THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' SELF – ESTEEM AND THEIR ENGLISH SPEAKING COMPETENCIES
(A Study of Eleventh Grade Students at a Public Senior High School in Cimahi)

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Abstact: This study was intended to examine the correlation between students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies at a Senior High School in Cimahi. Sixty two students of eleventh grade were involved. The self – esteem questionnaire and the speaking test were given to the students to measure the level of their self – esteem and their English speaking competencies. The scores were calculated in IBM SPSS 22 to find out the correlation of the two variables. The findings showed there was a positive significant correlation between students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies at the moderate level. This study concluded that self – esteem is taken into consideration to students' achievement in speaking English.

Keywords: Self – Esteem, Speaking Competencies, Self – Esteem and Language Learning.

Introduction

English is a mediator used to communicate and to strengthen the relationship among people over the world. In Indonesia, English has been officially taught in schools since Indonesia declared its independence until now. National Education Curriculum establishes English as a main subject that needs to be learned by the students in every school. Speaking is one of the three skills that has to be acquired by the students in learning English. Students' success in mastering English is measured from the way they speak and deliver the message orally, and also how they value their capability and worth.

The position of English as a foreign language is not used in daily conversation, consequently many students in public schools have less opportunity to practice; and then they are afraid to speak English, so they are not willing and feel anxious to speak English. Therefore, there are some reasons that make students have their own willingness to speak. Some students are courageous; some are afraid to speak English because they avoid making mistakes in pronouncing the words or delivering ideas orally.

Speaking a foreign language requires thinking and involving affective factors; one of which is self – esteem.

Self – esteem is one factor that triggers the students' achievement in speaking English. Self – esteem deals with feelings; how they feel that they are capable of doing something well. Previous experiences like success and failures are the examples that can lead the students to how they value themselves. It is in line with Brown (1994 & 2000), self-esteem is one of the personality variables that contributes to the oral production achievement because the students will achieve their success in learning a foreign language if they feel confident and believe in themselves.

Based on the burning issues stated above, this study is purposed to answer the following research questions:

1. What level of self-esteem and English speaking competencies are students mostly at?
2. What is the correlation between the students' self-esteem and their English speaking competencies?

Literature Review

The following theories are related to this study.

- **Theories of Self – Esteem**

Rosenberg (1995) says that self – esteem is the individuals' positive evaluation or pride of the self, how they feel that they are persons of value and capabilities. Self – esteem is the part of affective domain that influences students' activities in the learning process because the general feeling of doing well in school is important for the sake of the school achievement (Al-Hattab, 2000; Shaalvik, 1990). Brown (2000) also reinforces that there is no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self–esteem, self–confidence and self–efficacy – belief in your own capabilities to successfully perform that activity.

According to Brown (2000), in general, he classifies self-esteem into three types:

a. **Global Self – Esteem**

Global self – esteem refers to the individual's overall evaluation of the self – appraisal which is strongly dealing with psychological well-being.

b. **Specific Self – Esteem**

Specific self-esteem is a better predictor of behavioral outcomes and actual performance on the concept attainment test (Rosenberg et.al, 1995; Shrauger, 1972). Specific self-esteem has a strong effect on school performance; moreover, having a good specific self – esteem is needed for students to acquire second or foreign language (Brown, 2000; Rosenberg, 1995).

c. Task Self – Esteem

In the educational domain, task self-esteem relates to particular tasks within specific situations which focus on one special subject area (Brown, 2000). Task self-esteem appropriately refers to one's self-evaluation of a particular aspect of the process, such as speaking, writing, a particular class in a second language, or even a special kind of classroom exercise (Brown, 2000). In this study, task self-esteem is appropriate to be connected to oral performance.

This study focuses on low and high characteristics of self – esteem. Students with high self – esteem:

1. Is open to criticism and deal with mistakes comfortably. They will learn their failures as the experience which leads to a better life.
2. Can give and receive expressions of feeling, appreciation and so on spontaneously.
3. Has better relationships with people and make better impression on others because they tend to be likeable and attractive.
4. Accepts changes in different life aspects and behave flexible in responding to situation and challenges without being worried.
5. Can handle under conditions of stress.

