

Exploring Teachers and Students' Perceptions of Enhancing Speaking Skills Using the STIFIn Concept

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to understand how teachers and students perceived the use of the STIFIn concept in improving students' speaking skills. The STIFIn concept, which was based on five types of human intelligence—sensing, thinking, intuiting, feeling, and instinct—was believed to help design more personalized and effective learning strategies. The study used a qualitative method with data collection techniques in the form of semi-structured interviews with teachers and students. Motivator Quran Darussalam, a high school Islamic boarding school, is located at the research site. The steps used to collect data included conducting interviews, making observations, and reviewing documents related to teaching speaking skills. Data reduction, data display, data condensation, and conclusion drafting are methods of data analysis. The results of the research were that the use of the STIFIn concept helped teachers to recognize the characteristics of students' intelligence and thus to adapt teaching methods more appropriately. Students also reported an improvement in their self-confidence and speaking skills following the implementation of the method. However, there were still some challenges in adapting the method to different types of student intelligence, which required in-depth training and understanding on the part of teachers. Overall, the STIFIn concept offered a new approach that could enrich language teaching in the classroom.

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1. INTRODUCTION

English has four skills: reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Students needed to master speaking as part of their English lessons because people knew they could speak English well (Islam, 2022; Maharani & Afifi, 2024). This research focused on speaking skills. Students were supposed to acquire proficiency in English to communicate with other people from other countries. There were many definitions of speaking. Sumaiya et al. (2022) said speaking was one of the essential skills that learners needed to master, as it enabled them to act as effective communicators. It involved forming sentences from words to express opinions, ideas, suggestions, or needs that others were interested in

hearing. By developing strong speaking skills, individuals could communicate effectively with people all over the world, especially as English was a global language spoken internationally (Selvi et al., 2023; Roshid & Kankaanranta, 2025).

To this day, speaking has always been considered one of the most important skills by people. According to Akhter (2021), speaking was a language that people used to communicate with each other. Speaking was an important aspect of learning English that supported effective communication. Mastering this skill was crucial for students to be able to express their thoughts and ideas well (Bsharat & Barahmeh, 2020). Speaking skills included not only the ability to sound out words but also aspects such as intonation, pronunciation, and appropriate use of vocabulary. Speaking was a skill that required considerable effort to master, and the ability to communicate fluently orally was the most important skill for language learners (Suliman, 2024). Students were considered proficient when they could communicate effectively. According to Ferdiyanto & Kholili (2022), fluency in the target language was essential for students. In the context of language learning, speaking skills were an indicator of students' success in communication.

Some believe that developing students' speaking skills remains one of the biggest obstacles to studying English. Speaking was not an easy subject for them (Han et al., 2023). They often encountered various obstacles that hindered their ability to communicate. According to Fithriyah (2024), many students struggled with issues such as low self-confidence, lack of vocabulary, lack of grammar, insufficient practice, and teaching strategies that didn't meet their specific learning needs. This phenomenon also occurred in education in general. In this case, school was only a place of training for work and career; educational institutions should have been able to stimulate the growth of the diverse abilities that each student possessed (Mazenod et al., 2018; Islam, 2023).

Teachers and students discussed ways to improve speaking skills. Teachers, as learning facilitators, had valuable views and experience in designing teaching approaches that could help students (Sjölje et al., 2021; Hamdani et al., 2021). On the other hand, students also had different expectations and needs in their learning process. In learning English, teachers needed to teach speaking skills correctly to achieve the learning goals (Kwee, 2021; Islam, 2024). Many teachers relied on rote memorization or dialogues to teach speaking skills without class discussion, which left some students confused. According to Paulsrud & Nilholm (2023), both teachers and students shared responsibility for learning issues. The teacher used the Write-Memorize-Practice method for conversation, but few students practiced due to lack of understanding. Students' speaking skills were poor because they didn't practice speaking in class. The ineffective teaching method failed to achieve the learning objectives (Chew & Cerbin, 2021; Shalihah et al., 2022).

