Analysis of Self Efficacy and Motivation as contributing factors in Second Language Acquisition: A Literature Review

Leslie Keith Descipulo Manipol¹, Nasrullah Nasrullah², Jumariati³
¹,² Universitas Lambung Mangkurat
Jl. Brigjen H. Hasan Basry, Banjarmasin, 70123, Indonesia

Corresponding email: lesliekeithmanipol@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Several factors influence second language acquisition (SLA)—the concepts of motivation and self-efficacy linked to SLA success. Regarding linguistic outcomes, motivation is a significant contributor, whereas self-efficacy is a component of social, metacognitive, and cognitive strategies. Students with varying levels of motivation and self-efficacy attribute diverse reasons for their success and failure in learning a second language, so these elements are crucial in determining one’s level of success in learning a second language. This study analyzes self-efficacy and motivation as contributing factors to second language acquisition. This paper gathered and reviewed journal articles on motivation and self-efficacy in second language acquisition from various journals in the field using thematic analysis. The method for this study uses a literature review to demonstrate the contribution of the factors of self-efficacy and motivations to second language acquisition. Self-efficacy and motivation improve students’ learning performance in various language skills. The implications of this study benefit language teachers by helping learners create positive beliefs about themselves and improve their confidence in their abilities to learn a second language.

Keywords: Motivation, Self-efficacy, Second Language Acquisition

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Research has been conducted on the factors that influence second language acquisition. Individual differences include various domains, such as self-efficacy and motivation. Self-efficacy and motivation influence how people think, feel, encourage themselves, and act. According to Adwani & Shrivastava (2017), self-efficacy is self-belief in one’s ability to plan and execute the
actions required to achieve specific goals. In this sense, there is no pulse and no life in the class without student motivation.

Self-efficacy concerns the perception or judgment of one’s ability to achieve a specific goal and cannot be perceived globally. A person can gain a sense of self-efficacy by completing a skill, observing someone else complete a task, receiving positive feedback about completing a job, or relying on physiological cues. The origins of self-efficacy can be traced back to Bandura’s (1997) social learning theory, renamed social cognitive theory in 1986. Self-efficacy is a crucial concept in Bandura’s theory. According to Bandura’s (1995) theory and research, self-efficacy influences how people feel, think, behave, and motivate themselves. According to Stajkovic & Sergent (2019), self-efficacy is defined as beliefs that serve as "an important set of proximal determinants of human motivation, effect, and action". These beliefs become a form of action through motivational, cognitive, and affective intervening processes. Setting personal goals is an example of a mental process. The higher the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goals people set for themselves, resulting in a higher level of commitment to the plans.

On the other hand, motivation is a desire to learn; it has been termed the "neglected heart of language teaching." It is about motivating people to achieve high-performance levels and breaking down barriers to change. Motivation is the driving force behind human behavior’s guidance, control, and persistence. It improves a person’s behavior. To learn a second language in a learning setting, the learners must desire to learn the language, known as motivation. According to (Bruner (1966, cited in Chalak, 2010), one of the most effective ways to assist students is to free them from the control of rewards.

In some cases, the two types of motivation may overlap to some extent because one may simultaneously be motivated by an internal and external source. Maslow (1954) believed that intrinsic motivation is superior to extrinsic motivation because we strive for "self-actualization." In general, both types of motivation are essential in learning, and a lack of motivation can lead to procrastination because motivation is the driving force that causes people to act. In other words, motivation can influence learning behavior. Conversely, motivation is the most commonly used concept to explain a language learner’s failure or success. The degree of active, personal involvement in second language learning is determined by motivation. According to one study, motivation directly impacts how frequently students use second language learning strategies, how
much they interact with native speakers, and how long they persevere and maintain their second language skills.

In this regard, a substantial body of research has contributed to second language acquisition by substantiating these factors influencing students’ learning, self-efficacy, and motivation. In terms of the relationship between each factor and learning language, several language acquisition theories suggest that academic achievement is influenced by self-efficacy because it affects learners’ persistence, effort, and self-regulation, which leads to more positive learning outcomes (Graham, 2022). According to Karaouglu (2008), students can help themselves achieve their goals by determining their language needs and defining why they want to learn the language. Having goals and expectations increases motivation, which leads to improved language competence.

As explained above, students have different levels of self-efficacy and motivation, making various attributions for their success and failure in learning a second language. Given the importance of self-efficacy and motivation in second language learning, it seems appropriate to investigate these two factors in this context. This study analyzed self-efficacy and motivation to provide students with a clear understanding of self-efficacy and motivation as factors in second language learning. The writer hopes that the findings of this study will help language teachers assist students in developing positive beliefs and motivation about their ability to learn a second language.

