| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Relationship between Students' Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Their English Language Achievement

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| ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the influences of self-efficacy beliefs in English learning between male and female university students. There was a total sample of 128 university Non-English majors from Dong Nai Technology University in Bien Hoa city. The quantitative component used a questionnaire asking about students' background and their self-efficacy beliefs in learning English. Ten students were individually interviewed to be able to clarify the reasons that affected their self-efficacy beliefs and their English performance. T-test was used to find out the gender differences in self-efficacy level and English achievement degree. The result showed that there was a positive relationship between self-efficacy and achievement. Differences between male and female students in their confidence levels and English learning performance were found. The thesis finishes with a set of recommendations for teachers to pay attention to the importance of self-efficacy because it influences learning English achievement.

1. Introduction

This section is dedicated to the significant literature resources that contributed to the research. The author should survey scholarly articles, books, and other sources relevant to the area of research, providing a description, summary, and critical evaluation of each work. According to United and Napire (2015), Vietnam is in the top 16 most successful emerging economies in 2020. The Vietnamese government promotes integration into the world's economic and political spheres. Vietnam joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1995, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum in 1998, the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2007, and the Comprehensive and Progress of the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (CPTPP) with 11 countries in 2018. Vietnam's integration into the global economy has resulted in significant growth in domestic foreign investment. English has become an essential tool for any workers in the economy (Pham, TH, Ho, MT, Vuong, TT, Nguyen, MC, & Vuong, QH, (2020). The English language, therefore, has been given a special place, especially after the country decided to expand relations with many foreign countries in the 1980s. The significant importance of English in Vietnam is recognized in society. Many Vietnamese parents believe that their children would have good opportunities for employment if they do have the ability to communicate fluently in English. The need for the English language has become very acute for most Vietnamese learners. The need for highly skilled and competent English speakers makes EFL instruction a major issue in Vietnamese education. Vietnam needs graduates who are both competent in their professional occupations and English language skills to work in a global economy. English has become a prerequisite to accessing employment opportunities. Competence in English will promote Vietnam's presence at the global level. English has been promoted strongly as a major foreign language taught in the public education system, particularly in universities (Truong Cong Bang, 2017b). However, for a significant portion of Vietnam's population, English proficiency is still limited, with rankings being "low" compared to other countries in the area (Tuoi Tre, 2019). Both English majors and non-English majors exhibit poor English proficiency (Ngo Thu Huong, 2015). A student's low English proficiency can be pointed to several reasons. For example, one may indicate ineffective teaching and learning methods or a lack

of a qualified English teacher. As an English teacher in Vietnam's higher education, the researcher found that many students who are not majoring in English may lack the motivation to learn English. They tend to look for strategies to pass exams and tend to opt out of English courses as soon as possible (Archer & Truong Cong Bang, 2017a). According to recent studies, the results suggest that more work is needed to explore students' self-efficacy beliefs which are proposed as a major factor influencing students' motivation to learn English and performance (Truong, TNN, & Wang, C., 2019). This study focuses on students' motivation to study English because research has shown that motivation has the great potential to enhance students' language competence (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

The current study used a widely accepted model of motivation, self-efficacy theory, as a theoretical framework of the research. Self-efficacy is a major construct in learning English. Many students who have completed 3 English modules in the first year at university still are not able to pronounce well, understand simple questions, or write short passages. It is hoped that the research on self-efficacy may find ways to enhance students' achievement in learning English. This study mainly aims at exploring students' ability beliefs and the links between their confidence in learning English and achievement. This study also attempts to explore gender differences in learning English self-efficacy.

1.1 Research Questions
Here is the guiding question of the research:

How does students' motivation to learn English, as assessed by self-efficacy theory, affect their performance in English?

To answer this question, the following sub-questions are presented:

1. What is the relative strength of self-efficacy beliefs in predicting students' performance in English?
2. What are the differences between male and female students in their self-efficacy beliefs in learning English?

1.2 Aims of the study
The aims of this study are:

(1) To examine the relative strength of self-efficacy beliefs and students' performance in English
(2) To investigate the differences between male and female students in terms of their self-efficacy beliefs in learning English.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Self-efficacy
2.1.1. Definitions of self-efficacy
There have been various definitions of self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is considered as people's beliefs about their abilities. The goals are easier to be attained if people believe that they are able to reach those goals. Similarly, Bernhard (1997) defines the concept of self-efficacy as learners' beliefs about their ability to perform their tasks. For Pajares (2000), students evaluate their academic results. This concept is also defined by Ehrman (1996) as the degree to which students think they are competent to cope with learning challenges (cited in Arnold & Brown, 1999, p.16). People who learn a foreign language well tend to believe they have the capacity or ability to learn the language successfully. On the other hand, people with low self-efficacy tend to fail to learn a foreign language from the beginning (Bernhardt, 1997). It can be understood that self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave.