To overcome these problems, a learning approach was needed that could adapt to the individual characteristics of students. One such approach was the STIFIn method, which stood for Sensing, Thinking, Intuiting, Feeling, and Instinct (Poniman & Amalia, 2020). This method was based on the principle that each individual had a dominant intelligence tendency that influenced the way they received and processed information. By

understanding each student's intelligence type, teachers could develop more personalized and effective learning strategies (Shemshack et al., 2021; Ferdiyanto et al., 2021).

By implementing the STIFIn approach, teachers reported significant improvements in students' speaking skills (Simanullang, 2022). Students using this approach show increased communication skills, fluency, and confidence. Adapting teaching methods to students' learning styles leads to greater engagement and motivation. By understanding and integrating different learning styles, instructors can create a more inclusive and effective learning environment that supports the development of students' speaking skills (Islam, 2023).

The phenomenon that took place at Motivator Quran Darussalam, an Islamic boarding school, demonstrated the tremendous effort put in to help improve the students' English language proficiency. The phenomena at the Islamic boarding school Motivator Quran Darussalam demonstrated how important the teacher-student connection was for enhancing speaking abilities. Through a thorough qualitative approach, the STIFIn Concept was used as an effective tool to help students enhance their communication potential. English proficiency became crucial in the era of globalization, both for academic work and for communicating with people around the world (Taguchi & Ishihara, 2018; Islam & Birchok, 2024). This Islamic boarding school, which was well-known for its spiritual and character-based approach to education, hoped to integrate English language instruction into its curriculum so that students could learn the language fluently and spread moral and spiritual teachings in addition to mastering religious subjects (Zainuddin & Wafi, 2024).

In response to this phenomenon, the purpose of this study was to highlight the perceptions of teachers and students toward improving speaking skills using the STIFIn concept. This concept provided a comprehensive framework for understanding individual learning styles and communication preferences. By understanding how each element in STIFIn played a role in the learning process, the researcher hoped to identify the most effective strategies for improving English-speaking skills in Islamic boarding schools.

Some of the previous researchers have had discussions on this issue (Utami, 2020; Yandri et al., 2021; Hz, 2022; Diana & Sholehah, 2022; Siregar, 2022; Cipta & Argarini, 2024; Fadilah & Rizqi, 2024; Salafiyah et al., 2025). Previous studies had not explored teachers' and students' perceptions of the STIFIn concept in Islamic boarding schools, particularly in relation to the development of speaking skills. Most research focused on the use of audio-visual media or language application-based technology. The STIFIn concept, meanwhile, has been more widely applied in the context of self-potential development, personality mapping, and general subjects such as mathematics and science. These studies often evaluated the effectiveness of STIFIn from a theoretical perspective, without taking into account the practical experiences and perceptions of both teachers and students.

Researchers recognized that speaking skills were one of the most challenging aspects for students to acquire. It was found that at the Islamic boarding school Motivator Qur'an

Darussalam, both teachers and students had a strong desire to improve English-speaking skills within the school environment. Through this approach, it was expected to reveal how teachers designed teaching methods that suited the characteristics of students, as well as how students responded to and adapted those methods. This research also explored the challenges faced by teachers and students in learning English and how their perceptions affected motivation and learning outcomes. Specifically, it examined teachers' and students' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the STIFIn concept in improving speaking skills. Teachers played an important role in facilitating language acquisition, and their insights into the STIFIn approach provided valuable information regarding its practical application in the classroom. Similarly, understanding students' perceptions sheds light on how this method impacted their engagement, motivation, and overall speaking proficiency. Based on the above explanation, this study was aimed at highlighting the perceptions of teachers and students toward improving English speaking skills through the application of the STIFIn concept.

2. METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at exploring the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the implementation of the STIFIn concept in improving speaking skills at the high school Islamic Boarding School. We selected a qualitative method to gain profound insights into actual practices, experiences, and opinions within the natural educational context. The results are presented as descriptive context rather than numerical data or statistics, focusing instead on a description of the phenomena observed. This research uses qualitative research, a descriptive method that analyzes people's experiences and behaviors in their natural environment (Taylor et al., 2015). The research was conducted at High School Islamic boarding school Motivator Quran Darussalam, Klaseman, Gending, Probolinggo, which has implemented the STIFIn concept in the learning process, especially in the development of speaking skills. The following is a presentation of the STIFIn concept model in Figure 1.

