

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a general description of the study. It covers the background of the problem, research problem, objective of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of the terms.

### **1.I Background of the problem**

Speaking is an important skill in learning a language through which we can convey information, ideas, and maintain social relationship by communicating with others. In addition, a large percentage of the world's language learners study English in order to be able to communicate fluently.

Many language learners regard speaking skill as the measure of their language mastery. Therefore, one of the main purposes of language learning is to develop proficiency in speaking and communicative efficiency. They regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire and assess their progress in terms of their accomplishments in spoken communication. On the contrary, for most people, speaking is the most difficult part when they learn a foreign language.

Speaking a second or foreign language involves taking the risk of being wrong with all its consequences. Based on the writer's observation at SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung and the experience when the writer practiced teacher training program (PPL) at SMPN 1 Lambu Kibang, it can be reported that students with average speaking score of 66.80, were particularly reluctant to speak in the classroom. They felt nervous when they were asked to speak English in front of the class. Sometimes they also avoided this chance by giving many excuses, like saying 'I am shy' or 'I cannot do that'. They were often shy to say something or they just listened silently when the teacher asked them. Eventhough they did what the teacher instructed, sometimes their voice was slower and softer than what they usually did. Consequently, the teacher could not hear the voice clearly. They were afraid if they made mistakes, they would get negative response from their friends. For examples other students would laugh at him/her, or the teacher would blame him/her. They were unable to express themselves confidently, they were not sure with their ability in speaking English and they inclined to feel that they would fail.

The situations above may indicate that the students have low self-esteem. Rosenberg and Owen (2001) state that description about low self-esteem people in based on empirical research. People with low self-esteem are more troubled by failure and they tend to exaggerate events as being negative. For example, they often interpret non critical comments as critical. They are more likely to experience social anxiety and low levels of interpersonal confidence. This makes social interaction with others difficult as they feel awkward, shy, suspicious, and unable to adequately express themselves when interacting with others.

There are two aspects that influence English speaking ability, namely linguistic aspect and non-linguistic aspect. Linguistic aspect involves pronunciation, comprehension, grammar and word order, vocabulary and general speed of speech. Meanwhile non-linguistic aspect involves personality dimension such as ; self-esteem, inhibition, risk-taking, anxiety, empathy, and extroversion/introversion.

Actually, to be able to speak English in speaking class, students are not only expected to have a great ability in grammar, vocabulary or writing, but also how brave they have to express their ideas in English in front of others. In this case, they just lack confidence and have less positive attitude toward themselves in their ability to participate successfully in oral interaction. This situation indicates that self-esteem may give some contributions to successful English speaking ability.

On the other hand, study conducted by Carter & Nunan (2001) suggests that learning cannot be achieved without careful consideration to psychological factors. In all school environments, students get different grades. Some believe that they get either higher or lower grades than they expected to. Most of these problems are closely related to psychological factors out of which self-esteem has determining effects on language learning. The point is that the importance of self-esteem as a crucial factor affecting language learning should not be underestimated. It could be claimed that no activity will be carried out successfully without self-esteem (Huitt, 2004; see also Brown).

Dedmond (2009) states self-esteem as the complication of feelings about ourselves that guides our behavior, influences our attitudes, and drives our motivation. Meanwhile, Barrow (2010) states self-esteem as the ability to cope

with life's challenges, the feeling of being worthy and deserving and the right to enjoy the product of hard work.

Several studies have been carried out on the effects of self-esteem on language learning (see Khodadad, 2010; Hayati and Ostadian, 2011). These studies reveal that the role of self-esteem as a psychological factor in language learning have been underestimated. The effects of self-esteem on high school students' learning in Missouri (Hiskens, 2011) suggests that students with low self-esteem were faced with problems in general learning.

Referring to the illustration above, it can be seen that psychological factor like self-esteem may give some contributions to successful learning of speaking English.

This study was conducted in the second year of SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung. In this grade, the students were expected to have the ability in conducting simple communication. Based on KTSP curriculum, basic competences show that the students are expected to be able to express meaning in simple short transaction and interpersonal conversations to communicate in closest social and academic contexts.

