

## THE CORRELATION BETWEEN TEACHERS' FRIENDLY ATTITUDE AND STUDENTS' SPEAKING ACHIEVEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

The research aims at finding out the correlation between teachers' friendly attitude and students' speaking achievement. The sample of this research was class VIII A consist of 35 students of SMPT Madinatul Ulum Cangkring Kecamatan Jenggawah, Jember. The research was a correlational research which was attempting to find out the correlation between two variables, teachers' friendly attitude and students' speaking achievement. The statistical description of the two variables was conducted before calculating the score into *Pearson product moment* formula. Based on the data analysis, it was found that  $r_{xy}0.677$  was higher than  $r$  table 0.349 with significant level 0.05 or 5 % and  $df$  33. Therefore, if  $r_{xy}$  was higher than  $r$  table, it can be concluded that there was a positive correlation between teachers' friendly attitude and students' speaking achievement. The correlation indicated a high-strong correlation between the two variables.

*Keywords: correlation, teachers' friendly attitude, students' speaking achievement*

### INTRODUCTION

In education, teachers carry extraordinary crucial roles because they are models with various skills and abilities with different knowledge background. People's perception about them occur since they are able to do a lot of things in which they teach knowledge to humans (students) from a blank paper who turn into written papers. As Hill (as cited in Piddock, Magsino and Manley-Casimir, 1997:177) stated that teachers should maintain ideals of truthfulness, rationality, and critical scholarship even though others are unaware. These are what teachers do.

Apart from the positive perception, teachers as the performers in front of their students must perform good behavior and attitude because all eyes of students are on them. They play like actors/actresses in front of the class. Therefore, everything that they do must present something which can be imitated and learnt by their students.

Students sometimes become a good copy machine for teachers' performance in front of the class whether they like it or not.

As a teacher, someone cannot neglect that attitude and behavior are essential for teaching since teaching covers three items to measure including affective, cognitive and psychomotor. In this case, affection related to emotion has to be considered since humans express their emotion every day and emotion is something that can manipulate ones' way of thinking including way of study. Therefore, students' emotion in learning may be influenced by teachers' attitude because teacher is the central of knowledge source in the classroom. However, affective aspect also has to be corresponded to some factors influence teaching and learning activity, namely, internal and external factor (Shalahuddin in Luthfi, 2008:19). And teachers' attitude includes as in external factors.

Attitude may affect someone's way of thinking and act. It can be influenced in two ways, positive and negative performance (Omolara & Adebukola, 2015:133-135). Some other researchers presented the result that teachers' positive attitude and behavior affected students' academic performance (Kurgat & Gordon, 2014:98) in a good way and students were satisfied with teachers' positive behavior (Mehdipour & Balaramulu, 2013:54). It means teachers' positive behavior is expected by some students to encourage their learning performance.

However, the term of positive behavior has to be specified explicitly in order to reach some specific goals of learning. In learning languages, the problems occur differently because there are activities which emphasize teachers-students' relationship in learning. Since language is the main concern in this activity and language is used to communicate so that there must be certain situation in language teaching which require more approaches that can support students to improve their language proficiency. In the case of speaking, more positive behavior may be required to push students to perform directly in an oral presentation.

Building a more intimate relationship to students are good for their emotion because if they feel intimate it will reduce the barrier between teacher and students (Maclean, 2017:345). There are some teachers' positive attitude which can be performed in teaching and learning. Friendly attitude is one of them. Friendly attitude referred to the idea in which teachers think they have to make friends with language students in their class (Gitsaki & Alexiou, 2015:336). But the research conducted by Gitsaki and Alexiou presented the data that this friendly attitude, together with other attitude including make a compromise and non-verbal communication, did not show any significant difference between the start and the end of the school year.

On the other hands, in Hong Kong, teachers-students' relationships are distant because students are not able to have a casual conversation to teachers (Maclean, 2017:20). Therefore, they lack of confidence in speaking English because of the feeling of awkward. It seemed the situation might decrease students' self- confidence and increase their anxiety and they cannot perform their English well, especially in speaking English.

