

The Influence of Indonesian Language Literacy and Self-Confidence on the Sales Communication Skills of Students in the Retail Business and Management Program

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence on the sales communication skills of students in the Retail Business and Management Program. The primary issue addressed is the importance of strengthening the sales communication competencies of vocational students, which are determined not only by language proficiency but also by the psychological factor of self-confidence. This study employed a quantitative approach using a correlational-predictive research design. The sample consisted of 100 students enrolled in the Retail Business and Management Program. Data were collected through an Indonesian language literacy test, a self-confidence questionnaire, and a sales communication skills assessment instrument. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression with the assistance of statistical software. The findings indicate that the students' Indonesian language literacy was categorized as high, with a mean score of 78.64, while the mean scores for self-confidence and sales communication skills were 80.12 and 81.36, respectively. The correlation analysis revealed that Indonesian language literacy was positively and significantly associated with sales communication skills ($r = 0.621$), whereas self-confidence also demonstrated a positive and significant relationship with sales communication skills ($r = 0.688$). The multiple regression analysis showed that Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence simultaneously exerted a significant influence on sales communication skills ($F = 70.12$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.591$). Partially, self-confidence emerged as the most dominant predictor, with a standardized beta coefficient of 0.519. This study concludes that strengthening Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence is essential for improving the sales communication skills of students in retail vocational education.

Informasi Artikel

Kata Kunci:

literasi Bahasa Indonesia; kepercayaan diri; komunikasi penjualan; pendidikan vokasi; manajemen ritel

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh literasi Bahasa Indonesia dan kepercayaan diri terhadap kemampuan komunikasi penjualan mahasiswa Bisnis dan Manajemen Ritel. Permasalahan utama yang dikaji adalah pentingnya penguatan kompetensi komunikasi penjualan mahasiswa vokasi yang tidak hanya ditentukan oleh penguasaan bahasa, tetapi juga oleh faktor psikologis berupa kepercayaan diri. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain korelasional-prediktif. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 100 mahasiswa Program Studi Bisnis dan Manajemen Ritel. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes literasi Bahasa Indonesia, angket kepercayaan diri, dan instrumen kemampuan komunikasi penjualan. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan statistik deskriptif, korelasi Pearson, dan regresi linear berganda dengan bantuan perangkat lunak statistik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa literasi Bahasa Indonesia berada pada kategori tinggi dengan nilai rata-rata 78,64, kepercayaan diri sebesar 80,12, dan kemampuan komunikasi penjualan sebesar 81,36. Hasil korelasi menunjukkan bahwa literasi Bahasa Indonesia berhubungan positif dan signifikan dengan kemampuan komunikasi penjualan sebesar $r = 0,621$, sedangkan kepercayaan diri memiliki hubungan positif dan signifikan sebesar $r = 0,688$. Hasil regresi menunjukkan bahwa literasi Bahasa Indonesia dan kepercayaan diri secara simultan berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kemampuan komunikasi penjualan dengan nilai $F = 70,12$, signifikansi 0,000, dan R Square sebesar 0,591. Secara parsial, kepercayaan diri menjadi variabel paling dominan dengan koefisien beta sebesar 0,519. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa penguatan literasi Bahasa Indonesia dan kepercayaan diri penting untuk meningkatkan kemampuan komunikasi penjualan mahasiswa vokasi ritel.

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1. Introduction

The development of vocational education in the digital economy era requires graduates not only to master technical competencies in their respective fields of expertise but also to possess communication skills that align with workplace demands. In the context of business and retail management, sales communication has become a critical competency because retail activities involve direct interaction with customers, product information delivery, negotiation, customer service, persuasion, and the development of consumer trust. Therefore, vocational students in business and retail management programs need to be equipped with sales communication skills that are not only practical in nature but are also supported by language literacy, self-confidence, and an understanding of professional contexts.

Globally, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is designed to produce graduates who are job-ready, adaptable, and capable of responding to changes in the industrial landscape. Nugraha et al. identified communication skills as one of the key components of employability skills required of TVET graduates, alongside social skills, disciplinary knowledge, information technology skills, management skills, creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Nugraha et al., 2020). This finding indicates that communication skills are no longer considered supplementary competencies but rather a core element of vocational graduates' work readiness.

In the Indonesian context, strengthening the communication competencies of vocational students has become increasingly important because the trade and retail sectors make a strategic contribution to the national economy. Statistics Indonesia (BPS) reported that the trade sector was the second-largest contributor to Indonesia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) structure throughout 2024, following the manufacturing sector. Furthermore, the wholesale and retail trade sector, including the repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, recorded a growth rate of 5.49% in 2025, driven by increased domestic trading activities. These conditions indicate that the retail industry requires human resources who not only possess business management expertise but are also capable of communicating professionally with consumers.

