



## SELF-ESTEEM RELATED PERSPECTIVES OF EFL LEARNERS REGARDING GENDER, AGE AND LANGUAGE LEVEL

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### Abstract

In this study, an attempt has been made to investigate the perceptions of the EFL learners studying at the English Preparatory School of a university about self-esteem in relation to gender, language level and age. In order to explore the perceptions of the participants, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES) was employed. The participant learners were 40 EFL students. Of 40 participants 12 were female while 28 were male. The English language levels of the learners who took part in this study were pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. The ages of the participant EFL learners ranged between 18 and 30. A t-test was utilized to find out whether there were any significant differences in the perceptions of the male and female participants about self-esteem. Another t-test was carried out to explore if the perceptions of pre-intermediate and intermediate level learners differed regarding self-esteem. An ANOVA test was also administered to test whether there were any significant differences in the perceptions of the participants in different age categories in relation to their reported self-esteem scores. The findings of the study revealed that there were no significant differences in the reported perceptions of the participants about self-esteem in relation to gender, language level and age.

**Key words:** Self-esteem, EFL, Language level, gender, age.

### Introduction

It has been declared that high self-esteem can lead to high academic achievement. Aryana(2010) examined that the person who has positive feelings tend to have more academic performance, while the one who has negative beliefs led to show less achievement. Another important research was done by Ferkany(2008). He has argued that self-esteem is important for motivating children in order to be successful in school, especially in certain domains of instruction such as psychological education. If so, facilitating children's self-esteem in schools may after all be a very important educational aim. Similarly, Tremblay et.al. (2000) declared that "In most elementary settings, development of self-esteem is a primary goal because it is considered to be an underlying factor determining student motivation, persistence, and academic success" (p.313).

### Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is generally defined as evaluative beliefs about one's self. A lot of views on an individual has about oneself were accepted from how others behaved him and then, with the development of language capacity. These two main sources are believed to shape one's self. Others' beliefs and images about him/her go into people's self-concept which has one common feature: none was with them at birth. Everyone is born with concrete physical characteristics and undiscovered capacities. None is born knowing he is a girl or a boy, nor does anyone come into world already thinking he is smart or stupid, unlovable and lovable. Nonverbal communication has the biggest crucial role in early childhood; relying on how much affection, touching, food, and warmth are received. Person as an infant obtain general influence on whether they are loved and worthy. Following this, with the development of language capacity, they start to translate these general impressions into particular words within their minds and what others told them about themselves begin to have as much impact on their developing self-concepts (Sanford & Donovan, 1984).



## Self-Esteem and Language Learning

Language learning is so much more ego-involving than other fields of study. Therefore how teachers can assist their learners' emotional journey to become successful should be considered. To realize the role of self-esteem in language learning, Brown (1987) stated that "there has been an increasing awareness of necessity in second language learning and teaching to examine human personality in order to find solutions to perplexing problems" (p.99). To handle those problems, personality factors which will add to the success in language learning appeared. Also, he declared that "self-esteem is probably the most pervasive aspect of human behavior. It could easily be claimed that no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem"(p.101).

The humanistic movement of self-esteem has been found to be related to values concerning achievement, maturity, self-direction, and competence. According to, some researchers (Brown & Alexander, 1991; Coopersmith, 1967; Feather, 1991; Reasoner, 1982) students with positive self-esteem demonstrate a higher academic success rate. Language learning can be thought as a journey. All learners may show different perception in their learning route. Hortwitz (2008) stated that it is very important to be aware of the students' self-esteem when they are learning a language in order to see their perceptions in learning differences. There have been many researchers who have investigated definitions of self-esteem. They put emphasis on six major components of self-esteem: competence and worthiness, cognition and affect, stability and openness (James, 1980; White, 1959; Coopersmith, 1959; 1967; Rosenberg, 1965; 1979; Brandon, 1969; 1994; Mruck, 1999).

