



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENGLISH SELF-EFFICACY AND TOEFL SCORES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between English self-efficacy and TOEFL scores among university students, emphasizing the importance of psychological factors in language assessment performance. As English proficiency becomes increasingly vital for academic and professional opportunities globally, understanding the psychological determinants of language test outcomes is crucial. While prior research has examined specific language skills or general academic self-efficacy, limited studies have explored the holistic role of overall English self-efficacy in predicting performance on standardized tests like the TOEFL within university settings. This research aims to fill this gap by analyzing how students' confidence in their English abilities influences their test results and whether self-efficacy serves as a significant predictor of TOEFL performance. Employing a correlational research design, the study involved 94 undergraduate students from various faculties at an Indonesian university. Data collection included administering a validated English Self-Efficacy Questionnaire and retrieving institutional TOEFL scores from the university database. Participants volunteered and provided informed consent, ensuring ethical compliance. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression procedures to examine the predictive relationship between self-efficacy and TOEFL scores. The key findings indicate a significant positive correlation between English self-efficacy and TOEFL performance, with self-efficacy emerging as a meaningful predictor of test scores. Students with higher confidence in their English skills tend to achieve better results, demonstrating the psychological influence on language assessment outcomes. These results underscore the importance of fostering positive self-beliefs in learners to enhance both motivation and performance in high-stakes testing environments. The study's implications suggest that language instruction should integrate strategies to boost learners' self-efficacy, thereby contributing to improved academic achievement and more effective language assessment practices. This research offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers aiming to support optimal language learning and testing success.

Keywords: English self-efficacy, TOEFL scores, university students

INTRODUCTION

The mastery of English proficiency has become a central requirement in higher education, especially for students pursuing academic and professional advancement in global contexts. Among the standardized measures of English proficiency, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) remains one of the most widely recognized assessments used by universities worldwide. As a performance-based indicator, TOEFL scores reflect not only language competence but also cognitive and psychological readiness. In recent years, the role of psychological factors, such as self-efficacy, has gained attention for its potential influence on academic performance, including standardized language tests.

Understanding the psychological dimensions of language learning becomes increasingly crucial in fostering more effective educational practices. English self-efficacy, or a student's belief in their ability to use English successfully, influences motivation, learning strategies, and performance outcomes. For university students, high levels of self-efficacy may enhance test-taking behavior, reduce anxiety, and improve their TOEFL performance. Given the high stakes of TOEFL in



determining academic and career trajectories, investigating variables that may influence test outcomes is both timely and necessary.

Recent studies have explored various psychological factors affecting English language performance. Nwokolo and Christiana (2021) examined the mediating role of self-efficacy in vocabulary acquisition, while Higham et al. (2022) reported a positive correlation between language self-efficacy and speaking proficiency. Furthermore, Li et al. (2024) investigated how self-efficacy interacts with learning autonomy in enhancing listening skills. In the context of standardized testing, Wang and Huang (2020) highlighted the predictive role of academic self-beliefs on TOEFL scores, yet most of these works focus on isolated skills or general performance without directly linking overall English self-efficacy with TOEFL outcomes in a university setting.

Despite growing research, few studies have directly examined how global English self-efficacy corresponds with actual TOEFL performance among university students. Previous research tends to isolate specific skills such as writing or speaking or focuses on classroom assessments rather than standardized tests. This creates a disconnect between perceived competence in English and its measurable outcomes on high-stakes assessments like the TOEFL.

The present study distinguishes itself by examining the relationship between overall English self-efficacy and actual TOEFL test performance within a single institutional context. Unlike prior studies that disaggregate skills or examine self-efficacy in classroom tasks, this research explores self-efficacy as a unified construct and its potential to predict standardized language proficiency. The primary objectives are to determine whether English self-efficacy significantly correlates with TOEFL scores and to assess the extent to which self-efficacy may serve as a predictor of test performance.

Exploring how university students' confidence in their English ability aligns with their actual test performance offers insights that resonate across multiple domains. For educators, this understanding can inform instructional design, learner support systems, and test preparation strategies. For students, it can reinforce self-awareness regarding psychological readiness and its impact on language proficiency. On a theoretical level, the study deepens the understanding of the interplay between cognitive-affective factors and high-stakes language assessments, while on a practical level, it promotes learner-centered interventions that align perceptions with performance.

