



(417) (438)

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والثلاثون

فعالية تطبيق استراتيجيات مختارة في تعزيز فاعلية الذات لدى طلاب الجامعات الكردية الذين يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية

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المستخلص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقق من فعالية تطبيق استراتيجيات مختارة في تعزيز فاعلية الذات لدى طلاب اللغة الكردية بوصفها لغة أجنبية. ولفحص هذه العلاقة، تم استخدام مقياس فاعلية الذات للطلاب لتقييم فاعلية الذات الأكاديمية المتصورة للطلاب. تم استخدام ثلاث استراتيجيات (العصف الذهني، العمل التعاوني، والمناظرة) في تدريس المهارات الأكاديمية لطلبة السنة الأولى خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٣-٢٠٢٢ وتكونت عينة الدراسة من ٦٢ طالباً وطالبة من طلبة السنة الأولى في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية/كلية اللغات في جامعة صلاح الدين. تم تطبيق المقياس على عينة الدراسة المستهدفة مرتين، المرة الأولى قبل تطبيق الاستراتيجيات المختارة، والمرة الثانية في شهر مايو بعد تطبيق الاستراتيجية. علاوة على ذلك، تم إجراء مقابلة مع عشرة طلاب للحصول على نظرة أعمق للموضوع. تم استخدام الحزمة الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية (SPSS) لتحليل البيانات المتحصل عليها من استخدام المقياس.

وكشفت النتائج الكمية أن تطبيق الاستراتيجيات الثلاث في تدريس المهارات الأكاديمية لطلبة السنة الأولى أدى إلى فرق معنوي في زيادة فاعلية الذات لدى الطلبة. علاوة على ذلك، وجد أن الاستراتيجيات الثلاث (العصف الذهني، والعمل التعاوني، والمناظرة) كانت فعالة، ومن بينها كان العمل التعاوني الأكثر فعالية في تعزيز فعالية الطلاب الذاتية بشكل إيجابي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: فاعلية الذات، المهارات الأكاديمية، العصف الذهني، العمل التعاوني، المناقشة



The Effect of Implementing Selected Strategies on Promoting Kurdish University EFL Students' Self-Efficacy

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of implementing targeted pedagogical strategies on enhancing the academic self-efficacy of Kurdish EFL students. To accurately measure this relationship, a student self-efficacy scale (mainly adapted from Morgan-Jinks Scale) was employed to assess students' perceived confidence in their academic potentials. During the 2023-2024 academic year, three different strategies- brainstorming, cooperative work, and debating - were integrated into teaching academic skills module to 62 first-year English Department students at Salahaddin University. The self-efficacy scale was administered twice: once as a pre-intervention and the second time after the full implementation of the strategies. Further qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews with ten students. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and the interview responses were analysed thematically.

The quantitative findings unequivocally revealed that the integration of these three strategies significantly boosted first-year students' self-efficacy in academic skills. Momentously, while all the three strategies demonstrated marked efficacy, among them cooperative work emerged as the most potent catalyst in positively promoting students' self-efficacy.

Key Words: Self-efficacy, Academic Skills, Brainstorming, Cooperative Work, Debating

1. Research Background and Problem Statement

University students during their serious induction year encounter considerable psychological and academic challenges (Gueroni et al., 2024). This period of growth from adolescence to young adulthood, accompanied



by the rigorous requirements of higher education, causes an unsteady and risky environment for students, specifically for those aiming for independence away from parental support (Sachitra and Bandara, 2017). Gueroni et al (2024) deem it a “pressing need for interventions to target the mental health of this specific demographic group to bolster their positive emotional resources” (p.2). Hence, preserving students’ psychology and mental health should be of primary significance for teachers so as to boost their individual qualities and increase their potential, especially by supplementing their self-efficacy and self-regulation. Analogously, Guzman et al (2024) consider social support through implementing appropriate interventions as crucial resources to protect students’ mental health and reinforce their self-efficacy.

Joining college brings about a significant transition in students’ academic life since it poses real challenges and necessitates adjusting to new environments. This issue may be particularly significant for the freshers who may not be familiar with university policy and who find it difficult to adapt to university rhythms. Hence, it becomes a professional obligation for teachers to draw up students’ efficacy beliefs and uphold their convictions about their involvement in the newly emerging goals at university. Students need to be enabled to think positively and trust that they can carry out new types of academic tasks assigned to them. This self-confidence is a crucial variable contributing to their future success.

