

# The Impact of Self-efficacy Towards Speaking Performance

I Gde Putu Agus Pramerta<sup>1\*</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>English Language Education Study Program, Universitas Mahasaraswati, Denpasar, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

This present study is an associational study that employed *simple linear regression* model. There were two variables in this study such as self-efficacy as the independent variable while speaking performance as the dependent one. This study was conducted at a public university in Indonesia. The subjects recruited were 75 students. The data were collected by administering a self-efficacy questionnaire which contains 28 items. The data were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS program. The results show that mostly, the students had average and high category of SE as shown by 22.7% and 38.7% respectively. Moreover, it was found that  $F(1, 72) = 17.950, p < 0.001$ . It means that statistically there was an impact of students' self-efficacy toward students' speaking performance. Based on the aforementioned results, it can be concluded that the students had good potential to enhance their speaking skills and their SE had significant contribution to their speaking performance.

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## 1. Introduction

Speaking is a difficult language skill to acquire (Harmer, 2007; Zhang, 2009), and it is influenced by a number of factors (Ur, 1996). Thus, research in speaking is becoming an increasingly intriguing area of study. Furthermore, a growing body of research has long been conducted to confirm the notion that speaking deals with many factors such as motivation (see Dincer & Yesilyurt, 2013; Ochoa, Cabrera, Quinonez, Castillo, & Gonzalez, 2016; Othman & Shuqair, 2013), self-esteem (see Koosha, Ketabi, & Kassaian, 2011; Pagaduan-Apostol, 2017; Rashidi, Yamini, & Shafiei, 2011), and anxiety (see Aida, 1994; Fukai, 2000; Horwitz, 2001; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Lin & Yi, 1997).

### 1.1 Speaking

Speaking is a real-time speech production in which words follow words and phrases follow phrases (Thornbury, 2005). In addition, Thornbury argues that speech utterances are responses to the utterances of the person with whom we are conversing. Therefore, according to Hornby (1987), speaking is the ability to use language for communication. Moreover, Burn and Joyce (1997) argue that speaking is an interactive process, which implies that speaking is not merely a one-way communication but also a two-way exchange. Humans require speaking ability because we use language as a tool for communication and require speaking ability to convey our meaning precisely and effectively. How could we express our thoughts and communicate with others if we lacked good communication skills? Overall, our ability to communicate without speaking.

Speaking is likely one of the four language skills that language learners should prioritize and possess (Haidara, 2016). Haidara's statement aligns with Nunan's (1998) contention that speaking is the most essential aspect of language acquisition. Both of Haidara and Nunan's statements explain why so many people, including prospective teachers, desire to improve their communication skills. Students who will be English teachers in the future are expected to be able to communicate accurately and effectively in English by knowing how to express ideas and exchange meaning in a language. Even so, they are expected to provide excellent examples of effective oral communication. As a result, many educational institutions offer numerous speaking courses to their prospective teachers in order to improve their oral communication skills.

Since it is believed that speaking is comprised of multiple speaking elements/factors, as supported by Ur (1996), speaking is dependent on a number of factors during its implementation. For more than two decades, it inspired numerous researchers in second language research to investigate the factors influencing speaking performance. Throughout these decades, numerous studies have confirmed that

speaking is composed of linguistics knowledge, listening ability, topical knowledge, motivation (Abrar & Mukminin, 2016), role of teacher, use of mother tongue, and classroom environment (Battacharya, 2017), performance condition (Tuan & Mai, 2015), psychology (Schwarz, 2005; Thornbury, 2005), and feedback during speaking (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). However, not all of these components will fit when we discuss the speaking skills as oral communication ability and self-efficacy (especially in relation to the level of confidence in the individual's abilities). It will focus primarily on linguistic knowledge (grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency), subject-matter knowledge, listening ability, and communication skill. In accordance with the subject matter of this article, I have reviewed only the elements that I have mentioned.

Good linguistics knowledge will benefit the oral communication skills of language users (Vigoya, 1997). For instance, grammatical competence enables individuals to correctly apply the structure of the language and convey meaningful messages (Latha & Ramesh, 2012). As a factor that affects speaking performance, pronunciation is also significant because mispronouncing a single word can result in miscommunication (Battacharya, 2017). In addition, fluency is one of the factors that influence speaking performance, as it relates to the ease, speed, flexibility, and lack of hesitation in expressing ideas (Crystal and Varley, 1993). Last but not least, vocabulary mastery is crucial because it can be applied to productive endeavors (Nation, 2001). Thus, language users can apply this knowledge to produce precise and effective communication meaning.

