

Self-Efficacy of English Department Students in Writing Bachelor's Theses

Kurnia Rahman¹, Amirullah Abduh², Chairil Anwar Korompot^{3*}

^{1,2,3}English Education Department, State University of Makassar, Indonesia

*Corresponding E-mail: cakorompot@unm.ac.id

Abstract

The aims of this research are to find out the level of students' self-efficacy based on the self-efficacy aspect during the process of writing bachelor's theses and the students' ways to improve their self-efficacy during the process of writing bachelor's theses process. This research used mixed method, which means that qualitative and quantitative were used in this research. In this article only contains the first research question which used quantitative method. The data of this research was collected through an online questionnaire. The sample of this research were decided by using purposive sampling technique. There were 30 students from class A of the 2018 cohorts of the English Language Education Study Program (PSPBI) at State University of Makassar who participated in online questionnaire then there are 6 students participated in online interview. The result of data analysis found that (1) most of the students were in medium level of self-efficacy (73.3%) and the rest of the students in the high self-efficacy level (26.7%).

Keywords: *Self-Efficacy, Writing, Bachelor Thesis, English Study Program.*

1. Introduction

University phase is the transition after high school life into work life preparation. It is higher education where the students are trying to adapt their selves with the new situation which is different from the previous phase. Entering the university phase means that the students are preparing their selves to get job based on the major that had been chosen by them. Widarto (2017) stated that studies period can be reached in a relatively short time period. It can be taken within 4 years according to academic rule. Within that period of time, students are required to pass prescribed and elective courses before obtaining their bachelor's degree, and one of the prescribed courses that must be taken is a thesis.

Every student is required to master how to write academically, but in reality, it is difficult to do. Especially for the undergraduate students with foreign language major or international class. They should complete the theses with the foreign language. Writing bachelor's thesis with the second language make the process more challenging. Raimes (1983) agrees that when students complain about how difficult it is to write in a second or foreign language, they are not only talking about the difficulty of finding the right words and using the correct grammar but it is also about the difficulty of finding and expressing ideas in a new language.

Physiologically, the writing performance can be boosted with realizing the existence of self-efficacy which reduce the impact of those hampering factors. As published by

Simaremare (2018) that self-efficacy affects the effort and tenacity of individuals in facing problems. In different major, it is also related with Abduh et al (2022) that mentioned about the function of self-efficacy can be used in solving students' language, especially to support Art-Based language teaching. Bandura (1997) stated that self-efficacy refers to the belief in someone's capabilities to arrange and execute an action which is required to get the goal. Furthermore, he stated that self-efficacy has diverse effect because it can influence the way of someone choose to pursue, how much effort that they do, or how long they will survive to adversity, whether their thought patterns are self-hindering or self-aiding, and how much stress and depression that they experience coping with taxing environmental demands, and level of accomplishment they realize.

The self-efficacy can be a control for the students' educational behaviours. The existence of self-efficacy should be realized for students to know how big the benefits of self-efficacy are. Bandura (1997) stated there are three aspects or dimensions of self-efficacy, those are level(difficulty), generality, and strength. Those aspects can be used to measure the level of someone's self-efficacy. It is related with Shortridge (2000) statement that the measurement of self-efficacy is related to three aspects of self-efficacy.

There are three level of self-efficacy, those are high, medium, and low level. In the term of writing self-efficacy, the students who have high self-efficacy level will develop the right strategy as a long-term plan that execute in completing their bachelor's theses.

There are some researchers that have investigate about students' self-efficacy in completing bachelor's theses. Bangun (2018,

p.53) who investigated the bachelor's students at Sanata Dharma University found that there are 71% out of total studied students who have high self-efficacy to complete their theses. Prianto (2010, p.33) who investigated the bachelor's psychology students at Sanata Dharma University found that there are 58.6% students with moderate self-efficacy in their writing bachelor's theses. Simaremare (2018) who investigated and observed the bachelor's students of economic education found that there are three informants who had different self-efficacy level and all of the informants did not have good enough self-efficacy, especially in completing their theses. Ulfah (2010, p.67) who investigated the bachelor's psychology students at University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta found that students who worked at the time of writing the theses had negative self-efficacy, which can be seen from some of the informants who viewed life with work feeling disturbed, undirected and could not manage time. Sari (2018, p.41) found that there is no relation between self-efficacy and writing bachelor's thesis ability. Then Tirtaningtias (2019, p.33) found self-efficacy plays small effect to the students' difficulties in writing the bachelor's theses for English Language Education Study Program.