The concept of self-esteem has attracted the attention of many researchers and different definitions have been put forward by them. Some of these definitions are similar to each other whereas some others are different and contrasting. Self-esteem is regarded as an important tool for personal happiness and effective functioning. Generally, people want and need high self-esteem to overcome their problems effectively, to feel themselves better and to get their personal aims easily. People also need self-esteem because psychological wellbeing is more important than everything. What we do, say and think directly are shaped by the level of self-esteem, and how the others see us and treat us. Sanford & Donovan (1984) remind us that self-esteem affects the choices people make about life to take action to change things that need to be changed and ability to receive love and give love. Rogers (1951) termed his view of self as how others see us and it shapes the person's self-esteem. Rogers identified self-esteem as a function of others' view of us or the way we think the others view us.

Osborne (1996) describe self-esteem as "one person's stable comparison of affirmative or minus feelings and comments about success and failures of the self in daily lives" (p.65). Also, Owens (1991) stated that self-esteem is how the individual sees himself/herself, and it is crucial for happiness. In line with Owens, Crocker and Wolfe (2001) claimed that when the individual has a good self-esteem he/she is highly contingent on doing well in school and being physically attractive.

According to Brown (1987), 'self-esteem could easily be claimed that no successful cognitive or effective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of yourself and belief in your own capabilities"(p. 101). In addition, Myers (2008) pointed out that self-esteem affects our cognitive performance: Facing failure, high self-esteem people keep on their self-worth by feeling other people as failing, too, and by exaggerating their superiority over others.

It is also believed that self-esteem has a very big role on shaping the personality variable in determining human behavior. In order to understand a man psychologically, one must understand the nature and the degree of self-esteem, and the standards that one judges oneself.

In 1979, Rosenberg postulated a study of the adolescent self-esteem and he concluded that self-esteem could be divided in three: the extant self, the desired self, and presenting self. Coopersmith (1967)



focused that people with feelings of insufficiency and unworthiness see themselves as worthless and inability to generate inner resources to develop their situation. When a person does not fulfill personal aspirations it causes a person to feel inferior. He proposed four factors that contribute to improve self-esteem. These are: the values that the child perceives to have towards the self, the child's experience with success and his individual definitions of success or failure as well as the child's style of dealing with negative feedback or criticism.

In the light of the associations between self-esteem and academic achievement, and self-esteem and thoughts and actions, the raising of self-esteem in the classroom is very important. Teachers can prepare a positive learning environment and plant a positive self-esteem in their classes. When a teacher gives positive feedback and leads student involvement in learning and discovery, it is generally agreed that students can learn best.

It is worthwhile to mention that the importance of promoting self-esteem in language learners can be related with learners' academic achievement. If so, there is a need for language teachers to explore ways of promoting their learners' self-esteem so that they can help their learners to become better achievers of English language. Therefore, this study is conducted to examine the perceptions' of the participants regarding self-esteem in relation to gender, language level and, age.

This study is significant for different reasons. Firstly, the studies exploring the perceptions' of the participants regarding self-esteem in relation to gender, language level and, age are scarce in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus learning and teaching contexts. Secondly, the findings of this study might contribute to the psychological dimension of language learning and teaching. It might also shed light to the importance of designing language learning tasks that can foster the development of self-esteem and thus contribute to learner achievement.

Therefore, this study also aimed to investigate whether the perceptions of the participants about self-esteem differed in relation to gender, age, and language level of the learners.

The research questions this study addresses are the following:

- 1 Are there any gender-related differences in the perceptions of the participants regarding self-esteem?
- 2 Are there any age-related differences regarding their perceptions about self-esteem?
- 3 Are there any language level related differences in the perceptions of the participants about self-esteem?

## METHOD

### Research Design

The present study aimed to investigate the perceptions of the EFL learners studying at the Preparatory School of a university regarding self-esteem in relation to gender, language level and age. For this investigation quantitative means were employed. Anderson (2006) stated that quantitative research is measurable, objective, and reasoning is logistic and deductive. Quantitative methods derive from experimental and statistical methods in natural science and the main focus is on 'how much is happening to how many people'.