Concerning the context of this study, college enrollment steadily increases for Kurdish students every year and Kurdish freshers encounter the same problem mentioned above. Coping with the new learning environment requires high level of initiative and self-efficacy, which in turn renders higher education a stressful experience and causes mental tension for freshers. Promoting freshers’ beliefs in their abilities is an enduring concern to educators and administrators. University teachers need to address this issue effectively. This enduring concern for the researchers highlighted a clear gap in the Kurdish literature. Therefore, they tried to bridge up this gap and gain a better insight into the students’ feeling about academic life and investigate the effectiveness of utilising some strategies in promoting EFL



students' self-efficacy in an attempt to find out the feasibility of these strategies in the Kurdish context.

This study is intended to answer the following research question:

- 1-What are Kurdish EFL students' perceptions toward their self-efficacy after implementing the selected strategies (brainstorming, debating, and cooperative work)?
- 2-Is there any significant difference in Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy after implementing the selected strategies (brainstorming, debating, and cooperative work)?
- 3- Which strategy is more effective in promoting Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy?

2. Aims

The current study is guided by the following aims:

1. Identifying Kurdish EFL students' perceptions towards their self-efficacy after implementing the selected strategies (brainstorming, debating, and cooperative work)
2. examining the effectiveness of implementing the selected strategies (brainstorming, debating, and cooperative work) in promoting Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy.
3. Identifying the strategy that is more effective in promoting Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy

3. The Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1. Kurdish EFL students have a positive attitude towards implementing selected strategies (brainstorming, debating, and cooperative work)
2. Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy will be promoted after implementing selected strategies (brainstorming, debating, and cooperative work)
3. All the three strategies will equally promote Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy

4. Literature Review

4.1 Self-Efficacy and Its Importance in Learning



Concerning self-efficacy, Mahatma Gandhi's extract is commonly quoted for its succinctness in describing the crucial role that self-belief plays in human beings' lives: 'If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning'. This inspirational excerpt reveals the significance of high self-efficacy in fostering positive self-fulfilling predictions. Having this belief in one's own abilities is determinant in managing and accomplishing tasks and approaching prospective challenges.

Self-efficacy is originally derived from Bandura's social cognitive theory. It is based on the conviction that people are expected to engage in activities to the extent that they consider themselves effective to perform these activities. According to this theory, people coordinate with the social context in which they are embedded. Evidently, academic self-efficacy touches on learning and motivation and they are interrelated. This is why Bandura believes that the outcomes people anticipate mostly depend on their judgments of what they can achieve (Bandura, 1988). Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy as a person's personal belief in their own abilities to produce a specific performance. Individuals are affected by their own judgments about their personal abilities. This effect can be perceived in the way they carry out tasks. In a later work, Bandura et al (1996, p. 1207) say "In the theory of social cognition, personal efficacy works within a broad network of social and psychological impacts where functional beliefs play an influential regulatory function".

Academic self-efficacy concerns students' confidence in effectively performing academic activities at a desired level (Schunk, 1991). Pajares (1996) maintains that individuals' self-beliefs and how they interpret their attainment informs their subsequent performances. Analogously, Honicke and Broadbent (2016) (Cited in Pedditzi and Marcello, 2018) define academic self-efficacy as a personal belief in one's own capability to perform at designated levels even in the face of academic challenges.

Hence, it can be said that the concept of self-efficacy enables students withstand challenges and keep up a positive orientation toward their



academic pursuits. Consequently, it contributes meaningfully to their psychological persistence against academic pressures (Salami, 2010).

According to Pedditz and Marcello (2018), students' self-efficacy is important since it is a decisive factor that tells in advance "students' academic achievement across academic areas and levels" (p.250). To Sagone and Indiana (2023), having high self-efficacy and positive beliefs about one's ability to achieve the desired results is a decisive element that causes students to engage in, or avoid a behaviour, i.e. it is described as action-guiding. For this reason, it deserves to be enhanced and further studied.

Researchers have made efforts to understand the factors that regulate student self-efficacy and they considered it a significant topic in the education field (Chen et al., 2021; Li et al., 2021). Evidently, there are various factors that act in shaping this academic self-efficacy: family, friends, and school. Gao et al (2020) consider teaching approaches as crucial in developing students' self-efficacy. In a similar way, Schunk and DiBenedetto (2016) assert that teachers are active agents who partake in defining students' academic self-efficacy.

Bartimote-Aufflick et al (2016) believe that under certain conditions university student self-efficacy can be fostered best. They regard the use of strategies the best way to improve students' self-efficacy. Similarly, Laka and Suryanto (2024) contend that students are able to perform effectively and produce the desired results when positive learning strategies are utilised in a supportive learning environment.

