Building Students' Confidence in Speaking English through Differentiated Instruction

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Abstract

Differentiated Instruction is a way of learning where teachers make adjustments in content, process, product, and learning environment to improve students' learning ability. This research aims to explore how English teachers implement Differentiated Instruction and build students' confidence in speaking English. This research was a case study. The informants were two English teachers of *Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri (SMPN) 4 Jember*, 31 students of class VIID, and 31 students of class VIIF. The data were collected through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The data were analyzed using data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The results showed that the English teachers had implemented all elements of Differentiated Instruction to build students' confidence in speaking English. In the interview, the teachers stated that they used various methods such as presentation, discussion, question and answer, and games to make students confident in speaking English. The interview results were in line with the observation results where during the implementation of Differentiated Instruction, teachers had provided various activities to encourage students to be more confident in speaking English. Based on the questionnaire results, there was an increasement in students' confidence in speaking English during the implementation of Differentiated Instruction. The finding showed that the confidence of students in classes VIID and VIIF to speak English increased by 6.23% for class VIID and 1.72% for class VIIF. From the results of the study, it can be concluded that Differentiated Instruction can increase students' confidence in speaking English.

Keywords: differentiated instruction, speaking skill, students' self-confidence

INTRODUCTION

Many foreign language students study English to improve their speaking abilities. Cameron as cited in (Sari, 2019) and Burns and Joyce as stated in (Lestari, 2019) stated speaking is the active use of language to express meanings so that other people may understand them. To express meaning clearly and precisely and to ensure that the listener will understand, a speaker must use words or sentences according to (Syaifullah et al., 2022) their function and with the correct structure. To communicate verbally with others, it is essential for learners to develop speaking abilities for the target language and culture. stated that speaking reveals whether or not a student is learning a language successfully. In other words, the level of students' language skills can be determined by the way they communicate in English. The teacher's responsibility is to ensure that the classroom atmosphere is conducive to speaking, and students should be given plenty of opportunity to do so. According to Norman & Hyland as cited in (Akbari & Sahibsada, 2020), (Kanza, 2015). confidence is a learning factor that can affect students' engagement and development. Self-confidence can help students to speak English fluently during the teaching and learning process, either in a group discussion or presentation in front of the class. It is important to note that self-confidence is an affective factor that affects how well students learn English as a foreign language.

One of the learning strategies that can be implemented to build students' confidence is through Differentiated Instruction. Differentiated Instruction is learning that gives students the flexibility to increase their potential through four elements of diferentiation which are content, process, product, and learning environment. (Tomlinson, 2017) defines Differentiated Instruction is what happens in the classroom to give students a variety of methods for absorbing knowledge, comprehending concepts, and communicating what they have learned. (Gibon et al., 2020) states that Differentiated Instruction is a form of learning where the teacher actively facilitates a fun learning process with varied students so that students can learn well. Differentiated Instruction is defined as teachers' efforts to facilitate differences among students in the classroom. The teacher will provide varied instructions for each group to create fun learning, encourage creativity, and increase students' self-confidence. (Tomlinson, C.A., Moon, 2013) state that Differentiated Instruction is a strategy that can increase students' confidence in speaking, as it can use various media or strategies to stimulate students to be confident, active and creative as stated that the students will be interested and engaged in class if there are ideas or tasks that seem useful to them.

Studies on within-class Differentiated Instruction in secondary education are scarce, some studies showed positive effects of Differentiated Instruction on student achievement. The first study was conducted by (Nteli & Zafiri, 2017) entitled *The Development of Speaking Skills using the Immersion Teaching Model: A Case Study of a 5th Grade Greek Primary Class in an EFL Context*. In order to differentiate the learning processes, this study examines how students' speaking abilities grow utilizing the Immersion Teaching Model (ITM). The research's findings showed that speaking abilities might be improved for students with at least a basic degree of language proficiency, but there was no difference found for students with no speaking proficiency, indicating the need for additional differentiation. The ITM treatment, however, has demonstrated to be both extremely effective in boosting student motivation and practicable for application in EFL classrooms.

