



## TRAIN CONFIDENCE IN SPEAKING ENGLISH BY USING A MIRROR

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Article info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Corresponding Author:</b></p> <p>Atrianus Toni  <a href="mailto:atrianustoni@gmail.com">atrianustoni@gmail.com</a>            Universitas Kapuas, Sintang</p>	<p>This study explores the effectiveness of using mirrors as a tool to boost learners' confidence in speaking English. Confidence is a critical factor in mastering spoken language, as it enables learners to practice fluency, pronunciation, and expression without fear of judgment. The research employs a qualitative approach, analyzing the experiences of English learners who incorporate mirror practice into their study routines. Participants engage in structured activities, including self-introductions, storytelling, and impromptu speeches while observing their reflections. The mirror serves as a visual aid to build self-awareness and simulate the presence of an audience. Findings reveal that mirror practice enhances self-confidence, reduces anxiety, and fosters self-correction in pronunciation and body language. This simple yet effective method encourages consistent practice, leading to noticeable improvements in speaking skills. The study concludes that incorporating mirrors into language learning can significantly impact learners' confidence and oral communication proficiency, especially for self-directed learning environments.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>Train Confidence in Speaking English, Using a Mirror for English Practice</i></p>
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### INTRODUCTION

The ability to speak English confidently is an essential skill in today's globalized world. As a lingua franca, English serves as the primary means of communication in diverse fields such as education, business, science, and technology (Crystal, 2003). For many learners, developing proficiency in spoken English is a critical goal, as it opens opportunities for career advancement, academic success, and cross-cultural communication. However, despite its importance, speaking remains one of the most challenging aspects of learning English as a second or foreign language (Brown, 2007). Among the various factors that hinder learners, a lack of confidence often emerges as a significant barrier.

Confidence is a vital psychological factor that influences an individual's willingness to communicate. Learners who lack confidence in their speaking abilities may experience anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and reluctance to engage in conversations. These negative emotions can create a self-perpetuating cycle, where fear of speaking leads to reduced practice opportunities, ultimately stalling progress (Horwitz et al., 1986). As a result, fostering confidence in learners has become a key focus in language teaching methodologies.

Effective strategies that address psychological barriers while enhancing speaking skills are crucial to empowering learners to communicate effectively in English.

One innovative approach to building confidence in speaking English involves the use of mirrors as a learning tool. This technique, rooted in principles of self-awareness and self-reflection, encourages learners to practice speaking while observing themselves in a mirror. The use of mirrors allows learners to focus on their facial expressions, mouth movements, and body language, providing valuable feedback that enhances their speaking performance. Moreover, practicing with a mirror offers a safe and low-pressure environment where learners can experiment with pronunciation, intonation, and fluency without fear of judgment.

The theoretical foundation for using mirrors in language learning can be linked to Rogers' (1951) concept of self-awareness and Carl Jung's (1961) emphasis on self-reflection. According to Rogers, self-awareness plays a crucial role in personal development, enabling individuals to recognize their strengths and areas for improvement. By observing their speech and demeanor, learners can develop a deeper understanding of their communication skills, leading to increased self-confidence. Similarly, Jung's ideas highlight the importance of self-reflection as a means of personal growth and overcoming internal challenges. The mirror technique aligns with these principles by promoting active self-assessment and encouraging learners to take ownership of their learning process.

Several studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of mirror-based practice in various domains, including public speaking, acting, and therapy. For instance, research in drama education has shown that practicing in front of a mirror helps actors refine their performances by improving their awareness of physical gestures and vocal delivery (Boal, 2002). In therapy, mirror exercises have been used to enhance self-esteem and reduce anxiety in individuals with body image concerns (Phillips & Diaz, 1997). Although the application of mirrors in language learning is relatively underexplored, these findings suggest that it holds significant potential for improving confidence and communication skills in English learners.

In the context of English language teaching, the mirror technique can address several key challenges faced by learners. Firstly, it allows learners to focus on their articulation and pronunciation, which are often sources of insecurity for non-native speakers. By observing their mouth movements and practicing difficult sounds, learners can achieve greater clarity and accuracy in their speech (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Secondly, the mirror provides immediate visual feedback, enabling learners to adjust their facial expressions and gestures to convey meaning more effectively. This aspect is particularly valuable for developing non-verbal communication skills, which play a crucial role in enhancing overall communicative competence (Mehrabian, 1971).