In this research, investigating the correlation between teachers' friendly attitude and students' English-speaking achievement is significantly required to know whether they influence each other or not. Possibility of positive or negative correlation between the two variables lead us know the importance of creating a better relationship between teachers and students in affecting students' English performance and achievement. As some previous researches mentioned above, some experts explained teachers attitude which related to students academic performance in some discipline at the higher level of education such as university and senior high school. Thus, the result of the research presents the information that concern on the Islamic teacher's attitude in an Islamic school to junior high school students in speaking English. Therefore, it contributes to be some valuable information to some teachers who teach foreign language in Islamic junior high school.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Teachers' Attitude**

Education is one of the most significant processes in humans' life to be more valuable and educated. There are a lot of processes to get through it. It also may happen in different kinds of situation outside or inside of the classroom. Informal learning will be acquired through outdoor activities and no need any formal teachers to do it. Otherwise, education in the classroom or formal education is acquired indoor with formal teachers. Therefore, this education is much more influenced by teachers' performances in classroom.

Regarded to teachers' performances, there are some important elements such as teachers' teaching style, teachers' attitude and behavior, teachers' classroom management, etc. Attitude is one of the important thing in teaching and learning. As we know that teachers are a role model for their students. They present and share all of the things that students do not know. In their performance as teachers, they have to be 'good' in front of their students, parents, other teachers and society. People's perception about teachers is 'good'. Therefore, it is not an easy thing for those who want to be a teacher.

The things what people notice about teachers is attitude. As social creature, humans are bounded by some agreements of norm which people agree as the rules which lead them to be human. The norms are values for people to be humans in the society. As the good perception of people toward teachers, they have to perform a good attitude. Good attitude such as patient, friendly, care, polite, well-dressed, communicative, open-minded, etc. Moreover, according to Stronge (2007:28), research indicates that effective teachers have residual effects on their students' willingness to work to their potential.

Attitude may affect someone's way of thinking and act. It can be influenced in two ways, positive and negative performance (Omolara & Adebukola, 2015:131). Teachers' positive attitude and behavior could affect students' academic performance (Kurgat & Gordon, 2014:40 in a good way and students were satisfied with teachers' positive behavior (Mehdipour & Balaramulu, 2013:221-223). It means teachers' positive behavior is expected positively by some students to enhance their learning performance. Moreover, building a more intimate relationship to students are good for their emotion because if they feel intimate, it will reduce the barrier between teacher and students (Hargreaves, 2017:34; Dutt & Rao, 2003:56). This intimacy may break down the boundaries which make students more comfortable to the situation in teaching and learning activities.

### **Teachers' Friendly Attitude**

One of teachers' positive attitudes is being friendly to students. In Cambridge Dictionary, friendly means behaving in a pleasant, kind way towards someone such as with a friendly face or smile. According to Hanson (2012:23), friendliness is a down-to-earth approach that is welcoming and positive. Therefore, being friendly may positively affect the relationship among people.

Being friendly may be indicated by varied bodily postures, direct orientation, bodily contact (Argyle, 2017:78). It means that physical contact may become the indication of being friendly. However, it depends on the situation and scene of being friendly. We cannot just hug or touch students to show our friendliness if they are teenagers or adult. Bodily postures are indicated as friendliness in case when people are accustomed to hug or touch such as touching the shoulders, shake hands, and hugging to calming.

According to Khan (2015:56) in his article, there are some suggestions to create a friendly atmosphere of teaching and learning process such as 1) remember the birth dates of students, 2) call students by proper names, 3) appreciate them, 4) listen to their opinion enthusiastically, 5) support them to be confident, 6) smile a lot.

Moreover, for EFL teachers, it is important to make friends with students in the classroom, especially foreign transfer students, in showing communicative attitude in the classroom (Gitsaki& Alexiou, 2015:46). This friendly attitude may break the boundaries between teachers and students.

Successful teachers show a friendly attitude to students and make fair judgments (Galajda, Zakrajewski & Pawlak, 2016:180). Managing this attitude is related to managing teachers' individual emotion. Teachers cannot be unpredictable emotionally changed in front of students or they may have different perspective and confuse to behave to teachers.

### **Students' English Performance and Achievement**

Performance shows an act to express the human experience. Therefore, academic performance shows an act to express what he/she has experienced during the learning process. The academic performance of learners is measured by the result, in this case, in form of scores or grade. Academic performance of learners at school can be tracked from their scores at the semester report. Learners' academic performance is described by the final scores or grades in different subject matter with the different grading system in different institution.

Academic performance report has some purposes such as to improve the learning process, as a correction of teaching and learning activity, to improve relationship quality of teacher-student and student-parent, etc. (Topor, 2007:16). Academic performance showed by language performance will be different with the performance of other subject such as science and technology. Language has been categorized in first language, second language and foreign language. It depends on how the language is used among the language speakers.