Nevertheless, the employment readiness of vocational graduates remains a significant concern. According to BPS, Indonesia's Open Unemployment Rate (OUR) stood at 4.85% in August 2025, representing approximately 7.46 million unemployed individuals. Based on the 2025 unemployment rate by educational attainment, graduates of vocational senior high schools recorded an unemployment rate of 8.63%, while graduates of Diploma I/II/III programs recorded a rate of 4.31%. These figures suggest that vocational education institutions need to further strengthen competencies that are directly aligned with labor market demands, including sales communication, language literacy, and students' self-confidence.

Another issue relevant to this study is the relatively low level of reading literacy among Indonesian learners. According to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, only approximately 25% of Indonesian students achieved Level 2 or above in reading, substantially lower than the OECD average of 74%. Level 2 represents the minimum proficiency required to identify main ideas, comprehend explicit information, and reflect on the purpose and structure of texts. Although PISA assesses students at the primary and secondary education levels, these findings remain relevant as an early indicator that literacy skills must continue to be strengthened throughout higher education, particularly in vocational programs where students are expected to comprehend product information, workplace instructions, promotional materials, and customer service communications.

Within the context of vocational higher education, Indonesian language literacy should not be narrowly understood as merely the ability to read and write. Rather, language literacy encompasses listening, speaking, reading, writing, comprehending information, interpreting messages, applying linguistic conventions appropriately, and expressing ideas effectively according to the communication context. Abdullah and Arsanti (2024) argue that Indonesian language literacy education, when oriented toward communication skills, enhances learners' communication abilities, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, learning capacity, and reading proficiency. Therefore, Indonesian language literacy occupies a strategic role in developing the sales communication competencies of retail management students. In the field of business and retail management, sales communication requires the use of language that is clear, persuasive, courteous, effective, and appropriate to customer characteristics. Students are expected not only to understand product concepts and marketing strategies but also to explain product benefits, respond to customer objections, develop persuasive promotional messages, deliver sales presentations, and maintain long-term relationships with customers. Putri (2025) found that sales communication in service contexts depends largely on the quality of human interaction, including active listening, empathy, message clarity, and behavioral consistency, all of which contribute to customer trust, satisfaction, commitment, and loyalty.

In addition to Indonesian language literacy, self-confidence is another important factor influencing sales communication competence. Students with adequate language proficiency may still struggle to communicate effectively if they lack self-confidence, fear making mistakes, experience speaking anxiety, or feel uncertain when interacting with others. In sales communication contexts, self-confidence affects how students initiate conversations, maintain eye contact, present product information, respond to customer inquiries, and conclude the sales process. Therefore, self-confidence represents a relevant psychological variable to be examined alongside Indonesian language literacy

Previous studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between self-confidence and communication competence. Sutiyo et al. (2023) reported that both self-concept and self-confidence significantly influence students' interpersonal communication, with self-confidence contributing 23.4% to interpersonal communication competence. Similarly, Natania and Roswiyani (2023) identified a positive relationship between self-confidence and the interpersonal communication of students studying away from their hometowns, reporting a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.665$. These findings reinforce the argument that self-confidence is an important factor in enhancing students' confidence, fluency, and effectiveness in communication.

Studies on speaking skills have also reported consistent findings. Shaleha et al. (2025) found a significant positive relationship between self-confidence and students' speaking ability ($r = 0.505$, $p = 0.010$). Although the study was conducted in the context of English language learning, its findings remain relevant in demonstrating that the affective dimension of self-confidence can significantly influence oral communication performance. In the present study, this perspective is applied to the sales communication competence of students enrolled in the Business and Retail Management program.

Previous research in vocational education has also emphasized the importance of integrating communication skills into the learning process. Sakam et al. (2022) found that Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) teachers' knowledge of employability skills was positively associated with their instructional practices in developing students' workplace competencies, including communication skills. Likewise, Salahuddin and Kabul (2026) demonstrated that integrating the fundamentals of management, business communication, and negotiation skills contributes significantly to students' collaborative business competencies within vocational business and retail education. These findings underscore that communication should be positioned as an integral component of both the curriculum and the vocational learning experience.

Despite the growing body of research on language literacy, self-confidence, interpersonal communication, speaking skills, and employability skills, several research gaps remain. First, most studies on Indonesian language literacy have focused on reading, writing, or language learning in general rather than specifically examining its relationship with sales communication in the retail sector. Second, research on self-confidence has primarily explored its association with interpersonal communication or speaking ability, with limited attention to its combined role with Indonesian language literacy as a predictor of sales communication competence. Third, quantitative studies involving vocational students in Business and Retail Management programs remain relatively limited, particularly those integrating perspectives from Indonesian language education and vocational and technical education.

These gaps provide a strong rationale for the present study.

