

The Correlation Between Students' Emotional Intelligence and Public Speaking Performance at State Senior High School 1 Mungka

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A B S T R A C T

Emotional factors are often considered crucial in influencing students' success in English speaking activities, particularly in public speaking contexts. Emotional intelligence plays an important role in supporting students' confidence and effectiveness in public speaking activities. This study aimed to examine the relationship between students' emotional intelligence and their public speaking performance in English presentations. This research employed a quantitative correlational design involving 25 twelfth-grade students at SMAN 1 Mungka who were selected using total sampling. Data were collected through an emotional intelligence questionnaire and documentation of students' public speaking performance scores. The questionnaire was validated using Aiken's V through expert judgment and demonstrated acceptable reliability based on Cronbach's Alpha. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis with the help of SPSS. The findings revealed that students generally showed a good level of emotional intelligence and moderate public speaking performance. The correlation analysis indicated a very strong and significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and public speaking performance ($r = 0.956$, $p < 0.01$). These results suggest that emotional intelligence contributes to students' success in delivering English presentations.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Public Speaking Performance, Correlation Study, English Presentation*

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INTRODUCTION

Public speaking is an essential skill in English language learning, particularly in activities that require students to deliver ideas and information orally in front of an audience (Dunar, 2015). In many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, students are frequently required to perform presentations as part of speaking practice. Through presentation activities, students are expected to demonstrate their ability to organize ideas, use appropriate language, and communicate effectively with listeners (Lucas, 2012). Therefore, public speaking performance becomes an important indicator of students' communicative competence in English learning.

However, performing a presentation in a foreign language is not an easy task for many students. (Tuan & Mai, 2015) found that speaking in front of an audience often triggers emotional reactions such as anxiety, nervousness, and fear of negative evaluation. These emotional conditions can influence the way students deliver their ideas and affect the overall quality of their presentations. Research in language learning suggests that psychological factors often play a crucial role in determining students' speaking success. As noted by (Rengganawati, 2024), many learners experience low self-confidence when speaking in front of an audience due to feelings of shyness, fear, or anxiety. As a result, their public speaking performance becomes less effective even though they may understand the material being presented.

In public speaking contexts, students are not only required to demonstrate linguistic competence but also to manage various emotional challenges that may arise during the

speaking process. Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in this regard, as it enables individuals to regulate anxiety, maintain confidence, and stay focused while delivering their ideas. Students who are able to manage their emotions effectively tend to experience lower levels of speaking anxiety and are more capable of expressing their thoughts clearly and fluently. In contrast, students with lower emotional control may struggle with nervousness, hesitation, and lack of confidence, which can negatively affect their overall speaking performance. Therefore, emotional intelligence is considered an important factor influencing students' success in public speaking activities.

In the context of English language learning, speaking performance is generally evaluated through several key components that reflect students' ability to communicate effectively. According to (Brown, 2004), speaking performance involves various aspects such as fluency, pronunciation, grammar accuracy, and the ability to convey meaning clearly during communication. These elements indicate that successful speaking does not only depend on linguistic knowledge but also on the speaker's ability to deliver ideas smoothly and understandably. Similarly, (Harmer, 2007) states that effective oral communication requires not only mastery of language forms but also the ability to engage with the audience and maintain confidence while speaking. Therefore, students' public speaking performance in presentation is influenced by both linguistic competence and psychological readiness when delivering ideas in front of others.

One of the psychological aspects that can influence students' speaking performance is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is not merely a set of emotional responses, but a structured set of abilities that influence how individuals process emotional information and respond to various situations. (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) conceptualize emotional intelligence as a cognitive-emotional ability involving the capacity to perceive, use, understand, and regulate emotions effectively. This model highlights that emotions play a significant role in guiding thinking and behavior. In line with this perspective, (Goleman, 1998) expands the concept by emphasizing its practical implications in real-life contexts, particularly in social interaction and performance-related situations. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, emotional intelligence becomes highly relevant as students are frequently exposed to communicative tasks that require both cognitive and emotional engagement. Therefore, emotional intelligence can be seen as an essential factor that supports students in managing emotional challenges and enhancing their performance in speaking activities.