### The Participants of the Study

The participants of the study were 40 EFL learners studying at English Preparatory School of a university. Thirteen of the participants were female and twenty-seven of them were male. Seven of the participants were pre-intermediate level learners while thirty-three of them were intermediate level. The participants of the study were chosen purposively. There were six intermediate level language classes and eight pre-intermediate level language classes in the English Preparatory School. In each language level learners were grouped from the highest to the lowest according to their grades. The



participants of the study were voluntarily chosen from the two classes which were the top classes that were constituted from the students with the highest grades in the Preparatory School. Criterion sampling strategy was employed for the selection of the participants because the researcher specifically wanted to involve the students with the highest grades in each level in the study. Since the research studies in this area showed that learners with high self-esteem tend to have high grades, the researcher aimed to explore the self-esteem level of the successful learners assuming that they have high self-esteem. Therefore, these students were given a questionnaire which was Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (SES) to measure their self-esteem level. In total, there were fifty students in both of the selected classes yet all the students did not want to participate in the study for different reasons so forty students volunteered to take part in the investigation.

## Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

### Questionnaire

In this study the survey research design was employed. The design was ideal because it facilitated the collection of data from a large number of respondents through a self-administered questionnaire. The data collection instrument was which measured the self-esteem level of the participants. The scale included 10 items which were used to measure the learners' self-esteem level. Demographic information which included information about the participants' gender, language level and age was also collected.

In this investigation, Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (SES) was translated to the participants' native language which was Turkish since the researcher believed the participants might not understand every item if it was in the target language. For this reason, in order to collect reliable data the scale was first translated by the researcher and then it was given to another colleague to translate it for the purpose of checking the two translations. After the two translations were compared and agreed on one version, it was given to another colleague to back translate it for the reliability purposes. When the last version was agreed on, it was administered to the participants to collect data. SES (Self-esteem Scale) was originally developed by Rosenberg (1965) for the purpose of measuring global self-esteem. It is the most widely used self-esteem measure in social science research. It involves ten items. It taps the extent to which a person is generally satisfied with his/her life, considers him/herself worthy, holds a positive attitude toward himself/herself, or, alternatively, desires more respect, feels useless or useful. Supporting this view, Bryne (1996) declared that it is significant to differentiate Rosenberg's aspects from that of who consider general self-esteem to represent a sum of self-judgments.

SES (Self-esteem Scale) was scored with Guttman scoring format. Five of the items were phrased positively, for example, "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself" and the other five were phrased negatively, for example, "I certainly feel useless at times". "Positive" and "negative" items were presented alternatively in order to reduce the effect of respondent set.

Based on Gutman scoring format Rosenberg SES followed three steps of scoring.

In the first step;

For 1st, 2nd, 4th, 6th and 7th items which were:

Item 1: On the whole, I'm satisfied with myself.

Item 2: At times I am no good at all.

Item 4: I am able to do things as well as most other people.

Item 6: I certainly feel useless at times.

Item 7: I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on equal plane with others.

•If the answer was "Totally wrong" or "Wrong", "1" point was recorded.

•If the answer was "Totally right" or "Right", "0" was recorded.

For 3rd, 5th, 8th, 9th, 10th items which were:

Item 3: I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

Item 5: I feel that I do not have much to be proud of.



Item 8: I wish I could have more respect for myself.

Item 9: All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

Item 10: I take a positive attitude towards myself.

•If the answer was “Right” or “Totally right”, 1 point was recorded.

•If the answer was “Wrong” or “Totally wrong”, “0” was recorded.

In the second step;

•If sum of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd items was at least 2 or more, “1” point was recorded.

•If the sum of 4th and 5th items was 1 or 2, “1” point was recorded. If the sum was 0, then “0” point was recorded.

•For 6th, 7th, and 8th items, a total score was recorded which can be at most 3, at least 0.

•If the sum of 9th, and 10th, items was at least 1, then “1” was recorded.

In the third step;

•For each participant a total score of 10 items was computed. This score may change between 0 and 6.

•The score between 0-2 was recorded as “1” which meant high self-esteem.

•The score between 3-6 was recorded as “2” which meant low self-esteem.

If the score obtained from SES scale was between 0-6 and, any score was between 0-2 it was accepted as indicative of having high self-esteem, and any score between 3-6 was accepted as being indicative of having low self-esteem.

