

Enhancing Speaking Proficiency through Self-Discovery: Utilizing Johari Window Techniques in Student Learning

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Abstract

Effective speaking hinges on confidence and comfort, yet many students grapple with these aspects, often feeling lost and unsure about their abilities. This study investigates the application of Johari Windows to aid first-year English Program students at IAIN Parepare, who commonly encounter challenges in speaking. Our research focuses on two primary questions: How does the Johari Window facilitate students' self-discovery, and how does it contribute to the development of their speaking skills? Adopting a mixed-method approach, this study blends quantitative and qualitative data. We engaged 48 first-year English Program students at IAIN Parepare, utilizing observations, questionnaires, and focus group discussions as our primary data collection tools. Additionally, the data were analyzed using SPSS. Our findings reveal that many students exhibit uncertainty or neutrality in identifying with the characteristics and traits of the 'open self,' highlighting the complexities of self-awareness and the fluid nature of self-perceptions, which vary among individuals. The study also notes differing self-views across various characteristics. Crucially, implementing the Johari Window in speaking skill development, particularly in forum discussion groups, has significantly bolstered students' awareness of their public speaking strengths and weaknesses. This enhanced awareness has been instrumental in their journey toward becoming more confident and effective speakers.

Keywords: Self-discovery, Johari windows, speaking skill, English learning

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly interconnected world, the ability to communicate effectively in English is more than a skill; it's a vital tool for global engagement and personal empowerment (Ting et al., 2017). Proficiency in English, particularly in speaking, not only facilitates cross-cultural interactions but also plays a crucial role in academic and professional advancement. As the lingua franca of business, education, and international relations, the mastery of English-speaking skills opens a multitude of doors, offering

learners access to a wealth of opportunities and experiences (Sudarmo, 2021). However, the journey to achieving such proficiency is often fraught with challenges, not least of which is the learner's own journey of self-discovery and awareness (Atmojo et al., 2020). A significant obstacle in this journey is not just the linguistic barrier but also the psychological aspects of learning. Many students grapple with a lack of confidence, heightened anxiety, and a fear of making mistakes while speaking in a non-native language. This apprehension is further compounded by a limited understanding of their own communicative abilities and potential.

Self-discovery, a fundamental aspect of personal growth, involves a deep exploration of one's identity, potential, life purpose, and the guiding principles that shape our life's trajectory (Waring, 2015). This journey is rooted in self-awareness, leading to a better understanding of our interests and goals and, eventually, a profound sense of self-knowledge. Such knowledge empowers us to navigate towards experiences and situations that align with our true selves. Reflective of the diversity in human thought and perception, self-discovery is a unique process for each individual. It encompasses reflecting on one's behavior, preferences, emotions, and beliefs. Engaging in self-discovery allows us to uncover insights about our distinct personalities, inclinations, values, and tendencies. This process is about more than self-awareness; it's about understanding our natural preferences and styles. Brown (2015) further elaborates, defining self-discovery as the acquisition of knowledge about one's values, beliefs, traits, and emotions, emphasizing its dual role in both policy and entrepreneurial learning, as highlighted by Hausmann and Rodrik (2005).

This introspective journey can be facilitated by various techniques. These include practices like morning journaling, auditing relationships, identifying personal joys, engaging in spiritual practices, and having introspective conversations with one's inner child. Embracing such practices can catalyze personal growth and evolution, making the journey of self-discovery not only about personal enlightenment but also about enhancing one's interaction with the world (Bench et al., 2015). In the context of language learning, particularly in developing English-speaking skills, this process of self-discovery becomes crucial. By understanding and acknowledging their own unique traits and fears, learners can better navigate the challenges of speaking in a foreign language (Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2019). The next step in our exploration is to connect this concept of self-discovery with the Johari Window model to see how it can specifically aid learners in overcoming the barriers to effective English communication.