The classroom environment greatly impacts students' self-efficacy, which in turn will be reflected in their learning. For instance, peers, teachers, and supportive instructions make students more likely to have a positive influence on their self-image and encourage them believe in their abilities. In this sense, they will be able to use their resources to plan, control and perform the tasks and activities successfully (Bwenvu, 2023). Similarly, Tang and Zhu (2024) underline the crucial significance of nurturing academic self-efficacy. They believe that teacher support stands out as a decisive factor in promoting students' academic self-efficacy highlighting



the need for educational interventions revolving around cultivating these attributes among their EFL students.

Hence, it can be said that strategic learning is very effective for the learning process. Students are active participants in their own learning when they get involved in accomplishing tasks related to specific strategies. They will be provided with ample opportunities to apply their content knowledge while working on authentic and interactive tasks.

4.2 Sources of self-efficacy

The belief students hold about their ability to accomplish academic tasks successfully is not an innate trait, but rather a dynamic construct shaped by a variety of experiences. Students continually gather and process information from the surrounding environment to build intuitive efficacy judgements. Understanding the distinct sources from which students derive their self-efficacy beliefs is essential for teachers aiming to foster a productive learning mindset.

Bandura (1977, p.195) identifies four main sources of self-efficacy upon which expectations of personal self-efficacy are built: performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and emotional and physiological states.

Hendricks (2015) considers these four sources as crucial in increasing self-efficacy perceptions and elaborates on them as follows:

1- Performance accomplishments

Mastery experiences are considered the most effective sources of efficacy since they serve as tangible evidence of success. Acquiring self-efficacy beliefs on the basis of previous successes seemingly promote the determination needed to encounter future challenges.

2- Vicarious experience

Some people indirectly derive high expectations from other peoples' successful experiences, especially success in carrying out some risky activities without having unfavourable consequences. When others carry out tasks successfully, this would promote individuals' confidence beliefs to accomplish similar tasks. Generally speaking, students tend to learn better in supportive socially-comparative environments.



3- Verbal persuasion

Verbal feedback can affect human behaviour greatly. It can be utilised extensively on the part of teachers due to its convenience and availability. Doubtless to say, affirmation from others can increase students' efficacy perceptions. When praise coincides with instructions, students perform task more effectively.

4- Physiological and affective states

Individuals are more liable to anticipate success when they are supported and relaxed. An individual's awareness of his/her physical and emotional state directly affects his/her perception of personal abilities and potentials.

4.3 Self Determination Theory

While Bandora's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy provides a robust framework, integrating other theories can offer a more comprehensive understanding and yield richer insights into promoting self-efficacy among Kurdish EFL students. Self Determination Theory is a highly relevant theory in this respect. This theory posits that individuals are driven by three main psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Promoting these needs in EFL classrooms can significantly enhance students' motivation and, consequently self-efficacy. When students feel autonomous in their learning choices, competent in their language skills, and connected to their peers and teachers, their engagement and belief in their abilities are likely to flourish (Deci and Ryan, 2000).

It is mentioning that the researcher's instruction and the questionnaire items were guided by the dimensions of Bandora's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy. However, useful insights from self determination theory were applied in directing the instruction and questionnaire design.

4.4 Learning strategies

Richards and Schmitt (2010, p.559) consider language learning strategies as crucial and define them as "the conscious or unconscious processes which language learners make use of in learning and using a language". These learning strategies aim at teasing out students' current



understanding and creating abundant opportunities for them to incorporate new knowledge into their understanding.

The use of effective strategies can enhance motivation, improve performance, and foster resilience in the face of challenges. The following three strategies were employed by the researchers for a whole academic year so as to increase students' self-efficacy, namely:

4.4.1 Brainstorming

According to AlMutairi (2015), brainstorming is a strategy that provokes creativity and solving problems in the educational fields. It enhances students to reach original solutions since it involves breaking up old ideas and making new connections that leads to expanding the limits of knowledge. Kumbhar (2018) considers brainstorming "a tool for maximizing a group's creativity in problem solving". This can be achieved by involving group members to solve a specific problem by spontaneously generating ideas and sharing them. Furthermore, he is of the belief that brainstorming has different meanings. It might be used to refer to a casual discussion for new ideas or general creative problem solving technique.