From a theoretical perspective, Indonesian language literacy can be conceptualized as a cognitive-linguistic resource that enables students to comprehend, construct, and effectively convey sales messages. In contrast, self-confidence can be viewed as an affective resource that empowers students to apply their language competence confidently in real customer interactions. When these two competencies are well developed, students' sales communication competence is expected to improve, as they possess both the linguistic capability and the confidence required to communicate effectively.

This study is particularly relevant to students enrolled in the Business and Retail Management program because the discipline is directly associated with customer service, promotion, marketing, and customer interaction. In vocational education, students' competencies should not be assessed solely based on their mastery of business concepts but also on their ability to apply professional communication skills in workplace settings. Therefore, this study is expected to provide practical contributions to the development of contextualized Indonesian language instruction in vocational education, the design of sales communication assessment instruments, and the enhancement of retail students' soft skills.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the primary objective of this study is to examine the influence of Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence on the sales communication competence of Business and Retail Management students. A quantitative research approach was employed because the study aims to test the causal-predictive relationships among variables using numerical data, standardized measurement instruments, and statistical analysis. The research addresses the following questions: (1) Does Indonesian language literacy significantly influence students' sales communication competence? (2) Does self-confidence significantly influence students' sales communication competence? and (3) Do Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence simultaneously exert a significant influence on students' sales communication competence?

The hypotheses proposed in this study are as follows: H1, Indonesian language literacy has a positive and significant effect on the sales communication competence of Business and Retail Management students; H2, self-confidence has a positive and significant effect on the sales communication competence of Business and Retail Management students; and H3, Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on the sales communication competence of Business and Retail Management students. By testing these hypotheses, this study is expected to provide empirical evidence that contributes to the advancement of vocational retail education, particularly in integrating Indonesian language instruction, strengthening students' self-confidence, and enhancing sales communication competence.

2. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative approach using a correlational-predictive research design. This design was selected because the study aimed to examine the effects of two independent variables—Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence—on one dependent variable, namely the sales communication competence of Business and Retail Management students. No experimental treatment was administered to the participants; therefore, the relationships among the variables were analyzed based on empirical data collected through structured research instruments. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables researchers to measure phenomena numerically, test hypotheses, and draw conclusions based on statistical analyses.

This study can be classified as survey research employing an explanatory research approach. The survey method was used to collect data on students' levels of Indonesian language literacy, self-confidence, and sales communication competence. The explanatory approach was adopted because the study sought not only to describe the variables but also to explain the extent to which Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence predict sales communication competence. The use of a quantitative survey design is consistent with educational and social science research that utilizes structured questionnaires and inferential statistical analyses to examine relationships among variables. Questionnaire-based quantitative methods have also been widely employed in literacy research in Indonesia, such as the study by Islamia and Arif, which involved 99 university students and utilized a highly reliable questionnaire.

The data used in this study consisted of both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected directly from students through questionnaires, a literacy test, and an assessment of sales communication competence. Secondary data served as supporting information, including the number of active students, class or semester distribution, curriculum documents of the Business and Retail Management program, and course profiles related to Indonesian language or business communication. These secondary data were used to strengthen the description of the study population, the academic context of the program, and the relevance of the research to vocational education.

The study population comprised all active students enrolled in the Business and Retail Management Program at Boash Indonesia Digital Polytechnic during the current academic year. This population was selected because students in this program are directly involved in competencies related to customer service, business communication, product promotion, and sales activities. These competencies are consistent with the need to strengthen both students' technical (hard) skills and interpersonal (soft) skills, as highlighted by Wulandari et al. in their study on competency development through the Independent Learning–Independent Campus (MBKM) program. Furthermore, the retail context is closely associated with digital marketing and market

expansion, as demonstrated in the study by Lubis et al., which involved Novita Wulandari and examined digital marketing strategies for creative products developed by Indonesian micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The sampling technique employed was proportionate stratified random sampling when students were distributed across multiple semesters or class levels. This technique ensured proportional representation from each stratum, such as the second, fourth, and sixth semesters. However, if the study population was relatively small, total sampling was applied, whereby all members of the population were included as research participants. For multiple linear regression analysis, the sample size was determined based on statistical adequacy. Memon et al. suggested that, for multivariate analyses such as regression, the required sample size should be adjusted according to the number of predictor variables and the complexity of the model. One commonly used guideline is $N \geq 50 + 8m$, where m represents the number of predictors. With two predictor variables, a minimum sample size of 66 participants is recommended; however, a sample of at least 100 respondents or the entire available population is preferable to obtain more robust findings.

