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CHARTING LANGUAGE HORIZONS: INVESTIGATING THE DYNAMIC ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG HIGHER INSTITUTION STUDENTS– A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW


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Abstract:

How significantly does a student's belief in their success determine their actual performance in a foreign language? What are the key factors that moderate this relationship? To address these questions, this systematic review evaluated research published between 2018 and 2024, utilising Bandura's self-efficacy framework to analyse the relationship between self-belief and foreign language performance in higher education settings. From the initial 769 articles sourced from Scopus, Google Scholar, and Research Gate, 26 met the criteria required to examine the diverse linguistic landscapes of modern students. The meta-analysis underscores a consistent finding: higher self-efficacy correlates with superior language learning outcomes, yielding a small-to-moderate effect size. Perhaps more revealing, however, is the role of moderators—a complex web of individual (gender and grade level), psychological (anxiety), and instructional factors (teaching methods and vicarious experiences)—that actively shape the learner's foreign language performance. Environmental contexts, such as study abroad experiences, also play pivotal roles. Ultimately, this review argues that self-efficacy is not merely a psychological byproduct but a critical engine of linguistic success. Consequently, it recommends that teacher training and curricula move beyond rote instruction to incorporate "efficacy-boosting" tools—positive feedback and mastery-based

tasks—to cultivate a more supportive and high-achieving learning environment.

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Academic Achievement, Foreign Language Learning, Higher Education, Self-Efficacy, Systematic Review

Introduction

Learning a second or foreign language requires the integration of cognitive, practical and social skills. Among these, self-efficacy is recognised as a vital factor influencing foreign language learning. Many studies emphasise its importance for learners' academic performance and language acquisition, yet limited research has explored how different language skills develop among non-native university students in particular. Moreover, findings regarding the impact of self-efficacy on various language skills are inconsistent. For example, Jee (2019) found that self-efficacy positively affected Korean language proficiency among international students in South Korea. In contrast, Zhang and Lu (2014) presented inconclusive evidence indicating that self-efficacy only partially influenced certain aspects of language proficiency, such as speaking and listening, but had little or no effect on reading and writing.

While self-efficacy has been widely examined in general foreign language acquisition, limited research has investigated specific aspects, such as its role in different language skills (e.g. speaking, listening, reading, and writing) or effective strategies for developing and enhancing self-efficacy among non-native university students.

Additionally, there is a notable lack of research on diverse learner populations. Much of the existing literature on self-efficacy in foreign language learning has focused on relatively homogeneous learner populations, such as undergraduate students from specific universities and countries. Therefore, further research is needed to understand the foreign language learning experiences of diverse learner populations, particularly non-native learners in higher education. Learners from varied cultural backgrounds possess different levels of language proficiency. Studying their experiences can provide valuable insights into the challenges they encounter and support the development of effective strategies to enhance language learning success.

By addressing these gaps, this systematic review aims to examine the role of self-efficacy in foreign language learning and identify the key factors that moderate the relationships among non-native learners in higher institutions. We hope that these findings will offer valuable insights into the psychological aspects of language education while informing instructional practices to make foreign language teaching more effective and engaging for a diverse range of learners.

Theoretical Framework

This systematic review adopts Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory as its foundational framework, which defines self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their ability to complete specific tasks. This belief significantly influences an individual's goal setting, task execution, and approach to challenges. In the context of foreign language learning, learners' self-efficacy affects their anxiety, motivation, engagement, and classroom participation. According to Bandura, four primary sources that shape individuals' self-efficacy are: (1) mastery experience, (2) vicarious experience, (3) social persuasion, and (4) physiological state. These factors are particularly relevant in language learning, where learners often encounter challenges such as anxiety, lack of motivation, limited exposure, and cultural differences. By applying this theoretical framework, this review explores how self-efficacy impacts foreign language learning, focusing on the mediating effects of anxiety, learning motivation, and language proficiency on the relationship between self-efficacy and foreign language achievement. This study aims to expand and enrich the theoretical understanding of foreign language learning.

This systematic review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, developed by Shamseer et al. (2015). As a widely recognised standard systematic review framework, the PRISMA guidelines ensure transparency, accuracy, and completeness of the research process. Following this guideline, researchers implemented a comprehensive research protocol that included all 17 steps, such as literature search strategies, study screening, quality assessment, and the final selection of studies for analysis. These steps were designed to minimise bias and enhance the reliability of the findings. By adhering to the PRISMA guidelines, this review offers a more systematic and comprehensive examination of the relationship between self-efficacy and foreign language learning, helping to address existing research gaps in the field.