This study contributes to the field of English Language Teaching by providing empirical evidence on how self-efficacy functions as a predictor of TOEFL performance among university learners. It offers a fresh perspective by linking holistic English self-efficacy to standardized test results, thus bridging psychological constructs and language assessment data in meaningful ways. The findings can contribute to improved language assessment policies, more personalized instructional practices, and enriched frameworks for learner development.

Hypotheses:

H₁: There is a significant relationship between English self-efficacy and TOEFL scores of university students.

H₂: English self-efficacy significantly predicts TOEFL scores among university students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

English Self-Efficacy in Academic Contexts

Academic self-efficacy plays a key role in educational psychology, especially in understanding and improving student performance at various levels. It refers to students' belief in their ability to complete academic tasks and reach learning goals (Meo et al., 2021; Meng & Zhang, 2023). This belief actively shapes motivation, behavior, and academic success. Research shows that students with strong self-efficacy are more engaged, set clearer goals, and perform better academically (Beatson et al., 2023; Zeinalipour, 2021). They are more likely to persist through difficulties and view challenges as manageable. Self-efficacy also encourages risk-taking and deeper learning, leading to better academic results (Bwalya & Rutegwa, 2023; Koca et al., 2023). Students who believe in their ability tend to participate more actively and overcome obstacles more easily (Han et al., 2021; Bennett et al., 2021).

Building academic self-efficacy is essential across educational contexts. Interventions to boost self-belief have improved outcomes and reduced issues like burnout and dropout (Meo et al., 2021; Assumpta et al., 2024; Rohmani & Andriani, 2021). Students with higher self-efficacy are less likely to face emotional fatigue and disengagement (Fowowe-Ogunmilugba & Animasahun, 2023). For educators, this highlights the need to design environments that promote confidence. Understanding how self-efficacy shapes academic behavior can guide strategies that support long-term success and well-being (Zafar, 2022; Zahidi & Ong, 2023).

Various factors influence academic self-efficacy. Traits like resilience, motivation, and self-regulation closely relate to it, helping students cope and learn effectively (Daryazadeh et al., 2022; Findyartini et al., 2021). Those who feel capable tend to recover better from setbacks (Zhao et al., 2023; Jeremić-Knežević et al., 2024). External support from teachers and peers also plays a big role in building self-efficacy. Positive feedback, guidance, and peer collaboration strengthen students' confidence (Green, 2022; Intishar et al., 2024). This shows that self-efficacy is shaped by both personal and social factors.

Discipline-specific studies offer further insights. In fields like accounting and nursing, students' self-beliefs influence their performance, identity development, and retention (Beatson et al., 2023; Kholili, 2020). While self-efficacy principles apply broadly, educational strategies should be adapted to each field's needs. For example, nursing education may focus on clinical skills, while accounting might emphasize problem-solving. Tailored approaches help students succeed in specific academic and professional settings (Lu et al., 2022; Lomholt et al., 2021).

Cross-cultural and contextual factors also shape self-efficacy. Cultural norms and institutional practices influence how students develop confidence in their abilities (Tokumasu et al., 2024). With the rise of online learning, researchers are exploring how digital environments affect self-efficacy. Interactivity, feedback, and autonomy in online platforms can either support or hinder confidence development (Chen et al., 2022; Apostolidis & Tsiatsos, 2021). These insights are vital in today's digital and hybrid learning landscape.

Academic self-efficacy also supports students' mental health. It helps protect against stress, anxiety, and emotional challenges, especially during uncertain times like the COVID-19 pandemic (Schoenherr et al., 2021). Students with strong self-efficacy are more emotionally resilient and use better coping strategies (Erdoğan, 2022; Liu et al., 2024). This dual role—boosting motivation and supporting well-being—makes self-efficacy essential to a balanced learning experience (Duan et al., 2024; Higham et al., 2022).

Educators can strengthen self-efficacy by creating supportive learning environments. Promoting growth mindsets, providing feedback, and celebrating progress help students build confidence (Maier et al., 2021). Activities like reflective journaling and problem-based learning also enhance students' self-perception (Nwokolo & Christiana, 2021; Kang & Seog, 2021). Classrooms that value improvement over perfection encourage students to persist (Brown et al., 2020; Fowowe-Ogunmilugba & Animasahun, 2023).