4.4.2 Debating

For Meyers and Jones (1993), cited in Brown, 2015, using debates as a teaching strategy would encourage active learning in the classroom and make them interactively participate in their own learning. Ramlan, et al (2016) define debate as an educational strategy that develops reasoning skills and increases awareness of personal attitude and beliefs.

Throughout a debate, students try to persuade others with their own position. Subsequently, this would enliven classes and teach students public speaking and matters of etiquette.

4.4.3 Cooperative work

Richards and Schmitt (2010, p. 135) accentuate the importance of collaborative learning as an effective approach to teaching where students work cooperatively in small groups. Teachers need to structure successful interaction patterns among students and allocate enough time to organise appropriate interactions between students and materials.



5. Methodology

The current study employs a mixed-method approach that utilises both quantitative (one group pre-post experimental design) and qualitative (explanatory sequential design) data collection and analysis techniques to address the research problem. This approach was chosen because it strengthens the reliability of findings through data triangulation.

5.1 Participants

In this study, the sample included sixty-two first-year students from English Department at College of Languages in Salahaddin University. During the academic year 2023-2024, three different strategies, brainstorming, cooperative work, and debating, were integrated into teaching *academic skills* module. The sample was chosen based on convenience sampling since these students were taught by the researchers. Due to the small size, the results cannot be generalized beyond the specific context of the study.

5.2 Procedures and Data Collection

Prior to implementing the afore-mentioned three strategies, one of the researchers ran an opening session with the students to acquaint them with the strategies and their importance in promoting their academic skills. Throughout the implementation phase, the following points were attended to carefully:

- Introducing these strategies to the students consecutively,
- Creating a supportive environment in the class,
- Encouraging them to participate out of their own volition so as to yield the expected results,
- Motivating them to work in group and exchange ideas and experiences,
- Enlivening the class by immersing the students in different activities, and
- Providing adequate feedback and necessary scaffolding.

The aforementioned strategies were implemented in teaching *academic skills* module, to which three hours are allocated in the timetable per week. The core of this module is built on brainstorming and debating. Every week, a topic is introduced where the whole class brainstorm and share ideas. Then, the students work collaboratively in groups to debate the topic by discussing



points of agreement and negotiating opposing ideas. This means that the three strategies were utilised complementarily and harmoniously in the same session to enhance the positive effect of each strategy.

5.3 Research Tools

This research tries to relate self-efficacy as a dependent variable to the implementation of three strategies as explanatory variables. Pajares (1996) asserts that self-efficacy beliefs can be investigated by asking students to rate the level and strength of their confidence to accomplish a specific task. Based on this assertion, the researchers decided to administer a questionnaire to the students to elicit the required data.

A 25 item questionnaire was developed to collect data from 62 first graders.

It was adapted from three main scales and adjusted to the use of the three strategies in question (Academic Self-Efficacy Scale for Filipino Junior High School Students, Morgan-Jinks Student Efficacy Scale, and Owen and Froman's College Academic Self-Efficacy Scale). To ensure comprehensiveness and clarity of the tool, the items were reviewed by a set of academics as jury members. Concerning reliability issues, Cronbach alpha is one of the most widely used methods for determining internal reliability. To check internal consistency of the questionnaire, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was computed and its value was calculated as (.79) indicating an acceptable reliability of the questionnaire.

The procedure followed to analyse the data in this study involves obtaining the statistical description of the mean scores, standard deviations, and agreement percentage for the items of the questionnaire items twice, before and after utilising the three strategies on the part of the researchers in their teaching. Next, ANOVA test was employed to compare the results obtained before and after strategy implementation. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was utilized.

Additionally, an interview was carried out with ten students so as to thoroughly elicit their attitudes toward their academic self-efficacy.

It is worth mentioning that ethical issues were taken into consideration when the interviews were conducted. The participants were informed with the purpose and benefit of the research. They were assured that confidentiality



and anonymity will be maintained, and their informed consent was obtained before carrying out the interview.