This systematic review aimed to answer the following questions:

How does self-efficacy relate to foreign language learning achievements of non-native higher education learners?

What are the potential moderating variables that influence this relationship?

Study Selection and Screening Process

Search Strategy

A comprehensive search was conducted in multiple scholarly databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate. The search was limited to studies published in English between 2018 and 2024. In the Scopus database, the following search terms and Boolean operators were used: ("self-efficacy" OR "language self-efficacy") AND ("foreign language" OR "language skills" OR "foreign language learning" OR "foreign language skills").

Additional search terms, such as “self-efficacy” and “foreign-language learning”, were applied in other databases to ensure thorough coverage.

Researchers followed five inclusion criteria: (1) published between 2018 and 2024, (2) written in English, (3) conducted on non-native university students, (4) focused on the influence of self-efficacy on foreign language learning, and (5) reported quantitative data.

Following the PRISMA guidelines, screening was conducted in three stages.

Identification: Initial records were identified, and duplicates were removed.

Screening: Three researchers independently screened the titles and abstracts against the inclusion criteria.

Eligibility: Full-text assessments were conducted to confirm the final eligibility. Disagreements were resolved by consensus.

Data Extraction and Synthesis

The researchers employed a mixed-methods approach to synthesise the data, combining meta-analysis and narrative synthesis. A standardised Excel extraction form was used to record study identifiers, participant demographics (country, language background), study design, sample size, self-efficacy measures, moderating variables, and effect sizes.

To ensure accuracy, data extraction was performed independently by three researchers. For the meta-analysis, the overall effect size of the relationship between self-efficacy and language learning was calculated to account for potential heterogeneity across the studies.

Study Selection Results

A total of 769 records were identified (Scopus $n = 509$, Google Scholar $n = 153$, ResearchGate $n = 107$). After the initial screening of titles and abstracts, 680 articles were excluded for not meeting the inclusion criteria, leaving 89 papers for further evaluation.

During the full-text eligibility phase, 56 articles were downloaded and assessed for eligibility. Thirty full-text articles were excluded for the following reasons:

- (1) Focus on teacher perceptions ($n = 12$)
- (2) Self-efficacy unrelated to foreign language learning ($n = 8$)
- (3) Focus on first or second language rather than foreign language ($n = 7$)
- (4) Purely descriptive measures of self-efficacy levels without correlation to outcomes ($n = 4$)
- (5) Lack of quantitative data ($n = 2$)

Ultimately, 26 studies met all the criteria and were included in both the meta-analysis and narrative synthesis.