6. Speaks about his proficiency and lack of it with honesty and without being embarrassed because they appreciate their own merits, worthiness, and capabilities of doing well in some contexts.
7. Has more willingness to speak in groups easily and confidentially without being shy and fear of making mistakes.
8. Does not consider him or herself inferior to others and think that all people have the same ability.

Meanwhile, students with low self – esteem:
1. Feels awkward, shy, conspicuous and unable to express him or herself with confidence.
2. Is worried about making mistakes and is always embarrassed to expose him or herself to anything new or a particular situation.
3. Is hyper sensitive and hyper alert to signs of rejection.
4. Deals with life in a protective and defensive manner.
5. Is depressed, unhappy and shows a greater degree of anxiety and aggression.
6. Does not feel satisfaction with his/her life and underestimates with their abilities.
7. Is vulnerable to criticism and has greater social anxiety.

8. Feels inferior to others or unworthy.

9. Does not like leadership role or voluntary tasks.

10. Behaves inconsistently.

11. Suffers a lot from personal mistakes and sees failure as a result of deficiency in his/her abilities.

• **Aspect of Speaking Competencies**

Byrn (as cited in Bouchareb, 2010) states that speaking is a two-way processing between the speaker and the listener, it makes use of both speaking which is a productive skill and listening with understanding which is a receptive skill. Speaking is important, as it is said by Richards & Rodgers (1986) that it is one of the central elements of communication in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching. The more definitions of speaking are uttered by other experts.

According to Harmer and Brown (2001), speaking competencies are the ability to speak fluently presupposes not only knowledge of language features, but also the ability to process information and language "on the spot" and carry on a conversation reasonably and competently. They know about a language – verb forms, vocabulary items, basic grammatical patterns, and the like, and quite another to know how to use it effectively in a conversational exchange

(Savignon, 1988). In addition, speaking competence is the ability to communicate orally in clear, coherent, and persuasive language appropriate to purpose, occasion, and audience (Utama, 2013).

Harmer (2001) declares dimensions of speaking competence, which are (1) ability to process information on the spot (mental/social processing), (2) knowledge of language features. The Standford FLOSEM adapted by Padilla & Sung (1999) mentions the main points of language should be taken into account, including comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, expression, and structure (grammar).

There are some activities to assess students' speaking competencies such as *Acting from a Script, Role – Play, Interviews, Responses to a Series of Picture, and Reporting* (Harmer, 2001 and Kayi, 2006). This study would like to choose a role – play as a medium to evaluate student's speaking competency. Role play is "a classroom activity which gives the student the opportunity to practice the language, the aspects of role behavior, and the actual roles he may need outside the classroom" (Livingstone, 1983). They are pretending they are in various social contexts and have a variety of social roles (Kayi, 2006).

- **Self – Esteem in Language Learning**

The intrinsic factor of self-esteem has been reported as one of the personality factors present during any cognitive or affective activity in the foreign or second language classroom (Kanafani, 2009). Bounchareb (2010) reinforces that self-esteem is considered an important affective element in the process of scholastic and educational achievement.

In addition, Heyde (cited in Brown, 2000) studied the effects of different levels of self- esteem on the performance of an oral production task by American college students learning French as a foreign language. She found that the different levels of self-esteem correlated positively with performance of oral production measures. Thus, self-esteem is considered an important affective element in the process of scholastic and educational achievement (Bounchareb, 2010). Thus, students with high self-esteem tend to take risks and learn more foreign language in depth from failures they made.

