

The Influence of Aiesec Global Volunteer Activities Towards Students' Speaking Confidence

Mely Yanti, Clarry Sada, Urai Salam

FKIP Universitas Tanjungpura Pontianak

ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe how the activities done by the learners when they were having the Global Volunteer Program in AIESEC can influence students speaking confidence and to explain why those activities, can contribute to the improvement of learners' speaking confidence. This research is a qualitative case study. The subjects of this research were three participants who experienced the program of AIESEC Global Volunteer. This research was done by interviewing all the participants and collecting artifacts from the program. The result of this research was that all participants appeared to be so confident in answering the interview questions and expressing themselves. Besides, all the participants stated that the program of AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities indeed brought their confidence to the next level. In other words, during the program, they experienced so many pieces of training that it was believed that those activities contributed to the improvement of their speaking confidence.

Keywords: *Influence, AIESEC, Speaking Confidence*

Corresponding author

Name: Mely Yanti

Email: mellyyanti1208@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Speaking as a productive skill is very essential. According to Leong and Ahmadi (2016), Speaking is one of the most important skills to be developed and enhanced as means of effective communication. The function of speaking also can be varied, not only as the product of learning a language but also as a tool of interaction. This has caused speaking skills to become more demanding than listening, writing, and reading skills. It is also widely believed that people spend more time getting along with each other orally rather than using language in the written form. Therefore, it is crucial to help the EFL learners in developing their speaking skills, otherwise, they turn into passive learners.

As English is learned as a foreign language in Indonesia, there were many passive English learners who cannot communicate in English. As a result, it was found that speaking anxiety had become one of the problems while students were learning speaking. Gebi

(2017) stated that anxiety was one of the factors which influenced speaking performance. Indeed, with feelings of discomfort and insecurity, English learners found it difficult to share their opinions and participate in class discussions. Maulana et.al (2016) stated that the most problems that they faced in learning speaking skills are a lack of vocabulary, lack of pronunciation, lack of confidence to speak, and afraid of making errors while speaking. It was also believed that learners' less confidence to speak and judgment of English as a difficult subject make speaking a difficult language skill. Self-confidence here takes a core part in communicating with others as Doqaruni (2013) states that the students who participate actively in class seem to have higher self-confidence than those who are passive in class.

Many strategies in AIESEC or International Association of Students in Economics programs can develop students' self-confidence in speaking. Joining a student's organization. Students' organization has become essential in developing student's leadership skills, self-confidence, public speaking, and critical power (Claiborne et al., 2020; Horace et al., 2021). In Universitas Tanjungpura, AIESEC is students' organization that has local and international programs to develop leadership potential and self-development. Besides that, AIESEC also is a forum for young people to practice speaking skills and build students' self-confidence in speaking, as well as self-management. It is further explained by Velez (2015) that AIESEC is currently recognized as a global platform for young people to explore and develop their leadership potential. They consider themselves as a non-political, independent, not-for-profit organization run. Its members are interested in world issues, leadership and management.

AIESEC recruits members from universities like students volunteer and become part of AIESEC's global membership. The students that join this organization are not only English students, but also all the study programs from other faculty. Facilitators for each program can be from other countries so that students are trained in real-life situations to speak English every time. The main goal of AIESEC is to develop leadership potential as well as self-development. This organization requires students to be able to communicate in English with foreigners. The students are expected to be more confident to speak in English and share their ideas about world issues and undertake many projects with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

One of the programs in AIESEC which is well known in Universitas Tanjungpura is global volunteer program. AIESEC associates with non-governmental organizations to provide them with young foreigners volunteers. AIESEC members become the workforce. The main issues of this program are usually providing education, improving literacy, eradicating poverty, sustainable living, health & sanitation, and human rights. This program is generally unpaid volunteerism and the durations are from 6 to 12 weeks. In these programs, there are many activities that require students to communicate with other people in different countries. There are some activities that are mostly conducted in the global volunteer program such as introduction and orientation, research and analysis, the new initiative, three-week evaluation, execution, and culmination. Moreover, the discussion of the activities about the particular topic of the project was done in English.