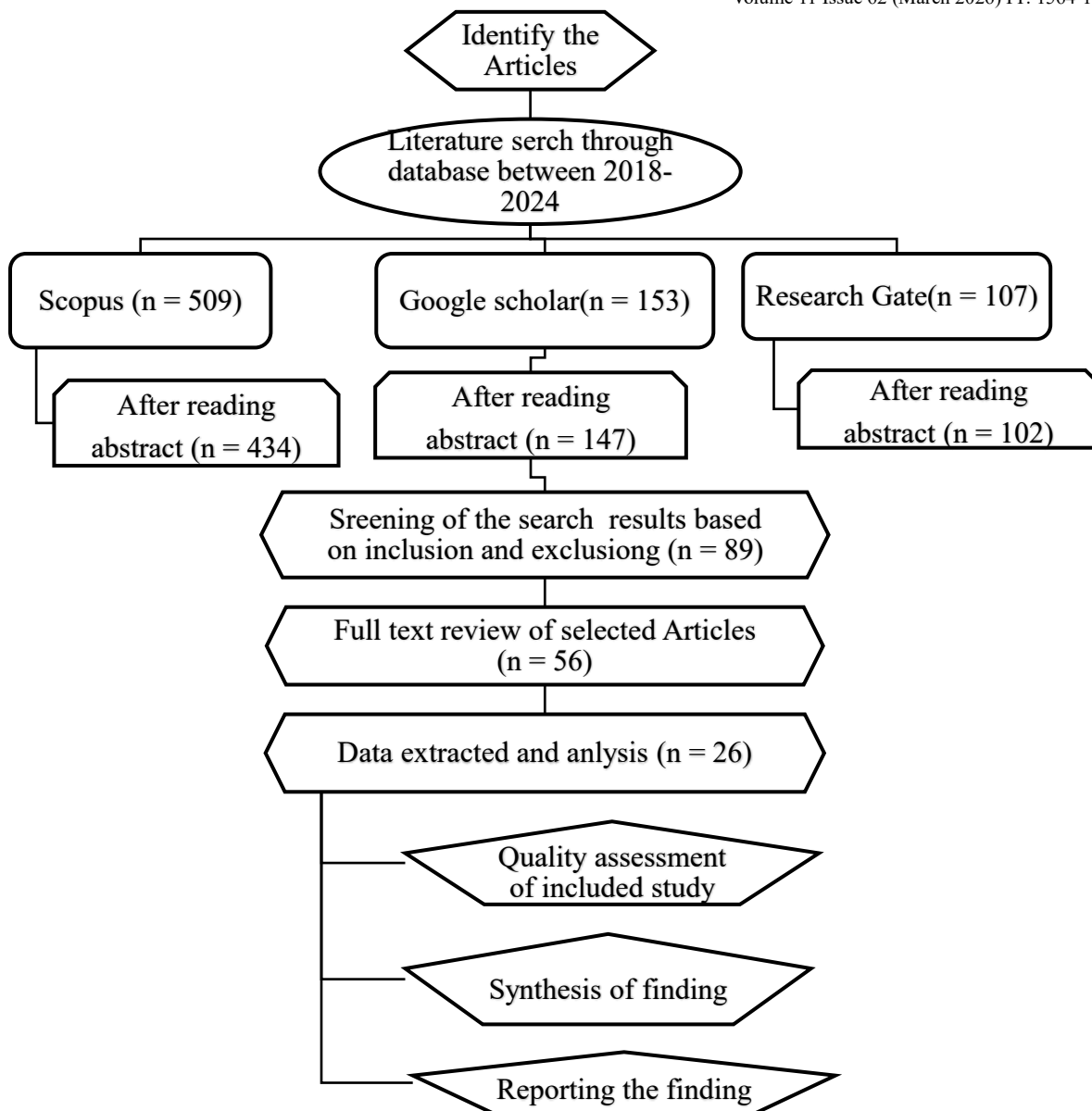


Figure 1: Flow Chart of The Study

Data Collection Process

To collect data, relevant information from the selected studies was extracted using a standardised data extraction form. The data collected included study attributes (e.g. author, publication year, study design), demographic information of participants (e.g. country of origin, language background, and foreign language learning), potential moderators (e.g. motivation, anxiety, prior learning experience), and outcome measures and results of the studies. The data were then independently extracted from each included study by three researchers using a data extraction form. This process was repeated by two independent reviewers for verification, ensuring the consistency and accuracy of the data extraction. Any discrepancies or errors were resolved through discussions or consultations with other reviewers. The extracted data were subsequently compiled and entered into a spreadsheet for analysis.

Results

The Impact of Self-Efficacy on Foreign Language Learning Among Non-Native Higher Institution Learners

Self-efficacy is learners' own perception of their capabilities to accomplish language learning tasks, and it plays an important role in shaping foreign language learning experiences among non-native university students. A systematic review was conducted to explore this relationship, beginning with an initial search of 743 potentially relevant articles from various countries and languages. After screening the titles and abstracts, 56 articles were selected for full-text review. The final analysis included 26 articles that met the inclusion criteria of this review. Most studies examined the relationship between self-efficacy and English (n = 20) as a foreign language, while a smaller number focused on other languages, including Korean (n = 1), Japanese (n = 1), German (n = 1), Arabic (n = 1), and Chinese (n = 1) (see Figure 2). Most studies (n = 13) explored the relationship between self-efficacy and language proficiency. A smaller number of studies examined the relationship between self-efficacy and specific language skills, including reading (n = 4), writing (n = 1), listening (n = 3), and speaking (n = 5) proficiency. (see Figure 3)

