

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provided the methodology utilized to conduct the study. This chapter outlines six parts of the research procedure, namely the method of the research, focus of the research, setting and participants, data collection, data analysis, and time and place of the Research. More details are described below.

A. Research Design

This research employed a qualitative narrative inquiry design to explore how informal peer interactions contribute to EFL students' speaking confidence. Narrative inquiry is a powerful tool for understanding how individuals make meaning of their personal experiences through stories (Clandinin, 2007). It emphasizes the participants' voices, enabling a deep and contextual exploration of their confidence-building processes in speaking English outside formal classroom settings.

The study was guided by Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory, focusing on four main sources of self-efficacy: performance accomplishment, vicarious learning, verbal encouragement, and emotional states. These theoretical constructs served as lenses through which the data were collected and analyzed. The research aimed to capture how students' lived experiences during informal peer conversations, such as hangouts, WhatsApp discussions, and task-related chats, shape their self-belief and speaking confidence.

Using narrative interviews with two purposively selected participants from the English Education program at a public university in West Java, Indonesia, the researcher gathered in-depth stories about the students' informal language practices. Data analysis combined two approaches recommended by Barkhuizen (2014): narrative presentation and thematic narrative analysis. These allowed for both holistic storytelling and an analytical breakdown of themes aligned with Bandura's theory.

This design enabled the researcher to document participants' personal journeys and interpret how informal interactions foster speaking confidence. The

choice of narrative inquiry preserved the complexity of each student's experience, while the use of theory-driven thematic analysis helped connect those experiences to established psychological and educational frameworks.

B. Focus of the Research

This study explores how informal peer interactions contribute to the development of speaking confidence among EFL students, specifically through the lens of Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory, which examines performance accomplishment, vicarious learning, verbal encouragement, and emotional states.

C. Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at one public university in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia, known for its commitment to community service, academic growth, and educational advancement. The university offered a diverse range of programs, including English Education, which provided students with opportunities to engage in both formal and informal English-speaking environments. The setting was ideal for observing EFL students' confidence in English, particularly in informal peer interactions that occurred outside structured classroom settings, such as in study groups, social gatherings, and online communication. By observing these interactions, the researcher gathered valuable insights into how informal English use contributed to confidence-building in everyday communication.

The participants were recruited using purposive sampling to ensure they met specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. Criteria included being enrolled in the English Education program, actively engaging in informal English conversations with peers since the beginning of their studies, and showing a sustained interest in using English outside the classroom, such as in group discussions, casual hangouts, and daily communication via WhatsApp and voice calls.

Two participants were selected for this study and are referred to using pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality and uphold ethical standards in qualitative research (Saunders et al., 2015).

Egbert, a seventh-semester English Education student, began learning English independently before university. He practiced speaking mostly through informal conversations with peers, and over time, noticed improvement in his fluency, grammar, and pronunciation. He saw these achievements as personal victories that significantly boosted his confidence.

Chloe, also a seventh-semester English Education student, developed her speaking confidence by interacting with fluent peers and observing their intonation, expression, and fluency. She reported that informal peer interactions provided a relaxed environment that helped her speak naturally and manage anxiety, especially compared to formal classroom settings. Their experiences offer valuable insights into the impact of informal language use and peer support on speaking confidence, aligning with the narrative inquiry approach to explore the meaning behind their stories.

The research object in this study was informal peer interactions conducted in English among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students within a university context. This research object was chosen because it represented a natural, unstructured form of language practice where students could freely use English without the constraints of formal classroom settings. Informal peer interactions included various types of communication, such as casual conversations, discussions about academic tasks, and exchanges through digital platforms like WhatsApp. These interactions occurred spontaneously and were characterized by a relaxed environment where students used English more freely and experimentally, which was valuable for observing how confidence developed in real-world communication.

This specific focus on informal peer interactions was significant to the study's objective of exploring factors that influenced speaking confidence. By investigating how students communicated and supported each other in English outside of formal instruction, the study highlighted the potential benefits of informal interactions for building confidence and language skills. This research object was ideal for the study as it reflected a growing interest in understanding language acquisition beyond traditional classroom methodologies, addressing a gap

in the literature on the benefits of peer-supported, informal learning in language education.

D. Data Collection

The primary data for this research were gathered through semi-structured narrative interviews. Each participant was interviewed once in-depth, with the conversation lasting approximately 45–60 minutes. The interview questions were developed based on Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy performance accomplishment, vicarious learning, verbal encouragement, and emotional states. This approach ensured that the data collected was closely aligned with the theoretical framework and allowed the participants to express their experiences in their own words.