The second study was conducted by (Awada & Faour, 2018) entitled *Effect Of Glogster And Cooperative Learning Differentiated Instruction On Teachers' perceptions*. The study examined at how well Glogster and cooperative learning differentiated science and English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) projects. In order to understand the meaning science and English teachers had created for Differentiated Instruction and how they viewed it after utilizing Glogster and cooperative learning to undertake and present projects, the researchers gathered open-ended data. The results demonstrated that using Glogster and cooperative learning as a multifaceted model could boost Science and English language teachers' and students' perspectives of Differentiated Instruction. Most of the students in the experimental classrooms expressed favorable opinions of Glogster and the cooperative learning environment provided by Differentiated Instruction, according to the experimental teachers. The students were quite pleased with the amount of work, the simplicity of the assignment, and the options provided for how to show their creations.

The third study was conducted by (Pozas et al., 2020) entitled *Teachers and differentiated instruction: exploring differentiation practices to address student diversity.* results. This study examined contextual elements including school subject and school track as it sought to investigate how various Differentiated Instruction approaches were used in classroom instruction. Teachers' constructivist attitudes were also taken into account as a covariate. The findings demonstrate that constructivist views among teachers do have a favorable impact on their usage of Differentiated Instruction. Additionally, the findings unmistakably show that, (1) while teachers do generally include DI into their in-class instruction, they do so less frequently than is ideal for effectively addressing heterogeneity and (2) teachers primarily use tiered assignments and varied ability groups when they do employ Differentiated Instruction, which shows that they have a rather narrow range of Differentiated Instruction approaches.

Based on an observation and interview with the teacher of SMPN 4 Jember, the researchers found that some students were seen bowing their heads and being silent when the English teacher asked questions. During group presentations, only one or two students from the groups were confident to speak English, the rest were just silent and there were even some students who looked nervous and opened the dictionary during the presentation. As a 'Sekolah Penggerak', all the teachers have an obligation to conduct Differentiated Instruction in teaching learning process. Based on this phenomenon, this study addressed the following research questions: (1.) How do the English teachers apply Differentiated Instruction in the English speaking classroom, (2.) How do the English teachers build students' confidence in speaking English through DI, and (3.) To what extent is students' confidence in speaking English built after learning through Differentiated Instruction. The researchers were inspired and want to explore more how the English teachers at SMPN 4 could increase students' confidence in speaking English with Differentiated Instruction and to what extent the the students' confidence in speaking improve through Differentiated Instruction.

METHOD

The design of this research was in a form of case study type and was conducted at SMPN 4 Jember. The informants were two English teachers who teach class VIID and VIIF. Moreover the researchers also invited two classes of seventh grade to become the participants. These participants were 31 students of class VIID and 31 students of

class VIIF who were taught by the two teachers using Differentiated Instruction. The selection of these two classes was based on the choice of the teachers who stated during the interview that the two classes had difficulty speaking English compared to other classes and also pre classroom observation. They would be involved to obtain quantitative data in the form of close-ended questionnaires.

The instruments for this research were an observation checklist, an interview guideline for teachers and students, questionnaire, and documentation. The observation checklist sheet was used to check the activities of teachers and students in learning English using Differentiated Instruction. The observation form had been prepared in accordance with the characteristics of Differentiated Instruction learning, namely content differentiation, learning process or strategy, product, and learning environment, student engagement in speaking English, and teacher attitudes in teaching using Differentiated Instruction. The interview was done with the two English teachers of SMPN, three students from class VIID, and three students from class VIIF. The researchers used the interview guideline to interview the teachers and the students. The teachers' interview was conducted to gain the data related to the first and second research problem, and to check the accuracy data from the observation. Meanwhile, the students' interview was conducted to gain deeper information related to the third research question. The questionnaire was designed in the form of close-ended questions in Google Form and it was distributed to the students twice. The first questionnaire (Q1) was distributed before the lesson began, and the second questionnaire (Q2) was distributed after the lesson.