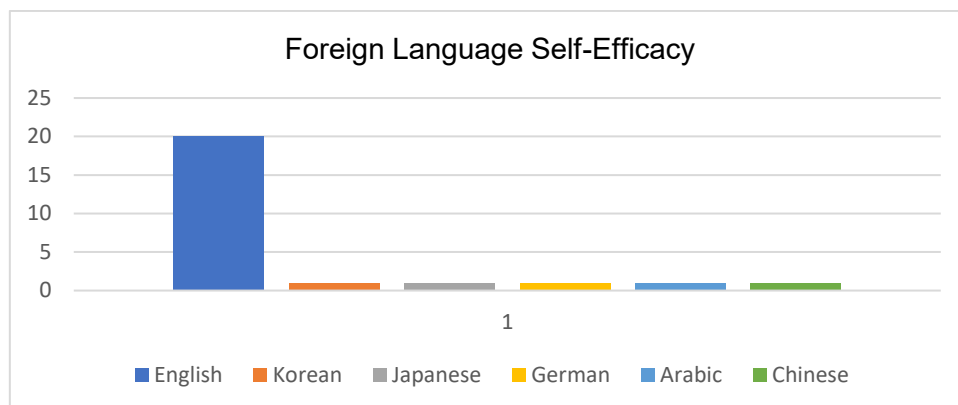


Figure 2: Distribution Of Articles by Foreign Language Studied

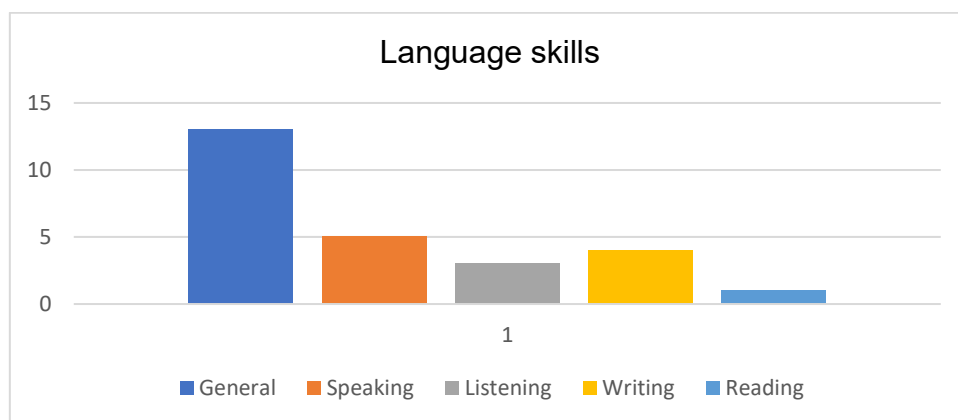


Figure 3. Distribution Of Articles by Language Skill

Table 1: Key Themes and Findings on Self-Efficacy and Foreign Language Learning

Theme	Key Findings	Examples from Studies
1. Self-Efficacy and Language Proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Positive correlation exists between self-efficacy and language proficiency. - Learners with higher self-efficacy tend to achieve better results in standardised tests and self-perceived proficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hao & Yang (2019): Chinese learners of Japanese with higher self-efficacy demonstrated better proficiency ($r = 0.609$). - Wang et al. (2021): High self-efficacy was strongly linked to higher test scores.
2. Self-Efficacy and Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-efficacy enhances learners' motivation. - Higher motivation positively impacts academic achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alkhalifah (2022): Self-efficacy and motivation were significant predictors of academic achievement among Saudi EFL students. - Chang & Tsai (2022): Self-efficacy significantly influenced academic achievement in online English courses.
3. Self-Efficacy and Language Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-efficacy has a positive impact on specific language skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading. - Learners with higher self-efficacy tend to perform better in these skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hermagustiana et al. (2021): Higher self-efficacy was positively correlated with speaking performance ($r = 0.605$). - Dai et al. (2023): Writing self-efficacy significantly enhanced writing skills. - Hong & Phan (2020): Self-efficacy in TOEIC reading and listening was significantly associated with higher achievement ($r = 0.244$).
4. Self-Efficacy and Anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Higher self-efficacy is negatively associated with foreign language anxiety (FLA). - Reducing anxiety contributes to improved language performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hermagustiana et al. (2021): Self-efficacy was negatively correlated with FLLA, improving speaking performance. - Jee (2019): Higher self-efficacy was significantly associated with reduced anxiety in Korean learners ($r = -0.694$).
5. Self-Efficacy and Academic Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-efficacy is a significant predictor of academic achievement. - Learners with higher self-efficacy tend to perform better academically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noorollahi (2021): Self-efficacy was a more significant predictor of academic achievement than self-esteem ($r = 0.609$). - Luu (2023): Vietnamese students with high self-efficacy demonstrated better academic performance ($r = 0.132$).
6. Self-Efficacy and Learning Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners with higher self-efficacy tend to adopt effective learning strategies, such as metacognitive and self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies. - These strategies contribute to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zhou & Thompson (2023): Self-efficacy significantly influenced the use of metacognitive strategies in listening tasks. - Zhu et al. (2024): High-proficiency writers used more SRL strategies.