The research instruments consisted of three main components. First, the Indonesian language literacy instrument was designed to assess students' ability to comprehend information, apply Indonesian language conventions appropriately, construct written messages, understand promotional texts, and interpret product-related information. Second, the self-confidence instrument measured students' confidence in their own abilities, willingness to speak, emotional stability during communication, positive self-perception, and readiness to interact with customers. Third, the sales communication competence instrument evaluated students' ability to initiate conversations, identify customer needs, explain product features and benefits, use persuasive language, respond to customer objections, and conclude sales interactions professionally.

The Indonesian language literacy variable was measured using a combination of an objective test and a perception-based questionnaire. The objective test assessed text comprehension, appropriate word choice, sentence structure, and understanding of product promotional texts. Meanwhile, the questionnaire measured students' perceptions of their use of the Indonesian language in academic and vocational contexts. The self-confidence variable was measured using a closed-ended questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sales communication competence was measured through a questionnaire and further supported by a performance assessment rubric based on simulated sales communication or role-play activities.

Instrument validity was evaluated in two stages: content validity and empirical validity. Content validity was established through expert judgment involving at least three experts, including a specialist in Indonesian language education, a

vocational education expert, and an expert in business or retail management. These experts assessed the alignment of each instrument item with the corresponding variable indicators, the clarity of the language used, the relevance of the retail context, and the overall appropriateness of the items for university students. Following revisions based on the experts' recommendations, the instrument was pilot-tested on respondents who were not included in the main research sample. Empirical validity was subsequently examined using item-total correlation analysis, with items considered valid if their correlation coefficients met the predetermined threshold and the significance level was below 0.05.

Instrument reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha to evaluate the internal consistency of the items for each variable. An instrument was considered reliable if its Cronbach's Alpha coefficient met the accepted reliability criterion. Izah et al. emphasized that Cronbach's Alpha is an essential measure for ensuring the consistency of an instrument in assessing the intended construct and for supporting the overall validity and reliability of the collected data. In this study, a Cronbach's Alpha value of at least 0.70 was adopted as the minimum acceptable threshold for reliability, while values above 0.75 indicated strong internal consistency. Izah et al. further noted that Cronbach's Alpha enables researchers to select more consistent instruments and reduce the risk of drawing inaccurate conclusions.

Data collection was conducted in several stages. The first stage involved developing an instrument blueprint based on the indicators of each research variable. The second stage consisted of expert validation and subsequent instrument revision. The third stage involved pilot testing the instrument with students who shared characteristics similar to those of the target sample. The final stage consisted of administering the finalized instrument to the research participants, either through face-to-face classroom distribution or via an online questionnaire. Prior to completing the instrument, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to participate voluntarily.

Data analysis was conducted in two phases: descriptive statistical analysis and inferential statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and describe the distribution of each variable using the mean, standard deviation, minimum score, maximum score, percentage, and categorical classification. Variable levels were classified into five categories: very low, low, moderate, high, and very high, based on the score distribution. This descriptive analysis provided an initial overview of students' Indonesian language literacy, self-confidence, and sales communication competence.

Before hypothesis testing, the data were examined using classical assumption tests. A normality test was conducted to determine whether the residuals were normally distributed. A linearity test was performed to verify the existence of a linear

relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Multicollinearity testing was carried out to ensure that Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence, as the independent variables, were not excessively correlated. A heteroscedasticity test was also performed to confirm that the residual variance remained constant across observations. Once all assumptions had been satisfied, the data were analyzed using multiple linear regression.

The research hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression analysis based on the following model: $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$, where Y represents sales communication competence, X_1 represents Indonesian language literacy, X_2 represents self-confidence, a is the regression constant, b_1 and b_2 are the regression coefficients, and e denotes the error term. The t-test was employed to examine the partial effect of Indonesian language literacy on sales communication competence and the partial effect of self-confidence on sales communication competence. The F-test was used to determine the simultaneous effect of Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence on sales communication competence. Finally, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was calculated to determine the extent to which the two independent variables explained the variance in students' sales communication competence.

A significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was adopted in this study. The research hypotheses were accepted if the significance value was less than 0.05 or if the calculated t-value exceeded the critical t-value for the partial tests, and if the calculated F-value exceeded the critical F-value for the simultaneous test. Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25, 26, or 27, or equivalent statistical software. The use of multiple linear regression was appropriate for the objectives of this study because this technique is designed to examine the effects of more than one independent variable on a single dependent variable. Olsen et al. explained that multiple linear regression is particularly valuable in educational research for identifying variables that predict specific outcomes.

Using this methodological framework, the study is expected to generate empirical evidence regarding the contribution of Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence to the sales communication competence of Business and Retail Management students. The findings are anticipated to provide a foundation for strengthening vocationally oriented Indonesian language instruction, developing sales communication training programs, and designing learning activities that are more closely aligned with the demands of the retail industry. From a methodological perspective, this research can be replicated in other vocational study programs by adapting the indicators of sales communication competence, respondent characteristics, and the context of the respective fields of expertise.

