

# The Predictive Effect of Self-efficacy on the English Learning Motivation of Freshmen College Students

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**Abstract:-** The researchers of this study aimed to examine the influence of self-efficacy on the English learning motivation of freshmen college students. The study was conducted during the first semester of the school year 2021-2022 among the 144 freshmen college students of San Agustin Institute of Technology. Specifically, the study aimed to: determine the level of self-efficacy and English learning motivation of the respondents, find out whether self-efficacy is significantly correlated with English learning motivation, and examine if self-efficacy predicts the English learning motivation of the respondents. This study adopted a quantitative approach employing non-experimental research design using descriptive-correlational research techniques. An adapted questionnaire from the study of Torres and Alieto (2019) was used as an instrument to gather data from the respondents. Mean, standard deviation, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis, and simple linear regression analysis were used to treat the data. The results showed that the freshmen college students demonstrated a high level of self-efficacy that stemmed from reading manual instructions of gadgets, poems, essays, short stories, and novels in English. Moreover, the respondents demonstrated a very high level of English learning motivation as well. They believed that learning English would be able to help them for their future ventures. Furthermore, the correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation. Finally, through regression analysis, the study revealed that the respondents' level of self-efficacy could significantly influence their English learning motivation. In essence, self-efficacy plays a crucial role in learning a second language.

**Keywords:-** *Self-Efficacy, English Learning Motivation.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Learners' motivation to learn a language is essential to their success in learning the language itself. For decades now, the Philippine education system has used English as a medium of instruction from primary school through college. It is a tool for learning and a medium of communication even

in business and professional conferences. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning was introduced, which reduces students' social interactions, potentially decreasing their self-efficacy, and motivation to learn. Many learners find the English language teaching a distressing experience, even though English language is the universal language used worldwide. According to a study by Gan (2012), inadequate English vocabulary is a significant problem among students. That is why students have trouble expressing themselves adequately and appropriately. They still need help in terms of written and oral forms. Lucas (2010) expressed that motivation plays a significant role to second language learning. That if students are intrinsically motivated, they will be able to learn a second language with ease. But, what can potentially influence motivation to learn a new language, which in this case, English? One proposition that emerged is self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy (SE) refers to an individual's personal views or confidence in his capacity to complete specific tasks effectively. Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1997) emphasized that what people do and how well they do it depends on how deeply they think about a specific task. People with high motivation and self-efficacy are more likely to succeed, give it their all, and not give up when faced with challenges (Ersanli, 2015). Self-efficacy has several sources, the most influential of which is personal experience, described by Bandura (1997) as "enactive mastery experience". For example, if an individual has succeeded in completing a given task, and then later on given another similar or identical task, then his self-efficacy will be high that he could succeed still in the second task. Vicarious experience is the second greatest source of self-efficacy. Accordingly, self-efficacy arises when people watch peers whom they deem to be similar to them, successfully perform the task in question. A third source of self-efficacy is peer influence through encouragement. The final source of self-efficacy discussed by Bandura (1997) is affective and comes from our mental and emotional states.

The problem of English learning motivation is also present among the freshmen college students of San Agustin Institute of Technology (SAIT) as seen in their oral recitation

scores and communicative skills in speaking English. Concerning their fluency in speaking English, students have shown inferior interpersonal communication skills towards interacting with others, especially with their teachers. They prefer to use vernacular rather than English because they lack confidence in speaking the language in front of the class.

With these undeniable facts, the researchers believe that assessing freshmen college students' self-efficacy, English learning motivation, and the relationship between these variables at San Agustin Institute of Technology, Valencia City, is necessary.

➤ *Research Objectives:*

In general, this study aimed to examine the predictive effect of self-efficacy on the English learning motivation of freshmen college students.

Specifically, this study aimed to:

- Determine the level of self-efficacy of the freshmen college students.
- Identify the level of motivation of the freshmen college students in learning English.
- Examine potential significant relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation.
- Investigate potential predictive effect of self-efficacy on the freshmen college students' English learning motivation

➤ *Research Hypothesis:*

The following hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho1. There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation of the freshmen college students.

Ho2. Self-efficacy does not predict the English learning motivation of the freshmen college students.

## II. METHODS

Presented below are the research design, research locale, population and sample, research instrument, data collection, statistical treatment, and ethical consideration.

