

# THE CORRELATION BETWEEN MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE AND SPEAKING MASTERY OF THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM IN SOUTH SUMATERA

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**Abstract:** The objectives of this study are to find out whether or not: (1) there is a significant correlation between the students' musical intelligence and their speaking mastery, and (2) there is a contribution of musical intelligence to speaking mastery. The sample of this study is 83 university students of English education study program in South Sumatera. The data are collected by using students' musical intelligence questionnaire and speaking test. Pearson Product Moment Correlation of SPSS version 23.0 is used in analyzing the data. The results show that (1) there is no significant correlation between the students' musical intelligence and their speaking mastery ( $r= 0.071$  and  $p\text{-value}= 0.522$ ), and (2) there is no contribution of musical intelligence to speaking mastery. However, if we analyze each point of the questionnaire, song lyric has the highest percentages in the questionnaire to the speaking mastery of the university students of English education study program in South Sumatera. In conclusion, the students' musical intelligence is not significantly correlated to their speaking mastery.

**Keywords:** *Correlation, Musical Intelligence, Speaking Mastery*

Speaking is one of the most important skills of all the four language skills because individuals who learn a language are referred to as the speakers of that language (Ur, 1996). While, Bailey and Nunan (2004) state that speaking is thought by many language speakers as the hardest language skill to be acquired because speaking activity happens in real time where people have to give response directly and when people speak they are not able to revise or edit what they have said like what they do in writing .

Moreover, English speaking of Indonesian students is still below the average. It is showed by the report of Zulianti (2013) who said that speaking mastery of SMK Negeri 01 Batu in West Java was still the problem in learning speaking subject especially in the sixth grade. The standard minimum score is  $>70$ , but the mean score of the students in the sixth grade is 61, so their scores were still lower than the standard minimum score. While, Meyer (2009) acknowledges that speech is the primary mode of human communication. Then, Burkart (1998) points out that speech is the most basic means of human communication and it is synonymous with knowing the language. It is in line with Brown (2000) who says that the parameter of successful foreign language speakers is that they can interact with other people through oral communication.

The researchers found some problems of the university students of English education study program in South Sumatera, and the results showed that there were many students who were not confident in giving their opinions. It was because they were lack of vocabulary, grammar, and practice. They were not accustomed to speaking English because they often used their mother tongue. Moreover, they often felt nervous, so they liked to be silent listeners rather than to make mistakes in their English speaking. Based on the results above, the researchers were interested to know whether musical intelligence can affect speaking mastery of the students or not. Musical intelligence is one of nine intelligences which are stated by Howard Gardner.

Gardner (1983) defines that intelligence is the capability to cure or to make brands that are valued within one or more cultural settings. It is important to know that people have different intelligences. Today there are nine intelligences stated by Gardner which are related to a person's unique aptitude set of capabilities and ways they might prefer to demonstrate intellectual abilities which are verbal-linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial-visual intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, interpersonal intelligence,

intrapersonal intelligence, naturalist intelligence, and existential intelligence. In this study, the researchers only chose the musical intelligence.

Musical intelligence is the ability to recognize tones, rhythms and musical patterns, the capacity to understand and express oneself musically (Gardner, 1983). McKenzie (1999) states that the most common characteristics of having musical intelligence are appreciating and using of sound, interesting in playing an instrument, remembering things by putting them in a rhyme, enjoying many kinds of music, remembering song lyrics easily, and understanding relationship between sound and feeling. Moreover, Sleve and Miyake (2006) claim that learning a new language from structural and motivational properties of music in songs because these musical activities can develop auditory perception and metacognitive knowledge and aid phonological memory. Song, a combination of music and lyrics, possesses many intrinsic merits, such as a kaleidoscope of culture, expressiveness, recitability and therapeutic functions, which render it an invaluable source for language teaching (Shen, 2009).

