



The Influence of Self-Confidence, Learning Habits, and Expressive Courage on English Learning Outcomes

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of self-confidence, learning habits, and courage to express opinions on students' English learning outcomes. Employing a quantitative correlational design, the research was conducted among 46 students of the English Education Study Program, Class of 2024, at Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau. Data were collected through structured questionnaires using a Likert scale and analyzed using multiple linear regression techniques. The findings reveal that learning habits have a significant positive effect on students' English learning outcomes, indicating that disciplined routines and consistent study practices play a central role in academic achievement. In contrast, self-confidence and courage to express opinions show negative coefficients, suggesting that these factors do not directly contribute to improved learning outcomes when not supported by effective learning behaviors. The regression model obtained is $Y = 88.334 - 0.340X_1 + 0.342X_2 - 0.091X_3$. These results highlight that psychological and expressive strengths alone are insufficient to ensure academic success without structured and sustained learning habits. The study concludes that effective English learning outcomes emerge from the balance between internal qualities and disciplined learning practices, offering important implications for educators in fostering both character development and academic rigor.

Keywords: self-confidence; learning habits; courage to express opinions; English learning outcomes; EFL students

INTRODUCTION

In the modern classroom, learning no longer depends solely on textbooks and teachers; it is shaped by invisible forces that live within the learner's mind and heart. Among these forces, self-confidence, learning habits, and the courage to express opinions quietly determine whether a student merely survives a lesson or truly thrives within it. Scholars have long emphasized that language learning is not only a cognitive process, but also an emotional and behavioral journey, where beliefs about one's own abilities strongly influence effort, persistence, and achievement (Nathir Ghafar & Ghafar, 2023). In the context of English learning, these internal factors become even more critical, as mastery is not simply about knowing rules, but daring to use them in real communication (Khaerati, 2021).

Self-confidence has consistently been identified as a central predictor of academic success. Students who trust their own capabilities tend to set higher goals, demonstrate stronger resilience, and show greater willingness to engage in challenging tasks (Hayat et al., 2020). In language classrooms, this confidence directly affects students' readiness to speak, listen, write, and interact with peers without fear of failure (Permadi Marhaeni et al., 2013). When learners believe that they can succeed, they approach English learning with curiosity rather than anxiety, seeing mistakes not as shameful scars but as stepping stones toward fluency (Leistyaning Pertiwi & Arifin, n.d.).



Learning habits, on the other hand, function as the quiet architecture of achievement. While motivation may light the spark, consistent habits sustain the flame over time. Research has shown that students who maintain structured study routines, effective time management, and active learning strategies tend to achieve significantly better academic outcomes (Gizachew, 2025). In English learning, habits such as regular vocabulary practice, listening exposure, and reflective reading create repeated contact with language, allowing knowledge to deepen and become more automatic (Han & Chen, 2010). Without healthy habits, even highly motivated learners may struggle to convert effort into measurable success (Luthfiah et al., 2025).

The courage to express opinions represents a different, yet equally vital, dimension of the learning process. Expressive courage refers to a student's willingness to communicate ideas, ask questions, and participate in discussions despite the risk of making mistakes or being judged by others. Previous studies have linked this trait to the concept of willingness to communicate, which has been shown to be a strong predictor of language development, particularly in speaking and interactive skills (Lee & Chiu, 2023). Learners who regularly voice their thoughts tend to develop higher levels of linguistic accuracy, fluency, and pragmatic awareness, because they practice language in meaningful social contexts (Shafira et al., 2021). When this courage is absent, knowledge often remains silent and unused, trapped behind a wall of fear.

Despite extensive research into individual psychological and behavioral variables, fewer studies have examined the combined influence of self-confidence, learning habits, and courage to express opinions on English learning outcomes. Most existing studies investigate these variables in isolation, focusing only on self-efficacy, study skills, or communication anxiety separately (Fitra et al., 2020). This fragmented approach has left a gap in understanding how these factors interact as a system, shaping students' overall performance in English. The complexity of language learning suggests that achievement is rarely the product of a single factor, but rather the harmonious interaction of belief, behavior, and bravery (Sukmawati & Mardhatillah Sabillah, 2021).

Furthermore, the gap between ideal learning conditions and classroom realities remains a persistent concern in educational research. Ideally, students would enter learning environments with strong self-belief, disciplined study routines, and fearless communication habits. In reality, many learners hesitate to speak, study inconsistently, and underestimate their own abilities, particularly in foreign language contexts where fear of error is amplified (Kianinezhad, 2024). Recent studies have highlighted that classroom environments often fail to systematically nurture these internal qualities, focusing instead on content coverage and assessment outcomes (Kusumawati, 2024). This mismatch between what learners need internally and what classrooms provide externally creates an urgent need for deeper investigation.