Knowledge of the subject matter is also crucial to the success of oral communication. According to Bachman and Palmer (1966), topical knowledge has a substantial impact on speaking performance. To support this view, MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, and Noels (1998) explain that having sufficient knowledge will aid learners in delivering an effective speech. Therefore, individuals with limited knowledge of the topic being discussed may experience difficulty speaking, while conversely, those with extensive knowledge will participate in the communication with ease because they know what to say.

In addition to the aforementioned factors, communication and listening skills are believed to have a significant impact on speaking performance. McPheat (2010) defines communication competence as the art and process of creating and exchanging ideas. McPheat explains further that communication involves the reception of information in addition to its transmission. Consequently, those who comprehend the message effectively and are able to respond are more likely to be successful at maintaining communication. Additionally, listening ability is a factor that shapes communication competence itself. Despite the fact that they are distinct competencies, they are interrelated. To illustrate this point, Doff (1998) asserts that individuals will struggle to enhance their communication skills if they do not develop their listening skills. According to Shumin (1997), individuals are able to respond to a conversation as a result of their listening ability. Consequently, it explains that listening is a significant factor in determining the success of a speaking performance. A person with excellent listening skills will be able to respond to the conversation as expected by the other participants. In contrast, a person with poor listening skills will have difficulty responding to the communication because the information received is unclear, making it difficult for them to do so.

## 1.2 Self-efficacy

As one of the affective factors in language learning, self-efficacy is defined as an individual's confidence in his or her ability to perform a certain action or achieve specific outcomes in a given situation (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1997). It is believed that a person's self-efficacy influences initiating behavior and perseverance in overcoming obstacles to complete tasks (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, SE is positively associated with success. A person with a high SE tends to perform tasks more positively and more effectively than those with a low SE.

Good performance is the result of guided actions governed by high-order self-regulatory competencies (Bandura, 2006). As a source of good performance, self-regulatory skills assist individuals in carrying out the necessary actions. In accordance with this assertion, Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (2001) assert that perceived ability generates or facilitates behavior. According to Bandura (2006), these actions include generic skills for identifying task requirements, constructing and evaluating actions, establishing goals as a guide for performing actions, and self-motivation to manage stress. Once individuals are able to maintain good self-regulation skills, it will contribute to their good performance when completing a particular task. Moreover, many studies (e.g. Demir, 2017; Habibi & Yazdani, 2016; Newby-Fraser & Schlebusch, 1998; Sadri & Robertson, 1993) have supported the notion that SE results in improved performance.

SE is concerned with an individual's perceived capability and persistence in attempting to complete a difficult task (Bandura, 2006). This is followed by Bandura's explanation of how to measure SE, in which he argues that perceived capability relates primarily to what individuals are able to do rather than what they will do. Perseverance in adversity during the process of completing the task focuses on how persistent

individuals are despite being under pressure to continue performing the actions and overcome the obstacles.

SE in speaking has become an intriguing and promising topic for the global development of English language learning, particularly in countries where English is considered a foreign language. The primary distinction between English as a foreign language and English as a second language is the opportunity or frequency with which people use English. In ESL countries, English is frequently used as a means of communication outside the classroom as well as in the classroom. Malaysia, Singapore, and India are the best examples of ESL countries that provide more opportunities for ELLs to use English. In EFL countries, however, these opportunities are limited to the classroom and workplace, where the infrequent use of English may cause ELLs to experience anxiety when speaking English. Moreover, this circumstance may contribute to the poor speaking performance. Therefore, it is necessary for them to have an adequate level of SE in order to be more self-assured and to have faith in their abilities, which will ultimately result in a good performance when speaking.

In the second language research field, however, the impact of SE on speaking performance is rarely examined. Presumably, previous researchers were more likely to investigate SE in relation to general language skills as opposed to a particular skill. Therefore, this is the novelty and significance of this study, as it contributes significantly to the literature of SE, which is believed to be a determining factor in terms of speaking performance. Consequently, this study will investigate:

1. What are the levels of students' self-efficacy in speaking course?
2. Does SE significantly contribute to speaking performance?

## 2. Research Methods

### 2.1 Design

This study belongs to an associational study by implementing *Simple Linear Regression* (SLR) model. Moreover, there are two variables that will be involved in this study such as self-efficacy as the independent variable and speaking performance as the dependent variable.

### 2.2 Research setting

This study was conducted in the English Language Education Department at a state university in Indonesia for 2019-2020 term. The reason why this university was chosen was because this research needed students who were studying in English Language Education and had taken Speaking I course which this criteria could be fulfilled by doing the research at this university as it has an English Language Education Department and the students had taken Speaking I course.