### A. Research Design

This study adapted a quantitative approach employing a non-experimental research design using descriptive-correlational techniques. A descriptive research design can use various research methods to investigate one or more variables (MacCombes, 2020). The main purpose of researchers who use descriptive research design is to describe the statistically analyzed data at hand. On the other hand, a correlational research design investigates relationships between variables without the researchers controlling or manipulating any of them. The direction of a correlation can be either positive or negative (Bhandari, 2021). The researchers used this design because the purpose of the study was to determine the level of self-efficacy and English learning motivation of the respondents. Meanwhile, the study is correlational because it investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation. In

addition, it assessed whether self-efficacy can significantly influence the English learning motivation.

### B. Research Locale

This study was conducted at San Agustin Institute of Technology (SAIT). It is a private Catholic institution founded by an Italian missionary priest, Fr. Manlio Caroselli S.J., in 1960 in Valencia City, Bukidnon, Philippines. The school has basic education and higher education programs. Meanwhile, the higher education department offers the following courses: elementary education, secondary education, business administration, office administration, midwifery, social work, technical vocational teacher education, and TESDA programs.

### C. Population and Sample

The freshmen college students of San Agustin Institute of Technology were the respondents of the study. Probability sampling procedure was employed in the selection of the respondents. Using Raosoft, an online sample size calculator, the researchers selected 144 respondents from a total population of 328 using simple random sampling technique.

### D. Research Instrument

This study used a questionnaire derived from Torres and Alieto's (2019) work entitled, "*English Learning Motivation and Self-Efficacy of Filipino Senior High School Students.*" The questionnaire is composed of two parts. The first part measures the self-efficacy of the respondents and the second part seeks to determine the degree of English learning motivation of the respondents. The researchers had this questionnaire validated and tested with its reliability. The test showed that self-efficacy obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.956 while English learning motivation yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.926, both were described as reliable.

### E. Data Collection

At the onset of the research work, the researchers sent a letter to the College Dean requesting for permission. After its approval, the researchers promptly sought the participants' consent to conduct the study. The researchers tabulated the responses of the respondents after collecting the questionnaires. Then, the data were sent to the statistician for statistical analysis. The researchers interpreted the data based on the results given.

### F. Statistical Treatment

The researchers used descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the research objectives. Mean and standard deviation were employed to ascertain the respondents' self-efficacy and English learning motivation. Meanwhile, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was utilized to determine any possible relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation. Finally, simple linear regression analysis was used to determine whether self-efficacy yields an impact on English learning motivation.

*G. Ethical Consideration*

The researchers ensured that ethical guidelines were followed during the research process. Before conducting the study, permission from the College Dean and consent from the respondents were obtained. The respondents were fully informed about the study’s aims and potential risks. The respondents were encouraged to participate in the study but were never coerced to do so if they refused to. In other words, the researchers ensured that all respondents who answered the questionnaires participated in the study voluntarily. The researchers ensured that the privacy and confidentiality of the personal information of the respondents were properly observed. No personal information from the respondents was divulged. No data from the study were falsified nor fabricated. Any form of deceit was avoided. To assure the originality of the work, the researchers had their manuscripts examined by a plagiarism software. All these ethical issues were avoided. The researchers observed all ethical protocols to come up with a quality and ethically-bound study.

**III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results of the study are presented below concisely in textual and tabular forms.

*A. Self-efficacy of the Respondents*

Table 1 presents the level of self-efficacy of the college freshmen students with an overall mean of 3.49 (SD=0.67) which means high. This implies that the students are confident that they can read and understand operating manuals, poems, essays, short stories, novels, print ads, and conversations in English.

**Table 1**  
*Level of Self-efficacy of the Respondents*

	Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	I read and understand instructions in manuals of gadgets or appliances.	3.90	0.81	High
2.	I read and understand the details of poems, essays, short stories, and novels in English.	3.84	0.82	High
3.	I read and understand the main ideas of a short English article.	3.76	0.83	High
4.	I read and understand the main ideas of print ads in English.	3.62	0.86	High
5.	I communicate ideas effectively and efficiently in English written discourse.	3.46	0.87	High
6.	I engage in an informal conversation using English.	3.42	0.89	High
7.	I engage in academic discussions using the English language.	3.40	0.82	Moderate
8.	I write a business letter in English.	3.35	0.90	Moderate
9.	I deliver the report using English as the medium.	3.34	0.79	Moderate
10.	I write a narrative in correct English.	3.33	0.83	Moderate
11.	I recite in English class fluently.	3.31	0.72	Moderate
12.	I communicate ideas in English clearly and correctly.	3.31	0.78	Moderate
13.	I deliver solo performances like oration, declamation, and some modes of public speaking.	3.16	0.80	Moderate
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>3.49</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>High</b>

