

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF EXPRESSING OPINIONS IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF GRADE VIII STUDENTS
AT MTS MARDIYAH ISLAMIYAH**

A THESIS

*Submitted to Fulfill the Duties and Requirements to Achieve a Bachelor of
Education Degree (S.Pd)*



By

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MANDAILING NATAL
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If someday, it is proven as duplication, imitation, plagiarism, or made by others partly or entirely, I understand that my *Skripsi* and academic title will be cancelled due to the law.

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This thesis entitled "Students Perceptions of Expressing Opinions in English Language Learning: A Case Study of Grade VIII Students at MTS Mardiyah Islamiyah" written by Widiya Haliza, Student Registration Number (NIM) 22130025, has been examined and approved by the Examiners and is eligible to proceed to the Thesis Defense Examination.

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FOREWORD

Peace be upon you, and Allah's mercy and blessings.

All praise and gratitude I offer to the presence of Allah SWT because of His grace and blessings, I can complete the thesis proposal entitled "Students' Perceptions of Expressing Opinions in English Language Learning: A Case Study of Grade VIII Students at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah". I submit this proposal as one of the requirements to complete my studies and obtain a Bachelor of Education (S.Pd) degree in the English Language Education Study Program, State Islamic College of Mandailing Natal.

I realize that without the help, guidance, and support of various parties, the preparation of this proposal would not have proceeded smoothly. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have assisted, especially my supervisor, family, and friends who have provided motivation and support throughout the process of preparing this proposal. I hope this research can make a positive contribution to the development of English language learning.

I hope this proposal can be accepted and receive constructive input for improvement and refinement in the implementation of further research.

Peace be upon you and Allah be upon you.

MOTTO

“Sebaik-baik manusia adalah yang paling bermanfaat bagi manusia.” (HR. Ahmad)”

“Allah tidak membebani seseorang melainkan sesuai kesanggupannya.” (QS. Al-Baqarah: 286)”



ABSTRACT

Widiya Haliza, (2026). Students' Perceptions of Expressing Opinions in English Language Learning: A Case Study of Grade VIII Students at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah. Thesis, English Language Education Study Program, State Islamic College of Mandailing Natal. This study investigates Grade VIII students' perceptions of expressing opinions in English language learning at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah, the factors shaping these perceptions, and their influence on classroom participation. Expressing opinions plays an essential role in developing students' communication skills, speaking proficiency, confidence, and active engagement in learning. However, students may perceive this activity differently due to personal abilities, emotional challenges, and classroom environments. This research employed a descriptive qualitative design using a case study approach. Six Grade VIII students were purposively selected as informants based on their participation levels, including active, moderately active, and passive speakers. An English teacher was also involved as a supporting informant for triangulation. Data were gathered through non-participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's interactive model, comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings reveal that students generally hold positive perceptions of expressing opinions, recognizing its importance in improving speaking abilities, understanding learning materials, and building confidence. Nevertheless, several students experience nervousness, embarrassment, fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, and insufficient confidence. Internal factors influencing perceptions include self-confidence, language proficiency, vocabulary mastery, and comprehension of learning materials, while external factors involve teaching methods, speaking opportunities, teacher feedback, peer support, and classroom atmosphere. Positive perceptions encourage active participation through answering questions, sharing ideas, and engaging in discussions. Conversely, negative perceptions may lead to hesitation and passive involvement. The study concludes that supportive learning environments and consistent speaking practice are essential for fostering positive perceptions and enhancing students' classroom participation.

Keywords: students' perceptions, expressing opinions, English language learning, classroom participation, qualitative case study.

ABSTRAK

Widiya Haliza, (2026). Students' Perceptions of Expressing Opinions in English Language Learning: A Case Study of Grade VIII Students at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah. Skripsi, Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri Mandailing Natal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji persepsi siswa kelas VIII terhadap kegiatan menyatakan pendapat dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah, faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi persepsi tersebut, serta pengaruhnya terhadap partisipasi siswa selama pembelajaran di kelas. Kegiatan menyatakan pendapat memiliki peran penting dalam mengembangkan kemampuan komunikasi, keterampilan berbicara, kepercayaan diri, dan keterlibatan aktif siswa dalam pembelajaran. Namun, siswa dapat memiliki persepsi yang berbeda akibat kemampuan individu, hambatan emosional, dan kondisi lingkungan kelas. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Enam siswa kelas VIII dipilih secara purposive sebagai informan berdasarkan tingkat partisipasi mereka, yaitu siswa aktif, cukup aktif, dan pasif dalam berbicara. Seorang guru bahasa Inggris juga dilibatkan sebagai informan pendukung untuk keperluan triangulasi. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi nonpartisipan, wawancara semiterstruktur, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña yang meliputi kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa secara umum memiliki persepsi positif terhadap kegiatan menyatakan pendapat karena dianggap penting dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara, memahami materi pembelajaran, dan membangun kepercayaan diri. Namun, beberapa siswa masih mengalami rasa gugup, malu, takut melakukan kesalahan, keterbatasan kosakata, dan kurangnya kepercayaan diri. Faktor internal meliputi kepercayaan diri, kemampuan berbahasa Inggris, penguasaan kosakata, dan pemahaman materi, sedangkan faktor eksternal mencakup metode mengajar, kesempatan berbicara, umpan balik guru, dukungan teman sebaya, dan suasana kelas. Persepsi positif mendorong partisipasi aktif, sedangkan persepsi negatif dapat menyebabkan keraguan dan keterlibatan pasif. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa lingkungan belajar yang mendukung dan latihan berbicara yang konsisten penting untuk membangun persepsi positif serta meningkatkan partisipasi siswa.