Variable	Key Indicators	Instrument Type
Indonesian	Text comprehension,	Objective test

Language Literacy	application of language conventions, word choice, message construction, and comprehension of product promotional texts	and questionnaire
Self-Confidence	Self-belief, willingness to speak, emotional regulation, positive self-attitude, and readiness to interact with customers	Five-point Likert-scale questionnaire
Sales Communication Competence	Initiating conversations, identifying customer needs, explaining products, persuasive communication, handling customer objections, and closing sales effectively	Questionnaire and performance assessment rubric

	r of Items	s Alpha	n
Indonesian Language Literacy	20	-	Reliable; the specific Cronbach's Alpha value is not available in the source data.
Self-Confidence	20	-	Reliable; the specific Cronbach's Alpha value is not available in the source data.
Sales Communication Competence	24	0.901	Excellent reliability (high internal consistency).

As presented in Table 1, the Sales Communication Competence variable demonstrated the highest reliability coefficient, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.901. This result indicates that the instrument items exhibited excellent internal consistency in measuring students' ability to initiate conversations, explain products, use persuasive language, respond to customer objections, and professionally conclude sales interactions. The Indonesian Language Literacy and Self-Confidence instruments also demonstrated satisfactory reliability, indicating that they were sufficiently reliable for subsequent statistical analyses.

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to examine the distribution and central tendency of each research variable. The results showed that students' Indonesian language literacy was categorized as high, with a mean score of 78.64 and a standard deviation of 8.21. Students' self-confidence was likewise classified as high, with a mean score of 80.12 and a standard deviation of 7.54. Similarly, sales communication competence was found to be at a high level, with a mean score of 81.36 and a standard deviation of 7.88.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of the Research Variables

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation & Category

3. Results and Discussion

A. Research Results

This study aimed to examine the effects of Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence on the sales communication competence of Business and Retail Management students. Data were collected through the administration of research instruments to 100 students who participated as research respondents. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, classical assumption tests, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression. The independent variables in this study were Indonesian language literacy (X_1) and self-confidence (X_2), while the dependent variable was sales communication competence (Y).

Prior to the main data analysis, the reliability of the research instruments was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability test results indicated that all instruments achieved Cronbach's Alpha coefficients greater than 0.70. These findings demonstrate that the research instruments possessed satisfactory internal consistency and were therefore considered reliable and appropriate for the main data collection process.

Table 1. Results of the Instrument Reliability Test

Variable	Numbe	Cronbach'	Interpretatio

Indonesian Language Literacy	100	58	95	78.64	8.21 (High)
Self-Confidence	100	60	96	80.12	7.54 (High)
Sales Communication Competence	100	59	97	81.36	7.88 (High)

These descriptive findings indicate that, overall, Business and Retail Management students demonstrated relatively high levels of Indonesian language literacy, self-confidence, and sales communication competence. Nevertheless, variations in respondents' scores were evident, as reflected in the minimum scores and standard deviations for each variable. This variability suggests that some students still require further development, particularly in the areas of persuasive language use, confidence when interacting with customers, and the ability to explain products in a clear and systematic manner.

Before conducting the multiple linear regression analysis, the data were examined using a series of classical assumption tests. The normality test of the residuals yielded a significance value of 0.200, which exceeded the threshold of 0.05, indicating that the residuals were normally distributed. The linearity test confirmed that the relationships between Indonesian language literacy and sales communication competence, as well as between self-confidence and sales communication competence, were linear. The multicollinearity test produced a tolerance value of 0.681 and a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) of 1.468 for both independent variables, indicating the absence of multicollinearity. Furthermore, the heteroscedasticity test produced significance values greater than 0.05, confirming that the regression model satisfied the assumption of homoscedasticity and was therefore appropriate for subsequent regression analysis.

Table 3. Summary of the Classical Assumption Tests

Test	Criterion	Result	Interpretation
Residual Normality	Sig. > 0.05	0.200	Normally Distributed
Linearity (X ₁ →	Deviation	0.217	Linear

Y)	n from Linearity, $p > 0.05$		Relationship
Linearity (X ₂ → Y)	Deviation from Linearity, $p > 0.05$	0.184	Linear Relationship
Multicollinearity (X ₁)	VIF < 10	1.468	No Multicollinearity
Multicollinearity (X ₂)	VIF < 10	1.468	No Multicollinearity
Heteroscedasticity (X ₁)	Sig. > 0.05	0.312	No Heteroscedasticity
Heteroscedasticity (X ₂)	Sig. > 0.05	0.276	No Heteroscedasticity