### **Analysis of the Data**

In this study, the data collected was subjected to a statistical analysis. For this purpose, SPSS 20 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used. Descriptive statistics were calculated to get the means and standard deviations of the collected data. The difference between the male and the female students' perceptions was tested through a two-tailed independent samples t-test. In order to check the differences between the language levels of the participant students, another two-tailed t-test was administered. To test the differences in the perceptions of the learners' regarding age, one way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was employed.

### **Ethical Issues**

In order to collect the data, the official permission was taken from the Director of the English Preparatory School. Before the questionnaires were distributed to the participants, the researcher informed both of the teachers and the participants for the study. The researcher distributed a consent letter to all the participants to get their informed consent for taking part in the study.

Before distributing the data collection instrument to the participants, the researcher informed the teachers of those classes and the participants about the aim and purpose of the investigation, and introduced the instrument of the study. The SES (Self-esteem Scale) was administered to the participants in their classrooms. Each student has completed the scale and answered the demographic questions approximately in 10-15 minutes.

While the students were responding to the scale, the researcher answered their questions, when they had, orally and carefully in order to promote comprehension. To obtain reliable data from the participants, the researcher explained the questions to the participants very carefully to be sure each of the students understood the questions.

### **Findings and Discussion**

Table 1.below, shows the number of the participants according to their gender and the means and standard deviations for the male and female participants of the study.



**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Participants' Gender**

Gender		N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Male	Female	28	4,43	,96	,18
		12	4,00	,74	,21

In this study, 28 of the participants were male while 12 of the participants were female. In other words, 56 % of the participants were male while 24 % of the participants were female. This means that more than two third of the participants were male in this study.

Table 2.below, demonstrates the number of the participants according to the two different language levels (i.e. pre-intermediate and intermediate). It also depicts the means and standard deviations for the participants according to their language levels.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the Participants' Language Level**

Language Level	N	M	Std. Deviation
Pre-intermediate	13	4,23	,83
Intermediate	27	4,33	,96

13 Pre-intermediate level EFL learners and 27 Intermediate level EFL learners who were studying at the English Preparatory School of a university participated in this study.

Table 3.below, shows the descriptivestatistics for the participant EFL learners in relation to their age.

**Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for the Participants' Age**

Age	N	M	Std. Dev.
18-20	17	4,29	,99
21-25	21	4,33	,86
26-30	02	4,00	1,41
Total	40	4,30	,91

According toTable 3.,the ages of the participant students were between 18 and 30. 21 of the participants were between the ages of 21 and 25, 17 of them were between 18 and 20 and only two of the participants were between the ages of 26 and 30. In other words, 46 % of the participants were between the ages of 21 and 25, while 37 % of the participants were aged between 18 and 20, and only 8 % of the participants were aged between twenty-six and thirty.

### Perceptions of the Participants about Self-esteem Regarding Language Level

Table 2.below, shows the statistical results of the t-test employed for the perceptions of the participants about self-esteem regarding language level.

**Table 2. T- test Results for the Perceptions of the Participants about Self-esteem Regarding Language Level**

t-test for Equality of Means					
Language Levels	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Difference
Intermediate	-,33	38	,74	-,10	,31
Pre-intermediate	-,35	27,18	,73	-,10	,30



The results of the t-test regarding the perceptions of the participants about self-esteem regarding language level did not reveal any significant. In other words, it seems that the perceptions of the participants with different language levels did not differ about the self-esteem.

### Perceptions of the Participants about Self-esteem Regarding Age

The Table 3.below, shows the results of the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test employed to test the perceptions of the participants about self-esteem regarding age.

**Table 3. The ANOVA Results for the Perceptions of the Participants about the Relationship between Self-esteem and Academic Achievement Regarding Age**

Age	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	,204	02	,10	,12	,89
With in Groups	32,20	37	,87		
Total	32,40	39			

According to the statistical results of the ANOVA test, the participants' perceptions did not reveal any significant results. In other words, the perceptions of the participants about self-esteem did not differ according to their age.

### Discussion of the First Research Question

The t-test results indicated that the male and female participants' perceptions did not reveal any significant findings. That might mean that gender is not a significant factor to influence the participants' perspectives about self-esteem. The researches have shown that there were other studies similar with the findings regarding self-esteem in relation to gender. For instance, Koosha et.al. (2011) stated that "there was no significant between male and female learners on self-esteem" in their study. According to them when both boys and girls are exposed to the same teaching style, materials, and teachers, that is why male and female learners have not differences on self-esteem. According to results of the study by Kassaianet. al. (2011) there was found that no significant in the gender of students on self-esteem.

