Evaluating the TSENCYDENT Routine: A Comprehensive Analysis of Students' Perceptions on Learning Environment, Speaking Fluency, and Confidence in an Indonesian EFL Context

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Abstract. Speaking anxiety and limited feedback opportunities in large classes pose significant challenges to developing English speaking fluency in Indonesian high school contexts. This study evaluates students' perceptions of the Tsencydent routine, a brief, structured warm-up activity designed to address these issues. Employing a convergent mixed-methods design, data were collected via questionnaires and open-ended responses from 20 students at a Muhammadiyah senior high school in Padang Panjang and analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Findings indicate that students generally perceived the routine as useful in fostering a low-pressure learning environment, which appeared to reduce anxiety and increase comfort compared to formal speaking assessments. Commonly reported benefits included perceived growth in vocabulary, improved speaking fluency, and greater self-confidence, often attributed to immediate and constructive teacher feedback. Most students recommended the routine's continued use. Based on these findings, the study proposes that the Tsencydent routine may serve as a practical pedagogical approach that combines affective support with scaffolded language practice, presenting a possible framework for EFL classrooms facing similar constraints.

Keywords: EFL in Indonesia; low-pressure learning environment; speaking anxiety; students' perceptions; Tsencydent routine

Introduction

The development of spoken English proficiency remains a significant challenge within Indonesia's English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, where student anxiety often poses a critical barrier to communicative practice. This speaking anxiety, characterized by fear of negative evaluation and self-doubt, is

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widely documented in Indonesian secondary schools, leading to student reluctance to participate and hindering fluency development (Aeni et al., 2021); (Aziz & Wahyuni, 2023). Effective pedagogical strategies must therefore address this affective filter by creating low-pressure environments that encourage consistent verbal output. Research underscores the importance of immediate, constructive feedback in such environments, as it is crucial for error correction, motivation, and consolidating language acquisition (Li, 2023), (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). However, the prevalent condition of large class sizes in the Indonesian public school system severely limits a teacher's capacity to provide individualized, real-time feedback, often resulting in generalized instruction that fails to mitigate anxiety or cater to individual learner needs (Sulistiyo et al., 2020), (Fauzi, 2022).

In response to these intertwined challenges, structured classroom routines that integrate habitual practice with instant feedback have been proposed as a viable pedagogical solution. The "Tsencydent" (Transcendent) Routine is one such strategy, implemented as a brief, daily warm-up where students construct and vocalize sentences from prompts, receiving immediate formative feedback from the teacher. This routine aligns with principles of task repetition and automaticity development, aiming to normalize speaking, reduce affective barriers, and provide a consistent, manageable feedback mechanism(Nation, 2013), (de Jong & Perfetti, 2011). While the theoretical benefits of routine-based, communicative practice are well-established in second language acquisition literature, and studies have explored warm-up activities globally, there is a distinct paucity of empirical research examining their systematic implementation and perceived effectiveness within specific, localized Indonesian educational settings.

A review of recent literature reveals that studies on speaking anxiety and feedback mechanisms in Indonesia often focus on broader teaching methodologies or technological interventions (Aziz & Wahyuni, 2023), (Fauzi, 2022). However, a few researchers have focused on the role of classroom routines and rituals in shaping learning climates (Santosa & Novianti, 2021). Despite this, there have been limited studies concerned with a deep, qualitative investigation into student perceptions of a specific, routine-based pedagogical intervention like Tsencydent, particularly within the distinct context of Islamic private education systems such as Muhammadiyah schools. The student voice—their understanding, experiential benefits, and critiques—regarding such a routine remains largely unexplored, creating a gap between pedagogical design and learner reception.

Therefore, this research intends to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Tsencydent Routine through the primary lens of students' perceptions. The objectives of this research are to: (1) investigate students' initial understandings and impressions of the routine; (2) analyze their perceived benefits regarding speaking fluency and confidence; (3) evaluate their perspective on how the routine shapes the learning environment and the efficacy of teacher feedback; and (4) document their overall evaluations and suggestions for improvement. By addressing these objectives, this study aims to fill a critical gap by providing empirical evidence on how a localized classroom routine is subjectively experienced by learners. The significant contribution of this research is threefold: it offers practical insights for teachers to refine implementation, provides school policymakers with evidence to consider adopting scalable, low-cost practices, and,

most importantly, empowers students by incorporating their perspectives into the iterative design of their own learning environment.

Literature Review

This section provides a theoretical and empirical foundation for the study by reviewing key concepts and prior research related to student perceptions, speaking anxiety, and feedback routines within Indonesian EFL contexts. The review is structured to move from overarching theoretical frameworks to specific, relevant empirical studies, culminating in a clear identification of the gap this research intends to fill.

