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ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF SELF-EFFICACY IN THE CONTEXT OF EFL SPEAKING LEARNING

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis persepsi mahasiswa *English as a Foreign Language* (EFL) mengenai efikasi diri mereka dalam konteks pembelajaran keterampilan berbicara (*speaking*). Efikasi diri merupakan keyakinan mendasar bahwa seorang individu mampu menyelesaikan tugas secara optimal di tengah berbagai hambatan linguistik maupun psikologis. Namun, sejumlah mahasiswa kerap menghadapi kendala kecemasan dan stagnasi keterampilan berbicara akibat rendahnya rasa percaya diri dalam menggunakan bahasa Inggris. Penelitian kuantitatif ini menerapkan instrumen kuesioner terstruktur yang diadaptasi dan disebarkan kepada 40 mahasiswa pendidikan bahasa Inggris dari tiga universitas di Indonesia menggunakan teknik *purposive sampling*. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis secara komprehensif menggunakan teknik analisis statistik deskriptif berupa perhitungan persentase frekuensi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas mahasiswa memiliki efikasi diri yang positif dan mampu mempertahankannya guna mereduksi kecemasan berbicara. Mahasiswa dengan tingkat efikasi diri yang tinggi terbukti lebih tangguh dan cakap dalam mengendalikan tantangan komunikasi dibandingkan mahasiswa berefikasi rendah.
Kata kunci: *Efikasi Diri, Keterampilan Berbicara, Pembelajar EFL*

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine EFL students' perceptions regarding self-efficacy in speaking contexts. Self-efficacy represents an individual's conviction in completing speaking tasks successfully despite facing linguistic and psychological barriers. However, many students encounter difficulties achieving proficient communicative competence due to anxiety, low motivation, and diminished self-confidence. This quantitative study utilized an adapted structured questionnaire administered to 40 EFL students across three Indonesian universities selected through a purposive sampling technique. The gathered data were evaluated using descriptive statistical analysis by calculating frequency distributions and percentages. The results indicate that students maintain a high level of self-efficacy, which substantially enhances their self-confidence to mitigate speaking anxiety. This study confirms that students with elevated self-efficacy manage communicative obstacles more effectively than those possessing lower self-efficacy.
Keywords: *EFL Learners, Self-Efficacy, Speaking Skills*

INTRODUCTION

One of the essential competencies that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students must develop is speaking. Generally speaking, it is the most essential language skill of the four basic skills for learning a foreign language (Rao, 2019). Strong English-speaking skills are necessary for communication in today's global world (Chahal, 2023). Communication is essential for explaining and conveying information to diverse conversational partners (Leong

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& Ahmadi, 2017). Furthermore, proficient oral English capabilities broaden professional employment prospects and cultivate intercultural relationships (Chahal, 2023). Higher education curricula require students to participate in communicative tasks to maximize interpersonal and cognitive growth (Wijaya, 2021). Therefore, consistent oral communication opportunities inside the language classroom prepare prospective graduates for global challenges (Akhter et al., 2020).

However, acquiring excellent spoken proficiency in an EFL environment demands persistent effort because students frequently encounter multi-layered pedagogical hurdles. Developing fluent speaking skills remains a daunting challenge for many EFL learners across higher education (Darmawan et al., 2021). Learners regularly experience grammatical confusion, restricted vocabulary command, and sentence formulation problems. They also struggle with psychological hurdles including debilitating speaking apprehension, fear of making mistakes in public, and general insecurity. Creating self-confidence serves as a vital psychological remedy because it alleviates communication anxiety and facilitates spontaneous oral delivery (Chahal, 2023).

Besides developing self-confidence, having self-efficacy can also help overcome difficulties speaking English because it affects speaking ability (Demirel et al., 2020). Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's conscious judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute specific performance tasks successfully (Greene, 2017). Individuals possessing elevated self-efficacy tend to participate actively, exhibit greater tenacity during hardships, and demonstrate superior overall achievements (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). High self-efficacy also reinforces intrinsic motivation and directs attentional focus toward productive learning goals (Au & Bardakçı, 2020). Maintaining robust self-efficacy empowers language learners to achieve resilient communicative competence despite communicative setbacks.