The related studies that are mentioned above only investigate and show the situation of self-efficacy for bachelor's students in writing the theses with L1(in Indonesia) and the number of studies that investigate it with the students' L2 is low if it is categorized into the amount of quantity. Thus, based on the mentioned explanation, the researchers want to conduct in-depth research about self-efficacy of students who are preparing their bachelor's theses in title of self-efficacy of English Department Students in writing bachelor's theses. Thus, self-efficacy situation in completing the bachelor's thesis is chosen as

the case in this study because it requires further investigation to confirm the truth of previous research. In this research, the researchers have two research questions to be completed, but in this article the researchers only serve one research question. The researchers want to know the level of students' self-efficacy in writing their bachelor's theses for this research.

2. Literature Review

2. 1. Definition of Self- Efficacy

Bandura (1997) stated that self-efficacy refers to the belief of someone's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given performance. Furthermore, he explained that someone's self-efficacy values have a variety of effects, including influencing the course of action people take, how much initiative they put forward in specific projects, how long they can be responsive to pressure, whether their thinking processes are self-hindering or self-aiding, how much stress and depression they feel dealing with demanding environmental demands, and level of accomplishment they release.

Zimmerman (1995) stated that self-efficacy level is related to differences between various levels of task. In generally, it refers to the transfer of self-efficacy beliefs across actions, and perceived efficacy intensity is calculated by degrees of certainty that one will accomplish assigned tasks. He believed that self-efficacy plays an important part in student performance. Thus, the existence of self-efficacy brings a positive impact to the students' performance when they are doing their task.

From several expert opinions regarding the definition of self-efficacy, the researchers can conclude that self-efficacy is a situation where

someone believes in the ability and knowledge to set strategies and plan in completing and producing a masterpiece.

2. 2. Aspect of Self- Efficacy

According to Bandura (1997) there are three aspects of self-efficacy. Those are level, generality, and strength which can be used to measure the level of someone's self-efficacy.

- a. Magnitude (level) aspect reveals the level of difficulty of a task that is believed to be completed. Thus, the level of students' self-efficacy tends to be measured based on the level of challenge or difficulty level of the task that can be completed. Thus, it can be concluded that this aspect will determine the strategy that may be used in completing or solving the task to avoid strategies that exceed the students' ability.
- b. The general condition (generality) relates to the range of tasks faced by students, this aspect more clearly describes the wide range of tasks that are felt to be completed by students. The student abilities differ from one another in completing task. Some students feel capable of completing tasks with a wide range of tasks. While some others are only able to complete tasks in more specific or limited fields.
- c. Strength aspect is about the students' confidence in realizing certain achievements. This aspect emphasizes the level of strength or students' stability of their beliefs.

2. 3. Characteristics of Self- Efficacy

Kreitner and Kinichi (2009) separated the characteristics of someone's self-efficacy into two types, those are the characteristic of someone with high self-efficacy and someone with low self-efficacy.

Someone with high-self-efficacy has some characteristics. Someone with high self-efficacy tends to be active and trying to think the finest possibilities. They can take control of the situation by minimizing or neutralizing obstacles. They can set specific goals and criteria, so they can make a plan, prepare for it, and practice it to make it happen. When they already have a target, they will make an effort and stick with it so that when they are in challenge, they can solve it in a new way. However, even if they fail to face the challenge, they will learn from mistakes. They always visualize the successful. Even though people who have high self-efficacy seem strict, they can still manage and keep stress to a minimum.

Someone who has low self-efficacy also has characteristics, but opposite to the characteristics possessed by those who have high self-efficacy. They prefer to stay away from demanding chores and develop minimal dedication and low aspirations. They only concentrate on character problems. They don't even try to put an effort, they just put up a feeble effort. They give up or grow discouraged as a result of setbacks. They think that put failures down to a lack of competence or bad luck. They have excessive stressed, sad, and anxiety. Then most of them always think of excuses for failing.

2. 4. The Factors Causing Different Level of Self- Efficacy

There are six factors that influence the level of students' self-efficacy. Those are culture, gender, difficulty level of the task, external incentives, the status or role of the individual in the environment and information about self-recognition of abilities from others.

a. Culture affects self-efficacy through values, beliefs, and self-regulation processes that

function as a consequence of beliefs about self-efficacy.