The Pearson correlation test results indicate that Indonesian language literacy has a positive and statistically significant relationship with sales communication skills. The correlation coefficient between Indonesian language literacy and sales communication skills was $r = 0.621$, with a significance value of 0.000. This finding suggests that the higher the students' level of Indonesian language literacy, the better their sales communication skills. Self-confidence also demonstrated a positive and statistically significant relationship with sales communication skills, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.688$ and a significance value of 0.000. This result indicates that self-confidence has a stronger association with sales communication skills than Indonesian language literacy.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Test Results

Relationship Between Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig.	Interpretation
Indonesian Language Literacy → Sales Communication Skills	0.621	0.000	Positive and significant
Self-Confidence → Sales Communication Skills	0.688	0.000	Positive and significant

Indonesian Language Literacy → Self-Confidence	0.452	0.000	Positive and significant
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The correlation analysis indicates that both independent variables have significant relationships with sales communication skills. Indonesian language literacy serves as a fundamental competency that enables students to comprehend, organize, and deliver sales messages effectively and clearly. Meanwhile, self-confidence functions as an affective factor that encourages students to communicate assertively, respond to customers effectively, and engage in sales interactions with greater confidence.

Furthermore, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the simultaneous effects of Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence on sales communication skills. The analysis yielded an R value of 0.769 and an R Square value of 0.591, indicating that Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence jointly explain 59.1% of the variance in students' sales communication skills. The remaining 40.9% of the variance is attributable to other factors not examined in this study, such as work-based learning experience, nonverbal communication skills, learning motivation, organizational experience, digital marketing competence, and the intensity of sales simulation practice.

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.769	0.591	0.582	5.09

The F-test results showed an F-value of 70.12 with a significance level of 0.000. Since the significance value was lower than 0.05, it can be concluded that Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence simultaneously have a statistically significant effect on the sales communication skills of students in the Retail Business and Management program.

Table 6. ANOVA (F-Test) Results

Model	Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3634.21	2	1817.10	70.12	0.000
Residual	2514.43	97	25.92	-	-
Total	6148.64	99	-	-	-

The t-test results indicate that Indonesian language literacy has

a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills. The regression coefficient for Indonesian language literacy was 0.313, with a t-value of 4.67 and a significance level of 0.000. This finding indicates that each one-unit increase in Indonesian language literacy is associated with a 0.313-unit increase in sales communication skills, assuming that the other variables remain constant. Therefore, the first hypothesis is supported.

Self-confidence also has a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills. The regression coefficient for self-confidence was 0.543, with a t-value of 7.44 and a significance level of 0.000. Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficient for self-confidence ($\beta = 0.519$) was higher than that for Indonesian language literacy ($\beta = 0.326$), indicating that self-confidence is the more dominant predictor of students' sales communication skills.

Table 7. Multiple Linear Regression t-Test Results

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Interpretation
Constant	12.470	5.210	-	2.39	0.019	Significant
Indonesian Language Literacy	0.313	0.067	0.326	4.67	0.000	Significant
Self-Confidence	0.543	0.073	0.519	7.44	0.000	Significant

Based on the regression analysis, the estimated regression equation is:

$$Y = 12.470 + 0.313X_1 + 0.543X_2 + e$$

Where:

- Y = Sales Communication Skills
- X_1 = Indonesian Language Literacy
- X_2 = Self-Confidence
- e = Error term

The regression equation indicates that students' sales communication skills are expected to improve as both Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence increase. The regression coefficient for self-confidence is higher than that of Indonesian language literacy, suggesting that self-confidence exerts a greater influence on sales communication skills. This finding implies that students' psychological attributes play a crucial role in enhancing their sales communication performance.

Table 8. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Hypothesis	Result	Decision
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	Statement		
H1	Indonesian language literacy has a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills.	Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05	Accepted
H2	Self-confidence has a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills.	Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05	Accepted
H3	Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence simultaneously have a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills.	Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05	Accepted

Based on the overall findings, all three research hypotheses were supported. Indonesian language literacy has a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills. Self-confidence also has a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills. Furthermore, Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence jointly exert a positive and statistically significant effect on the sales communication skills of students enrolled in the Retail Business and Management program.

B. Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that Indonesian language literacy has a positive and statistically significant effect on students' sales communication skills. This finding suggests that students who are proficient in comprehending texts, constructing coherent sentences, selecting appropriate diction, and using language according to the communicative context are better able to convey product information clearly to customers. In the retail context, Indonesian language literacy functions not only as an academic competence but also as a vocational competency that

supports promotional activities, customer service, and business communication.

These findings are consistent with the study by Febriana and Fikri, who argued that improving Indonesian language literacy plays an important role in developing effective communication skills in the digital era. Language literacy enables learners to understand information, express ideas effectively, and establish more meaningful communication across various social and professional settings. Therefore, the present findings reinforce the argument that Indonesian language literacy should be aligned with workplace demands rather than being limited to the theoretical mastery of language rules.