To create a comfortable environment, the interviews were conducted in an informal setting familiar to the participants. The questions were open-ended, allowing participants to share stories freely and reflect on their informal English-speaking experiences. For example, they were asked to describe a time when they felt confident speaking English with friends, or how they felt when receiving feedback from peers.

After the initial interviews, the researcher followed up with additional questions through chat and brief voice calls. This was done to clarify some responses, confirm interpretations, and ensure the accuracy and depth of the data. This process helped maintain the trustworthiness and credibility of the narratives collected. All interviews were audio-recorded with permission, transcribed verbatim, and translated into English as necessary.

E. Data Analysis

The data in this study were analyzed using an integrated approach that combined narrative presentation and thematic analysis, both guided by Barkhuizen's (2014) framework of narrative inquiry. This dual-method strategy was chosen to preserve the depth and complexity of participants' lived experiences while also allowing for structured, theory-driven analysis.

Narrative presentation was utilized to retain the integrity, coherence, and chronological flow of the participants' stories. According to Barkhuizen (2014), presenting narratives in a holistic and story-like format allows researchers to understand how individuals construct meaning and identity through their lived experiences. In this study, narrative presentation enabled the researcher to capture the emotions, turning points, and evolving perceptions of each participant as they reflected on their informal English-speaking experiences. By telling the participants' stories in their own words and structure, this approach honored their voice and authenticity.

On the other hand, thematic analysis was conducted to systematically examine and interpret the underlying themes across narratives. Using Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory as the conceptual lens, the analysis focused on identifying elements from the four sources of self-efficacy—performance accomplishment, vicarious learning, verbal encouragement, and emotional states—within participants' stories. This method allowed the researcher to connect individual experiences to broader psychological constructs, highlighting recurring patterns and offering insights into how informal peer interactions shape speaking confidence.

By integrating these two approaches, the analysis achieved both narrative depth and analytical clarity. The narrative presentation helped the researcher understand the context and meaning behind each experience, while the thematic analysis ensured that findings were aligned with the research objectives and theoretical framework. This integration supports what Barkhuizen (2014) emphasizes as the strength of narrative inquiry: enabling both storytelling and thematic understanding in the exploration of complex educational phenomena.

1. Transcription and Familiarization

After conducting the interviews, the researcher transcribed the audio recordings verbatim. The transcripts were then read multiple times to gain a deep understanding of the participants' stories, emotional tones, sequences of events, and underlying meanings. As suggested by Barkhuizen (2014), this familiarization stage was crucial for ensuring that the participants' voices were authentically represented before moving into the formal analysis.