According to (Goleman, 1998), emotional intelligence consists of five main components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Self-awareness refers to the ability to recognize one's own emotions and understand how these emotions affect behavior. Self-regulation involves the ability to manage and control emotional responses, especially in stressful situations. Motivation relates to an individual's internal drive to achieve goals and persist despite challenges. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, which is essential in effective communication. Lastly, social skills refer to the ability to build relationships, communicate effectively, and interact positively with others. These components are closely related to public speaking performance, as they help students manage anxiety, maintain confidence, and engage with their audience during presentations. Students who possess higher emotional intelligence tend to show better emotional control, stronger confidence, and greater ability to maintain focus during presentations (Agustian, 2023).

Several previous studies have also highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in language learning. Research conducted by (Sulistyawati, 2018) found that emotional intelligence has a significant influence on students' speaking skills, where learners with higher levels of emotional intelligence demonstrate better communication abilities. Similarly, research by (Imama & Wilany, 2023) reported a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and students' speaking performance in EFL contexts. These findings indicate that emotional intelligence contributes to students' ability to manage speaking anxiety and express their ideas more effectively in oral communication. Other research also

emphasizes that emotional intelligence plays an important role in reducing students' anxiety and improving their confidence during speaking activities.

However, most previous studies have primarily focused on general speaking skills rather than specifically examining public speaking performance in formal presentation contexts. Teachers frequently focus on linguistic elements such as grammar, vocabulary, and presentation structure, while students' emotional readiness receives less attention. As a result, some students who actually understand the learning material still struggle to deliver their presentations effectively because they cannot manage their emotions during public speaking activities. In addition, limited studies have explored this relationship among senior high school students in Indonesian EFL settings, particularly using real classroom-based performance data. Therefore, there is a need to further investigate how emotional intelligence is related to students' public speaking performance in English presentations, especially in authentic classroom situations.

Based on preliminary observations conducted by the researcher at SMAN 1 Mungka, several students still experienced difficulties when delivering English presentations. Some students appeared very nervous when speaking in front of the class, such as having shaky hands, speaking with a low voice, and pausing frequently because they lost focus. In addition, some students avoided eye contact with the audience and preferred to read their notes rather than explain the ideas clearly. There were also students who hesitated to come forward when asked to present because they were afraid of making mistakes or being laughed at by their classmates. These conditions indicate that emotional factors still become major obstacles that influence students' public speaking performance.

Furthermore, interviews conducted with the English teacher also revealed that emotional problems such as nervousness and lack of confidence often affect students' ability to deliver presentations effectively. Even students who have understood the material sometimes fail to perform well because they cannot control their emotions when speaking in front of the class. This situation suggests that emotional intelligence may play an important role in supporting students' success in English public speaking activities.

To address the issues discussed above, this study focuses on examining the role of emotional intelligence in students' public speaking performance in English presentations. Emotional intelligence is believed to influence students' ability to manage anxiety, maintain confidence, and communicate ideas effectively in front of an audience. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and students' public speaking performance among twelfth-grade students at SMAN 1 Mungka. Specifically, this study addresses the following research questions: (1) Does a significant relationship exist between students' emotional intelligence and their public speaking performance at SMAN 1 Mungka? (2) What is the correlation direction between students' emotional intelligence and public speaking performance among students at SMAN 1 Mungka? and (3) What is the magnitude of the relationship between students' emotional intelligence and public speaking performance among students at SMAN 1 Mungka?.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach using a correlational research design to examine the relationship between students' emotional intelligence and their public speaking performance in English presentations. Quantitative research allows researchers to investigate relationships between variables using numerical data and statistical analysis (Creswell, 2018). In this study, emotional intelligence served as the independent variable, while public speaking performance functioned as the dependent variable. The research was conducted at SMAN 1 Mungka, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were twelfth-grade students of SMAN 1 Mungka. The total number of students involved in this research was 25 students. The students were generally aged between 16–18 years old. In terms of gender distribution, the participants

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consisted of 8 males and 17 females. They were selected because they had experienced presentation activities in English learning and were considered capable of providing relevant data related to public speaking performance.

This study used a total sampling technique, meaning that all members of the population were involved as research participants (Sugiyono, 2013). Total sampling was chosen because the population size was relatively small, allowing the researcher to obtain comprehensive and representative data from all available participants.