The formula and the students 'confidence category used to determine the percentage of student answers in the questionnaire are as follows:

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100\%$$

P : percentage of student response results
f : frequency of student response results
n : the number of students who answered the questions

Table 1. Self Confidence Score Category

Category	Percentage
High	76% - 100%
Medium	51% - 75%
Low	26% - 50%
Very Low	0 - 25%

Adopted from Febriyani et al. (2020)

In this study, the researchers used qualitative data analysis techniques based on (Ridder et al., 2014) which are data condensation, data display, and conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are divided into three parts. The first part is to answer research question number one which is how English teachers implement Differentiated Instruction in the English-speaking classroom. The second part is to answer research question number two which is how English teachers build students' confidence in

speaking English through Differentiated Instruction. The third section is to answer research question number three which is to what extent students' confidence in speaking English is built after learning through Differentiated Instruction.

The Implementation of Differentiated Instruction in the English Speaking Classroom
The results of the observations are divided into four according to the four elements of Differentiated Instruction, namely content, process, product and learning environment.

Content Differentiation
The differentiation content carried out by the teacher in class VIID was when the teacher asked students to create procedure texts in groups. The teacher gave the students the opportunity to choose the topic of the procedural text/manual according to their interests and abilities. The teacher gave some topic to the students through a word wall game where one student from each group pressed the spin button to get the topic. After that, the students created a manual text based on the chosen topic.
In class VIIF, the teacher also provides several pictures of parts of the house that can be chosen by each group to make a short descriptive paragraph that would be presented orally at the next meeting. The descriptive text with the vocabulary presented was adjusted to the level of students' abilities. the topics studied were easy for students to understand because the teacher had explained the material by including pictures of parts of the house.

Process Differentiation
In the differentiated learning process, the teacher of class VIID provided various activities to develop students' speaking skills. in the first activity, the teacher provided a video conversation about procedures. Then the teacher provided the text topic in the form of a word wall game, where students could freely choose their own topics by pressing the spin button. After that, the teacher divided the students into groups and asked the students to create a procedure or text manual. During the activity of creating the text manual, the teacher allowed the students to take their own cellphones to help them in creating the text manual in Canva. the students were also allowed to include pictures or videos for their presentation.
In class VIIF, the teacher gave pictures of house parts and asked students many questions about the vocabulary. To reduce student boredom, the teacher provides ice breakers at each meeting. The ice breaker was quite fun to increase student motivation to learn. Then, the teacher asked questions by giving pictures of prepositions of place. Students answered the position of objects by writing the answers on the board with confidence. For the last assignment, the teacher gave assignments that could be done individually, in pairs or in groups. some students did their own assignments and some students chose to work in pairs. they were able to complete the assignment and present it well in front of the class.

Product Differentiation
During the lesson, the teacher of class VIID gave students the option to work on the assignment given, which was to create a procedure text which would later be presented with the help of pictures or videos. At the time of making the procedure text,

the students looked for pictures or videos that were suitable for their procedur text. There were several groups that directly made the procedural text in the Canva application, and there were groups that made the procedural text in notebooks and added videos from YouTube. After being given some time by the teacher to create the procedure text, the product or student work was presented orally in front of the class. Each group presented their products with the help of technology equipment that had been provided in the language lab.

The teacher of class VIIF assigned students to write a short paragraph of description about parts of the house. The teacher asked the students to choose one of the pictures of parts of the house and write a paragraph according to the chosen picture. The pictures provided by the teacher were five, namely the living room, kitchen, family room, bedroom, and bathroom. From the five pictures, the teacher got five different products that had been done by the students.

Learning Environment Differentiation

The observations on the first meeting and the second meeting were held in the language laboratory because the VIID classroom does not have a projector to display learning videos. Inside the language lab there are a television complete with speakers and microphones. There are tables and chairs arranged with various settings. The language lab provides wide access to students to learn because the room has technology facilities, a good Wi-Fi network, fun and relaxing atmosphere for teaching speaking. With a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere supported by complete facilities, then, students' confidence to speak English will also increase.