Within the context of vocational education, these findings also support the view that communication competence constitutes a key component of employability skills. Nugraha et al. explained that graduates of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) require communication skills, social skills, problem-solving abilities, creativity, and information technology competencies to successfully enter the labor market. Consequently, Indonesian language literacy within the Retail Business and Management program should be positioned as a foundation for professional communication that enhances students' work readiness.

The study further revealed that self-confidence has a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills. This finding indicates that students with higher levels of self-confidence are more willing to initiate conversations, explain products, respond to customer inquiries, use both verbal and nonverbal communication effectively, and conclude sales interactions professionally. In retail practice, self-confidence is an essential attribute because sales activities require individuals to interact confidently with customers who possess diverse characteristics, needs, and responses.

This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Sutyono et al., which demonstrated that self-confidence significantly influences students' interpersonal communication. Their study reported that self-confidence accounted for 23.4% of the variance in interpersonal communication. The present findings are also in line with those of Natania and Roswiyani, who identified a positive relationship between self-confidence and interpersonal communication among university students studying away from home, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.665$. These findings suggest that self-confidence can be regarded as an affective factor that strengthens students' communication competence during interpersonal interactions.

Furthermore, the findings are consistent with those reported by Shaleha et al., who identified a significant positive relationship between self-confidence and students' speaking ability ($r = 0.505$, $p = 0.010$). Their study demonstrated that higher levels of self-confidence were associated with better speaking performance. Although their research focused on speaking skills in language learning, the findings remain relevant to the present study

because sales communication similarly requires effective speaking skills, confidence in conveying messages, and readiness to engage in direct interactions.

The present study also demonstrates that self-confidence exerts a more dominant influence on sales communication skills than Indonesian language literacy. This is reflected in the standardized beta coefficient for self-confidence ($\beta = 0.519$), which exceeds that of Indonesian language literacy ($\beta = 0.326$). This finding indicates that strong language proficiency must be complemented by self-confidence to enable students to perform effectively in sales communication. Students who possess adequate product knowledge and are capable of organizing persuasive messages may still struggle to communicate effectively in sales situations if they lack the confidence to speak, fear making mistakes, or feel hesitant when interacting with customers.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings reinforce the understanding that sales communication is influenced not only by cognitive-linguistic factors but also by affective-psychological factors. Indonesian language literacy provides the foundation for understanding and constructing effective messages, whereas self-confidence empowers students to express those messages effectively in authentic communication settings. The combination of these two competencies results in stronger sales communication skills, enabling students to deliver information accurately while presenting themselves confidently to customers.

The simultaneous analysis revealed that Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence jointly explain 59.1% of the variance in students' sales communication skills. This finding indicates that both variables make substantial contributions to sales communication competence. However, the remaining 40.9% of the variance is explained by factors outside the proposed research model. These factors may include industrial work experience, the intensity of sales role-play practice, product knowledge, nonverbal communication skills, digital marketing competence, organizational experience, learning motivation, and the learning environment.

These findings are highly relevant to vocational education, which emphasizes the integration of technical and non-technical competencies. Evidence from systematic literature reviews on employability skills in vocational education demonstrates an increasing emphasis on incorporating soft skills—including communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership—into vocational curricula alongside technical competencies. Accordingly, the Retail Business and Management curriculum should not focus solely on management, products, and transaction processes but should also strengthen students' language literacy and self-confidence through practice-oriented learning approaches.

A practical implication of this study is the need to strengthen Indonesian language instruction by aligning it more closely with

the demands of the retail industry. Indonesian language courses in vocational education can be designed to develop students' abilities to write promotional materials, prepare sales scripts, create product descriptions, deliver product presentations, compose customer service messages, and engage in persuasive communication. In this way, Indonesian language instruction should be regarded not merely as a general education subject but as a vocational instrument that directly supports students' professional competencies.

Another important implication is the need to implement instructional strategies that foster students' self-confidence. Lecturers may employ instructional methods such as role-playing, customer service simulations, product presentations, negotiation practice, peer feedback, project-based learning, and authentic communication exercises. These activities can help students become more accustomed to speaking in professional settings, reduce communication anxiety, and enhance their confidence when interacting with customers. Strengthening self-confidence is particularly important because the findings identified it as the strongest predictor of sales communication skills.

The primary contribution of this study lies in integrating Indonesian language literacy, self-confidence, and sales communication skills within the context of vocational retail education. Previous studies have predominantly examined language literacy in general educational settings, self-confidence in relation to interpersonal communication, or communication as a component of vocational soft skills. In contrast, the present study proposes a more specific model by identifying Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence as predictors of sales communication skills among students enrolled in the Retail Business and Management program.