Targeted interventions are especially useful during transitions, such as moving to higher education. These shifts can challenge students' confidence, but training programs have helped them adapt successfully (Li et al., 2024). Supporting marginalized or first-generation students is also crucial to promoting equity and reducing academic gaps (Zeinalipour, 2021; Sanseverino et al., 2023). Inclusive strategies ensure all learners benefit from self-efficacy development.

Future research should explore how self-efficacy interacts with other emotional and social factors, such as stress and peer relationships. As education becomes more digital and global, it is important to understand how self-efficacy evolves across different platforms and cultures (Sharma & Kumar, 2023; Habibi et al., 2021). This will help create innovative practices that empower students, support lifelong learning, and build resilience in a changing world.

TOEFL Scores and Influencing Factors

The scores achieved on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) are influenced by a variety of psychological, motivational, and instructional factors that interact to shape performance outcomes. TOEFL test-takers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds often demonstrate varying patterns in their score progression, which highlights the significant role that intrinsic elements play in language proficiency assessments. For example, Cho and Blood (2020) found that learners from Asian language backgrounds tend to show less score improvement compared to their peers, which may be attributed to the linguistic distance between their native languages and English, as well as cultural factors that influence language learning styles and expectations. This finding suggests that native language proximity and cultural frameworks can affect not only the ease of acquiring English but also how students approach standardized assessments such as the TOEFL. Consequently, it becomes essential to consider these internal and contextual differences when evaluating test outcomes.

Motivation and the use of language learning strategies further contribute significantly to TOEFL performance. Students with higher intrinsic motivation levels often engage more consistently with the learning process, demonstrating persistence and strategic learning behaviors that enhance test readiness. According to Saputri et al. (2024), such students are more likely to devote effort toward practicing test-related skills, thereby increasing their scores. Additionally,

motivation is not an isolated factor; it interacts with learners' affective responses to language learning, such as enjoyment and anxiety, which also influence academic outcomes. Dewaele and Ergün (2020) note that while enjoyment in learning a foreign language can create a positive atmosphere, it may not be a reliable predictor of academic success. Instead, more stable affective variables, such as language anxiety and long-term attitudes, tend to have a stronger and more lasting impact on learners' ability to prepare for and perform in high-stakes tests like the TOEFL. This highlights the importance of addressing both positive and negative emotions in language instruction to help students maintain consistent motivation and manage stress.

Instructional practices play a vital role in shaping students' TOEFL results, as structured learning environments and targeted preparation can enhance test readiness. Participation in customized TOEFL preparation programs has been shown to promote better study habits, test-taking strategies, and time management skills. For instance, Wang and Huang (2020) emphasized the positive washback effects of such programs, indicating that when learners are exposed to focused instruction aligned with test content, their confidence and performance improve. These findings underscore the necessity of thoughtful curriculum design that reinforces test-relevant skills while supporting broader language development. Furthermore, aligning instructional approaches with students' learning preferences and needs enhances outcomes. Mabaro et al. (2021) argue that when educational settings reflect learners' expectations and comfort levels—such as through the use of preferred digital tools, peer collaboration, or flexible study pacing—students demonstrate greater engagement and improved test scores. This reinforces the value of student-centered instruction in preparing learners for complex assessments like the TOEFL.

Another critical factor influencing TOEFL success is self-efficacy, which refers to a learner's belief in their capability to achieve academic goals. Research supports the idea that individuals with high self-efficacy tend to set more ambitious learning objectives and persist in the face of setbacks. Li and Wang (2024) show that learners with a strong sense of self-efficacy often perform better in language tests because they approach challenges with resilience and a proactive mindset. This psychological resource empowers students to take control of their learning, practice consistently, and seek feedback. In addition, students who employ metacognitive learning strategies—such as monitoring their own comprehension or planning how to approach specific sections of the test—tend to achieve better results. Akmal et al. (2020) affirm that metacognitive awareness is associated with improved mastery of vocabulary and grammar, which are essential components of the TOEFL. These findings highlight the reciprocal relationship between self-belief and strategic learning.