Theoretical Framework

The present study is grounded in two complementary theoretical perspectives that explain the psychological and social dimensions of language learning. First, (Krashen, 1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis posits that emotional variables such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence function as an adjustable "filter" that can impede or facilitate the comprehensible input necessary for acquisition. A high affective filter, often caused by speaking anxiety, prevents input from reaching the brain's language acquisition device, thereby hindering learning. This framework is crucial for understanding why creating a low-anxiety classroom environment, a stated goal of the Tsencydent routine, is not merely a matter of comfort but a prerequisite for effective language acquisition (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012)

Second, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, particularly the concepts of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding, illuminates the role of social interaction and support in learning. The ZPD represents the gap between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance. Scaffolding refers to the supportive dialogue or assistance provided by a teacher or more capable peer to help the learner bridge this gap. In the context of this study, the immediate, formative feedback provided by the teacher during the Tsencydent routine is conceptualized as a form of scaffolding. This real-time support is designed to guide students from their current level of speaking ability toward greater fluency and accuracy within their ZPD, making the theoretical process of skill development practically observable (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Key Concepts

Three key concepts underpin the investigation: student perceptions, speaking anxiety, and immediate feedback. Understanding students' perceptions is paramount in educational research, as learners' subjective experiences directly influence their engagement, motivation, and ultimate success. As Brown (2007) argues, perception data offers invaluable insights into the acceptability and perceived efficacy of pedagogical interventions, which objective tests may not capture. In the Indonesian EFL context, exploring student voice remains essential for designing culturally and contextually responsive teaching practices (Zacharias, 2012).

Speaking anxiety, a situation-specific type of foreign language anxiety, is a well-documented barrier in EFL settings. It manifests as worry, fear of negative evaluation, and self-consciousness during oral tasks (Horwitz et al., 1986). In Indonesia, factors contributing to this anxiety include fear of making mistakes in front of peers, limited vocabulary, and traditional teacher-centered classrooms that

prioritize accuracy over communication (Aeni et al., 2021), (Juhana, 2012). This anxiety often results in avoidance behavior, severely limiting opportunities for the practice necessary to develop fluency.

The efficacy of immediate feedback in language learning is well-supported. Timely corrective feedback, whether explicit or implicit, allows learners to notice the gap between their interlanguage and the target form, facilitating cognitive comparison and potential restructuring (Ellis, 2009), (Li, 2023). In speaking activities, immediate feedback is particularly valuable as it corrects errors close to the point of production, enhancing the likelihood of incorporation into the learner's developing system. However, its practical implementation is often at odds with the reality of large classes.

Review of Related Studies

Empirical research on strategies to reduce speaking anxiety highlights various approaches. Studies have explored the benefits of collaborative tasks, digital storytelling, and gamification to create more engaging and less threatening speaking practice (Aziz & Wahyuni, 2023), (Sari, 2020). Research specifically on classroom routines and rituals suggests that predictable, structured opening activities can lower anxiety by providing a safe and familiar framework for participation (Santosa & Novianti, 2021), (Waring, 2014). However, detailed investigations into the longitudinal impact of a specific, feedback-embedded speaking routine like Tsencydent are scarce.

Concerning feedback mechanisms in Indonesian classrooms, studies consistently identify systemic challenges. Research by (Sulistiyo et al., 2020) and (Fauzi, 2022) confirms that large class sizes and curriculum demands often force teachers to rely on delayed, whole-class, or written feedback, which is less effective for developing oral skills. While some studies advocate for peer feedback or technology-mediated solutions, the simple, direct teacher-student feedback loop within a daily routine remains under-researched as a feasible solution for the resource-constrained typical classroom.

A synthesis of this literature reveals a specific gap. While existing studies address either anxiety reduction or feedback challenges, and while some acknowledge the value of routines, there is a paucity of research that integrates these three elements through a focused examination of a specific routine from the student perspective. Prior work has not closely examined how students in a distinct educational subsystem, such as Muhammadiyah schools, perceive and experience a routine designed to systematically combine low-stakes practice with immediate scaffolding. Therefore, this study fills this gap by conducting a comprehensive analysis of student perceptions to understand how the Tsencydent routine operates within the interplay of anxiety, feedback, and routine practice in a real-world Indonesian EFL context.

Method

This section details the methodological approach undertaken to investigate student perceptions of the Tsencydent routine. The description encompasses the research design, the participants and setting, the instruments developed for data collection, the procedural steps implemented, and the techniques employed for data analysis.