Instruments

Two instruments were used to collect the data in this study, namely a questionnaire and documentation. The first instrument was a questionnaire designed to measure students' emotional intelligence. The questionnaire consisted of 30 items developed based on the emotional intelligence framework proposed by (Goleman, 1998). The items represented five indicators of emotional intelligence, namely self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The second instrument was documentation, which was used to obtain students' public speaking performance scores in English presentation activities. These scores were collected from the English teacher's assessment records. The assessment included several speaking components such as fluency, pronunciation, grammar, intonation and body language. Before being used in the main study, the questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability. The validity of the instrument was examined using Aiken's V formula through expert judgment, while the reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha with the help of SPSS software.

Procedures

The data collection process was carried out in several stages. First, the researcher obtained permission from the school to conduct the research and coordinated with the English teacher regarding the research implementation. Next, a pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted with 10 students to ensure the clarity and reliability of the instrument. After confirming that the instrument was appropriate for use, the main data collection was conducted on September 2-3, 2025.

During the data collection, the researcher distributed the emotional intelligence questionnaire directly to the students in the classroom. The students were asked to read each statement carefully and select the response that best reflected their opinion. After all questionnaires were completed and collected, the researcher obtained the documentation of students' English presentation scores from the English teacher as the data representing students' public speaking performance.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis consisted of descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the distribution of students' emotional intelligence scores and public speaking performance scores, including the calculation of mean, minimum score, maximum score, and standard deviation.

To determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and public speaking performance, a correlation analysis was conducted. This analysis aimed to identify whether there was a significant relationship between the two variables and to determine the strength of the relationship.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings of this study present the results of the descriptive statistics and the correlation analysis between students' emotional intelligence and their public speaking performance. To provide a clear overview of the data distribution, descriptive statistics were calculated for both variables, namely students' emotional intelligence and public speaking performance.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic of Students' Emotional Intelligence

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Emotional Intelligence	25	98	124	111.48	5.440
Valid N (listwise)	25				

As shown in table 1, the descriptive statistical analysis showed that the mean score of students' emotional intelligence was 111.48, with a minimum score of 98 and a maximum score of 124. The standard deviation was 5.440, indicating a moderate level of variation among students. This suggests that most students demonstrated a relatively consistent and well-developed level of emotional intelligence, particularly in terms of their ability to recognize, manage, and respond to emotional situations during learning activities.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistic of Students' Public Speaking Performance

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Public Speaking Performance	25	79	95	87.92	3.013
Valid N (listwise)	25				

Meanwhile, the mean score of students' public speaking performance was 87.92, with a minimum score of 79 and a maximum score of 95. The standard deviation was 3.013, indicating that the variation in students' speaking performance was relatively low. This finding implies that most students were able to perform at a fairly similar level, showing adequate fluency, pronunciation, grammar, intonation and body language when delivering their presentations. Overall, the results indicate that students' public speaking performance can be categorized as good.

To further examine the relationship between the two variables, a Pearson Product Moment correlation analysis was conducted using SPSS.

Table 3. Pearson Product Moment Correlation

Correlations			
		Emotional Intelligence	Public Speaking Performance
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.956**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	25	25
Public Speaking Performance	Pearson Correlation	.956**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	25	25

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

The results of the correlation analysis revealed that the correlation coefficient was $r = 0.956$, indicating a very strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and public speaking performance. The significance value ($p = 0.000 < 0.01$) confirms that the relationship is statistically significant. This means that students with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to demonstrate better performance in public speaking activities.

The strength of this correlation suggests that emotional intelligence is not only related to, but may also play a substantial role in influencing students' ability to perform effectively in speaking tasks. Students who are able to regulate their emotions, maintain self-confidence, and interact appropriately with others are more likely to deliver their ideas clearly and engage their audience successfully. Therefore, the findings provide strong empirical evidence that

emotional intelligence is closely associated with students' success in English public speaking performance.

Discussion

Does a significant relationship exist between students' emotional intelligence and their public speaking performance at SMAN 1 Mungka?

The findings of this study clearly indicate that a significant relationship exists between students' emotional intelligence and their public speaking performance. This is evidenced by the result of the Pearson correlation analysis, which shows a significance value of $p = 0.000 < 0.01$, confirming that the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant and not due to chance.