The Johari Window, developed by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, is a framework designed to enhance self-awareness and interpersonal relationships within groups (Luft & Ingham, 1961). As Izzati (2011), Ashley and Reiter (2012), Dierdorff et al. (2019), and Saxena (2015) describe, this model not only aids in self-awareness and personal development but also improves dynamics in team and group settings. It functions as a disclosure/feedback mechanism, offering insights into how individuals perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others. Central to the Johari Window is the concept of balancing self-disclosure and feedback. It posits that people have varying capacities to share information about themselves and to receive feedback, shaping their interpersonal relationships. This model identifies four areas of self-knowledge: open, blind, hidden, and unknown. The open area relates to traits known to both the individual and

others, facilitating effective communication and collaboration. The blind area encompasses traits others see, but the individual does not, highlighting the importance of external feedback. The hidden area covers aspects the individual knows but keeps from others, stressing the role of self-disclosure. Lastly, the unknown area contains traits neither known to the individual nor others, representing potential areas for growth and discovery.

This model's relevance extends to various contexts, as noted by [Oliver and Duncan \(2019\)](#), who suggest adapting it to different collaborative and research settings. It encourages introspection and openness, which are essential for effective communication and personal development. However, while the Johari Window offers numerous advantages, like enhancing self-awareness, communication, interpersonal skills, and team dynamics ([Lowes, 2020](#)), it also has limitations. Its effectiveness is contingent on the willingness of participants to engage positively and constructively. Concerns about privacy and the potential for negative feedback reception must be managed carefully.

Learning is an ongoing journey that significantly influences an individual's mental development and behavior ([Xin et al., 2023](#)). A key skill in this process, particularly for students, is effective speaking. This skill is not just about fluency; it encompasses the ability to coherently connect various points and ideas. However, a common hurdle that many students encounter is the lack of confidence, often stemming from inadequate self-discovery ([Chand, 2021](#)). Self-discovery involves a deep understanding of one's strengths, weaknesses, potential, interests, and skills, which is essential in navigating academic and career decisions ([Vasoya, 2023](#)). Students frequently face challenges in correlating their personal interests and hobbies with potential career paths, partly due to a lack of self-awareness ([Jenkins et al., 2019](#)). This gap extends to vital academic and professional skills, such as problem-solving and communication, leading to a disconnect between academic learning and career readiness. To bridge this gap, our research at IAIN Parepare explores the application of the Johari Windows theory in the context of first-year English Program students, particularly focusing on the obstacles they face in speaking, such as limited vocabulary and self-assurance.

The Johari Windows model is instrumental in this regard, as it aids students in better understanding their interpersonal dynamics and self-perception. By facilitating a deeper awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, the Johari Window empowers students not only to enhance their speaking skills but also to evolve holistically. This growth is crucial for students to effectively navigate their academic journey and career pathways. In essence, fostering self-discovery is imperative for students to improve their speaking abilities and to surmount challenges in their educational and professional trajectories. By integrating the Johari Windows model, students are equipped to confront and overcome these challenges, leading to their overall development. Based on the discussions above, our research is guided by two pivotal questions: 1. How does the Johari Window contribute to the development of students' self-discovery? 2. In what ways does the Johari Window enhance the speaking skills of students?"

METHOD

This study is designed to investigate two primary aspects: firstly, how the Johari Window facilitates the development of students' self-discovery, and secondly, its role in advancing their speaking skills. To achieve a comprehensive understanding, we employed a

mixed-method approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data. This approach is particularly advantageous for its capacity to provide a multi-dimensional perspective of the research problem. Following the sequential explanatory design, as outlined by Cresswell and Cresswell (2017), our methodology commenced with the collection and analysis of quantitative data. This design is particularly effective for elucidating and interpreting quantitative findings through subsequent qualitative analysis, especially useful in contexts where quantitative results may be unexpected or require deeper exploration.

The study was conducted with first-year students from the English Program at IAIN Parepare, involving a total of 48 participants. We employed a total sampling technique, ensuring that every member of the target population was included in the study. The research spanned two months, during which data were meticulously gathered through questionnaires and forum group discussions, complemented by observations and interviews. Furthermore, the researchers applied a systematic approach to evaluate the validity and reliability of our questionnaire items using statistical analysis. For validity assessment, we conducted a bivariate Pearson correlation analysis in SPSS, focusing on the significance value as a key indicator. A significant proportion of our items demonstrated validity, with significance values falling below the 0.05 threshold, indicating their appropriateness for our study. Conversely, a smaller subset of items was identified as invalid due to their significance values exceeding 0.05. In terms of reliability, Cronbach's Alpha technique was utilized to determine the consistency of the questionnaire. This method is crucial for evaluating if repeated measurements with the questionnaire yield consistent results. Our analysis revealed a high level of reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.939 for the set of 80 items in the questionnaire, significantly exceeding the critical threshold of 0.7. This high Cronbach's Alpha value confirms the trustworthiness and consistency of our data (Ursachi et al., 2015).