- b. Gender as the factor that can influence the level of self-efficacy is proved by Bandura's (1997) study which stated that women have higher self-efficacy in managing their roles. Generally, the illustration can be seen in women who have roles as housewives and career woman at the office, as well as the women will have high self-efficacy compared to working men. Moving to the educational side, Huang (2013) found that female students display higher language arts self-efficacy than males. Meanwhile, the male students show higher mathematics, computer, and social sciences self-efficacy than females.
- c. Difficulty level of the task. The level of the task difficulties that is faced by the students will affect the individual's routine on their own abilities. The more complex a task faced by the students, the lower self-efficacy that they have. Conversely, if the student is faced with an easy and simple task, the student will rate his ability with higher self-efficacy.
- d. External incentives. Incentives that the students get from outside will affect the level of their self-efficacy. Competent incentive as one of the components that can increase self-efficacy, as Bandura stated that competent incentive is an incentive given by others that can reflects students' success.
- e. The status or role of the individual in the environment. Students who have a higher status will get greater control so that their self-efficacy is also high. Meanwhile, the students who have lower status will have less control so that their self-efficacy is also low.
- f. Information about self-recognition of abilities from others. This factor means that if the students get and believe positive

things about themselves, they will have high self-efficacy, then individuals will have low self-efficacy if they get negative information about themselves.

2. 5. The Factors Causing Different Level of Self- Efficacy

Bachelor's thesis is one of the prescribed courses that must be programmed by all students before getting a bachelor's degree, in Indonesia the bachelor's thesis is mostly known as skripsi or tugas akhir. In PSPBI, this course has code 15E21C801 with 6 SKS. This course can be programmed when entering the third or fourth year with several conditions, such as finishing 131 sks at least. This course consists of writing a thesis, conducting research, and presenting research results. Before preparing the thesis, students need to go through several stages.

In the English department at UNM, the beginning process is carried out by submitting topics to the academic supervisor, after the title is approved, the student is directed to take care of the submission of an advisor to the head of the study program. After that, students will get a supervisor's S.K which contains 2 names of thesis supervisors who will be the directors while students are preparing their theses. One of the thesis advisors is the student's Academic Advisor (PA) lecturer (State University of Makassar, Pedomon Penulisan Tugas Akhir Mahasiswa, 2019). The students are also provided with a guide book published by UNM, where it is hoped that the book can be used by students independently during writing the bachelor's theses process.

Bachelor's thesis for bachelor's students (S-1) is a scientific work which is the result of research that can confirm the results of previous research which is prepared with the ability and handling of scientific thinking

independently by students in the context of completing undergraduate studies (State University of Makassar, Pedomon Penulisan Tugas Akhir Mahasiswa, 2019).

Sutari (2007) said that the ability to write scientific papers is the ability or skill that a person has in expressing thoughts, or feelings to others by using written media and language that is easy to understand, so that the author's goals are achieved. For the final-year students, the bachelor's thesis problem attracts the attention of most students. There are some students who consider it as a challenge that needs to be faced and there are those who think that thesis is only complicate the situation to graduation. Bjerså, Shams, and Fagevik (2019) stated that the bachelor's thesis level has attracted national attention because it is thought to provide students with the opportunity to analyze and identify empirical-theoretical issues, as well as develop higher theoretical, analytical, and problem-solving skills, and promote continuous learning.

2. 6. The Factors Causing Different Level of Self- Efficacy

According to Persadha (2016) there are five aspects that can measure a student's ability to write the bachelor's thesis, such as:

- a. The ability to develop the content of thesis. It is about the aspects of the ability to write a thesis that involve problem formulation, expression of ideas, and presentation of evidence to strengthen ideas in the form of a complete picture of information regarding the background that is written in accordance with the title, problem, and purpose of the thesis.
- b. The ability to organize thesis aspects. It is related to the structure of writing. In this aspect, information must be presented in a coherent manner so that the result of thesis gets the reader's interest.

- c. The ability to use the vocabulary and terms of thesis. The vocabulary and terms aspect concerns how the researchers choose the right words and diction in using scientific words and terms so that the reader understands what the researchers want to convey directly.
- d. The ability to use language in thesis. This aspect use concerns the construction of sentences in the formation of language, so that the resulting sentences are easy to understand and attractive to readers.
- e. Ability to apply the spelling and writing techniques for thesis. This aspect involves the application of all spelling rules in writing. In this aspect, the researchers are required to use a good, correct and systematic format for writing thesis.
- e. Analysis and data collection. This point related to statistics subject that should be completed the students before taking the writing thesis subject.
- f. Thesis Examination. This point can be seen when the students presenting their thesis in front of an examiner, almost all thesis students are nervous.