Theme	Key Findings	Examples from Studies
	improved performance and promote deeper learning.	

Table 2: Effect Sizes of the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Foreign Language Learning

Study	Country	Effect Size (r)	Key Findings
Hermagustiana et al. (2021)	Indonesia	$r = 0.605$	Learners' self-efficacy was significantly and positively associated with speaking achievement.
Jee (2019)	Australia	$r = -0.694$	Learners' self-efficacy was significantly inversely associated with speaking anxiety.
Hong & Phan (2020)	Vietnam	$r = 0.244$	Self-efficacy exhibited a weak positive effect on TOEIC scores.
Tanir (2023)	Türkiye	$r = 0.253$	Weak positive correlation between self-efficacy and German language performance.
Putri et al. (2024)	Indonesia	$r = 0.459$	Moderate positive correlation between self-efficacy and Arabic syntax.
Sabti et al. (2019)	Iraq	$r = -0.466$	Moderate negative correlation between writing anxiety and writing performance.
Yoestara & Putri (2019)	Indonesia	$r = 0.249$	Self-efficacy exhibited a weak positive correlation with TOEFL performance.
Boroumand et al. (2021)	Iran	$r = 0.94$	Listening achievement was positively correlated with self-efficacy.
Noorollahi (2021)	Iran	$r = 0.609$	A significant positive correlation was found between self-efficacy and academic achievement.
Luu (2023)	Vietnam	$r = 0.132$	No statistically significant correlation was found between self-efficacy and academic performance.

The analysis across studies revealed a positive correlation between self-efficacy and foreign language proficiency. Learners with higher self-efficacy tend to achieve better results on standardised language tests (Wang et al., 2021) and self-perceived proficiency. (Hao & Yang, 2019). Hao and Yang (2019) found a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.609$) between self-efficacy and Japanese proficiency among Chinese learners. Self-efficacy among non-native

learners is linked to their motivation to learn foreign languages. Self-efficacy enhances foreign language learners' motivation, which in turn positively impacts their academic achievements. (Alkhalifah,2022; Wang & Tsai,2022)

A systematic review of studies also revealed that self-efficacy plays a crucial role in shaping specific language skills among non-native language learners. These skills include speaking (Ho et al.,2023; Nguyễn et al.,2022; Hermagustiana et al.,2021; Zhang et al.,2020; Jee, 2019), listening (Zhou & Thompson,2023; Payaprom,2022; Boroumand et al.,2021) reading (Hong & Phan, 2020), and writing (Zhu et al.,2024; Dai et al.,2023; Zhou et al.,2022; Takarroucht,2022). For example, Hermagustiana et al. (2021) found that Indonesian undergraduate English language learners with high self-efficacy demonstrated better speaking performance ($r = 0.605$) and experienced lower levels of foreign language learning anxiety (FLLA). Similarly, Payaprom (2022) and Boroumand et al. (2021) found a positive correlation between learners' self-efficacy and listening performance, with learners employing more effective metacognitive strategies. In the domain of writing, Dai et al. (2023) and Zhu et al. (2024) revealed that writing self-efficacy significantly enhances writing skills, particularly when learners utilise self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies. Finally, Hong and Phan (2020) demonstrated that self-efficacy in TOEIC reading and listening comprehension was positively correlated with TOEIC achievement ($r = 0.244$). The skill-specific benefits of self-efficacy indicate that self-efficacy not only influences overall language performance but also enhances the performance of specific language skills.

A systematic review revealed that high self-efficacy is correlated with lower foreign language anxiety (FLA), which, in turn, leads to improved foreign language performance. Hermagustiana et al.,2021; Jee.2019). Hermagustiana et al. (2021) found in their study that Indonesian undergraduate foreign language learners with high self-efficacy experience lower anxiety while learning English, leading to better performance in speaking. Jee (2019) found a similar outcome, reporting that Korean foreign language learners with high speaking and listening self-efficacy reduced anxiety ($r = -0.694$). These findings highlight the importance of fostering self-efficacy to create a supportive learning environment that can help learners reduce their foreign language anxiety, thereby enhancing their language performance.