### 2.3 Subjects recruitment

The subjects invited in this study were 75 students. The recruitment occurred via online. In addition, in order to participate, the students had taken the Intensive English course and had completed the Speaking I course. The participants in this study were between 18-20 years old because with that range of ages have taken Speaking I course.

### 2.4 Methods of data collection

The method implemented in this study was administering questionnaire of self efficacy in speaking skills. In collecting the data, the participants completed the online survey through a Qualtrics survey. Moreover, it took around 20 minutes to take the survey.

### 2.5 Instruments

The instruments implemented was a questionnaire containing one item asking about students' speaking score and 28 items asking about students' self-efficacy developed by [Asakereh and Dehghannezhad \(2015\)](#). This questionnaire was developed to assess students' self-efficacy in speaking. The 28 items were found to be valid and reliable.

### 2.6 Analysis

The data were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS program. The data analysis involved variability analysis using descriptive statistics and parametric analysis using SLR. Moreover, the regression model that was proposed in this study can be seen as follows:

$$\text{Speaking} : \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{SE}) + \varepsilon$$

Furthermore, the hypothesis in this study can be formulated as follows:

$$H_0 : \beta_1 = 0$$

$$H_1 : \beta_1 \neq 0$$

### 3. Findings & Discussion

#### 3.1 Findings

The data in this study were firstly analyzed to find the variabilities (*M*, *SD*, *Var*, *Min*, *Max*) of each variable. The results (see table 1) show that the minimum score in SE = 65.00, the maximum score = 269.00, *M* = 186.93, *SD* = 44.15, and *Var* = 1949.24. Meanwhile, the minimum score in speaking performance = 50.00, maximum score = 91.00, *M* = 80.46, *SD* = 7.32, and *Var* = 53.52.

**Table 1. Descriptive statistics**

	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Speaking	75	50.00	91.00	80.46	7.32	53.52
SE	75	65.00	269.00	186.93	44.15	1949.24
Valid N (listwise)	75					

Then, the analysis was conducted into analyzing the distribution of students' self-efficacy to know their categories. From the data shown in table 2, it was found that there were two students who got scores between 65 – 105 with 2.6% of frequency. There were fifteen students who got scores between 106 – 146 with 20% of frequency. There were seventeen students who got scores ranged between 147 – 187 with 22.7% of frequency. There were twenty-nine students who got scores between 188 – 228 with 38.7% of frequency. Lastly, there were twelve students who got scores between 229 – 269 with 16% of frequency.

Besides analyzing the distribution of students' self-efficacy to know their categories, this study also analyzed the distribution of students' speaking scores. From the data shown in table 3, it was found that there was only one student who got scores between 50 – 59 with 1.3% of frequency. There were three students who got scores between 60 – 69 with 4% of frequency. Then, there were eleven students who got scores ranged between 70 – 79 with 14.7% of frequency. There were fifty-one students who got scores between 80 – 89 with 68% of frequency. Lastly, there were nine students who got scores between 90 – 100 with 12% of frequency.

**Table 2. Distribution of Students' SE**

No.	Interval Classes	Frequency ( <i>fi</i> )	Relative Frequency ( <i>fr</i> %)	Category
1	65 – 105	2	2.6	Very low
2	106 – 146	15	20	Low
3	147 – 187	17	22.7	Average
4	188 – 228	29	38.7	High
5	229 – 269	12	16	Very high