Legend:

Scale	Limits	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Very High
4	3.41-4.20	High
3	2.61-3.40	Moderate
2	1.81-2.60	Low
1	1.00-1.80	Very Low

*B. English Learning Motivation of the Respondents*

Presented in table 2 is the level of motivation of the respondents in learning English with an overall mean of 4.86 (SD=0.56) which means very high. This further implies that most of the freshmen college students are motivated in learning English because they believe that it will be helpful for them in their future career. Through English, they will be able to understand English-speaking people, movies, pop music, magazines, and communicative engagements in business and professional conferences.

**Table 2**  
*Level of English Learning Motivation of the Respondents*

	Items	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1.	English will be helpful for my future career.	4.69	0.58	Very High
2.	Knowledge of English will be helpful when I take examinations	4.62	0.63	Very High
3.	English helps me to understand English-speaking people and their way of life.	4.59	0.69	Very High
4.	I feel English is an essential language of the world.	4.58	0.65	Very High
5.	I am interested in increasing my English vocabulary.	4.58	0.64	Very High
6.	I want to understand English films/videos, pop music, or books/magazines	4.57	0.68	Very High
7.	English will be helpful when transacting businesses in government, economics, and school.	4.55	0.70	Very High
8.	Learning and mastering the English language is very fulfilling.	4.53	0.71	Very High
9.	I gain confidence when I know I use the English language well.	4.48	0.67	Very High
10.	Knowledge of English helps me to perform well in other subjects.	4.47	0.74	Very High
11.	I feel English is mentally challenging.	4.46	0.73	Very High

12. English helps me to accomplish school requirements.	4.45	0.73	Very High
13. Skills in the use of English will help me to improve my life in the future.	4.42	0.77	Very High
14. I may need English to be admitted to colleges or universities.	4.41	0.67	Very High
15. I am interested in English culture, history, and literature.	4.37	0.77	Very High
16. It pays to learn and master English because of the many benefits with learning it.	4.36	0.73	Very High
17. Knowledge of English helps me to become a better person.	4.35	0.80	Very High
18. I need English to get the best job.	4.33	0.78	Very High
19. I can get pleasure from learning English.	4.24	0.80	Very High
20. I gain recognition when I have a good command of English.	4.21	0.82	Very High
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>0.56</b>	<b>Very High</b>

Legend:

Scale	Limits	Interpretation
5	4.21-5.00	Very High
4	3.41-4.20	High
3	2.61-3.40	Moderate
2	1.81-2.60	Low
1	1.00-1.80	Very Low

**C. Correlation Analysis between Self-efficacy and English Learning Motivation**

The correlation analysis between the independent and dependent variables is presented in Table 3. Self-efficacy is the independent variable while English learning motivation is the dependent variable. These variables were initially measured using mean and standard deviation. Then, Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was employed to examine the relationship between these variables.

Furthermore, the result revealed that there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation as indicated by  $r=0.262$  ( $p<0.01$ ). Though the relationship between these two (2) measures is relatively low, it still indicates that the relationship between these independent and dependent variables is significant. Therefore, the first null hypothesis, “There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation,” is rejected.

Based on the result, it can be construed that English learning motivation is much easier attained if students believe that they will be able to reach this goal. Moreover, students who are motivated to learn English language tend to believe they have the capacity or ability to learn the language successfully. In essence, self-efficacy is an essential factor

for language learning. Similarly, students’ self-efficacy is connected with their English language performance, and that self-efficacy has a favorable association among first-year college students’ English learning motivation.

Table 3

*Correlation Analysis between Self-efficacy and English Learning Motivation*

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: English Learning Motivation			
	Correlation Coefficients	P-value	Degree	Interpretation
Self-efficacy	0.262**	0.002	Low	Significant

The significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation is validated in the works of Peniel and Osizer (2013), Bandura (1997), and Basco and Han (2016) as they asserted that motivation and self-efficacy are related constructs, with the latter having a substantial effect on the former. In other words, a person's efficacy affects his feelings, thoughts, motivation, and behavior. An individual’s aspirations, the amount of work he exerts, how he endures adversity, and his tenacity in the face of failure are all related to his perceptions of his capability. This finding supports Bandura's (1997) argument that a person with solid self-efficacy would be motivated to learn, which in this research, in English.