1.2. Research questions

This study aims to investigate self-efficacy and motivation to clearly understand self-efficacy and motivation as factors in second language learning using thirty studies, including theses, reports, books, and journal articles on related topics.

1.3. Significance of the study

This study expects to prove self-efficacy and motivation improve students’ learning performance in various language skills. The implications of this study benefit language teachers by helping learners create positive beliefs about themselves and improve their confidence about their abilities to learn a second language.
2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study used a literature review method, which employs qualitative techniques. According to Baumeister & Leary (1997), a literature review is a systematic method of collecting and analyzing previous studies, which is the crucial foundation for all sorts of research. It serves as a basis for knowledge, development, and effectiveness and can potentially build new ideas and directions for a specific field. Also, the literature review method can answer research problems by combining conclusions and viewpoints from various empirical findings—a strength that no other study possesses (Snyder, 2019). To obtain complete and comprehensive information and data for this study, the researcher intends to study more profoundly self-efficacy and motivation as contributing factors in SLA using a literature review (LR). Danson & Arshad (2015) state that this evaluation addresses structured and precise research objectives. A systematic review’s main objective is to provide an in-depth analysis of all primary research currently accessible in response to a specific research topic (Clarke, 2011). This review, often called "secondary research," draws on all the available research. Planning, conducting, and reporting are the three general stages used in this review (Putra & Roza, 2020). This approach will show how motivation and self-efficacy interact when learning a second language. Regarding self-efficacy and motivation in second language learning, this research anticipates to help teachers and students develop positive self-perceptions and increase their self-confidence in their capacity to learn a second language. It is also a reference for future researchers in the same field.

2.2. Data Sources

The information for this study was gathered from several studies, including theses, reports, books, and journal articles on related topics. Each research subject, self-efficacy and motivation, has fifteen studies, giving thirty research reports to create the sample. They are relevant to the study of Self-Efficacy and Motivation in SLA. The databases used in this study are Research Gate, Elsevier, the Education Resource Information Centre (ERIC), SAGE, Academia, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. This study conducts a comprehensive literature review to investigate, assess, and analyze research on self-efficacy and motivation in SLA. The researcher uses this approach to systematically review several studies by going through the planning, conducting, and reporting process (Kitchenham et al., 2009). The primary process is planning, which entails choosing the research subject and more precise questions (Kartimi et al., 2021). After establishing Self-efficacy and Motivation in SLA as the research subject matter, an SLR conducting process takes place, which entails looking for articles using predefined keywords. Searches for papers pertinent to the
subject are done during this procedure. Specifically, "student’s self-efficacy and motivation towards second language acquisition," "relationship between self-efficacy and motivation in English," and "self-efficacy and motivation in teaching and learning English" are used as keywords. In addition, the researcher collects each article’s results that are suitable for annotation at the reporting step. This study focuses on self-efficacy and motivation in second language acquisition. The topic was chosen because factors affecting learning can be influenced by self-efficacy and motivation. As such, the results of this study are presented and further discussed in the discussion.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings

The analysis and summary of documented papers are connected to the contribution of self-efficacy and motivation to students’ second language acquisition in the research data included in this literature study, provided in the table below.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Researcher and Year</th>
<th>Journal/Thesis/Publisher</th>
<th>Research Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>(Walker, 2013)</td>
<td>SMU Scholar</td>
<td>One of the indicators of successful French language learning appears to be self-efficacy. However, self-efficacy is not a stand-alone variable. It is intertwined with a number of other personality variables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>{Karaouglo, 2008 cited in Huo, (2018)}</td>
<td>TESOL International Association</td>
<td>Personalizing the environment can help to relax students and create a more welcoming environment, which will increase their motivation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Bandura 1994 In Encyclopedia of Human Behavior

Learners with higher levels of self-efficacy choose more difficult tasks, stick with them longer, attribute outcomes to their own controllable efforts or strategies, and thus perform better.

4. (Mili, 2019) Research Gate

Motivation is the most important factor in learning a second language. Those who maintain a positive attitude and motivation for learning will undoubtedly achieve their goal.

5. (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011) ELSEVIER- Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences

Students’ efficiency in language classes is directly related to their motivation and attitude.


Instructors should design effective course content and create an open and positive environment to encourage students to become self-motivated independent learners.