Similarly, Emil (2003) found that self-esteem is not connected with gender. In the same line, Smith (2002) declared that in his finding that gender had no impact on students' self-esteem score(cited in Emil 2003 p.65). Consistent with the present study, Setless (1992) stated that there was no significant difference in the self-esteem of female and male students. Another study was conducted on self-esteem showed that the level of self-esteem of boys and girls is not related with gender. However, self-esteem of students has a big role in determining their academic achievement. Aryana (2010) emphasized that differences in academic achievement can be influenced by their motivation instead of their self-esteem of the male and female participants.

Based on the finding of this study and similar research studies showed that the participants' perceptions regarding self-esteem did not differ in relation to gender. Harris (2009) found that "a relationship did not exist between level of self-esteem and gender in the African American students participating in the study" (p. 75). Furthermore, the related studies were conducted by a few researchers such as Maccoby&Jacklin (1974) revealed that female and male learners' perceptions did not show any differences on self-esteem. Additionally, Wylie (1979) investigated the effects of being male and female on self-esteem and found that gender difference in self-esteem was not significant.

Similarly, Inianna (2004) carried out a study which took place at the University of the Virgin Islands and its results initially offered that gender of the participants showed no significant impact on their



self-esteem. In that study, they found that motivation on academic achievement affected self-esteem rather than the gender differences.

In North Cyprus, Yaran and Yücesoylu (2010) carried out a similar study in English Preparatory School. They concluded that male and female students did not show any difference on self-esteem. There are some other studies that investigated self-esteem and gender and found no significant differences between self-esteem levels of Turkish male and female students (Gücray,1989; Karagöllü,1995; Durmuş,1994; Arıcak,1995; Gür,1996; Duru,1995 cited in Güllüoğlu, 1999, p. 20).

Smith (2002) examined sex difference has a role in determining the self-esteem scores of male and female participants. The result of the research showed that no correlation was found between gender and self-esteem. In same vein, Othman et. al. (2011) evaluated that gender differences were not found significant on self-esteem of undergraduate second year students. According to Teoh and Afiqah (2010), male and female was not have any effect on the levels of self-esteem. Claes (1999) reported that sex differences did not have any importance on language learning.

Concerning the relationship between self-esteem and gender in second language, the result of a study by Kooshaet. al. (2011) revealed that a negative relationship was found between male and female learners on self-esteem. Consistent with the findings of this study, Chubb et. al. (1997) concluded the same result with this paper study. They found that there was no difference between two genders. It was seen that significant difference was not found between male and female learners' scores on self-esteem. Also, Harris (2009) conducted a study to determine whether there is relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement of African American students in the Southern portion of the United States. The result of the study demonstrated that there were no significant between self-esteem and gender in the African American students participating in the study.

The finding of this study also is supported by the research conducted by Wylie (1979), Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) that analyzed whether gender differences has a crucial role on their self-esteem or not. Their studies reported non-significant differences between boys and girls on self-esteem measures. This bring us to the point of gender difference is not the predictor of self-esteem scores of male and female language learners at University level.

### **Discussion of the Second Research Question**

The t-test results indicated that there was no significant difference between pre-intermediate and intermediate learners. There are some research studies that investigated the relationship between language level of students and self-esteem and they revealed a negative relationship between the two variables. For instance, Ciarrochi's (2012) study showed that there was no significance in self-esteem between the gifted and non-gifted students. Moreover, Settles, (1992) explored that there is no significant difference between the self-esteem self-report score of children with high and low conduct grades was upheld on pre-experiment analysis. That is, the result of these studies did not find relationship between self-esteem and gifted students (p.39). With regard to this study, Inianna (2004) conducted a study which gave the result of there was no relationship between language level of the student and self-esteem index score (p.3).

Several studies which examined and resulted in no significant between language level of the students on their self-esteem score follow:

In a study which was employed by Chubb et al. (1997) also found that language level of students on self-esteem did not play any crucial importance. This hypothesis was tested to compare the language level of students in order to find out the relationship between two variables. The hypothesis was accepted that the change in language level of the students was not significant.