2.1.2. The effect of self-efficacy
Consistent with Pintrich and Schunk (1996), self-efficacy beliefs no longer most effectively affect mental and bodily fitness; however, they are vital determinants in one's decision-making system, career-making plans, and academic achievement. A crucial belief, especially educational self-efficacy, may be seemed as a learner's conviction in his/her capability to perform numerous instructional tasks correctly (Bandura, 1997; Bandura & Barbaranelli, 1996). It is advised by Bandura and Locke (2003) that the level of self-efficacy ideals may range depending on the obligations or individuals. Bandura (1997), low self-efficacy beliefs can play a position in one's low academic achievement. However, he maintains that excessive self-efficacy beliefs inspire college students to address challenging obligations, which leads them to experience greater self-efficacious. If they cannot manipulate the venture, they do not position the blame on the external motives. On the other hand, for the ones having fewer self-efficacy beliefs, hard duties pose a first-rate hazard and a source of worry due to their lack of agreement within their talents, which results in not striving sufficient, as it has to be, however giving up (bandura, 1995; Bandura, 1997). Likewise, Ekizoglu and Özçınar (2010) assert that a high degree of self-efficacy stimulates an individual extra to do his/her great. In different words, "college students with excessive self-efficacy tend to be greater a hit and a hit college-students tend to have higher self-efficacy ideals" (Tılfarlıoğlu & Cinkara, 2009, p. 136).

2.1.3 Self-efficacy and learning achievement

Learning achievement is students' knowledge or skill attainment in a certain subject which is measured by test scores and grades (Tu'u, 2004). Azwar (1999) has a similar viewpoint that GPA studies, grades, graduation rate, etc., are employed to express learners' learning achievement. In addition, it can be expressed in the form of words, letters, symbols, or numbers. These reflect students' learning results in a specific period. According to the explanation above, it can be understood that learning achievement is the amount of knowledge that learners obtain through their learning process. The value of the achievement is expressed through their grades, GPA, or test scores in a certain subject. Although there are many ways to assess learners' abilities, students' final test scores are used to measure learners' English learning achievement in this research. A factor that has been proven to affect students' learning achievement is their self-efficacy (Koura & Al-Hebaishi, 2014; Mahyuddin et al., 2006). Students' actions throughout their learning process may rely on their own performance, expectation, and their considerations of capability. Therefore, students who have strong self-efficacy tend to spend more exertion on pursuing their academic success (Pajares, 1996). In addition, Koura and Al-Hebaishi (2014) indicate that people with a high level of self-efficacy are more relaxed and confident when they face difficult tasks than those who have lower self-efficacy.

Bandura's self-efficacy theory is of great significance for education, and the self-efficacy of learners affects them in various ways. Decisions that a person can make about his or her abilities may decide whether a person should decide what activities are to be tried, how much they will strive, or when to insist. The student with higher self-efficacy tries to set higher goals, works hard to achieve his / her goal, improves the current level of thinking, uses critical thinking skills and strategies, decides and does not quit easily (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Bouffard- Bouchard, 1990; Lent, Brown and Larkin, 1984; Pajares, 1996; Schunk & Hanson, 1985). Therefore, the student who is quite efficient is more prone to succeed.

2.1.4 Self-efficacy and gender

The differences between male and female self-efficacy are discovered by many studies (Oxford, 1993; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 2001). Onwuegbuzie et al. (2001) find that females tend to be interested in learning a foreign language more than males because of the fact that males might consider that foreign language belongs to the feminine domain. Thus, they are not comfortable learning a language. According to Schmidt et al. (1999), the differences in genders in motivation when learning English as a foreign language have a connection with the differences in learning performance. Their research findings show that females in nature have more motivation to learn English than males. This discrepancy might be a result of a highly social foreign language learning process which creates more motivation for women to attain foreign language (Oxford & Shearin, 1994).

In brief, gender is one of the factors which influence people's self-efficacy. Different gender has different self-believe in learning English. It is important to discover this disparity in order to find out a suitable solution to improve students' English learning.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

The purpose of this study is to examine EFL learners' self-efficacy in learning English and gender differences in self-efficacy toward learning English. In addition, the study aims to investigate whether there is a relationship between self-efficacy and the academic performance of learners at DNTU. To answer the research questions of the study, a mixed-method approach was used. The mixed-methods design is widely used in the education field (Creswell, 2012).