7. (Hadriana et al., 2013) Asian Social Science

High internal motivations, supported by conducive learning environments, will create a better climate and can help students achieve more.


Those who are integratively motivated outperform those who are
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(Author, Year)</th>
<th>Journal/Educational Journal</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>(Alizadeh, 2016)</td>
<td>International journal of Research in English Education</td>
<td>Instrumentally motivated in L2 learning. Motivated learners devote a significant amount of time to achieving their goals in learning a foreign language, and motivated learners learn language more effectively than unmotivated learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Al-Hazemi (2000) cited in (Alizadeh, 2016)</td>
<td>The Internet TESL Journal</td>
<td>Learners with strong desire to learn a language can obtain high level of competence in the target language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>(Wu, 2003)</td>
<td>System</td>
<td>To be motivated to continue studying the L2, learning should be enjoyable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>(Lucas et al., 2010)</td>
<td>Philippine ESL Journal</td>
<td>Learners are intrinsically motivated to improve their speaking and reading skills, as well as through knowledge and achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>(Tercanlioglu, 2001)</td>
<td>The Reading Matrix</td>
<td>Learners value reading because they read for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>(Raoofi et al., 2012)</td>
<td>English Language Teaching: Canadian Center of Science and Education</td>
<td>Self-efficacy in the second language context influences learners’ motivation and learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>(Bandura, 2005)</td>
<td>Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Adolescents</td>
<td>As a key component of human agency, self-efficacy acts as a bridge between learners’ and teachers’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
expectations, aptitude, prior accomplishments, and subsequent performance.

The strongest predictor of achievement was self-efficacy, which was supported by ability as an internal attribution. ESL learners who attributed their failure to a lack of effort had higher self-efficacy than those who did not attribute their failure to a lack of effort.

A significant relationship existed between self-efficacy and learner autonomy, as well as a positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic success.

ESL learners with high levels of self-efficacy make more internal and personal attributions than low efficacious learners, and among unsuccessful learners, high efficacious ones make more personal control attributions than those with low levels of self-efficacy. Furthermore, self-efficacy predicted success.

Among learners’ metacognitive strategies and beliefs, self-efficacy was the best predictor of achievement.
<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Author(s) and Year</th>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Abstract</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Azar &amp; Tanggaraju, 2020</td>
<td>Studies in English Language and Education</td>
<td>Motivation is a complex and important factor in learning a new language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Wong, 2005</td>
<td>RELC Journal</td>
<td>Preservice teachers with high self-efficacy used more learning strategies to improve their English proficiency than those with low self-efficacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Tabassam, 2021</td>
<td>Psychology and Education</td>
<td>For the successful implementation of English as a second language in Pakistani universities, motivation remained at the top of the list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Piniel &amp; Csizér, 2013</td>
<td>Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching</td>
<td>Secondary school students studying English in a predominantly monolingual context may interact with motivation, cognition, and affect during the L2 learning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Zulkosky, 2009</td>
<td>Research gate</td>
<td>The concept of self-efficacy influences how people think, feel, motivate themselves, and act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Zareian &amp; Jodaei, 2015</td>
<td>International J. Soc. Sci. &amp; Education</td>
<td>The study identified role motivation as one of the most important IDs in SLA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Nurhidayah, 2020</td>
<td>Jurnal Ilmiah STBA</td>
<td>Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can help students recognize the value of learning a foreign/second language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Self-efficacy credence toward a concrete task can be developed and improved both in and out of the classroom. Motivation is something that all students bring with them in some form or another.

People’s levels of motivation are determined by their self-efficacy beliefs, which are reflected in how much effort they will put into an endeavor and how long they will persevere in the face of obstacles.

Depending on the context of language learning, learners’ motivation can fluctuate.

Academic achievement is influenced by self-efficacy because it influences learners’ persistence, effort, and self-regulation, which leads to more positive learning outcomes.

### 3.2. Discussion

From these articles, books, theses, and reports, the researcher also drew four topics from the reviewed studies, which are: (1) Motivation and student efficiency in Second Language Acquisition (2) Self-efficacy as a predictor of achievement in Second Language Acquisition (3) Higher self-efficacy leads to more internal and personal attributions (4) Motivations are determined by self-efficacy beliefs.

**1. Motivation and student efficiency in second language acquisition**
A student’s motivation substantially impacts the student’s efficiency in learning a new language (Oroujlou & Vahedi, 2011). Students driven to learn a second language are more likely to participate in language learning activities, practice the language outside the classroom, and persist in facing challenges. For instance, language proficiency and fluency may improve.