Figure 2 Emotional Tones

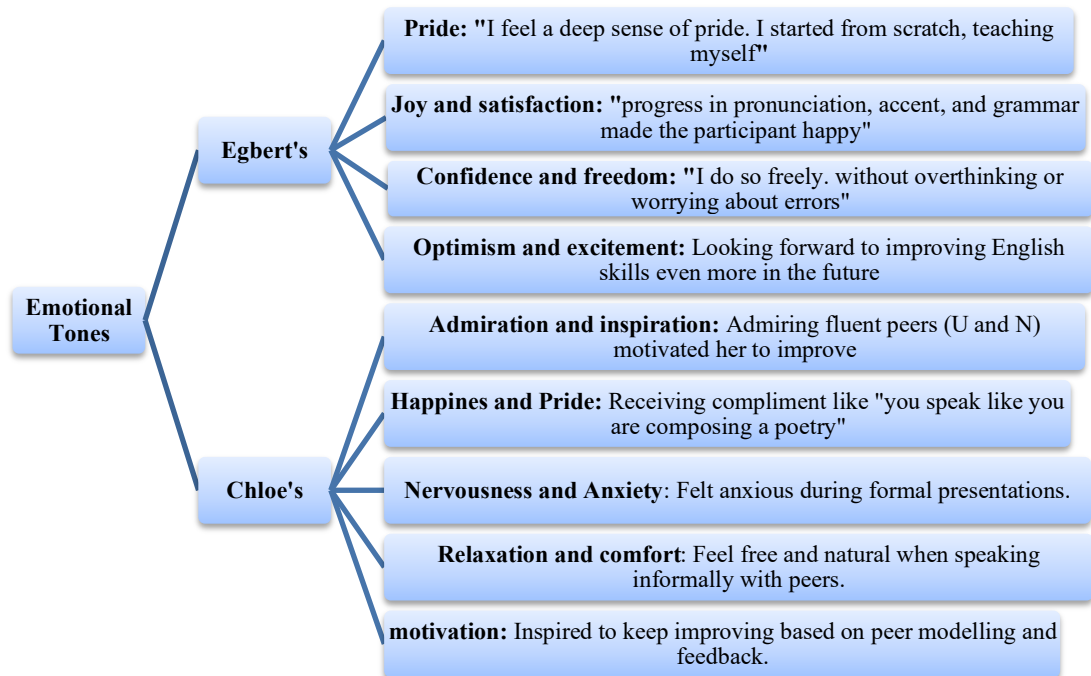


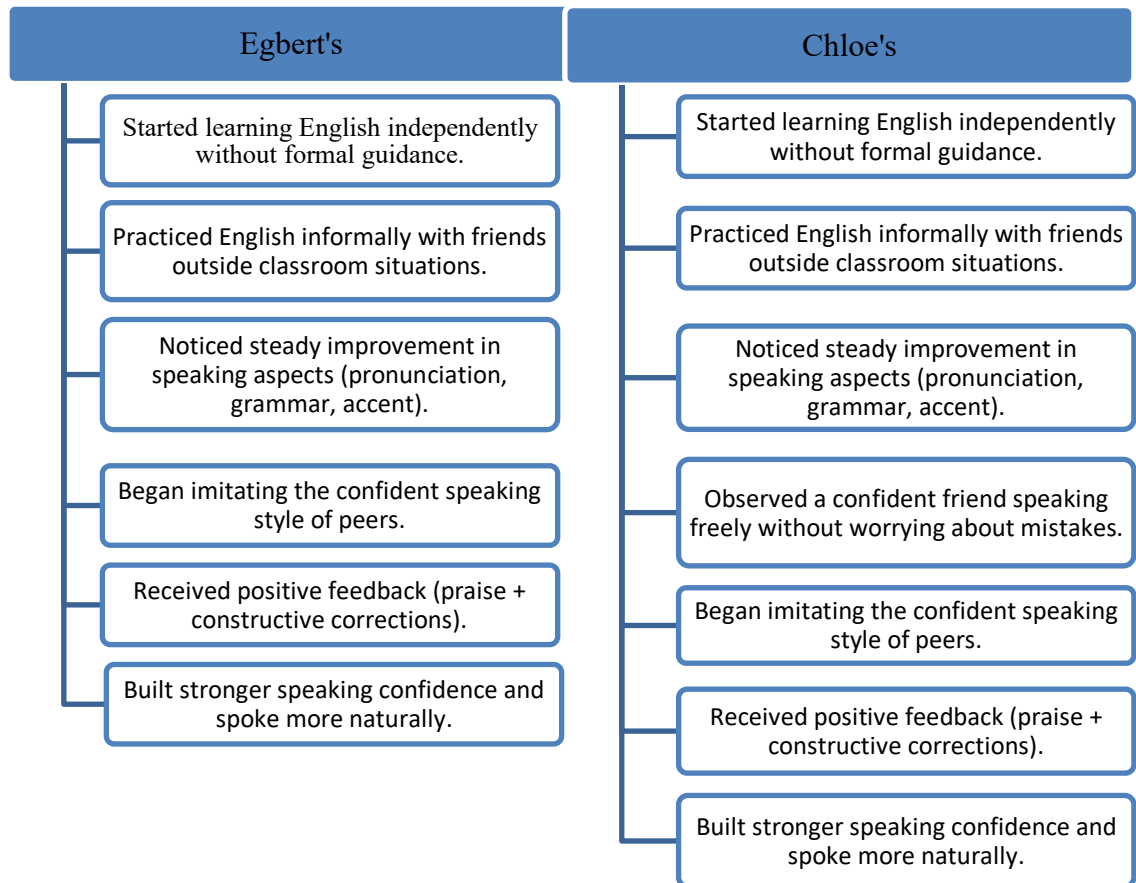
Figure 3 Sequences of Events

Table 1 Underlying Meanings

| Underlying Meanings | Egbert | Chloe |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal peer interaction greatly contributed to speaking confidence. • Success and small victories built performance accomplishment. • Observing a friend's confident behavior led to vicarious learning. • Receiving encouragement and corrections positively affected self-efficacy. • Speaking practice in relaxed, informal settings was essential to developing fluency and reducing fear of mistakes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer modeling (vicarious learning) strongly influenced speaking development. • Positive peer feedback (verbal encouragement) reinforced her belief in her speaking ability. • Informal settings helped reduce speaking anxiety and made English practice more natural. • Managing emotional states in formal presentations contributed to building resilience and self-confidence over time. • Informal interactions became a safe space for experimenting with English and growing fluency. |