**Table 3. Distribution of Students' Speaking Performance**

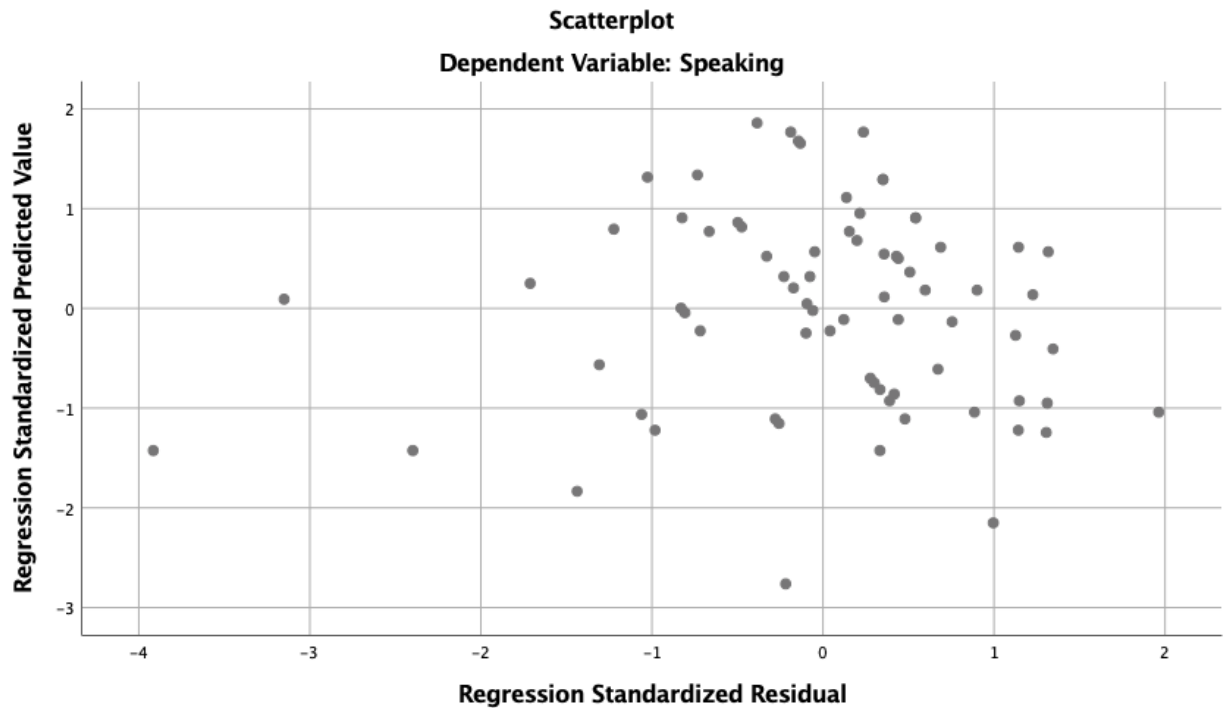
No.	Interval Classes	Frequency ( <i>fi</i> )	Relative Frequency ( <i>fr</i> %)	Category
1	50 – 59	1	1.3	Very low
2	60 – 69	3	4	Low
3	70 – 79	11	14.7	Average
4	80 – 89	51	68	High
5	90 – 100	9	12	Very high

The next analysis conducted was tests of assumptions prior to conducting hypothesis testing. There were several tests conducted such as normality test, heteroscedasticity test, autocorrelation test, and linearity test. Table 4 shows that  $p > 0.05$  in both K-S and S-W analysis. These scores show that the data came from the speaking performance was normally distributed. Then, figure 1 shows that the data were widely spread which indicated that the assumption of heteroscedasticity was met. It was continued into analyzing linearity by looking at figure 2. The residuals in figure 2 show that it follows the line which means that the linearity assumption was met. Then, the last assumption test conducted was autocorrelation by looking at *Durbin-Watson* value (table 5). It shows that the score is 2 which means that there was a negative

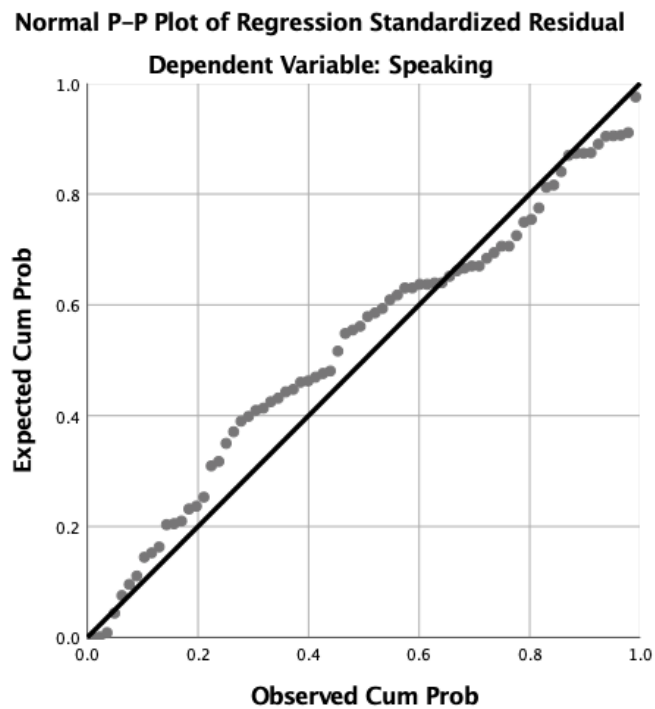
autocorrelation or there was no autocorrelation happened in this study. Therefore, hypothesis testing could be continued.