3.2 Participants

Data were collected from Dong Nai Technology University in Bien Hoa city. The university has a large number of the target population (students whose majors are not English). There are 18 different departments. All students are compulsory to study English from elementary level to intermediate level. The researcher has worked as a lecturer of English at this university. This helps the researcher easily approach the university to conduct the research. The targeted population was 128 EFL non-English major students currently learning English as a minor component in their university program. The English level of students at the DNTU was at below-average levels. These conditions were conformable to the target of the study.

3.3 Research instruments

3.3.1 Questionnaire

The Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy (QESE) measures learners' self-efficacy beliefs in learning English with 32 items. The structural aspect of construct validity for the responses to the QESE was examined using Item Response Theory (IRT). The results showed high person reliability and item reliability, as well as an expected hierarchy of item difficulty (Wang & Bai, 2017).

The Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy (QESE) consists of 32 items. There are four aspects of self-efficacy: Listening Efficacy (Item: 1,3, 9, 10, 15, 22, 24, 27), Speaking Efficacy (Item: 4, 6, 8, 17, 19, 20, 23, 30), Reading Efficacy (Item: 2, 12, 16, 21, 25, 26, 29, 32) and Writing Efficacy (Item: 5, 7, 11, 13, 14, 18, 28, 31). Each aspect was measured with eight questions. The answer to each

question was based on a seven-point rating scale from 1 ("I cannot do it at all") to 7 ("I can do it very well"). It was designed to measure the following four areas: (a) self-efficacy for listening (8 items); (b) self-efficacy for speaking (8 items); (c) self-efficacy for reading (8 items); and (d) self-efficacy for writing (8 items). To prevent the awareness of the subjects towards each aspect that was explored, questions were randomly ordered.

3.3.2 Interview questions
Two main questions were asked during the interviews. The questions were designed to align with the self-efficacy theory.

1. To what extent are you confident in learning English? Why do you think so?
2. Do you think males and females behave differently in English classes? Why do you think so?

3.3.3 End-of-semester tests and scoring.
Students' English achievement was measured by students' overall grades on end-of-semester tests designed to measure proficiency in four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Four skills are rated on a 10-point scale which is applied in Vietnam. The total score for the course is the average of the four skills' scores. Scores were provided by instructors of the students who participated in the current research. Scores included listening, reading, and writing scores that were tested. The test was designed by the teacher of the course.

3.4 Data analysis procedures
3.4.1 Quantitative data analysis
In the study, data were collected and synthesized using Excel software and analyzed by SPSS. All data were quantifiable because they were coded using numerical values. Frequency distributions were also provided. There were 128 participants who answered full and exact questions in the questionnaire. Data of gender, academic year, and faculty were cleaned. The reliability test was carried out by Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the scale "self-efficacy in listening, speaking, reading and writing". To answer the question about the level of self-efficacy of students at DNTU, the Mean and Standard Deviation values of "self-efficacy" and "performance" were calculated to get a rough view of the mean of self-efficacy and the performance of non-English students. To achieve the influence of self-efficacy on learning achievement goals, the author calculated the relationship between self-efficacy and achievements, considering the positive or negative relationship. Independent Samples T-Test was used to compare two groups for the purpose of examining the effect of gender on the level of self-efficacy. Therefore, this study examines the relationship between sex (male and female) and self-efficacy and academic achievement.

3.4.2 Qualitative data analysis
After reviewing the quantitative data obtained from the study, the researcher approached ten voluntary students participating in the interview. The researcher gave the students freedom to determine the places in which they would be relaxed and at their convenient time. When the interviews were conducted, the interviewer asked for permission to document the participants' responses by voice recorder application in order to get the details and also made the participants feel natural when answering the questions. After the interview, the researcher transcribed the responses from the voice recording and the notes. With Vietnamese responses, the researcher translates them into English for analysis. Finally, the data from the interviews were analyzed.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1 Results
4.1.1 Level of self-efficacy of English language learners in DNTU
The degree of students' self-efficacy was calculated and categorized as follows: self-efficacy mean score above 6.30 out of 7 (> 90%) was categorized as very high self-efficacy; a mean score ranging from 5.60 to 6.30 out of 7 (80 to 90%) was categorized as high self-efficacy; a mean score from 4.90 to 5.60 out of 7 (70% to 80%) was classified as moderate self-efficacy; a mean score from 4.20 to 4.90 out of 7 (60% to 70%) was classified as low self-efficacy; and a mean score below 4.20 (< 60%) was classified as very low self-efficacy (Alrabai, 2018). The data in Table 4.2 below indicate that the overall mean score for learners' self-efficacy in the current study was 4.40 out of 7 (62.71%). This means that the students had low confidence in learning English.