3. Research Methodology

3. 1. Research Design

In investigating the research's topic, the researchers use mixed method. Creswell (1999) stated that in a mixed-method study, the researchers use both qualitative and quantitative data gathering and approaches by providing it in the same study. Research in mixed method to explore the complex phenomena qualitatively as well as to describe complicated processes using numbers, charts, and basic statistical analyses. In this study, there are two research questions that need to be treated with a quantitative and qualitative approach. Starting with a quantitative approach then followed by a qualitative approach. In this article, the researchers serve the data which was processed in quantitative approach.

3. 2. Research Site

This research started in 7th February 2022. There are two rounds of collecting the data process. The first and second round was done via online. The participants of this research are students in Class A of the 2018 cohorts of the English Language Education Study Program (PSPBI) at UNM. Research Instruments: this research used two instruments to obtain and collect data. These instruments are questionnaire and interview. Especially for this article, the instrument that is served is

2. 7. The Factors Causing Different Level of Self- Efficacy

There are some obstacles that can appears during the process of writing bachelor's thesis, it can derive from the students itself or the environment around them. Hartono (2002) has formulated some obstacles that will be faced by the students during the process of writing the bachelor's thesis:

- a. Interpersonal communication. It refers when two or more people interact other in order to exchange information or to express and share their thoughts.
- b. Consultation to the thesis advisors. As we know, each student will be guided by two thesis supervisors.
- c. Task obstacles. Writing and finishing a thesis takes a lot of time and work for the students.
- d. Emotional obstacles. Depression is one of the most common emotional issues that students face. Students are frequently frustrated as a result of the depression.

questionnaire which is important to obtain rational and to provide answers to the first research question listed in the research question, "What is the level of students' self-efficacy in writing their bachelor's theses?"

3.3. Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researchers analyzed the data using the following steps:

- a. Determine the score for each item in the questionnaire, which is done by specifying the value of numbers 1 to 4 based on the

applicable scoring norms by looking at the nature of the favorable or unfavorable statement.

- b. Tabulate the scores of the questionnaire items and calculate the score of each subject and the total score of the items. After that, analyze the data statistically using the IBM SPSS Statistics Version 22 and Microsoft Excel 2016.
- c. The categorization is based on the normal distribution using the level or ordinal categorization method.

Table 1. Ordinal Categorization

| Norm or Score Criteria | Categorization |
|--|----------------|
| $X (\mu+1,0 \sigma) \leq X$ | High |
| $(\mu-1,0 \sigma) \leq X < (\mu+1,0 \sigma)$ | Medium |
| $X < (\mu-1,0 \sigma)$ | Low |

- d. Describing the students' self-efficacy level in writing their bachelor's theses.

4. Findings

In this chapter the research serves the finding of the research to answer the research question. The finding is processed based on the data that

has been collected. The data was collected by using questionnaire which is processed in quantitative approach. Based on the results of the data collection obtained through the self-efficacy questionnaire that has been processed and analyzed, it can be seen the students' self-efficacy level of PSPBI 2018 State University of Makassar as shown in the Table 2 below.

Table 2. Students' Self-Efficacy Level in PSPBI 2018 State University of Makassar

| Categorization | Interval | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|------------------|-----------|------------|
| High | $78 \leq X$ | 8 | 26.7% |
| Medium | $52 \leq X < 78$ | 22 | 73.3% |
| Low | $X < 52$ | - | - |
| Total | | 30 | 100 |

Based on the Table 2 above, the researchers found that:

- a. There are 8 students who have high self-efficacy with percentage 26.7% out of the sample
- b. There are 22 students who have medium self-efficacy with percentage 73.3% out of the sample
- c. There is no sample who has low self-efficacy.

From the result that is presenting in the questionnaire result, the researchers make statement that all students have their own self efficacy, but the level self-efficacy among individual is different. In PSPBI A 2018 who acts as the sample of this research has two different level. Most of them has medium self-efficacy level with percentage seventy-three-point three percent (73.3%) twenty-six-point seven percent (26.7%). From the sample, there

is no students who is categorized into low self-efficacy level.

The categorization of students' self-efficacy level in PSPBI 2018 State University of Makassar is depicted in a diagram as shown in Diagram 1 below.