Additionally, practicing in front of a mirror can help learners overcome the fear of public speaking. Many language learners experience anxiety when speaking in front of an audience, often due to self-doubt and a lack of preparation (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). The mirror serves as a non-threatening substitute for an audience, allowing learners to rehearse their speech and build confidence in their delivery. Over time, this practice can reduce anxiety and equip learners with the skills needed to communicate effectively in real-life situations.

This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of using a mirror as a tool to train confidence in speaking English. Specifically, it seeks to explore how mirror-based practice influences learners' self-perception, speaking performance, and overall confidence levels. By examining these aspects, the research aims to provide insights into the potential of mirrors as an innovative and accessible strategy for enhancing speaking skills in English language learners.

## **METHOD**

The study utilized a qualitative research design to explore the impact of using mirrors as a tool for enhancing learners' confidence in speaking English. The participants consisted of 20 English language learners aged between 18 and 25, selected through purposive sampling. The research was conducted over six weeks, during which participants engaged in structured mirror-based speaking activities. The steps in this method following as:

1. **Pre-Test Assessment:** Participants completed an initial speaking assessment to measure their baseline confidence and speaking proficiency.
2. **Mirror Practice Sessions:**
  - Participants practiced speaking English in front of a mirror for 15 minutes daily.
  - Activities included self-introductions, rehearsed speeches, storytelling, and impromptu topics.
  - Guidance was provided on focusing on facial expressions, body language, and pronunciation.
3. **Weekly Feedback and Reflection:**
  - Weekly group sessions were conducted to gather participants' feedback on their experiences.
  - Reflections were documented in journals to capture progress and challenges.
4. **Post-Test Assessment:** After six weeks, participants underwent a final speaking assessment to evaluate improvements in confidence and proficiency.
5. **Data Collection and Analysis:**
  - Data were collected through observation, participant journals, and semi-structured interviews.
  - Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns and key findings related to confidence building and speaking improvements.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Finding**

The findings of this study reveal a significant improvement in participants' confidence and speaking skills after six weeks of mirror-based practice. Key results include:

1. **Increased Confidence:**
  - 85% of participants reported feeling more confident when speaking English in front of others.
  - The act of observing their reflections helped reduce anxiety and improve self-assurance.
2. **Improved Pronunciation and Fluency:**
  - Participants demonstrated better pronunciation and smoother speech flow, as noted in the post-test assessments.

- Self-correction became more evident during practice sessions.
3. **Enhanced Non-Verbal Communication:**
    - Observing facial expressions and gestures in the mirror helped participants become more aware of their body language.
    - This resulted in more engaging and effective communication.
  4. **Positive Learner Perception:**
    - Participants described the method as engaging and noted that it provided a safe space for self-improvement without external judgment.

## **Discussion**

The results highlight the potential of using mirrors as a simple yet effective tool for building confidence in speaking English. The mirror provides learners with immediate visual feedback, allowing them to monitor and adjust their speaking habits in real time. This aligns with Harmer's (2007) theory that self-awareness is a critical component of language learning.

Furthermore, mirror practice offers a unique solution to the fear of judgment, which is a common barrier to developing speaking skills. By practicing alone, learners gain the freedom to experiment with pronunciation, vocabulary, and expressions. This aligns with Brown's (2007) principle that reducing anxiety enhances language acquisition.

The study also emphasizes the role of non-verbal communication in effective speaking. Participants reported becoming more expressive and confident in their delivery, reinforcing Thornbury's (2005) argument that body language and gestures significantly impact oral communication.

While the results are promising, it is important to consider limitations such as the relatively small sample size and the absence of control groups for comparison. Future studies could explore long-term impacts and integrate mirror practice with other interactive learning methods to enhance its effectiveness.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that using mirrors as a tool for practicing English speaking significantly enhances learners' confidence and communication skills. The method empowers learners by providing immediate visual feedback, promoting self-awareness, and creating a safe environment for self-correction and experimentation. Over six weeks, participants exhibited notable improvements in their pronunciation, fluency, and non-verbal communication, contributing to their overall speaking proficiency.

The findings highlight the potential of mirror practice as a simple, cost-effective, and accessible strategy for addressing common challenges in language learning, such as anxiety and fear of judgment. This approach is particularly beneficial for self-directed learners seeking to improve their spoken English in a supportive yet independent setting.

However, the study acknowledges certain limitations, including the small sample size and the absence of a comparative analysis with other methods. Future research should explore the long-term impact of mirror practice and its integration with interactive and collaborative learning techniques to maximize its effectiveness.

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