One of studies which conduct this issue is Koosha's study. Koosha, et al., (2011) conducted the study in Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan Branch. Twenty undergraduate EFL students were involved in this research; they filled the questionnaire and followed speaking tests. The result showed a significant relationship between self-esteem and speaking skill with fluency exerting the most influence, the other skills affects as well, yet not statistically significant. Koosha et al., (2011) concludes those who enjoy higher levels of self-esteem are more sociable, more risk taking and more prepared to share their views with others regardless of whether, lexically or grammatically, they produce what can be regarded as accurate or standard or even correct English. Self-esteem and speaking performance have a correlation which relates to one and another, when one with high self-esteem, he or she becomes more successful learners in oral communication as well.

Methodology

This study used a correlation study with a descriptive method. A descriptive study involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis and answer research questions concerning the present existing condition of the participants (Gay, cited in Escalona, 2005). Nebeker (2006) says that a descriptive study is referred to as "correlation" or "observational" studies. Even though the correlational study deals with numerical scores, however, is sometimes referred to as a form of descriptive research because it describes

an existing relationship between variables without any manipulation of variables" (Fraenkel et al., 2011).

- **Participants**

This study employed sample rather than population. The participants in this study were 62 students from two classes; XI IPS 2 and XI IPS 3 at a Senior High School in Cimahi. The selection was based on the characteristics of the two classes; the active and less-active classes and the number of hours of English taught in XI IPS per week is more than XI IPA classes. The two classes were expected to be representatives of population.

- **Data Collection**

Some instruments employed in this study were listed as below in sequence: observation, questionnaire, the speaking test, and interview. The instruments were conducted for three days, on September, 15th 2014 until September, 18th 2014.

a. Observation

The observation process was held during two days in two classes, started from September 15, 2014 by watching the teacher's task on how she asked the students some questions spontaneously relating to their daily activities and the material they were learning.

b. The Speaking Test

The next day, the speaking test was held. The researcher had the students perform role plays in pairs based on the context. The context was about *How to Make an Appointment and a Reservation.* The teacher and the researcher adapted the Standford FLOSEM to assess the students' speaking competencies. However, only the teacher who gave scores to the students' speaking tasks. Meanwhile, the researcher record the students' performance for the transcript document.

c. Questionnaire

The questionnaire applied in this research was combined from many experts (Al-Hattab, 2006; Aregu, 2013; Brown, 2000; Harmer, 1998; Liu, 2005; Rosenberg, 1995; Törnqvist, 2008). There were 20 questions to measure students' self-esteem while they are speaking in English. One of the questions was *I would rather speak in my language than struggle to speak in English. (Harmer, 1998).* This study utilized the Likert scale which asks individuals to respond to a series of statements of preference and numbers placed on a continuum. Rating scales are from 1 to 4 as presented below: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 =

agree, 4 = strongly agree. All items did not have the same score, since there were ten reversed statements; the items were: 2, 4, 7, 9, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 19.

The results gained from measuring students' self-esteem classified students into two levels; high and low self-esteem. The interpretation is presented as follows.

- Strongly disagree denotes very low self – esteem = 20 – 35
- Disagree denotes low self – esteem = 36 – 50
- Agree denotes high self – esteem (normal) = 51 – 65
- Strongly agree denotes very high self – esteem = 66 – 80

The questionnaire addressed to the students should be valid and reliable; therefore validity and reliability are computed by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation formula.

d. Interview

This study employed semi-structured, according to Fraenkel et.al (2011), it belongs to rather formal interview which is designed to elicit specific answer from respondents and later compared and contrasted. Four students became the interviewees and were given some questions. They were as representative of different level of the self-esteem score: high and low.

- **Data Analysis**

Since this study utilizes the correlation study, some requirements should be fulfilled. The study should measure at least the normality, the linearity, the hypothesis, and the correlation of both variables. Some steps were required and listed as follows.

a. Normality Distribution

The computation of normality was tested by using IBM SPSS 22 with Kolmogorov – Smirnov with the significance of value used was 0,05. The probability (*P*) will be as follows.