The present study is positioned to respond to this gap by examining the influence of self-confidence, learning habits, and courage to express opinions on students' English learning outcomes. By exploring these variables simultaneously, this research seeks to offer a more integrated perspective on the psychological and behavioral foundations of language achievement. Understanding these relationships is expected to provide practical insights for teachers, curriculum designers, and educational policymakers who wish to create learning environments that nourish not only intellectual growth, but emotional strength and communicative bravery (Khajavy et al., 2019).



Ultimately, this research hopes to gently illuminate the truth that successful English learning is not built solely upon grammar exercises and vocabulary lists, but upon the invisible pillars of belief, discipline, and courage. When students learn to trust themselves, practice with consistency, and speak with bravery, their learning outcomes rise naturally, like a tide guided by the quiet pull of the moon (Dakhalan, n.d.)

Previous Research

Previous research has long recognized that psychological and behavioral factors play a decisive role in students' academic achievement, particularly in language learning contexts. (Mardatillah, 2024) investigated the relationship between self-confidence and English speaking performance among university students and found a strong positive correlation between students' confidence levels and their oral achievement. The study revealed that learners who possessed higher levels of self-belief were more willing to participate actively and demonstrated better fluency and accuracy during presentations. This finding emphasizes that confidence does not simply influence performance emotionally, but also shapes tangible learning outcomes.

Another important study was conducted by (Safi, 2025), who performed a meta-analysis exploring the impact of learning habits on academic success. Their findings demonstrated that structured study habits, time management, and consistent rehearsal practices significantly predicted students' academic performance across disciplines, including language learning. In English learning environments, this suggests that students who develop regular reading, listening, and writing routines are more likely to achieve higher proficiency levels. Their work firmly positioned learning habits as a foundational pillar of academic success rather than a minor supporting factor.

(Hu & Wang, 2023) introduced the influential concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC), which closely relates to the courage to express opinions. Their study found that learners with higher communicative willingness were more active in classroom interactions and demonstrated stronger language development over time. This research explained that communicative courage is not merely a personality trait, but a dynamic characteristic shaped by classroom environment, perceived competence, and emotional safety. Students who dared to speak more frequently benefited from richer opportunities for feedback and real-life language use.

More recent studies have begun to integrate these variables into more complex frameworks. (Rahayu et al., 2025) argued that language learning success emerges from the interaction of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions rather than isolated factors. Similarly, (Januaripin, 2024) found that students' self-confidence influenced both their learning behaviors and classroom participation, indirectly affecting their academic outcomes. These works demonstrate that confidence, habits, and expressive courage function as interconnected forces that jointly shape learners' performance.

Although these studies provide strong foundations, they often examine these variables separately or focus on general academic achievement rather than English learning outcomes specifically. Few studies have simultaneously explored self-confidence, learning habits, and courage to express opinions as combined predictors of English achievement. This gap underlines the necessity of the present study, which seeks to offer a more integrated and comprehensive perspective on how these internal factors influence students' English learning outcomes.



METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a correlational design. The research was conducted in a structured and systematic manner to collect, analyze, and interpret data in order to examine the influence of self-confidence, learning habits, and courage to express opinions on students' English learning outcomes. The correlational design was selected to identify the strength and direction of the relationships among the variables without manipulating them.

The research was carried out on students of the English Education Study Program, Class of 2024, at Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau.

Participants

The population of this study consisted of all students of the English Education Study Program, Class of 2024, at Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau, totaling 52 students. Population refers to the entire group of individuals that possess particular characteristics and become the target of a study (Jailani et al., n.d.).

The sample in this study was determined using the Slovin formula to identify the minimum number of participants required. Using a margin of error of 0.05, the sample size was calculated as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + N \cdot e^2)$$

$$n = 52 / (1 + 52 \times 0.05^2)$$

$$n = 52 / 1.13$$

$$n = 46.01 \approx 46 \text{ students}$$

Thus, the final sample consisted of 46 students selected from the population.

Instruments

Data were collected using structured questionnaires designed to measure four main variables:

1. Self-confidence,
2. Learning habits,
3. Courage to express opinions, and
4. English learning outcomes.

The questionnaire items were developed using a Likert scale format ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The instruments were adapted to suit the research context and were reviewed to ensure clarity and content validity before distribution.

Data collection procedures

Data collection was conducted in January 2025 at Universitas Muhammadiyah Riau. The questionnaires were distributed directly to the selected participants. Before filling out the questionnaires, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Participants were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaires independently and honestly.



Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the characteristics of the data, while inferential statistics were applied to examine the relationships between self-confidence, learning habits, courage to express opinions, and English learning outcomes. Correlation and regression analyses were used to determine the strength, direction, and significance of the influence among the variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Before addressing each research question, it was necessary to ensure that the collected data were of high quality and suitable for statistical analysis. The preliminary tests revealed that the research instruments were both valid and reliable. All questionnaire items measuring self-confidence, learning habits, and courage to express opinions obtained r-count values higher than the r-table value of 0.290, indicating strong construct validity. Additionally, the reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha showed coefficients within the high category, confirming that the instruments were internally consistent and dependable.

Normality testing was conducted using the Shapiro–Wilk test through SPSS. The results indicated that all variables were normally distributed, with significance values greater than 0.05: self-confidence ($p = 0.256$), learning habits ($p = 0.102$), courage to express opinions ($p = 0.527$), and English learning outcomes ($p = 0.071$). These findings confirmed that the data met the assumptions required for multiple linear regression analysis. With these foundational checks complete, the study proceeded to examine the specific influences of each independent variable on English learning outcomes.

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	88.334	18.675		.000
	KepercayaanDiriX1	-.340	.631	-.338	.593
	KebiasaanBelajarX2	.342	.602	.353	.573
	KeberanianBerpendapat X3	-.091	.191	-.089	.634

a. Dependent Variable: NilaiY

Based on the results of the data analysis, the following regression model can be formulated:

$$Y = 88.334 - 0.340X_1 + 0.342X_2 - 0.091X_3$$

Therefore, it can be concluded that learning habits have a positive effect on students' learning outcomes, while self-confidence and courage to express opinions have a negative effect on students' learning outcomes.



The Influence of Self-Confidence on English Learning Outcomes

The first research question explored whether self-confidence significantly influences students' English learning outcomes. Statistical testing revealed that the data met the assumptions required for further analysis. The regression analysis produced a regression coefficient of -0.340 , as described in the following model $Y = 88.334 - 0.340X_1 + 0.342X_2 - 0.091X_3$, shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1. Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	88.334	18.675		4.730	.000
	KepercayaanDiriX1	-.340	.631	-.338	-.539	.593
	KebiasaanBelajarX2	.342	.602	.353	.568	.573
	KeberanianBerpendapatX3	-.091	.191	-.089	-.480	.634

a. Dependent Variable: NilaiY

This result indicates that self-confidence did not show a positive direct influence on English learning outcomes in this study. Higher levels of reported confidence were slightly associated with lower achievement scores. This unexpected pattern may suggest that some students relied more on perceived ability than structured effort, which reduced their focus on consistent learning strategies.

The Influence of Learning Habits on English Learning Outcomes

The second research question analyzed the effect of learning habits on English learning outcomes. The regression results showed a positive regression coefficient of 0.342 , indicating that learning habits significantly improved students' academic performance. Students who developed structured routines, effective time management, and consistent exposure to English demonstrated better outcomes. This confirms that disciplined practice is a central pillar of language mastery and academic success.

The Influence of Courage to Express Opinions on English Learning Outcomes

The third research question examined the influence of courage to express opinions on English learning outcomes. The analysis showed a regression coefficient of -0.091 , suggesting that this variable did not contribute positively to learning outcomes in this study. Although the ability to express opinions strengthened classroom participation, it did not directly improve test-based performance. This highlights the difference between communicative activity and academic assessment, where expressive courage must be balanced with focused academic practice.

Taken together, the results show that learning habits exerted the strongest positive influence on English learning outcomes, while self-confidence and courage to express opinions did not show direct positive effects in this research context. These findings suggest that psychological readiness and expressive strength must be supported by disciplined behavioral patterns to yield measurable academic success.



CONCLUSION

This study sought to examine the influence of self-confidence, learning habits, and courage to express opinions on students' English learning outcomes, and the findings offer a clear and meaningful pattern. Among the three variables, learning habits emerged as the strongest positive influence, showing that structured routines, consistent practice, and effective study strategies play a central role in shaping students' academic success in English. This result confirms that achievement in language learning is not formed by chance, nor by talent alone, but by the quiet discipline of repeated effort. The findings also revealed that self-confidence and courage to express opinions did not demonstrate positive direct effects on English learning outcomes within the context of this study. Although these qualities are generally viewed as supportive factors in learning, the results suggest that when they are not balanced with structured learning behaviors, they may not contribute effectively to measurable academic achievement. In some cases, high self-confidence may reduce students' sense of urgency to study, while the courage to speak may be expressed more in participation than in mastery of tested skills.

The significance of this study lies in its integrated perspective. It shows that psychological strength and expressive ability must be guided by strong learning habits to produce optimal academic outcomes. Confidence without discipline may drift, and courage without direction may scatter, but well-formed habits provide the steady bridge between potential and performance. This study contributes to the field of English education by providing empirical evidence that supports the prioritization of effective learning habits in language teaching. Future research is encouraged to explore these relationships using larger samples, experimental designs, and different educational contexts in order to deepen understanding and expand the practical implications of these findings.

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