

INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' SELF-EFFICACY OF PUBLIC SPEAKING

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Abstract

Students in English Department have to master speaking skill in order to communicate with others. Public speaking is a place to help students enhance their speaking skill. This study aims to investigate students' self-efficacy of public speaking. This study was conducted to 43 students of Public Speaking Class in English Language Education Study Program of Sanata Dharma University from academic year 2016/2017. The data were obtained from the questionnaire and interview. The results showed that 1) the students are aware of their self-efficacy while doing public speaking (81.4%), 2) the students have a higher self-efficacy in public speaking (79%), and 3) four factors from Bandura (1997) namely mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal or social persuasion, and emotional state influence students' self-efficacy. Seemingly, the students have a positive self-efficacy in speaking English.

Keywords: *self-efficacy, students' self-efficacy, public speaking*

1. INTRODUCTION

Many students were afraid of speaking English in front of their classmates even they were in the fifth semester. It was not because they did not have English language skill, they were not aware of their own self-efficacy. Most of them felt a little apprehension to speak English in front of their classmates, therefore, they had a negative perception of their mind. It is called as anxiety and how to address the anxiety from one person to another is different and it depends on their own assessment of their ability called self-efficacy (Sarafino, 1994). Therefore self-efficacy plays an important role in speaking in front of the classmates.

Bandura (1997) defines self-efficacy as an individual belief that he could control the situation and get the positive results. Self-efficacy in oneself convinces the strength to reduce anxiety and negative thoughts. When facing the difficult task, in this case, public speaking, individual beliefs in self-efficacy is able to influence the way people in reacting to stressful situations (Bandura, 1997). The high of individual self-efficacy might motivate individual cognitively to act more resilient and focused especially if the objective to be achieved is a clear objective. There is a significant relation between self-efficacy, achievement, and performance of each individual (Bandura, 1997).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Self-efficacy

People believe that they can perform better in some tasks, therefore, they motivate themselves and work hard to get a good result. Their beliefs are called efficacy beliefs. "Efficacy beliefs influence how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave" (Bandura, 1993, p. 118). Self-efficacy is a belief of person's capabilities to acquire or do behaviors at some designated levels

(Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy may measure a person's thoughts, feelings, and actions and influence our actions.

People who have low self-efficacy believe that the task given is hard and they build strong disagreement choice to finish the task. On the contrary, people who have high self-efficacy tend to enjoy the task and do it willingly. Bandura (1994, p. 71) defines self-efficacy as people's beliefs "about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives" (p.71). It is showed that these are strong determinants of the person's level of achievement. Self-efficacy plays an important role in doing some challenges because it can affect achievement settings (Bandura, 1977; Schunk, 1984). Self-efficacy can influence people's accomplishment (Karsten & Roth, 1998). Therefore the choice of activities and challenges can be influenced by self-efficacy.

Bandura (1997) states that self-efficacy is an individual belief to control the situation and obtain the positive result. Besides, Schultz & Schultz (1994) defines self-efficacy as feelings toward the adequacy, efficiency, and ability to cope the life. Feist & Feist (2002) add that self-efficacy is an individual's belief which has the ability and hold the control with the given task in the environment. To sum up, these experts explain the positive impacts of having self-efficacy.

Some researchers have conducted the research about self-efficacy in some areas. The researchers investigate the mathematics self-efficacy can influence people's interest (Lent, Lopez, & Bieschke, 1993; Pajares & Miller 1994). On the other hand, there is a study on science (Lent, Brown, & Larkin, 1984). The result showed that high self-efficacy influence the academic achievement.

Others have studied self-efficacy in educational research, in the area of academic performance, motivation, and self-regulation (Bandura, 1986; Graham & Weiner, 1996; Lent et al., 1984; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002; Mills, 2004; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996; Schunk, 1991). Self-efficacy studies basically concern about a number of variables such as motivation, language learning strategies, language anxiety, and language achievement. The results of some studies show that there is a correlation between the high levels of self-efficacy and good performance in language learning tasks (Rahimi & Abedini, 2009; Farjami & Amerian, 2013; Ghonsooly & Elahi, 2010; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Liu, 2013; Mills, Pajares & Herron, 2006, 2007; Wang, Kim, Bong & Ahan, 2013). Other studies showed a significant positive estimation of academic achievement (Doordinejad & Afshar, 2014; Hsieh & Schallert, 2008; Rahemi, 2007; Rahimpour & Nariman-Jahan, 2010; Wigfield, 1994; Zim Students' learning achievement has associated to EFL contexts. Ghonsooly, Elahi, and Golparvar (2012) investigate the relationship between college students' self-efficacy and their achievement in English. In addition, Başaran and Cabaroğlu (2014) assert that students with poor proficiency in English have a belief that they cannot learn the foreign language and it is based on teachers' observation in a classroom. A great amount of research has confirmed this observation on self-efficacy in foreign language learning has significantly reported that the results showed a positive correlation between students' self-efficacy and their achievement in English (Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). Students who have a low self-efficacy might affect their academic achievement (Caprara et al., 2003). They tend to ignore the strategy to complete the mission or task because they believe that whatever they do may lead them in wrong path or unsuccessful results. On the contrary, students who have a high self-efficacy might work harder, evaluate their own strategy in learning and engage in self-regulation which makes them be successful in school (Pajares & Schunk, 2001).merman, Bandura & Martinez-Pons, 1992).