Table 4.1. Level of self-efficacy of English language learners in DNTU

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Efficacy for Listening	4.25	1.02
Efficacy for Speaking	4.58	1.06
Efficacy for Reading	4.40	1.01
Efficacy for Writing	4.36	1.07
Overall Self-efficacy	4.40 (out of 7)	1.00

Table 4.1 shows the low level of self-efficacy for all 4 language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (all in words 4.20 to 4.90 out of 7). In particular, efficacy for speaking was the highest with 4.58 points, and the lowest was efficacy for listening, reaching 4.25 points. Each question was considered in detail to get a better understanding of the effectiveness of English learners themselves in DNTU with each skill.

The first one is listening. The level of confidence in listening was the lowest of the four skills. The highest level was for question 27 (Can you understand telephone numbers spoken in English?). This indicates that students had the ability to hear and understand at a basic level of daily communications. Most students underestimated their ability to listen to native programs, especially radio programs (M = 3.75), because it was more difficult to listen without looking at mouth shapes. However, shorter conversations with more intimate content such as a story, a song, or a conversation in a lesson achieved a higher confidence score.

The second one is speaking; the level of English speaking ability belief was the highest out of the 4 skills (M = 4.58). The average of all questions was above 4.5. Students had enough confidence to complete well the questions that carried the daily content they had learned. The lowest confidence level was for question Q8 (Can you tell a story in English?) M = 4.03; this may be because telling a story requires greater memorization than speaking. Question 30 about the introduction of the self-introduction reached the highest level (M = 5.24).

Thirdly, reading was a skill with the most equal average index. The answer with the highest average was dictionary usability with Q26 (M = 5.24) and the lowest average value assessed on the question (Q25, M=3.98) about the ability to read foreign newspapers. The content questions with simple learning requirements had equal values.

The last one is writing skill; the first 5 questions in writing skills (Q5,7,11,13,14) in the writing level of short message samples all indicated quite good students' confidence levels. However, the level of confidence that could complete an essay of two pages length was the lowest-rated (M = 3.62). The remaining two sentences (Q18 and Q28) had a lower rate than the rest (Q31). As the difficulty level of the topic and length increased, the lower the degree that students could complete.

In general, the Standard Deviation coefficient for each question in the QESE table is mostly high (SD> 1). When represented by the scatter graph, the points of value will be scattered far away. This indicates that the data fluctuates around the broad mean, meaning that there is a large difference in the students' responses to the questions in the QESE table to measure English learning confidence. This reflects the current situation of students' belief in English; depending on interests, learning dynamics, and academic achievements, each student has a different degree of belief; some students are very confident, and some students have low self-esteem. This difference in English beliefs is the reason for the high Standard Deviation.

In addition to the difference in English belief of each student in each question, there is also the difference in English confidence of students when answering different QESE questions. This is the reason for the high Standard Deviation question and the low one. For example, in the question "Can you understand the stories that are told in English?" (Q1, SD = 1.41), the students' answers all have a large difference in the 7-point Likert-scale, some students are very confident in their listening abilities, but there are many students. Students are not confident in their hearing ability; the distance between students' "confidence" and "no confidence" in this question is quite wide, so the Standard Deviation coefficient is very high. However, for the question "Can you understand English songs?" (Q24, SD = 1.19), the students' answers are quite equal, most of the students listen to English music, and therefore, most of the students are confident that they can hear and understand. of English songs, which is the reason that the SD of Q24 is smaller than the SD of Q1.

4.1.2. Results from students' scores

The degree of the learner achievement was classified as follows: an achievement score above 90 out of 100 (>90%) was classified as very high achievement; a score from 80 to 90 (80% to 90%) was classified as high achievement; a score from 70 to 80 (70% to 80%) was classified as moderate achievement; a score from 60 to 70 (60% to 70%) was classified as low achievement; and an achievement score below 60 (<60%) was classified as very low achievement (Alrabai, 2018). That is for a scale of 100; however, in Vietnam, using a scale of 10, the author will convert to a scale of ten as follows: an achievement score above 9 out of 10 was classified as very high achievement; a score from 8 to 9 was classified as high achievement; a score from 7 to 8 was classified as moderate achievement; a score from 6 to 7 was classified as low achievement, and an achievement score below 6 was classified as a very low achievement.

Table 4.2 shows the level of achievement in English language learners at DNTU. The data in reveal that the overall mean score for learner achievement was 6.32. It can be concluded that Students were low achievers in terms of the English language. This result is similar to prior studies (see e.g. Alhawsawi, 2014; Alrabai, 2017).