H_a : Normally distributed

H_o : Not distributed

This study applied Annova in IBM SPSS 22 to test the linearity. If the significant score was higher than 0.05, then there was a linier relationship significantly between the score of students' self – esteem and speaking test.

b. Linearity

The linearity testing is aimed to look at the significance of the relationship between two variables in this research. Independent variable was students' self – esteem scores and dependent variable was the scores of students' speaking competencies.

c. The Correlation of Two Variables

After the requirements have been completed, the main step for this

research's goal is to investigate the strength of correlation between students' self-esteem and their English speaking competencies score. According to (Riduan & Sunarto, 2012), the degree of correlation is interpreted in the table below.

Table 3.1: Degree of Correlation

Coefficient Interval	Degree of Correlation
0.80 – 1	Very high correlation
0.60 – 0.799	High correlation
0.40 – 0.599	Moderate correlation
0.20 – 0.399	Slight correlation
0.00 – 0.199	Very slight correlation

d. Hyphothesis

When there is a correlation between students' self-esteem and their English speaking competencies, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and null alternative (Ho) is rejected.

Data Presentation and Discussions

- **Data Presentation**

Having conducted the instruments; the students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies are classified based on the scores they gained.

Of the maximal score 80, the highest self – esteem score of the students is 78 and the lowest self – esteem score is 41. The result shows that 2 students have very high self – esteem, 44 students have high self – esteem and 16 students have low level of self – esteem; however there are no students who have very low self – esteem.

The data shows that the maximum score of students' speaking test is 88 and the minimum score is 74 of the total score 100. There are 42 students who belong to the good category in the speaking test and 20 students are in the level of fair category in the speaking test. There are no students both in the excellent or poor level in the speaking test.

After the scores are gained; firstly the validity and reliability of questionnaire are measured using Pearson Product Moment Correlation formula in IBM SPSS 22. All items of questionnaire are valid because $r_{obtained}$ in each item is higher than $r_{critical}$ (0.26).

Table 4.1: The Validity of Questionnaire

Question	r_{table}	$r_{observed}$	Validity
1.	0.26	0.618	Valid
2.	0.26	0.493	Valid
3.	0.26	0.611	Valid
4.	0.26	0.480	Valid
5.	0.26	0.556	Valid
6.	0.26	0.562	Valid

No.	r table	r observed	Status
7.	0.26	0.440	Valid
8.	0.26	0.365	Valid
9.	0.26	0.573	Valid
10.	0.26	0.614	Valid
11.	0.26	0.599	Valid
12.	0.26	0.708	Valid
13.	0.26	0.647	Valid
14.	0.26	0.375	Valid
15.	0.26	0.547	Valid
16.	0.26	0.453	Valid
17.	0.26	0.395	Valid
18.	0.26	0.476	Valid
19.	0.26	0.348	Valid
20.	0.26	0.497	Valid

The questionnaire utilizes IBM SPSS 22 with Cronbach's Alfa to measure its reliability. In this study, the questionnaire belongs to the accepted reliability since $r_{observed}$ 0,854 > r_{table} (0.26).

Table 4.2: The Reliability of Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.854	20

Afterwards, the scores of two variables need to be calculated its normality, linearity, correlation, and hypothesis.

a. Normality

Based on the computation in Kolmogorov – Smirnov, the probability (*p*) was 0.200.

Table 4.3: Normality Distribution

		Unstandardized Residual
N		62
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	3.51007861
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.100
	Positive	.064
	Negative	-.100
Test Statistic		.100
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200[c,d]

a. Test distribution is Normal.

The calculation in IBM SPSS 22 shows that the data distribution is normal because *p* (0.200) is higher than 0.05. The lowest and the highest scores are not too distant.

b. Linearity

This study used Anova to calculate the linearity of the scores. The scores of two variables are linier because the significant score gained is 0.60 which is higher than 0.05.

c. Correlation Score of Two Variables

Table 4.4: Correlation

		Self_Esteem	Speaking_Score
Self_Esteem	Pearson Correlation	1	.509[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	62	62
Speaking_Score	Pearson Correlation	.509[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	62	62

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Since the aim of this study is to investigate the correlation between students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies, the scores are calculated using Pearson Product Moment. When the scores of two variables are linier regarding the measurement, it indicates that the correlation exists. The data is clear to show that the correlation coefficient between students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies is 0.509 at 0.05 significant level and N = 62.