Therefore, the students in these organizations get more chances to develop their self-confidence, public speaking, and also leadership potential with critical power.

Based on the pre-observation of this organization, the researcher found that there was a case of three students of Universitas Tanjungpura who were participants of the AIESEC Global Volunteer Program. One of the participants from English Education Study Program stated that learning English was done passively in the classroom. She feels less motivated to speak, difficult to master the subject, and she is also less understanding when the lecturer speaks. This had caused them to find it hard to speak English fluently and confidently. For instance, when they did the presentation in front of the class, they tended to read the script without having too much eye contact with the audience. Besides that, the lecturer also stated the same thing that students had less confidence and motivation can be a factor affecting students speaking performance. However, there was a significant change in their speaking confidence after participating in the Global Volunteer program of AIESEC. It was a six-week- program. Before starting the program, there is an orientation and introduction session to train participants' communication skills as well as to describe the participants' tasks. This made the participants feel well-prepared. For instance, one of the research participants said the orientation session consisted of many opportunities for him to speak up. At first, he was not confident, but after the fifth or sixth time, he became more confident. Moreover, the discussion about the particular topic was done in English. Therefore, the writer assumed that the learners' speaking confidence increased significantly when he was exposed to the community of the target language through his internship.

Some experts believed that learners can be more confident to speak when they are exposed to a community of the first language. According to Alonso, R (2016) as regards whether the learners' prepositional choices and preferences in L2 English reflect the patterns of spatial construal in their L1s, the findings suggest a strong role for L1 influence in the spatial construal of advanced foreign- language learners of English. It is also reported that students can acquire a second language or foreign language effectively when they are exposed to the community of the first language. Therefore, it is concluded that students can learn a second language or foreign language the best when they got a sufficient amount of exposure in the first language community.

There were some previous relevant studies done by other researchers on the variable of "speaking confidence". JianweiXu (2014) did self-confidence research. She used an observation and a guided interview to get the data. The participants were two Chinese advanced learners of English in Australia. She found that regarding internal factors, it was found that the learners would seem to perceive more confidence if their previously established L2 identities were confirmed (JianweiXu, 2014). Boonkit (2015) in his research entitled "Enhancing the Development of Speaking Skills for Non-native English Speakers" stated that promoting speaking confidence could be done by encouragement for more exposure and seeking opportunities to speak in real situations. Therefore, encouraging Indonesian students to assume that English as a second language is essential in developing their speaking confidence.

In this research, the writer would like to investigate how the global volunteer program in AIESEC can develop learners' speaking confidence. The previous research only focused on how teaching techniques and tasks can promote speaking confidence. However, they did not realize that encouraging students to attend international organizations can also be effective in developing speaking confidence. Besides, this research also conducted differently in terms of places, settings and participants. Therefore, the aim of this research was describing the activities done by learners when they were having their project abroad as well as to investigate how those activities have improved their speaking confidence.

A qualitative case study research was conducted to achieve the research purpose. The participants in this research were three students at Universitas Tanjungpura who had attended the global volunteer program of AIESEC for 6 weeks and had been very confident in expressing ideas in English. The techniques used in this research were interview and collecting artifacts.

METHOD

It is essential to have a systematic procedure for conducting research. Therefore, in this section, the researcher described the rationale for choosing a particular method in the research design, including the technique of data collection, tools of data collection, and the technique of data analysis.

To achieve the purpose of the research, the writer has chosen an effective approach. In this research, a qualitative case study was applied. In qualitative research, the case study is one of the frequently used methodologies (Yazan, 2015). Furthermore, Gopaldas (2016) stated that qualitative research refers to a range of data collection and analysis techniques that use purposive sampling and semi-structured, open-ended interviews.

