

# THE IMPACT OF BLENDED-LEARNING APPROACH ON IMPROVING ARABIC SPEAKING SELF-CONFIDENCE AMONG MALAYSIAN SCHOOL STUDENTS

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**Abstract :** *The aim of this study to establish an intervention program of an efficient blended learning approach to enhance the speaking skills self-confidence among the fourth-year school Malaysia primary school students. A single arm randomized trial experimental design with repetitive measures used to determine the efficiency of interventional program on the students' self-confidence. There are 30 students selected randomly from the classes of an Islamic school located in Penang, Malaysia, and for three months. Blended approach (Face-to-Face/online and multimedia) of learning is the main program involved in present study. A group of teaching strategies used in this study to enhance the students' self-confidence (and domains) like group-based strategy, role-play strategy, storytelling strategy, and collaborative learning strategy, and others. There are four sessions of this interventional program are Pre-, Post-1, Post-2, and Post-3 to determine the levels of self-confidence. Overall self-confidence showed significant differences among the sessions, where the improvement showed effect size equals to 94.5%. The domains of self-confidence showed also improvement in students' confidence, ability, functional, and use by 90.1%, 93.5%, 92.3%, and 92.6%, respectively. The intervention program enhanced the knowledge and self-confidence among the students after followed blended approach of learning within short period of time.*

**Keyword:** *Blended learning approach, self-confidence, teaching strategies, intervention program*

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## Introduction

On the issue of language, the primary goals of students learning a foreign language are mastery of the language and fluency in speaking the language in different aspects of life and communication. Furthermore, the instructor plays an essential role in aiding students in mastering the skill of speaking in a foreign language. Furthermore, certain characteristics, such as self-confidence, influence speaking ability. It is critical that whenever students confront challenges, they believe in their skills and resist worry and fear to acquire the art of speaking and get the best possible outcomes (Hafizh, 2018). Brooks and Williams (2019) claimed that there are two key components in speaking, which are efficiency and self-confidence, based on their research.

The instructor must use all measures available to encourage students to develop self-confidence and faith in their skills (Lydia Hope Williams, 2019). Learning strategies are significant and required instruments that contribute to the development of skills and the promotion of learners' scientific competence, resulting in advancement in scientific competence, skill development, improved self-confidence, and language learning methods. Furthermore, there are unique learning methods used under certain situations, and these tactics have previously been used across the millennia, under various names; as conventional learning skills (Saedpanah, & Dastgoshadeh, 2019). The main objective of the current study is to improve the self-confidence of students in speaking the Arabic language through the utilization of the blended learning approach (Face to Face/Online & Multimedia) among Malaysian Primary school students.

## **Method**

### **Study design**

A single arm randomized trial with repetitive measures used to determine the efficiency of the blended interventional program for students of Arabic language learners. The experimental design is utilised to fulfil the study's objectives. As a result, the current study's design included an educational blended programme to improve the self-confidence to speak Arabic as a foreign language. Students in their fourth year of primary school (Pusat Islam) in Malaysia were enrolled in the current study. A blended learning programme will be deployed in one of the school's classes. This blended curriculum will be separated into two sections: face-to-face/online learning and multimedia learning. PowerPoint slides and videos are the types of multimedia that will be utilised since they are seen to be the most compatible with the traditional teaching style. There will be one pre- and three post-sessions, ensued by an assessment of the students' self-confidence and domains. The combination of Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development and Dale's Cone of Learning theories supported the learning and confidence of primary school students.

### **Blended intervention program**

An interventional programme will be conducted using the blended learning approach using different strategies and multimedia. It is dependent on the educator's expertise and ability to improve the student's self-confidence, as well as the amount of time and the quality of orientation for this programme. The strategies and approaches of the new blended learning approach are Group Based Strategy, Role-Play Strategy, Storytelling Strategy, Collaborative Learning Strategy, Use of Multimedia. The time allotted for courses will be one hour. The intervention programme has 24 classes (8 classes for each module). The main scenario for conducting this strategy/approach is according to the following phases:

- 1) First post-session teaching module: The students will be able to grasp the words and events via the use of PowerPoint presentations and videos for Malaysian stories. In the meantime, the teachers will explain these stories in Bahasa Malaysia and Arabic language. In addition, the teacher will instruct the students on the proper way to pronounce words.
- 2) Second post-session teaching module Students will sit at one table and begin telling stories among themselves, playing out certain roles, and exchanging the phrases. When someone is at a loss for words, the others will assist each other and the roles in the stories will alternate among them. This will result in a sort of information sharing and Malaysian storytelling sharing utilizing Arabic as a foreign language. Furthermore, they will improve their memory and drive their psychological features in terms of eagerness to learn new things and the capacity to help others.
- 3) Third post-session teaching module: The intensive instruction course used a combination of multimedia and face-to-face/online, employing PowerPoint presentations and videos of narratives and methods to improve speaking abilities.