Moreover, quantitative data were processed using SPSS 26.0, with a focus on descriptive statistics. This approach involved the computation of students' Johari Window scores by recoding and summing values under each scale. Concurrently, qualitative data underwent a rigorous analysis process, starting with data identification and transcription. This was followed by initial coding, topic searching, review of themes, defining and naming themes, and, ultimately, finalizing the themes. This comprehensive analysis aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of the impact of the Johari Window on students' self-discovery journey and speaking skills.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Findings

Aspects	Indicator (Trait)	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Open	Various Traits	20%	60%	20%
	Friendly	30%	50%	20%
Blind	Lazy	15%	55%	30%
	Idealist	25%	50%	25%
	Cheerful	35%	40%	25%
	Pleasant	30%	45%	25%
	Loving	40%	30%	30%

	Helpful	45%	35%	20%
	Lost Focus	20%	40%	40%
Hidden	Curiosity	39.6%	50%	10.4%
	Firmness	43.8%	46.2%	10%
	Confident in Speaking	30%	41.7%	28.3%
	Brave	25%	50%	25%
	Consistent	20%	52.1%	27.9%
	Logic	25%	54.2%	20.8%
	Clever	15%	75%	10%
	Trustworthiness	40%	54.2%	5.8%
	Think before act	54.2%	30%	15.8%
	Relax	30%	54.2%	15.8%
	Talented	35%	50%	15%
Unknown	Less in Speaking	37.5%	50%	12.5%
	Not a Pleasant Person	10%	46.2%	43.8%
	Not a Care Person	15%	30.8%	54.2%
	Incapable	20%	45.8%	34.2%
	Good Listener	56.3%	35%	8.7%
	Friendly	62.5%	25%	12.5%
	Confident	30%	68.8%	1.2%
	Unfriendly	5%	66.7%	28.3%

In the four aspects of the Johari Window model, the distribution of responses reveals insightful patterns about self-perception and awareness among respondents. In the Open aspect, a significant majority displayed neutrality towards various traits, indicating a general hesitation or uncertainty in recognizing these characteristics in themselves. This suggests a balanced self-view, where respondents neither strongly identify with nor completely deny these traits. The Blind aspect showed more variation, with a mix of neutrality and disagreement for traits like "Friendly" and "Cheerful," pointing to a lack of awareness or acknowledgment of these traits by the respondents. On the other hand, there was a notable agreement on positive traits such as "Loving" and "Helpful," suggesting these qualities are recognized by others but not necessarily by the individuals themselves.

In the Hidden aspect, traits like "Curiosity" and "Firmness" saw substantial agreement, indicating these are qualities respondents acknowledge in themselves but choose to keep private. The high neutrality in traits such as "Confident in Speaking" and "Brave" suggests a cautious or reserved self-perception in areas traditionally associated with confidence and assertiveness. Finally, the Unknown aspect revealed intriguing insights into less acknowledged or newly emerging traits. The agreement on being "Less in Speaking" and a predominant disagreement with being "Not a Pleasant Person" or "Not a Care Person" highlights traits that respondents might not have fully explored or recognized in themselves. This aspect, rich with neutrality and varied responses, underscores the complex and often uncharted territory of self-awareness and personal growth.

Qualitative Findings

The data is based on interviews and forum group discussions. Forum Group Discussion: Improving Speaking Skills through Johari Windows Approach (Focus on Four Areas with Specific Cases and Benefits).

Based on **Open Area**, here are some perceptions of students.

