INVESTIGATING STUDENT'S LEVEL OF SELF-EFFICACY IN SPEAKING PERFORMANCE OF THAI EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The psychological notion of self-efficacy plays a key role in evaluating students' linguistic aptitude and fluency in English. The purpose of this study is to ascertain Thai students learning English as a foreign language (EFL)'s degree of self-efficacy in oral communication. In order to assess students' confidence in their ability to speak English fluently, the study looks into their sense of self-efficacy. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used in this investigation. A questionnaire was distributed to 28 students who attended an Islamic high school in Satun, Southern Thailand, using a quantitative methodology. Several kids from the school are interviewed as part of the qualitative technique. Participants are asked particular questions that allow them to give in-depth answers based on their experiences and circumstances. Using the three elements of self-efficacy—magnitude, generality, and strength—the research findings show that students in Thailand consistently have low levels of self-efficacy. As a result, the study's findings imply that Thai students still require assistance in oral English communication. There are numerous uses for this subject in psychology, education, and language instruction. Instructors could come up with strategies to help Thai students feel more confident about learning English as a second language and improve their oral communication abilities. Techniques that enhance English communication skills can be incorporated into language programs and curriculum designs. The results can be used by psychologists to address issues with self-efficacy in language learning. This study takes a fresh approach by examining Thai English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' self-efficacy, particularly with regard to speaking abilities. It advances existing knowledge by highlighting the specific challenges these students face when speaking. This research provides novel insights that can guide interventions aimed at enhancing students' self-efficacy in oral English communication.

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Keywords: Self-Efficacy, Speaking Performance, Thai EFL Learners, Language Learning, Confidence, Communication Skill

1. INTRODUCTION

More people than any other language agree that English is the major and worldwide language for communication (Mastura et al., 2021; Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020a; Rao, 2019a; Wang & Sun, 2020; Zhang, 2018). Developing speaking proficiency is one of the many components of acquiring English language skills (Manurung, 2015). Speaking, along with

listening, reading, and writing, is regarded as one of the four basic language skills. Speaking is generally regarded as the most crucial of the four fundamental language skills while learning a foreign or second language(Jaya, et al., 2023). It is common knowledge that mastering a language requires the ability to communicate successfully in that language (Chand, 2021). This is mostly because of its great significance and impact, particularly when people are speaking in a language other than their mother tongue (Boonkit, 2010; Khatib & Maarof, 2015). Learning and honing effective oral communication skills can lead to a number of benefits, including better job opportunities, increased business effectiveness, increased confidence, better career options, the ability to give speeches in public, perform well in interviews, participate in discussions and debates, and make compelling presentations. (2019b, Rao).

Speaking a language presents unique challenges for those who are learning it (Jaya, et,al., 2023) This is because effective oral communication necessitates the language's ability to be used in social circumstances (Marzban & Hashemi, 2013). Ashraf and Bangabandhu (2018) investigated the challenges faced by EFL students in developing their speaking skills through classroom participation. These students' main problems were nervousness, fear, not paying attention in class, and language errors. Similarly, Heriansyah (2012) discovered in her study that two major obstacles to improving

speaking abilities are a lack of vocabulary and a fear of making mistakes. In a different study by Sokip (2020) on the challenges students encounter in achieving fluency in a foreign language in an educational setting, it was found that the main obstacle is low speaking motivation. Pupils frequently express concerns about making mistakes when speaking, which is consistent with the findings of earlier research by a number of studies. Their investigation revealed that the fear of making mistakes was the biggest issue. Because of their low self-efficacy—a term used to describe students' lack of confidence in their abilities—students seek greater self-assurance in order to improve their speaking skills.

