

University of Mississippi

eGrove

---

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Graduate School

---

2013

## The Relationship Between Student Self-Efficacy And English Proficiency In A University Intensive English Program

Vanessa Carrie Cook  
*University of Mississippi*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://egrove.olemiss.edu/etd>



Part of the [First and Second Language Acquisition Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Cook, Vanessa Carrie, "The Relationship Between Student Self-Efficacy And English Proficiency In A University Intensive English Program" (2013). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 903.  
<https://egrove.olemiss.edu/etd/903>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact [egrove@olemiss.edu](mailto:egrove@olemiss.edu).

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENT SELF-EFFICACY  
AND ENGLISH PROFICIENCY IN A UNIVERSITY INTENSIVE ENGLISH PROGRAM

A Thesis  
presented in partial fulfillment of requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of Modern Languages  
The University of Mississippi

by

VANESSA C. COOK

August 2013

Copyright Vanessa C. Cook 2013  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the relationship between learner self-efficacy and English-language proficiency in a native English environment involving participants from various non-native English backgrounds. Participants were 43 English language learners in a university-level Intensive English Program in the Southeast United States.

Previous studies, including those by Idrus and Sivapalan (2010); Nasser and Zaferanieh (2012); Rahimi and Abedini (2009); Teng (2005); Tifarlioglu and Cinkara (2009); Wong (2005); and Hsieh and Kang (2010), have examined self-efficacy and learning outcomes for students who shared a common language and were studying English in the students' native language environments. Findings in these studies suggested that higher perceptions of self-efficacy were related to increased achievement in learning English.

The participants in the current study were asked to complete the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) at the beginning and end of the semester. A comparison of results revealed that the measure of student self-efficacy was consistent over time. Results from the first questionnaire were compared to the change in scores between learners' entrance and exit Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments English Placement Test (Cambridge, 2013). The results of statistical analysis were not consistent with research that examined students who were learning English in native language environments and who shared a common native language and indicated that there was no discernible relationship between learner self-efficacy and change in language score for the diverse group.

In addition to the student analysis, instructors were asked to estimate the level of self-efficacy of students through an adaptation of the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996). Instructor estimates were compared to the reports of self-efficacy for students in their classes to determine whether perceptions would be consistent. Analysis of instructor and student perceptions of students' self-efficacy toward their potential for learning a new language indicated that scores from both were consistent. In this small sample of instructors, the respondents appeared to be intuitive in assessing the self-efficacy of their students and receptive to using such information to adjust teaching to maximize learning outcomes for all students.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the many people who have helped me through the completion of this thesis. First and foremost, I appreciate the assistance and support given by my thesis committee: Dr. Esim Erdim, Dr. Tamara Warhol, and Dr. Larisa Warhol.

I value the input and patience of my mother, Dr. Martha Cook, as she provided academic and emotional support throughout this endeavor. I also appreciate the extra push and encouragement of Dr. Linda Chitwood who helped me move forward and provided me with time to think each time I felt stuck and overwhelmed by all of my responsibilities. Without these two wonderful mentors and the support of all of my friends I would not have been able to undertake this degree and complete this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank the students and instructors that offered their time and thoughts as I collected and analyzed data.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
BACKGROUND.....	3
METHODOLOGY.....	16
RESULTS.....	22
DISCUSSION.....	35
REFERENCES.....	39
APPENDIX.....	43
VITA.....	59

## LIST OF TABLES

1. FRAMEWORKS FOR STUDY OF SLA.....	3
2. RANDOM SAMPLE OF PARTICIPANTS.....	22
3. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR STUDENT RESPONSES AND INSTRUCTOR RESPONSE.....	32

## LIST OF FIGURES

1. INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION.....	23
2. SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION.....	24
3. PRETEST FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION.....	25
4. POSTTEST FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION.....	26
5. RELATIONSHIP BEWTEEN INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE SCORES AND CHANGE OF SCORES ON CAMLA EPT.....	27
6. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE SCORES AND CHANGE OF SCORES ON CAMLA EPT REMOVING S37 AND S43.....	28
7. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHANGE OF SCORES ON ADULT AND ESL LITERACY LEARNING SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE AND CHANGE OF SCORES ON CAMLA EPT.....	29

## I. INTRODUCTION

Second language acquisition has been studied from a variety of perspectives that have contributed to many theories about how language is learned and which factors contribute to mastery of a second language. Initial theories focused on innate capacities of learners when acquiring a second language, while others emphasized the role of the learning environment or the social context in which the language was being learned (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). These early theories were broad in the sense that they did not account for individual learner differences and how these differences could influence the learner's ability to master a second language. In the 1980s, a new branch of research began to focus on identifying unique characteristics of the individual learner and how and to what degree each characteristic might contribute to language learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The characteristics studied included intelligence, aptitude, learning styles, personality, motivation and attitudes, identity and ethnic group affiliation, learner beliefs, and age of acquisition (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

It is through the study of motivation that researchers began to look at learner self-efficacy, or an individual's belief that he or she has the capability to complete a particular task or reach a particular goal (Bandura, 1997). The psychologist, Albert Bandura (1997), initiated research into self-efficacy through the lens of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Bandura hypothesized that individual self-efficacy has a much stronger influence on learning outcomes than previous psychological theories had recognized.

Robert Gardner (as cited in Dornyei, 1999) first applied self-efficacy to second language acquisition in his work on integrative versus instrumental motivations. His research provided results showing that learning context is less important than motivational factors in determining ultimate success in language acquisition. Further studies by Tremblay and Gardner (1995) found self-efficacy to be a greater determinant of success than environment, societal pressure, or innate ability.

Since self-efficacy is unique to the individual learner and has been determined to be a significant factor in language mastery, research into self-efficacy can provide methods by which the individual learner's self-efficacy can be evaluated and strengthened both inside and outside the classroom. Increasing the awareness of instructors in university intensive English programs to the importance of learner self-efficacy might influence teaching methodologies, curriculum design, and feedback to learners to bring about greater mastery of the target language.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the relationship between learner self-efficacy and English-language proficiency in a native English environment involving participants from various non-native English backgrounds. Participants were asked to complete the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) at the beginning and end of the semester. Results from the questionnaire were compared to the change in scores between learners' entrance and exit Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments English Placement Test (Cambridge, 2013). In addition to the student analysis, instructors were asked to estimate the level of self-efficacy of students through an adaptation of the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996). Instructor estimates were compared to the reports of self-efficacy for students in their classes to determine whether perceptions would be consistent.

## II. BACKGROUND

There has been interest in second language learning for many centuries but it was not until the 1950s that systematic frameworks to explain second language acquisition began to emerge (Saville-Troike, 2006). These frameworks can be separated into three general categories: linguistic, psychological, and social (Saville-Troike, 2006). Some of the most well-recognized of these frameworks are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

*Frameworks for Study of SLA*

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Linguistic</b>	<b>Psychological</b>	<b>Social</b>
1950s and before	Structuralism	Behaviorism	Sociocultural Theory
1960s	Transformational-Generative Grammar	Neurolinguistics Information Processing	Ethnography of Communication Variation Theory
1970s	Functionalism	Humanistic Models	Acculturation Theory Accommodation Theory
1980s	Principles and Parameters Model	Connectionism	Social Psychology
1990s	Minimalist Program	Processability	

*Note.* Reproduced from “Introducing Second Language Acquisition” by M. Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 24. Copyright 2006 by Cambridge University Press.

Within the linguistic branch, research centers on either internal focus or external foci. Noam Chomsky famously drew attention to the creative aspects of language learning and claimed that humans begin with an innate capacity to acquire language (Saville-Troike, 2006). This idea of innate capacity as outlined in the Universal Grammar theory still dominates the field of second language acquisition today, expanding into the Principles and Parameters Model and Minimalist Program (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The most famous external focus framework is Functionalism. This segment of second language acquisition research views language as a system of communication and focuses on the information content in language (Saville-Troike, 2006).

The study of second language learning from a psychological perspective led to the development of many theories on how humans learn and what factors influence the attainment of knowledge. Some theories focus on the neurobiological processes that create a memory (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Others rely on methods that show the most promise in processing information and retaining knowledge (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

While linguistic frameworks look mainly at the mechanics of second language learning, social frameworks expand on these elements by placing second language acquisition in a greater environmental context. The two foci of these frameworks are microsocial and macrosocial. Microsocial theories such as Variation Theory and Accommodation Theory explore contexts of second language use and their influence on learner production (Saville-Troike, 2006). Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory was an early approach that placed primary importance in second language learning on social interaction. Vygotsky believed that the interaction between a

second language learner and an interlocutor is the point at which learning occurs (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

While discrete elements of a second language can be taught explicitly (e.g., parts of speech, alphabets); second language acquisition is also socially and culturally bound. It is not just an educational experience, but a deeply social event (Dornyei, 1999). Because language is distinctly tied to a culture and place, current research in second language acquisition often focuses on the connection between language learning and the psychological and social factors that influence the second language learning process.

One subset of this humanistic model of research is how individual differences or learner traits influence the learning style and overall proficiency of a student. According to Raofi, Tan, and Chan (2012), research shows that differences in the individual are strong indicators of potential success in second language acquisition. These differences include personality traits, learning styles, learner's beliefs, strategies, aptitude, age, and motivation (Saville-Troike, 2006).

While all of these factors can have significant influence on learning, learner beliefs and motivation, and how these factors influence second language learning, has been a prominent theme over the past 50 years of second language acquisition research. From the 1960s, this branch of research in second language acquisition began to shift focus from methods of learning to factors that influence learning. Some factors are external (i.e., teaching style, classroom environment, program goals) and some are internal (i.e., personal interest, goals, motivation). In the realm of internal factors, research has shown that motivation plays a large role in the success of students learning a second language (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Motivation in educational environments can be defined simply as the reason why the learner exerts effort to learn new concepts. How long the learner participates in the learning

activities and how hard the learner works at success in the educational activity are also signs of how deeply motivated the learner is by that activity. A dominating paradigm in motivation research is the expectancy-value theory. This theory holds that an individual's motivation is influenced greatly by the individual's expected success in the activity and the value placed on that success (Dornyei, 1999).

The expectancy-value theory states that motivation is based on an individual's expected level of success at a task and the value the individual places on success at that task (Dornyei, 1999). It is composed of three components: attribution theory, self-worth theory, and self-efficacy theory. Attribution theory examines how success or failure in past events affects future efforts and outcomes, while self-worth theory is based on the idea that an individual's highest motivating factor is saving face. Self-efficacy theory, by contrast, focuses on an individual's judgment of his or her innate ability to carry out a task (Bandura, 1986).