Consequently, this research aims to investigate EFL students' perceptions regarding how they preserve and enhance self-efficacy during their speaking development. Identifying these internal mechanisms helps educators formulate actionable pedagogical interventions for oral communication development. Previous investigations have confirmed that self-efficacy influences oral performance, reductions in anxiety, and learner satisfaction (Arlinda, 2022; Asakereh & Dehghannezhad, 2015; Maryam et al., 2019). Furthermore, related studies revealed that regional background and academic immersion shape speaking self-beliefs across universities (Givency, 2023; Wene & Vantaosen, 2023). Nonetheless, these earlier works did not investigate the concrete, operational strategies through which students sustain their self-efficacy beliefs when encountering difficult oral speaking tasks.

Empirical studies have established that self-efficacy directly influences EFL students' ongoing acquisition of oral communication skills. However, literature examining the practical maintenance mechanisms utilized by English education students remains scarce. This research addresses this gap by exploring the specific perceptual and behavioral dimensions students employ to retain self-efficacy in speaking contexts. To guide the investigation, the primary research question is: How do English Language Education students maintain their self-efficacy in speaking skills?

METHOD

A quantitative descriptive survey research design was applied to conduct this investigation. Quantitative inquiry enables researchers to gather standardized numerical data and systematically assess participant perceptions through statistical interpretations (Creswell, 2012). The research design gathered empirical ratings through a closed-ended survey format.

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This design allowed the researchers to measure the distribution of student perspectives regarding their internal efficacy mechanisms objectively.

The participants comprised 40 undergraduate students enrolled in English Language Education departments across three universities in Indonesia. The sample was chosen using a purposive sampling technique based on specific criteria: active enrollment in university-level speaking courses and experience with academic presentations. Methodologists indicate that a sample size of at least 30 respondents meets standard requirements for descriptive survey investigations (Kerlinger et al., 2000; Kumar, 1999). The cohort included 33 female students and seven male students between the ages of 18 and 27 years.

The data collection instrument was adapted from an established survey questionnaire designed to assess academic self-efficacy perceptions (Wijaya & Mbato, 2020). The modified instrument comprised ten closed-ended statements measuring internal motivation, affective regulation, vicarious modeling, advisor feedback, and strategic task engagement. To maintain accuracy and prevent linguistic ambiguity, the items were translated into Indonesian and reviewed by academic peers for clarity. Each statement was scored using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) following conventional psychometric scaling (Sugiyono, 2014).

Data were collected over a two-week period utilizing an online Google Forms questionnaire distributed via student communication channels. Prior to accessing the survey items, participants received explicit informed consent documentation explaining research objectives, voluntary participation, and guaranteed confidentiality. Ethical guidelines established by institutional review standards require protecting participants' rights and anonymity prior to data collection (Harrison et al., 2020). The resulting survey responses were subsequently compiled, cross-checked for completeness, and verified before undergoing formal statistical evaluation.

The collected survey data were examined using descriptive statistical analysis procedures. Descriptive analysis organizes and interprets collected numerical evidence to present an accurate summary of observable phenomena (Whitney, 1960). The analytical procedure calculated raw response frequencies and corresponding percentages across the five Likert response categories for each questionnaire statement. These percentage distributions reveal the extent of consensus regarding the factors sustaining students' self-efficacy during speaking tasks.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the statistical data obtained from the 40 EFL respondents and interprets the theoretical implications of the findings. The evaluation begins with the scoring criteria used to assess respondents' perceptions on the Likert scale.