Similarly, Othman et. al. (2011) analyzed a study in Malaysia on self-esteem and academic achievement of university student. They pointed that there was not positive association between language levels of students and their self-esteem score. Another study, which was conducted by Settles (1992) found that the language learners' self-esteem and their language level were not significant. It meant that there was no relationship between self-esteem and language level of the students. The results of this study rightly asserted that no connection found between two variables. Since no significant difference in language level of language learners, this validated the present research paper findings.

In another study, which was conducted with gifted and regular classroom students, demonstrated no significance on their academic self-esteem (Winne et. al. 1982). High ability students or gifted students did not show any differences on their self-esteem scores. Schneider et al. (1989) also came to the same conclusion with Winne et. al. (1982). Schneider found negative correlation between self-esteem and gifted students, which indicated that students with high language level did not have more high self-esteem than those with low. In the same line with the present study, another study which was conducted by Hoge and Rezulli (1991) found that gifted students exhibited no relation between self-esteem scores. With respect to this study no significance was found between gifted language learners and their self-esteem scores.

In general, the results of this study revealed that language level of students was not a significant factor that could influence the self-esteem scores of the participants. Thus, it could be asserted that self-esteem of the learners can be affected by other factors such as environment, background of the learner and family, social, cognitive, biological and financial.

### **Discussion of the Third Research Question**

The ANOVA test results did not reveal any significant findings regarding the participants' perceptions of different age groups.

The results of the present study were also similar to that of Steva et. al.'s (2013) research, which showed that there was no significance in the participants' perceptions about self-esteem in relation to their age. There was another study which investigated the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement in relation to age. Similarly, concerning the relationship between age and language level of students, no statistical significant association was found by Kassian et. al. (2011). Harris (2009) also examined the relationship between age of the learners on self-esteem. No significant relationship was existed between level of self-esteem and age of the participants. With regard to relation self-esteem and academic achievement of language learners, the study finding revealed that self-esteem and age were not associated with each other (Harris 2009). In same line, Wylie (1979) also recorded that age differences was not related with self-esteem of the participant children. Koosha (2011) has reported similar conclusion. He reported that a negative relationship was found between age of the learners on their self-esteem's scores, that is, there was no significant between self-esteem and age difference.

To recap, the findings of this study revealed that there were not significant differences in the self-esteem scores of the participant learners regarding age, gender and language level. In conclusion, the result of this study verified that language learning takes place in an affective and supportive classroom environment.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The findings of this study cannot be generalized to the overall population since it was carried out with a limited number of the participants. To the extent this study limited, more extensive study may yield stronger effects. Based on the findings of this study, further research could also investigate on how the



difference happens for non-achieve students, what factors and characteristic can affect the students' self-esteem.

### Implications

The findings of the present study may provide valuable information to teachers, counselors, parents, school principals for understanding the importance of self-esteem on academic achievement and may help them to gain further insight into planning appropriate preventive strategies for dealing with low self-esteem students. To overcome low self-esteem in language classroom, school counselors could be provide for them better ways to enhance self-esteem in their academic performance and outside world.

Since self-esteem and language learning go hand in hand, parents and teachers should strive to model positive problem solving skills, provide a supportive, warm, and consistent class environment, foster positive attitudes and beliefs, and provide adequate adult supervision. Consequently, both of teachers and parents can be more cautious about low achieving students. To sum up, some important suggestions will be presented below to develop self-esteem of language learners.

Self-esteem is essential for gaining confidence and coping skills that are needed to achieve meaningful goals both in school and in outside world. According to Gills(2004) the importance of self-esteem in educational process should be given more emphasis than is presently given to it. Both teachers and parents should be curious on their self-esteem.

In order to improve self-esteem, it would be useful to know when students feel good about themselves. High self-esteem is relevant to psychological well-being which is a much better predictor of school performance. However, people who have low self-esteem have less enthusiasm to succeed. They are fed with negative thinking by low self-esteem. In that case the significant responsibility to foster the self-esteem is on teachers and families. This has implications for both parents and teachers. Taking this into consideration there are some suggestions to help students to be more positive and more successful in their academic life and outside life. For example:

Berne & Berne (1988) offered ten important points which should be used, when working with students.