In the framework of second language acquisition, self-efficacy is used to describe the way a learner feels about his or her ability to learn or improve proficiency in a second language. Bandura (1997) believed that most human motivation is cognitively generated and that learners form beliefs about what they can do, anticipate likely outcomes, and set goals and plan activities based on their level of self-efficacy. While there are many activities that, if the participant is successful, result in valued outcomes, they are not pursued by people who doubt they can be successful at those tasks (Bandura, 1997). He theorized that learners with stronger efficacy beliefs would have higher performance attainments regardless of actual ability or past achievement (Bandura, 1997). The idea of self-efficacy as a factor in academic learning is a significant part of Social Cognitive Theory, highlighted initially in the work of Bandura (1986).

Social Cognitive Theory was first developed for use in the field of psychology to explain how different forms of motivation influence the learning of particular behaviors. The theory holds that learning is knowledge acquisition through cognitive processing of information (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Learners contribute to the attainment of desired outcomes by enlisting cognitive guides and self-incentives and by selecting and constructing environments to suit their purposes. The greater the learner's foresight, proficiency, and means of self-influence, all of which are acquirable skills, the more successful the learner is in achieving what she seeks (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1986) focused on the idea of self-influence as a determiner of outcomes in the same way that previous frameworks focused on external factors of influence. While environment and culture play an important role in development, the attitudes and actions of the learner greatly influence overall outcomes. Bandura (1997) suggested that efficacy beliefs are developed and altered not only by direct mastery experiences but also by assessments of significant others, vicarious experience, and changes in physiological states.

Self-efficacious individuals view attainments as under their personal control. The level of perseverance devoted to a task is supported by perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Even when failing at a task the level of self-efficacy plays a role in the learner's cognitive processing of the outcome (Bandura, 1997). Individuals with high self-efficacy will see insufficient effort or situational impediments as contributing factors to the failure while those with low self-efficacy will likely see the failures as lack of ability (Bandura, 1997). Learner self-efficacy also serves as a filter when processing feedback with learners agreeing with feedback that matches their perception of their own self-efficacy. For instance, if a highly self-efficacious student is not successful at a task the student may believe that trying harder the next time the situation is presented will result in a difference outcome. If an interlocutor says that trying harder will not

help because the student does not have the innate ability to complete the task, the self-efficacious learner will disagree with the interlocutor and continue to try harder in spite of the opinion of the interlocutor. A non-efficacious learner might think that failure is due to bias of the teacher or the teacher's negative view of the learner. If the teacher lets the student know that the teacher agrees with the student, this will reinforce the student's interpretation of the student's own abilities (Bandura, 1997). As a result, Bandura (1997) believed that a person's level of motivation and actions are based more on what is believed than what is objectively true.

It is important here examine some terms and definitions that can be mistakenly confused with self-efficacy: motivation, self-concept, and self-esteem. While self-efficacy is used interchangeably with motivation in some fields, there is a significant difference in the definition of each term in Bandura's work (1997). Motivation is a broad concept that includes external and internal influences that affect outcomes while self-efficacy is focused only on the internal beliefs of the learner. Self-concept is defined by Bandura (1997) as a composite view of self formed by direct experience as well as evaluations from significant others. It is an attitude toward self and a general outlook on life. While self-concept is an encompassing self-image, self-efficacy focuses only on the perception of ability related to a specific task. Self-efficacy is highly predictive of behavior while self-concept is weaker and more equivocal (Bandura, 1997).

Unlike self-efficacy, self-esteem is concerned with judgments of one's self worth. It is the concept of one's overall place within the culture and environment and how the individual judges personal achievement compared to others. Self-esteem, as defined by Bandura, is a general concept that remains consistent across multiple tasks. Self-efficacy is particular to a given task. Bandura believed that it took more than high self-esteem to attain goals. Achievers can harshly judge performance output and adopt standards that are not easily fulfilled, thus

having high self-efficacy but perhaps struggling with self-esteem. In ongoing pursuits, perceived self-efficacy predicts what goals an individual will set and performance attainment, while self-esteem has little effect on either (Bandura, 1997).

Bandura's work on self-efficacy was grounded in psychology but quickly drew interest from scholars in other disciplines. Its application has since expanded into many fields, including education, nutrition, mass communication, and second language acquisition (Bandura et al., 1996). Beginning in the 1990s, research in self-efficacy and second language acquisition shifted focus from further expanding Bandura's theories to developing empirical evidence through the creation of standardized instruments to measure student self-efficacy and motivation. These research studies moved further away from the social dimension of second language learning and placed more emphasis on learner motivation as a primary force in enhancing or hindering learning (Dornyei, 1999). Robert Gardner laid the foundations of this push in 1985 by utilizing standardized instruments and firm empirical evidence to support his theories. He introduced the idea of integrative versus instrumental motivations with integrative motivations linked to empathy and understanding for others and instrumental motivations consisting of pragmatic gains like promotion or a raise in pay (Dornyei, 1999). Comparing these motivational factors to other influences on learning (i.e., environment, aptitude, learning strategies), his research results indicated that learning context is less important than motivational factors in determining ultimate success in language acquisition (Gardner as cited in Dornyei, 1999).

Further studies by Tremblay and Gardner (1995) supported the idea of self-efficacy as a greater determinant of success than environment, societal pressure, or innate ability. Dornyei (1994) built upon the data collected in these previous studies to promote a more pragmatic, education-centered approach to further self-efficacy research. Believing that learning

environment had more influence on motivation than previously thought, Dornyei felt that there was a need to move from building theoretical frameworks to immediate classroom application of previous results. He believed that the learning environment had more influence on motivation than previously thought. His published work helped push research from defining motivation to practical applications of motivational techniques.

In the context of recent self-efficacy research, studies have focused on a variety of factors and correlations. Wong (2005) looked at the overall language self-efficacy of English language learners in Malaysia and how self-efficacy influenced language learning strategies employed by the subjects, a group of 74 students training to become English-language teachers. Participants were given 10 hypothetical learning contexts and asked to rate their confidence in carrying out each task correctly on a 10-point scale. Participants were also given a companion language learning strategies questionnaire to identify the strategies they used to increase their command of English. Wong's study found that respondents scoring high in self-efficacy also reported greater use of learning strategies when building their language proficiency. Strategies most often mentioned were cognitive (i.e., use of English listening, reading, and writing outside of classroom) and social (i.e., assistance from interlocutors). The study found that students with low self-efficacy used context to guess at information they did not understand while students with high self-efficacy tried to find the meaning of misunderstand information by enlisting interlocutors or using print resources to gain word knowledge. The results of this study suggest that self-efficacy might be increased by teaching learning strategies to students, particularly the strategies that were most often mentioned by respondents. Based on her results, Wong also suggested that the negative attitude of learners with low self-efficacy should be addressed within the classroom to improve overall performance (Wong, 2005).

Teng (2005) analyzed the relationship between self-efficacy, motivation and learning activities of students in Taiwan. Her study included 654 students from three colleges in Taiwan who were majoring in English, business, or engineering. This was the first research of its kind focused on Taiwanese learners of English and provides a large sample from which to extrapolate information. She found that highly motivated students also participated in learning activities at a more significant rate than those with low motivation to learn the language.

Tilfalioglu and Cinkara (2009) compared the self-efficacy scores of students in three proficiency levels (i.e., pre-intermediate, intermediate, and upper intermediate) at an English as a foreign language program in Turkey. The authors administered the English as a foreign language self-efficacy questionnaire (EFL-SEQ), altering it by translating it into Turkish. The EFL-SEQ consists of 40 items scored on an 8-point Likert-type scale. The first 35 questions focus on the subject's ability to perform a specific task while the final five focus on the subject's overall performance in English-language learning. Their analysis of 175 preparatory students was an attempt to discover whether students at higher proficiency levels would show a higher level of self-efficacy than those at lower levels. The study found that there was a significant positive correlation between high self-efficacy and high levels of English proficiency (Tilfalioglu & Cinkara, 2009). The authors believed the link between self-efficacy and achievement found in their study should encourage more study on effective learning strategies and teacher training.

Rahimi and Abedini (2009) narrowed their research to focus on the relationship between self-efficacy and proficiency when applied to proficiency in listening comprehension. The authors utilized an author-designed questionnaire and the Listening Diagnostic Pre-Test from the paper-based Longman TOEFL to collect their data. In their study, responses from 61 Iranian freshmen majoring in English literature enrolled in intermediate-level English as a foreign

language classrooms were analyzed. The focus on listening comprehension was compared with results from other aspects of English instruction, showing that self-efficacy has a substantial influence on success in listening comprehension. Rahimi and Abedini (2009) concluded that their findings reinforce the need for ordinary teaching practices to be reexamined through the lens of how these practices influence or hinder learner self-efficacy. Drawing from Pajares (2006), they suggested that teachers praise what is praiseworthy, emphasize skill development, and foster optimism in order to promote greater self-efficacy of the individual in the classroom setting.

Idrus and Sivapalan (2010) also chose to look at a single aspect of language learning: oral communication. The study of 170 first semester pre-university Malaysian students in English 1 classes delved deeper into the concept, looking not only at student self-efficacy scores and success in learning, but also at the underlying factors that contributed to a student's sense of self-efficacy. The contributing factors included: learner ability, activity perception, and aspiration that achieving fluency in a second language would bring personal and professional success (Idrus & Sivapalan, 2010). They combined a 24-item questionnaire adapted from Bandura and Mikulecky (as cited in Idrus & Sivapalan, 2010) and semi-structured interviews to collect their data, giving them a mix of quantitative and qualitative information from which to draw conclusions. Results of this study indicated that it is not just an overall sense of self-efficacy that benefits learning, but a particular belief in one's language learning abilities and perception of potential for success in particular language-learning activities. Idrus and Sivapalan concluded that when a student finds a learning strategy that improves performance, this realization can lead to greater overall self-efficacy. This finding makes it ever more important for teachers to be

aware of the self-efficacy level of their students and provide students with various strategies for learning so that individuals can find strategies that best work for their learning style.