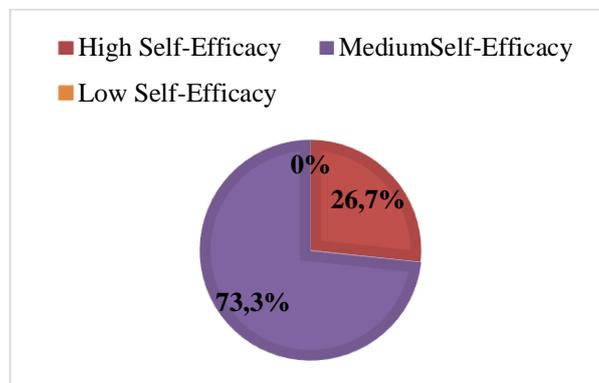


Diagram 1. Students' Self-Efficacy Level in PSPBI 2018 State University of Makassar

5. Discussions

The interpretation of findings connected to Self-Efficacy of English Department Students in Writing Bachelor's Theses is stated in this sub-chapter. The researchers found that majority of students have a medium level of self-efficacy, and there are four ways for students to improve their self-efficacy. It was concluded according to the findings of quantitative data which is gathered from questionnaire to find the of students' self-efficacy level.

The finding of this research is supported by Bandura's theory about self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the someone believe about their ability and capability to get the goal and someone who has a good self-efficacy will set many ways to get the goal. It is related to Bandura (1997) who stated that self-efficacy refers to the belief in someone's capabilities to arrange and execute an action which is required to get the goal. Thus, it will affect the ways of someone to make a decision. Everyone has their own self-efficacy, but in the different level. The level of someone self-

efficacy can be measured by the aspect of self-efficacy.

According to the Bandura (1997), there are three aspects of self-efficacy. The first is magnitude (level) aspect which is measured based on the level of challenge or difficulty level of the task that can be completed. The second is the general condition (generality) aspect which is measured based on the wide range of tasks that are felt to be completed by students. The last aspect is strength, it is measured based on the students' confidence in realizing certain achievements. In this research, the self-efficacy level is measured during writing the bachelor's thesis. Thus, to measure the level of students' self-efficacy, in this research construct the instrument based on those aspects using questionnaire in quantitative approach. It is related with Shortridge (2000) statement that the measurement of self-efficacy is related to three aspects of self-efficacy. The researchers found that there are 8 out of 30 students who have high self-efficacy and there are 22 students who have medium self-efficacy.

According to the Kreitner and Kinichi (2009), someone with high-self-efficacy has some characteristics. Someone with high self-efficacy tends to be active and trying to think the finest possibilities. They can take control of the situation by minimizing or neutralizing obstacles. They can set specific goals and criteria, so they can make a plan, prepare for it, and practice it to make it happen. When they already have a target, they will make an effort and stick with it so that when they are in challenge, they can solve it in a new way. However, even if they fail to face the challenge, they will learn from mistakes. They always visualize the successful. Even though people who have high self-efficacy seem strict, they can still manage and keep stress to a minimum. Those statements are related with Bangun (2018) statement in his research about the characteristics of students who have high self-efficacy.

Someone who has low self-efficacy also has characteristics, but opposite to the characteristics possessed by those who have high self-efficacy. Kreitner and Kinichi (2009) mentioned that most of them are passive. They prefer to stay away from demanding chores and develop minimal dedication and low aspirations. They only concentrate on character problems. They don't even try to put an effort, they just put up a feeble effort. They give up or grow discouraged as a result of setbacks. They think that put failures down to a lack of competence or bad luck. They have excessive stressed, sad, and anxiety. Then most of them always think of excuses for failing.

In this research, most of the students are indicated in the medium level of self-efficacy. It means that the characteristics that they have are between high self-efficacy characteristics and low self-efficacy characteristics. Students with medium self-efficacy prefer to show the optimistic of students with high self-efficacy,

but they are easier to lose it in some stage. Thus, the students with medium self-efficacy level should be supported in their process. Fanani (2021) mentioned in his research that students who are in medium level of self-efficacy have good confident in their abilities to solve various problems and obstacles as possessed by students with high self-efficacy. In line, Rahmawati (2021) in her research also mentioned that students who have medium self-efficacy to complete their bachelor's theses, have good confidence and belief with their ability even though students have to face various academic problems during the process of working on the thesis

6. Conclusion

Based on the finding and discussion which related with the questions of this research, there is one point as the conclusion. The level of students' self-efficacy in writing their bachelor's theses is in medium level. It is proven by sample of this research who shows two different level. Most of them has medium self-efficacy level with percentage seventy-three-point three percent (73.3%) and students with high self-efficacy level have twenty-six-point seven percent (26.7%). Then there are no students who has low self-efficacy in writing their bachelor theses.

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