Self-efficacy not only enhances learners' language performance and motivation but also reduces their foreign language anxiety and improves their overall academic achievement while reducing learners' foreign language anxiety. It is also associated with learning strategies (Noorollahi,2021; Luu, 2023). For instance, Noorollahi (2021) found that among Iranian EFL students, self-efficacy was a stronger predictor of academic achievement ($r = 0.609$) than self-esteem. The analysis revealed that learners with high self-efficacy are more likely to employ effective learning strategies such as metacognitive (Zhou & Thompson,2023) and environmental self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies (Zhu et al., 2024). These findings indicate that self-efficacy impacts foreign language learning outcomes and encourages the adoption of effective learning strategies to enhance knowledge acquisition.

In summary, this systematic review revealed the impact of self-efficacy on foreign language learning. The review found that self-efficacy not only enhances learners' language proficiency and reduces their anxiety associated with language learning but also boosts their learning motivation and supports the development of four key language skills, including speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Additionally, self-efficacy has been shown to improve academic performance and reduce anxiety associated with learning a foreign language. These findings

emphasise the need to integrate self-efficacy building strategies into foreign language teaching and curriculum design, as this can lead to more effective language-learning outcomes.

Potential Moderating Variables Affecting the Relationships Between Self-Efficacy and Foreign Language Learning Performance

The final 26 studies that met the inclusion criteria were conducted in various countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Iran, Thailand, Algeria, Indonesia, Iraq, Australia, and Turkey. The analysis revealed a strong, multifaceted relationship between self-efficacy and foreign language learning. This relationship is evident across various domains, including language proficiency, motivation, specific language skills (speaking, listening, writing, and reading), and academic performance. Additionally, self-efficacy is strongly linked to reduced foreign language anxiety and the use of effective learning strategies in language learning. Potential mediating variables, such as motivation, anxiety, and language proficiency, were also identified. The findings are a detailed exploration of these findings (Table 3).

Table 3: Potential Moderating Variables Affecting the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Foreign Language Learning

Study	Country	Moderating Variables	Effect on Relationship
Zhou & Thompson (2023)	China	Listening proficiency, gender, major, years of English learning, and study abroad experience	Gender and prior proficiency influenced the use of metacognitive strategies over time.
Dai et al. (2023)	China	None specified	No moderating variables were identified; self-efficacy directly improved writing skills.
Alkhalifah (2022)	Saudi Arabia	Learning preferences (preferred learning styles)	Learning preferences moderated the effect of self-efficacy on academic achievement.
Payaprom (2022)	Thailand	None specified	No moderating variables were identified; self-efficacy directly enhanced listening skills.
Lu et al. (2022)	China	None specified	No moderating variables were identified; self-efficacy had a direct impact on English proficiency.
Wu et al. (2022)	China	None specified	No moderating variables were identified; self-efficacy directly reduced English use anxiety.
Zhu et al. (2024)	China	Writing proficiency levels	Higher-proficiency writers used more environmental SRL strategies, enhancing their self-efficacy.

Study	Country	Moderating Variables	Effect on Relationship
Zhou et al. (2022)	China	None specified	No moderating variables were identified; self-efficacy directly improved writing performance.
Ho et al. (2023)	Hong Kong	Gender, prior English proficiency	Gender and prior proficiency influenced the effectiveness of experiential learning.
Nguyễn et al. (2022)	Vietnam	Teaching approaches (TBLT, TSLT, PPP)	Teaching approaches mediated the effect of self-efficacy on speaking skills and students' motivation.
Chang & Tsai (2022)	China	Emotional Intelligence (EI), Learning Motivation	EI and learning motivation moderated the effect of self-efficacy on academic achievement.
Takarroucht (2022)	Algeria	None specified	No moderating variables were identified; self-assessment directly improved writing self-efficacy.
Wang et al. (2021)	China	Academic emotions, language proficiency	Academic emotions and proficiency levels influenced the self-efficacy profiles.
Boroumand et al. (2021)	Iran	Use of the concept mapping strategy	The concept mapping strategy mediated the effect of self-efficacy on listening achievement.
Noorollahi (2021)	Iran	Self-esteem	Self-esteem moderated the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement.
Hermagustiana et al. (2021)	Indonesia	Foreign Language Learning Anxiety (FLLA)	FLLA mediated the relationship between self-efficacy and speaking performance.
Namaziandost & Çakmak (2020)	Iran	Gender	Gender influences the impact of the Flipped Classroom model on self-efficacy.
Hong & Phan (2020)	Vietnam	Sources of self-efficacy (mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, affective states)	Mastery experiences were the most influential source of self-efficacy.
Zhang et al. (2020)	China	Sources of self-efficacy (enactive mastery, vicarious experience,	Verbal persuasion is the most powerful source of self-efficacy.

