

## **The Correlation Between Classroom Seating Position and Speaking Ability of a 9th Grader**

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### **ABSTRACT**

English is regarded as an international language, one of the most widely used languages in all fields. In Indonesia, the government recognized that English proficiency had an impact on global development not only for education but also for career purposes. English is useful in a variety of fields. The limitation of the study was only focused on “The Correlation between Classroom Seating Position and Speaking Ability of 9th Grade Students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Palembang”. The objectives of this study were found out whether or not there is a significant correlation between Classroom Seating Position and Speaking Ability. This study used quantitative research design with correlational approach. The researchers used a purposive sampling, total of population were 172 students and the total of sample were 27 students. The data were collected by two instruments, (1) through ready-made questionnaires, (2) speaking test was analysed by using SPSS 26. The result of this study was that there was a correlation between two variables, with r-obtained (0.797) was higher than r-table (0.388). The conclusion of this study was that the alternative hypotheses ( $H_a$ ) was accepted and the null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) was rejected. Then there was a high correlation between the two variables.

### **Introduction**

Communication is critical to success in all areas of life in today's global globe. Language was a means of communication. As a result, language, such as English, was required for communicating with others. English is considered an international language, one of the languages used mainly in any aspect. In Indonesia, the government realized that English competency impacted global development not only for educational purposes but also for carrier purposes. English plays a significant role in many sectors.

Speaking ability is the most consequential skill in obtaining a foreign language learning as a second language. Speaking is considered an essential skill in learning a foreign language among four language skills. According to Brown (2004) and Rao (2019), speaking was a skill that was frequently judged in real-life circumstances. Bueno et al. (2006, p. 321) and Al-Sobhi and Preece (2018), stated “Speaking was one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face. Speaking was considered the most important of the four

language skills of English. Even the learners learned the language for so many years they found it difficult to speak in real-time situations when it was demanded”.

As it was seen, speaking is arduous in learning the English language. Thus, it has to be a priority in teaching and learning the English language. Learning the English language is not only focused on theory; students could also use it as a functioning tool for communication. According to Saroyan and Amundsen (2023), teaching was not only about conveying the subject matter, but it was a process of changing students' behaviour following the goals, such as the students having to express their minds and ideas spontaneously.

Thus, the teachers must be able to implement and design learning strategies that follow the student's interests and talents. Since English is not the mother tongue of most students, it is also a challenge for the teachers to make learning and teaching activity to be interested. Jaelani and Zabidi (2020), stated “Learning and teaching were the two things that were tightly relevant to pedagogical activities. Learning and teaching were also a form of education that created an interaction among students and teachers”. Talking about teaching and learning, there were four skills that the students learned in the same case as a language as a whole. On the other hand, various issues were coming up, especially classroom management.

Managing the classroom of students was one of the most concerning topics in the EFL teaching and learning process. Jones and Jones (2020), stated that classroom management points to a pattern of activities to maintain an effective learning environment. Since classroom management is crucial in creating efficient and effective teaching and learning processes, teachers must have many experiences. Macías (2018), mentioned that problems related to classroom management could happen to all teachers with different beliefs. According to Miljenović et al. (2024), teachers' classroom management was divided into three types: interventionist, non-interventionist, and interactionist.

Besides managing class as an effective way to create an interactive classroom, a teacher must know about setting up classroom activities based on their characteristics and personality factors, such as front and back sitters. This creates a comfortable condition for learning English in the 2 classrooms. The seating position seemed like an unnecessary thing that teachers realized; seating position had an impact on the teacher to manage the entire class.

Moreover, the students' choices toward the seats were also considered since their preferences toward their seat positions may differ because of a particular factor that also leads to instruction success. Motivation is the factor that encourages people to prefer a particular thing over another and has an essential role in achieving the goal and creating an effective teaching and learning process. The linguistic elements comprised (1) comprehension, (2) pronunciation, (3) vocabulary, (4) grammar, and (5) fluency (Enayat & Derakhshan, 2021). Whereas the non-linguistic aspects included; (1) being nervous about speaking, (2) having no motivation, (3) being afraid of making errors, and (4) low participation in 1 class (Alotumi, 2021 & Sholikhi, 2021). The experts' explanations showed

that the highest percentage that caused students' speaking mastery problems was the linguistic aspect, which reached 77%, then the non-linguistic aspect only reached 23%.