2.2 Self-Efficacy in Public Speaking

Some researchers have conducted research in self-efficacy. It is not astonishing that many studies examine that self-efficacy influences academic achievement motivation, learning, and academic achievement (Pajares, 1996; Schunk, 1995). It also influences the efforts, persistence to confront the barriers, resilience in dealing with failures, and depression in some situations (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1997) claims that a person who has anxiety indicates the fear and avoidance behaviors that often interfere with the performance of their lives, as well as in academic situation. Zahiri, Sibarani, & Sumarsih (2017) conduct the research on students' anxiety and self-efficacy while doing English monologue. The result showed that both anxiety and self-efficacy influence students' speaking skill. It is showed that some students may feel the fear and anxiety to speak in front of people, particularly in speaking skill.

Other studies have shown that public speaking self-efficacy predicts public speaking achievement (Dwyer & Fus, 1999, 2002). The researchers investigate the relationship between public speaking self-efficacy and communication apprehension. They find that there is an inverse relationship between communication apprehension and self-efficacy. In a subsequent study, Dwyer and Fus (2002) also investigate the relationship between communication apprehension, public speaking self-efficacy, self-perceived public speaking competence, and course grade. The result shows that self-efficacy predict students' final grades.

2.2.1 Factors Influencing Self-Efficacy in Public Speaking

Bandura (1997) and Pajares (2002) state that the idea from the self-efficacy theory introduces the four factors which influence the perception of self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) suggests that the development of self-efficacy stems from four different sources including mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasions, and physiological and affective states. Mastery experiences are the most influential efficacy sources that provide an apt evidence to the students that they have the capability to succeed creating a sense of efficacy (Burnham, 2011; Joet, Usher & Bressoux 2011; Phan, 2012; Loo & Choy, 2013; Usher, 2009; Usher & Pajares, 2006; Palmer, 2006). In addition, Bandura (1997, p. 80) claims that mastery experience is the most influential because it provides the evidence to succeed. This factor refers to how people assess their own personal accomplishment in a designated level. Students who have already assessed their own strategies in learning may have successful and unsuccessful results. Those who have a successful results develop a high sense of confidence about their abilities. On the contrary, students who have unsuccessful results might experience feelings of hesitation and uncertainty. Mastery experiences can be the most effective way to be a self-efficacy booster to people because they have already had pre-existing knowledge (Bandura, 1997).

Relating to public speaking, the students in public speaking class acquire a mastery experience when they attempt to deliver a speech in front of their classmates. When they deliver the speech successfully, their self-efficacy will more than likely increase. However, students who fail in delivering speech, their self-efficacy can be enhanced if their self-efficacy is resilient. They work hard by practicing and improving themselves in performing better for the next task. In this case, the students will more than likely experience increased public speaking self-efficacy because they are aware of their own self-efficacy that they can do well if they push their effort on the task.

Vicarious experience relates to self-evaluation in which people observe others strategies to strive the results whether it is successful or not. If people watch others who are successful, they tend to increase their own self-efficacy. On the contrary, when people watch and observe others who are unsuccessful, they attempt to diminish the self-efficacy. Consequently, a vicarious experience is

how you think or inspire the model is (Bandura, 1994). The illustration case in the classroom draws like this, when students observe their friends and they find the matched one (in terms of attribute and ability) succeed in completing the given task, they feel that they meet a similar challenge. Since they have already found the model, when the model fail in completing the task therefore it might make them feel unsettling.

Schunk (1987, p. 170) observes that peers can be the role model to the students and if the peers successfully perform a task, it may raise self-efficacy in students. For public speaking, the students who observe their classmates delivering speeches successfully may experience increased public speaking self-efficacy. The students may have vicarious experience by watching their classmates, lecturers, or even exemplary videos. Bandura (1997) says that people should compare their capabilities to those who have similar attributes in order to have vicarious experiences effectively.