Based on the description above, the writer is interested in investigating the effect of students' self-esteem on their English speaking ability at the second year of SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung. The school has been chosen as the subject of this research because, as far as the researcher concerns, there is no research dealing

with the effect of self-esteem on students' speaking ability carried out in this school yet.

## **1.2 Identification of Problems**

Based on the background above, the following problems could be identified :

1. For most students, speaking is the most difficult part when they learn English.
2. In speaking activity, most students are nervous when they are asked to speak English in front of the class.
3. Students lack of confidence of positive attitude toward themselves in their ability to participate successfully in oral interaction.
4. Low self-esteem may affects students' learning in speaking ability. This situation indicates that self-esteem may give some contributions to successful learning of English speaking ability.

## **1.3 Limitation of Problem**

Based on the identification of problems, the writer limited the study as follows :

1. To investigate the effect of students' self-esteem on their English speaking ability.
2. To find out which level is better among high, normal, and low self-esteem on students' English speaking ability?

### **1.4 Research Problems**

Based on the limitation of problem, the writer formulates the problems as follow :

1. Does self-esteem have effect on students' English speaking ability at the second year of SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung ?
2. Which level is better among high, normal, and low self-esteem on students' English speaking ability at the second year of SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung?

### **1.5 Objectives of the Research**

This study has objectives as follow :

1. To investigate whether self-esteem has effect on students' English speaking ability at the second year of SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung.
2. To find out which level is better among high, normal, and low self-esteem on students' English speaking ability of the second year students at SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung.

### **1.6 Uses of the Research**

The uses of the research might be beneficially theoretically and practically :

1. Practical
  - As information for the researcher who are interested in investigating the effect of students' self-esteem on their English speaking ability.

- To answer the writer's curiosity on the effect of students' self-esteem on their English speaking ability.
2. Theoretical
- Give contribution to the previous research about self-esteem and language learning.

### **1.7 Scope of the Research**

In this research, the writer focuses on the effect of self-esteem on students' English speaking ability and find out which level is better among high, normal, and low self-esteem on students' English speaking ability at the second year of SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung. The writer chose second year students for the population of the research, there were six classes and for the sample, the writer took 5 students from each class and collected them into one class when the test was held, with the total 30 students from six classes. For gaining the data, self-esteem and speaking ability, the writer has administered tests. They are self-esteem test and English speaking ability test. Self-esteem is tested by using questionnaire developed by Morris Rosenberg, and simulation technique used to assess students' ability in speaking English. In this technique, the students played role as a journalist and famous person. They chose one picture of famous person and pretended to be one of the person in the picture. The test covered asking and giving personal information. The writer used ex-post facto method in this research and gave no treatment but collected the data and saw the relation between two variables that happened. The writer looked at the effect of variable X (self-esteem) to variable Y (speaking ability). Besides that, the writer also find out which level

is better among high, normal, and low self-esteem on students' English speaking ability at the second year of SMPN 14 Bandar Lampung.

## **1.8 Definition of Terms**

### **Speaking**

It is the ability to express oneself in life situations, or the ability to report acts or situations in precise words, or the ability to converse, or to express a sequence of ideas fluently.

### **English speaking ability**

It is defined as an ability or skill that the learners have to communicate, to convey meaning, and to have a meaningful conversation in English.

### **Self-esteem**

It is the complication of feelings about ourselves that guides our behavior, influences our attitudes, and drives our motivation.

### **High Self-esteem**

It is that feeling at the center of your being of self-worth, self-confidence, and self-respect, means that you feel good about yourself.

### **Normal Self-esteem**

It is liking yourself, for the most part, as you are but still have occasional periods of self doubt. How you feel about yourself depends on who you compare yourself with.



**Low Self-esteem**

It is may be associated with feelings of depression. Or it may mean not thinking very highly of yourself, doubting your ability to get the things you want.

**Effect**

It is a change or result that causes of some factors.

**Affective**

It is the conscious subjective aspect of feeling or emotion.