Observations for class VIIF students were carried out in their own classrooms. The VIIF classroom is quite spacious and contains 31 pairs of tables and chairs as well as the teacher's table. Besides that, there are also three large fans installed so that the room feels cool even though the weather conditions outside the class are hot. The classroom walls are also filled with student work. In addition, at the back of the classroom there is a bookcase that is large enough to store student items or books. The spacious classroom allows students to set their own desks and chairs to form groups. If the lesson activity requires laptops, LCD players, or viewers, the teacher can install these tools in the classroom.

Building Students' Confidence in Speaking English through Differentiated Instruction

Both English teachers implemented Differentiated Instruction to build students' confidence in speaking English. The following are the findings of how each teacher built the confidence of VIID and VIIF students in speaking English in class through Differentiated Instruction.

Based on an interview with the VIID English teacher, especially in speaking skills, she revealed that she often uses product differentiation to improve students' speaking skills.

> *"The way I apply it is most often product differentiation because not all students are capable of this. In this case, sometimes because I ask them to make a video, one of them is unable to because he is hindered by his device. So some use videos, some in the form of pictures, some in the form of direct oral presentations" (Informant 1, April 5th, 2023)*

The researchers asked how the English teacher build students' confidence in speaking English. She answered that she uses various methods to get students to speak English such as role play, presentations and group discussions. She also added that the results of the application of Differentiated Instruction can make students' confidence increase. She said that the students are more creative to express their ideas. And it is sometimes beyond their expectation that it turns out that the students are great at this.

The interview from the English teacher of class VIIF stated that she more often uses process differentiation in teaching speaking in her class.

> *"The differentiation that I do in speaking class is usually process differentiation. For example, this is role play learning, so they make short dialogues. I let them to play roles with 3 people 2 people or maybe more" (Informant 2, April 5th, 2023)*

The English teacher added that she also builds students' confidence by conducting Differentiated Instruction in class. She said that she does content and process differentiation to make students more confident by giving shorter texts to low achiever students and longer texts to high achever students. She said if the teacher adapts learning to students' abilities and allows students to choose, such as choosing to form their own groups, then by itself, students' confidence will be formed.

> *"If we adjust to their path with their competence and liberate them to choose, for example, topics or even form groups. From there, then we can indirectly build students' confidence. So when they can choose, then they can not only build their confidence, they are committed to completing it. In the process, they are very enthusiastic because it is according to their own wishes, according to their abilities too." (Informant 2, April 5th, 2023)*

From the interview and observation above, it can be said that both teacher have their own method of implementing Differentiated Instruction in their class. Both answers above are in line with the class observations that have been done. The findings of observations from class VIID show that the teacher applied product differentiation to VIID class students. she let her students to choose what products will be produced later in the presentation. while the English teacher of VIIF class, let VIIF class students in carrying out the learning activity process. VIIF students can determine for themselves how they will complete the task.

It can be concluded that Differentiated Instruction provides opportunities for students to learn according to their abilities and interests. When teachers apply Differentiated Instruction to students, then indirectly, students' confidence, motivation and abilities will also increase. In this study, both teachers have built the confidence of VIID and VIIF students in speaking English by applying differentiation of content, process, product and learning environment to their students.

The Extent of Students' Confidence in Speaking English Is Built After Learning through Differentiated Instruction

The result of questionnaire is used to answer the third research questions, which is to what extent is students' confidence in speaking English built after learning through Differentiated Instruction.