Kata kunci: *Kecerdasan Buatan, ChatGPT, Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing, Pembelajaran Mandiri, Persepsi Siswa.*

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12. Finally, may Allah SWT always devote joy to all of us; hopefully, this thesis can be useful for the reader.

Panyabungan, September 2026

Writer



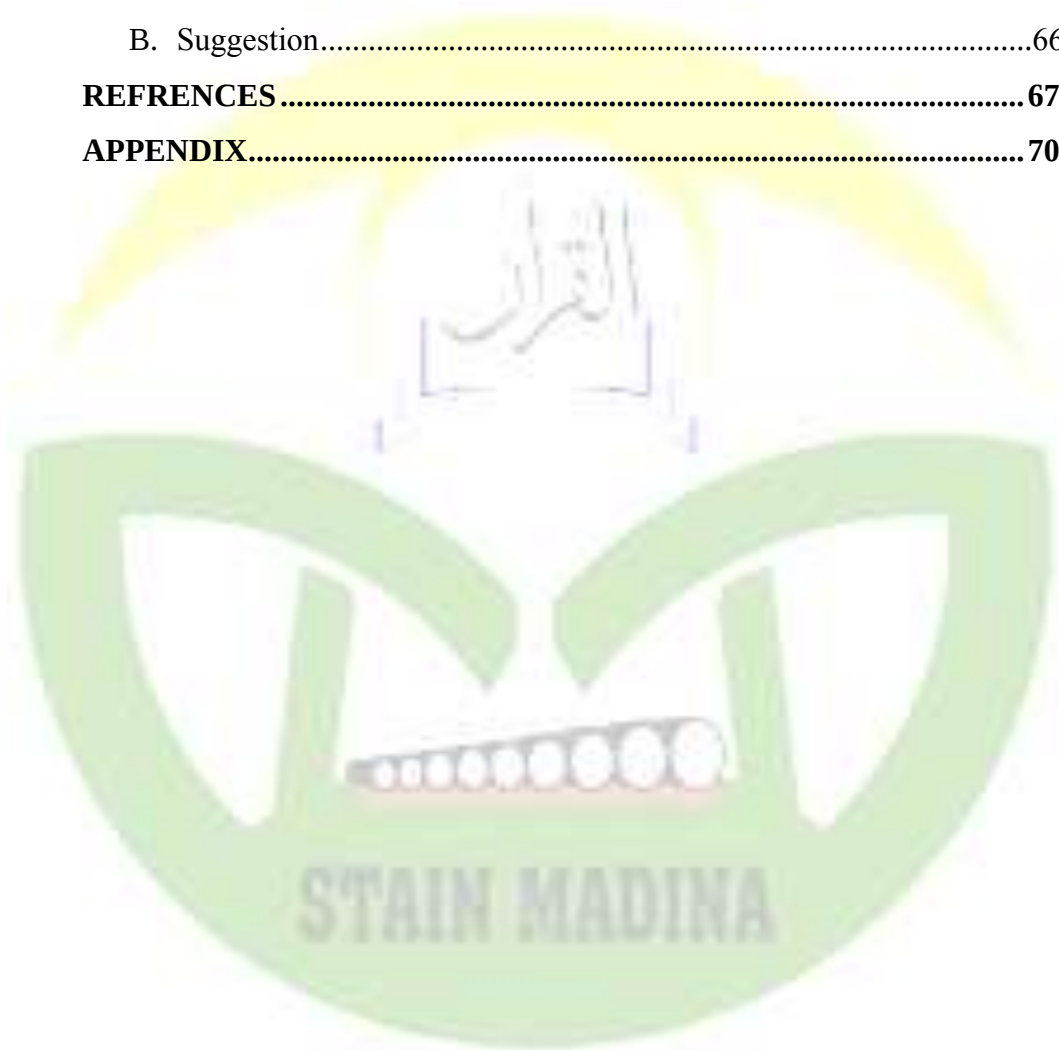
Widya Haliza



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English has become one of the most important subjects in secondary education because it equips students with the communicative competence needed to participate in academic, social, and global contexts. At the junior secondary school level in Indonesia, English is taught through an integrated approach that combines listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with the expectation that students are able not only to understand the language but also to use it actively to communicate their ideas. One important form of active communication in the classroom is students' ability to express their opinions responding to a text, agreeing or disagreeing with a statement, or giving a reason for their point of view. This activity does not only train students' speaking ability, but also encourages them to think critically and participate meaningfully in classroom interaction (Brown, 2004; Richards, 2006).

However, in practice, not all students are equally willing or able to express their opinions during English lessons. Several studies suggest that this willingness is closely tied to how students perceive the activity itself: students who view expressing opinions positively tend to participate more actively, while those with negative perceptions tend to remain passive even when they have adequate language ability (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Previous research has examined students' perceptions of English learning mainly in relation to instructional models, learning media, or classroom environments in general, while studies that focus specifically on students' perceptions of expressing opinions as a classroom activity, particularly at the junior secondary level in Islamic schools, remain limited. This indicates a research gap that has not been adequately addressed.

Preliminary observations conducted by the researcher at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah also indicate that not all students actively participate in expressing their opinions during English lessons. Although the teacher frequently asks questions and encourages classroom discussion, only a small number of students voluntarily respond. Many students remain silent, hesitate before answering, or participate

only when directly invited by the teacher. Informal conversations with the English teacher further revealed that several students were reluctant to express their opinions because they feared making grammatical mistakes, lacked vocabulary, felt shy speaking in front of their classmates, or worried that their answers might be incorrect. These conditions suggest that students' classroom participation is influenced not only by their English proficiency but also by how they perceive opinion-expression activities during English learning.