This result implies that emotional intelligence is an important factor associated with students' performance in public speaking activities. From a theoretical perspective, this finding can be explained by the model of emotional intelligence proposed by (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), which emphasizes the role of emotional regulation in supporting cognitive processes. In public speaking contexts, students are often faced with emotional challenges such as anxiety and nervousness, which can interfere with their ability to organize ideas and communicate effectively. Therefore, students who are able to regulate their emotions are more likely to perform better.

In addition, (Goleman, 2000) argues that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in determining how individuals respond to stressful and performance-based situations. Public speaking, particularly in a foreign language, represents such a situation, where emotional control and confidence are essential for successful performance.

This finding is consistent with previous studies. (Sulistyawati, 2018) found that emotional intelligence significantly influences students' speaking skills, while (Imama & Wilany, 2023) also reported a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and speaking performance in EFL contexts. Therefore, the present study confirms and strengthens previous findings by demonstrating that emotional intelligence is significantly associated with students' public speaking performance.

What is the correlation direction between students' emotional intelligence and public speaking performance among students at SMAN 1 Mungka?

The results further indicate that the direction of the correlation between emotional intelligence and public speaking performance is positive ($r = 0.956$), meaning that both variables increase together. This suggests that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to demonstrate better performance in public speaking activities.

This positive relationship can be explained through the components of emotional intelligence proposed by (Goleman, 1998), namely self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Self-regulation enables students to control anxiety and nervousness, which are common barriers in speaking performance. Self-awareness helps students recognize their emotional states and adjust their communication strategies accordingly. Meanwhile, social skills and empathy allow students to engage more effectively with their audience, which is a key aspect of successful public speaking. From the perspective of (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), the ability to regulate emotions supports more effective thinking and communication.

These findings are consistent with previous research. (Imama & Wilany, 2023) reported that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to perform better in speaking tasks, while (Sulistyawati, 2018) also found that emotional intelligence contributes positively to students' speaking ability. Therefore, the positive direction identified in this study reinforces the idea that emotional intelligence facilitates better communication outcomes in EFL contexts.

What is the magnitude of the relationship between students' emotional intelligence and public speaking performance among students at SMAN 1 Mungka?

In terms of magnitude, the correlation coefficient ($r = 0.956$) indicates a very strong relationship between emotional intelligence and public speaking performance. This suggests that emotional intelligence has a substantial association with students' ability to perform effectively in speaking tasks.

The strength of this relationship can be understood through the integrated role of emotional intelligence components in supporting speaking performance. According to (Goleman, 1998), the combination of self-awareness, self-regulation, and social skills enables individuals to manage internal emotional states while simultaneously interacting effectively with others. In public speaking contexts, this means that students are not only able to control anxiety but also capable of delivering their ideas confidently and engaging their audience.

Furthermore, (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) argue that emotional intelligence enhances cognitive functioning by allowing individuals to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior. This theoretical perspective helps explain why students with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to organize their ideas clearly and communicate them effectively during presentations.

The findings of this study are in line with previous studies. (Sulistyawati, 2018) and (Imama & Wilany, 2023) both reported a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and speaking performance. However, the present study extends these findings by demonstrating that the relationship is not only significant and positive but also very strong in the specific context of public speaking performance. Nevertheless, this very strong correlation should be interpreted with caution. The relatively small sample size may influence the strength of the relationship. Therefore, further research involving larger samples and different research designs is needed to confirm and generalize these findings.

CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to examine the relationship between students' emotional intelligence and their public speaking performance in English presentations among twelfth-grade students at SMAN 1 Mungka. The findings showed that students generally had a good level of both emotional intelligence and public speaking performance, with correlation analysis revealing a very strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between the two variables ($r = 0.956$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to perform better in public speaking activities. These results highlight the important role of emotional intelligence in supporting students' success in English speaking contexts, as it helps them regulate anxiety, maintain confidence, and engage effectively with their audience during presentations, making it a key factor in effective public speaking performance. In terms of pedagogical implications, English teachers are encouraged to integrate emotional intelligence development into speaking instruction through activities that promote self-awareness, emotional regulation, and social interaction to enhance both emotional competence and speaking ability. However, this study was limited by a relatively small sample size and the use of a correlational design, which does not allow for causal conclusions; therefore, future research is recommended to involve larger samples and apply experimental or mixed-method approaches to further explore causal relationships, as well as to investigate other factors influencing public speaking performance, such as motivation, anxiety, and teaching strategies.

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