According to Creswell (2012), a case study is an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection. In conclusion, a case study is a study that has to focus on a particular investigation of a specific unit.

This study investigated the learners who have attended the global volunteer program. After doing a short interview with them, the researcher found out that the program which is related to English language teaching had significantly boosted their speaking confidence. They stated that he was not confident enough to communicate with his friends, lecturers, and even their students in English. However, their two months' experience in Malaysia has changed their attitude towards speaking. This has made them a case. The case study was chosen as the research design in order to do a deeper investigation into how the activities in global volunteer programs improve their speaking confidence.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The AIESEC Global Volunteer activities can be joined by following several registration processes

1. AIESEC Global Volunteer Program and Speaking Confidence

Based on the program registration requirements, all the participants who are aimed to register must follow all the processes.

a. AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities

The AIESEC official website does not require any criteria for their potential candidate however during all the processes, the reviewer team will see whether the candidate meet their criteria or not. In the AIESEC (2021) it is written that the selection process is different per opportunity. This means it can include a CV check, interviews with the opportunity provider (for example the company or NGO the candidates want to work at) or interviews by the AIESEC office abroad or it can be completely different. This statement is also supported by one of the researcher participants who said "My process of joining the program is quite simple. I have heard the information from my friends and my own research on the internet and also the AIESEC Organization in Universitas Tanjungpura. my processes of applying the AIESEC Global Volunteer Program are (a) visiting the official website of the AIESEC (b) applying for the AIESEC Global Volunteer Program – if you are shortlisted you will be invited to an interview (c) joining interview, in the interview section, I was asked to answer common sense questions like (tell me about yourself) and so on after that (d) matching with the host country and host family, I was chosen to volunteer in Canada, the next is (d) going to pursue the program."

It was also proven that the registration process was different from another participant view who said "As far as I know, there is no specific requirement for joining the AIESEC Global Volunteer Program. I just created an account on the website and after that I was invited to an interview, there the interviewer asked a question to assist me whether or not I am qualified for the program." Moreover, P2 answered the question by saying "The AIESEC Global Volunteer team was telling me that I just need to know myself deeper and love to be different, these were happening during the interview, and I passed it luckily." From the research participants' responses, it was found qualitatively that the registration processes were answered slightly different. All the participants register themselves on the website and following all the website instructions. The website processes are presented in the following figure.

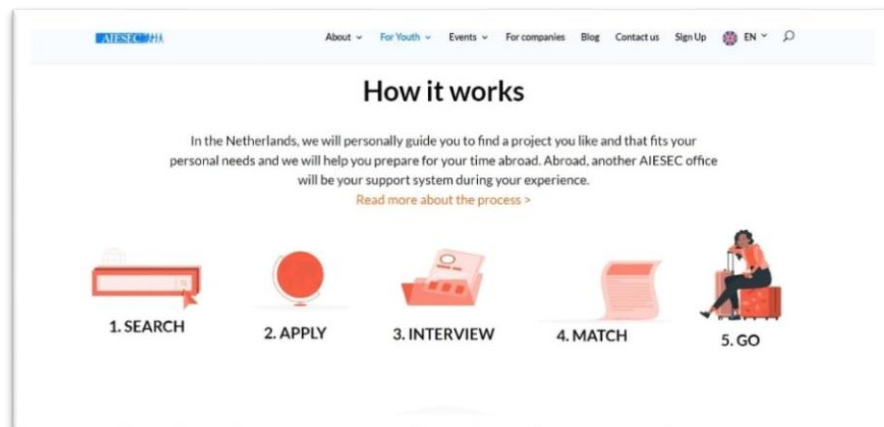


Figure 1. Registration Processes

Moreover, the registration has given the potential candidate to apply English as a language tool for passing the processes. After the acceptance, the program activities were held in different host countries based on each participant, for instance one of the participants had the Sustainable Development Goals Program which is Quality Education, they are (a) introduction and orientation

(b) research and analysis (c) new initiative (d) mid-term evaluation (e) execution (f) culmination. These activities are presented in the following themes.

b. Teaching Learning Process

The activities during the AIESEC Global Volunteer Programs for Quality Education Focus were more to teaching and learning processes. However, all the activities have the same flow like introduction and orientation, research and analysis, new initiative, three-week evaluation, execution and culmination.