- 1- Make children feel valued and cared for.
- 2- Self-esteem grows when children know you.
- 3- Reflect on wording used.
- 4- Accept children in their work.
- 5- Teach them to accept their right to strong feelings.
- 6- Be trusting and nonjudgmental.
- 7- Acknowledge the positive in a non-evaluative way/
- 8- Use humor to promote self-esteem.
- 9- Share with them.
- 10- Offer activities where they can be successful.

In addition, teachers could make use of this relationship in enhancing student's self-esteem, because self-esteem and academic achievement seems related. Changes in one variable are likely to lead to change in the other.

Another implication carried out by Brady et. al, (1978), offered five keys steps to teachers to foster positive self-esteem in students: Self-praise, children's self-praise, children's praise of other children, teacher's praise of students, and helping children to set realistic goals and to evaluate realistically. Understanding self-esteem is basic to understand adolescent's behavior. It is very important to know how adolescents value, perceive and regard the self to interpret their behavior. For teachers and



parents, it is crucial to discover the level of self-esteem that learners or children have. It is not impossible to figure out the level of self-esteem from the behaviors of a learner or a child for the teacher or family. Some behaviors give clues that whether there is high or low self-esteem.

In addition, positive or negative self-esteem, learning esteem in the ESL classroom, and oral communicative language proficiency are greatly influenced by many variables such as; parents, teachers were important factors for the participants in the study. Other factor such as positive or negative learning conditions and/or school environment added to the pleasure or the rejection of learning English (Nogueras, 1996). It is recommended that in educational setting should be followed those: First one is to create positive interactions between students. Second one is to set effective objectives in order to improve the students' self-esteem. Third one is to training teachers to realize how low self-esteem affects the language learners in the classroom. Fourth one is the materials should be meaningful. And the last one is to focus on communicative language.

Parents and teachers absolutely affect children's self-esteem by giving positive or negative feedback. For example, Young & Hoffman (2004) suggested that not only family but also teachers could help students to enhance their self-esteem without paying attention to the child's background, conditions. They recommended six gold rules which as follows:

- Support the child to feel important
- Hold the child in high regard
- Arrange proper rules
- Assist the child to overcome their wrong
- Focus on internal motivation
- Use different materials

Dweck (1999) emphasizes that self-esteem is important in and out of the classroom. Teachers and parents can support self-esteem by remembering some of the following:

Be positive and show empathy to the one's who have low self-esteem. Focus on the activities which gives you information about self-esteem of the students, in order to see how much the students suffered from self-esteem and then, try to talk about the things which makes them feel good. (This is also a great beginning of the year activity). Those suffering with low self-esteem need to be treated sensitively, instead of showing strict rules. Help children to feel valuable, important and special as person. Parents and teachers are the biggest model in the child life, therefore rise up the child as you want to effort towards you. Be realistic and do not force the child do things which may not be done by children. When you set up goals, pay attention on them to being logical and remind the students nobody is perfect, and everybody makes mistakes. Just focus on what they can understand from the mistakes.

The results of this study also provide researchers with an opportunity to further investigate successful academic curricula and interventions in order to provide equitable educational opportunities for all students. Studies conducted on programs that have proven successful at increasing self-esteem of low self-esteem students and positively impacting the academic achievement of the language learners could be informative for schools seeking to replicate similar results. It may also be beneficial for studies are needed to examine outcomes for students who have problems with good self-esteem. Factors influencing self-esteem and academic achievement should be researched further.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

Based on the present study finding, some recommendations could be given for further studies:

1. The present study could be reapplied to larger sample by comparing different universities' students.



2. Demographic information form could be include more detailed information such as; family related questions, place where they live, socioeconomic status of students in order to analyze sample characteristics.
3. As it was declared before, having high self-esteem has a big and positive role in academic achievement, while for low self-esteem students can be said reverse. Coping with low self-esteem professionals or university counselors should be curious to develop programs for university students in order to enhance self-esteem. As a conclusion self-esteem can be learned, but it does not happen overnight or by chance.

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