Study	Country	Moderating Variables	Effect on Relationship
		verbal persuasion, physiological states)	
Yoestara & Putri (2019)	Indonesia	None specified	No moderating variables were identified; self-efficacy directly influenced TOEFL performance.
Sabti et al. (2019)	Iraq	Writing anxiety, achievement motivation	Writing anxiety and achievement motivation moderated the effect of self-efficacy on writing performance in this study.
Jee (2019)	Australia	Language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing), test anxiety	Test anxiety moderated the relationship between self-efficacy and FLA.
Luu (2023)	Vietnam	Gender, family area (urban vs. rural), grade level	Grade level moderated the relationship between self-efficacy and students' academic achievement.
Tanir (2023)	Türkiye	Gender, department (Gastronomy, Tourism, Aviation)	Department moderated the relationship between self-efficacy and German-language performance.
Putri et al. (2024)	Indonesia	Gender, academic background	No significant moderating effect of gender or academic background on self-efficacy was found.
Hao & Yang (2019)	China	None specified	No moderating variables were identified; self-efficacy directly influenced Japanese proficiency.

The systematic review revealed that the relationship between self-efficacy and foreign language learning is influenced by various moderating variables, as evidenced by the studies summarised in Table 3 below. These variables can be categorised into individual, emotional, psychological, instructional, and contextual factors (Figure 4).

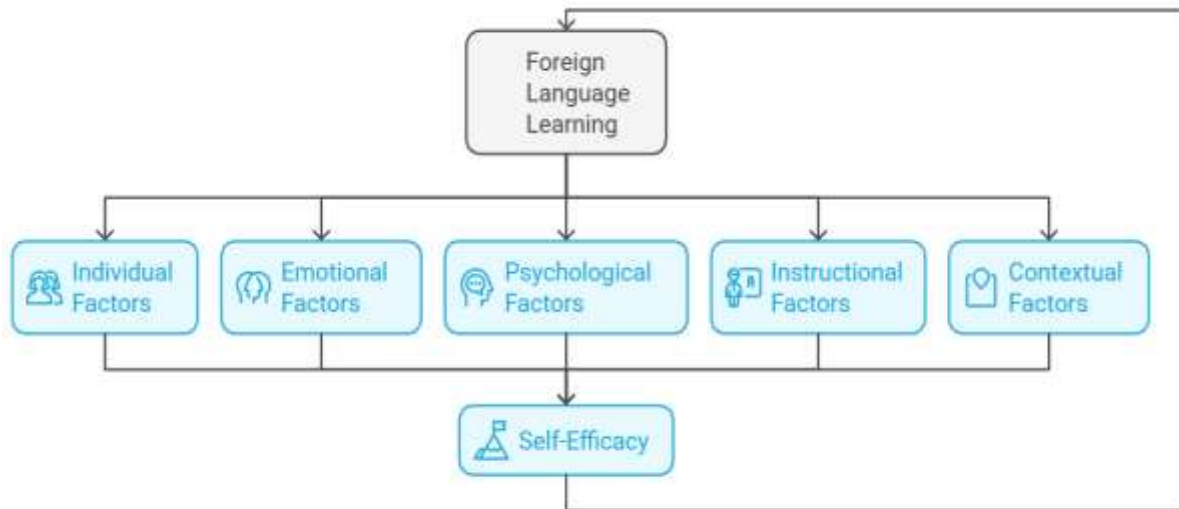


Figure 4: Moderating Variables Affecting the Relationships Between Self-Efficacy And Foreign Language Learning Performance

Individual Factors

Gender and prior language proficiency also play a role, with female students and those with higher prior proficiency often demonstrating greater improvement in self-efficacy after interventions such as experiential learning or flipped classroom models (Ho et al., 2023; Namaziandost and Çakmak, 2020). However, self-efficacy tends to decline as foreign language learners progress to higher levels because of academic challenges (Luu,2023). Additionally, proficiency in specific language skills, such as speaking and listening, was strongly linked to higher self-efficacy.