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Achievement in Listening	5.90	1.78
Achievement in Speaking	6.40	1.60
Achievement in Reading	6.69	1.57
Achievement in Writing	6.29	1.55
Overall Achievement	6.32 (out of 10)	1.41

Table 4.2. Level of achievement in English language learners at DNTU

There were differences in students' self-efficacy beliefs in learning English skills. Students' confidence was scored highest with speaking skills. However, the results of the level of achievement in the English language showed that the achievement in reading scores is the highest. This can be argued that although students feel confident in speaking when they take the speaking test, there are many external effects that occur.

The standard Deviation coefficient in Table 4.6 for the 4 skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are all high (SD> 1). This indicates that the data fluctuates around a broad mean means that student achievement varies widely. This reflects the current situation of students learning English in a classroom. There are always outstanding students who get high scores on most tests, but there are also many individual students who get all low scores. This difference in scores is the reason for the high Standard Devia.

4.1.3 The relationship between self-efficacy and learning achievement

	Overall Achievement
Overall Self-efficacy	.717**

Table 4.3. The correlation coefficient between self-efficacy and learning achievement

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

The coefficient of the compatible relationship between self-beliefs and achievement is the positive correlation relationship (0 < 0.717 <1). This means that if the value of Achievement increases, the value of Self-efficacy also increases, and vice versa; if the value of Self-efficacy increases, the value of the variable Achievement also increases.

4.1.4 The relationship between genders and self-efficacy

			Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
			F	**Sig.**	**t**	**df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
SELF_EFFICACY	**Equal variances assumed**		.04	.85	-2.32	126	.02
	Equal variances not assumed				-2.39	84.78	.02

Table 4.2. Independent Samples Test of gender and self-efficacy

According to the Levene test, the value Sig = 0.85 > α = 0.05 shows that the variance of the 2 populations is the same, so we will use the t-test results from Equal Variances assumed. Independent-samples T-test analysis: The index Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.02 <α = 0.05, and the average mean score of women was significantly different. Female students had higher self-efficacy than male students. It can be interpreted that gender is a distinctive factor for English as a foreign language self- efficacy.

4.1.5 Results from students' interview
Data from the interviews show different opinions on students' English ability between males and females in English learning.

For the first question, more than half of the students in the interview responded that they were confident in their English performance in the classroom for several reasons. Firstly, student 7 and student 9 held the same opinion that they did study not only grammar but also other macro skills in high school, so they were familiar with English and were able to express themselves in English.

Most students showed their agreement that students self-awareness was one of the main reasons for their confidence in learning English. Due to the fact that they had realized the importance of English, student 3 and student 9 told the researcher that they had done their best to practice English every day to improve their skills.

There were four students responding that they were not very confident in their English ability. They faced many difficulties in learning English. Two of them, including student 1 and student 5, said that they had lost their basic knowledge of English and considered it a difficult subject to learn. They also showed their shyness when communicating with other people, which discouraged them from learning English effectively. Lacking vocabulary and not mastering grammar were also the reasons why they were not confident in their English. Students 4 and student 6 said that they did not have enough vocabulary to express their ideas in English when they studied English speaking and writing skills, and they failed to practice their English skills regularly. For the second question about the issue of academic interest between male and female students, seven out of ten students responded that females did better when learning English. Student 1 and student 7 supposed that female students had a tendency to learn and approach languages better than male students since most male students were interested only in subjects relating to science like maths, chemistry, biology, physics, and so on. Three students, including student 1, student 2, and student 10, said that female students were more hardworking than male students. Another reason why they thought female students were better at learning English than male students was that female students were thought to be good at communication skills, according to student 5 and student 9's answers. In general, students expressed their opinions that if they had good English background, recognized the importance of English, and practiced English regularly. They could be confident in their English skills. On the other hand, if they were lazy, or did not have basic knowledge of the English language, or lacked vocabulary and grammar, they would be less or even not confident in their English ability. Besides that, most of them thought

4.2 Discussions
According to Bandura (1977), people with high self-efficacy are believed to be more likely to achieve success in life than people with low self-efficacy. Although there is impressive evidence to support the impact of self-efficacy beliefs on academic accomplishment, there are still students who struggle to believe what they can achieve. The current study seeks to identify the impact of self-efficacy in learning English on the non-English majored learners in the DNTU context and the differences between male and female students in their own self-efficacy in English and their achievement in English.

The study was conducted by a survey with a questionnaire to gather data on students' self-efficacy belief towards their learning English while the final exam scores to measure students' English achievement.

