

Improving Students' Self Efficacy in Speaking English through Self-assessment Mind Mapping

Arum Putri Rahayu¹

¹STAI Ma'arif Magetan

Corresponding author

hayurahayu9284@gmail.com

Abstract: Speaking is a vital skill that empowers students to seize new opportunities and adapt to evolving academic, professional, and social environments. This study addresses a key issue in English language teaching: how to sustainably enhance students' self-efficacy in speaking without overburdening teachers. The study's focus is on fostering self-efficacy, which is crucial for students to develop confidence in their speaking abilities. In the research, 31 second-semester undergraduate students from the Tarbiyah Faculty of STAI Ma'arif Magetan were interviewed to explore the self-assessment actions they commonly undertake. The findings led to the development of self-assessment mind map as a simple yet effective instructional tool. This study presents: 1) mind maps serve a visual aid for students to reflect on and evaluate their own speaking abilities, 2) promoting self-regulation and improvement over time, and 3) explores its impact on students' self-efficacy in speaking English as well as their performance in English-speaking tests.

Keywords: English speaking, mind map, self-assessment, self-efficacy.

Introduction

Speaking is a core element of human interaction, acting as the main avenue for expressing thoughts, ideas, and opinions (Torky, 2006). It holds a vital role across personal relationships, professional environments, and public discussions (Parupalli, 2019), (Ghafar & Raheem, 2023). The capacity to communicate thoughts clearly and effectively greatly impacts how messages are perceived and understood (Thornbury, 2005).

Speaking lies at the heart of human interaction and the expression of our inner thoughts (Alpuim & Ehrenberg, 2024). Unlike written communication, which permits reflection and revision, speaking demands real-time processing, often revealing our immediate emotions and responses (Wahyudin, Yudi et al., 2024), (Alsaawi, 2019), (Pfeiffer, 1998). Through speech, we convey nuances, tone, and emphasis that add depth to meaning, making it a powerful tool for both sharing information and building relationships

(Salija et al., 2018). This immediacy and personal touch make speaking an essential aspect of effective communication and meaningful connection with others (Alsaawi, 2019).

Speaking enables us to share and exchange thoughts and ideas effectively. With an average of around ten thousand words spoken daily, this sheer volume highlights just how essential verbal expression is in our everyday lives (Katamba, 2015). Professionals such as auctioneers or politicians, whose roles depend heavily on verbal communication, often exceed this average (Katamba, 2015). Their work requires not only a high volume of words but also the strategic use of language, prioritizing clarity, persuasion, and engagement to effectively connect with their audiences (Jonz & Saville-Troike, 2003).

Learners often assess their language learning achievements based on the development of their speaking ability, as it is one of the most visible and practical indicators of language proficiency (Eslit & Valderama, 2023). The ability to speak fluently and

confidently in a new language is often associated with successful communication and is seen as a direct reflection of one's progress (Burns, 2019). Speaking allows learners to actively engage with others, practice real-time language use, and express themselves effectively, which are crucial for building confidence and integrating into social or cultural contexts (Wahyudin, Yudi et al., 2024). Consequently, many learners prioritize speaking skills over other aspects of language learning, such as reading, writing, or listening, viewing it as a key measure of their overall language competence (Derakhshan et al., 2016). Furthermore, (Rao, 2019) argued that speaking serves as a benchmark for determining the success of language learners, as it involves practical interaction with other speakers and showcases their ability to use the language effectively in real-life contexts. This interactive nature makes speaking a key indicator of language proficiency, reflecting a learner's capacity to convey ideas, respond appropriately, and adapt to various communication settings (Rao, 2019), (Wahyudin, Yudi et al., 2024). As one of the four essential language skills, speaking holds a crucial role in language learning, emphasizing the importance of mastering it to achieve comprehensive language competence and success in both academic and everyday communication (Ghafar & Raheem, 2023).

Speaking is a productive skill, requiring students to actively use language to achieve their communicative goals. Unlike receptive skills such as listening or reading, speaking involves creating and delivering messages, allowing learners to express their ideas, emotions, and intentions effectively. It plays a pivotal role in enabling interaction, fostering understanding, and building relationships, making it an essential component of achieving overall language proficiency and communicative success (Susanto, 2012), (Wahyudin, Yudi et al., 2024), (shiamaa abd E. F. Torky, 2006). However, Many consider speaking one of the most challenging skills for students to master due to the complexity of its components (Laila et al., 2023), (Natasia & Angelianawati, 2022). It requires learners to simultaneously formulate ideas, decide what to say, and select appropriate language while ensuring accuracy in grammar,

vocabulary, and pronunciation (Hadriana, 2008). Additionally, speaking involves responding appropriately to the other person, which demands quick thinking and adaptability in real-time communication. These interconnected demands make speaking a multifaceted and often intimidating skill for language learners to develop and refine (Pollard, 2018), (Iman, 2017), (Cendra & Sulindra, 2022).