Based on analysis previous research, the researchers got research gaps and that's some reasons why learning English is essential. First, students could get high-quality jobs. In business, the language that is commonly used is English. Second, learners would be able to communicate with others worldwide. Lastly, learners can quickly get data from all over the world (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022 & Miranda & Wahyudin, 2023). However, Indonesian students need some help with speaking ability from linguistics and non-linguistics aspects.

Depending on the previous reasoning, the researchers were curious whether there was a correlation between a student's speaking abilities and their classroom sitting arrangement.

## Method

This type of study was a research method with a statistical procedure to collected information to improve understanding of the issue. In this study, the researchers used quantitative research design with correlational approach (Sileyew, 2019). The population was a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects with specific qualities and characteristics that would be set by the researchers to be studied and then withdraw the conclusion. According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), the population was a component of the research target. In this research, the population was the ninth-grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Palembang. The total of the students was 172 students. According to Creswell (2015), sample is the study participants selected from the population that the researchers use to generalize. In this study, the researchers used one class as a sample. The total of the students were 27 students.

The questionnaire was a data collection technique that would give respondents a set of questions or written statements to answer. Brace (2018), put forward several principles of questionnaire writing as a data technique. The questionnaire would consist of 20 questions. It made use of a closed-ended questionnaire due to it having some scores related to five different options that would be chosen by the students in terms of strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The questionnaires that would use that was proposed by Taslim et al. (2019), the test was a set of stimuli presented to an individual to elicit responses based on which a numerical score could be assigned. In this study, the researchers collected the data by giving test to students. The researchers gave the questions to the students, then the students performed with the topic, and the researchers recorded the students' performance. In determining the score, the researchers used an oral rating scale that was proposed by ( Harris, 1969 & Stevens & Levi, 2023).

## Results and Discussion

### Findings

The findings of this study included: (1) the result of the student's classroom seating position, (2) the result of the student's speaking ability, and (3) statistical analysis

#### 1. The result of the student seating position

There were 27 students of ninth-grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Palembang that were chosen as a sample by using a purposive sampling technique. In this study, the classroom seating position was an independent variable (X) and speaking ability was a dependent variable (Y). The 27 students answered the seating position questionnaires. The results and discussion are adjusted to the research approach. If the quantitative research approach consists of descriptive statistics, the results of the assumption test and the results of hypothesis testing are then analysed critically. If the qualitative approach is in the form of themes from the results of the qualitative analysis carried out.

Table 1  
*The result of Students' Seating Position*

No.	Score	Total	Score level
1.	80-100	1	High
2.	60-79	13	Moderately
3.	<60	13	Low

Table 1 showed the scores achieved by the ninth-grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Palembang which were calculated by using SPSS 26. It can be seen the total of the data (N) was found that 1 student got "High". In the scoring 60-79, 13 students got "Moderately". In the table, it could also see that 13 students got "Low". It can be concluded that more students have moderately and low levels from 27 students.

#### 2. The Descriptive Statistics of Student Seating Position Questionnaire

Table 2  
*Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire of Seating Position*

N	Valid	27
	Missing	0
Mean		58.52
Std. Error of Mean		2.699
Median		62.00
Mode		69
Std. Deviation		14.026
Variance		196.721
Range		58
Minimum		30
Maximum		88
Sum		1580
Percentiles	25	51.00

50	62.00
75	69.00

Table 2 showed that the student's score was calculated by using SPSS 26. It can be seen that the total of the data was 60. The maximum score for classroom seating position was 88, the minimum score was 30, and the mean or average of the students' seating position was the total score which score 1580 divided by the total of students which was 27. It was found the average of the students' seating position was 58.52, and the standard deviation was 14.026.

### 3. The Result of Students' Speaking Test

Table 3  
*The result of students' speaking test*

No	Score	Total	Score Level
1.	80-100		Very Good
2.	70-79		Good
3.	60-69		Fair
4.	50-59		Poor
5.	<50		Very Poor

Table 3 showed the scores achieved by the ninth-grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Palembang, it was found that the highest score was 80 and the lowest score was 45.

