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A STUDY ON CORRELATION BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN INDONESIAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

There have been a number of research studies that point out that students' self-efficacy has a close relationship with their academic achievement. Giving speeches in English requires a high level of self-efficacy because confidence and English skills are both needed when performing the assignment in front of an audience and examiners. This research tries to investigate the students' self-efficacy in giving speeches in EFL classes and their performance, which is reflected in their academic achievements.

The research involved 89 non-English department university students in a non-English speaking country. The speech course was given to the students in their fourth semester after they completed English courses focusing on reading and writing, speaking and listening, and extensive reading in their first, second and third semester respectively. Questionnaires are distributed to the students to find out their level of self-efficacy. Their achievements were assessed based on the rubrics provided and distributed to the students at the beginning of the course. The data were then analyzed using SPSS. The research found that self-efficacy in English speech delivery did correlate to the academic achievement.

Key words: *Self-efficacy, giving English speeches, academic achievement, non-English department students.*

This paper focuses on the nature of machine translation and the possibility in empowering it. After recognizing the nature of machine translation, it is hoped that the users of the machine can take any appropriate actions to make the benefit of machine translation.

Introduction

Efficacy is seen as one important factor that can influence one's learning and even affect the outcome when performing a task. Although efficacy is closely related to social cognitive theory and education, it has been used widely in many areas such as in sports (Feltz & Magyar, 2006), in learning disabilities (Klassen, 2006), in cultural issues (Kim & Park, 2006; Oettingen & Zosuls, 2006), and in teaching (Hoy & Davis, 2006; Haworth, 2008). Haworth (2008) argues that teachers' efficacy may influence their relationship with the students. She suggests that teachers' self-efficacy needs to be improved by involving the teachers in professional development programs. For students, efficacy is essential so that they have the confidence to do their task assigned and at the end, they can receive the expected results. This article tries to investigate the relationship between the self-efficacy and academic achievement in delivering English speeches taking place in a Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Self-efficacy

Bandura (1997) refers to efficacy as "a judgment of one's ability to organize and execute given types of performances." It means that it is the people themselves who judge their own capabilities to execute a certain action. An English language learner may have a higher level

of self-efficacy in one skill but a lower level in the other. For example, many English language learners would judge themselves to be more confident in their speaking ability than in writing skills because they can do some improvisation to communicate with other people, while in writing, they have to deal with grammar and spelling. Self-efficacy, according to Pintrich and Schunk (1996) and Bandura (2006) also influences people in setting goals. Self-efficacy and goal setting are dependent on the "intraindividual and environmental differences" (p. 89). In an academic setting, the examples from these factors are like the relationship between the students and teachers, students and other students, and students and the materials discussed in the class. A student with a high level of self-efficacy may set his goal lower when he does not have a good relationship with the environment or the materials tested were not yet discussed in the class. In short, the intra-individual and environment differences, at some point, lower the level of students' self-efficacy.

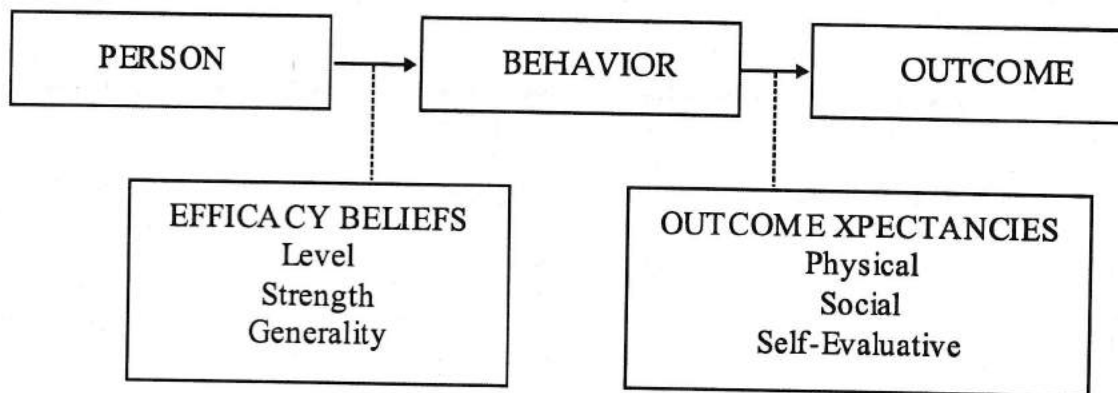
Self-efficacy is closely related with achievement. People with high self-efficacy would expect to have higher achievement in the performed task. Pintrich and Schunk (1996) and Bandura (2006) assert that students with high confidence and high expectations for achievement would try harder and tend to be more