The findings of the survey indicated that the respondents have a relatively low level of self-efficacy in speaking skills. The results also revealed that there was a difference in gender in the students' self-efficacy. In addition, a positive relationship between students' self-efficacy belief and their learning achievement was found from the data analysis.

Results show that students had low confidence in studying English. Students with low self-efficacy were in their 3rd year, so their confidence in themselves (self-efficacy) tended to diminish. This was because students in year 3 focused on their specialized subjects, and English became more difficult over the years. In addition, the surveyed students made up the majority of the Faculty of Technology, and the technology students did not take English seriously because they thought English was not necessary for their job compared to other majors. Besides, in this study, 42% of students said that English was difficult for them to master. The learners hold negative beliefs and expectations about language learning (e.g., Al-Roomy, 2015), which leads consequently to negative self-talk and judgements, especially when they face a learning challenge. Those learners usually hold self-doubts and lose confidence that they are able to execute learning tasks efficiently (Rafada & Madini, 2017); they hardly learn the language well and are not motivated to learn (Noran, Habibah, & Rahil, 1993). This is in line with Bandura's theory that low self-performance people believe that a task is difficult and therefore have a limited vision of how to deal with the English language. The key factor here was the belief they had in themselves.

There is a significant relationship between the participants' self-efficacy in their learning English and their academic performance in English. Research results have shown the impact of self-belief on English language learning. The student's low self-efficacy makes the student's academic achievement not high. There have been several studies done on the influence of self-efficacy on students' learning achievement. Tılfarlıoğlu and Cinkara (2009) studied the self-efficacy of EFL learners and their relationship to their English learning success. With results (r = .37) from the Pearson Product correlation, their study found that the participants' individual confidence levels and their learning outcomes were highly correlated. Their research is also consistent with some other researchers Zimmerman, 1992; Bandura, 1997; Bassi, Steca, Delle Fave, and Caprara, 2007. Meera and Jumana (2016) aim to explore the relationship between self-efficacy and English language learning outcomes for junior high school students. Their research also sets out that participants' individual self-efficacy was positively related to their learning outcomes. Participants with a high level of self-efficacy had better academic records. Similarly, Louise and Mistele (2011) argued that self-efficacy could predict learning outcomes. Liem, Lau, and Nie (2008) also reinforce other studies by revealing that self-efficacy is a predictor of student English performance. Another study conducted by Chen (2007) explored the effects of English listening self-efficacy, English anxiety, the perceived value of the English language, and culture on the performance of people. Study EFL with 277 university students not using English from Taiwan. The research found that English listening self-efficacy predicts English listening performance better than other variables in the study. In addition, Mills et al. (2007) studied 303 French university-level students to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy and other beliefs on achievement. The results of the study show that self-regulation is a powerful predictor of performance. Another researcher was doing research on self-efficacy and English performance; Duman (2007) also concluded that self-efficacy plays an important role in English efficiency. In addition, Rahemi (2007) explored Iran's high school students 'self-proficiency in English, and his research concluded that the participants' EFL performance and self-efficacy were positively correlated. Similarly, Rahimi and Abedini (2009) explored the relationship between EFL learners' beliefs about their self-efficacy in listening with 61 first-year students at EFL. As a result, there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and listening performance. In addition, Kaşık (2014) studied students from different faculties at a university to find relationships between self-efficiency, attitudes, and performance in English writing classes at all levels. Kotbas (2018), in his study to explore the relationships among pre-service EFL teachers' English self-efficacy, teacher goal orientations, and academic achievements, found a positive relationship between English self-efficacy and academic achievements of pre-service EFL teachers. The results of the study show that these variables are positively correlated.

The reasons why students have low self-efficacy can be explained based on the interview results. 40% (N = 4) do not believe that they can learn English well because they lose basic English. Most of the reason for these students is that they think English is difficult to learn. These things make students feel a lack of interest in learning English. Muenks, K., Yang, J. S., & Wigfield, A. (2018) suggested that there is a link between student beliefs about language learning. The lack of student motivation and relatively poor attitude to English and others may well have serious effects on language learning - a considerable amount of research supports the effects of attitude and motivation on second language acquisition (Cook, 2001) 40% (N = 4) has an average level of self-efficacy, they only rate their beliefs as fairly confident. These students point out the reason because they love English. Only 20% (N = 2) are very confident in their own English learning ability. These students recognize the importance of their future. English offers more opportunities in the future. The students who are most effective at themselves are those who are aware of the benefits of Vietnamese and thus create better dynamics. Peacock, M., & Ho, B. (2003) show that students expressed a much stronger desire to do well in English and also awareness of the importance of focusing on language. A couple of low-use students, however, expressed a lack of confidence in learning English.