Informal conversations with the English teacher further revealed that many students actually understood the material being discussed but were reluctant to voice their opinions. The teacher mentioned that common reasons included fear of making grammatical mistakes, limited vocabulary, shyness in front of classmates, and worry that their answers might be considered wrong. This condition shows that students' low participation in expressing opinions is not merely a matter of language proficiency, but is also closely related to how students perceive the activity of expressing opinions itself. whether they see it as beneficial, safe, and worth attempting, or as risky and better avoided.

Based on these classroom observations and identified above, understanding students' perceptions becomes essential: perception shapes students' willingness to participate, communicate, and construct knowledge through classroom interaction. By exploring how Grade VIII students at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah perceive the activity of expressing opinions, this study aims to provide English teachers with a clearer picture of the factors associated with students voicing or withholding their ideas, so that more supportive and student-centred English learning environments can be designed. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "Students' Perceptions of Expressing Opinions in English Language Learning: A Case Study of Grade VIII Students at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah".

B. Formulation of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How do Grade VIII students at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah perceive expressing opinions during English language learning?
2. What factors influence Grade VIII students' perceptions of expressing opinions during English language learning at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah?
3. How do students' perceptions influence their participation in expressing opinions during English language learning?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the formulation of the study, the objectives of this research are:

1. To explore Grade VIII students' perceptions of expressing opinions during English language learning at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah.
2. To identify the factors that influence Grade VIII students' perceptions of expressing opinions during English language learning at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah.
3. To examine how students' perceptions influence their participation in expressing opinions during English language learning at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah.

D. Significances of the Study

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions to English language learning, particularly regarding students' perceptions of expressing opinions during classroom interaction.

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the existing body of knowledge in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly in the areas of students' perceptions, classroom interaction, and communicative language learning. The findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of how students perceive opinion-expression activities in English language learning and how these perceptions influence their classroom participation.

Furthermore, this study is expected to provide empirical evidence that may support the development of learner-centred and communicative approaches in English language teaching. The findings may also serve as a valuable reference for future researchers who are interested in investigating similar issues related to students' perceptions, classroom participation, and English language learning in different educational contexts.