### **Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

Arabic language classes are made available to fourth-year students of both genders. These students were chosen from a primary school on Penang Island. Fourth year primary school students who are

receiving the Arabic lessons in a Malaysian school are included in this study. All students who have speaking difficulties (medical and psychological problems) are excluded from participating in the study.

### **Location, duration, and approval of study**

This study will be conducted at a selected primary school (Pusat Islam), located on the island of Penang, Malaysia. The main reason of choosing a school from Penang because the northern regions and especially Penang obtain different geographical factors with the race and cultural diversity of teachers and students which influence the adoption and acceptance of technology and virtual learning approaches (Ramli, & Saleh, 2019). This study will last for 12 weeks and will begin in February 2020, during the period of the Arabic language course. One month is the duration of time between the tasks, i.e. one month is the time between the pre-and post-1, post-1 and post-2, and between post-2 and post-3. This study will be approved by the primary school's headmaster, and it will be carried out under the supervision of two academics and assessed by school teachers.

### **Sampling and Study Procedures**

The class was chosen at random from among the fourth-year classes at the school. The current research will include all fourth-year primary school students, with a total of 30 students in each class. The current study includes 30 students, with 15 males and 15 females participating in equal numbers. Random sampling will eliminate prejudice in the selection of students and, as a result, their subsequent progress.

### **Instruments of Students Self-confidence**

The self-confidence questionnaire is validated in terms of content, panel, language, and statistical validity before being used in research. These 20 questions summarised and simplified in order to accommodate the students' capacity to respond. While preparing the self-confidence questions, four categories have adhered to confidence, ability, function, and use (Dizon, G, 2020). Likert scale adopted in the evaluation of self-confidence. Five answerable options were proposed of self-confidence variable are never, seldom, sometimes, often and always. These domains are coded by 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively. The overall score of self-confidence is the summation of these domains that associated to the students' speaking skills performance.

### **Statistical analysis**

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22. If the p values are less than 0.05, the results are deemed significant. First, the dependent variables will be evaluated for normalcy and committed to the test assumptions. Repeated measured ANOVA is considered to be the most acceptable statistical test to find out the difference in score of the self-confidence (and domains) among the study sessions.

## **Results**

### **Demographic Characteristics**

There are several variables involved in this study are gender, attending the religion class, income level, father and mother Arabic fluency, father and mother education, and father and mother occupation. Equal numbers of females and males involved in this study (50% each). Majority of participants of this study are seldom attended to religion class (80%), RM 1000-5000 income level (60%), medium father Arabic fluency (66.7%), medium mother Arabic fluency (76.7%), college father education (40%), college mother education (63.3%), unemployed mother occupation (43.3%), and employed father occupation (66.7%).

### **Factors Affected the Level of Speaking Performance with Study Sessions**

To determine the difference in students' self-confidence, the self-confidence difference among sessions are the only significant factor observed while no significant observed with fathers' occupation, as shown in Table 1. The effect size of intervention program to the students' self-confidence started from the pre session until the end of post sessions was 94.5% ( $\eta^2 = .945$ ).

**Table 1 Impact of study sessions and other variables on differences in students' self-confidence**

Source	df	MS	F	<i>p</i> *	$\eta^2$
Self-confidence	1.818	31027.476	459.650	<0.001	.945
Self-confidence * Fathers' occupation	3.637	165.262	2.448	.064	.154

\* Huynh-Feldt

**Differences the Level of self-confidence with Study Sessions**

Figure 1(a) depicts the improvement in participants' self-confidence, from lowest score at pre- session escalated gradually into higher levels reaching the highest score at post 3 session. Figure 1(b) depicts the improvement in participants' confidence domain, from lowest score at pre- session escalated gradually into higher levels reaching the highest score at post 3 session. Figure 1(c) depicts the improvement in participants' ability, from lowest score at pre- session escalated gradually into higher levels reaching the highest score at post 3 session. Figure 1(d) depicts the improvement in participants' functional, from lowest score at pre- session escalated gradually into higher levels reaching the highest score at post 3 session. Figure 1(e) depicts the improvement in participants' use, from lowest score at pre- session escalated gradually into higher levels reaching the highest score at post 3 session.

