

CORRELATION BETWEEN SEL COMPETENCE AND EFL EIGHTH GRADERS' SPEAKING SELF-CONFIDENCE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the correlation between Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competence and students' self-confidence in speaking English at MTsS Asy-Syarif Koto Laweh. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, students may experience difficulties in speaking due to low confidence, anxiety, and limited emotional regulation. These challenges indicate the importance of examining the relationship between SEL competence and speaking self-confidence. This study employed a quantitative correlational design involving 48 eighth-grade students selected through total sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires measuring SEL competence and students' self-confidence in speaking and were analyzed using Pearson Product-Moment correlation. The findings revealed a very strong positive and significant correlation between SEL competence and students' self-confidence in speaking, with a correlation coefficient of 0.914 and a significance value of $p < 0.001$. This indicates that students with higher levels of SEL competence tended to demonstrate greater confidence in speaking English. The findings suggest that emotional awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making are associated with students' confidence in oral communication. Therefore, SEL competence is significantly related to students' self-confidence in speaking English.

Keywords: *social emotional learning (SEL), speaking self-confidence, English as a foreign language, eighth grade students, correlation*

A. Introduction

English plays a crucial role in education as an international language that enables global communication. In Indonesia, English has been taught as a foreign language since 1967 and remains a compulsory subject due to its importance in preparing students to participate in the

global community (Santoso et al., 2014; Sari & Putra, 2022). However, mastering English as a foreign language remains challenging because students have limited opportunities to use the language in daily life. Among the four language skills, speaking is often considered the most difficult, as it requires learners to

produce language spontaneously while managing linguistic and affective factors (Brown, 2004).

Previous studies have shown that students' speaking performance is strongly influenced by emotional and psychological factors such as anxiety, low motivation, and lack of self-confidence (Vargas Jiménez, 2015; Krashen, 1982). Interaction, guidance, and peer collaboration also play an important role in the development of speaking ability (Vygotsky, 1978). In this context, Social Emotional Learning has gained attention as an approach that supports students' emotional regulation, social interaction, and confidence. Social Emotional Learning involves the development of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2013; CASEL, 2018). Research has shown that Social Emotional Learning contributes positively to students' communication skills, confidence, and academic achievement (Zins et al., 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Jane and Jamal, 2022).

Despite growing interest in Social Emotional Learning, limited research has examined its relationship with

students' self-confidence in speaking within English as a foreign language in Indonesia. Classroom observations at MTSs Asy-Syarif Koto Laweh indicated that students with higher social emotional competence tended to be more confident and active in speaking English. Therefore, this study investigates the correlation between Social Emotional Learning competence and students' self-confidence in speaking English among eighth-grade students at MTSs Asy-Syarif Koto Laweh.

B. Method

This study employed a quantitative approach using a correlational research design to examine the relationship between Social Emotional Learning competence and students' self-confidence in speaking English (Burns and Grove, 2005; Fraenkel, 2012). The research was conducted at MTSs Asy-Syarif Koto Laweh, Agam, West Sumatera, involving eighth-grade students in the academic year 2025.

The population of this study consisted of all forty-eight eighth-grade students from two classes, as presented in Table 1. Due to the relatively small population size, total

sampling was applied, in which all students were included as research participants (Creswell, 2012).

Table 1. Population of the student

No	Class	Total Number of Student		
		Man	Woman	Total
1	VIII.1	12	12	24
2	VIII.2	12	12	24
Total		24	24	48

Two variables were examined in this study: Social Emotional Learning competence as the independent variable and students' self-confidence in speaking as the dependent variable. Social Emotional Learning competence was measured based on five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2013). Students' self-confidence in speaking was measured through indicators such as bravery in speaking, expressing ideas, optimism, independence, and confidence during presentations (Febriyani et al., 2020).

Data were collected using questionnaires adapted from Zins et al. (2004) for Social Emotional Learning competence and Febriyani et

al. (2020) for self-confidence in speaking. A Likert scale was applied, and Content validity was established through expert judgment and analyzed using Aiken's V index (Aiken, 1985; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha indicated excellent reliability for both instruments.