Shabani and Torkeh (2014) had reported a research entitled “The Relationship between Musical Intelligence and Foreign Language Learning: The Case of Iranian Learners of English.”. They state that inclusion of music program in the learning of foreign language classroom can have benefits such as providing smoothing condition, stimulating creative process, increasing students' motivation for learning, activating linguistic information stored in the memory, helping students to concentrate and connect with their inner self, and improving writing, reading, listening, and speaking skills in language learning process. The students with higher levels of musical intelligence perform better in many fields such as verbal memory, vocabulary, and phonemic awareness than other students with lower levels of musical intelligence.

Jolly (1975) states that the use of music for example song in lessons can improve four skills of language: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Gardner (1983) states that songs activate both parts of the brain. Individual processes musical tones in the right hemisphere of the brain, but with formal training and greater competence, musicians utilize the left hemisphere as well. The pronunciation of words, understanding, rhythm and musical execution correspond to the left hemisphere, whereas, melodic expression, emotions, and tone correspond to the right hemisphere. Therefore, this study aimed to know the correlation between musical intelligence and speaking mastery of the university students of English education study program in South Sumatera.

## **Method**

This study described whether or not there was a significant correlation between students' musical intelligence and their speaking mastery at English Education Study Program of university students in South Sumatera. It would also try to find out the contribution of students' musical intelligence to their speaking mastery. The processes were done by Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and regression analysis using SPSS version 23.0. The sample of this study was 83 university students of English education study program in South Sumatera.

The data were collected by distributing musical intelligence questionnaire to students to measure their musical intelligence. The questionnaire was adapted from a McKenzie's multiple intelligence. It consisted of 90 items, but the researchers only took 10 items about the part of musical intelligence. Then, the data were also collected by giving speaking test to measure their speaking mastery. There were six aspects of speaking test, namely grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, comprehension, background knowledge, and fluency.

## **Results**

The questionnaire results showed that the highest percentage was the question of number 10 about remembering song lyrics easily (10.4%). The second highest percentage was on number 6 (4.8%) about remembering things by putting them in a rhyme. Meanwhile, a speaking test was used to measure the students' speaking mastery.

**Table 1. Correlation Between Musical Intelligence and Speaking Mastery**

		Musical Intelligence	Speaking Mastery
Musical Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.071
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		.522
	N	83	83
Speaking Mastery	Pearson Correlation	.071	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.522	
	N	83	83

As shown on the table above, the correlation coefficient (Pearson Correlation) was 0.071 and the p-value was 0.522. Because the p-value 0.522 was higher than 0.05, there was no correlation between musical intelligence and speaking mastery of the university students of English education study program in South Sumatera.

**Table 2. Musical Intelligence and Speaking Mastery Percentage**

Musical Intelligence			Speaking Mastery		
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low	4	4.8%	Low	-	-
			Moderate	4	4.8%
			Good	-	-
			Very Good	-	-
Medium	42	50.6%	Low	1	1.2%
			Moderate	16	19.3%
			Good	21	25.3%
			Very Good	4	4.8%
High	37	44.6%	Low	-	-
			Moderate	18	21.7%
			Good	18	21.7%
			Very Good	1	1.2%
Total	83	100%	Total		100%

Table 2 showed (4.8%) students who were in low musical intelligence were in moderate speaking mastery. Then, among 42 students in medium musical intelligence, (1.2%) student was in low, (19.3%) students were in moderate, (25.3%) students were in good, and (4.8%) students were in very good speaking masteries. Finally, among 37 students in high musical intelligence, (21.7%) students were in moderate, (21.7%) students were in good and (1.2%) student was in very good speaking masteries.

**Table 3. Regression analysis – model summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.219 <sup>a</sup>	.048	.036	7.572	.048	4.090	1	81	.046
2	.390 <sup>b</sup>	.152	.131	7.191	.104	9.804	1	80	.002

a. Predictors: (Constant), P6

b. Predictors: (Constant), P6, P10

The researchers used multiple regression analysis to see the contribution of musical intelligence as the predictor variable to speaking mastery as the criterion variable. The percentages of multiple regression showed that the contribution of question 6 about remembering things by

putting them in a rhyme was 4.8%, and the contribution of question 10 about remembering song lyrics easily was 10.4%.