**Table 4. Normality Test**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Speaking	.204	74	.200	.854	74	.300



**Figure 1.** Scatterplot of speaking performance



**Figure 2.** P-P plot of speaking performance

As hypothesis testing was conducted, it was found that (See table 5 and 6)  $F(1, 72) = 17.950, p < 0.001$ . It means that statistically there was an impact of students' self-efficacy toward students' speaking performance. Moreover, there was 20% contribution of SE towards speaking performance while the rest 80% cannot be explained since there were other factors that were not studied in this research. Moreover, from table 7, it was found that both were statistically significant predictors where in speaking,  $t = 19.861, p < 0.01$  and in SE,  $t = 4.237, p < 0.001$ . table 7 also shows that the least square regression line can be drawn as follow:

$$\text{Speaking} = 66.626 + 0.074 (\text{SE})$$

The above line means that the constant score of every student's speaking performance was 66.626. Moreover, every one unit of SE the student has will add up as many as 0.074 to his/her speaking performance.

**Table 5. Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.447 <sup>a</sup>	.200	.188	6.59060	2.220

**Table 6. Anova Table**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	779.696	1	779.696	17.950	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	3127.396	72	43.436		
	Total	3907.091	73			

**Table 7. Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	66.626	3.355		19.861	.000
	SE	.074	.017	.447	4.237	.000

### 3.2 Discussion

As maintaining English speaking skill that is affected by many determinant factors, self-efficacy as one of them has been paid great attention in education, especially in English language learning. English teachers should be aware of their students' self-efficacy levels as one of the considerations of preparing and selecting the materials, speaking activities, and speaking assessment. Those who do not care with their students' self-efficacy levels may not benefit from them.

As being investigated in this study, the students' self-efficacy can be said as great potential in developing their speaking skills. By having a great source of trust as well as confidence in speaking skills, the students may perform better than those who do not have the same trust and confidence. Yet, this has to be proven empirically that students' self-efficacy is really a great source to enhance speaking or communication performance.

To prove the above assumption, the results in this study suggest that SE statistically contributes to the prospective English teachers' speaking performance. This finding apparently confirms the other findings found by [Asakereh and Dehghannezhad \(2015\)](#) that SE contributes to speaking performance. In addition, the finding in this study is also supported by a study conducted by [Zahiri, Sibarani, and Sumarsih \(2017\)](#). They reported that SE statistically contributes to speaking performance. Thus, their finding, as well as the one found in this study confirm the notion that SE seems to have a relationship with speaking skills.

As having the appropriate level of SE has a positive relationship with speaking performance, it is necessary for scholars to profoundly understand what makes SE contributes positively to speaking performance. The more we can understand SE, the more we can create efforts for our students to achieve success in language learning, especially in speaking performance. According to [Bandura \(1997\)](#), SE is influenced by four factors such as mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal or social persuasion, and emotional state. Seemingly, most of the English prospective teachers involved in this study had those four factors. A speaking course that can maximize the students' experience, providing peer or group speaking activity, giving social persuasion and providing students with the good class atmosphere will presumably affect students to have the appropriate level of self-efficacy. Accordingly, every English

education department should considerably focus on those four factors due to increasing students' SE since SE positively contributes to speaking performance.

Moreover, students' scores in speaking performance show that above 50% of the students had high performance in speaking even though speaking skill is considered as a difficult skill to master (Harmer, 2007; Luoma, 2004; Zhang, 2009). Presumably, SE has triggered the students to do more efforts to finally achieve this state. As claimed by Bandura (1997), SE influences initiating behavior and persistence during the accomplishment of the task. This claim is also in line with the one stated by Pajares (2000) that SE, especially those who have a higher degree, will spend the effort to perform the required task. Yet, Pajares (1996) points out that individuals with low SE might perceive that things are tougher than they really are. Then, this condition can lead to a sense of stress and depression. Accordingly, from both claims (Bandura and Pajares), it can be inferred that even though speaking is difficult, students with a high level of SE will always work hard to overcome the difficulties encountered during conducting the task since SE triggers students to be more persistent in accomplishing the task. Then, this condition is exactly what Bandura (1993) claims that SE promotes positive changes in cognitive and affective to achieve success during accomplishing the task, which in turn, impact behavior.

Even though the contribution of SE towards speaking performance found in this study was really low, the model proposed in this study explains how SE works in a constellation along with other factors (Which were not identified in this study) to affect speaking performance. Thus, English teachers should know how to deal with students SE as well as taking it as a consideration in conducting a speaking course.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study reports the contribution of SE toward speaking performance of students. Based on the aforementioned results, it can be concluded that the students who took Speaking I course had high levels of self-efficacy in speaking which was good potential in enhancing speaking performance. Moreover, they also had good performance in speaking. Last but not least, SE in this study statistically contributes to students' speaking performance.

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