As for the gender differences in English self-efficacy, the study found that the female student'(t=2.38) overall self-efficacy in English is higher than the male' (t=2.31), and this is consistent with other findings of Li (2018) and Wang (2014). The girls also had higher self-efficacy than boys in the listening, speaking, reading, and writing aspects. That means the university girls have stronger confidence and more diligence than boys. Huang C. (2012), in his study, explored females had higher language arts self-efficacy than males, while males had higher self-efficacy in mathematics, computer, and the social sciences than females. In the interview, some students supposed that female students had a tendency to learn and approach languages better than male students since most male students were interested only in subjects relating to science like maths, chemistry, biology, physics, and so on. Thus, male university students should be given much care and increase their English self-efficacy in the future. Bandura (1977) argues that individuals with high self-efficacy have much more activities and are more successful in comparison with people having a low level of self-efficacy. This corresponds to the results of female students' learning. There was also a significant difference between people with high and people with low self-efficacy in science. That is, people with high self-efficacy had better performance. Female students have greater self-efficacy and higher academic performance than male students.

It was found that girls were more effective in learning English (t = -2.38) than boys (t = -2.31). The quantitative results show that female students' self-efficacy and female students' academic achievement are higher. The interviewers said that learning a foreign language only needs hard work, so regardless of gender, students can learn a foreign language well. However, many people believe that female student are more hardworking and gifted in learning foreign languages than male students. It could be explained that in Vietnamese society today, men and women are given equal opportunities to study and have the right to choose any subject they like. However, it has often been assumed that the choice of a subject is based on their gender characteristic. For example, males are considered suited to subjects that demand strong characteristics, such as natural science, while females are more suitable for subjects such as social and linguistics. This finding is consistent with the results of a number of other studies in the literature, concluding that gender and self-efficacy are related. The results showed that girls displayed higher self-efficacy in the language-related fields (Pajares, 1996). In Pajares's study, it was said that students were asked to rate their academic skills and female students said they rated themselves as better writers than male students. This has effectively motivated them. In general, language is associated with feminine tendencies, and most students consider writing to be a girl's domain (Eccles, 1987). In this study, it was discovered that the girl has a higher capacity for self-managed learning, which is one of her effective dimensions (t = -3.7; X = 2.38; p = 0.000) than boys. Noran et al. (1993) reported in a study of psychological factors when learning English that girls have more positive attitudes toward language and love it. Özkasap (2009) explored whether there was a relationship between beliefs about self-efficacy for self-regulated learning and the sense of responsibility for learning by college EFL learners. Her research concluded that female participants had higher confidence in self-efficacy than men. One of the studies in the meta-analysis showed that the effect itself is domain-specific when gender is variable. While women are more effective at languages, men are more likely to perform well in math, computers, and social sciences (Meece, Wigfield, and Eccles, 1990). Numerous studies show that sex is a significant variable that affects self-efficacy (Kaşık, 2014; Doğan, 2016; Uslu, 2016; Bozkurt & Ekşioğlu, 2018). However, there are also studies in the literature that conclude otherwise. Hampton and Mason (2003) explored the impact of gender, learning disabilities, and effective sources on beliefs about personal performance and academic achievement. Their findings showed that gender did not directly or indirectly affect their performance. In another study, Ersanlı (2015) aimed to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy in learning and 8th-grade language dynamics. There was no statistically significant difference in sex among study participants. In a study investigating the relationship between learning EFL's opinions on their self-efficacy and using a language learning strategy, Bonyadi, Nikou, and Shahbaz (2012) revealed that the gender variables had no significant effect on learners' self-efficacy. Bandura's theory does not support sexual or sexual beliefs with any genetic trait (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). These participants revealed a difference in their self-efficacy in learning English. However, this does not mean that using the same tools in a different context will yield the same results.

60% (N = 6) of the total students interviewed confirmed that female students tended to learn English better than male students. They think that students have better communication abilities than men. Males and females have totally different approaches: male learning is somewhat instrumental, while female learning is integrative. By integrative, I mean that females tend to take a stronger interest in the culture, the country, and the speakers of the target language. Biologically speaking, women's sound and pronunciation organs developed much earlier than men, so the female student is good at verbal, hearing, and expression, and their verbal expression ability and auditory perception are stronger than boys. Women's hearing for the dominant language is usually sensitive consciousness, so their English grades generally better than men's. (Wang, Q., 2015) Among the students, there was an opinion that women are more likely to concentrate and work harder than males. An experiment has shown that when females talk, they use both hemispheres, while males use only one. Thus, females are more creative and engaged in learning than males. Males learn better with the help of visualization and hearing, while females process languages more efficiently (Ning, Haiiang & Dai, Xue., 2010).