2. Practical Significance

The findings of this study are expected to provide practical benefits for several parties, as follows:

a. For Students

This study is expected to increase students' awareness of the importance of expressing opinions during English language learning. It is also expected to encourage students to become more confident, active, and willing to communicate their ideas, thoughts, and responses in English. By participating actively in classroom interaction, students may improve not only their speaking confidence but also their overall communicative competence.

b. For English Teachers

The findings of this study are expected to provide English teachers with valuable insights into students' perceptions of opinion-expression activities in the classroom. Understanding these perceptions may help teachers identify the factors that encourage or hinder students from participating actively in classroom discussions. Consequently, teachers may develop more interactive, supportive, and student-centred learning strategies that foster students' confidence and willingness to express their opinions.

c. For MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah

This study is expected to provide useful information for the school in improving the quality of English language learning. The findings may serve as a consideration in developing learning programs and classroom practices that promote active student participation,

effective classroom interaction, and communicative competence. In addition, the results may support the school's efforts to create a more positive and engaging learning environment.

d. For Future Researchers

This study is expected to serve as a useful reference for future researchers who intend to conduct studies related to students' perceptions, classroom interaction, communicative language teaching, and opinion-expression activities in English language learning. Furthermore, the findings may provide a foundation for further studies involving different educational levels, research settings, or research approaches, thereby contributing to the advancement of English language education research.

E. Keyterms

To avoid misunderstanding and ambiguity in interpreting the terms used in this study, the researcher provides the following operational definitions:

1. Students' Perceptions

Perception refers to the process through which individuals select, organize, and interpret information to give meaning to their experiences (Robbins & Judge, 2017). In educational settings, students' perceptions influence how they respond to learning activities, classroom interactions, and instructional practices. In this study, students' perceptions refer to Grade VIII students' views, beliefs, feelings, evaluations, and experiences regarding expressing opinions during English language learning at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah. These perceptions include students' attitudes toward the importance of expressing opinions, their confidence in sharing ideas, their comfort during classroom interaction, and their willingness to participate in English learning activities.

2. Expressing Opinions

Expressing opinions is the communicative ability to convey personal ideas, thoughts, beliefs, or judgments about a particular topic while providing appropriate reasons or explanations. In English language

learning, expressing opinions is an essential communicative function that encourages learners to participate actively in classroom interaction and develop critical thinking as well as speaking skills. In this study, expressing opinions refers to students' activities of sharing ideas, responding to questions, giving arguments, agreeing or disagreeing with others, and participating in classroom discussions during English language learning.

3. English Language Learning

English language learning refers to the process of acquiring English language knowledge and communicative competence through classroom instruction that integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Effective English language learning promotes meaningful communication, interaction, and active student participation.

In this study, English language learning refers to the teaching and learning process of English conducted in Grade VIII at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah, where students are encouraged to participate actively by expressing their opinions during various classroom learning activities.

4. Classroom Participation

Classroom participation refers to students' active involvement in learning activities through asking questions, answering questions, expressing opinions, responding to others' ideas, engaging in discussions, and collaborating with classmates and teachers during classroom instruction. In this study, classroom participation refers to the extent to which Grade VIII students actively engage in expressing opinions during English language learning, both voluntarily and in response to the teacher's instructions.

Based on the definitions above, the title "Students' Perceptions of Expressing Opinions in English Language Learning: A Case Study of Grade VIII Students at MTs Mardiyah Islamiyah" refers to an in-depth investigation of how Grade VIII students perceive the activity of expressing opinions during English language learning, the factors that shape these perceptions, and how these perceptions influence their participation in classroom interaction.

F. Research Systematics

To provide a clear understanding of the organization and content of this study, the research is systematically arranged into five chapters as follows:

1. Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter presents the general overview of the study. It consists of the Background of the Study, Formulation of the Study, Objectives of the Study, Significances of the Study, Key Terms, and Research Systematics. This chapter explains the rationale for conducting the research, identifies the research problems, and outlines the overall direction of the study.

2. Chapter II: Review of Literature

This chapter discusses the theoretical foundations that underpin the study. It reviews relevant theories concerning students' perceptions, expressing opinions, English language learning, and classroom participation. In addition, this chapter presents previous related studies, identifies the research gap, develops the conceptual framework, and provides the proposition guiding the qualitative investigation.

3. Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter explains the research methodology employed in the study. It includes the research design, research setting, participants, data sources, data collection techniques, research instruments, data trustworthiness, and data analysis procedures. This chapter describes how the research is conducted to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings.

4. Chapter IV: Findings And Discussion

This chapter explains the findings obtained by the researcher during the field research. The findings are presented in the form of data descriptions, which include general findings and specific findings. The general findings provide an overview of the research location and conditions, while the specific findings present the research results related to the research focus. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the research

findings by relating the findings obtained in the field to relevant theories and previous studies.

5. Chapter V: Conclusion And Suggestion

This chapter presents the conclusion and suggestions based on the results of the research. The conclusion provides a summary of the research findings and discussion in accordance with the research focus, while the suggestions provide recommendations that are expected to be useful for the parties involved in the research.

