



## THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM AND SPEAKING PERFORMANCE IN INDONESIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study purposes to discover the level of student's speaking performance and to investigate the correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance in EFL context. This research is conducted due to the fact that speaking becomes a problem for many EFL senior high school students, proved by their low English speaking performance. The data are collected from 102 students consisting 51 males and 51 females. A speaking test in the form of role play and a closed-ended questionnaire adapted from a well-known self-esteem scale, an adult version of Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI), are given to the students. The score is processed in SPSS Statistics 17.0 to determine the correlation between the two variables. The research findings show that the students' English speaking performance stands on medium level and there is a highly significant positive correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance in EFL context with the correlation coefficient obtained 0.731. It is suggested that students have to try to believe that they are competent and worthy so that they are not reluctant to speak in English language. Besides, school managements and teachers should also design school activities which can stimulate students' self-esteem.

**Keywords:** Self-Esteem, Speaking Performance, EFL context, correlation

### INTRODUCTION

One among many indicators of successful second language acquisition (SLA) is the ability to speak in the target language since learner's ability in producing a speech implies that they have a good communicative competence for the reason that speaking in a language requires prior knowledge such as vocabulary, morphology, phonology, syntax, and discourse structure to access words and combine them into phrases, clauses, and longer units of text (Saville-Troike, 2006). However, competence could not be directly measured since it is included to tacit knowledge (Ana, 2003). One way to check learner's competence in producing a speech is by measuring their performance with administering a test, which provokes them to produce a speech and the results would imply their competence (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Indonesian education system also expects that junior high school and senior high school students have a good competence in speaking English since it is one of four skills demanded in the 2006 and 2013 national curriculum (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional [Depdiknas], 2006; Departemen Pendidikan Nasional [Depdiknas], 2016)

However, in fact, some learners are not successful like others in terms of producing a speech. It becomes a problem for many people who learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It is also supported by Bygate (1987) which stated that one of the basic problems in foreign language teaching is preparing learners to be able to use the language. In Indonesian context, some students even do not want to talk or say anything because they are shy to talk in front of other students, they are fear to make mistakes, and they keep using their own language because they tend to use language in the best way they know in case of talking something spontaneously (Febriyanti, 2011). Additionally, a research by Mukminin, Masbirorotni, Noprival, Sutarno, Arif, & Maimunah (2015) on senior high school students in Jambi also found that many learners are difficult in producing a speech. Moreover, Efrizal (2012) reported that the data in his research pre-assessment conducted in Bengkulu showed that students' speaking is 0% excellent, 0% very good, 20% good, 36% low, and 44% failed.

In line with this problem, individual differences (IDs) are considered to be related to the degree of learner's success in acquiring language. Some of the factors that could contribute are age, aptitude, intelligence, attitude (De Bot, K., Lowie, & Verspoor, 2005) sex, cognitive style, cognitive style, learning strategies, self-esteem, risk-taking, and anxiety (Brown, 2000). Regarding those factors, self-esteem is presumed as the most dominant factor which is related to student's speaking performance due to the findings by Safa'ati & Setiawati's research (2013) which also discovered that many learners (37% of 30 respondents) have low self-esteem. This assumption is also supported by the researcher's experience as a pre service teacher at a junior high school in Bandung, which discovered that some students who had a high degree of self-esteem were able to produce a speech in English and student's self-esteem level were increased when they had a good speaking skill.

Self-esteem is defined as the evaluation made by an individual and maintained with regard to himself, which expresses an attitude of approval and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy (Coopersmith, 1967). Many experts also elaborated that self-esteem plays an important role in creating successful L2 learning. Harmer (2007) stated similar indication of students who avoid speaking in the classroom. He explained that one of many reasons why students are often reluctant to speak is because they are not predisposed to expressing themselves in front of other people, especially when they are being asked to give personal information or opinions. Additionally, Rubio (2007) also explained that in the context of language learning, having low self-esteem can lead to serious consequences in which learners may avoid taking the necessary risks to acquire communicative competence in the target language and may feel deeply insecure and even drop out of the class.