persistent. In addition, this type of student would have a higher level of engagement with his learning environment so he can achieve his goal set. Students who believe in themselves but have low outcome expectations may show the same behavior as the type of students discussed previously, but at the same time they would try to negotiate the standards set by the teachers so they can get a higher grade with less hard work. The other type of student is the one who has low confidence and low expectation. The students

who fall in this criteria may stop attending the class or simply do not show up on the test day. Meanwhile, students with a low level of confidence but high expectation would experience frustration because they compare themselves with their peers who perform better.

Self-efficacy is usually related with efforts someone puts into a certain task. These two variables are seen as positively correlated, which means that if the self-efficacy is high, the number of efforts will also be high and, in turn, it affects

Figure 1.
The relation between efficacy beliefs and outcome expectancies.



the outcome produced by the individual. The relationship between the three variables is described in the figure proposed Bandura (1997) below.

Efficacy varies in levels, strength and generality. According to Zimmerman (2006), the *level* means that the level of self-efficacy depends on the level of difficulty of the assigned task; *strength* refers to "certainty with which one can perform a specific task"; *generality* is the efficacy owned by an individual in relation to performing tasks from different subjects.

The figure shows that an individual's efficacy influences his behavior to perform the task assigned. A student who has lower level confidence usually makes fewer efforts because he perceives himself not to be able to perform the given task and therefore, he gives up easily. This type of student, compared to his opposite, has relatively lower efforts to figure out alternative solutions when he encounters a problem. LeClair, Doll, Osborn, and Jones (2009) found that ELL students who had low self-efficacy tended to have lower academic achievement. Their research was conducted in the United States

where English became the first language in their schools. The low self-efficacy caused a low level of motivation to learn because their English skills were not as proficient as expected to understand the classroom communication, even though extra help such as language specialists had been given to the students.

According to Bandura (1997), knowing what to do and how to do it is not enough to have a certain level of efficacy. When one has a certain level of efficacy, he would be able to organize the subskills needed to perform the tasks. The subskills like cognitive, social and emotional behavior have to be organized so that the assigned task can be performed well and produce the desired output.

An individual may have the sub-skills but not be able to orchestrate them. In the end, he will not be able to perform effectively. It is commonly found that a number of students who are given the same intervention and who are believed to have similar skills may show different levels of performance because they have different abilities to coordinate the subskills. Also, efficacy can go up and down depending on various conditions.

In short, self-efficacy is seen as one of the most influential factors that influences students' academic achievement. In addition, self-efficacy can also encourage the students to study harder and perform better in exams. In an English language learning context, students with higher confidence with their English will likely make more efforts to perform a task compared to those who have a lower level of self-efficacy.

Speech Delivery course

This course provides massive opportunities for students to work with their speech text and rehearse their performance in the classroom. Bandura (2006) asserts "the same perceived efficacy can occur if development of competencies is socially structured so that skills in dissimilar domains are developed together." These opportunities can improve students' level of efficacy because different skills such as writing, speaking, reading and listening are developed in the classroom. In addition, the practices can help the students reduce their anxiety in relation to standing in front of an audience, delivering English speeches and being assessed.