Table 2. The Result of Students' Questionnaire

No	Statements	Students VIID				Students VIIF			
		Q1		Q2		Q1		Q2	
		Score	Category	Score	Category	Score	Category	Score	Category
A	**Not easily discouraged (*Tidak mudah berputus asa*)**								
1	I express myself freely in English	64,51 %	Medium	70,96 %	Medium	35,48 %	Low	54,83 %	Medium
2	I feel excited when learning English	58,06 %	Medium	87,09 %	High	54,83 %	Medium	80,64 %	High
3	I try to speak English in class even though I stuttered.	70,97 %	Medium	83,87 %	High	48,38%	Low	64,51 %	Medium
4	I speak little English because my vocabulary is lacking	54,84%	Medium	51,61 %	Medium	80,64%	High	70,96 %	Medium
5	I have no opportunity to speak English outside of class	61,29%	Medium	41,93 %	Low	74,19%	Medium	48,38 %	Low
6	Vocabulary with difficult pronunciation makes me lazy to speak English	64,51%	Medium	51,61 %	Medium	67,74 %	Medium	32,25 %	Low
B	**Have the courage to argue, ask, or answer questions (*Berani dalam berdebat, bertanya dan menjawab*)**								
7	I enjoy speaking English with my classmates	32,25%	Low	35,48 %	Low	22,58 %	Very Low	38,70 %	Low
8	I do not speak English in various group discussions in class	70,97%	Medium	54,83 %	Medium	83,87 %	High	54,86 %	Medium
9	I dare to express my opinion in English in every group/class discussion	38,70%	Low	67,74 %	Medium	32,25 %	Low	45,16 %	Low
10	I always try to answer the teacher's questions in English	58,06%	Medium	67,74 %	Medium	48,38 %	Low	80,64 %	High
11	I dare to ask the teacher questions in English about the material.	48,38%	Low	70,96 %	Medium	29,03 %	Low	38,70 %	Low
C	**Have the courage to present in front of the class (*Berani melakukan presentasi didepan kelas*)**								
12	I dare to speak English if I do a group presentation	83,87%	High	90,32 %	High	70,96 %	Medium	80,64 %	High
13	I dare to speak English when presenting alone in front of the class	32,25%	Low	41,93 %	Medium	25,80 %	Low	51,61 %	Medium
14	I dare to speak English in front of the class	51,61%	Medium	74,19 %	Medium	41,93 %	Low	51,61 %	Medium
15	I am often nervous if asked to do a presentation in English.	74,2 %	Medium	67,74 %	Medium	77,41 %	High	25,80 %	Low
	The average of students' confidence	57,63 %	Medium	63,86%	Medium	52,89%	Medium	54,61 %	Medium

From Table 2, it can be concluded that students in classes VIID and VIIF had an increase in self-confidence in speaking English. The result in class VIID showed that the average value on Q1 was 57.63%. After class VIID carried out learning with DI, The result of Q2 showed that the average value of Q2 was 63.86% and in the moderate category. although it is still in the same category limit, but there is an increase in the percentage of 6.23% On the other hand, the result in class VIIF showed that the average value on Q1 was 52.89%. After class VIIF carried out learning with Differentiated Instruction, The result of Q2 showed that the average value of Q2 was 54,61% and in the moderate category. Class VIIF also has improvement in the percentage of 1,72%. There was an increase of 6.23% in the confidence of students in class VIID and 1.72% for class VIIF. Although there was no significant increase between Q1 and Q2 results, the slight increase proved that the application of Differentiated Instruction in class was effective enough to build students' confidence in speaking English.

From the findings of observation and interview, both teachers have implemented Differentiated Instruction the four elements of Differentiated Instruction very well. The four elements of Differentiated Instruction are learning environment, content, process and product. Both English teachers have differentiated the learning environment for their students. (Anderson & Putman, 2020) stated that teachers appreciated the flexibility that technology offered because it allowed them to conduct Differentiated Instruction easily, make changes based on the unique needs and interests of each student, and offer modifications to help students with disabilities make up for their limitations. This statement is in line with the situation in class VIID that the teacher allowed the students to use their gadget to make them easier to do the assignments.

Besides the language lab, in the classroom there are also facilities that can make students feel comfortable to learn English. Large and cool classrooms accompanied by technology devices such as TVs and LCD projectors, and teacher skills in building students' confidence in speaking English can make students comfortable and able to develop their language skills without feeling bored and nervous. This is in line with what (Hamad et al., 2019) stated that the use of technology encourages students to explore and sustains their interest over time. The situation above is in line with what (Thapliyal et al., 2022) stated that the right learning environment will make learning effective and improve student learning abilities. The environmental differentiation that has been carried out by the two English teachers has made students comfortable in studying. The comfort of the learning environment in the speaking class makes students active and more confident in speaking English