Table 1. The Criteria of the Likert Scale

Scale	Statement Category	Abbreviation	Rating Weight
5	Strongly Agree	SA	5
4	Agree	A	4
3	Neutral	N	3
2	Disagree	D	2
1	Strongly Disagree	SD	1

Table 1 displays the Likert scale criteria utilized to evaluate participants' responses across all items. A score of 5 reflects the highest agreement with the presented statement, indicating strong alignment with the underlying self-efficacy indicator. Conversely, rating

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scales descending toward 1 correspond to growing levels of disagreement with the questionnaire statements. The middle category provides an alternative for respondents expressing neither positive nor negative stances toward the prompt. The distribution of responses across the first five questionnaire statements is presented in Table 2, highlighting factors that influence students' internal speaking self-efficacy.

Table 2. Results of Questionnaire Statements 1 to 5

No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percent
1.	As an English Education student, I believe that speaking skills are critical to master so that I appear more educated.	SA	21	52.5%
		A	18	45.0%
		N	0	0.0%
		D	1	2.5%
		SD	0	0.0%
2.	I can overcome my speaking anxiety because I am confident that I have sufficient ability to produce quality speaking skills.	SA	3	7.5%
		A	19	47.5%
		N	17	42.5%
		D	1	2.5%
		SD	0	0.0%
3.	By observing my peers' success in speaking, I have also instilled a stronger desire to improve my speaking skills.	SA	16	40.0%
		A	20	50.0%
		N	4	10.0%
		D	0	0.0%
		SD	0	0.0%

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4.	When my speaking skills are assessed and accepted by my academic advisor, the chances of me being successful in speaking will be higher.	SA	23	57.5%
		A	10	25.0%
		N	5	12.5%
		D	2	5.0%
		SD	0	0.0%
5.	I feel more confident to achieve my speaking skills if my academic supervisor and colleagues always provide continuous encouragement to me.	SA	11	27.5%
		A	25	62.5%
		N	4	10.0%
		D	0	0.0%
		SD	0	0.0%

Table 2 presents the statistical breakdown of students' responses regarding value attribution, anxiety regulation, vicarious experience, and institutional support. A combined 97.5% of respondents agreed with Statement 1, indicating that students view oral competence as a primary marker of academic identity. Statement 2 reveals that 55.0% of students rely on self-efficacy beliefs to alleviate communicative nervousness, whereas 42.5% maintain a neutral attitude. Peer observation and social persuasion also yielded high consensus, as reflected by the 90.0% and 90.0% agreement levels for Statements 3 and 5, respectively.

The high value students place on spoken mastery (Statement 1) aligns with foundational literature framing oral communication as a vital indicator of overall language proficiency (Dionar & Adnan, 2018; Nunan, 1991; Zakaria et al., 2021). Furthermore, the ability of self-efficacy to mitigate anxiety (Statement 2) demonstrates Bandura's (1997) assertion that efficacy beliefs govern cognitive and affective appraisals during threatening situations. When individuals possess firm confidence in their capacities, they demonstrate lower vulnerability to self-defeating thoughts during stressful speaking encounters (Michel, 2022). The finding regarding vicarious peer modeling (Statement 3) illustrates that observing comparable peer success provides a standard for calibrating personal expectations (Schunk, 1987). Finally, strong validation from academic advisors (Statements 4 and 5) reflects the role of social persuasion in reinforcing learners' beliefs that they can successfully execute required speaking activities (Hawthorne et al., 2022; Putra, 2017).

Table 3 summarizes the response frequencies for Statements 6 through 10, exploring strategic task engagement, goal persistence, and environmental guidance.

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Table 3. Results of Questionnaire Statements 6 to 10

No	Statement	Scale	Frequency	Percent
6.	When I attribute speaking skills as an evocative and exciting learning activity, I am confident that I will be able to produce good speaking skills.	SA	11	27.5%
		A	27	67.5%
		N	2	5.0%
		D	0	0.0%
		SD	0	0.0%
7.	When I can build a higher level of self-efficacy in speaking skills, I will find various strategies to achieve my speaking skills in challenging speaking situations.	SA	7	17.5%
		A	24	60.0%
		N	9	22.5%
		D	0	0.0%
		SD	0	0.0%
8.	I am confident that I will be able to produce higher-quality speaking skills if I persist in achieving my goals through my speaking projects.	SA	11	27.5%
		A	26	65.0%
		N	3	7.5%
		D	0	0.0%
		SD	0	0.0%
9.	I can remain calm despite many obstacles in my speaking skill journey because I have dedicated all my efforts, commitment, and perseverance to my speaking skills.	SA	4	10.0%
		A	21	52.5%