2. Codings and Categorization

In this phase, the researcher identified meaningful units within the narratives related to the research focus. Open coding was applied to segments of the data that reflected experiences connected to Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy: performance accomplishment, vicarious learning, verbal encouragement, and emotional states. These codes were then categorized thematically to prepare for narrative reconstruction and thematic interpretation

Table 2 Result of Egbert's Coding and Categorization

| Theme (Category) | Codes | Sample Extract from Egbert |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Performance Accomplishment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small success moments - Improvement in pronunciation and fluency - Sense of achievement after communication | <p>"Over time, I noticed significant improvements in my pronunciation, accent, and grammar."</p> <p>"Every progress step felt like a personal victory."</p> |
| Vicarious Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observing fluent friends - Unconscious imitation of speaking style - Inspired by role models | <p>"Watching her, I realized that the key to speaking English fluently isn't about being perfect—it's about having the confidence to just speak."</p> |
| Verbal Encouragement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive feedback from friends - Motivated by praise and constructive corrections | <p>"Praise makes me want to keep talking, even showing off a little, while corrections assure me that mistakes aren't something to fear."</p> |
| Emotional States | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anxiety in formal settings - Comfort in informal peer conversations - Strategies to manage nervousness | <p>"Speaking in class always makes me nervous... but when I speak with my friends, there's no pressure."</p> |

Table 3 Result of Chloe's Coding and Categorization

| Theme (Category) | Codes | Sample Extract from Chloe |
|--|---|--|
| Performance Accomplish ment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small success moments - Improvement in pronunciation and fluency - Sense of achievement after communication | <i>"There was a moment when I was able to explain something clearly, and my friends understood me without asking for clarification."</i> |
| Vicarious Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observing fluent friends - Unconscious imitation of speaking style - Inspired by role models | <i>"I often find myself unconsciously imitating N's way of talking or the way Slank delivers her words."</i> |
| Verbal Encouragem ent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive feedback from friends - Motivated by praise and constructive corrections | <i>"Whenever my friends told me, 'Your English is good' or 'You sound natural,' I felt encouraged to speak more."</i> |
| Emotional States | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anxiety in formal settings - Comfort in informal peer conversations - Strategies to manage nervousness | <i>"In formal presentations, I get really nervous, especially at the beginning. But with my friends, it's completely different. I feel more flexible, more natural."</i> |

3. Narrative Construction Using Labovian Narrative Structure

After coding and categorization, the next step was narrative construction. In this phase, the researcher reconstructed the participants' experiences into coherent and structured narratives. The goal was to retell each participant's story while preserving the authenticity of their voice and maintaining the flow of their lived experiences, as emphasized by Barkhuizen (2014). The narratives were organized following a logical progression using a format inspired by Labov's (1972) structural model of narratives: Orientation, Complication, Action, Resolution, and Evaluation.

4. Thematic Analysis (Guided by Self-Efficacy Theory)

Following the narrative construction, a thematic analysis was conducted to interpret the deeper meaning within the participants' experiences. This phase systematically linked narrative segments to the theoretical lens of Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy. The steps of thematic analysis included:

Re-examining the Coded Data: The researcher revisited all the categorized codes to ensure alignment with the four self-efficacy sources.

Theme Identification: The data were grouped into major themes corresponding to: Performance Accomplishment: Successes in informal speaking practices.

Vicarious Learning: Learning through observing fluent peers.

Verbal Encouragement: Motivation gained through feedback.

Emotional States: Emotional regulation and reduced anxiety in informal settings.

Cross-Case Comparison: The experiences of both participants were compared to identify similarities, differences, and patterns.

Connecting Themes to Theory and Literature: The findings were interpreted through Bandura's self-efficacy framework and existing research, situating the participants' experiences within broader academic discussions.

This integrated approach, combining narrative and thematic analysis, allowed for a rich, layered understanding of how informal peer interactions influenced the development of speaking confidence among EFL students. It ensured

that both the individuality of each participant's experience and the broader thematic insights were captured systematically.

F. Time and Place of the Research

This research was conducted at a university in Tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. Meanwhile, the time of this research was conducted in the period from:

Table 4 Research Timeline

[illegible]