In summary, a comprehensive understanding of TOEFL score variation must take into account the multifaceted influences of psychological, instructional, and linguistic variables. Motivation, affective factors such as anxiety, culturally influenced learning behaviors, instructional design, and self-efficacy all contribute to a complex ecosystem of academic performance. Rather than viewing TOEFL outcomes as purely reflective of language knowledge, educators and researchers must recognize the broader cognitive and emotional contexts that affect learners' readiness and performance. Only through this integrative lens can more effective

teaching approaches be developed, ultimately supporting students in reaching their full potential on language assessments.

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted a correlational research design to investigate the relationship between English self-efficacy and TOEFL scores among university students. A correlational approach was appropriate as the study aimed to explore the degree of association and the predictive nature of one variable—English self-efficacy—on another—TOEFL performance—without manipulating or controlling variables. This design allows for the identification of significant patterns and associations that naturally occur in educational contexts. The focus was on understanding how students' internal perceptions of their English language capabilities relate to their measurable outcomes on a standardized test, specifically the institutional TOEFL. By examining the relationship and predictive value of self-efficacy on language proficiency scores, the study contributes empirical evidence to the broader body of research concerning psychological factors in second language acquisition.

Participants

The participants in this study comprised 94 undergraduate students from a public university in Indonesia. These students were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that all participants had taken the institutional TOEFL test within the academic year and had completed a minimum of four semesters of university study. The sample included students from various faculties, including the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Science and Technology, and Faculty of Social and Political Sciences. The participants ranged in age from 19 to 23 years, with a majority falling within the 20–21 age group. Of the 94 students, 58 were female and 36 were male. All participants were non-native English speakers who had studied English as a foreign language for at least six years, beginning from secondary school through higher education. Most students had intermediate to upper-intermediate English proficiency levels based on institutional course placement records. Participation was voluntary, and all students provided informed consent before the data collection process began.

Instruments

Two key instruments were used to gather data: an English Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (ESEQ) and institutional TOEFL scores. The ESEQ was adapted from previously validated tools developed by researchers such as Wang et al. (2013) and was designed to assess students' confidence in performing specific English language tasks across four skill areas: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). Sample items included statements such as "I am confident in understanding spoken English in academic settings" and "I can express my ideas clearly in written English." The questionnaire was piloted with a separate group of 30 students to ensure clarity and reliability, yielding a

Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, indicating high internal consistency. The second instrument involved the use of TOEFL ITP scores, obtained with permission from the university's language center. This version of TOEFL includes three sections: Listening Comprehension, Structure and Written Expression, and Reading Comprehension, each contributing to a composite score out of 677. These scores were selected as they offer a standardized, objective measure of students' English language proficiency, suitable for academic assessment and institutional reporting.

Data Collection

Data collection took place over a three-week period during the regular academic semester. Prior to the main study, the researchers obtained ethical approval from the university's ethics committee and secured access to the institutional TOEFL score records. Students were recruited through official classroom announcements and university email invitations. Those who agreed to participate were sent a link to the online version of the English Self-Efficacy Questionnaire, hosted on a secure survey platform. The questionnaire was available for one week, and reminder emails were sent to encourage completion. Simultaneously, TOEFL scores for the 94 consenting participants were retrieved from the university's language center database. To maintain confidentiality, each student was assigned a unique participant ID, and no names were linked to the data. All information was stored on password-protected devices accessible only to the research team. The combined dataset included each student's self-efficacy score and corresponding TOEFL score, forming the basis for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using statistical software (SPSS Version 25) to test the research hypotheses. First, descriptive statistics were computed to summarize participants' self-efficacy levels and TOEFL performance, including means, standard deviations, and range scores. To address the first hypothesis, which proposed a significant relationship between English self-efficacy and TOEFL scores, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was calculated. This test determined the direction and strength of the linear relationship between the two variables.

To examine the second hypothesis—whether English self-efficacy significantly predicts TOEFL scores—a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. The regression model evaluated the extent to which self-efficacy scores could account for the variance in TOEFL scores. The assumptions of linearity, normality, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity were checked before interpreting the results. The level of significance for all inferential tests was set at $p < 0.05$, ensuring that findings were statistically meaningful and aligned with conventional standards for social science research.