Having a willingness to speak in a foreign language might means that students are able to actualize themselves. Relating this to Maslow's theory (Omrod, 2011), in actualizing themselves, people need to satisfy their physiological needs first, then their need for safety, love and belonging needs, and esteem needs. Alternatively stated, students must have a good level self-esteem before they actualize themselves in producing a speech in foreign language, in this case, English. This theory is known as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which is drawn as follows.

Figure 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Additionally, self-esteem gives a great influence to L2 learning process. As what Brown (2000) explained that self-esteem is probably the most persuasive aspect of any human behavior. There is no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of yourself, and belief in your own capabilities for that activity.

Several studies related to this problem had been conducted to develop theories about the correlation between self-esteem and English speaking performance in L2 acquisition. Wullur's study (2014) found out a significant, positive and moderate correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance for grade 11 students of high school in North Minahasa regency, indicated by the three exceptionally low aspects of self-esteem, namely embarrassed to be laughed at, unwillingness to become speaker of the group, and hesitation or anxiety to speak in front of the class. Moreover, another research by Gustaman (2015) reported that according to her research to 62 Indonesian eleventh grade students, the correlation gotten was 0.509, which showed that there was a moderate, positive, and significant correlation between students' self-esteem and their English speaking competencies.

Due to limited research found in examining this problem in Indonesian context, another research with different research site is still needed to explore more about the correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance to clarify whether there is any significant correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance in Indonesian context. Based on the explanation above, it is important to conduct a study regarding the correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance in EFL context. The research questions in this research are:

1. At what level is the students' English speaking performance?
2. Is there any significant correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance in EFL context?

This study purposes to find out the level of student's speaking performance and to discover whether there is a significant correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance or not. The hypotheses tested in this study are written as follows:

$H_0$  :  $\rho = 0$  (There is no significant correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance)

$H_1$  :  $\rho \neq 0$  (There is a significant correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance)

## METHOD

This research employed quantitative approach, correlational study, using Microsoft Excel 2010 and SPSS Statistics, 17.0 since this study mainly tested statistical relationships between variables which the researcher hypothesizes (Hamied and Malik, 2016). In addition, this study measured two variables and determined whether they show any consistent pattern of relationship (Gravetter & Forzano, 2016). The two variables being examined were students' speaking performance as dependent variable and student's self-esteem as independent variable. The population of this study was formed by all eleventh grade students at one public school in Batang Hari, Jambi, which amounts 204 students consisting of 82 male students and 122 female students. 102 students consisting 51 male students and 51 female students were taken as the sample using disproportionate stratified random sampling because both of males and females will be deliberately randomly selected in the same size (Johnson, 2015).

Two data collection techniques which had conformed validity and reliability test were used in this research. First, a well-known scale completed with the calculation method, an adult version of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI) developed by Ryden (1978), has been used to collect data for student's self-esteem. There are 50 questions to measure

self-esteem and 8 questions acted as the lie scale to help determining if respondents try too hard to appear having high self-esteem (Alters & Schiff, 2011). This scale was adjusted to English learning context and translated into Bahasa Indonesia in order to avoid misunderstanding. Based on the calculation method provided in the document of self-esteem scale, participants' score was converted and categorized in this criterion below.

Table 1. Self-Esteem Level Categories of CSEI

Male	Female	Self-esteem level
33	32	Significantly below average
36	35	Somewhat below average
40	39	Average
44	43	Somewhat above average
47	46	Significantly above average

(Ryden, 1978)

As stated previously, the questionnaire has gotten through validity test, in which the  $r$  obtained for each item was greater than  $r_{table}$ , which means that it is valid, so that each indicator can measure what will be measured. Besides, it is also passed reliability test with the Cronbach Alpha value as much as 0,920 in which it was greater than  $> 0,60$ . As stated by Ghozali (2005) that a variable is reliable if Cronbrach alpha value is greater than 0.60.