The study produced by Hsieh and Kang (2010) also proposed self-efficacy as a good indicator of academic achievement but they additionally wanted to evaluate attributions for achievement outcomes in relation to self-efficacy. They studied 192 South Korean students in ninth-grade English courses. All participants had studied English for at least six years prior to the study and identified themselves as strong in grammar but not in communication, a common problem for students of English in South Korea (Hsieh & Kang, 2010). To discern links between self-efficacy and achievement the authors asked participants to rate their confidence in earning 10 possible scores on their next test on a scale from 0 = *very uncertain* to 100 = *very certain*. The review of their results indicates that attribution is an important indicator of achievement, though self-efficacy seemed to be an even stronger indicator. They believed their results showed that successful learners attributed their success to internal, personal factors and therefore teachers should pay attention to cognitive beliefs, not just performance. If teachers can assist students in being more aware of student cognition, motivation, and behavior in language learning then, students can attain more control of outcomes and achievement (Hsieh & Kang, 2010).

Naseri and Zaferanieh (2012) focused their self-efficacy research on reading comprehension, looking at reading strategy as a factor in determining student self-efficacy. They evaluated 80 junior and senior Iranian English as a foreign language students. All participants were native Persian speakers and English literature and translation majors. The authors created their own instruments using previous tests and questionnaires as a basis for their tools. Their final instruments included a 100-question reading comprehension test, a 43-item reading strategy questionnaire, and a 14-item reading self-efficacy questionnaire. As with previous studies, a

significant strong positive correlation was found between high self-efficacy scores and improvement in reading comprehension skills. There was also a noteworthy relationship between high self-efficacy scores and students who reported using reading strategies to build their comprehension (Naseri & Zaferanieh, 2012). A second part of the study examined whether there was a relationship between self-efficacy, success, and a particular reading strategy. Four strategies identified for the study were: cognitive, meta-cognitive, compensatory, and testing. Cognitive strategies were most often identified, followed by testing. Results showed that students who employed a combination of the four strategies also proved to have the highest self-efficacy scores. Naseri and Zaferanieh (2012) believed that their results showed a need for learning strategies to be explicitly taught to learners. They also believed that teaching learning strategies could aid independent study and learning of language outside the classroom.

All of these studies found a positive relationship between learner self-efficacy and learner success, whether it be in a particular facet of second language learning or an overall evaluation of learner proficiency. Another similarity in the research is that all studies were conducted in non-native English language environments with a focus on learners of a similar national origin.

With strong but limited current research in the field of English as a second language and learner self-efficacy, it is important to conduct studies to investigate the relationship between second language learning and self-efficacy in other learning groups and environments. Many students study English outside their native countries and in programs that draw students from diverse national and language backgrounds. Because self-efficacy is theorized to have such a strong impact on outcomes for second language learners, more research is needed to investigate whether previous findings would be replicated through studies of diverse populations of English as a second language students studying in a single, native English learning environment. If the

impact of self-efficacy is consistent in different language and learning environments then learning strategies identified in previous studies could be applied to these populations. Conclusions not consistent with previous studies would indicate that there may be something unique about these situations that influences self-efficacy or learning outcomes and would be an avenue for additional research.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the relationship between learner self-efficacy and English-language proficiency in a native English environment involving participants from various non-native English backgrounds. Specifically, the proposed study will answer two research questions. The first research question is: What is the relationship between student self-efficacy and change in English proficiency?

The second research question is: What is the relationship between self-efficacy for a group of English language learners and the perception of their self-efficacy by their instructors?

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study included convenience samples of subjects drawn from students enrolled in an Intensive English Program during the spring 2013 semester at a public university in the Southeast United States. This program offers five levels of English language instruction (i.e., Beginning, Intermediate, High Intermediate, Advanced, or Advanced Plus) to students from a diverse group of countries and native languages. All students were volunteers. They were not compensated for their participation. The sample was described using measures of central tendency and dispersion for the selected demographic variables. These descriptive statistics sought to identify the typical subject for the sample. All student participants were identified only by number and instructor participants were identified by number as T1 through T5. Demographic data including the age, language background, and gender of students was obtained through the institution's Intensive English Student Database.

A total of 48 students were recruited. Five students did not complete administration of all instruments; therefore their data was eliminated from consideration for all analyses. There were 43 final participants in the study. The sample in this study ranged in age from 17 to 32. There were 25 male and 18 female participants. Breakdown of assigned language levels was: Beginning = 5, Intermediate = 8, High Intermediate = 11, Advanced = 15, Advanced Plus = 4. Language levels were assigned based on results of an English placement exam performed at the beginning of the semester. Participants' home countries were: China (4), Colombia (5), Egypt (1), Israel (1), Japan (6), Turkey (1), Mexico (1), Oman (11), Russia (1), South Korea (6), Thailand

(1), and Vietnam (5). All participants had previously studied English as a second or foreign language.

The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board. Informed consent was obtained from each student (Appendix A). The researcher administered to subjects a 30-statement questionnaire on self-efficacy called the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Appendix B) created by Larry Mikulecky, Paul Lloyd, and Shenghui C. Huang (1996). To build the questionnaire, the authors drew from their own work as well as four previous questionnaires: Children's School Attitude Schedule; Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale; Self-Efficacy Scale; and the Self-Efficacy for Academic Achievement Scale (as cited in Mikulecky et al., 1996). Initially 119 questions were gleaned from the previous questionnaires. This bank was then narrowed to 36 questions for a pilot test with 45 intermediate-level Intensive English Program adult literacy students and 28 students from adult basic education programs. After the pilot test the final version of the test was winnowed to 30 questions.

The original questionnaire utilized a 5-point Likert-type scale for scoring with the maximum score being 150. To measure reliability the final version of the test was administered to four intermediate-level intensive English reading classes and two adult basic education programs. The Cronbach internal consistency reliability coefficient for the whole questionnaire was moderately high; 0.799 for the intensive English students, and very high; .09215 for the adult education group (Mikulecky et al., 1996).

For the purpose of this study the respondents marked a four-point numerical scale to provide their individual perceptions of information in 30 statements. Sixteen items are composed of positive statements regarding the perceptions of students regarding their learning

which were rated on a scale of 1 = *strongly agree* to 4 = *strongly disagree* with no neutral point. Fourteen items are composed of negative statements regarding the perceptions of students toward their learning which were rated on a scale of 1 = *strongly agree* to 4 = *strongly disagree* with no neutral point. In populations that struggle communicating in the target language the neutral option is often selected as an alternative when the statement or question is not understood clearly. The decision not to use a neutral point was made to encourage respondents to choose a position on the statements or to ask for clarification if the statement was not understood (Patten, 2001). The negative and positive statements were mixed within the questionnaire to control for response sets and reduce the *halo effect* in which respondents choose responses based on global impressions and attitudes rather than carefully considering each item (Patten, 2001). The maximum score was 120 (Appendix C). The principal investigator scored the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) by hand.

The questionnaire was administered twice, once within the first six weeks of the term and the second time within the two weeks prior to the exit Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments English Proficiency Test (CaMLA EPT) (Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments, 1972). The researcher administered each questionnaire at the beginning of the class period to five different intact classes. Participants were read the consent form, acknowledged their intention to participate by taking a questionnaire and then completed the form. Each class was allotted 15 minutes to complete the survey, though most participants completed the survey in less than 10 minutes. Participants were told to ask the researcher if they did not understand statements on the questionnaire so that the researcher could assist in explaining the statements. Since the questionnaire was in English, participants were also allowed to use dictionaries and translation tools if needed.

Students in the selected Intensive English Program were administered the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments, 1972) at the start of the term. Scores from this test were used to place students in an appropriate level of English-language instruction offered by the program. At the end of the term the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 1972) was administered as an exit exam.

The CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013) is a non-diagnostic, objectively scored test that consists of 100 multiple-choice items assessing the following competencies: listening comprehension of questions and conversations; grammar in conversational contexts; selection of vocabulary to fit the context of single sentences; and reading comprehension of sentences and texts. The highest score attainable is 100 (Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments, 2013).

The test is administered in a group setting using a punched scoring method. Answer sheets are scored electronically using Scantron software. It is designed to place English language students into homogeneous levels of ability for enrollment in language programs (Cambridge Language Assessments, 1972). There are three forms available for administering the test. Reliability testing for the form used in the current study was conducted with four different groups in 1977, 2002, and 2005. The internal consistency reliability estimates ranged from 0.88 to 0.92 (Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments, 2013). To measure validity scores of examinees from the 2002 and 2005 CaMLA EPT reliability tests were compared to the same examinees' scores on the Pre-Institutional TOEFL. The correlations between these scores were fairly strong (0.74 and 0.81, respectively) and suggest that the tests measure English similarly (Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments, 2013).

The variable of self-efficacy will be measured by a score on the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996). Change in English proficiency

will be measured by the difference between entrance and exit test scores on the Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments English Placement Test (CaMLA EPT) (Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments, 1972).

The first research question was answered by analyzing data using a Spearman *rho* rank-order correlation coefficient. This statistical analysis was chosen because of the small sample size ( $N = 43$ ). A significant relationship was determined by a  $p$  value of 0.05 or less. Analysis of data was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Version 21.0).

In order to compare perceptions of students to instructors' perceptions, the researcher administered a short questionnaire to instructors of the research subjects. The questionnaire consisted of statements 1, 2, 10, 22, 23, and 29 taken from the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) (Appendix D). These statements were selected because of their global measure of self-efficacy and were adapted to require the instructor to assess the students in their classroom who participated in the initial questionnaires. Instructors were also given space to comment on each statement (Appendix E). Questionnaires were e-mailed to instructors in the summer after the term in which the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) was administered to students. Three of five instructors responded to the survey. Data from their responses was used to answer Research Question 2. The principal investigator scored the adapted Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) by hand.

This relationship was analyzed by the use of quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was collected from students and instructors. The variable of student self-efficacy was measured by select items from the Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996), which was matched with the same items administered to

the instructors. The quantitative portion of the second question was analyzed by the one-sample chi-square test. Analysis of data was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Version 21.0).

The qualitative portion of the data was analyzed by comparing the relationship between comments made by all instructors within the group on the adapted Adult Literacy and ESL Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996). Comments were grouped by themes related to self-efficacy. Qualitative methods were utilized because this is an area of new investigation (Moon, Dillon & Sprenkle, 1990 as cited in Milinki, 1999).

#### IV. RESULTS

Research Question 1 asked: What is the relationship between student self-efficacy and change in English proficiency? Table 2 shows a random selection of participants, biographical data, and raw scores on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013) and Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996).