Verbal persuasion is a kind of social persuasion when people are persuaded verbally that they can accomplish and complete the task, they would do the task willingly. Verbal or social persuasion refers to feedback, judgments, and appraisals from others about the related task (Usher & Pajares, 2006). Schunk (1989) says that students who acquire feedback in association with mastery experience and vicarious experience which confirm and persuade them that they have the ability to do the task may have a higher sense of self-efficacy. Verbal and non-verbal (such as facial expressions) become influential when they are emitted by a person who is considered as a credible persuader and believable evaluator in their own environments such as parents, teachers, experts, and others. (Zimmerman, 2000). Usher and Pajares (2008, p. 754) suggest that, “encouragement from parents, teachers, and peers whom students trust can boost students’ confidence in their academic capabilities”. In public speaking, verbal persuasion or social persuasion will be in the form of feedback from the lecturers and friends. Students may also grasp encouragement from their classmates, lecturers, or family when they practice their speech.

The last is the somatic and emotional state. Emotional arousal refers to the emotions and physical sensations such as anxiety or happiness that one experiences while doing certain tasks (Bandura, 1977). The self-efficacy and self-fulfilling prophecy of failure or inability to do some tasks can be affected and captured from stress, anxiety, worry, fear, and all negative things (Bandura, 1977, p. 106). Environmental factors can exert a strong influence on the individual internal state. Therefore the stressful and severe situations can cause the students to understand themselves as less capable and the positive mood state can also support students’ self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Van Dinther, Dochy & Segers, 2011). Students in public speaking class may experience high public speaking anxiety because they have to speak in front of their classmates. They probably will interpret their anxiety as incompetence and perform poorly on their speech.

2.2.2 Public Speaking

Dwyer & Fus (1999) examine the relationship between public speaking self-efficacy and communication apprehension. Bygate (1987) states that in speaking, the presence of an interlocutor necessitates the presence of two conditions, namely 1) reciprocity condition; and 2) time pressure condition. The reciprocity condition refers to there is more than one participant in speaking. It means that the speaker should adjust to what the listener’s topic and the listener should actively participate in the conversation. Time pressure refers to the lack of preparation in impromptu or spontaneous speech (Asakereh & Dehghannezhad, 2015). In addition, challenging, stimulating, and supportive environment can influence language learning and speaking skills in particular learning (Fraser, 2007; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Speaking has many different aspects and categories from the

communicative view (Harmer, 2007). Accuracy involves the use of grammar correctly, grammar, and pronunciation practice. In addition, fluency is the ability of persistence in speaking spontaneously. Accordingly, the teachers should consider those things in developing students' learning.

Public speaking is a process of designing and delivering a message to the audience (Wrench et al., 2012). To be a good public speaker, planning and organizing the topic or material are needed. There are three types of public speaking based on the intended purpose: informative, persuasive, and entertaining (Wrench et al., 2012). The most common types of public speaking are informative. The purpose of informative speech is to share knowledge with others. It happens in the classroom, the teachers share their knowledge with the students. Persuasive speaking is how the speakers try to persuade others. The speaker must convince, motivate, and invite the audience to change or move to be better. Then entertaining speaking involves organizing some events such as presenting and accepting awards, introduction to wedding toasts, delivering eulogies at funerals, and memorial services to after-dinner speeches. Whereas students who have public speaking class hold some benefits. These benefits include developing critical thinking, fine-tuning verbal and non-verbal skills, and overcoming a fear of public speaking.

3. METHOD

The researcher used a survey research in order to answer the research problems in this study. The sampling that the researcher used is purposive sampling. The survey and interview were used to determine students' self-efficacy in public speaking. The survey was conducted by distributing the questionnaires and interviewing some students in Public Speaking class.

3.1 Participants

This study was taken in Public Speaking class in the academic year 2016/2017 of English Language Education Study Program in Sanata Dharma University. The questionnaire was distributed to 43 students in Public Speaking class. In this study, the participants should answer 20 close-ended questionnaire. Then the researcher conducted interview to six (6) students of Public Speaking class.

3.2 Instruments

The researcher used a questionnaire and an interview to this study. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2003, p. 245) describe that a questionnaire is a widely used and useful instruments for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher and often being comparatively straightforward to analyze. This study used close-ended questionnaire which consisted of 20 items. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) emphasize that a close-ended question in the questionnaire provides limited choices to answer and uses simple, clear, and unambiguous language.

In this study, Likert scale was used to measure the students' self-efficacy in Public Speaking class. It comprised 20 items based on Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). This study also conducted an interview to verify the participants' response from the questionnaire.