Emotional And Psychological Factors

Emotional and psychological factors play a crucial role in shaping the relationship between self-efficacy and foreign language learning among non-native university students. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is one of these factors, indicating that learners with lower FLA show higher self-efficacy and perform better in a foreign language. (Hermagustiana et al.,2021). Emotional intelligence (EI) has also been found to significantly influence foreign language learners' self-efficacy. Chang and Tsai (2022) and Hermagustiana et al. (2021) found that learners with high EI and a lower level of FLA exhibited better self-efficacy and academic performance.

Instructional Factors

Teaching approaches and learning experiences significantly influence learners' self-efficacy in foreign language learning and shape this relationship. Nguyễn et al. (2022) conducted the research demonstrated that different instructional approaches, such as Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Task-Supported Language Teaching (TSLT), can significantly influence self-efficacy and motivation, particularly in speaking and writing tasks (adjusted $R^2 = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$). Regarding feedback mechanisms, Zhang et al. (2020) revealed that positive feedback

(verbal persuasion, especially positive feedback from teachers ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$) and peers ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.05$) was a critical factor in boosting learners' self-efficacy. At the same time, "mastery experiences", which learners gain through completing tasks, and pleasant learning experiences previously, are particularly important for establishing and reinforcing self-efficacy (Hong and Phan,2020). Similarly, vicarious experiences, where learners gain confidence by observing the successful performance of their peers, are also considered an effective way to enhance self-efficacy, as they provide learners with tangible models of success (Zhang et al.,2020). These findings collectively demonstrate that teaching methods, positive feedback, successful experiences, and peer modelling work together in foreign language learning to significantly enhance learners' self-efficacy, which in turn impacts their language learning outcomes.

Contextual Factors

Additionally, this systematic review identified foreign language learners' learning preferences, overseas study experiences, and academic backgrounds as three key contextual moderators in the relationship between self-efficacy and foreign language learning. Drawing on Bandura's socio-cognitive theory, these moderating variables appear to modulate learners' self-appraisal processes in multilingual contexts. An empirical study demonstrated that individual differences and environmental factors jointly shape self-efficacy in foreign language learners. Alkhalifah (2022) conducted an empirical study with 142 students and revealed that learners employing visual-auditory learning styles demonstrated greater confidence and success in their foreign language learning process than learners employing other learning styles. Zhou and Thompson (2023) argued that exposure to immersive language environments can help foreign language learners enhance their self-efficacy by providing them with real-world experience and cultural engagement. Other researchers, such as Tanir (2023), supported the idea that an academic background can influence foreign language learners' self-efficacy and language performance. Tanir (2023) found that learners often have different motivations and opportunities to apply their language skills, especially in specific fields such as tourism or aviation, which, in unhelps them enhance their self-efficacy and overall language performance.

Conclusion

This systematic review aimed to examine the correlation between self-efficacy and foreign language learning achievement. Simultaneously, the key factors moderating this relationship among non-native higher institution speakers from 2018 to 2024 were identified. This study aligns with previous literature that self-efficacy positively influences foreign language learning. This study showed that learners with high self-efficacy achieve better results in foreign language learning. The study also revealed that the effect size of this positive relationship varied across studies, from small to medium. This difference may be attributed to the use of different methods in these studies, with some employing self-reported surveys and others using objective measures.

This study also identified four key moderators that influence this relationship. These factors include individual factors (gender, prior proficiency, grade level, language skills), emotional factors (emotional intelligence), psychological factors (foreign language anxiety), instructional factors (teaching methods, verbal persuasion, mastery experiences, vicarious experiences), and contextual factors (learning preferences, overseas study experiences, and academic backgrounds).

The findings highlight the importance of fostering self-efficacy through targeted interventions, such as implementing teaching methods that consider individual learners' learning preferences, providing opportunities for mastery experiences, and addressing psychological and emotional barriers, such as foreign language anxiety. To optimise the long-term effectiveness of foreign language pedagogy, we propose a three-tier collaborative framework for educational stakeholders. (1) Integrate the self-efficacy cultivation module into foreign language educators' training programs. These modules should focus on developing formative language assessment skills, such as providing positive feedback strategies for cross-cultural classroom teaching. (2) Provide a continuous professional development program for foreign language instructors by incorporating evidence-based modules to boost learners' self-efficacy. (3) Regarding policy support, educational authorities should establish a dynamic mechanism to focus on language transformation in multilingual regions. The proposed framework, which integrates teacher development, curriculum innovation, and policy support, creates a synergistic effect that can enhance language education practices.

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