Table 2

##### *Random Sample of Participants*

	Country of Origin	Gender	Age	Pre-Test Score	Post-Test Score	Change in Test Score	Self-Efficacy Score 1	Self-Efficacy Score 2	Change in Self-Efficacy Score	Language Level in IEP
S2	Oman	M	19	63	64	1	80	66	-14	Advanced
S9	Oman	M	19	49	65	16	84	92	8	Advanced
S16	Thailand	M	22	71	79	8	87	97	10	Advanced Plus High
S17	Colombia South	F	18	33	51	18	94	96	2	Intermediate
S21	Korea	F	19	70	74	4	80	86	6	Advanced
S27	Mexico	F	24	34	51	17	88	93	5	Beginning High
S30	Japan South	M	22	54	63	9	82	80	-2	Intermediate
S32	Korea South	M	23	82	78	-4	86	90	4	Advanced Plus
S42	Korea	M	23	87	86	-1	75	79	4	Advanced

Raw data for the entire group of 43 was entered in SPSS 21.0 and a frequency distribution was acquired in order to determine whether or not the data was normally distributed. The following figure (Figure 1) provides an illustration of the frequency distribution of the raw data from the initial administration of the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996).

Figure 1. Initial Questionnaire Frequency Distribution

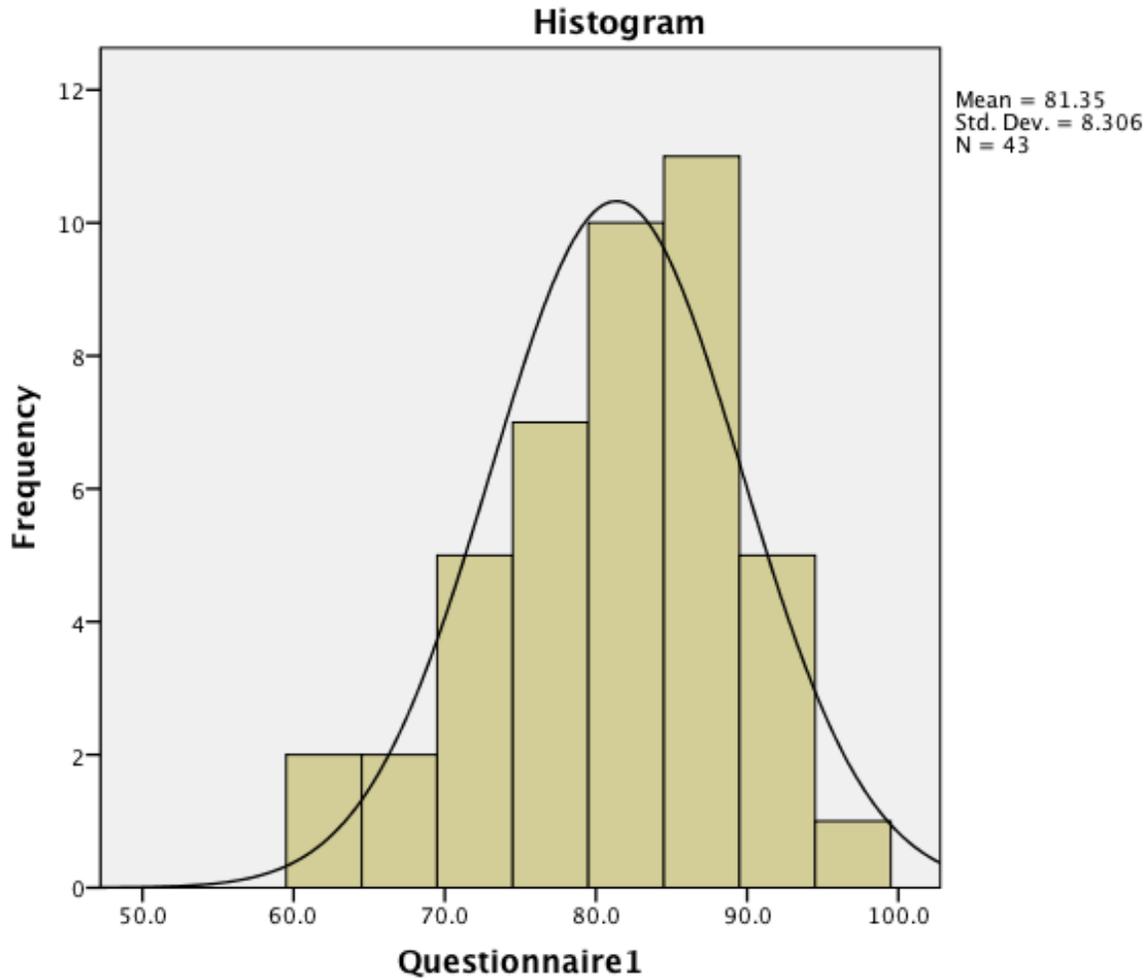


Figure 1 suggested a normal distribution of scores among the raw data for the initial questionnaire. The mean of scores was 81.35 with a standard deviation of 8.306. The second administration of the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) was conducted at the end of the semester. Figure 2 illustrates the frequency distribution of those raw scores.

Figure 2. Second Questionnaire Frequency Distribution

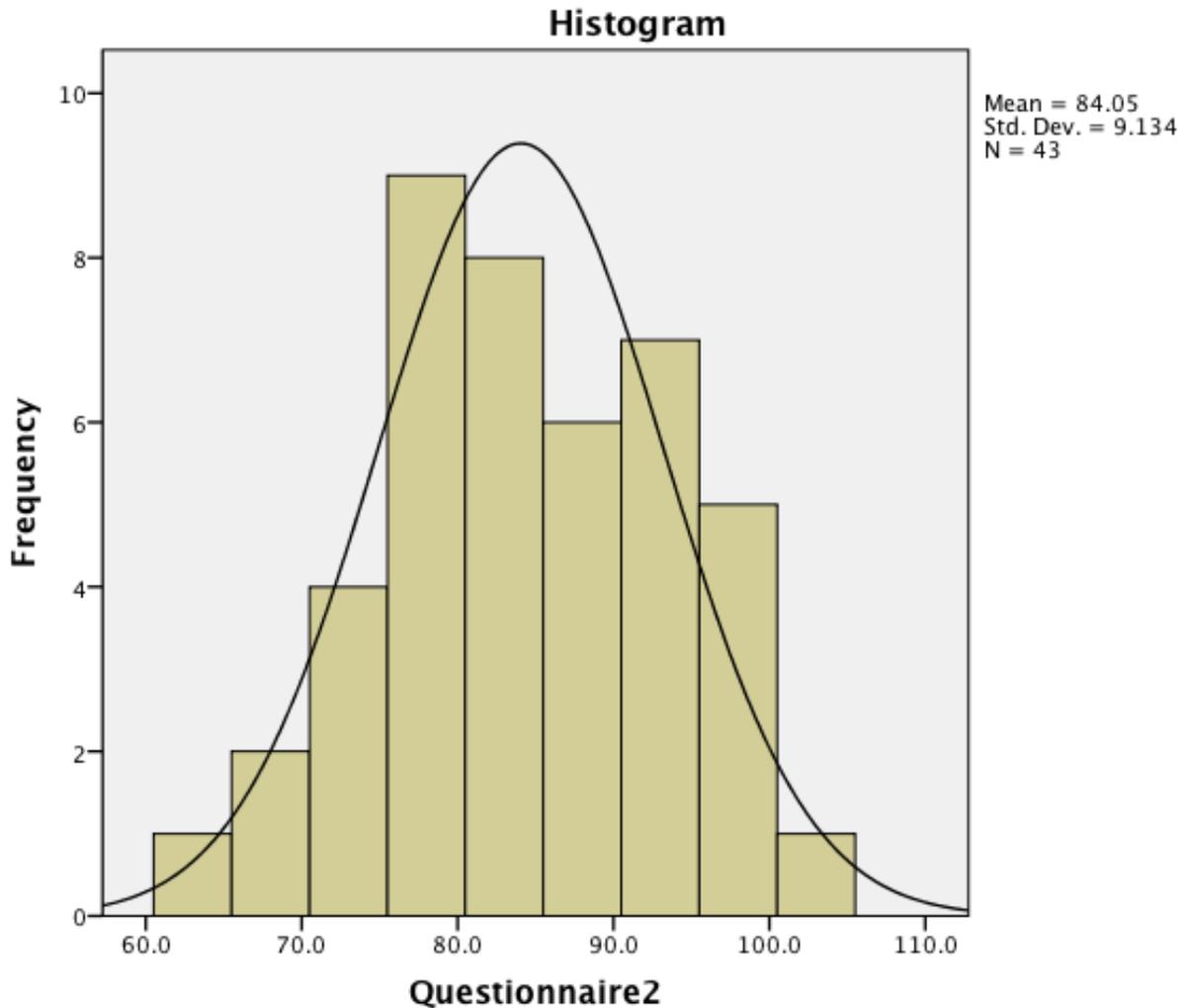
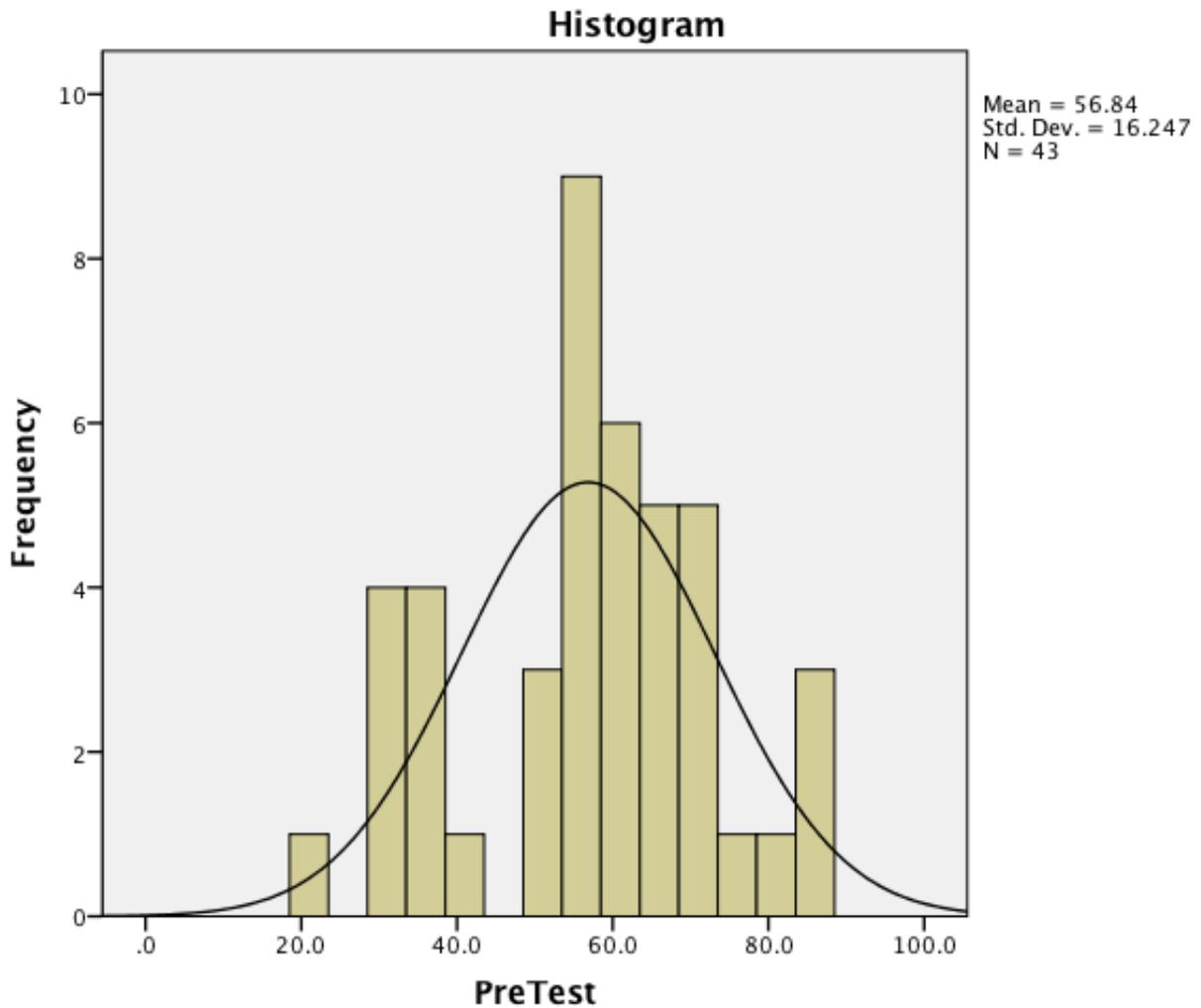