30% of students (N = 3) stated that male students tend to learn foreign languages better than female students. They show that male students have better memory, so they can memorize vocabulary faster. As well as, the ability to think logically helps them learn better. A study in Sweden mentioned that boys do better in English than in other subjects in school. It could be that English

has become associated with their hobbies and what they do in their free time, which motivates them more and makes them feel more confident when they come to school and have lessons in English compared to other subjects (Sara, 2018). There is only one opinion that gender does not affect studying. Achieving success in learning depends on each person's learning method. This corresponds to Noack's study (2016)

5. Conclusion

The current study explored students' self-efficacy beliefs in learning English. The study examined the relative strength between students' ability beliefs and their English performance (their English final test scores were used to measure their English performance). Gender differences in self-efficacy beliefs and English performance were also explored.

The results of the data showed that the EFL learners of Dong Nai Technology University had a low level of confidence in learning English. In tasks rather than to compete against each other. Social interactions can make everybody share the feeling of success and therefore get enthusiastic about the subject.

Another recommendation would be that teachers should be aware that gender difference is one of the important factors affecting students' motivation. Therefore, learning experiences and teaching practices that discourage the development of such attitudes should be incorporated into English instruction.

The results of the current study provide some practical implications for dealing with English language teaching and learning at the Dong Nai University of Technology. The role of self-efficacy suggests several insights for educators. Students' self-efficacy was a significant factor determining students' performance. Teachers need to be aware of the motivational properties of this variable. The school and classroom environments are vital contexts that can enhance students' self-efficacy. Whenever necessary, teachers should carefully exercise motivational strategies to increase students' self-efficacy beliefs in a design challenge. The level of difficulty and complexity of the task should be careful consideration before the task is given to students so that the task is challenging but within their reach. The teacher should provide instructional practices that allow students to achieve a sense of success and establish and maintain positive ability perceptions.

It is important that students feel competent and achieve success in English. Teachers should employ strategies to ensure that this will occur. For example, teachers could conceptualize success in different ways rather than just simply high achievement in English tests. If students are in a classroom where success is defined in terms of self-improvement rather than coming top in tests, then all students have the chance to feel successful. The teacher can encourage students to take on difficult tasks and make mistakes. This can send the message that success requires hard work and determination. Group work may encourage students to work together to solve tasks rather than compete against each other. Social interactions can make everybody share the feeling of success and therefore get enthusiastic about the subject.

Another recommendation would be that teachers should be aware that gender difference is one of the important factors affecting students' motivation. Therefore, learning experiences and teaching practices that discourage the development of such attitudes should be incorporated into English instruction.

Findings on gender differences in self-efficacy can assist educators in having a clearer understanding of male and female motivational patterns. It can prevent teachers from making wrong evaluations that lead to gender-differentiated expectations and classroom practices.

The current research explored the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and students' English performance, involving only a small number of students in one university. As such, the results of the research may not be generalizable to other populations (i.e., students in other universities in Vietnam and students in other countries). The second limitation relates to the use of translated measures (the questionnaire) and translation of the interview data from Vietnamese to English for analysis. Although the researcher followed the rigorous steps suggested in the translation process and there was evidence for the equivalence between the two versions, it is likely that due to cultural differences, the translated versions may not have fully captured the abstract meanings in the original versions. As such, it may influence the interpretation of the data.

The results of the current research show promise in helping to understand the role of self-efficacy in relation to students' English performance. Future studies should be replicated using other populations in an effort to increase the reliability and validity of the findings. Future studies also need to include a greater diversity of participants, for example, both non-English majors and English majors. Language students from different universities, at varying levels of proficiency, at various stages of learning, and at various ages might need to be included to try to determine more precisely how the model used in the current study works. Further work might also explore the general ability of the key finding of this research across other subjects: that is, whether it is the self-efficacy

that holds a positive relationship with academic performance in a subject. Additional insights regarding efficacy influences might be gained by longitudinal research that extends the investigative focus of the current research. Past studies have established that the self-efficacy model is theoretically and empirically valid. In continued work with this theory, researchers should consider other factors which may influence the construct of self-efficacy. It is necessary that significant people such as lecturers, peers, and parents are close to, care for, and support students. A caring and supportive relationship with students may enhance students' responsibility for and self-efficacy. Therefore, different variables such as teacher feedback, peer influence, and family values may also become part of the model for further research, especially if the sample size is larger.

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