According to Bandura, self-efficacy is the belief one has in one's ability to succeed in a specific undertaking (Artino, 2012; Zhang, 2018). Research suggests that while fear of failure can impede one's efforts in school and at work, self-efficacy can help (Chuang et al., 2022). The relationship between self-efficacy and the fear of making mistakes—especially in education and language learning—has been the subject of extensive research. According to these research, self-efficacy might help people overcome challenges and their fear of failing by establishing a connection between academic success and self-esteem (Chuang et al., 2022). The imposter phenomenon—beliefs about one's ability to accomplish tasks successfully—is also discussed. It describes how these beliefs affect one's fear of failing and propensity to hide mistakes. Additionally,

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research involving international students indicates that using the self-efficacy theory could lessen negative feelings and help people get over their fear of making mistakes when learning a language (Maeda, 2017). This remark draws attention to the wide range of self-efficacy displayed by students, especially those in Thailand, who are learning English as a foreign language.

The current investigation is based on relevant research that Paradewari (2017) conducted to explore students' self-efficacy in public speaking. This study's main goal was to look into a cohort of 43 students enrolled in Sanata Dharma University's English Language Education Study Program's Public Speaking Class. Moreover, the study "Students' Self-Efficacy and Their Speaking Skill at Lower Secondary School" by Septiani (2018) provides more proof to support the current investigation. According to these two research, teachers have a major influence on students' speaking skills by raising their sense of self-efficacy. This study's main goal is to evaluate Thai students studying English as a second language in terms of their self-efficacy in speaking the language. This study encourages a more positive approach toward this aim by offering insightful information about the significance of motivation and self-efficacy in achieving English language competency. In order to offer guidance for this study, the investigator developed the subsequent question: How much self-efficacy do Thai students show

in terms of their ability to speak English as a foreign language?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Speaking Demonstration for EFL Students

Speaking abilities have received greater attention in recent years, with a great deal of study being done on improving oral fluency and education (Dincer, 2017). Speaking is the primary and most efficient means of human communication, allowing the exchange of ideas, viewpoints, opinions, and other information. It is a necessary skill for interpersonal contact (Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020). Experts have differing definitions. Speaking, according to Cameron (2001), entails actively employing language to express meaning. Speaking, according to McDonough and Shaw (2003), is the process of using words to communicate ideas, opinions, and wants, negotiate issues, and forge relationships. Speaking is therefore an essential skill for interpersonal communication, which is actively employing language to negotiate, clarify, build relationships, and express ideas through verbal communication.

2.2 Confidence in Oneself

One important factor that affects how well students do during the learning process is their level of self-efficacy (Masitoh & Fitriyani, 2018). Self-efficacy, broadly speaking, is the belief in one's ability to complete specific

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activities (Bandura, n.d.; Cai et al., 2021; Graham, 2011). Furthermore, according to Artino (2012), self-efficacy is a person's belief in their own ability to plan and carry out the necessary actions in order to achieve specific categories of outcomes. Empirical studies have found a positive correlation between people's self-efficacy and academic performance (Pajares & Kranzler, 1995; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Pajares, 2003; Schunk, 1984). This is because people, especially students, are drawn to tasks in which they feel like they are doing exceptionally well (Bandura et al., 1981). Furthermore, individuals are more successful in studies that attract them (Ainley, 2012). Higher achievers typically exhibit greater confidence in their abilities and a stronger sense of their own effectiveness than lower achievers (Zhang, 2018).

2.3 Self-Efficaciousness Dimensions

Three factors are taken into consideration by Bandura when assessing pupils' self-efficacy: magnitude, generality, and strength. Magnitude comes first. According to Denoyelles et al. (2014) and Gist (1987), magnitude is a person's assessment of the level of difficulty related to a specific profession. Furthermore, it is emphasized by Maksum et al. (2019) and Badrun et al. (2022) that the dimension of magnitude relates to the complexity of student behaviors. Since the size dimension influences people's perceived potential to achieve, it is essential for understanding how people approach and

address challenges. The intricacy of the task, its degree of difficulty, the student's prior experiences, and their success in comparable tasks are some of the variables that occasionally affect the outcome (Edwards et al., 2001). Overall, it can be concluded that size is the individual's assessment of the difficulty or complexity associated with a given task, indicating their confidence in their ability to succeed in the face of varying degrees of adversity.