There is a direct relationship between student efficiency and motivation in language classes. Students will achieve their goals if they maintain a positive attitude and motivation while learning (Mili, 2019; Tabassam, 2021). Various types of motivation can influence a student’s efficiency in SLA. One type of motivation is intrinsic motivation, which comes from within the student and is driven by an interest in the language or the desire to learn more about the culture associated with the language. Another type of motivation is extrinsic motivation, which comes from external factors such as rewards, grades, or social pressure. Both can be effective in helping learners stay motivated (Nurhidayah, 2020).

Studies have shown that students who are intrinsically motivated to learn a second language tend to perform better and achieve higher levels of proficiency than extrinsically motivated students (Lucas et al., 2010; Tercanlioglu, 2001). Intrinsic motivation is associated with more self-directed learning, greater engagement with the language, and a deeper understanding of the language’s cultural context. Therefore, teachers and educators can foster intrinsic motivation in their students by creating a positive learning environment [Karaouglo, 2008 cited in Huo (2018)], incorporating engaging and interactive activities, and providing opportunities for students to use the language in real-life situations. Hence, incorporating students’ interests and goals into language learning activities can help increase their motivation and engagement.

In addition, when students perceive themselves as competent in acquiring a foreign language and are provided with materials arranged to their level, they are more likely to be motivated to learn. Students also tend to see the value in their studies when challenged with difficult work in a safe and supportive environment. Thus, designing effective course content that is engaging and relevant to learners’ interests and creating an open and positive classroom environment can help learners build motivation. It also appears that enjoyment is a factor in increasing motivation (Wu, 2003). Learners who enjoy what they are learning are more likely to be motivated to continue learning and improving their language skills. Significantly, motivation can impact a student’s efficiency in learning a new language.
2. Self-efficacy as a predictor of achievement in second language acquisition

Self-efficacy is the most powerful predictor of achievement (Wang et al., 2009) because it leads to more positive learning outcomes. Self-efficacy links learners’ and teachers’ expectations, aptitude, prior successes, and subsequent performance and is a crucial aspect of human agency (Raoofi et al., 2012). In language learning, self-efficacy can be essential in shaping learners’ attitudes and behaviors toward the target language. Research findings have shown that individuals with high self-efficacy in their language learning abilities tend to have more positive attitudes toward learning, greater motivation, and better performance than those with low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994). Learners with higher self-efficacy tend to have more positive attitudes toward the target language, feel more motivated to learn, and are more likely to persist in their learning efforts despite setbacks and difficulties. On the other hand, learners with lower self-efficacy may experience more anxiety, self-doubt, and negative feelings toward the target language, which can hinder their progress and achievement.

Several studies have found a link between self-efficacy and achievement in second language acquisition. Pintrich & Linnenbrink (1985), for example, discovered that self-efficacy was a significant predictor of achievement in a foreign language course, regardless of incorporating prior knowledge and ability. Similarly, Bandura & Schunk (1981) discovered that students with higher levels of self-efficacy in their language learning ability outperformed those with lower self-efficacy on language tests. Furthermore, self-efficacy can be influenced by various circumstances, including feedback from instructors, fellow students, and personal experiences. For instance, Frank & Schunk (1988) discovered that peer and teacher evaluation considerably impacted students’ self-efficacy in a foreign language course.

However, it is important to note that self-efficacy is not a stand-alone variable (Walker, 2013). It is closely related to other personality variables, such as self-esteem, emotional stability, extroversion, and introversion. While self-efficacy can be an important indicator of successful language learning, it is essential to consider it in the context of other personality variables and environmental factors that can influence learners’ attitudes and behaviors toward the target language.

3. Higher self-efficacy leads to more internal and personal attributions.

ESL students who attributed their failure to insufficient effort showed higher self-efficacy than those who did not (P. H. P. Hsieh & Schallert, 2008). This is because students who attribute
their failure to insufficient effort may believe that they could have done better if they had tried harder or used more effective learning strategies and therefore have a sense of control over their academic outcomes.

Research has shown that high self-efficacy is positively related to academic achievement. Students who believe in their abilities to succeed and who can take responsibility for their learning tend to be more motivated, persistent, and engaged in academic tasks. They also tend to use more effective learning strategies and achieve higher grades. Additionally, high-efficacious students are more likely to make internal and personal attributions for their academic successes and failures than external attributions. This means they are more likely to attribute their successes to their abilities, efforts, or strategies and their failures to their lack of effort, knowledge, or skills. In contrast, low-efficacious students tend to attribute their failures to external factors such as the difficulty of the task or the teacher’s unfairness.