Student 1: *"Previously, I was always open about my interest in public speaking. Through this discussion, I have understood how to speak more persuasively and effectively. I am now more aware of the techniques we have discussed, which helps me speak in public more confidently and efficiently. Regarding some of the words that have been presented in the questionnaire to evaluate, I used to be insecure and shy."*

Student 2: *"Just like Participant 1, I have learned a lot about the area of "Open." Before, I spoke without planning, and friends told me that I often spoke too long. Now, I plan better before speaking and try to convey my message more concisely and clearly. This is related to the trait that I used to have of being careless, and I was known as a quiet person."*

Based on the interview result, student 1 initially identified themselves as open about their interest in public speaking. However, through participating in discussions, they gained a deeper understanding and awareness of effective speaking techniques. This learning process enhanced their confidence and efficiency in public speaking. Additionally, the questionnaire and discussions helped them confront and acknowledge their previous insecurities and shyness. This indicates a significant shift in self-perception, moving from a less confident to a more assured and skilled communicator.

Moreover, student 2 similarly experienced a transformation in their approach to speaking. Initially, they admitted to speaking impulsively and at length, a habit noted by their peers. The learning process in the "Open" Area led them to realize the importance of planning and clarity in communication. This change in approach signifies growth from being perceived as careless and quiet to becoming more thoughtful and articulate. The self-awareness journey for Student 2 involved recognizing and addressing a previously unacknowledged aspect of their communication style.

Furthermore, both students used the Johari Window framework to gain insights into their communication styles and personal traits. They not only became more self-aware but also took practical steps to improve their communication skills, reflecting growth in their open selves. This transformation demonstrates the effectiveness of self-discovery tools like the Johari Window in fostering personal development and enhancing interpersonal skills.

Blind Area,

What traits are you completely unaware of that people can see?

Student 3: *"For me, the "Blind" Area revealed that I often use filler words such as "ehm" and "uh" when speaking. This is related to the lost focus trait. This is something I had not realized before, but with feedback from friends, I am now more aware and trying to reduce the use of these filler words. In addition, based on people's opinions, it is stated that I have good insight, which I do not feel, but recognizing this blind Area can increase my confidence in the future, especially in my speaking skills."*

Student 4: *"Just like Participant 3, I also often use filler words. My friends tell me that this can disrupt the flow of the conversation. Now, I try to speak more fluently and use fewer filler words."*

In the context of the Blind Area of the Johari Window, Student 3 and Student 4 provide insights into traits they were previously unaware of but were observed by others. Student 3 discovered, through the "Blind" area assessment and feedback from peers, their frequent use of filler words like "ehm" and "uh" in speech. This trait aligns with the 'lost focus' characteristic, suggesting a lack of awareness in their speaking style. Before this revelation, they were not conscious of this habit. However, upon gaining this insight from others, Student 3 is now actively working to minimize the use of filler words. Interestingly, they also received feedback about having good insight, a trait they had not personally recognized. Acknowledging this positive trait, previously in their blind spot, has the potential to boost their confidence, particularly in their speaking abilities.

Besides, student 4 shared a similar experience with Student 3 in that they also frequently used filler words, a habit highlighted by friends. These filler words were perceived to disrupt conversational flow. This feedback mirrors the characteristics in the Blind Area, where traits are visible to others but not to oneself. In response, Student 4 is now making a conscious effort to speak more fluently and reduce their reliance on filler words. Both students' experiences underscore the importance of the Blind Area in the Johari Window model, illustrating how feedback from others can unveil aspects of ourselves that we are not aware of. This awareness can lead to personal growth and improvement, particularly in communication skills, as seen in these students' efforts to refine their speaking style based on the insights gained.

Hidden Area,

What kind of hidden things do you hide from other people?