The second is generality. According to Kim (2018), generality in the context of the self-efficacy paradigm refers to how much a person's belief in their own ability to achieve carries over to other tasks or circumstances. Masitoh and Fitriyani (2018) define the general dimension as the students' subjective assessments of their capacity to perform specific tasks and their convictions regarding their suitability for a range of activities and circumstances. Generality is the ability of a person's self-efficacy beliefs to be applied to many occupations or circumstances. People who have a high level of general self-efficacy, for instance, may effectively complete multiple tasks with confidence. On the other hand, people who have lower total self-efficacy can think they are only capable of a certain number of tasks. Gist (1987).

And lastly, power. The strength dimension of self-efficacy pertains to an individual's capacity to persist and surmount challenges in order to accomplish a job, particularly when

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confronted with challenges or a deficiency of supportive interactions (Zakariya, 2022). Strength is the degree to which a person perseveres in pursuing their objectives, especially in the face of adversity (Medyasari et al., 2021). This particular quality has to do with how effective a person's confidence in their own skills is. Self-sustaining expectations in a person encourage a resolute dedication to achieving goals in the absence of lasting experiences. On the other hand, those who have a narrow and hazy view of their own skills are more vulnerable to experiences that cannot be sustained.

2.4 The Value of Self-Efficacy in Public Speaking

According to a study by Hoesny et al. (2023), self-efficacy is a reliable and significant predictor of language performance that goes beyond the use of conventional language competency tests. The results of the study indicate that people who have higher levels of self-efficacy are more proficient in language and get better academic results. Furthermore, Leeming (2017) shows a high correlation between students' general competency levels and their favorable assessments of their gifts. Students' general academic performance and competency benefit when they have a positive self-perception of their abilities. This expression suggests that self-efficacy is more than just a psychological concept and that it actually affects a person's language abilities.

Additionally, Wang & Sun's 2020 study highlights the significant impact that self-efficacy has in a variety of circumstances. The results of this study imply that those who have a high degree of self-confidence in their language skills are more likely to show extraordinary proficiency in real-world language use. After careful analysis, it is evident that self-efficacy in speaking abilities is more significant than just one factor. It takes into account things like motivation, overall language proficiency, academic achievement, and the real-world applications of language training. The aforementioned studies emphasize how crucial self-efficacy is in determining the results and achievements of language acquisition.

3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Design of the Research

Several methodologies were used in this study. According to (Nath et al., 2019), a mixed methodology combines quantitative and qualitative techniques. Analyses using descriptive statistics and in-depth interviews are part of the procedure. The purpose of this study is to assess students' level of self-efficacy in a speaking task. Three factors are taken into consideration by Bandura while assessing the students' self-efficacy: Magnitude, Generality, and Strength.

3.2 Research Subjects

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Students in the 12th grade from an Islamic school in Satun, Thailand, participated in the study. After completing the questionnaire, twenty-eight female students were selected for an interview.

3.3 Data and Instrument Collections

This study used an interview and a questionnaire as two different ways to collect data. This survey was developed based on research conducted by Siboro et al. (2022). The questionnaires were designed to assess three primary topics, each addressing a distinct facet. How students view their own talents in the face of assignment challenges is one of the key topics in the magnitude dimension. The second element focuses on how committed the students are to maintaining the necessary degree of adaption. The student's skill at completing assignments was emphasized in the third theme.A 4-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire to measure responses. The following can be said about the scale: The following are the four stages of self-efficacy: 1. Often (signifying an extremely high degree of self-efficacy); 2. Occasionally (signifying a moderately high degree of self-efficacy); 3. Seldom (signifying a low degree of self-efficacy); and 4. Never (signaling a low degree of self-efficacy).