Based on interviews with two English teachers, they expressed positive perceptions that learning by using Differentiated Instruction greatly influenced the improvement of students' language skills and confidence in applying English. This is in line with the results of classroom observations which show the development of students' confidence in speaking English. The teachers applied content differentiation carried when students were asked to do assignments. This is in line with what Heacox as cited in (Borja et al., 2015) explained that content differentiation is to provide options for students to be able to explore more about the topic of their choice. Morever, Tomlinson in (Suleiman et al., 2020) stated that diferentiated content provides diverse ways to address the facts, ideas, principles, or attitudes, as well as the abilities that students are working with.

The difference in content presented leads to process differentiation. in the process of differentiation the teacher considered the ability and interest of students in producing manual texts. to support their speaking product, the teacher provided the option to compose text with the help of videos or images. This is in line with (Granås, 2019) which states that process differentiation relates to how well the teacher provides activities that are tailored to the needs and interests of students. (Borja et al., 2015) also stated that students must be given the choice to work independently, in pairs or in groups according to the interests and needs of students. (Reis & Renzulli, 2018) also stated that different learning styles are also present among the students. Some people learn best when working in groups, while others learn best when working alone. Different approaches to instruction are employed in their classrooms to accommodate the needs of individuals or groups.

The learning process that starts with a comfortable learning environment, selecting assignment topics according to students' interests, and also the activity process in creating assignment products in the form of presentations has succeeded in making

students improve their language skills. Indirectly, students' self-confidence is formed due to the learning process that prioritizes students' interests in completing their assignments. In this speaking class, students can make presentations and speak fluently because they have chosen the topic of the assignment they like and do it according to their abilities.

The results of questionnaires and interviews showed that there are several factors that make students motivated to learn English so that their confidence increases. One of the questionnaire items that has a high category is that students feel excited when learning English. This is in line with the statement of (Tomlinson, C.A., Moon, 2013) that the students will be interested and engaged in class if there are ideas or tasks that seem useful to them. Both teachers have applied Differentiated Instruction in their learning, starting from providing a comfortable learning environment and using interesting content, process, and product differentiation when teaching English. Variation techniques in building self-confidence students according to the abilities, interests and needs of students are also used. Interview answers from three VIID students stated that they rarely even almost never used English in asking, answering or discussing with friends due to lack of vocabulary.

The study found that students who find it difficult to speak a foreign language would turn to their mother tongue because it comes naturally to them. (Tuan, N.H., Mai, 2015) and Harmer in (Mei & Masoumeh, 2017) also stated that students will attempt to use their language when they are unfamiliar with the subject. The third aspect of the questionnaire was that students have the courage to present in front of the class. Both classes had the same results in the high category in the item that they dare to present if they are in a presentation group. One of the VIID students said that he felt confident presenting in front of the class because he was with his group friends. The interview results from VIIF students showed that they were confident in presenting their work because they were assisted and supported by their friends. However, the item that they dare to make presentations individualy is still in the medium category due to fear of saying the wrong thing. According to Ur in (Wulandari, 2020) and Musliadi in (Putra, 2019), inhibition is one of the factors that cause students to have difficulty speaking English. Morever, (Juhana, 2023) mentions that lack of confidence is one of the factors that hinder students from speaking in class. However, the observations show that the two English teachers have implemented Differentiated Instruction where they have differentiated content, processes, products and created a comfortable learning environment which has been adapted to the level of students so that all VIID and VIIF students can actively participate in speaking English without fear of being wrong and nervous.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the researchers concluded that the two English teachers had built students' confidence by performing all the elements of Differentiated Instruction in the speaking classroom. The students enjoyed the activities provided by their teachers and they were more confident in speaking English because the teachers delivered the lessons according to their interests and abilities. A suggestion that can be taken into consideration is that teachers should give a bigger portion in the implementation of process differentiation because this element determines the success of speaking teaching. In addition, it is hoped that future researchers can continue this research by specializing research on Differentiated Instruction elements such as specific

research on differentiation of content, process, product, or learning environment to improve English language skills.

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