In ESL learning, students who attribute their failure to insufficient effort may be more likely to engage in behaviors that promote their learning, such as seeking feedback, practicing more, and using effective learning strategies (Wong, 2005). This can improve their language skills and increase confidence in their abilities, further enhancing their self-efficacy beliefs. However, it is essential to note that attributing failure solely to insufficient effort may not always be accurate or helpful, as other factors, such as language proficiency, cultural differences, or teacher quality, also contribute to academic performance. Therefore, ESL students need to receive appropriate support and feedback from teachers and peers to help them identify areas for improvement and develop effective learning strategies.

4. Motivations are determined by self-efficacy beliefs.

Learners’ motivation levels, reflected in how much effort they will put out and how long they will persevere in the face of difficulties, are influenced by their self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1989). Numerous studies have shown that self-efficacy beliefs can impact motivation in various contexts, including academic settings, athletic performance, and career success. Individuals can enhance their motivation and achieve tremendous success by building self-efficacy through skill development, goal setting, and positive feedback.

Moreover, motivation stems from the belief that they have the necessary skills and abilities to succeed (Hadriana et al., 2013). Conversely, individuals with low self-efficacy may feel less motivated to take on challenging tasks or give up more quickly when faced with obstacles. If a
student believes that a specific academic goal is unattainable, then he or she will need more self-motivation to achieve that goal. Nevertheless, due to the efficacies of self-influence on academic achievement since they impact students’ effort, perseverance, and self-control, all of which result in improved learning results, learners’ motivation may fluctuate depending on the language-learning circumstances.

In a second language acquisition context, learners’ motivation levels may fluctuate depending on the language-learning circumstances. For instance, if learners struggle to understand a particular grammar concept or communicate in the target language, their self-efficacy may decrease, leading to reduced motivation. Conversely, when learners successfully achieve language-learning milestones or receive positive feedback, their self-efficacy beliefs may increase, leading to greater motivation.

To sustain learners’ motivation in language learning, providing them with a supportive learning environment that fosters their self-efficacy beliefs is crucial. This includes setting achievable goals, providing positive feedback, offering resources and guidance to overcome challenges, and emphasizing the relevance and importance of language learning. Teachers can also emphasize the relevance and importance of English language learning, such as the potential career and personal growth opportunities that come with proficiency in English. By doing so, learners’ self-efficacy beliefs can be enhanced, leading to greater motivation and improved learning outcomes.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Conclusion

Much research has been conducted to determine why motivation and self-efficacy are important in second language learning. Although the underlying issues surrounding motivation and self-efficacy are complex, it is clear that each student’s motivation and self-efficacy to learn are flexible rather than fixed. Self-efficacy and motivation are crucial in both language learning and second language acquisition contexts.

Student productivity and motivation correlate directly in language classes. Students who stay motivated and positive while learning will succeed in their goals. When given challenging work and a secure setting to study in, students see a purpose in their actions and value their education. Because it produces better learning results, self-efficacy is the most effective predictor
of accomplishment. It has been noted that stronger self-efficacy aids learners in developing their English language skills and also influences motivation.

Thus, self-efficacy and motivation are two of the most critical factors in second language acquisition. These factors assist learners in believing they are capable of learning a foreign language when it is appropriate for them. Teachers can play a vital role in shaping students’ motivation and self-efficacy by providing appropriate learning opportunities and support. For instance, teachers can offer engaging and interactive activities that cater to student’s interests and learning styles, provide constructive feedback, and create a supportive learning environment that fosters confidence and autonomy. Additionally, teachers can help students set realistic goals and track their progress, enhancing their sense of accomplishment, self-efficacy, and motivation.

With the help of this study, it is clear that language teachers can directly impact students’ motivation and self-efficacy in learning English. Teachers’ ability to foster motivation and self-efficacy in students, indeed, can have a significant impact on their language learning outcomes and success.

4.2. Suggestions

This study showed how important motivation and self-efficacy are for successful language learning. In order to boost students’ motivation and self-assurance, language teachers should tailor their lessons and create a more welcoming environment. Given the time required to study a foreign language, teachers should foster an environment where students can learn independently and with greater motivation. This research can be used as a reference for future researchers in the same field better to understand self-efficacy and motivation in English language learning.

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