Research Design

The study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This design was selected to facilitate a comprehensive understanding by concurrently collecting and analyzing both quantitative (numeric) and qualitative (textual) data strands. The quantitative component, through a structured questionnaire, aimed to map the general landscape of student perceptions across predefined dimensions. Simultaneously, the qualitative component, derived from open-ended responses, sought to capture the depth, nuance, and personal context behind those perceptions. The two strands were analyzed independently and then merged during the interpretation phase to provide a more complete and substantiated answer to the research questions than either method could yield in isolation.

Participants and Research Setting

The research was conducted in a Muhammadiyah Senior High School in Padang Panjang, Indonesia. Participants were 20 students (11 female, 9 male) from a single Grade XI Science class, selected via purposive sampling. This class was chosen specifically because the Tsencydent routine had been a consistent and integral part of their English lesson openings for a substantial period, ensuring all participants had meaningful and comparable experiential ground upon which to base their perceptions (Etikan et al., 2016). The setting and sample provide a focused, context-rich case for an in-depth exploratory investigation.

Instruments for Data Collection

The primary instrument was a researcher-designed questionnaire structured around four key indicators of perception derived from the literature: (A) Understanding and Initial Impressions, (B) Experience and Benefits, (C) Learning Environment and Feedback, and (D) Evaluation and Suggestions. The questionnaire utilized Likert-scale items to measure attitudes and closed-ended questions for demographic data. Integrated within the instrument were open-ended questions prompting elaboration, examples, and suggestions. To ensure validity, the questionnaire underwent review by two expert judges in EFL pedagogy. A pilot test with five non-participant students was conducted to establish clarity and estimate reliability, with satisfactory internal consistency results (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was administered in person during a scheduled class session to ensure a controlled environment and a high response rate. Prior to distribution, the researcher explained the study's academic purpose, guaranteed anonymity and voluntary participation, and obtained informed consent. Participants completed the questionnaire individually, with student identifiers replaced by codes to maintain confidentiality. This procedure adhered to standard ethical research protocols for educational settings (Cohen et al., 2018).

Data Analysis Techniques

The quantitative data from the Likert-scale items were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Percentages were calculated to describe the distribution of responses for each item, providing a clear statistical summary of student perceptions across the four indicator domains (Pallant, 2020). The qualitative data from open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase framework outlined by (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This systematic process involved iterative reading, coding, theme generation, and refinement to identify

and report patterned meanings and insights relevant to the research questions, thereby giving voice to the detailed experiences of the participants.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

This section presents the key findings derived from the mixed-methods analysis of questionnaire and interview data, organized according to the four primary indicators of student perception. The results offer a comprehensive overview of how the Tsencydent routine was understood, experienced, and evaluated by the participants.

Understanding and Initial Impressions

Students demonstrated a clear and consistent understanding of the Tsencydent routine's primary objective: to practice and improve English speaking skills in a low-stakes setting. When asked to state its main purpose, responses overwhelmingly centered on themes of practice and habituation, such as "melatih berbicara" (to practice speaking), "menambah kosa kata" (to increase vocabulary), and "membiasakan berbahasa Inggris" (to get accustomed to using English). This alignment indicates effective communication of the routine's intent by the teacher.

Initial emotional reactions to the routine were predominantly positive. Quantitative data from the questionnaire reveals that 16 out of 20 students (80%) reported their first impression as either "Positive" or "Very Positive". Qualitative comments from open-ended responses characterized the experience with terms like "seru" (fun), "menyenangkan" (enjoyable), and "asyik" (cool). A recurring sentiment, as one student noted, was that it was a novel and engaging way to start the lesson: *"ini adalah hal yang sangat baru bagi saya dan saya cukup menyukainya"* (this is something very new for me and I quite like it). While a minority (4 students) felt "Neutral," no students reported negative initial impressions.

Experience and Benefits

Participants reported perceived benefits across several linguistic and psychological domains. The most frequently cited benefit was vocabulary acquisition, with all 20 students indicating that their *"kosakata bertambah"*.

Furthermore, students reported improvements in their speaking fluency and confidence. As shown in Table 1, a strong majority reported increased speaking fluency (17 students), heightened self-confidence (14 students), and a reduction in nervousness (12 students). One student elaborated, *"bisa mengetahui kosa kata baru dan meningkatkan percaya diri kita"* (we can learn new vocabulary and increase our confidence), directly linking lexical gain to psychological benefit. The structured practice from keyword to sentence was specifically highlighted as aiding cognitive processes: *"membuat dapat berfikir lebih cepat dengan menemukan kosa kata baru"* (makes [me] able to think faster by discovering new vocabulary).