The difficulties in learning English as a Foreign language had been analyzed by some researchers. There are some factors that affect students' English performance such motivational encouragement, learning strategy, prior knowledge and also family background (Mei, 2013:38); Butler, 2013:6). Students' different desire and attitude in learning the language will affect them in learning. If the surrounding and environment do not really support the activity of learning certain foreign languages, they will not succeed. On the other hand, the prior knowledge that they have are limited because of the language is only a minority language used in their environment.

In learning, there is achievement that becomes a goal for students in learning. Achievement can be defined as the result which has been achieved by doing several processes. It means, we cannot measure the achievement only in one single

performance. In education, students' achievement is something to use in measuring students' mastery after learning some knowledge. The success in learning something, for example English, can be measured by achievements level (Haley, 2013:4). This achievement level is able to present the information about the learners' success in the end of the program.

However, the final result of achievement cannot be the only way to measure students' mastery. In teaching and learning English as the foreign language, some problems may occur differently from other subjects. Cognitive aspect is not the only to measure in the final test. There are also some aspects in the process of teaching and learning including affective and psychomotor aspects in which they are related to emotion, attitude and behavior and supported also by the ability of physical movement which influence their mental attitude.

According to Sriyanti (2013:24), there are some factors influenced learning achievement such as internal and external factors. External factors including non-social and social factors. Non-social factors come from school facilities, geographical condition, distant of school, climate, transportation, etc. Social factors come from humans, for example the relationship between parents and others, teachers' teaching style, teachers' attitude, etc. Internal factors include physiological (physical condition) and psychological factors (intelligence, aptitude, personality, etc.).

In English teaching, measuring students' achievement is different because it is related to students' performance in learning English which involve four skills including speaking, writing and reading with some aspects such as grammar, vocabulary mastery and pronunciation. It involves receptive and productive activities which cannot be separated each other. Those skills have to be learnt simultaneously because it can determine the success of language mastery.

### **Previous Researches**

Some researches were conducted to investigate teachers' attitude or behavior toward students' English achievement. In a research conducted by Gitsaki and Alexiou (2015:46), the result shows that teachers' positive attitude apparently did not show significant difference. It means teachers' positive attitude in teaching and learning did not give so much influence to students' performance and achievement. On the other hands, some cases investigated by Hargreaves (2017:223) and Mehdiour and Balaramulu (2013:222) presented a contrast result that teachers' attitude influent significantly to students' achievement in learning, as well as in English.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a correlational research which related two variables, namely teachers' friendly attitude and students' English-speaking achievement. The sample of the research was students of SMPT Madinatul Ulum Cangkring Kecamatan Jenggawah, Jember class VIII A consist of 35 students with population all of the eighth-grade students consist of 65 students.

The data collection was conducted through distributing questionnaire and accessing students' speaking final scores in the end of the semester. The questionnaire was analyzed through Likert-scale for five items of scoring: Always (A), Very Frequently (VF), Occasionally (O), Rarely (R), Never (N) with scale 54321.

The data were then analyzed through statistical procedure such as calculating the result of questionnaire score and students' speaking scores by *Pearson product moment* coefficient of correlation ( $r$ ) formula. The criteria of correlation categories are based on the interval of the calculation result as follow.

**Table 1.** Degree of Correlation

Coefficient Range	Degree of Correlation
0.00-0.199	Very Low
0.20-0.399	Low
0.40-0.599	Moderate
0.60-0.799	High
0.80-1.000	Very High

**Table 2.** The Strength of Correlation

Coefficient Range	Strength of Correlation
0.00	No correlation
0.01 – 0.09	Negligible
0.10 – 0.29	Weak
0.30 – 0.49	Moderate
0.50 – 0.69	Strong
0.70 – 0.89	Very strong
➤ 0.90	Nearly perfect

The criteria of correlation were based on the two tables above in determining the degree and the strength of correlation between two variables.

**FINDING**

Based on the data analysis, there are some findings presented in the tables including data recapitulation of students' speaking scores and questionnaire scores. They are presented in table 3 and table 4 as follow.

**Table 3.** Data Recapitulation of Students' Speaking Scores

Sum of Speaking Scores ( $\Sigma x$ )	Standard Deviation (SD)	Mean (M)	Mode (Mod)	Median (Med)	Smallest Score	Highest Score
2507	6.886	71.63	73	73	60	83

There were 35 students as the sample in the research. The students' speaking scores were obtained from students' speaking scores in the final semester test. The average score of speaking was 71.63 with mode 73 and median 73 and the total number of speaking scores was 2507. The highest score was 83 and the lowest score was 60. The standard deviation was 6.886 with df 34.