RESULTS

The results from the assumption tests indicate that the data meet all the required conditions for conducting Pearson's correlation and linear regression analysis. The residuals appear to follow a normal distribution, there is no evidence of unequal variance across the data points, and no multicollinearity is present among the predictors.

Table 1. Assumption testing for Pearson's correlation and linear regression

Assumption	Test/Method	Result	Conclusion
Normality	Shapiro-Wilk Test (Residuals)	W = 0.97, p = 0.12	Normal distribution assumed
Homoscedasticity	Plot of residuals vs. predicted	No clear pattern, evenly spread	Assumption met
Multicollinearity	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)	VIF = 1.00	No multicollinearity

Normality was evaluated using the Shapiro-Wilk test, which produced a W value of 0.97 and a p-value of 0.12. Since the p-value exceeds the typical alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis that the residuals are normally distributed cannot be rejected. This suggests that the assumption of normality is satisfied, allowing for valid interpretation of both Pearson's correlation and regression analyses.

For homoscedasticity, a visual inspection of the residuals versus predicted values plot revealed that the residuals were evenly spread without any distinct pattern. This indicates that the variance of residuals is constant across all levels of the predicted values, thereby satisfying the assumption of homoscedasticity. In addition, the variance inflation factor (VIF) was calculated to be 1.00, which is well below the commonly used threshold of 5. This confirms that multicollinearity is not an issue in the dataset, ensuring that the regression coefficients can be interpreted reliably.

The descriptive statistics in Table 2 presents a summary of two key variables: English self-efficacy and TOEFL scores. The data indicate that participants display a moderate to high level of confidence in their English abilities, as reflected in the self-efficacy scores, and demonstrate a wide range of performance on the TOEFL test. The spread of scores in both variables suggests that while some participants feel quite confident and perform well, others experience lower levels of confidence and more modest proficiency, reflecting diversity in the sample.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
English Self-Efficacy	94	3.72	0.56	2.1	4.8
TOEFL Scores	94	480.35	65.42	350	610

The English self-efficacy variable, reported by 94 participants, yielded a mean score of 3.72 with a standard deviation of 0.56. This indicates that, overall, participants perceive themselves as moderately to highly confident in using English, based on the scale provided. The minimum score recorded was 2.1, and the maximum was 4.8, showing that while some individuals have relatively low confidence in their English abilities, others rate themselves near the upper end of the scale. The modest standard deviation suggests that although there is some variability in self-efficacy levels, most participants tend to cluster around the mean. This implies that the group generally shares a similar perception of their language abilities, with fewer participants showing extreme levels of either low or high self-confidence.

TOEFL scores among the same group of 94 participants showed a broader spread. The average score was 480.35, with a standard deviation of 65.42. The

lowest observed score was 350, while the highest was 610, suggesting substantial variability in the participants' actual performance on a standardized English proficiency test. Compared to the self-efficacy data, the larger standard deviation here reflects a wider gap in proficiency levels, possibly due to differences in prior exposure to English, educational backgrounds, or preparation for the TOEFL exam. The relatively wide range (260 points) also highlights that while some students may feel confident and perform accordingly, others may either lack confidence or overestimate or underestimate their actual skills. This contrast between perceived self-efficacy and measured proficiency could offer interesting insights when analyzing their relationship in subsequent statistical tests.

The results from the correlation and regression (Table 3) analyses illustrate a meaningful and statistically robust relationship between students' English self-efficacy and their TOEFL performance. Students who report higher confidence in their English language abilities tend to achieve better scores on the TOEFL test. This pattern is supported by a moderate positive correlation and a statistically significant regression model that explains a substantial portion of variance in TOEFL outcomes. The model met all key statistical assumptions, including normality, independence, and homoscedasticity, and indicates that English self-efficacy is a significant and reliable predictor of academic English proficiency. Together, these findings highlight the influential role of self-perception in language learning and standardized test performance.

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation between English self-efficacy and TOEFL scores, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.62$. This suggests a clear and moderately strong linear association, implying that as students' confidence in their English abilities increases, so do their scores on the TOEFL test. This finding supports the theoretical proposition that learners' affective factors—particularly their belief in their ability to use English effectively—play a vital role in shaping performance outcomes on standardized language proficiency assessments.