Figure 2 suggested that there was a normal distribution of scores among the raw data for the second administration of this questionnaire. The mean of scores was 84.05 with a standard deviation of 9.134. Therefore, the researcher determined that due to the similarity in the means and standard deviations of the scores of the two test administrations the initial questionnaire scores would be used for comparison to the change score for the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013) in order to answer Research Question 1.

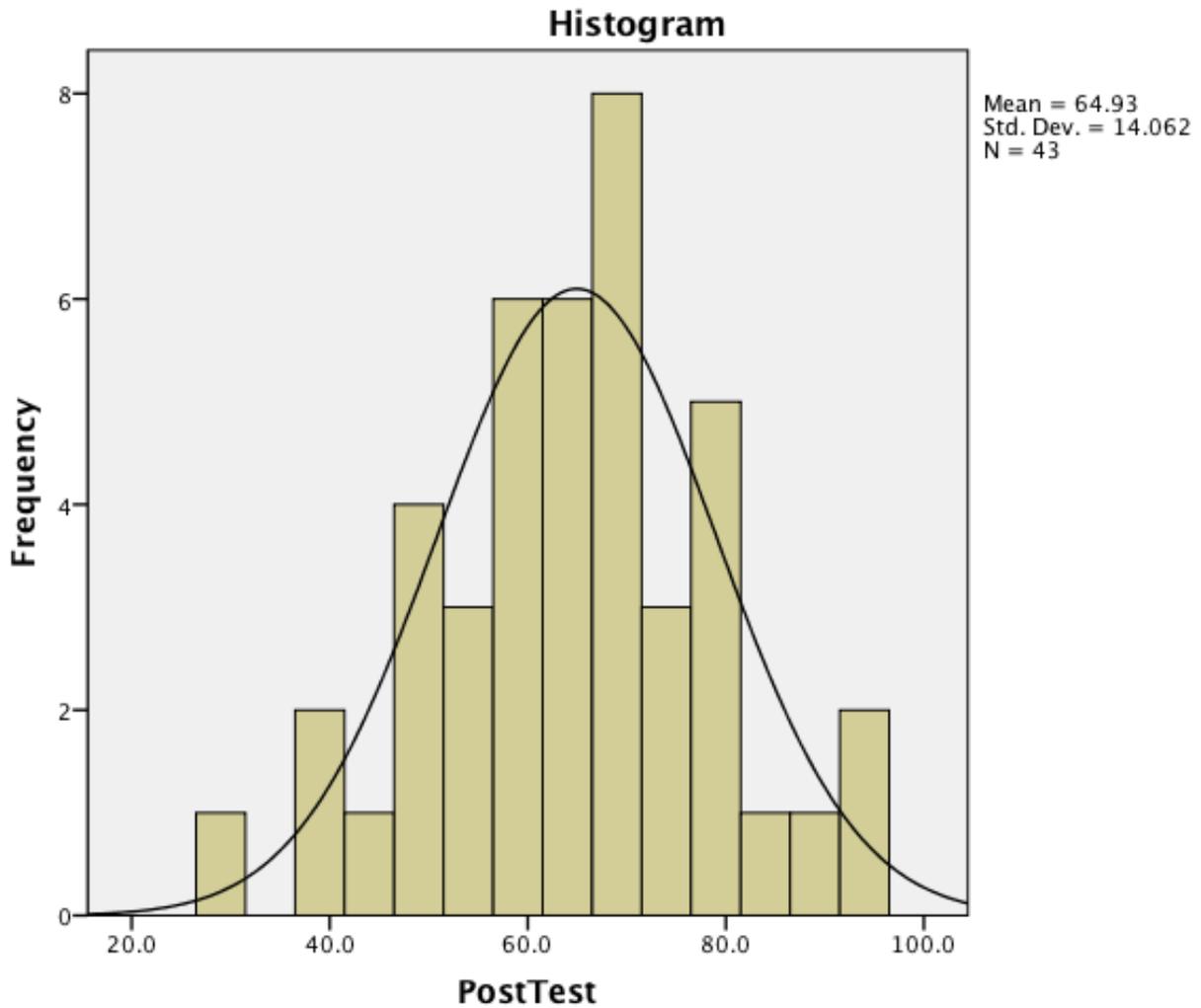
The frequency distribution of the initial scores of students on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013) is illustrated in Figure 3. The mean of scores was 56.84 and the standard deviation was 16.247, suggesting a near normal distribution.

Figure 3. Pre-Test Frequency Distribution



The frequency distribution of the second administration scores of students on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013) are illustrated in Figure 4. The mean of scores was 64.93 and the standard deviation was 14.062, suggesting a normal distribution.

Figure 4. Post-Test Frequency Distribution

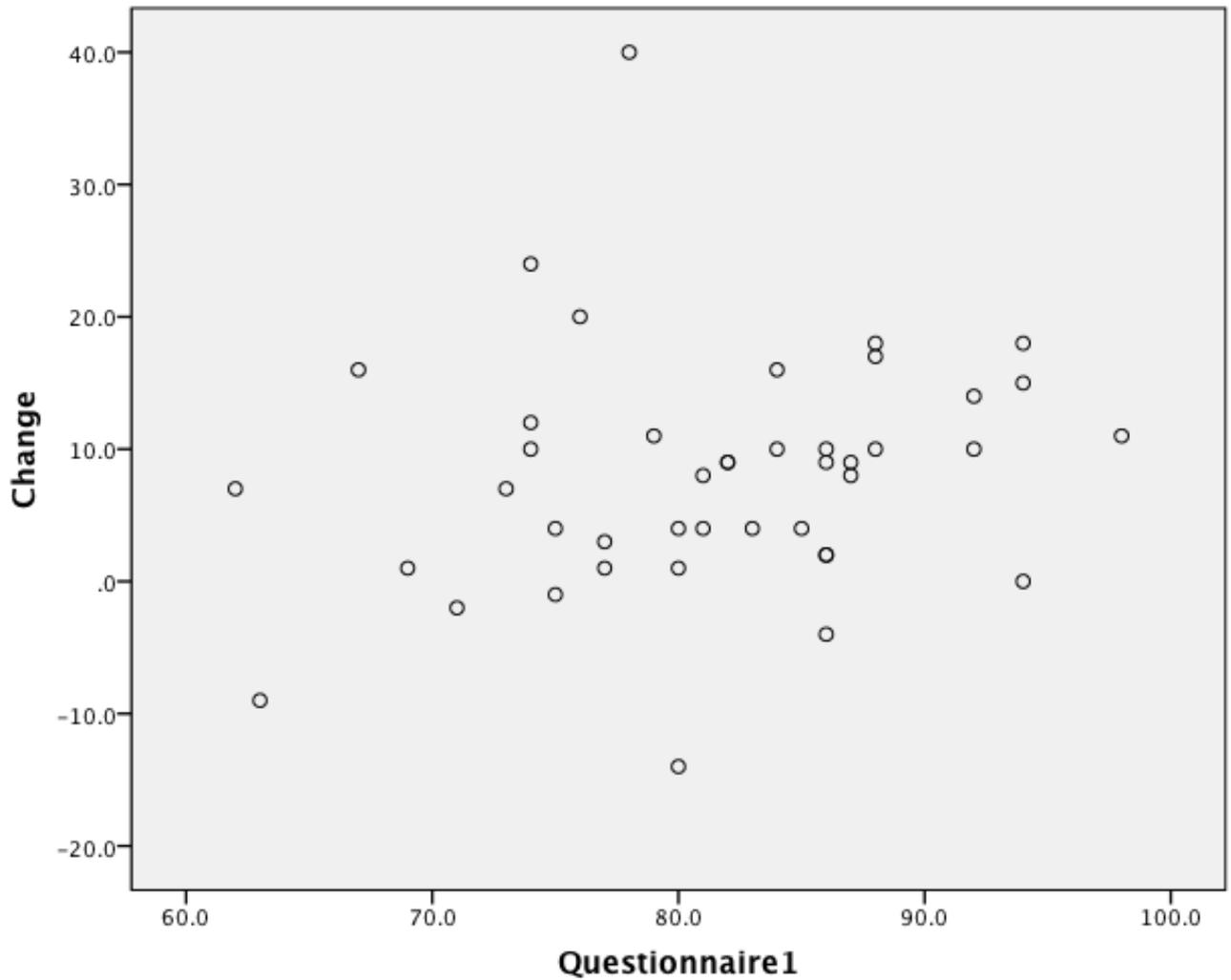


The change score was determined by subtracting each individual's initial score on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013) from his score on the second administration of the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013). This change or difference score was reported for each student.