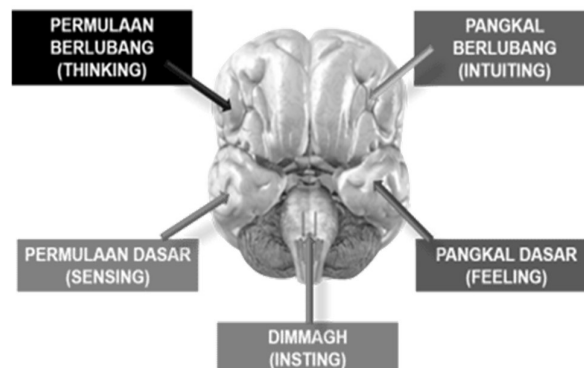


Figure 1. STIFIn concept model

The steps used to collect the data are the information notes and explanation, which correlate with the topic of research. The researcher will obtain information and explanations through interviews, observations, and documents related to teaching speaking skills. The first step was observation; after that, the researcher determines who will be watched, when, for how long, and why. Descriptions of attitudes, behaviors, actions, and human contact in general are examples of observational data. The researcher will observe the teaching and learning activities at the boarding school to directly assess how applying the STIFIn concept improves students' speaking skills.

The next step was the interviewing section. During the interview process, the researcher coordinated face-to-face meetings with three English teachers: two senior teachers who have been teaching for five years and one junior teacher who has been teaching for three years at the Islamic boarding school Motivator Qur'an Darussalam to understand how the STIFIn concept was applied. Additionally, we met directly with 15 students 5 from each of grades 10 and 12—over several days to gain insights into their experiences using the STIFIn concept, which helped support and validate information gathered from both students and teachers.

The interview included questions about the understanding of the STIFIn method, its impact on students' speaking skills, challenges faced, and suggestions for improvement. The last stage was to collect documents on the teaching of speaking skills. We collected the documents to determine the implementation strategy for teaching speaking skills. In this study, the types of documentation data used include learning materials such as syllabi, lesson plans, teaching materials like memorization boards that display daily conversations or new sentences, and STIFIn books that are utilized for developing speaking skills. The personal archives of teachers and students consist of official record reports that are collected in document files, which relate to their experiences applying the STIFIn concept in speaking learning.

Additionally, data reduction, data display, data condensation, and conclusion drafting are methods of data analysis. The data reduction portion involves grouping relevant data and removing any data that does not support the research. The preceding step groups the data, subsequently executing the data presentation portion to display the data in a single matrix. However, the goal of the conclusion section is to guarantee that the information generated is relevant, accurate, and impartial.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The objective of this research is to find out how teachers perceive using the STIFIn concept in teaching speaking skills. Additionally, the study aims to understand how students perceive their learning experience when utilizing the STIFIn method. STIFIn is an acronym for Sensing, Thinking, intuitive, Feeling, and Instinct, which are five types of machine intelligence dominance based on the working system of the human brain. This concept was developed by Farid Poniman and is used as an approach to understanding the potential and character of individuals based on the tendency to

dominance of the genetically working brain. The STIFIn concept is applied in the field of education to increase student engagement and motivation, especially in speaking and communication skills (Poniman & Amalia, 2020).

The observation demonstrates that the STIFIn concept enhances the learning of speaking skills in a personalized and effective way. This approach helps students feel more confident in speaking because the material and the delivery method align with their learning styles. In addition, students show independence in structuring the material and conveying their ideas. Observations made at the three levels of Class 10, 11, and 12 in English language learning, especially in speaking activities, are to explore the concept of STIFIn in teacher teaching strategies and student engagement. We conducted each observation over three meetings, focusing on the teacher's approach, student participation, and the students' conformity to the dominant STIFIn personality type.