Student 5: *"In the area of "Hidden," I realized that I often hide my uncertainty when speaking in public. This has to do with me sometimes not being able to relax/nervous, so I don't dare to speak my mind. I felt safe in this discussion to talk about my anxiety, and my friends provided great support. This helped me feel more confident when speaking in public."*

Student 6: *"Just like Participant 5, I also hide my uncertainties. Friends told me that honesty about our uncertainties can make us more human and connect with the audience. In addition, my curiosity makes me sometimes hesitant to express things verbally, but now, I am more open about my uncertainties when speaking".*

Student 7: *"In the "Hidden Area," I realized that I was always worried about what others would think of my presentation. This often made me nervous. Through this discussion, I learned to focus more on the message I wanted to convey rather than other people's reactions, which helped me become more confident".*

Student 8: *"Just like Participant 7, I also often hide my uncertainties when speaking. In this discussion, I learned that when we speak sincerely and honestly, the audience feels more connected to us, even if we have uncertainties. This relates to how we as*

individuals think before we act/speak as this will affect our audience in communication”.

In the Hidden Area of the Johari Window, Students 5, 6, 7, and 8 shared insights into their personal traits and uncertainties that they typically conceal from others. Student 5 recognized that they often hide their feelings of uncertainty and nervousness when speaking in public, a trait linked to their difficulty in relaxing. The group discussions provided a safe space for them to express these anxieties, and the support from peers positively impacted their confidence in public speaking. This openness in discussing hidden fears marked a significant step in overcoming them.

In addition, student 6 shared a similar tendency to hide uncertainties, echoing Student 5's experiences. They learned from their friends that being honest about uncertainties can make speakers appear more relatable and human, enhancing audience connection. Additionally, their innate curiosity sometimes held them back from verbal expression, but through these discussions, they became more open about their uncertainties. Moreover, student 7's experience in the "Hidden" Area revealed a deep concern about others' perceptions during presentations, often leading to nervousness. The discussions helped them shift focus from worrying about audience reactions to concentrating on the message they wanted to convey. This change in perspective significantly boosted their confidence in public speaking.

Similarly, Student 8 also tended to hide their uncertainties, particularly when speaking. They learned that sincerity and honesty in speech can foster a stronger connection with the audience, even in the presence of uncertainties. This realization is tied to the concept of thinking before speaking, emphasizing the impact of a speaker's authenticity on audience engagement. Collectively, these reflections illustrate the power of the Hidden Area in the Johari Window to uncover personal fears and uncertainties. By sharing and discussing these hidden aspects, the students gained valuable insights and strategies to enhance their communication skills, demonstrating personal growth and increased self-awareness.

Unknown

Are there traits that you don't know even others don't know because you have never explored them?

Student 9: "I realized that there are communication potentials that I have not known about, maybe Incapable, Responsive or Good Listener. After this discussion, I feel motivated to explore the potential of speaking in a foreign language, and this opens up new opportunities in my communication”.

Student 10: "Just like Participant 9, I feel there is a lot of potential for speaking in various situations that I have not explored, such as being a good listener. This is very influential in communication. How we as individuals can listen well to what they say besides being a friendly person opens up our opportunities to be able to communicate with many individuals. After this discussion, I will try to be more active in finding opportunities for public speaking and develop my ability to communicate in various contexts”.

In the Unknown Area of the Johari Window, Students 9 and 10 reflect on traits and potentials in communication that they hadn't explored or recognized, either in themselves or by others. Student 9 discovered untapped potentials in communication, mentioning traits like being "Incapable," "Responsive," or a "Good Listener." This revelation came as a surprise, as these were aspects of their personality they had not previously considered. The group discussions served as a catalyst for this realization, motivating them to explore new avenues in communication, such as speaking in a foreign language. This newfound awareness opened up possibilities for growth and development in their communication skills.

Similarly, Student 10 resonated with Student 9's experience, recognizing the unexplored potential in various communicative situations. They highlighted the importance of being a "Good Listener" and how it significantly impacts communication. They also pointed out that being a "Friendly" person can broaden opportunities for engaging with diverse individuals. The discussions inspired Student 10 to actively seek out public speaking opportunities and develop their ability to communicate effectively in various contexts. These reflections underscore the value of the Unknown Area in the Johari Window, which sheds light on latent or unexplored aspects of an individual's personality. For Students 9 and 10, the exploration of this Area revealed hidden communication skills and potentials, encouraging them to pursue new paths for personal and professional growth in communication.

The Development of Students in Speaking through Johari Window.