It could be concluded that the correlation score of two variables is 0.509 at 0.05 significant level and N = 62. It means that there is a positive correlation of two variables in the moderate level.

d. Hypothesis

The hypothesis in this study could be seen in table 4.4. *P* (Sig. (2-tailed)) was 0.000. It means there is a significant correlation between variable X and variable Y because Ha is accepted and H_o is rejected. Based on Table 4.4 that *p* (0.000) < 0.05, it indicates that there is a significant correlation between students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies.

- **Discussion**

Based on the data presentation, more than a half of the total students have high self – esteem. It means that they believe in their abilities of doing well during the schoolwork, especially in a speaking task.

Two students who have very high self – esteem mostly agree to all positive statements and mostly disagree to all negative statements. The percentage of "highly agree" response in positive statements and "highly disagree" response in negative statements are all selected by the two students with very high self – esteem. They highly agree and believe in themselves that they have good speaking competencies in English. As long as they learn English, they never get much trouble both in knowledge of features or expressing ideas orally because they always feel confident to communicate with their friends using English.

This is also reinforced by the observation report that the two students always answer the teacher's questions confidently without feeling fear of making mistakes, are eager to express their ideas, and are very active students as well. Another support is the interview session; one of them says that she does not feel shy and nervous when speaking in front of the classmates because she follows the English Club extracurricular which requires her to speak a lot.

Therefore, she categories herself as an active student during English lesson.

The students in the high level of self – esteem are almost same with the students in the very high self – esteem regarding their beliefs in their abilities. Based on the percentage, it shows that "agree" responses are dominantly chosen by the students with high self-esteem. The students with very high self – esteem disagree to the statements which underestimate their capabilities at speaking. Even though their self – esteem is in the high level, some choose the statement which is "they feel their speaking skills are not better than other friends" (64.5%).

For the evidences, they disagree to the following statements:

"I do not get frightened when I am asked a question by the teacher using English."

"I feel that English is not within in my abilities."

However, they will speak up and share their opinions if they are sure that they could utter it correctly. They tend to take action more careful because of avoiding doing some errors in pronunciation or wrong answers. To support the questionnaire result, observation and interview are conducted.

During the observation, the students with high self – esteem contribute to the learning process. Even though it's not very often, they always answer and share what on their mind if the teacher asks questions.

One of students became representative in this level. He considers himself talkative. He does not often feel fear and anxiety to speak in the public because he is comfortable to talk much and sometimes cannot control himself when talking to people. The way he talks also indicates that he likes speaking activities because he answers all questions with confidence and clearly enough. The textual evidence of interviewing session is that he says that "I am good to talk with people."

The students with low self – esteem prefer to choose "agree" and "highly agree" to negative statements that they face much trouble and obstacles when delivering opinions and pronouncing English words. It makes them dissatisfied with their speaking performances and quiet to avoid making mistakes and embarrassing themselves.

The observation also reports that the students with low self-esteem do not contribute too much in the lesson. They tend to keep silent to avoid teacher's questions. When the teacher asks one of them to answer the question on the video, he says *"ga bisa ah bu, susah, pake bahasa Indonesia aja ya"*. It indicates

that he is worried about making mistakes and is not willing to take risks or even accept challenges in a particular situation.

To strengthen the questionnaire result, 2 of 16 students are interviewed and given questions by the researcher. The result shows that they recognize if speaking English is not within their capabilities. They do not have a wide range of vocabulary, as a result they feel the anxiety to talk in the public. The way they answer the questions is also different from the students with high self – esteem, they talk very short. For instance, one student answers a question to describing himself; he says "I can't explain my self hehe... I don't understand English". It indicates that they are not interested in speaking English.

