both peers and teachers, proved to be an asset after graduation. Alumni SR and RF stated that they became more confident when delivering presentations at university. ND noted that she had become accustomed to speaking in formal forums, such as when opening meeting sessions with her colleagues, while HR reported feeling capable of performing well in English- language interviews during examinations. These findings indicate that emotional habituation developed through speaking practices in the pesantren fosters long-term affective competence.

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the English language programmes at Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa took place through the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation, all of which were designed to enhance students’ speaking abilities. The planning stage included the administration of a pre-test, the grouping of students according to their proficiency levels, and the determination of learning materials and methods appropriate to each level. In the implementation stage, students participated in English lessons in classes assigned according to their pre-test results, as well as various intensive speaking practice activities such as Morning Conversation, speech practice, telling daily activities, and Authentic Communication Practice during study tours, all of which were reinforced by the “I see you and I hear you” monitoring system. Evaluation was conducted continuously through performance-based assessment rather than written examinations, allowing students’ progress to be observed through their daily speaking practices. In addition, the findings from the alumni reveal that the programs contributed significantly to the development of their self-efficacy in using English after graduation. This confidence was



shaped through the four sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura's (1997) namely mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences through role models, and the ability to regulate emotional states during communication.

Although these four sources had a strong influence on the alumni's confidence, several challenges still emerged. Some students had low internal motivation, which prevented the English language programs from being fully optimized. Students who actively practiced English also experienced ridicule from peers, such as being perceived as attention-seekers which caused them to feel embarrassed about continuing to practice speaking English. This condition hindered some students from fully gaining the intended benefits of the programs. A further challenge experienced by several alumni after entering the workplace was the limited availability of English-speaking partners, which made it difficult for them to maintain consistent speaking practice. Nevertheless, almost all alumni agreed that although they were not yet fully proficient or entirely confident, the series of learning experiences in the *pesantren* had provided them with a strong foundation in both their ability and confidence to use English, whether in higher education or in professional settings.

This study reinforces previous findings which state that English language programs in *pesantren* are effective in improving students' speaking abilities. Research conducted by Ningsih & Hosna (2024) and Irawati et al. (2025) shows that structured activities such as daily conversations, public speaking, and English community sessions contribute to increased fluency and vocabulary mastery. However, this study not only supports earlier findings but also extends the discussion by demonstrating that the impact of these learning activities does not end at the school level. Instead, it continues through the formation of alumni's confidence after graduation as they enter higher education and the workplace. Accordingly, this study holds significant value as it provides a more comprehensive understanding of how practice-based programs in *pesantren* not only enhance short-term linguistic abilities but also shape long-term confidence in speaking English. This indicates that the English language learning model implemented in *pesantren* may serve as a reference for other educational institutions that focus on enhancing speaking proficiency.

The findings of this study enrich the perspective offered by Lestari (2025), who revealed that some students continue to experience anxiety despite possessing adequate speaking skills. This study shows that alumni of Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa are likewise not entirely free from anxiety, particularly when interacting with speakers perceived as more proficient. Nonetheless, the alumni were able to manage such anxiety through personal strategies and through emotional habituation formed within a supportive learning environment. This condition is consistent with Ani's (2019) findings, which demonstrate that positive feedback can enhance students' motivation, confidence, and self-efficacy. Thus, this study affirms that confidence is not formed solely through linguistic proficiency, but also through learners' experiences in regulating their emotional responses when speaking in front of others. The novelty of this study lies in its mapping of the relationship between practice-based English language programs and Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy among alumni an aspect that has received limited attention in previous research. This study also contributes



new insights by demonstrating that the self-efficacy developed within the pesantren continues to persist and exert influence on Alumni's communicative abilities in higher education and the workplace.

This study is subject to several limitations. First, the research sample was limited to a single *pesantren*, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other institutions. Second, the data were qualitative and relied on participants' narratives, which may be influenced by subjective personal experiences. Third, emotional aspects of self-efficacy were not measured using psychometric instruments and therefore do not provide quantifiable evidence of confidence levels. Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to: (1) expand the study across multiple *pesantren* with different program characteristics; (2) employ a mixed-method approach in order to obtain stronger quantitative and qualitative data; and (3) explore additional factors such as the role of families, technological support, or exposure to foreign speakers in the development of English-speaking confidence.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the English language programs at Pesantren Modern At-Taqwa provide a structured and immersive environment that supports the development of alumni's confidence in using English beyond their years of formal education. Through intensive speaking practices, supportive feedback, exposure to role models, and repeated opportunities to manage communication-related anxiety, participants developed beliefs in their ability to use English in academic and professional settings. These experiences reflect the four sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura including mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, vicarious experiences, and physiological and affective states, which collectively contribute to sustained communicative confidence. While feelings of nervousness and self-doubt persisted in certain situations, particularly when interacting with more proficient speakers, alumni demonstrated the capacity to manage these challenges through strategies developed during their time in the pesantren.