### **Discussion**

Based on the results of the descriptive statistics in the previous discussions, it was found that the musical intelligence and speaking mastery of the university students of English education study program in South Sumatera were various. The students who had low musical intelligence had moderate speaking mastery. Then, the students who had medium musical intelligence had low, moderate, good, and very good speaking masteries. Finally, the students who had high musical intelligence also had moderate, good, and very good speaking masteries.

Based on the statistical analysis, it was found that the result of the p-value (correlation coefficient) was 0.522 which means there was no correlation between musical intelligence and speaking mastery of the university students of English education study program in South Sumatera. It could be said that the students who get high speaking mastery did not always have high musical intelligence. Because there was no correlation between musical intelligence and speaking mastery, it could be concluded that there was no contribution of musical intelligence to speaking mastery in general, but if we looked each point of the questionnaire there was a contribution of song lyrics and remembering things in a rhyme (memorization capacity) to speaking mastery. It could be seen from the percentages of remembering things by putting them in a rhyme (4.8%) and remembering song lyrics (10.4%). It is in line with the statement from Almutairi and Shukri (2016) who claim that songs provide an opportunity for students to practice speaking skill. In addition, using songs in the classroom is not only to encourage the motivation of the students but also to promote the speaking mastery of the students (Orlova, 2003; Romero, Bernal, & Olivares, 2012).

Moreover, song is not only giving effect for speaking in general but also giving effect for some aspects of speaking such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. It was proved by most students who remember song lyric easily they have high grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency in speaking. Hugo and Horn (2013) believe that songs can help to make students aware of fast, slow and medium tempo of spoken English and the students are enabled to learn new words and idiomatic expression from the songs. On the other hand, using song in the classroom also can improve students' pronunciation, It was also supported by Arjomad and Yazdanimoghadam (2015) who had done a research about song and pronunciation, the result of the research was the students who were in experimental group got higher score in pronunciation than the students in control group. Thus, it can be concluded that music had significant effect on EFL learners' pronunciation ability.

Futonge (2005) states that song is also a great language package that bundles culture, vocabulary, listening, grammar and a host of other language skills in just a few rhymes. In addition, Millington (2011) says that songs can also be useful tools in the learning of vocabulary, sentence structures, and sentence patterns. They are usually based around a theme or topic that can provide the context for vocabulary learning. Therefore, students can get the advantages of using song as an input of their English language learning especially to achieve the vocabulary. finally, Zatinikasari (2008) says that song is also effective to make the students to remember the word easily and feel more motivated in the class because they learn in interesting way.

It could be concluded that there was no contribution of musical intelligence to speaking mastery of the university students of English education study program in South Sumatera. It was because the musical intelligence was too general, it combined all of the elements of music such as sound, playing an instrument, rhyme, music, song, lyrics, and understanding relationship between sound and feeling. However, if we looked more detail point to the number of the questionnaire, there was a contribution of song lyrics and remembering things in a rhyme to speaking mastery.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings and interpretations, there were three conclusions drawn in this study. First, there was no correlation between musical intelligence and speaking mastery of the university students of English education study program in South Sumatera. In other words, the students who got high speaking mastery did not always have high musical intelligence. Second, because there was no correlation between musical intelligence and speaking mastery of the university students of

English education study program in South Sumatera, there was no contribution of musical intelligence to speaking mastery except the contribution of song lyrics and remembering things in a rhyme to two aspects of speaking mastery namely vocabulary and pronunciation. Moreover, future researchers should not only relate musical intelligence to predict students' speaking mastery, but also encourage adding more variables such as memorization capacity because song can make the students remembering the words easily. That is why it is good to be applied in teaching English in the class. They also should try to find the population which has different characteristics with the population in this study in order to produce various findings and results.

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