Each pairs perform a role – play in the speaking test. The day before the test takes place, the students learn the material about *How to Make an Appointment and a Reservation* from the video and a serial of pictures for their practice. The professional English teacher assesses the students' speaking performance with four criteria: fluency, pronunciation, comprehension, and expression.

Categorizing students' speaking competencies uses a 100 – point scale. The scale is used by the teacher to assess

students' speaking skills. Based on the table below, the average of students' speaking score was good, not less than 80.

Table 5.1
The Classification of Speaking Score

Score	Category
90 – 100	Excellent
80 – 89	Good
70 – 79	Fair
< 69	Poor

Of 62 students, 42 students are categorized into the good level in the speaking score. They have good performance during the role – play. Even though their speaking capabilities are not a native like, they could speak in a good way. They understand the main topic although they need to self-correct to get back to the topic, speak almost fluently with occasional minor lapses, use some aspect of body language to support speech at many times, pronounce each word nearly a native like even though few errors occur, and produce their speech with infrequent grammatical errors.

Meanwhile, 20 students get fair scores in the speaking test. Their speaking abilities are at the moderate level, not the excellent level nor even the poor level. The researcher investigates the students' speaking performance; it is found that they have difficulties in

fluency, pronunciation, and grammar. Brown (2001) also agrees that rate of delivery (characteristic of fluency), performance hesitations, reduced vowels in speaking (pronunciation problem), and words organizations are some obstacles that are faced by some students to produce their speech. They occasionally hesitate to utter the words at normal speed because some pauses occur at times, need some repetitions pronounce each word, and produce some grammatical errors while speaking even though it does not obscure the meaning. They also rarely express facial expressions, gestures, and eye contact while they are performing; however, they can understand the topic even though partner's help may be necessary.

It has been mentioned in advance, the researcher observes the class before conducting the research. From the observation report, most of students are active and contribute to the English lesson. The active students are courageous to answer the teacher's questions using English. The data showed the truth that most of students have good speaking competencies because they are well – prepared and do the exercise before taking the speaking test.

Since the aim of this study was to investigate the correlation between students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies.

The degree of the correlation is at the point of 0.509 with the probability (*p*) was 0.000. It indicates that the correlation is in the moderate or modest level which means it is not strong or weak but still accepted. Nevertheless, the correlation is significant because *p* (0.000) < 0.05, it means H_o is rejected. In a result, there is a positive significant correlation between students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies at the moderate level. This result is similar to Serabi's study (cited in Zhi, 2014) that a modest (moderate) and significant correlation is also found between self – esteem and academic achievement. A positive relationship is discovered among self – esteem and all the variables of academic achievement.

It has been mentioned in advance, most of students have high self – esteem and a good speaking skill as well. It could be seen that both of variables are high or increase, so the correlation is positive. Based on the findings, most of students whose self – esteems are very high and high, their speaking scores are good as well.

Conclusions

To answer the first research question that 2 students have a very high

self – esteem in speaking in English. The highest score gained by one of them is 78 of 80. There are 44 students who belong to the level of high self – esteem; meanwhile 16 students are in the low level of self – esteem. The lowest score lays at 41 and there are no students who have very low self – esteem. It could be concluded that the students have high self – esteem and believe in their abilities of doing well during the English lesson, especially in a speaking section. They raise their hand up to get the opportunity answer the teacher's questions; it indicates that they consider themselves of having the ability to speak English.

After conducting the speaking test, 42 of total students have good scores in the speaking test, and 20 students have fair scores in the speaking test. It shows that more than a half of total students are categorized into the students who have good speaking competencies. It indicates that most of students utter their speech properly even though few errors still present, they understand the contain they carry out. They are well – prepared and do the exercise before taking the test. Therefore, their English speaking competencies are good.

It is similar to Brown (2000) that the different levels of self-esteem correlate positively with performance of oral production measures because some degree of self – esteem plays the important role to students' achievement in the schoolwork. In conclusion, there is a positive significant correlation between students' self – esteem and their English speaking competencies at the moderate level.

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