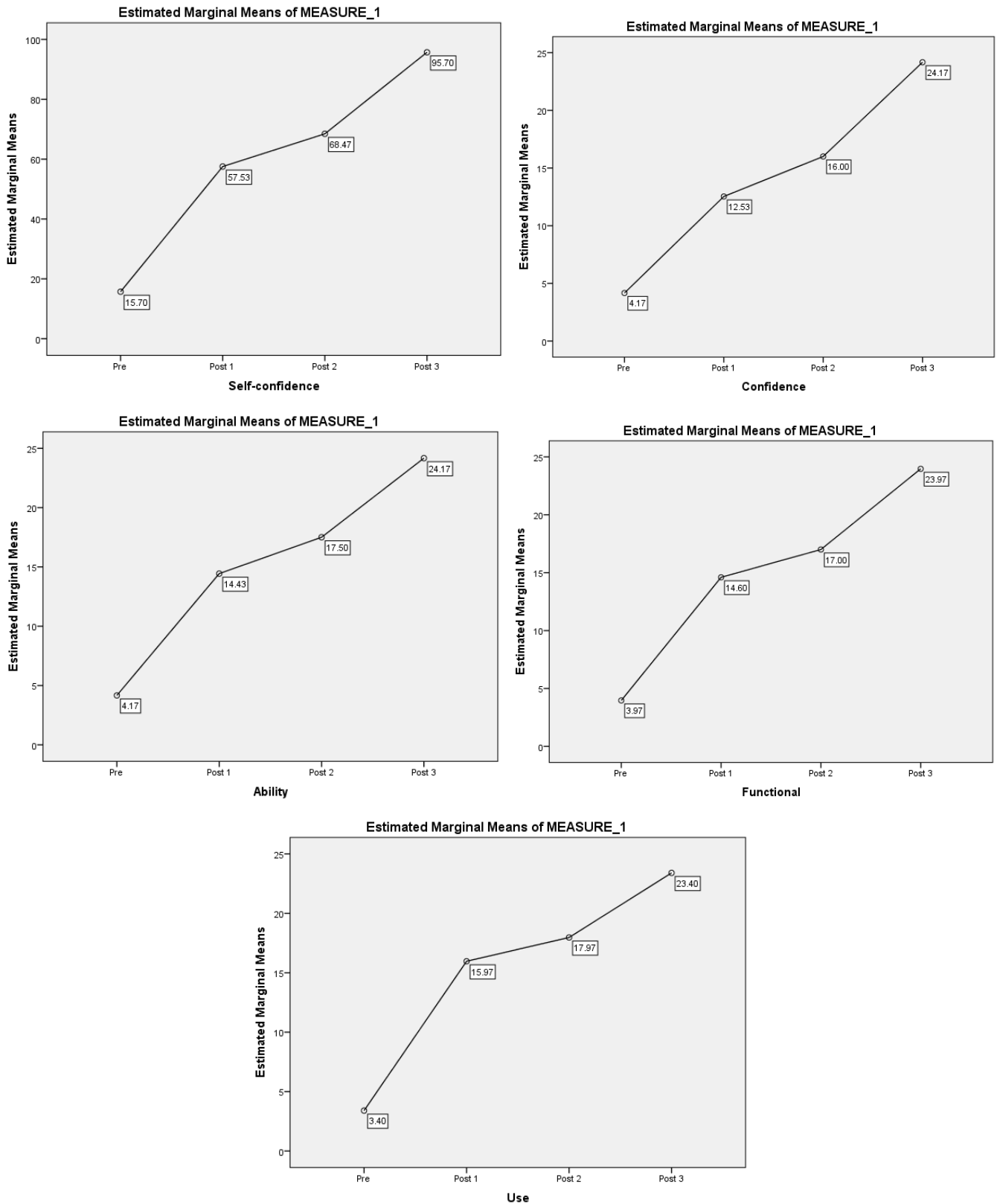


Figure 1: (a) Improvement in students' self-confidence at study sessions, (b) Improvement in students' confidence domain at study sessions, (c) Improvement in students' ability at study sessions, (d) Improvement in students' functional at study sessions, (e) Improvement in students' use at study sessions

### Effect Size and Cohen's d

Large effect sizes found with speaking performance, where highest values found for comparisons between pre and post sessions than comparisons among post sessions. For confidence domain, large effect sizes of all comparisons, except the post 2 and post 3 where obtained small effect size. For ability, large effect sizes found of comparisons the pre and post sessions, medium between post 1 and other post session, and small between post 2 and post 3 session. For functional, large effect sizes obtained for the comparisons between pre and post sessions, medium between post 1 and post 2, small between post 1 and post3, and small post 2 and post 3. For the use domain, large effect sizes for the comparisons between pre and post sessions, while small among the post sessions. Table 2 showed the effect size for the intervention program on the difference in score of students' performance among the sessions.