In Class 10, most students are of the sensing type. Teachers use a structured learning method, with clear instructions, examples of dialogue, and paired exercises. Students respond positively. Imitable examples enhance the effectiveness of speaking activities, indicating that this type of student prefers practical and clear activities. Thinking and intuiting types predominate in Class 11. Teachers use group discussion and presentation strategies to improve critical thinking. Thinking students excel at logical arguments, while intuition students are creative and express ideas in unique ways. In Class 12, most students believe and instinct type. Teachers use reflective and emotional approaches, such as storytelling. Students of the feeling type are expressive when telling stories and showing empathy, while the instinct type is adaptive and fluid but needs support in organizing ideas.

Overall, the results indicated that teachers who adapted learning methods to students' STIFIn personality types—particularly in speaking activities—were more successful in increasing students' engagement and their speaking skills. The STIFIn-based approach helps teachers to recognize and accommodate students' diverse learning preferences in speaking activities. Here the researcher got the specifications for the STIFIn type in Table 1.

Table 1. STIFIn Type and Speech Activity Preferences

STIFIn Type	Main Characteristics	Preferred Speaking Activities
Sensing	Practical, concrete, fact-based	Object descriptions, step by step explanations, using visual aids
Thinking	Logical, analytical, systematic	Debates, argument presentations, explaining cause effect relationships
Intuiting	Creative, imaginative, conceptual	Storytelling, future predictions, exploring abstract ideas
Feeling	Emotional, expressive, personal	Sharing personal experiences, value-based discussions, warm settings
Instinct	Spontaneous, responsive, confident	Role plays, improvisation, spontaneous debates

Table 1 above illustrates the differences in characteristics and preferences for speech activities based on STIFIn personality types. Each type has a unique tendency to absorb

information and express ideas verbally. Understanding these characteristics is important for teachers to design a speaking learning strategy that is appropriate and effective for each student.

Researchers conducted interviews with 3 English teachers (2 senior English teachers and 1 junior English teacher) and 15 students (5 students from grades 10, 11, and 12) at Islamic boarding school Motivator Qur'an Darussalam to understand the application of STIFIn and gather their experience in using the concept to support and validate information from students and teachers. All interviews yielded the following results:

Emphasizes the importance of recognizing student strengths early on:

T1: *"Students with different STIFIn types had different reactions to the speaking task. Sensing students require a clear structure, while intuiting students prefer creative tasks. The STIFIn concept helped me adjust the approach."*

Teachers highlight benefits in classroom management:

T2: *"Understanding the type of students makes it easier for me to group them in speaking activities. When I tailor activities to their type, I observe an increase in participation."*

We were initially hesitant but acknowledged the improvement in student performance after trying STIFIn-based differentiation.

T3: *"Initially, I believed that it would be complicated. But after trying, especially on the Feeling and Thinking students, I saw them become more confident and expressive."*

The interviews with teachers revealed that using STIFIn concepts helped them understand the characteristics of student learning more deeply. By recognizing the dominant type of each student, teachers find it easier to design appropriate learning strategies, especially in speaking skills. Teachers recognize that this approach makes the learning process more purposeful and effective because they can adapt the material, methods, and type of speaking activity to the individual needs of students. The STIFIn-based approach encourages teachers to be creative in learning plans and promotes positive interactions in the classroom. Students are more enthusiastic and confident with tasks according to their dominant type. The following are the results of interviews with grade 10 students.

S1: *"I know how I learned. It turns out that I am more comfortable if I learn to speak when there is an example first."*

S2: *"I usually get confused when I'm told to speak directly. But after knowing my type, the tasks are easier."*

S3: *"I think the STIFIn concept is good because not all students can learn the same way."*

S4: *"I feel more confident when speaking because the task suits my style."*

S5: *"I hope teachers can continue to use STIFIn because I am more enthusiastic if I learn like this."*

Based on the above results, 10th graders showed high enthusiasm for the STIFIn concept. They are new to STIFIn and feel this method helps them understand learning styles. With clear examples, they feel more comfortable speaking in English and express hope for the continued use of this method. The following are the results of interviews with grade 11 students.