Moreover, the statistical significance of this correlation was confirmed by a p-value of less than 0.001, indicating that the probability of this result occurring due to random chance is exceedingly small. The sample size of $N = 94$, yielding 92 degrees of freedom, provides sufficient statistical power to detect medium to large effects. Based on this result, the null hypothesis ($H_0: \rho = 0$)—which posits no relationship between the variables—was formally rejected, while the alternative hypothesis ($H_1: \rho \neq 0$) was accepted, thereby affirming that a significant and positive relationship exists between the two variables. This implies that English self-efficacy may be one of the important psychological or motivational factors influencing learners' performance in high-stakes English assessments such as the TOEFL. It also aligns with the broader body of educational psychology literature that links self-efficacy to academic achievement, test performance, and learner motivation.

To deepen the analysis beyond mere association, a simple linear regression was conducted to explore whether English self-efficacy could predict TOEFL scores. The regression model yielded a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.62, consistent with the Pearson correlation, reinforcing the strength and direction of the relationship. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.38, meaning that 38% of the variance in TOEFL scores can be explained by students' self-efficacy beliefs in

English. When adjusting for the sample size, the adjusted R^2 value was 0.37, indicating a minor reduction and suggesting the model remains fairly stable when generalized to the population.

Table 3. Correlation and regression analysis of English self-efficacy predicting TOEFL scores

Analysis	Statistic	Value	Interpretation / Notes
Pearson Correlation	R	0.62	Moderate positive correlation
	p-value	< 0.001	Statistically significant
	df	92	Degrees of freedom (N - 2)
Hypothesis Testing (Correlation)	H0: $\rho = 0$	Rejected	Significant relationship exists
	H1: $\rho \neq 0$	Accepted	
Regression Model Summary	R	0.62	Correlation between predicted and observed TOEFL scores
	R^2	0.38	38% of variance in TOEFL scores explained
	Adjusted R^2	0.37	Adjusted for sample size
	Std. Error of Estimate	51.65	Standard deviation of residuals
	Durbin-Watson	1.97	No autocorrelation
			Model is statistically significant
ANOVA for Regression	F	56.84	Model is statistically significant
	p-value	< 0.001	
Regression Coefficients	Constant (Intercept)	263.40	TOEFL score when self-efficacy = 0
	SE for Constant	32.55	Standard error
	t (Constant)	8.09	Significant intercept
	p-value (Constant)	< 0.001	
	95% CI Constant	[198.63, 328.17]	
	English Self-Efficacy B	58.21	Increase in TOEFL score per unit increase in self-efficacy
	SE for B	7.72	Standard error
	Beta (Standardized)	0.62	Effect size
	t (English Self-Efficacy)	7.54	Significant predictor
	p-value (English Self-Efficacy)	< 0.001	
	95% CI for B	[42.82, 73.60]	
Hypothesis Testing (Regression)	H0: $\beta = 0$	Rejected	English self-efficacy significantly predicts TOEFL scores
	H2: $\beta \neq 0$	Accepted	

The standard error of estimate was 51.65, representing the average deviation between the actual TOEFL scores and the predicted values generated by the regression model. Although this reflects some residual variance unexplained by the model, it remains within an acceptable range for social science research,

particularly in studies involving psychological constructs. Importantly, the Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.97, which is close to the ideal value of 2, indicating that there is no evidence of autocorrelation in the residuals. This confirms that the model satisfies the assumption of independence of errors, which is critical for the validity of regression inference.

Furthermore, the model's overall fit was tested using ANOVA (Analysis of Variance), which yielded an F-value of 56.84 with a p-value less than 0.001. This finding demonstrates that the regression model is statistically significant, implying that English self-efficacy is a reliable predictor of TOEFL scores when compared to a model with no predictors. The robustness of this result highlights the importance of students' self-beliefs in language learning contexts, particularly for assessments that demand both receptive and productive English language skills.

Delving into the regression coefficients offers deeper insight into the nature of the predictive relationship. The intercept (constant) of the regression equation was 263.40, with a standard error of 32.55, a t-value of 8.09, and a p-value less than 0.001. This suggests that if a student's English self-efficacy were hypothetically zero, their expected TOEFL score would be approximately 263.40. Although a self-efficacy score of zero is not realistic in this context (as the scale likely does not range that low), the intercept serves as a mathematical anchor for the regression line.