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		N	12	30.0%
		D	3	7.5%
		SD	0	0.0%
10.	Speaking activities would be more feasible and enjoyable if my academic advisors also dedicated all their diligence, commitment, and effort to guiding me during the speaking process.	SA	16	40.0%
		A	21	52.5%
		N	2	5.0%
		D	1	2.5%
		SD	0	0.0%

Table 3 indicates strong positive perceptions regarding proactive learning strategies, persistent effort, and supervisory mentorship. Ninety-five percent of respondents affirmed that reframing speaking tasks as engaging experiences enhances their operational efficacy (Statement 6). Additionally, 77.5% agreed that higher self-efficacy stimulates the strategic discovery of coping mechanisms during demanding speaking tasks (Statement 7). High endorsement was also recorded for project-based perseverance (92.5%) and advisory engagement (92.5%), highlighting the importance of sustained deliberate effort and environmental backing.

These empirical results illustrate that cognitive reframing and active strategy selection (Statements 6 and 7) assist learners in navigating complex language tasks (Ellis, 1986; Gharbavi & Mousavi, 2012; Oxford, 1990). When students experience elevated self-efficacy, they implement self-regulatory learning strategies to solve lexical, grammatical, and phonological difficulties (Suharja, 2020). Moreover, goal persistence through hands-on communicative projects (Statement 8) mirrors findings showing that project-based tasks provide structured opportunities that build authentic oral competencies (Fried-Booth, 2002; Rochmahwati, 2015; Wahyudin, 2016). Integrating dramatic role-plays and classroom debates similarly refines intonation and lexical precision while strengthening learners' confidence (Ashton-Hay, 2005).

Regarding emotional resilience (Statement 9), 62.5% of students indicated that personal effort and perseverance help them remain calm when confronting linguistic hurdles. When learners employ proactive coping strategies, they recognize speech errors without experiencing communicative paralysis (Hidayoza et al., 2019). Finally, the strong agreement concerning instructor dedication (Statement 10) corroborates research indicating that instructor empathy, indirect correction, and continuous encouragement mitigate speaking apprehension (Bandura, 2001; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). Supportive supervisory environments bolster students' perceived competence and prevent communicative disengagement during difficult oral tasks.

Overall, the survey findings suggest that sustaining self-efficacy depends on four interrelated pillars: intrinsic motivation, informative feedback, strategic task design, and

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vicarious peer modeling. Students who approach oral tasks with strong motivational conviction attribute temporary setbacks to manageable factors such as effort expenditure rather than fixed deficits (Ayunia & Marlena, 2022; Ningias & Indriani, 2021). Concurrently, attributional feedback that validates both capability and disciplined effort reinforces self-efficacy beliefs (Schunk, 1982, 1983, 1989). When academic programs incorporate collaborative tasks, supportive advisor evaluations, and opportunities for vicarious peer observation, EFL learners develop the resilience required to achieve oral communication fluency.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the questionnaire data, this study concludes that English Education students hold a positive perception regarding the importance of self-efficacy in supporting successful English speaking. Students sustain their self-efficacy through four key pillars: internal motivational drive, the receipt of constructive feedback from lecturers, the utilization of project-based learning strategies, and the observation of peers' speaking successes (peer modeling). Maintaining self-efficacy beliefs proved instrumental in helping students reduce communication anxiety and increase perseverance when facing various speaking performance challenges. For future research, it is recommended to expand the sample scope by involving participants from more diverse academic backgrounds to achieve broader data generalizability. Furthermore, the use of a mixed-methods approach combining questionnaires with in-depth interviews or direct speaking performance assessments is highly recommended to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of fluctuations in student self-efficacy.

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