The educational process must evolve to address the diverse challenges that both teachers and students face in language learning within the classroom, (Paragae, 2023). As the demands of language proficiency grow, educators need to adopt innovative teaching strategies and integrate technology to enhance engagement and effectiveness (Tabasi et al., 2024), (Isakovna, 2024). Simultaneously, students must navigate difficulties such as varying learning paces, linguistic complexities, and limited opportunities for practical application (Tomlinson et al., 2003), (Hossain, 2024). By embracing adaptive methods and fostering supportive learning environments, the education system can better equip students to overcome these hurdles and achieve their language learning goals, (Al-khresheh, 2024). These challenges encompass a range of factors, including teaching methods (Setiawan & Qamariah, 2023), which often require adaptation to meet diverse learner needs, and materials, (Andini et al., 2020), (Maulana & Helms, 2023), which may not always align with students' linguistic levels or cultural contexts (Eden et al., 2024). Motivation (Kiruthiga & Christopher, 2024), (Seven, 2019) is another critical issue, as maintaining learners' interest and engagement is pivotal for language acquisition. The integration of technology (Crossley & McNamara, 2016), (Ahmad & Jabeen, 2024) presents both opportunities and hurdles, depending on accessibility and the ability to use digital tools effectively. Additionally, policy-related constraints (Getie, 2020) can shape the availability and quality of language instruction, while gender dynamics (Herlinda et al., 2023) may influence participation and learning outcomes in some contexts.

The effectiveness of mind mapping in the educational context has become increasingly

evident in research, particularly as a tool for enhancing language learning and fostering creativity (Feng et al., 2023). Although language learners face numerous challenges, such as teaching methods, motivation, and technology integration, mind mapping has shown potential as a powerful and adaptable strategy to address these issues (Sagita & Sagita, 2024), (Feng et al., 2023), (Buran & Filyukov, 2015).

Mind mapping is a powerful educational tool that helps students organize information visually in a non-linear format, facilitating better comprehension and retention, particularly in an era of information overload (Nehru, 2022). This strategy enhances creativity, problem-solving abilities, and academic performance, as supported by studies like (Bawaneh, 2019) and (Panggabean et al., 2019), which highlight its benefits in fostering divergent thinking and improving outcomes in tasks such as business planning and writing. Additionally, mind mapping positively influences self-efficacy, empowering students to build confidence in their creative and learning capacities (Yan et al., 2022), (Riswanti et al., 2023). Its versatile application across various subjects and skill areas makes it an invaluable tool in modern education (Vieira et al., 2024).

While the positive effects of mind mapping on creativity and learning outcomes are well-documented, the results are not universally consistent (Shi et al., 2023), (Munir et al., 2023). For instance, some studies report limited or negligible impact, particularly in areas such as argumentative writing (Yan et al., 2022). Despite this, students often hold favorable views of the technique, expressing a willingness to engage in mind-mapping activities and appreciating its potential benefits (Dong et al., 2021), (Naghmeh-abbaspour & Rastgoo, 2020). This suggests that, even when measurable outcomes are modest, mind mapping can still foster a positive attitude toward learning and encourage active participation (Nurfaizah, AP., Suarlin., Amrah., 2020).

Mind mapping plays a vital role in enhancing students' self-efficacy by encouraging them to organize their thoughts and reflect on their learning processes (Yan et al., 2022). Through this visual strategy, students are empowered to take greater responsibility for their education, fostering

a sense of ownership and accountability (Nguyen et al., 2023). When combined with self-assessment, mind mapping has been shown to boost academic performance, motivation, and confidence (Jones et al., 2012), (Zhao et al., 2022). Additionally, the connection between self-assessment and creativity is evident in recent research, which highlights how self-reflection and active engagement in learning lead to significant improvements in creativity scores (Yan et al., 2022). This dual benefit underscores the value of mind mapping as both a learning and self-evaluation tool (Adodo, 2013).

Despite its benefits, mind mapping poses challenges, such as being time-consuming and cognitively demanding for students (Shi et al., 2023). However, these challenges can be mitigated through strategies designed to make the technique more accessible. Providing templates or worked-example mind maps offers structured guidance, allowing students to create their own visual representations without feeling overwhelmed (Prabha & Abdul Aziz, 2020), (Merchie & Van Keer, 2016). Such support not only reduces the initial learning curve but also enhances the effectiveness of mind mapping in fostering creativity and boosting self-efficacy, ensuring that students can fully leverage its advantages (Yan et al., 2022), (Zheng et al., 2020).