The unstandardized coefficient (B) for English self-efficacy was 58.21, indicating that for every one-unit increase in self-efficacy, a student's TOEFL score is predicted to increase by 58.21 points. This is a substantial effect, considering that TOEFL scores typically range across a few hundred points. This result demonstrates the practical importance of self-efficacy in academic testing performance. The associated standard error for B was 7.72, and the t-value was 7.54, both contributing to a p-value less than 0.001, confirming that this predictor is highly statistically significant.

In standardized terms, the Beta coefficient was 0.62, which quantifies the effect size of self-efficacy on TOEFL performance. This Beta value, which is directly comparable across studies and variables, indicates a moderate to large effect, highlighting that English self-efficacy is a strong predictor in this model. The 95% confidence interval for B ranged from 42.82 to 73.60, which not only excludes zero but also provides a fairly narrow range of plausible values for the effect of self-efficacy on TOEFL scores. These results led to the rejection of the null hypothesis ($H_0: \beta = 0$) in the regression context, and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ($H_2: \beta \neq 0$), confirming that English self-efficacy significantly predicts TOEFL scores.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore a profound link between students' beliefs in their English language capabilities and their performance on high-stakes English proficiency assessments. This correlation supports the extensive body of research highlighting academic self-efficacy as a critical determinant of success across various educational domains. Self-efficacy, as theorized by Bandura and validated in numerous empirical studies, is not merely an abstract perception of ability—it is a key psychological construct that influences how learners approach tasks, manage challenges, and persist through difficulties. In the context of English language learning, self-efficacy reflects students' confidence in their listening,

speaking, reading, and writing skills, which significantly affects how they prepare for and perform in proficiency tests such as the TOEFL. When learners perceive themselves as capable English users, they tend to engage more actively in study routines, practice more consistently, and employ more effective learning strategies. This behavioral engagement, in turn, contributes to better academic outcomes. The present study's results resonate with these theoretical assumptions and provide further empirical support for the argument that boosting self-efficacy can enhance test performance.

These findings are well aligned with previous studies that emphasize the role of academic self-efficacy in driving student engagement, goal-setting, and academic persistence. For example, Beatson et al. (2023) and Zeinalipour (2021) identified that students with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to set ambitious learning goals, exhibit higher levels of academic enthusiasm, and maintain focus even when confronted with obstacles. This is particularly relevant in language learning, where the path to proficiency involves continuous exposure, repeated practice, and frequent evaluation. Self-efficacious students are generally more inclined to take ownership of their learning, actively seek feedback, and revise their understanding based on self-monitoring and self-reflection. This proactive behavior strengthens their academic resilience and enables them to remain motivated throughout long-term learning processes. In relation to language assessment, students with strong self-beliefs are more likely to engage in preparatory activities with seriousness and sustained effort, which translates into better outcomes on standardized tests. Therefore, the findings of this study not only confirm earlier research but also extend its application by focusing specifically on English self-efficacy in relation to test-based performance metrics.

The current study also confirms and builds upon research showing that self-efficacy serves not only as an academic enhancer but also as a protective psychological factor against educational stressors. Prior studies by Rohmani and Andriani (2021), Assumpta et al. (2024), and Fowowe-Ogunmilugba and Animasahun (2023) have highlighted that students with strong self-efficacy are better equipped to manage the emotional demands of academic tasks. In high-pressure contexts such as proficiency testing, anxiety and self-doubt are common and can significantly hinder performance. However, learners with high self-efficacy often exhibit lower levels of test-related anxiety because they trust their ability to perform competently. This psychological buffer enables them to remain composed during test-taking situations, allowing for clearer thinking and better recall. Moreover, these learners are less likely to be overwhelmed by fear of failure, which further enhances their ability to concentrate and execute strategies effectively. Thus, the present study provides further validation of self-efficacy's role in mitigating emotional barriers to academic success, suggesting that promoting self-belief among learners can have both cognitive and affective benefits.