The initial scores on the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) were compared to the change in scores on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013). Figure 5 illustrates the wide and distribution of scores in a scattergram. This illustration

suggested that there was only a weak pattern to the relationship between self-efficacy score and change in the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 1996) for this group of participants.

Figure 5. Relationship Between Initial Questionnaire Scores and Change of Scores on CaMLA EPT

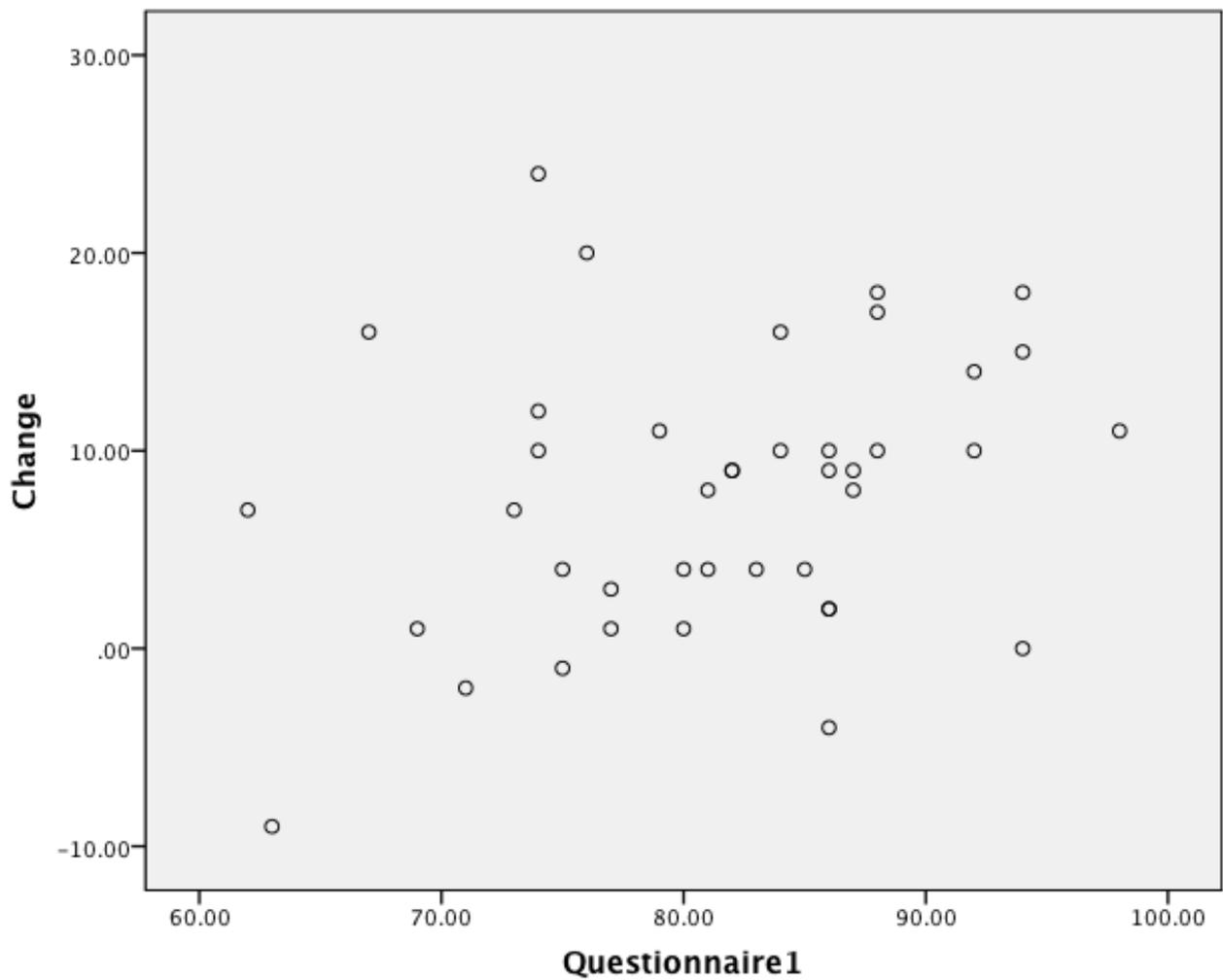


In the initial scattergram two participant scores fell very wide of the majority. To see if these outliers might have skewed the overall result, the scores for the highest change in score (S37;  $n = 40$ ) and lowest change in score (S43;  $n = -14$ ) on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013)

were removed from the data set and the analysis was run again with the remaining raw data.

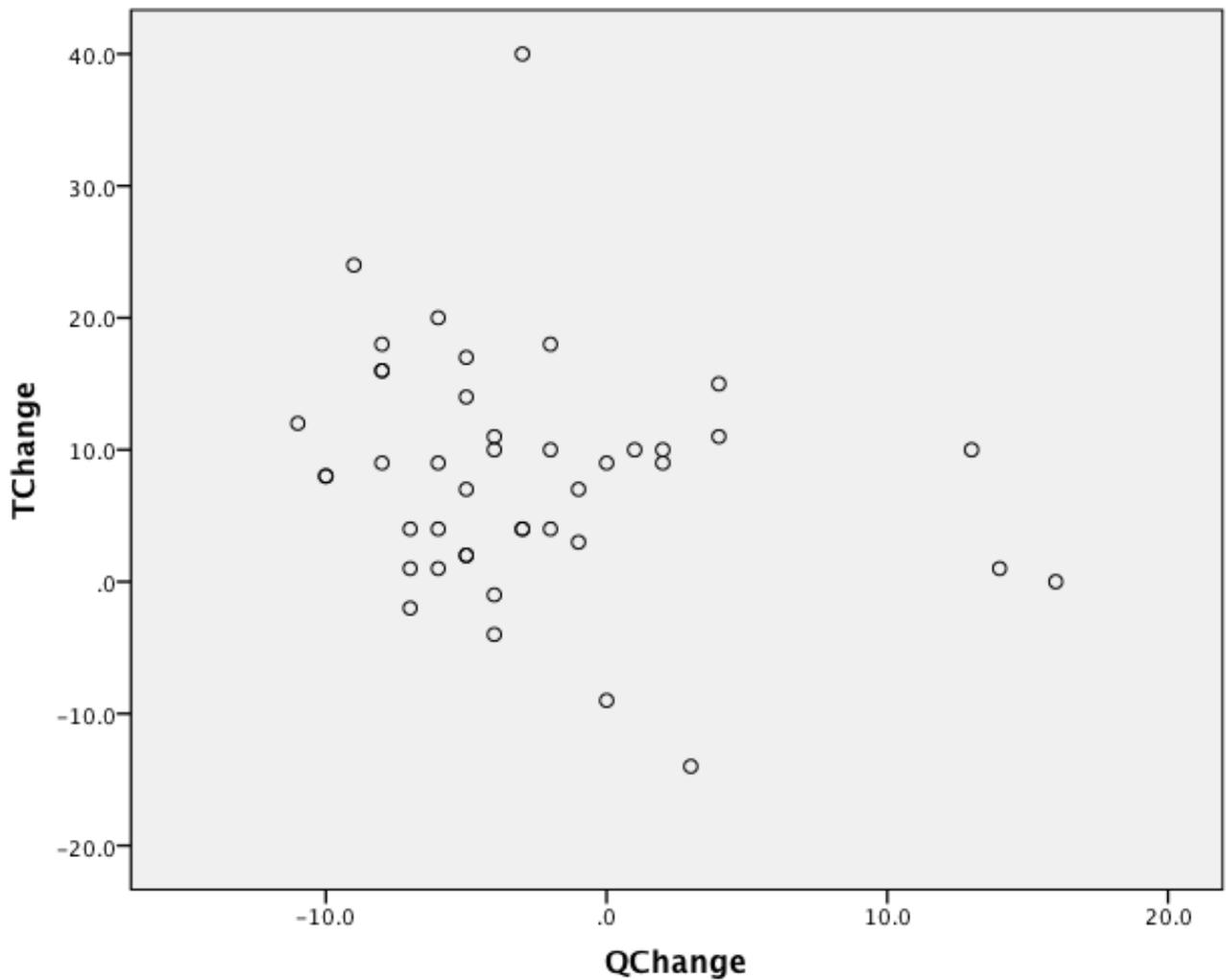
Figure 6 shows the new scattergram has a slightly more linear grouping but still no strong relationship between change in test score and score on the initial Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996).

Figure 6. Relationship Between Initial Questionnaire Scores and Change of Scores on CaMLA EPT Removing S37 and S43



Since a strong relationship was not found in previous analyses, a final analysis of the change of scores on the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) compared to the change of score on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013) was conducted. Figure 7 shows that a comparison of the change of scores on each instrument results in a tighter grouping and a weak linear distribution of scores.

Figure 7. Relationship Between Change of Scores on Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Questionnaire and Change of Scores on CaMLA EPT



Research Questions 1 asked: What is the relationship between student self-efficacy and change in English proficiency? The data suggested that there is a weak relationship for total scores, therefore an additional analysis was conducted after the self-efficacy scores were grouped into three categories: 1 = low, 2 = average, 3 = high. The categories were determined by using the mean of 81.349 for self-efficacy scores on initial administration of the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) and adding one standard deviation (SD = 8.3063) and subtracting one standard deviation (SD = 8.3063) to the mean to comprise the scores falling within the average range (2 = average, range of 73 – 89; n = 32) with scores rounded to the closest whole number. Scores of 72 and below were considered to be representative of low self-efficacy and those scores comprised category 1 (n = 5). Scores of 90 and above were considered to be representative of high self-efficacy and those scores comprised category 3 (n = 6).

A Spearman *rho* correlation coefficient analysis was used to determine the strength of the relationship between the initial self-efficacy scores and the change scores in each of the three categories. Spearman *rho* was selected because it does not require a normal distribution of scores and is appropriate for small sample sizes (Cronk, 2010).