### 4. Descriptive Statistics of Speaking Test

Table 4  
Descriptive Statistics of Speaking Test

N	Valid	27
	Missing	0
Mean		62.04
Std. Error of Mean		1.735
Median		65.00
Mode		65
Std. Deviation		9.015
Variance		81.268
Range		35
Minimum		45
Maximum		80
Sum		1675
Percentiles	25	55.00
	50	65.00
	75	65.00

Table 4 showed the maximum score on the speaking test was 80, the minimum score was 45, and the mean or average of the students' speaking test was the total score which score 1675 divided by the total of the students which was 27. It was found the average of the students' speaking test was 62.04, and the standard deviation was 9.015.

## B. Statistical Analysis

### 1. Correlation between Classroom Seating Position and Speaking Ability

Table 5

		SEATING_POSITION	SPEAKING_TEST
SEATING_POSITION	Pearson Correlation	1	.797**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	27	27
SPEAKING_TEST	Pearson Correlation	.797**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	27	27

To find the correlation between a classroom seating position and speaking ability, the researchers used Bivariate Correlation analysis. If the result of the correlation analysis was higher than a significant level (0.05), it means that there was a significant correlation between a classroom seating position and speaking ability. While if the result of the correlation analysis was lower than the significance level, it showed there was no correlation between a classroom seating position and speaking ability. The result of the correlation analysis showed that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was 0.797 and it means there was a correlation.

### 2. The Contribution of Students' Seating Position to Speaking ability

Table 6

Simple Regression  
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.797	.63	.621	5.54
	a	.6		7

a. Predictors: (Constant), SEATING\_POSITION

To find the correlation between a classroom seating position and speaking ability, the researchers used a sample regression analysis. Based on the table of the simple regression analysis, the contribution can be seen from the R Square (0.636). It means there was a contribution between a classroom seating position and the speaking ability of ninth-grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Palembang.

## Discussion

Nevertheless speaking skill can be achieved in numerous ways. Some of them can speak English with ease because they have good grammar, a sufficient vocabulary, clear pronunciation, and accuracy in word choice, while others struggle because they lack the necessary vocabulary and have poor grammar. Since it's necessary to learn how to speak, everyone has to first comprehend what they are saying. Based on the questionnaire that distributed, 50% of students chose vocabulary as the biggest influence in increasing students' success in learning English. Most of them said, because if we have a lot of vocabularies, it will make it easier for us to string words in English, use them to communicate and it will really help to improve our proficiency in English. The second 23.1% is fluency. In English, it is also important to focus on helped students succeed. Because if the students already have a lot of vocabulary but are not fluent in using it or the pronunciation is wrong, it is the same as not mastering it. Moreover, it will be a quite difficult to understand later in communication. As much as possible fluency and pronunciation should also be considered. The speaker produces spoken language by speaking English with good fluency and accuracy (Arini & Wahyudin, 2022).

In this study, the researchers conducted study on the ninth-grade students of SMP Muhammadiyah 4 Palembang with a total sample of 27 students. The researchers gave the classroom seating position questionnaire that consisted of 20 questionnaires and the researchers took the video of the students speaking with the topic "talks about your future plans" in 1 minute, and the researchers used the ratters to give them scores. Then after the researchers collected the data, the researchers identified and classified the data.

The researchers found the result of classroom seating position and the result of the speaking test, from the table above showed that student's seating position had a significant correlation toward students' speaking ability ( $r$ -obtained=0.797) in two-tailed testing at 0.05 of significant level 27 samples is ( $r$ -table =0.388). It means that there was a significant correlation between a classroom seating position and speaking ability since the value of  $r$  obtained was higher than the  $r$ -table. The alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) was accepted then the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected, these results supported research by (Miranda & Wahyudin, 2023).

## Conclusion

This study concluded that classroom seating position significantly influences students' speaking ability. This finding emphasizes the importance of seating arrangements in enhancing speaking skills in educational settings. The methodology involved administering a classroom seating position questionnaire consisting of 20 items and recording videos of the students speaking on the topic "talk about your future plans" for one minute. Scores were assigned by ratters based on these video recordings. The analysis revealed a significant correlation between classroom seating position and students' speaking ability, with an obtained correlation coefficient ( $r$ -obtained) of 0.797. This value was significantly higher than the critical value ( $r$ -table) of 0.388 at a 0.05 significance level for

27 samples. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>), which suggested no significant correlation, was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H<sub>a</sub>), which proposed a significant correlation, was accepted.

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