S6: *"I like tasks that are tailored to my character. So I can talk more actively."*

S7: *"If you know our type, we can also know our weaknesses and strengths. That helps a lot."*

S8: *"Speaking is more interesting. Usually I'm lazy; now I'm waiting for the turn of the presentation."*

S9: *"At first I thought it was complicated, but it helped me speak more fluently."*

S10: *"In my opinion, STIFIn makes teachers better know how to teach us. So we understand more easily."*

From the above interview, all 11th-grade students showed a thorough understanding of the STIFIn concept. They realized that knowing the STIFIn type helps them manage the advantages and disadvantages of speaking. Since applying the STIFIn method, many students have become more active and courageous in speaking tasks. Grade 11 is also motivated to improve speaking skills because this approach feels personal and relevant, and teachers better understand students' needs. The following are the results of interviews with grade 12 students.

S11: *"I feel like this approach makes me more free to speak in my style."*

S12: *"I'm usually nervous when I speak. However, the adjustments made to the task make it more convenient."*

S13: *"I can be more expressive and not be afraid to be wrong because the topic is close to me."*

S14: *"With STIFIn I found out that I prefer improvisation to memorization."*

S15: *"I hope this method is used more often because it feels fairer and more fun."*

In answering interviewers' questions, most 12th graders stated that the use of STIFIn concepts made them more independent and expressive when speaking and more fluent in conveying ideas according to their style. They also suggest the importance of introducing STIFIn early to make adaptation more effective and see this method as a beneficial way to prepare for communication after graduation.

Discussion

The results of this study indicated that the STIFIn-based approach had a positive impact on improving students' speaking skills. Teachers who understood the characteristics of each personality type were able to develop more targeted learning strategies. Teachers tried to recognize students' intelligence types and adapted teaching strategies accordingly, such as providing different speaking exercises for Sensing-type students with hands-on practice, Thinking-type students with logical argumentation, Feeling-type students with a more emotional and reflective approach, Intuiting-type

students with activities that stimulated creativity and imagination, such as storytelling or imaginative scenarios, and Instinct-type students with speaking exercises that were contextual and applicable, such as real-life simulations and speaking based on personal experiences. Project-based speaking exercises, such as vlogging, role-playing, and group debates, were tailored to the most appropriate approach for each type of intelligence.

Teachers provided motivational approaches and individual mentoring, particularly for students who struggled with public speaking. Teachers gave reinforcement based on an understanding of students' characters, including building their confidence. Students responded to this approach in various ways, from increased participation in speaking activities to greater confidence in using English in class.

The concept of STIFIN (sensing, thinking, intuiting, feeling, instinct) was developed by Poniman and his colleagues to identify types of human intelligence based on brain dominance (Poniman & Amalia, 2020; Simanullang, 2022). The theory classifies individuals into five types based on their brain dominance patterns, which affect the way they learn, interact, and communicate (Poniman & Amalia, 2020; Fadilah & Rizqi, 2024; Salafiyah et al., 2025). The understanding of this type of intelligence allows educators to adapt learning methods to suit the needs and potential of students, increasing the effectiveness of the learning process (Liu & Yu, 2023). In addition, research by Rahman Hz shows that certain types of STIFIN intelligence, such as Instinct and Feeling, have higher levels of anxiety, which can affect their ability to speak in public. This research highlights the importance of understanding individual intelligence types to overcome anxiety in public speaking (Hz, 2022).

In addition, students' perceptions also showed that when learning methods matched their personality types, they felt more motivated and confident in speaking (Zarrinabadi et al., 2021; Tai & Chen, 2024). This reinforced the importance of personalization in language skills learning.

4. CONCLUSION

The research shows that both teachers and students believe the STIFIn approach has successfully helped improve speaking skills and recognize students' intellectual potential. Both teachers and students reported notable improvements in learners' confidence and speaking abilities. Learning strategies tailored to STIFIn personality types offer a more personalized and flexible approach, which enhances students' engagement and motivation in the learning process. However, challenges remain in adapting methods to accommodate the diverse intelligence types, which requires thorough training and a more profound understanding from teachers.

Overall, the STIFIn concept presents an innovative approach that can enrich language learning practices in the classroom. In addition, further research suggests the development of a specific instrument on the STIFIn concept that is interactive on a wider scale.

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