3.3 Procedure

The participants were informed that their personal information would remain confidential and only used for a research purpose before distributing the questionnaire and interviewing some

respondents. The participants would write their information on the second page of a questionnaire. They finished to answer the questionnaire in 15 minutes. For the interview, some of respondents spent 10 minutes in answering the questions.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using percentage to show the result of the questionnaire. The researcher calculated the participants' answers using the formula below:

$$\frac{\sum X}{N} \times 100\%$$

$\sum X$: Sum of respondents' answer for each statement

N : Number of respondent

4. RESULTS

4.1.1 Students' Awareness of Self-Efficacy in Public Speaking

Students in Public Speaking class were aware of their own self-efficacy based on the findings. Since 43 participants affirmed a positive response toward the questionnaire given. There are five questions related to the students' awareness of self-efficacy in public speaking.

The participants had their own beliefs that they could speak English because the results showed that they were able to speak in front of their classmates. Moreover, they motivated themselves that they could perform better, it was showed that 93% agreed on the statement and it reached more than 50%. For delivering and organizing the speech, they thought that they could perform better. The participants were also asked whether they could maintain their posture in delivering a speech or not. Then the answer was 30 participants chose to agree with the statement. The last one was explaining the material of speech clearly and the results showed that 67.4% agreed with that statement. They could explain the material well because they got the preparation in performing a speech. Table 1 will display the data findings.

Table 1

| No. | Statements | Disagree | Undecided | Agree |
|-----|--|----------|-----------|-------|
| 1. | I believe that I have enough ability to speak English in front of my friends. | 4.6% | 14% | 81.4% |
| 2. | I motivate myself to enhance my speaking skill in Public Speaking class. | - | 7% | 93% |
| 3. | I can deliver an organized speech in Public Speaking class. | 4.6% | 16.3% | 79.1% |
| 4. | I can maintain my posture while delivering the speech. | 7% | 23.3% | 69.7% |
| 5. | I can explain the material of speech clearly so that my friends understand what I say. | 4.6% | 28% | 67.4% |

4.1.2 Students' Self-Efficacy in Public Speaking

Considering participants' self-efficacy, they were asked four statements which convince their own self-efficacy, particularly in public speaking. Their self-efficacy could grow the confidence. The statements were intended to investigate how far students were aware of their own self-efficacy.

The students expressed that they could deliver a speech confidently, the results will be showed in Table. 2. Since they wanted to produce a better speech, they pushed their efforts and worked harder. The students or participants showed 93% of the total percentage that they agreed with practicing a lot. Having a confidence and an effort were not enough, they had to consider and find their own strategy in delivering a speech. They confirmed that they already found the strategy to perform better in public speaking. They also considered that the strategy that they used had benefits in delivering a speech.

Delivering a speech must consider the time given so that the students thought that they could maintain it. To make the speech be effective, they could also limit the ideas to be easily understood. Seemingly, the atmosphere and surroundings in a class help the students' self-efficacy in public speaking class. The results indicated that 95.4% of the participants admitted that friends had an important role in supporting each other. In addition to that, they also considered that the lecturers help them in making an organized speech. Furthermore, the atmosphere also motivated them to deliver a speech.

Table 2

| No. | Statements | Disagree | Undecided | Agree |
|-----|---|----------|-----------|-------|
| 6. | I can deliver my speech confidently. | 4.6% | 16.4% | 79% |
| 7. | I push my effort in order to deliver my speech better. | - | 7% | 93% |
| 8. | I can find some strategies in delivering my speech. | 2.3% | 9.3% | 88.4% |
| 9. | I can get the benefits of using the strategies that I find in delivering my speech. | - | 14% | 86% |
| 10. | I can maintain my speech during the time given. | 2.3% | 21% | 76.7% |
| 11. | I can limit the content of my speech to two to four main ideas. | 7% | 14% | 79% |
| 12. | My friends support me when I deliver my speech. | - | 7% | 93% |
| 13. | My lecturer helps me to arrange an organized speech. | - | 4.6% | 95.4% |
| 14. | The atmosphere in my classroom motivate me to deliver an organized speech better. | - | 7% | 93% |

4.1.3 Factors' Influencing Students' Self-Efficacy in Public Speaking

Bandura (1997) suggests four factors that influence self-efficacy; mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal or social persuasion, and emotional state. The statements for mastery experience were in number 15 and 16. They agreed that they can raise or lower the voice and they believe that they were a credible speaker. People tend to have a high self-efficacy if they accomplished the task successfully (Bandura, 1997, p. 80). Observing peers or friends are the aspects of the vicarious experience, therefore, they had a role model in delivering a speech. The result showed that the students had a role model in public speaking.