AIESEC Global Volunteer Programs (2021) asserted that the introduction and orientation program happened during the program volunteer's incoming orientation seminar the first week of the program. This session normally lasts three days. The volunteers could get to know other volunteers who were from other nations. The volunteers should learn about the job description and what they need to bring to this session. AIESEC students from the host university were in charge of leading this session. The artefacts of the program are shown below.



Figure 2. The documentations of the introduction and orientation program

The research and analysis program, the AIESEC members from the host university sent the volunteers to their areas of employment following the incoming preparation seminar. The volunteers also needed to introduce themselves to the school principals before they begin their duties. At this point, the volunteers begun contributing based on their scheduled shifts. The volunteers could use this opportunity to conduct research and analysis while also getting used to their new working environment. They must determine what the pupils' needs are. The creation of pertinent instructional materials to meet the needs of the pupils will come next.



Figure 3. The documentations of the research and analysis program

The new initiative, after the volunteers had become accustomed to their duties, this step was completed. They must start such activities based on the demands of their students rather than carrying out the everyday instruction. The teachers and volunteers could also talk about brand-new teaching methods or instructional media. The teachers' consent is required before the volunteers can put the new concepts into practice.



Figure 4. The documentations of the new initiative program The three-week evaluation program, this stage is carried out following three weeks of daily instruction. To make sure everything is going smoothly, the AIESEC organization often conducts

interviews with volunteers, the school principal, and teachers. The school's principal will evaluate the students' three-week performance in addition to the teachers.



Figure 5. The documentations of the three-week evaluation program

The execution program, the volunteer's performance in teaching at this stage can be improved after getting feedback from the previous stage. The volunteers can specifically discuss ways to enhance teaching performance with the school principal or teachers.



Figure 6. The documentations of the execution program

The culmination program, the volunteers received their final evaluation and feedback at this stage of the global volunteer program. Written communication will be used to offer both the final evaluation and the feedback. This stage also included the Global Village. Participants had the opportunity to share aspects of their own cultures with other participants in the Global Village. This implies that throughout this stage, there were intercultural dialogues.



Figure 7. The documentations of the culmination program

c. The Speaking Confidence

The research question of how can the activities attended by the learners in AIESEC Global Volunteer influence students speaking confidence is answered based on the activities done by research participants.

When it was asked one of the answers from the research subjects was “In my opinion and based on my experience, I get involved through the whole programs and the most influencing activities to my speaking confidence were the new initiative and three-week evaluation. In the new initiative I created new teaching ideas Instead of doing the daily teaching, I initiated some activities based on my students’ needs and at this moment I felt, I got more confidence to express myself more.”(P1)

In addition, another research participants responded the question by saying “There is a discussion program that provided all the participants to share ideas and do Q&A. Besides that, the evaluation program in the three-week evaluation was giving me a lot of insight about teaching and presenting materials. So, I believed those have deepened my skill and developed my confidence.”(P3)

From all the obtained responses, almost all participants said that the new initiative program and three-week evaluation in AIESEC Global Volunteer Program benefited their confidence.

To support, one of the participants also said “As far as I am concerned, there are many more activities outside the classroom like a cross-culture understanding sharing, at this moment, I experienced sharing session, I did a great sharing and talked more compared to before I joined the program. I believed the program contributed a platform that can increase my speaking confidence”. (P2)

The new initiative program was becoming the most influencing factor that contributed speaking confidence to the selected candidate during the program due to its openness to share ideas and receiving inputs from others. Based on the collected answers, it can be drawn a conclusion qualitatively that their speaking confidence developed during the program.