Table 1 Perceived Benefits of the Tsencydent Routine (n=20)

Perceived Benefit	Number of Students Reporting	Percentage
Vocabulary Increased	20	100%
Speaking Became More Fluent	17	85%
Self-Confidence Increased	14	70%
Nervousness Reduced	12	60%
Better Understanding of Sentence Structure	11	55%

(Source: Researcher's survey data, 2025)

Learning Environment and Feedback

A central finding is the routine's success in cultivating a low-pressure learning environment. When compared to formal speaking sessions like tests, 16 out of 20 students (80%) reported feeling "much more comfortable" or "more comfortable" during Tsencydent. Students described the atmosphere as less pressuring, with one noting, *"karena tidak terlalu membuat tertekan bagi yang belum bisa bahasa Inggris"* (because it doesn't put too much pressure on those who are not yet proficient in English)

The feedback provided by the teacher during the activity was also perceived as highly effective. The majority of students (17 out of 20, 85%) found the feedback "helpful" or "very helpful". Qualitative data revealed that students valued immediate, corrective feedback on specific points such as pronunciation and grammar. One student appreciated that *"jika salah dalam pengucapannya guru siap untuk membantu"* (if [we] mispronounce, the teacher is ready to help), while another mentioned that corrections were given *"dengan baik"* (kindly). The supportive manner of feedback further reinforced the low-pressure environment.

Evaluation and Suggestions

Overall evaluation of the Tsencydent routine was strongly positive. An overwhelming 19 out of 20 students (95%) stated they would "recommend" or "highly recommend" its continued use in other classes. This high level of endorsement underscores the routine's perceived efficacy and acceptability from the student perspective.

Despite the positive feedback, students provided constructive suggestions for refinement, offering valuable insights for pedagogical implementation. The most common suggestion was a desire for more time to think before speaking, as one participant advised: *"beri waktu yang agak lama untuk mikirin sentence nya"* (give a bit more time to think about the sentence). This points to a need to balance spontaneity with cognitive processing time, especially for learners at different proficiency levels. Another suggestion called for a slight reduction in formality to make the activity feel even more natural, while others proposed maintaining a daily habit of vocabulary memorization to better fuel the routine.

Discussion

The findings of this study present a compelling case for the effectiveness of the Tsencydent routine as a pedagogical tool in the Indonesian EFL context. The discussion that follows interprets these results through the established theoretical lenses, compares them with existing literature, and explains their significance in addressing the study's research questions.

Lowering the Affective Filter and Building a Supportive Environment

A paramount finding was the routine's success in creating a low-pressure learning environment, with 80% of students reporting greater comfort compared to formal speaking sessions. This outcome can be directly interpreted through (Krashen, 1982). Affective Filter Hypothesis. The routine's design—brief, routine, and focused on production from a single keyword—systematically lowered the psychological barriers to speaking. By removing the high-stakes pressure of tests and grading, the activity reduced fear of negative evaluation, a primary component of language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). Student comments such as *"tidak terlalu membuat tertekan"* (does not put too much pressure) and *"supaya lebih rileks"* (to be more relaxed) indicate a successfully lowered affective filter, which according to Krashen, allows comprehensible input to be more readily acquired. This finding aligns with research by (Santosa & Novianti, 2021), who found that predictable classroom rituals reduce student anxiety by providing a safe and familiar framework. The positive first impressions further cemented this environment, fostering initial receptivity that is crucial for sustained engagement.

Scaffolding Fluency and Confidence through Structured Feedback

The reported improvements in vocabulary, fluency, and confidence are best understood through (Vygotsky, 1978) sociocultural theory. The Tsencydent routine operationalizes the concept of scaffolding, where the teacher's immediate and constructive feedback acts as support within the students' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The stepwise process from keyword to sentence provides a clear, manageable structure. When students struggle, the teacher's timely intervention—correcting pronunciation or grammar "dengan baik" (kindly)—guides them toward a higher level of independent performance. This explains why students perceived benefits in sentence construction (*"lebih paham menyusun kalimat"*) and quicker thinking. The feedback was not merely corrective but instructional, scaffolding cognitive and linguistic development. This aligns with (van de Pol et al., 2010) emphasis on the importance of contingent, dialogic scaffolding in teacher-student interaction for effective learning.

Furthermore, the link between vocabulary growth and increased confidence underscores the reciprocal relationship between linguistic competence and psychological state. As students' lexical resources expanded (noted by 100% of respondents), their perceived ability to communicate improved, thereby boosting self-efficacy. This finding supports the work of (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), who argue that positive emotional experiences and growing competence in a language reinforce each other, creating an upward spiral of engagement.