- *What is English Speech course and Why it is given.*

In the Language Training Center Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, this course is given to the second year nonnglish department students who have taken three other English courses: Writing I, Conversation, and Reading I. One of the considerations of giving this course in the fourth semester is the assumption that the students would have obtained the skills to perform the designed tasks. The writing skills are needed in order to write the speech text, which will help the students to organize their thinking and rehearse. The conversation skill is obviously needed when the students have to deliver the speech in front of the class while reading skills will be used when the students have to read or summarize the references needed to support their arguments.

The other consideration of designing the English Speech course is to give the students as many opportunities as possible to build arguments, support them and present them in front of a group. At the end, the students will have to answer one or two questions asked by their peers and/or teachers. This would require the students to use all skills they have in order to do the task.

- *How the English Speech course is organized*

The course is given in 16 meetings and two out of those meetings are used to conduct the final test. The rest of the meetings are usually used to do the interventions to make sure that the students acquire the knowledge and skills to deliver the English speech. The intervention is also used to build their confidence in doing the expected task by doing repetitive actions. In the class activities, for example, students are encouraged to practice by standing in front of the class and delivering a chunk of English texts. The activities will provide them with experiences and gradually develop their self-efficacy because they will be familiar with the task they are expected to perform (Gorsuch, 2009).

The students have to write a piece of English text that is used to guide their oral speech because in the test the students are not allowed to bring text with them. However, they may bring a number of key words they need to remind them of their text. The students are expected to deliver the speech within 4 minutes and are assessed based on a set of criteria given to the students at the beginning of the course.

Methodology

a. Data collection

- *Participants*

The participants of the study were 120 nonnglish department students who enrolled in the English class because the course was a mandatory subject for them. Most students were in the second year in the university and have learned English in an academic setting since they were at least in middle school.

During their studying in the university, it is mandatory for the students to take English subjects each semester. The English lessons focused on different skills from semester one to four such as basic reading and writing, English conversation, extensive reading and public speaking, respectively.

- *Instruments*

The study used questionnaires as its instrument to gather the data. The questionnaires were distributed to 120 students. The questionnaire is constructed based on the guide provided by Bandura (2006; 1997) in *Guide for Constructing Self-Efficacy Scales*. The construct includes several elements:

1. The questions were phrased with the word *can do* because the phrase refers to perceived capability.
2. The questions covered the behavioral factors that students can use to review their performance. In this case, the behavioral factors are related to the students' self-regulation to reach a certain level of achievement.
3. The questions were designed based on the assessment guideline provided by the institution.

The questionnaires were distributed to the students before they performed the tasks. This method was considered more effective to find out the level of student confidence in relation to their task performance. The questionnaires were then returned to the teachers and the teachers turned them in to the person in charge of collecting them.

The scale given in the questionnaire was based on the Likert scale because it was considered to be the simplest and most common means of measurement (Sue, n.d.). The respondents were asked to indicate their level of self-efficacy by circling the number that most describes it. The scale was arranged: 0 = "not at all" to 10 = "extremely well". The questionnaire was designed in the students' first language to make them more easily understand the questions and answer them (questionnaires attached). The other instrument used in this research is the teacher's assessment. The assessment was conducted based on the checklist provided by the institution. The teachers graded the students on a 0-4 scale (assessment form attached).

Hypothesis and data collection analysis.

The study hypothesized that there was a relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement in English speech delivery course in Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. The null hypothesis was set that there is no relation between self-efficacy and the course.

Data Analysis

The data obtained was analyzed using SPSS 18.0. The correlation was analyzed using the SPSS software.

Results

Out of 120 questionnaires distributed, only 94 of them returned. There were five questionnaires, which were not completely filled out by the

respondents; therefore the total questionnaires used in the research were 89. The following are the tables showing the results of the analysis.