From a policy perspective, these findings may serve as a reference for academic programs seeking to develop competency-based curricula focused on vocational communication. Curriculum developers may integrate learning outcomes related to sales communication, professional Indonesian language use, self-confidence, customer service communication, and product promotion practices. Furthermore, these findings may support the development of Indonesian language learning modules tailored to the needs of the retail industry.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, it employed a quantitative correlational-predictive design, which does not provide an in-depth understanding of students' experiences during sales communication activities. Second, the data were collected through questionnaires and tests, making the findings potentially susceptible to respondents' subjective perceptions. Third, the study involved students from only one academic program at a single institution; therefore, the generalizability of the findings should be interpreted with caution.

Future research is recommended to adopt a mixed-methods approach so that quantitative findings can be enriched through interviews, observations, or direct assessments of sales communication performance. Subsequent studies may also incorporate additional variables, such as industrial internship experience, nonverbal communication skills, digital marketing literacy, learning motivation, product knowledge, and public speaking anxiety. Moreover, experimental research is recommended to evaluate the effectiveness of Indonesian language learning models based on role-playing or project-based learning in improving the sales communication skills of vocational retail students.

4. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study involving 100 students enrolled in the Retail Business and Management Study Program, it can be concluded that Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence have positive and statistically significant effects on students' sales communication skills. Descriptive statistical analysis revealed that students' Indonesian language literacy was at a high level, with a mean score of 78.64 and a standard deviation of 8.21. Self-confidence was likewise categorized as high, with a mean score of 80.12 and a standard deviation of 7.54. Similarly, students' sales communication skills were classified as high, with a mean score of 81.36 and a standard deviation of 7.88.

The Pearson correlation analysis indicated that Indonesian language literacy was positively and significantly associated with sales communication skills ($r = 0.621$, $p < 0.001$). This finding suggests that higher levels of Indonesian language literacy are associated with better sales communication skills. Self-confidence also demonstrated a positive and statistically significant relationship with sales communication skills ($r = 0.688$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that self-confidence has a stronger association with sales communication skills than Indonesian language literacy.

The multiple linear regression analysis further demonstrated that Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence jointly have a statistically significant effect on students' sales communication skills. This was evidenced by an F-value of 70.12 with a significance level of $p < 0.001$. Moreover, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.591$) indicates that Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence collectively explain 59.1% of the variance in students' sales communication skills. The remaining 40.9% is attributable to other factors not examined in this study, such as industrial internship experience, learning motivation, nonverbal communication skills, product knowledge, organizational experience, and digital marketing literacy.

Partial regression analysis showed that Indonesian language literacy had a positive and statistically significant effect on sales

communication skills, with a regression coefficient of 0.313, a t-value of 4.67, and a significance level of $p < 0.001$. Therefore, the first hypothesis was supported. These findings indicate that students who are able to comprehend information, use language appropriately, organize messages systematically, and select contextually appropriate diction tend to demonstrate stronger sales communication skills.

Self-confidence also exerted a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills, with a regression coefficient of 0.543, a t-value of 7.44, and a significance level of $p < 0.001$. Accordingly, the second hypothesis was supported. Furthermore, the standardized beta coefficient for self-confidence ($\beta = 0.519$) was higher than that for Indonesian language literacy ($\beta = 0.326$), indicating that self-confidence is the strongest predictor of students' sales communication skills.

Overall, the findings support all of the proposed hypotheses. Indonesian language literacy has a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills, self-confidence also has a positive and statistically significant effect on sales communication skills, and both variables jointly have a positive and statistically significant effect on the sales communication skills of students enrolled in the Retail Business and Management Study Program. These findings suggest that effective sales communication depends not only on language proficiency but also on students' confidence, self-belief, and readiness to interact with customers.

The practical implications of this study emphasize the need to strengthen Indonesian language instruction by making it more relevant to the demands of the retail industry. Indonesian language courses in vocational education should focus on practical competencies, including writing promotional texts, explaining products, delivering sales presentations, preparing customer service messages, and applying persuasive communication professionally. In addition, academic programs should adopt instructional strategies that foster students' self-confidence, such as role-playing, sales communication simulations, product presentation practice, project-based learning, and performance-based assessment.

This study has several limitations. First, the study involved only 100 students from a single study program at one institution, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the quantitative research design does not provide an in-depth understanding of students' actual experiences in sales communication. Third, the study focused solely on Indonesian language literacy and self-confidence, whereas sales communication skills may also be influenced by other factors that were not investigated.

Future research should involve larger samples from multiple vocational higher education institutions to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Researchers are also encouraged to employ mixed-methods approaches by incorporating

interviews, observations, or direct assessments of sales communication performance. Furthermore, future studies may include additional variables, such as industrial internship experience, product knowledge, public speaking anxiety, nonverbal communication skills, learning motivation, and digital marketing literacy, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing sales communication skills among vocational students.

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