Number 18 and 19 were the statements for the verbal or social persuasion. The statements intended to know how they could persuade the friends when they were delivering a speech. The use of facial expression and gestures may increase their own self-efficacy because positive persuasion like that can make an achievable success (Vaezi & Fallah, 2011). The last number was intended to emotional state. Feeling relieved and delighted were the students' feelings after delivering a speech.

Table 3

| No. | Statements | Disagree | Undecided | Agree |
|-----|---|----------|-----------|-------|
| 15. | I can raise or lower my voice in order to make my speech powerful. | - | 18.6% | 81.4% |
| 16. | I am credible speaker during my speech because I can deliver my speech clearly. | - | 23.3% | 76.7% |
| 17. | I have a role model in delivering the speech effectively. | - | 30.2% | 69.8% |
| 18. | I can use facial expressions during my speech. | 9.3% | 14% | 76.7% |
| 19. | I can use gestures during my speech. | 2.3% | 9.3% | 88.4% |
| 20. | I feel relieved and delighted after delivering my speech. | - | 9.3% | 90.7% |

5. DISCUSSIONS

The results from questionnaire showed that the students were aware of their own self-efficacy. The students believed that they had the ability in performing better, motivated themselves to get a better performance in public speaking, and delivered an organized speech. These beliefs may influence how they feel, think, and react to their own self-efficacy. "Efficacy beliefs influence how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave" (Bandura, 1993, p. 118). Furthermore, the students could maintain the postures during delivering a speech and explain the material of speech in a better idea. The posture and the material which was obtained from the topic of a speech are kinds of the task given. Self-efficacy is "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura, 1986, p. 391).

The students built the self-efficacy in themselves and the results were astonishing. They could deliver a speech confidently, push the efforts, find the strategy, and get the advantages of having a strategy in delivering a speech. In the interview section, one respondent said that,

#3 for me the strategy is when from the beginning I get the attention from the audience, it will motivate me. So I have to be sure that the audiences grab attention from me.

#5 for me my strategy is always practicing for the performance, don't be spontaneous and prepare all and keep to be confidence.

Bandura (1997) suggests that individuals first develop a sense of competence or efficacy at an activity.

Delivering a speech deals with time, the students would be given a limited time. The results showed that the students could maintain and limit the speech in a time given. In this case, they understood that they should prepare a speech by practicing with a time given. Asakereh and Dehghannezhad (2015) describe time as one of the aspects of delivering a speech.

The environment can influence students' self-efficacy ((Fraser, 2007; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). The students answered the questionnaire that their friends and lecturers support and motivate them in delivering a speech. The milieu in a classroom also builds the strong confidence to them when they started to perform. These elements can construct a good self-efficacy to the students in public speaking.

After knowing that the students are aware of self-efficacy, the next issue that will be discussed is the factors that influence students' self-efficacy. For the first factor, mastery experience, the students agreed that they could raise or lower the voice as the professional speakers. Moreover, they believed that they were the credible speaker in Public Speaking class. Mastery

experience is related to individual's achievement (Zarei & Gilanian, 2015, p. 224). The second factor is a vicarious experience. Zarei and Gilanian (2015, p. 224) add that for vicarious experience, the observations and models are the source of information to form individual's self-efficacy. Thus, the students had a role model in delivering a speech.

Verbal or social persuasion is the third factors influencing self-efficacy. The students could persuade their classmates by using gestures and facial expressions while delivering a speech. When the audience responded the gestures and facial expressions positively, the speakers would have a strong self-efficacy. Verbal or social persuasion refers to feedback, judgments, and appraisals from others about the related task (Usher & Pajares, 2006). The last factor is the emotional state. After delivering a speech, the students feel relieved and delighted. Having feelings of relaxation can lead to a high level of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

This study is expected to investigate students' self-efficacy in public speaking. The results demonstrated that the students had a self-efficacy and showed a positive investigation of self-efficacy in public speaking. They are already aware of their own self-efficacy in delivering a speech in Public Speaking class. Judgments of personal efficacy influence the choices that students make, the effort that they expend, the persistence and resilience that they exert when obstacles arise, and the thought patterns and emotional reactions that they experience (Bandura, 1986, 1995, 1997; Pajares, 1996, 2003; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994; Zimmerman, Bonner & Kovach, 1996).

The findings of this study suggest that the atmosphere in a class motivates and supports the students in delivering a speech. Furthermore, the findings can raise awareness of students' self-efficacy in public speaking.

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