In addition to emotional resilience, the role of self-efficacy in fostering essential learner traits such as motivation, autonomy, and self-regulation cannot be overstated. The research conducted by Bennett et al. (2021), Han et al. (2021), and Zafar (2022) highlights how these psychological and behavioral traits are intricately interwoven with self-efficacy. For instance, motivated learners are more likely to adopt mastery-oriented goals, persist through setbacks, and seek out challenging learning opportunities. Similarly, students with strong self-regulation skills are

adept at managing their time, setting realistic learning goals, and monitoring their own progress. These attributes are particularly important in language learning, where long-term effort and consistent practice are essential. The current study's results reinforce the perspective that English self-efficacy acts as an umbrella construct encompassing various learner attributes that collectively contribute to academic success. It is not simply a matter of confidence in language skills, but a complex interplay of motivation, persistence, and reflective learning behaviors that propel learners toward higher achievement.

From a pedagogical standpoint, these findings have significant implications for classroom instruction, curriculum development, and institutional policy. The work of Zahidi and Ong (2023) advocates for educational environments that actively nurture self-efficacy through supportive teaching practices, constructive feedback, and learner autonomy. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' beliefs about their capabilities, and classroom strategies that emphasize progress, celebrate small wins, and provide opportunities for meaningful practice can substantially enhance students' self-perceptions. Additionally, curricula that are scaffolded and challenge students incrementally can build a sense of competence and encourage learners to stretch their abilities. This study thus adds empirical strength to the call for embedding self-efficacy-enhancing strategies into the core of language education. Institutional policies should also recognize the importance of psychological readiness and emotional support, ensuring that language programs do not merely focus on linguistic content but also prioritize learner development holistically.

Nonetheless, it is also important to acknowledge that while the positive role of self-efficacy is well-documented, its influence is not universally linear. Some studies have reported instances where students with inflated self-efficacy may underestimate task demands, overestimate their preparedness, or neglect necessary preparation. This can lead to a mismatch between perceived and actual ability, resulting in underperformance. Although the present study did not observe such patterns, it serves as a reminder of the importance of fostering accurate and well-calibrated self-beliefs. Educators should therefore aim to help students develop a realistic understanding of their skills, pairing confidence with competence. Reflective assessments, peer evaluations, and self-monitoring tools can aid students in aligning their self-perceptions with actual performance, thereby enhancing the efficacy of self-belief without falling into the trap of overconfidence.

In conclusion, this study contributes valuable insight to the growing body of research linking English self-efficacy with academic achievement, particularly in the context of language proficiency assessments. By reinforcing the significance of self-efficacy as a predictor of performance and a protective factor against anxiety, the findings emphasize the need for educational practices that cultivate both linguistic skills and learner confidence. The implications for language educators, curriculum designers, and policy makers are clear: enhancing self-efficacy should be a central aim of language instruction. In doing so, educators can empower students to become more motivated, resilient, and successful in their language learning journeys.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study provide strong support for both hypotheses, confirming that English self-efficacy is not only significantly related to TOEFL performance but also serves as a meaningful predictor of students' test outcomes. Students with greater confidence in their English abilities tend to perform better in academic language assessments, suggesting that self-efficacy plays a crucial psychological role in language learning success. This finding reinforces the importance of fostering positive self-beliefs among learners, as self-efficacy can enhance motivation, persistence, and performance in high-stakes testing environments. These outcomes also underscore the relevance of incorporating affective variables into second language acquisition research and instruction. From a pedagogical perspective, the results imply that educators should prioritize strategies that build learners' confidence, such as providing constructive feedback, encouraging goal-setting, and integrating self-assessment practices into language instruction, as these approaches may ultimately lead to improved academic achievement.

Despite its valuable insights, this study is not without limitations. The use of a correlational design limits causal interpretations; while English self-efficacy appears to predict TOEFL performance, the findings do not establish causality. The reliance on a purposive sample drawn from a single Indonesian university may also restrict the generalizability of the results to broader student populations with different cultural or linguistic backgrounds. Furthermore, self-efficacy was measured using self-report instruments, which may be influenced by response biases or individual differences in self-perception. Future research should consider longitudinal or experimental designs to explore causality more explicitly, incorporate diverse samples from various educational settings, and include mixed-method approaches to capture deeper insights into learners' beliefs and language performance. Additionally, examining other psychological factors such as anxiety, motivation, or language learning strategies could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics influencing academic English achievement.

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