**D. Regression Analysis between Self-efficacy and English Learning Motivation**

The regression analysis between the independent and dependent variables of the study is shown in Table 4. The regression analysis was employed to determine if self-efficacy influences English learning motivation. The study shows that the independent variable is a substantial predictor of the dependent variable. In other words, self-efficacy affects the motivation of freshmen college students to learn English. Therefore, the second null hypothesis, “Self-efficacy does not influence English learning motivation,” is rejected.

Table 4

*Regression Analysis between Self-efficacy and English Learning Motivation*

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: English Learning Motivation				
	Beta	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Constant	3.711	0.243	15.260	0.000	---
Self-efficacy	0.222	0.068	3.235	0.002	Significant
<b>R=0.262Adj.</b>		<b>R²=0.069</b>		<b>S=0.002</b>	

Self-efficacy obtained a beta coefficient of 0.222, which is the increase in English learning motivation of freshmen college students for every 1 level of increase in self-efficacy. Based on the analysis, the obtained regression model is: English learning motivation = 3.711 + 0.222\*Self-efficacy. Meanwhile, the computed multiple correlations is 0.262. This is the multiple correlations between the significant

independent and dependent variables. On the other hand, the adjusted  $R^2 = 0.069$  means that 6.9% of the variation in the English learning motivation of freshmen college students is explained by its linear relationship with the predictor variable which is self-efficacy. Also, the computed  $S=0.002$  measures the accuracy of the prediction, that is, the smaller its value, the better.

Self-efficacy most likely affect students' motivation, especially while learning English, since they would feel that it would help them fulfil tasks like writing business letters in English, engaging in intellectual discussions, and using good English when crafting narratives. Most students stated that their self-efficacy in English learning would most likely influence their interests, ambitions, and efforts in English learning and that having self-efficacy would inspire them to attain their English learning objectives. Learners were motivated to learn English because it is a global language and that it can help them communicate extensively and use it in many aspects of their lives.

This finding is supported by the study conducted by Ehrman and Oxford (1995), which states that self-efficacy extensively influences an individual's motivational process. The more self-efficacy a person has, the more inclined they will be to complete one-of-a-kind tasks and overcome obstacles. On the same note, motivation could also affect self-efficacy. If people lack the motivation to enhance or challenge themselves, they become much less confident in their abilities.

Moreover, self-efficacy contributes to motivation since freshmen college students use forethought to drive themselves and their behaviors. They felt that one's sense of self-efficacy can offer the foundation for motivation, so they constructed beliefs about what they could do. Learner's self-efficacy, or attitude toward oneself, as Ehrman and Oxford (1995) expressed it, is a strong predictor of one's motivation to learn. Self-efficacy is an essential component that influences one's learning motivation since the higher a student's self-efficacy is, the higher his learning goals and drive.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, the following conclusions are drawn: Students demonstrate high level of self-efficacy, which stemmed from reading and comprehending technical materials like operational manuals and other literary pieces. In addition, the freshmen college students are motivated to study English because they believe that their proficiency in English will enable them to achieve their goals in life. The study further revealed that there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and English learning motivation suggesting that students' belief in their capability to use English motivate them to learn the language more. Meanwhile, based on the regression analysis, students' English learning motivation is influenced by self-efficacy; thus, it is evident that self-efficacy plays a crucial role in learning a second language. Hence, self-efficacy is one of the essential factors needed to

facilitate language learning. With this, the current research finding confirmed the theory of self-efficacy by Bandura (1997), which emphasizes that every aspect of human endeavor is influenced by self-efficacy. This is because the higher the level of a person's self-efficacy, the more they will believe they can achieve a task or goal.

Having identified the significance of self-efficacy in English learning motivation, the following recommendations are put forward:

Teachers should keep using learner-centered strategies and provide various activities to satisfy today's students' linguistic demands. By tailoring instruction to their individual needs and interests and incorporating various technological tools into the classroom, students desire to learn English will improve.

Students who want to increase their self-efficacy in English language learning can surround themselves with fellows who speak good English or read vocabulary books, engage in English reading materials, converse in English, and practice writing in English. They must position themselves in an environment where they can both passively and actively learn English.

Future researchers should look into approaches that would improve English learning motivation and support the growth of positive language learning desires. The correlation between students' self-efficacy and English learning motivation may be reassessed in different groups of respondents to validate the current findings.

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