3.4 Analysis of Data

A methodical selection procedure was used to pick a number of students who received the lowest, medium, and highest scores on the questionnaire in order to collect the information required for the in-depth interview. The students displayed the findings of the questionnaire survey in each of the three areas. Lidyawati and Sahara's (2020) study highlights the importance of purposive sampling, in which researchers choose samples that correspond with specific population groupings. The investigator conducted a thorough analysis of the data, placing particular emphasis on the quantity, generality, and strength of the various aspects of self-efficacy.

4   FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The EFL learner's speaking performance level will be determined by presenting the score and the development of self-efficacy. In order to investigate the research question, the researchers formulated a series of inquiries on various aspects of self-efficacy. The questions were developed based on Bandura's theory, which encompasses three dimensions of self-efficacy: magnitude, generality, and strength. Below are the findings of the mean levels of students' self-efficacy in speaking performance among Thai English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners.

Table 1. Magnitude Dimension

	Item	Mean	Interpretation
1	Doing simple tasks is fun for me	3.3214	Sometimes
2	I am capable of finishing complex task	1.9286	Never
3	I lean towards challenging tasks rather than easy ones	1.6429	Never
4	I embrace challenging assignments	2.1429	Rarely

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5	Completing challenging tasks does not diminish my sense of self-efficacy	1.9643	Never
	Mean	2.20002	Rarely

Table 1. indicates that the magnitude dimension of the students' self-efficacy is low.

Table 2. Generality Dimension

	Item	Mean	Interpretation
1	I can get good at much different knowledge	2.2500	Rarely
2	The knowledge I already know makes me excited to learn more.	3.1786	Sometimes
3	I know how to finish tasks in a lot of different areas of knowledge	2.0000	Rarely
4	I like to complete tasks across different areas of knowledge	2.1429	Rarely
5	I usually want to improve my capability	3.2857	Sometimes
	Mean	2.574144	Rarely

Table 2. indicates that the general dimension of the students' self-efficacy level is low.

Table 3. Strength Dimension

	Item	Mean	Interpretation
1	When I fail, I quickly give up	2.5714	Rarely
2	I believe I will succeed even though I failed once	2.7143	Rarely
3	When I fail, I always cheer myself	2.7143	Rarely
4	I usually search for a solution if I make a mistake	3.1071	Sometimes

5	Experiences the most affect self-efficacy	3.4643	Sometimes
	Mean	2,90348	Rarely

Table 3. indicates that the level of the strength dimension of the students' self-efficacy is at low levels.

The following is the rating scale description of the students' self-efficacy level.

Table 3. Rating Scale Description

	Rating Scale	Range of Perceptions	Level Student' Self-Efficacy
1	3.50-4.00	Always	Very High
2	2.50-3.00	Sometimes	Slightly High
3	1.50-2.49	Rarely	Low
4	1.00-1.49	Never	Very Low

Based on the data displayed in the aforementioned tables, it can be deduced that Thai students continuously exhibit poor levels of self-efficacy in several elements of speaking performance.

Magnitude

The state size dimension includes a person's capacity for problem-solving and their level of self-efficacy in finishing various activities (Siboro et al., 2022). The magnitude dimension is people's subjective evaluation of their ability to handle the challenges they face in a speaking lesson.

According to a study by Masitoh and Fitriyani (2018), people perceive the magnitude dimension as the degree of task

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complexity they believe they can complete (Lunenburg, 2011). All of the pupils' poor levels of self-efficacy are shown in Table 1.

In the interview, a student identified as TY revealed that she usually feels less confident when she is involved in sophisticated communication. Consequently, she would rather engage in easier conversations rather than try more difficult ones. TY tends to stay away from deep conversation and instead participates in conversations that are more surface-level.