**Table 4.** Data Recapitulation of Questionnaires Scores

Sum of Questionnaire Scores ( $\Sigma x$ )	Standard Deviation (SD)	Mean (M)	Mode (Mod)	Median (Med)	Smallest Score	Highest Score
1714	3.240	50.4	48 & 52	50	43	56

In questionnaire data description, the sum of questionnaire scores was 1714 with average score 50.4, mode 48 and 52, and median 50. The smallest score was 43 and the highest score was 56. The calculation showed that standard deviation was 3.240 with df 34. All 26 items contain the statements about teachers' friendly attitude inside and outside of the classroom.

Finding out the correlation, *Pearson Product Moment* formula was used. Then,  $r_{xy}$  score was calculated after the statistical procedure of students' speaking scores and questionnaire scores are conducted.  $R_{xy}$  score was 0.677 then it was compared to r table 0.349 with significant level 0.05 or 5 % and df 33 (35-2). From the result, it can be concluded that there was a positive correlation between teachers' friendly attitude and students' English-speaking achievement. Based on the coefficient rank,  $r_{xy}$ 0.677 indicates high-strong correlation between two variables, teachers' friendly attitude and students' English-speaking achievement.



## **DISCUSSION**

Teaching and learning activity is an activity of transferring and sharing knowledge as well as receives it. There are teachers and students in this activity. Teaching English as a foreign language is a challenge for both for them since English is not their first or second language which is used in daily conversation. Therefore, in facing some difficulties, teachers have to be good role models for their students inside and outside of classroom.

Building teachers-students relationship is one of the ways to have a good teaching and learning activity. Relationship between them is much more influence by teachers' performance and competence affectively and cognitively. Teachers are not only must be able to master the material but also, they have to show good attitude and behavior to showing some moral values. Positive attitude must be improved and maintained but negative attitude must be avoided.

Teachers' positive attitude gave positive contribution to students' performance in the classroom. It affected students' perception of how good teachers in the classroom are (Kurgat & Gordon, 2014:34; Mehdipour & Balaramulu, 2013:223). The positive attitude in this research referred to teachers' friendly attitude which hypothesized to have any correlation towards students' speaking achievement. The research was conducted by distributing questionnaires to students as well as accessing students' speaking scores in the final examination. There were 26 items of statements which indicated teachers' friendly attitude inside and outside of the classroom. The indicators of friendly attitude derived from qualification and suggestion to set a friendly atmosphere in teaching and learning process.

Then, it was proved that there was a positive correlation between teachers' friendly attitude and students' speaking achievement. The statistical data showed that the result of  $r_{xy}$  was higher than  $r$  table with  $df$  34. The result of 0.677 had been converted to the correlation criteria and presented a high-strong correlation. It means that if there is a high-strong correlation, teachers have to maintain the friendly attitude in teaching and learning process to improve students speaking achievement. The finding was also supported by statement from Kurgat & Gordon (2014:40), Mehdipour & Balaramulu (2013:223) and Hargreaves (2017:223) that teachers' positive attitude can improve students' achievement. Teachers' friendly attitude as one of positive attitudes is essential in activating students in the instructional process.

Moreover, speaking is a productive skill which require active performance such as debating, presenting something orally, role-playing, etc. Doing those performance using English must be difficult for EFL students. The ways in supporting, calming, pushing, reducing anxiety and promoting self-confidence can be

done through being friendly teachers. Students have to be more motivated in speaking to express their ideas and speak in front of other people. Therefore, by being friendly, teachers may easier to manage and control the classroom well and overcome the problems easily through a more intimate communication. This finding is also supported by the data from Pawlak research (2011:36) that indicated teachers' friendly attitude as one of motivating factors to a learner involvement and a positive classroom atmosphere.

## CONCLUSION

The research was conducted through a quantitative-correlational approach by correlated two variables namely teachers' friendly attitude and students' speaking achievement. The importance of teachers' positive attitude in teaching and learning process lead the researcher in investigating the correlation between two variables. There result of the research showed that there was a positive correlation between teachers' friendly attitude and students' speaking achievement and it showed a high-strong correlation between them. The result of  $r_{xy}$  which was higher than  $r$  table indicated that teachers' friendly attitude and students' speaking achievement are positively correlated each other. Therefore, teachers' friendly attitude must be maintained and improved to promote students' speaking achievement.

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