Table 2. Interpretation of Validity Test

Validity	Interpretation
0.8 - 1.00	Very High
0.6 - 0.79	High
0.40 - 0.59	Moderate
0.20 - 0.29	Low
0.00 - 0.29	Very Low

Table 3. Social emotional Learning

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.946	45

Table 4. Self-Confident in Speaking

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.928	28

The questionnaires were administered during class sessions with the assistance of the English teacher. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS, including descriptive

statistics, normality and linearity tests, and Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis to determine the strength and significance of the relationship between the variables. The degree of correlation was interpreted based on Sugiyono's classification, as shown in Table 8.

Table 5. Degree of correlation

Coefficient Interval	Degree of Correlation
0.00 – 0.199	Very low
0.20 – 0.399	Low
0.40 – 0.599	Moderate
0.60 – 0.799	High
0.800 – 1.00	Very High

C. Findings and Discussion

Descriptive statistics show that students generally demonstrated a relatively high level of Social Emotional Learning competence. As presented in Table 9, the Social Emotional Learning scores ranged from 126 to 191, with a mean score of 157.50 and a standard deviation of 23.54. This indicates that most students possessed good social and emotional competencies, although some variation was observed.

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Social Emotional Learning (SEL)	48	126.00	191.00	7560.00	157.5000	23.53720
Valid N (listwise)	48					

Students' self-confidence in speaking English also showed moderate to high levels. As shown in Table 10, scores ranged from 73 to 129, with a mean of 98.02 and a standard deviation of 15.89, suggesting that while many students felt confident speaking English, differences among individuals remained.

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-Confident in Speaking	48	73.00	129.00	4705.00	98.0208	15.89258
Valid N (listwise)	48					

Before conducting correlation analysis, the data met statistical assumptions. The normality test (Table 11) showed a significance value of 0.200, indicating normal distribution. The linearity test (Table 12) confirmed a linear relationship between the variables. Pearson correlation analysis (Table 13) revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.914 with a significance value of < 0.001. Based on Sugiyono's (2015) classification (Table 14), this result indicates a very strong and significant positive correlation. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Table 8. Normality test with SPSS

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			Unstandardized Residual
N			48
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean		.0000000
	Std. Deviation		11.09745036
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		.076
	Positive		.047
	Negative		-.076
Test Statistic			.076
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c			.200 ^d
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) ^e	Sig.		.701
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.689
		Upper Bound	.713

Table 9. Linearity Test

ANOVA Table						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Self-Confident * SEL	Between Groups	11530.062	33	349.396	14.348	<.001
	Linearity	9917.383	1	9917.383	407.265	<.001
	Deviation from Linearity	1612.679	32	50.396	2.070	.074
	Within Groups	340.917	14	24.351		
Total		11870.979	47			

Table 10. Pearson Product Moment Correlation

Correlations			
		SEL	Self-Confident
SEL	Pearson Correlation	1	.914**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	48	48
Self-Confident	Pearson Correlation	.914**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	48	48

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

Table 14. Interpretation of Correlation

Coefficient Interval	Degree of Correlation
0.00 – 0.199	Very low
0.20 – 0.399	Low
0.40 – 0.599	Moderate
0.60 – 0.799	High
0.800 – 1.00	Very High

The findings indicate a very strong positive relationship between Social Emotional Learning competence and students' self-

confidence in speaking English. Students with higher levels of emotional awareness, self-management, and social interaction skills tended to be more confident, active, and willing to participate in speaking activities. This result supports previous studies emphasizing the role of Social Emotional Learning in enhancing communication skills and academic engagement (Zins et al., 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

These findings are also consistent with Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which suggests that lower anxiety and positive emotional states facilitate language production, as well as Vygotsky's (1978) theory highlighting the importance of social interaction in learning. Classroom observations further supported the results, showing that supportive learning environments and Social Emotional Learning-based practices helped students feel safer and more confident when speaking.

Overall, the results confirm that Social Emotional Learning competence plays a crucial role in fostering students' self-confidence in speaking English and should be

integrated into English as a foreign language instruction.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that there is a significant and positive correlation between social emotional learning competence and students' self-confidence in speaking English among eighth-grade students at MTSs Asy-Syarif Koto Laweh. Higher levels of social emotional competence are associated with greater confidence in speaking English.

This study highlights the importance of addressing students' emotional and social development alongside linguistic instruction. Teachers are encouraged to integrate social emotional learning practices into English teaching to help students build confidence and overcome speaking anxiety. Future studies are recommended to explore the role of social emotional learning in other language skills and educational contexts.

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