The responses of the students in this study demonstrate how the Johari Window approach significantly aids in self-discovery and enhances personal growth, particularly in the realm of speaking skills. This method has made students more aware of their strengths and areas needing improvement, subsequently leading to improved effectiveness and confidence in their communication. This finding aligns with the results of [Newstrom and Rubenfeld's \(1983\)](#) research, which highlighted the benefits of a modified Johari Window focusing on four key dimensions: requesting feedback, self-disclosure, providing feedback, and facilitating self-disclosure by others ([Nofriza, 2017](#)). Their study underscored that using the Johari Window can substantially enhance students' interest and comprehension of concepts related to interpersonal relationships while also boosting self-awareness and understanding of individual interpersonal dynamics.

In this research, a synergistic relationship was found between quantitative and qualitative data collection. The quantitative data revealed that many students were initially hesitant to acknowledge certain traits, often responding neutrally to attributes like self-confidence and wisdom. To delve deeper, qualitative data were gathered through group forum discussions. These discussions were designed to provide students with a platform to explore and discuss their traits across the open, blind, hidden, and unknown aspects of the Johari Window. The purpose was to enable a more profound self-recognition from various perspectives. The outcome of these discussions was enlightening; students identified traits that were previously perceived as obstacles ([Quigley et al., 2022](#)). Recognizing these traits became crucial evaluation material, offering significant benefits for their development of speaking skills ([Gumartifa & Syahri, 2021](#)). This process illustrates the powerful role of self-discovery and reflection in fostering growth, especially in public speaking capabilities.

Furthermore, the practical application of the Johari Window model was seamlessly integrated into the research methodology, where students were invited to introduce themselves. The results were quite revealing: some students displayed impressive speaking abilities, articulating their introductions smoothly and confidently, while others showed signs of nervousness, a natural response in a learning environment. What stood out was the variation in the vocabulary used by some students in their introductions, indicating a growth in their self-confidence and an embrace of the self-discovery process.

Transitioning to the novel aspects of the study, it becomes evident that the use of the Johari Window as a tool for self-discovery in an educational context marks a significant innovation (Saxena, 2015). Traditionally associated with psychotherapy or leadership training, its application here demonstrates the versatility of psychological tools in fostering student growth and understanding (Mahoney et al., 2021). Additionally, the incorporation of group discussion forums as a medium for sharing Johari Window results added a unique dimension to the research. This approach, less commonly employed in self-discovery studies, provided a dynamic platform for students to engage in collaborative exploration and reflection.

Further enriching the study was the emphasis on uncovering hidden and unknown aspects of the students' personalities. This focus unearthed deeper insights into their self-perceptions, a dimension often not fully explored in previous research. Lastly, the study's impact on enhancing speaking skills stands out as a key contribution. It illustrates the profound influence that self-discovery can have on developing essential communication competencies in an educational setting (Herrera, 2019; Almalki, 2023). Collectively, these innovative elements not only augmented the research methodology but also significantly advanced the field of self-discovery, particularly in enhancing communication skills and personal growth among students.

CONCLUSION

The innovative application of this traditionally psychotherapeutic or leadership-oriented tool has significantly contributed to enhancing self-awareness and communication skills among students. Through exercises like self-introductions and interactive group discussions, students navigated through the Open, Blind, Hidden, and Unknown aspects of their personalities, leading to profound insights into their self-perception and interpersonal dynamics. The study revealed a notable increase in self-awareness as students became more attuned to both their strengths and areas needing improvement, particularly in the realm of public speaking and personal expression. This heightened awareness was mirrored in their enhanced communication abilities, where students showed considerable progress in speaking confidently and effectively, utilizing varied vocabularies, and engaging more meaningfully with their audience.

Moreover, the research highlighted the importance of self-disclosure and feedback in personal development. Students were able to uncover hidden aspects of their personalities and address unknown potentials, thereby facilitating a deeper understanding of themselves and fostering a supportive learning environment. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data further enriched the study, revealing the complexities of student self-perception and the multifaceted nature of personal growth. In essence, this study underscores the value of psychological tools like the Johari Window in educational

settings, not just for self-discovery but also for practical skill enhancement. It offers a clear example of how introspection, coupled with structured peer interaction, can lead to significant improvements in communication skills, a critical component in both personal and professional development.

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