Then, the speaking test, in the form of role play was employed to collect data for students' speaking performance. Role play was used because it opens some window of opportunity for students to use discourse that might otherwise be difficult to elicit (Brown, 2001) and it is more natural than if teacher were involved in speaking activity (Hughes, 2003). Student's performance in producing oral language was measured by three teachers and the score was processed considering interrater reliability formula. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2010), inter-rater reliability could help avoiding human error, subjectivity, and bias which may enter into the scoring process. Besides, the speaking rubric used was Brown's oral proficiency test scoring categories, with five score levels (Very low, low, medium, high, and very high) for each of six major categories scored, namely grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, and task (Brown, 2001). The first research question was concluded based on these scoring categories.

In terms of answering the second research question, the correlational study using Pearson product-moment correlation was used due to the normality of data (Rasinger, 2013) to determine the correlation between the dependent variable and independent variables (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2008). In this case, hypothesis testing would be included (Coolidge, 2000). The result would be concluded based on the following correlation coefficient interpretation.

Table 2. Correlation coefficient interpretation

Interpretation	R
Very Weak	0.0-0.19
Weak	0.2-0.39
Moderate	0.4-0.59
Strong	0.6-0.79
Very Strong	0.8-1.00

(Evans, 1996)

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the first research question revealed that the students' performance is on medium level. The calculation done showed that the average score of each aspect

measured is 2.62 for grammar, 2.62 for vocabulary, 2.66 for comprehension, 2.56 for fluency, 2.58 for pronunciation, and 2.61 for task category. Each score is rounded to 3 and it showed that students' speaking performance stands on medium level.

Then, the investigation of the second research question discovered a highly significant positive correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance with the correlation coefficient 0.731. The result was obtained after correlating self-esteem score with speaking score taken from 102 students. The scores of both variables were calculated using SPSS Statistics 17.0. The analysis used to see the correlation between speaking performance with self-esteem was Pearson correlation with 2 X 2 cross tabulations.

Based on the calculation, the correlation between the two variables was drawn in the table below.

Table 3. The Correlation between Self-Esteem and Speaking Performance

		T1	T2
T1	Pearson Correlation	1	.731*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	102	102
T2	Pearson Correlation	.731*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	102	102

From the table above, it was shown that p-value was 0.000 which was less than 0.05. When  $p\text{-value} < \alpha = 0.05$ ,  $H_0$  was rejected which means that there is a correlation between speaking performance with self-esteem. In addition, the table above also showed that the correlation coefficient was 0.731. Based on the degree of correlation coefficient drawn previously, value 0.731 of the correlation coefficient showed that there was a strong or highly significant positive correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance.

The result of this study is supporting previous research which revealed that there is a positive correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance, although the level of significance is different. A research by Gustaman (2015) which investigated the correlation between student's self-esteem and their English speaking competence reported that the correlation between the two variables was 0.509. It showed that there was a moderate, positive, and significant correlation between students' self-esteem and their English speaking competencies.

Moreover, a study conducted by Kalanzadeh, Mahnegar, Hassannejad, & Bakhtiarvand (2013) also found out that there is a statistically significant correlation between the students' self-esteem and their speaking skills. Additionally, the finding was also in accordance with Wullur's study (2014) which reported a significant, positive and moderate correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance for grade 11 students of high school in North Minahasa regency. When speaking performance is correlated significantly with self-esteem, it means that self-esteem is related with students' speaking performance, as stated by Brown (2000) that there is no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of yourself, and belief in your own capabilities for that activity.

## CONCLUSION

This study purposed to discover the level of student's speaking performance and to examine the correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance. The results revealed that the students' speaking performance stands on medium level and there is a highly significant positive correlation between self-esteem and speaking performance in EFL

context with the correlation coefficient obtained 0.731. It is suggested that students have to try to believe that they are competent and worthy so that they are not reluctant to speak in English language. Besides, school managements and teachers should also design school activities which can stimulate students' self-esteem.

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