**Table 2 Effect size of comparisons in study students' self-confidence among study sessions**

Variables	Sessions	Cohen's d	Assessment	
Self-confidence overall score	Pre	Post 1	6.934	Large
		Post 2	4.473	Large
		Post 3	48.691	Large
	Post 1	Post 2	0.933	Large
		Post 3	6.327	Large
	Post 2	Post 3	2.308	Large
Confidence	Pre	Post 1	2.929	Large
		Post 2	3.517	Large
		Post 3	4.416	Large
	Post 1	Post 2	0.805	Large
		Post 3	1.126	Large
	Post 2	Post 3	0.360	Small
Ability	Pre	Post 1	3.572	Large
		Post 2	3.651	Large
		Post 3	5.431	Large
	Post 1	Post 2	0.776	Medium
		Post 3	0.600	Medium
	Post 2	Post 3	0.156	Small
Functional	Pre	Post 1	3.703	Large
		Post 2	4.143	Large
		Post 3	6.499	Large
	Post 1	Post 2	0.580	Medium
		Post 3	0.463	Small
	Post 2	Post 3	0.159	Small
Use	Pre	Post 1	4.729	Large
		Post 2	3.861	Large
		Post 3	4.188	Large
	Post 1	Post 2	0.470	Small
		Post 3	0.104	Small
	Post 2	Post 3	0.290	Small

## Discussion

Self-confidence is regarded as one of the psychological variables associated with the effectiveness of educational activities in the school. This is because it is believed that self-confidence is the foundation of learning motivation; hence, low levels of self-confidence induce poor learning and, as a result, failure of intervention aims. A few research scholars discovered that other psychological factors (such as disappointment and embarrassment) influence self-confidence, particularly in the learning and development of the Arabic language, due to the involvement with teachers and the amount of knowledge provided in the interventional learning course. When students' mental thinking abilities are unstable, they are unable to speak effectively with appropriate grammatical phrases (Aladdin, 2012; Ismail et al., 2020). Yasmine Kataw reported a significant relationship between the self-confidence teaching environment, for example, the class on traditional methods of teaching might well be regarded as a reason for their disinterest, anxiety, and/or loss of interaction, which significantly influences their teaching levels and motivations (Kataw, 2016). Malaysian primary students are timid and anxious due to pressure; thus, direct contact with an Arabic native instructor may stimulate their interactions with material provided in the intervention programme and provide a sort of relaxation with greater attention to the teachings (Che Haron et al., 2016).

The current study found that an intervention programme applied in a Malaysian primary school had outstanding results in terms of self-confidence management. The percentage of efficiency (or effect size) contributed to a high impact of the changes in self-confidence by 94.5 percent, but there was no significant impact for demographic characteristics, referring to the program's pure benefits in improving the speaking skills of Arabic as a second language in Malaysia. Figure 4.6 illustrated the progressive growth in self-confidence % from the beginning to the completion of the training. The self-confidence score increased from 15.7 at the start of the session to 95.7 at the end. Furthermore, substantial differences were seen when the sessions were compared, demonstrating the advantages of the intervention programme on self-confidence at various roles and stages of study. Regrettably, there have been few studies that have looked into Malaysian students' self-confidence when communicating in Arabic in class. As a result, the current study's findings should be regarded as a unique outcome and technique of assessing the self-confidence of Malaysian primary school students, since no study has used a comparable methodology process and/or interpretation of study data.

An additional reason was the use of psychometric criteria in the evaluation of self-confidence, which provided the study with another advantage. The current study's self-confidence measure included four key dimensions: confidence, ability, function, and usage. This study accomplished a sort of real practice of the knowledge and abilities gained through the intervention on the normal activities of primary school students, which had never been studied in a Malaysian school previously. This is seen as another benefit achieved from the interventional programme employed in this study.

## Conclusion

This is an interventional education programme that is used to improve the students' self-confidence in several sessions. On the intervention study daily schedules, this blended programme consists of learning techniques and technological media. The goal of this study were to first investigate the efficacy of this interventional programme on the percentage of growth in students' self-confidence and its domains (confidence, ability,

functional, and use). This study considered firstly, the improved students' self-confidence level (and domains) over a long period of intervention using a blended programme of learning techniques and multimedia in a Malaysian primary school. The future works and recommendations of this study involved. First is the investigation of the performance and self-confidence of students in other Arabic language abilities such as in reading, writing, and grammar. Second, a comparison of the intervention and outcomes of the present study with other languages (such as the English language) for Malaysian primary school students to be conducted.

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