This research aims to explore the use of self-assessment mind maps in enhancing students' self-efficacy in speaking English, and also to know factors strengthen students' self efficacy in speaking English. By providing a structured framework for students to engage in self-assessment, this approach hopes to foster greater creativity and higher-order thinking skills, offering a sustainable and effective strategy for improving language learning outcomes.

Materials and Methods

This research method is descriptive qualitative by exploring the students' self efficacy in speaking. Another way using focus group discussion (FGD) was employed to gain a more in-depth understanding of the other factors of persistence that might be present in the students. The subjects of this research are 32 participants of the first

semester students of STAI Ma'arif Magetan. The data is collected by interviewing and focusing on the students' conversations. It can be meant that the first step for rendering the data is the students conversation and were coached to identify, categorize, and analyze the facial expression, the body language and the errors accrued by using the students' Self-assessment Mind Mapping. also the use of self efficacy scale to clearer the findings.

Before the FGD, students were informed about the study's goals, assured of confidentiality, and told they could withdraw at any time without penalty. The FGD was conducted carefully to ensure meaningful results, with data saturation reached when no new insights emerged. Each participant received a unique code for anonymity, and students were asked to speak one at a time for clear recording. The session lasted 90 minutes, with recordings transcribed word-for-word and checked for accuracy. A small token was given to each participant as a thank-you. Thematic analysis of the qualitative data involved identifying and grouping key phrases, refining themes, and using these to understand student persistence in the program.

Results and Discussion

Result

Based on the observation, most students demonstrated a positive yet non-significant improvement in self-efficacy related to creativity following the intervention. In contrast, self-efficacy in learning English declined over time, with ten students showing a significant drop. However, after completing the task, all students gradually improved their English-speaking performance, with twenty students achieving greater gains, likely due to their higher interest in speaking.

For the focus group discussion (FGD), all students participated, representing various categories. The discussion on persistence factors highlighted four key themes that reinforce students' self-efficacy in speaking English: (i) obedience to parents, (ii) personal aspirations, (iii) social support, and (iv) maintaining a positive mindset.

Discussion

Obedience to Parents

Some students began to question their commitment to their chosen program after encountering failures as Islamic education department students, it was in line with (Harahap, et al., 2024) findings. However, parental encouragement, particularly from mothers, often played a pivotal role in sustaining their persistence. In some cases, students sought to fulfill their parents' unfulfilled aspirations, such as continuing a parent's educational legacy. Same with (Hayek et al., 2022) research finding, maternal involvement and supportive parenting were strongly associated with higher GPAs and academic success. Research indicates that authoritative parenting can enhance self-efficacy, reduce procrastination, and boost self-esteem—factors that collectively foster persistence in the face of challenges.

Personal Dreams

Contrary with parental influence, some students chose the Islamic education department as a means of pursuing their personal dreams (Mustafa & Salim, 2012). They viewed Islamic education department as a pathway to financial stability, social prestige, and an improved quality of life. Encouragement from influential figures further bolstered their motivation. This commitment to achieving their own aspirations emerged as a crucial factor in their resilience and success.

Social Support

Family, friends, and faculty often served as vital sources of strength for students, particularly those facing additional challenges such as learning disabilities or health issues (Cardona, 2021). In this research, a student with low self-efficacy found support through daily classroom interaction and strong social connections. College organizations also played a significant role by fostering a sense of belonging and empathy, with senior members and faculty sharing advice and personal stories of overcoming failure, which inspired perseverance, it was in line with (Goodenow, 1993). Research highlights that social support, especially from peers and lecturers, positively influences academic success and overall well-being.

Positive Mindset

For some students, a resilient mindset and self-regulation skills were crucial in their pursuit of religious education. These students developed effective time management, task prioritization, and workload regulation strategies. Self-efficacy was especially vital for those living near the university or commuting daily. A strong positive mindset combined with effective self-management was closely associated with persistence and academic success, underscoring the importance of self-determination and resilience in overcoming challenges, as (Han et al., 2017) stated.

Conclusions

Religious education is a demanding and multifaceted field that requires students to balance academic, spiritual, and personal growth. In this context, self-regulation and self-efficacy emerge as critical components that significantly influence students' ability to persist and succeed. Self-regulation enables students to manage their time efficiently, prioritize tasks, and maintain focus, while self-efficacy fosters the belief in their capacity to achieve academic and personal goals. Understanding the underlying factors that contribute to students' perseverance is invaluable for educators, counselors, and policymakers. By identifying these elements, they can design tailored interventions aimed at strengthening students' self-regulation abilities and enhancing their confidence in overcoming academic challenges. Such interventions may include workshops on time management, stress reduction techniques, and strategies for effective performance, alongside creating a supportive learning environment. These efforts can empower students to navigate the rigorous demands of religious education, fostering not only academic success but also resilience and holistic development.

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