A Spearman *rho* correlation coefficient was calculated for the relationship between the self-efficacy scores for students in the low self-efficacy category and their change in score on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013). A weak negative correlation that was not significant was found ( $r(4) = -.200, p > .05$ ). These results suggested that for the low self-efficacy category, self-efficacy was not related to change in score on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013).

A Spearman *rho* correlation coefficient was calculated for the relationship between the self-efficacy scores for students in the average self-efficacy category and their change in score on

the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013). A very weak positive correlation that was not significant was found ( $r(31) = .037, p > .05$ ). These results suggested that for the average self-efficacy category, self-efficacy was not related to change in score on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013).

A Spearman *rho* correlation coefficient was calculated for the relationship between the self-efficacy scores for students in the high self-efficacy category and their change in score on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013). A very weak positive correlation that was not significant was found ( $r(5) = .093, p > .05$ ). These results suggested that for the high self-efficacy category, self-efficacy was not related to change in score on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013).

Research Question 2 asked: What is the relationship between self-efficacy for a group of English language learners and the perception of their self-efficacy by their instructors? Data from six questions selected from the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) that were considered to be representative of a global measure of self-efficacy for students were compared to the responses of their instructors by class in order to determine the consistency with which students and instructors rated the students in the area of self-efficacy. The principal investigator determined the questions that would be included in this analysis. Questions selected were numbers 1, 2, 10, 22, 23, and 29 from the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996).

Table 2 illustrates the descriptive statistics regarding student responses and the instructor responses for these six questions.

Table 2

## Descriptive Statistics for Student Responses and Instructor Response

		Students				Teacher	
		Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Response
T1	Question 1	3.1111	3.0000	.92796	1.00	4.00	4
	Question 2	2.7778	3.0000	.83333	1.00	4.00	3
	Question 10	2.8889	3.0000	.78174	2.00	4.00	3
	Question 22	2.4444	2.0000	.52705	2.00	3.00	2
	Question 23	3.1111	3.0000	.33333	3.00	4.00	4
	Question 29	2.4444	3.0000	1.01379	1.00	4.00	3
T2	Question 1	3.4000	3.0000	.54772	3.00	4.00	4
	Question 2	3.8000	4.0000	.44721	3.00	4.00	4
	Question 10	3.6000	4.0000	.54772	3.00	4.00	2
	Question 22	2.6000	2.0000	.89443	2.00	4.00	3
	Question 23	3.4000	4.0000	.89443	2.00	4.00	NR
	Question 29	3.0000	3.0000	.70711	2.00	4.00	NR
T3	Question 1	3.2500	3.0000	.46291	3.00	4.00	4
	Question 2	3.6250	4.0000	.51755	3.00	4.00	4
	Question 10	2.6250	2.5000	1.06066	1.00	4.00	3
	Question 22	2.2500	2.5000	1.03510	.00	3.00	3
	Question 23	1.3750	2.0000	1.18773	.00	3.00	4
	Question 29	2.7500	3.0000	.46291	2.00	3.00	4
T4	Question 1	3.3000	3.0000	.67495	2.00	4.00	NR
	Question 2	3.2000	3.0000	.42164	3.00	4.00	NR
	Question 10	2.9000	3.0000	.87560	2.00	4.00	NR
	Question 22	2.8000	3.0000	.42164	2.00	3.00	NR
	Question 23	3.2000	3.0000	.63246	2.00	4.00	NR
	Question 29	3.0000	3.0000	.66667	2.00	4.00	NR
T5	Question 1	3.1818	3.0000	.40452	3.00	4.00	NR
	Question 2	3.4545	3.0000	.52223	3.00	4.00	NR
	Question 10	3.4545	3.0000	.52223	3.00	4.00	NR
	Question 22	2.6364	3.0000	.67420	2.00	4.00	NR
	Question 23	2.8182	3.0000	.75076	2.00	4.00	NR
	Question 29	2.7273	3.0000	.78625	2.00	4.00	NR

Note. NR = no response

The one-sample chi-square test was chosen to analyze the data to determine whether or not there is consistency between the student levels of self-efficacy and the perceptions of student self-efficacy by the teacher as drawn from the adapted Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-

Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996). There were five teachers included in the sample. Responses from three were collected. The remaining two did not respond. Therefore, there were only three sets of data analyzed. The one-sample chi-square test was calculated comparing the means of each question to the response of the instructor for each class. It was hypothesized that the values of the means would be consistent with the instructor rating.

For Instructor 1 (T1) the one-sample chi square test was calculated. It was hypothesized that the mean of the student scores would approach the teacher value for each question. No significant deviation from the hypothesized values was found ( $\chi^2(5) = .955, p > .05$ ). This result suggested that the self-efficacy ratings of the students ( $n = 9$ ) were consistent with the ratings of the instructor (T1) for students enrolled in her class.

For Instructor 2 (T2) the one-sample chi square test was calculated. It was hypothesized that the mean of the student scores would approach the teacher value for each question. No significant deviation from the hypothesized values was found ( $\chi^2(5) = 1.000, p > .05$ ). This result suggested that the self-efficacy ratings of the students ( $n = 5$ ) were consistent with the ratings of the instructor (T2) for students enrolled in his class.

For Instructor 3 (T3) the one-sample chi square test was calculated. It was hypothesized that the mean of the student scores would approach the teacher value for each question. No significant deviation from the hypothesized values was found ( $\chi^2(5) = 1.000, p > .05$ ). This result suggested that the self-efficacy ratings of the students ( $n = 8$ ) were consistent with the ratings of the instructor (T3) for students enrolled in his class.

Research Question 2 asked: What is the relationship between self-efficacy for a group of English language learners and the perception of their self-efficacy by their instructors? The data available suggested that instructor perception of students' self-efficacy was consistent with the

self-efficacy beliefs of students. Though perceptions of individual students varied for each question analyzed, the mean of the group was consistent with the instructors' ratings of the group as a whole. There was inadequate data to complete the qualitative analysis of instructor comments.

## V. DISCUSSION

This study addressed the relationship between learner self-efficacy and English-language proficiency in a native English environment involving participants from various non-native English backgrounds. While there are published studies regarding self-efficacy of student learners in non-native English speaking countries who are studying in homogeneous language environments, there is little data regarding more diverse groups of learners in native English language environments.

The following limitations to this study were present: This study had a limited sample size, which was not randomly chosen and consisted of a convenience sample. Data for five students was lost due to lack of completion of all of the administrations of the test instruments. In addition, there was a small amount of data gathered from instructors due to lack of response and limited responses. There was no control for previous language learning of student participants or level of proficiency at the start of the program. There was also no control for presence of a learning disability in the students' native languages or in second language learning.

The global view of learner self-efficacy in this study could be seen as a limitation as other studies have focused on a particular learning skill (i.e., reading, writing, listening) and the more narrow focus could prove a stronger relationship. A final limitation is that the questionnaire and test for this study were both administered in English. Previous studies showing a correlation between proficiency and learner self-efficacy were primarily completed in the learner's native language and might have produced more accurate results based on participants' stronger understanding of the study instruments.

The analysis of the data for Research Question 1 suggested that there was no significant relationship between self-efficacy scores on the Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (Mikulecky et al., 1996) and change in scores on the CaMLA EPT (Cambridge, 2013). These findings are inconsistent with studies by Idrus and Sivapalan (2010); Nasseri and Zaferanieh (2012); Rahimi and Abedini (2009); Teng (2005); Tifarlioglu and Cinkara (2009); Wong (2005); and Hsieh and Kang (2010). These previous studies found that self-efficacy was related to increased achievement. However, all studies were conducted in participants' native language environment and were limited to students from one language and culture group. Many of the previous studies also had sample sizes greater than 100 and used randomly selected subjects.

The small sample size and the diversity of learners within the present study as well as the native English speaking environment may have influenced the results of the current study. It is suggested that further research be conducted in order to determine if a significant relationship may be present with larger sample sizes. In addition, research into the relationship between self-efficacy and outcomes for language learning with subjects randomly chosen from among diverse language groups receiving English language instruction in the same classroom should be examined. Further investigations of the relationship between self-efficacy and the English language learning outcomes of students learning English in a native English speaking environment should also be conducted. It is possible that identity issues of students might affect their overall self-efficacy and cause a skewing of results.

To expand on this study, it would be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study of participants to evaluate whether correlations can be found between self-efficacy and change in proficiency across multiple semesters of study. Further research could also focus on analysis of

covariance, particularly with demographics like gender, country of origin, age, and number of semesters of English study. Additional insight might also be provided utilizing a different language proficiency assessment tool.

The analysis of the quantitative data for Research Question 2 suggested that student perceptions of self-efficacy were consistent with their instructor's perception of the student group's self-efficacy. These findings suggested that instructors may be reliable observers of self-efficacy and may appreciate statistical data to support the accuracy of their observations.

Analysis of the scores from the first and the second administration of the self-efficacy questionnaire to students suggested that the responses of students as a group were consistent from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester in measuring their perceptions of their own self-efficacy.

It appeared that for this small sample of instructors and students, instructors may be intuitive for recognizing levels of self-efficacy in their students and if so, would be receptive to developing teaching strategies that are targeted to students with differing levels of self-efficacy. Knowledge of student self-efficacy might lead to the use of different strategies for teaching students with low self-efficacy scores as opposed to strategies used for students with average or high self-efficacy scores.

Therefore, it is suggested that further study on this topic be conducted measuring instructor perceptions. One instructor respondent commented that she would be interested in seeing outcomes of the analysis of the data in order to apply this knowledge to adjusting teaching strategies and maximizing learner outcomes. Since self-efficacy is unique to the individual learner and has been determined to be a significant factor in language mastery, research into self-efficacy can provide methods by which the individual learner's self-efficacy can be evaluated

and strengthened both inside and outside the classroom. Increasing the awareness of instructors in university intensive English programs to the importance of learner self-efficacy might influence teaching methodologies, curriculum design, and feedback to learners to bring about greater mastery of the target language.