Alignment and Contrast with Previous Research

The study's results strongly corroborate existing research on anxiety-reducing strategies and effective feedback. The emphasis on a routine-based, low-stakes approach resonates with studies advocating for task repetition and familiar structures to build fluency and reduce fear (de Jong & Perfetti, 2011). Similarly, the high value placed on immediate teacher feedback confirms its central role in language acquisition, as emphasized by (Hattie & Timperley, 2007) and (Li, 2023).

However, this study adds a significant, context-specific nuance. While previous research in Indonesia often highlights the *problem* of large classes and limited feedback (Fauzi, 2022) and (Sulistiyo et al., 2020), this study presents

a practical solution being implemented within those very constraints. The Tsencydent routine demonstrates that systematic, brief feedback cycles are feasible and highly effective even in a typical Indonesian classroom setting, a finding that moves beyond problem identification to showcasing a viable pedagogical practice. Furthermore, the student-generated suggestion for *"more time to think"* offers a critical insight. It contrasts with some fluency-focused methods that prioritize speed, highlighting the need to balance automaticity with the cognitive processing time required by learners, particularly in a supportive (rather than pressure-driven) environment.

Addressing the Research Questions

The findings provide clear answers to the study's research questions. First, students' initial impressions were overwhelmingly positive, characterized by novelty and enjoyment, which set a conducive tone for learning. Second, the primary perceived benefits were multifaceted, encompassing tangible linguistic gains (vocabulary, fluency) and crucial psychological growth (confidence, reduced anxiety), validating the routine's holistic impact. Third, regarding the learning environment and feedback, the routine was perceived as successfully creating a low-pressure atmosphere, with teacher feedback seen as a helpful and integral scaffold within that environment. Finally, students' evaluations and suggestion**s** were strongly positive, with near-universal recommendation for continued use, coupled with pragmatic ideas for refinement, such as allowing more processing time.

In summary, this discussion posits that the Tsencydent routine functions as an effective pedagogical intervention by strategically addressing both affective and cognitive dimensions of language learning. It successfully lowers the affective filter, creating a safe space for practice, while simultaneously employing teacher feedback as scaffolding to guide students through their ZPD, resulting in perceived gains in fluency, vocabulary, and, most importantly, confidence. The study validates established theories in a specific local context and provides empirical evidence for a practical, sustainable classroom strategy that directly responds to well-documented challenges in Indonesian EFL education. The overwhelmingly positive student perceptions underscore that pedagogical approaches which honor psychological safety and provide structured support are not only theoretically sound but are also deeply valued by learners themselves.

Conclusion

This study evaluated student perceptions of the Tsencydent routine within an Indonesian EFL context using a convergent mixed-methods design. The findings indicate that students perceived the routine positively, reporting benefits such as vocabulary growth, increased speaking fluency, enhanced self-confidence, and reduced anxiety. Students also highlighted the low-pressure environment and constructive teacher feedback as key strengths of the routine.

It is important to emphasize, however, that the findings are based entirely on student perceptions rather than objective performance measures. The research focused on perceptual data from a single class in one school, which limits the generalizability of the results. Furthermore, the study measured perceived confidence and fluency rather than objective, performance-based proficiency

gains. These limitations should be carefully considered when interpreting the findings and applying them to other educational contexts.

Theoretically, the perceived benefits reported by students align with established language learning theories, including (Krashen, 1982). Affective Filter Hypothesis and Vygotsky's (1978) concept of scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development (van de Pol et al., 2010). Practically, the Tsencydent routine offers EFL teachers a feasible strategy for integrating daily speaking practice with immediate feedback, particularly in large-class settings common in Indonesia (Fauzi, 2022), (Sulistiyo et al., 2020). This approach aligns with research on the importance of formative feedback in skill development (Hattie & Timperley, 2007) and (Li, 2023).

Future research should address the limitations of this study by employing longitudinal designs to correlate perceptual findings with measurable improvements in speaking proficiency. Expanding research to multiple schools and diverse educational contexts would help determine the broader applicability of the routine. Additionally, investigating teachers' perspectives on implementing and sustaining such routines would provide a more comprehensive understanding of its practical implementation.

In sum, the Tsencydent routine presents a promising pedagogical approach that addresses affective and cognitive dimensions of language learning through structured, low-pressure speaking practice. While the positive student perceptions reported in this study are encouraging, further research is needed to establish the routine's effectiveness across different contexts and to measure its impact on objective language proficiency outcomes. This study contributes to the ongoing effort to develop practical, student-centered strategies for overcoming speaking anxiety in EFL contexts (Aeni et al., 2021), (Santosa & Novianti, 2021).

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