TY: "I would rather communicate at a lesser level than engage in conversations at a higher level since I frequently become nervous while speaking at a high level of difficulty. I usually make an effort to communicate in a more relaxed tone rather than a forceful one.

a. Generality

According to Lunenburg (2011), the degree to which the assumption is applicable to a variety of situations is known as dimension generality in self-efficacy. It illustrates the degree to which an individual can accomplish specific tasks or activities in various contexts or domains. People who have a strong sense of confidence in their mathematical skills, for example, would feel comfortable solving a variety of arithmetic problems in a range of contexts and at varying levels of difficulty. (Fitriani & Masitoh, 2018)

While expressing a need for increased skill in all areas of science, the student with the letters SM demonstrated a great willingness to go deeper into particular areas of personal interest. As a result, there is some degree of ambiguity regarding the acquisition of knowledge across all academic fields. Furthermore, SM expressed a strong willingness to advance and broaden its body of knowledge in spite of these circumstances.

SM: "I enjoy learning more about my interests, but I find it difficult to understand everything." I am keen to learn more even if there are a lot of things I do not know how to accomplish.

b. Strength

Strength in the context of the self-efficacy paradigm refers to a strong conviction in one's ability to do a task successfully (Lunenburg, 2011). Self-efficacy measures a person's confidence in their ability to follow a predefined course of action in a given situation. A high level of self-efficacy indicates that a person has a great deal of confidence in their ability to overcome challenges and keep going until they reach a goal, even in the face of adversity or a lack of encouraging experiences. This quality is important since it affects academic achievement, motivation, and knowledge acquisition. People who have high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to be driven, to stick with their goals, and to achieve better academic outcomes. (Van Der Bijl et al., 2001; Medyasari et al., 2021).

The interview revealed that when student RD encountered setback, he or she had a tendency to give up. She does, however,

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occasionally think that self-motivation serves as the main driving force, inspiring her to bolster her resolve during adversity and actively pursue solutions to setbacks. Moreover, RD says that experience will result in advancement in one's own life.

RD: "I frequently want to give up when I fail, but there are moments when I discover that the biggest motivation I have is within myself. When I make mistakes, I try to be kind to myself and find methods to pick myself back up. Likewise, I believe that life will improve me.

In general, The results of this study were compared with research looking at parallels and discrepancies in various situations. Paradewari (2017) conducted the first relevant inquiry, and one of their commonalities was the application of a two-methods technique that combines quantitative and qualitative techniques. The following results of the current investigation demonstrate that there were discrepancies among the 43 participants: A substantial proportion of pupils, specifically 79%, exhibit high levels of self-efficacy. 2) A significant portion of students—81.4%, to be exact—know their effectiveness. 3) Four different factors—mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal or social persuasion, and emotional state—have an impact on students' self-efficacy. This study shares similarities with the investigation on pupils in West Borneo carried out by Siboro et al. (2022), however the latter's findings were different. The observed discrepancy can be

attributed to variations in self-efficacy levels, which are further influenced by the students' contextual circumstances. On the other hand, this study assessed the impact of self-efficacy on public speaking using a quantitative method. 533 professional psychology students provided the data, which showed a wide range of the students' elevated self-efficacy.

5   CONCLUSION

Bandura's theory emphasizes the substance of self-efficacy in evaluating students' confidence levels, specifically their speaking abilities. This study uncovers that Thai students exhibit low self-efficacy through three dimensions: magnitude, generality, and strength. These findings highlight the high occurrence of low self-efficacy among Thai learners, resulting in emotions such as nervousness and a lack of confidence when doing speaking activities. Educators must address this issue by enhancing students' confidence and cultivating a supportive learning environment.

In the future, educators must acknowledge the significance of self-efficacy in language learning and communication. Customized interventions explicitly designed for Thai English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners can effectively address their difficulties and enhance their English proficiency. Further investigation is needed to inspect the determinants of self-efficacy among Thai students, which will assist in developing more

efficient intervention strategies. Through the targeted intervention of low self-efficacy, educators can empower Thai EFL learners to develop more confidence and proficiency in English communication. This, in turn, will ultimately lead to improved academic performance and success in real-world situations.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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