2. Language learning Strategies in AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities

This finding was collected to answer the second research question which is “Why the AIESEC Global Volunteer activities can be a contribution to the increase of learners’ speaking confidence”. The AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities tended to use a direct approach to learning language, which is centered on the direct involvement of the learner when speaking and listening to the foreign language in regular, everyday situations. As a result, there is a great deal of oral engagement, spontaneous language use, no translation, and little to no analysis of grammar and syntax (Taylor, 2014)

This also supported by the research participant response about the activities in the AIESEC Global Volunteer which was *“the program provided me with the platform to express more about myself and the things that are needed to be discussed. From this, my inability to speak fluently in English due to my confidence before joining the program got sharpened along the program. From this, the activities influenced my confidence a lot”*.

Furthermore, another answered *“The activities obligated me to join the whole program. This opportunity was benefitted me a lot to improve my English, because I participated the program for 8 weeks along the way of having my English improved I finally have my confidence developed”*.

In addition, the another more responded the question as *“I was obligated to use English every day, so because of this, willy-nilly I have to apply English as my main language, in this way, the program influence my speaking skill which brought the confidence at the same time”*.

From all the obtained answers, it can be concluded qualitatively that the program provided all the participant platform, and it obligated all the participants to actively participate so that the participants can improve their English speaking skill and the speaking confidence as well.

Based on the qualitative case study finding, it was found that all the research subjects answered the interview questions with high self-confidence and contributed ideas to this case study. They said that AIESEC Global Volunteer Projects brought them to develop their speaking confidence which caused them to have better performance in their speaking.

The finding shows that among all the activities in the AIESEC Global Volunteer Program, Introduction and Orientation, Research and Analysis, New Initiative, three-week Evaluation, Execution and Culmination, the new initiative activity was evolving into the most influencing component that contributed to the chosen candidate's speaking confidence throughout the program because of its willingness to receive advice from others and to share ideas. Almost all the participants claimed that the activities had helped their speaking confidence as well as their second language learning skill which is English skills. The researcher found that this research finding supports the finding from prior findings by Jianwei Xu (2014) in which the research finding was that the learners would seem to perceive more confidence if their previously established L2 identities were confirmed.

L2 in the previous research was also the main aspect that the researcher addressed in terms of confidence in mastering speaking as a second language happened in the program of AIESEC. In conclusion, it was found that indeed the AIESEC Global Volunteer program had influenced all the participants speaking confidence. These findings collaborate JianweiXu's study that the conception of self-confidence as being socially constructed, the learners' senses of confidence are shown to be strongly influenced by external factors such as power relations in specific contexts of interaction like the activities in the AIESEC Global Volunteer Program.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study attempted to investigate of "How can the AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities attended by the learners influence students speaking confidence". Based on the finding as presented above, it can be concluded that all interviewees appeared to be so confident in answering the interview questions and expressing themselves. Besides, all the participants stated that the program of AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities indeed brought their confidence in the next level. In other words, during the program, they experienced so many trainings that it was believed that those activities contributed to the increase of their speaking confidence.

Related to finding of this research, the researcher would like to suggest some suggestions as follow (a) This case study is significant example of inputs for learners who are intended to join the AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities. From the finding of this research, it is suggested that the learners can gain ideas and photograph of the program to develop their speaking confidence. (b) The researcher would also suggest the teachers or lecturers to recommend the AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities as one of the activities in schools or campuses that should be joined by the learners. (c) The researcher suggest to the other future researchers who are intended to conduct more studies can use this case study finding as a foundation theory to support their future research. (d) In general, it is also suggested that the readers can read more about the AIESEC Organization and its programs so that they can explore more activities beside the AIESEC Global Volunteer Activities.

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