Table 1.
The mean of self-efficacy and grades

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
selfefficacy	6.8796	.92792	89
grade	15.4865	2.10617	89

Table 1 shows that the mean of the self-efficacy of the respondents was a little above the average, which means that the participants were quite confident in performing their task given by the teacher. The table also displays that the participants' mean of grades was relatively high considering that if they performed perfectly in the test, they would get 20 points.

The correlation between self-efficacy and students' academic achievement is shown by table 2.

Table 2.
The correlation between self-efficacy and speech delivery course

Correlations			
		selfefficacy	grade
selfefficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.870**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	89	89
grade	Pearson Correlation	.870**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	89	89

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

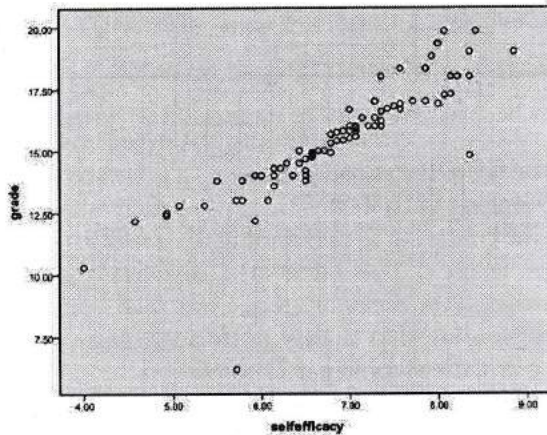
Its *p*-value of the correlation was .000, which means that there was a significant relation between the independent variable and dependent variable. In short, the null was rejected. Table 3 shows the scatterplot of the two variables. It shows that there was a trend between the two variables, which indicates that the academic achievement tended to be higher when the level of self-confidence was also higher.

Discussion

The study yields the similar results of the research conducted by Hsieh and Kang (2010) in

Korean EFL context. The study confirms the suggestion offered by Bandura (1997), which stated that self-efficacy would be well correlated with academic achievement. The students who had high levels of confidence showed better performance than those who

Table 3.
The scatterplot



had lower levels of self-efficacy in delivering English speeches. Apparently, letting the students know early what is expected from them at the end of the course helped the students prepare themselves to do the task. The course, which was designed to give a large portion of opportunities for the students to practice inside and outside the class, made the students confident to perform the test. On the contrary, students with low levels of self-efficacy will feel stressed out with the assignment because they see themselves as incapable of doing the assigned task. As a result, the students will likely feel anxious when delivering the speech in front of the audience, which may lead to a low level of academic achievement.

Limitation and Recommendation

The result of this particular research cannot be

used to generalize the condition of all students in the setting of the research. There were at least five classes in each department and at least fifteen departments in the Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, but only a few of them participated in the research. Accordingly, the recommendation for the future research is to collect data from a bigger sample size and more variety of departments. Self-efficacy can also be researched before and after the intervention. Looking at their level of confidence in the beginning and at the end of the intervention is helpful to see whether the intervention actually works effectively. This can be an effective means of course evaluation.

Teacher self-efficacy in teaching the particular course is also another point to research. Teachers' confidence in making the students understand what is taught is one of the most important things in teaching English for speakers of other languages. As Hoy and Davis (2006) argue, the level of self-efficacy affects the efforts and persistence, which in turns results in better performance. When teachers are identified to have a high level of efficacy, they will likely find ways to improve their teaching techniques to ensure that the students are confident to perform the task (Bandura, 2006). It eventually leads to better academic achievement of the students.

Conclusion

The English speech delivery course was given after a number of English courses that focus on different English skills such as reading, listening, writing and speaking. When a student delivers a speech in front of an audience and is assessed, he needs a high level of self-confidence because some students may not get used to speaking in the way they are required to. The study shows the similar results as shown by many studies that suggest high self-efficacy has positive impacts on academic achievement. The higher the level of self-efficacy, the better the academic achievement will be.

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