The findings underscore the importance of integrating cognitive, social, and emotional dimensions within language education. Rather than focusing solely on linguistic competence, effective language programs should also cultivate learners' self-beliefs, resilience, and willingness to communicate. By illustrating how pesantren-based English learning experiences continue to shape graduates' confidence after completion of their studies, this research contributes to the limited body of literature on the long-term outcomes of language programs in Islamic boarding schools. The study therefore offers valuable insights for curriculum designers, educators, and educational institutions seeking to create sustainable learning environments that promote both language proficiency and enduring self-efficacy.

REFERENCES

- Ani, A. (2019). Positive Feedback Improves Students Psychological and Physical Learning Outcome. *Indonesian Journal of Educational Studies (IJES)*, 22(2), 144–152.
- Bandura. (1997). *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. Worth Publishers.
- Husna, E. U., & Nisa', K. (2021). Strategi Pembelajaran Program Bahasa Arab dan Bahasa Inggris



- Untuk Meningkatkan Daya Saing Alumni Di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 Di Pondok Pesantren Mamba'us Sholihin Suci Manyar Gresik. *JOEMS (Journal of Education and Management Studies)*, 4(1), 51–58. <https://doi.org/10.32764/joems.v4i1.355>
- Irawati, L., Ferdiyanto, F., & Islam, R. (2025). Enhancing Students' Speaking Skills through English Area Program at Islamic Boarding Schools. *ETDC: Indonesian Journal of Research and Educational Review*, 4(3), 588–598. <https://doi.org/10.51574/ijrer.v4i3.3191>
- Isadaud, M. Dzikrul Fikri, & Muhammad Imam Bukhari. (2022). The Urgency of English in The Curriculum in Indonesia to Prepare Human Resources for Global Competitiveness. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 1(1), 51–58. <https://doi.org/10.54259/diajar.v1i1.177>
- Lestari, Z. W. (2025). Investigating Madrasa Students' Self-Efficacy in English Language Learning: Survey Research in A Public Madrasa in Bandung. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, 12(2), 1. <https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v12i2.22347>
- Nakanishi, M., Yamasaki, S., Endo, K., Ando, S., Morimoto, Y., Fujikawa, S., Kanata, S., Takahashi, Y., Furukawa, T. A., Richards, M., Hiraiwa-Hasegawa, M., Kasai, K., & Nishida, A. (2019). The Association Between Role Model Presence and Self-Regulation in Early Adolescence: A Cross-Sectional Study. *Plos One*, 14(9), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0222752>
- Ningsih, R., & Hosna, R. (2024). English Program Community (EPC) Dalam Meningkatkan kelancaran berbahasa Inggris. *Jurnal Penelitian Tarbawi*, 9(2), 54–60. <https://doi.org/10.37216/tarbawi.v9i2.1788>
- Nur, M. M., Gani, S. A., Samad, I. A., & Nur, W. M. (2021). Pesantren Readiness for The English Programs. *English Education Journal*, 12(2), 218–235. <https://doi.org/10.24815/eej.v12i2.19176>
- Rahman, F., Al-Nahdi, A., & Zurriyati, Z. (2023). The (In) Famous English Language Policy in Pesantren: What We Already Know and What Remains Unknown. *Idarah (Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Kependidikan)*, 7(2), 165–182. <https://doi.org/10.47766/idarrah.v7i2.821>
- Septiany, N., & Zuraida, Z. (2025). Investigating English Students' Strategies for Improving Oral Fluency and Self-Confidence at English Study Program Sriwijaya University. *International Journal of English Education and Linguistics (IJOEEL)*, 7(1), 97–106. <https://doi.org/10.33650/ijoeel.v7i1.11326>
- Shobaha, S., & Syarofi, A. (2025). “Do You Need English in Your Job?” Self-Experiences from Three Indonesian Alumni of Non- English Departement. 12(3), 32–43.
- Soraya. (n.d.). Mengelola Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Untuk Anak-Anak Melalui the Community English Programme (CEP). 2(1), 19–32.
- Sugiyono. (2020). *Metodologi Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R & D*. Penerbit Alfabeta Bandung.
- Sundari, H., & Lutfiansyah, L. (2021). Designing English Language Program At Pesantren: a Need Analysis of Course Design. *Faktor: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, 8(3), 305. <https://doi.org/10.30998/fjik.v8i3.10268>
- Zulfirman, R. (2022). Implementasi Metode Outdoor Learning dalam Peningkatan Hasil Belajar Siswa pada Mata Pelajaran Agama Islam di MAN 1 Medan. *Jurnal Penelitian, Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran: JPPP*, 3(2), 147–153. <https://doi.org/10.30596/jppp.v3i2.11758>