## LIST OF REFERENCES

- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, NY: W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A., Barbaranelli, C., Vittorio Caprara, G., & Pastorelli, C. (1996). Multifaced impact of self-efficacy beliefs on academic functioning. *Child Development*. 67, 1206-1222.
- Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments (1972). *Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments English Placement Test*.
- Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments (2013). *Cambridge Michigan Language Assessments English Placement Test*.
- Cronk, B.C. (2010). *How to use PASW statistics: A step-by-step guide to analysis and interpretation*. Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publising.
- Gardner, R.C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Dornyei, Z. (1999). Motivation. In *Concise Encyclopedia of Educational Linguistics*. (pp. 525-532). Oxford, UK: Elsevier Science Ltd.
- Dornyei, Z. (1994). Motivation and motivating in the foreign language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*. 78(3), 273-284.
- Hsieh, P. & Kang, H. (2010). Attribution and self-efficacy and their interrelationship in the Korean EFL context. *Language Learning*. 60(3), 606-627.
- Idrus, H. & Sivapalan, S. (2010). Perceived self-efficacy of ESL students with regard to their oral communication ability. In K. Abdullah, S. Selvadurai, E.A. Choy & M. Maros (Eds.),

- Contemporary Issues of Education, Development, and Security*. (pp. 74-86). Malaysia: Penerbit UKM.
- Lightbown, P.M. & Spada, N. (2006). *How languages are learned*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Mikulecky, L., Lloyd, P., & Huang, S.C. (1996). *Adult and ESL Literacy Learning Self-Efficacy Questionnaire*. Bloomington, IN: Language Education Department, Indiana University at Bloomington.
- Milinki, A.K. (1999). *Cases in qualitative research*. Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.
- Nasseri, M. & Zaferanieh, E. (2012). The relationship between reading self-efficacy beliefs, reading strategy use and reading comprehension level of Iranian EFL learners. *World Journal of Education*. 2(2). 64-75.
- Patten, M. (2001). *Questionnaire research: A practical guide*. Los Angeles, CA: Pyrczak Publishing.
- Pajares, F. (2006). Self-efficacy during childhood and adolescence: Implications for teachers and parents. In F. Pajares & T. Urden (Eds.). *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents* (pp. 339-367). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.
- Rahimi, A. & Abedini, A. (2009). The interface between EFL learners' self-efficacy concerning listening comprehension and listening proficiency. *Novitas-ROYAL*. 3(1). 14-28.
- Raofi, S., Tan, B.H., & Chan, S.H. (2012). Self-efficacy in second/foreign language learning contexts. *English Language Teaching*. 5(11). 60-73.
- Saville-Troike, M. (2008) *Introducing second language acquisition*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

- Stajkovic, A.D. & Luthans, F. (1998). Social cognitive theory and self-efficacy: Going beyond traditional motivational and behavioral approaches. *Organizational Dynamics*. 26(4), 62-74.
- Teng, K. (2005). *Perceptions of Taiwanese students to English learning as functions of self-efficacy, motivation, learning activities and self-directed learning*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations. (AAT 3178892).
- Tilfarlioglu, F. T. & Cinkara, E. (2009). Self-efficacy in EFL: Differences among proficiency groups and relationship with success. *Novitas-ROYAL*. 3(2). 129-142.
- Tremblay, P.F. & Gardner, R.C. (1995). Expanding the motivation construct in language learning. *The Modern Language Journal*. 79(4). 505-520.
- Wong, M.S. (2005). Language learning strategies and language self-efficacy: Investigating the relationship in Malaysia. *Regional Language Centre Journal*. 36(3). 245-269.

## LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INFORMATIONAL LETTER TO INTRODUCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant,

You are invited to take part in a project that is part of my requirements for my Master's program at The University of Mississippi.

The purpose of this project is to help me learn more about student attitudes and how these attitudes may affect student performance in English-language study.

If you take part in my research, you will be asked to read through 30 statements and rank how closely the statements apply to your feelings about learning English. I will also review your biographical information and entrance/exit test scores.

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any statements that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to take part it will not affect your grade in any English courses at The University of Mississippi. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

This study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study fulfills the human research subject protections obligations required by state and federal law and University policies. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a participant of research, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at 662-915-3766. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Cook  
103 EF Yerby Conference Center  
662-915-3766

APPENDIX B: ADULT AND ESL LITERACY LEARNING SELF-EFFICACY  
QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Read each statement and rate how strongly you agree or disagree by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.**

**1. I do a good job of participating in class discussion.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**2. I enjoy learning.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**3. I am not very good at learning writing skills.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**4. I am able to keep reading even when there are other interesting things to do.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**5. One of my main goals is to be much better at writing by next year.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**6. I have no problem learning reading skills.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**7. My problem is that I cannot get down to reading and writing when I should.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**8. Sometimes I think that I am no good at writing.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**9. When I decide to write something, I go ahead and do it.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**10. Doing well in learning is not one of my main goals in life.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**11. I think that I am pretty good at writing.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**12. I avoid trying to read new articles when they look too difficult for me.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**13. I find a lot of writing assignments hard to do.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**14. When I decide to read something, I go ahead and do it.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**15. I remember the important points in readings very well.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**16. I feel insecure about my ability to write clearly.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**17. One of my main goals is to be much better at reading by next year.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**18. I think that I am pretty good at my writing work.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**19. I can motivate myself to read.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**20. My writing work worries me.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**21. I find a lot of readings hard to understand.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**22. It is difficult for me to concentrate on my learning task.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**23. I am useless at schoolwork.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**24. I enjoy writing.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**25. I learn new words easily.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**26. If I can't understand a reading the first time, I keep trying until I can.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**27. My reading assignments worry me.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**28. Reading is boring.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**29. I can study well when there are other interesting things to do.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

**30. Sometimes I think that I am no good at reading.**

- Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX C: SCORING KEY FOR ADULT AND ESL LITERACY LEARNING  
SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE

**1. I do a good job of participating in class discussion.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**2. I enjoy learning.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**3. I am not very good at learning writing skills.**

1 Strongly Agree      2 Agree      3 Disagree      4 Strongly Disagree

**4. I am able to keep reading even when there are other interesting things to do.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**5. One of my main goals is to be much better at writing by next year.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**6. I have no problem learning reading skills.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**7. My problem is that I cannot get down to reading and writing when I should.**

1 Strongly Agree      2 Agree      3 Disagree      4 Strongly Disagree

**8. Sometimes I think that I am no good at writing.**

1 Strongly Agree      2 Agree      3 Disagree      4 Strongly Disagree

**9. When I decide to write something, I go ahead and do it.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**10. Doing well in learning is not one of my main goals in life.**

1 Strongly Agree      2 Agree      3 Disagree      4 Strongly Disagree

**11. I think that I am pretty good at writing.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**12. I avoid trying to read new articles when they look too difficult for me.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**13. I find a lot of writing assignments hard to do.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**14. When I decide to read something, I go ahead and do it.**

4 Strongly Agree          3 Agree          2 Disagree          1 Strongly Disagree

**15. I remember the important points in readings very well.**

4 Strongly Agree          3 Agree          2 Disagree          1 Strongly Disagree

**16. I feel insecure about my ability to write clearly.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**17. One of my main goals is to be much better at reading by next year.**

4 Strongly Agree          3 Agree          2 Disagree          1 Strongly Disagree

**18. I think that I am pretty good at my writing work.**

4 Strongly Agree          3 Agree          2 Disagree          1 Strongly Disagree

**19. I can motivate myself to read.**

4 Strongly Agree          3 Agree          2 Disagree          1 Strongly Disagree

**20. My writing work worries me.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**21. I find a lot of readings hard to understand.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**22. It is difficult for me to concentrate on my learning task.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**23. I am useless at schoolwork.**

1 Strongly Agree      2 Agree      3 Disagree      4 Strongly Disagree

**24. I enjoy writing.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**25. I learn new words easily.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**26. If I can't understand a reading the first time, I keep trying until I can.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**27. My reading assignments worry me.**

1 Strongly Agree      2 Agree      3 Disagree      4 Strongly Disagree

**28. Reading is boring.**

1 Strongly Agree      2 Agree      3 Disagree      4 Strongly Disagree

**29. I can study well when there are other interesting things to do.**

4 Strongly Agree      3 Agree      2 Disagree      1 Strongly Disagree

**30. Sometimes I think that I am no good at reading.**

1 Strongly Agree      2 Agree      3 Disagree      4 Strongly Disagree

**Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_/120**

APPENDIX D: ADAPTATION OF ADULT AND ESL LITERACY LEARNING SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INSTRUCTORS OF SUBJECTS' COURSES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thinking about your Spring 2013 Speaking and Listening class, please read each statement and rate how strongly you agree or disagree by placing a check mark in the appropriate box.**

**After each statement please add any comments or additional information you have about your students related to the statements and the rating you selected. What specific factors about or actions of your students led you to choose the rating you selected?**

**1. My students did a good job of participating in class discussion.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

Comments:

---

---

---

**2. My students enjoyed learning.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

Comments:

---

---

---

**3. Doing well in learning was not one of my students' main goals in life.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

Comments:

---

---

---

**4. It was difficult for my students to concentrate on their learning task.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

Comments:

---

---

---

**5. My students were useless at schoolwork.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

Comments:

---

---

---

**6. My students could study well when there were other interesting things to do.**

Strongly Agree       Agree       Disagree       Strongly Disagree

Comments:

---

---

APPENDIX E: SCORING KEY FOR ADAPTATION OF ADULT AND ESL LITERACY  
LEARNING SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR INSTRUCTORS OF SUBJECTS'  
COURSES

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thinking about your Spring 2013 Speaking and Listening class, please read each statement and rate how strongly you agree or disagree by placing a check mark in the appropriate box. After each statement please add any comments or additional information you have about your students related to the statements.**

**1. My students did a good job of participating in class discussion.**

4 Strongly Agree          3 Agree          2 Disagree          1 Strongly Disagree

**2. My students enjoyed learning.**

4 Strongly Agree          3 Agree          2 Disagree          1 Strongly Disagree

**3. Doing well in learning was not one of my students' main goals in life.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**4. It was difficult for my students to concentrate on their learning task.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**5. My students were useless at schoolwork.**

1 Strongly Agree          2 Agree          3 Disagree          4 Strongly Disagree

**6. My students could study well when there were other interesting things to do.**

4 Strongly Agree          3 Agree          2 Disagree          1 Strongly Disagree

## VITA

**Vanessa C. Cook**

### **Education**

Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and Journalism

[The University of Mississippi](#), Oxford, MS

*From Aug 1998 to Jul 2002*

Member of The Croft Institute for International Studies and the Sally McDonnell-Barksdale Honors College

3.51 GPA (overall)

### **Relevant Experience**

#### **Study Abroad Advisor**

The University of Mississippi Study Abroad Office

*From March 2005 to January 2011*

#### **Director**

The University of Mississippi International Outreach Office

*From January 2011 to present*