

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the introduction of research topics that are divided into five sub-chapters. The first sub-chapter is the background of the research. The second sub-chapter discusses the identification and limitations of the problems. The third sub-chapter discusses the problem in this research. Furthermore, the fourth sub-chapter discusses the research objectives. Finally, the fifth sub-chapter describes the significance of the research.

#### **Background of the research**

In the context of secondary education, the acquisition of English language skills holds significant importance, given its status as a global lingua franca and its role in academic and professional success. According to Rao (2019), English also plays a significant role in science, education, and business research. However, the journey toward English language proficiency among high school students is influenced by a multitude of factors, one of which is self-esteem.

Self-esteem, as a psychological construct, encompasses an individual's beliefs, feelings, and evaluations about their worth and abilities. Self-esteem can be defined as people's feelings about themselves regarding the importance of achievement, positive interpersonal relationships, and psychological well-being (Vohs & Baumeister, 2016). In the realm of education, self-esteem has been recognized as a crucial determinant of students' academic performance and overall well-being. High levels of self-esteem are often associated with increased motivation, resilience, and engagement in learning activities. High self-esteem will

form in students who have good learning management and are able to carry out self-regulated learning. Students who have high self-esteem will try their best to get the best achievements (Zahroh & Dewi, 2022).

Conversely, low self-esteem may hinder students' language learning progress by fostering feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, and self-doubt. Students who lack confidence in their language abilities may be reluctant to participate in class discussions, seek help when needed, or take risks in experimenting with new linguistic forms. As a result, their English language proficiency may stagnate or even decline over time. According to Rosani et al. (2021), students with low self-esteem will find it difficult to describe themselves and are constantly bothered by thoughts of fear of failure, which will hinder their potential.

Several researchers found that students' self-esteem have positive correlation with their achievement in English such as Randa (2017), Skripsiani et al., (2022), and Marpaung and Wenas (2019). Based on research from Randa (2017), on grade X senior high school students, self-esteem positively correlates with students' English achievement. Study that conducted by Skripsiani et al., (2022) at one of Senior High School in Muara Beliti, Muara Rawas, South Sumatera also found positive relationship between students' self-esteem and their English learning achievement. Self-esteem has a role in the process of students getting good English achievement. As well as study conducted by Marpaung and Wenas (2019) who found positively correlation between second years students' self-esteem and English learning achievement at one of private senior high school in Manado. These three studies are correlation research and used questionnaire for research students'

self-esteem and transcript document for analysis students' English learning achievement.

Despite the theoretical importance of self-esteem in relation to English language learning, only a few empirical research examine this relationship among high school students, especially in vocational high schools. Meanwhile, vocational high schools often have different educational characteristics, with a focus on technical and professional skills. In this context, proficiency in English communication can be a crucial asset for students in preparing for careers in various fields. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that influence students' ability to acquire the English language skills needed for success in the workplace. Therefore, the researcher is interested in examining the correlation between students' self-esteem and their English learning achievement in one of the vocational high schools in North Bengkulu.

### **Identification of problems**

English proficiency has emerged as a crucial skill in various aspects of contemporary life, encompassing education, employment, and leisure activities. The significance of English proficiency is underscored by the fact that many companies prioritize it as a key criterion in their hiring processes. Consequently, the ability to communicate effectively in English holds considerable importance for vocational high school students, who are poised to enter the workforce upon completing their education.

Despite the recognized importance of English proficiency, mastery of the language among vocational high school students remains a challenge, influenced

by various factors. One such factor is self-esteem, which plays an essential role in facilitating the learning process. However, there needs to be more awareness regarding the impact of self-esteem on English language achievement, particularly among high school students. A study conducted by Kusraharjo (2019) at a public vocational school in Banyuwangi, Indonesia, indicates that a significant proportion of high school students exhibit moderate to low levels of self-esteem, with implications for their academic performance.

Although, the critical importance of English proficiency for vocational high school students' future career prospects, there needs to be more research exploring the correlation between students' self-esteem levels and their English language achievement. This research gap underscores the need for further investigation to elucidate the relationship between self-esteem and English language proficiency among VHS students, thereby informing targeted interventions aimed at enhancing students' language learning experiences and outcomes.

### **Limitation of Problems**

This study aims to determine the correlation between students' self-esteem and their English learning achievement. Therefore, the researcher makes some limitations in this research, including the level of students' self-esteem, the level of students' English learning achievement, and if there any correlation between students' self-esteem and their English learning achievement. This research used a correlational design with a questionnaire research instrument to collect data on students' self-esteem level and a document of the transcript of student English Midterm exam scores as a data collection tool for students' English learning

achievement. In addition, this research was conducted at one of the public vocational schools in North Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia. This school was chosen because this topic is rarely conducted in rural schools, especially rural vocational schools.

### **Research Questions:**

The research questions discussed in this study are:

1. How is vocational students' self-esteem level at a public vocational school in North Bengkulu grade 11<sup>th</sup>?
2. How is vocational students' English learning achievement at a public vocational school in North Bengkulu grade 11<sup>th</sup>?
3. Is there a correlation between vocational students' self-esteem and their English learning achievement at a public vocational school in North Bengkulu grade 11<sup>th</sup>?

### **Purpose of the Research**

Based on the research questions above, the purposes of the research are:

1. To investigate the level of students' self-esteem at a public vocational school in North Bengkulu grade 11<sup>th</sup>
2. To identify the English learning achievement of students' self-esteem at a public vocational school in North Bengkulu grade 11<sup>th</sup>
3. To investigate the correlation between self-esteem and English learning achievement of students' self-esteem at a public vocational school in North Bengkulu grade 11<sup>th</sup>

## **Significance of the Research**

This research is expected to be useful for educational practitioners:

**Students.** The results of this study are expected to encourage students to have more awareness of self-esteem and maintain their high self-esteem level so that they are more enthusiastic about learning English.

**Teachers.** The results of this study are expected to be a source of information about the relationship between students' self-esteem and English learning achievement in vocational schools. In addition, this research is also expected to assist teachers in analysing and improving effective teaching strategies to help students have positive self-esteem in learning.

**Other researchers** The methodology and findings of this study are expected to inspire other researchers to pursue similar studies with different research design and data collection technique. This research can also be used as a source of information for that project.