6.Data Analysis and Discussion

6.1 The Questionnaire

This study examined the effect of implementing certain strategies on academic self-efficacy and further explored such a relationship in EFL instructions that adopts two different pedagogies (with and without using the three strategies mentioned above). Firstly, the mean scores of the first eight items of the questionnaire were calculated to respond to the first research question which reads “What are Kurdish EFL students’ general perceptions toward their self-efficacy?” These 8 items were designed to directly elicit students’ perceptions toward their own level of self-efficacy. The results are demonstrated in table 1 below:

Table 1 Pre-Post administration of Students’ self-efficacy

No.	Items	Mean Pre-test	Mean post-test
1	I learn more because I consistently develop good study skills.	4.2459	4.2623
2	I work hard to improve my academic level.	4.3279	4.5246
3	I feel confident that I can complete the degree within four years.	4.2623	4.4098
4	I feel confident that I can take on the responsibility of my learning.	4.4426	4.5410
5	In spite of pressures at college, I continue to maintain my good grades.	4.0328	4.1803
6	I learn from my mistakes.	4.5246	4.5738
7	I believe that I have the ability to accomplish any aim I set for myself.	3.8361	4.3934
8	I can manage to solve difficult problems creatively.	3.9344	4.2623

Comparing the means of pre-post test of attitude items has shown a significant change in students’ self-efficacy after implementing the three strategies in their classes (Table 2). Results of the post-administration indicated that the implementation of the three strategies had significantly affected students’ self-efficacy beliefs than the pre- administration results



before the use of such strategies. This result aligns with earlier results that academic self-efficacy is positively linked to strategy use (Jungert and Rosander, 2010).

Table 2 Paired Samples administration of students' self-efficacy

		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	Sig
Attitude items	Pre Mean Post Mean	.19262	.17908	.02293	8.401	.000

To answer the second research question which reads as “Is there any significant difference in Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy after implementing selected strategies (brainstorming, debating, and cooperative work)?”, the mean scores of the items relevant to each strategy was calculated. The pre-post mean scores of the first strategy ‘brainstorming’ is shown in table 3:

Table 3 Pre-Post Means of Brainstorming strategy items

	Items	Mean Pre-test	Mean post-test
9	I express my opinion even when I do not understand the topics.	3.5574	3.9180
10	I can make connections between what I know already and the new knowledge.	3.2623	3.5574
11	I can manage to solve difficult problems creatively with my colleagues.	3.8033	4.1639
2 ^١	I can think creatively (out of the box).	3.8525	3.9016
3 ^١	I can generate many ideas quickly.	3.5902	3.8852
4 ^١	I can voice ideas without worry of others' negative opinion or judgment.	3.6066	3.8361

The difference in the mean scores of students' self-efficacy in the pre and post administration of the brainstorming items (item No 9-14) can be noticed. This difference can be attributed to the fact that brainstorming is effective in building commitment and enthusiasm. Furthermore, brainstorming sessions provided students with free flow of ideas that helped to unlock their creative talents. By stimulating individual students to



contribute and express personal views, many hidden, innovative, or overlooked potentials spring and become apparent. The significant payoff was that they came up with lots of good ideas and sometimes ideas that changed the direction of the lesson. Hence, it fostered their self-efficacy since they were being asked for active participation and relevant ideation. The rise in students' self-efficacy resulted from the fact that brainstorming enabled them the license to be engrossed and inquisitive, and to draw different viewpoints and conclusions.

The pre-post mean scores of the second strategy 'cooperative work' is shown in table 4:

Table 4 Pre-Post Means of Cooperative work strategy items

	Items	Mean Pre-test	Mean post-test
15	Successfully fulfilling tasks on the part of my peers motivates me.	3.9508	4.2951
16	I ask questions and respond to questions asked in class.	3.6393	4.0328
17	Sharing ideas with my colleagues promotes my self-confidence.	3.9344	4.2787
18	I learn from teachers and students' feedback on my assignments.	3.9672	4.4918
19	I make an attempt to plan my time to meet the deadline for group assignments.	4.0820	4.2787

As for cooperative learning items in the questionnaire (item No 15-19), the students got higher levels of academic self-efficacy in the post- administration. This significant change can be ascribed to the positive influence of cooperative learning. When students collectively work toward a common goal, academic work becomes an interesting activity. Besides, when students study in collaborative groups and explain topics to peers, this would greatly enhance their own understanding. This helps solidify that they are members of the same team and paves the way to ask for help from others, which consequently yields in promoting their self-efficacy.

Table 5 Pre-Post Means of Debating items

	Items	Mean	Mean
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		Pre-test	post-test
20	I am able to argue and persuade my colleagues.	3.5082	3.7541
21	I can give a presentation and speak in public with confidence.	3.6393	3.8197
22	I accept my colleagues' different view points.	3.8033	4.2131
23	I develop good reasoning skills as a result of engaging in debate activities.	3.6721	4.0164

The pre-post mean scores of the third strategy 'debating' are shown above in table 5. Concerning the results of debating items in the questionnaire (item No 20-23), a noticeable increase in students' self-efficacy can be pointed out. This result affirms the effectiveness of debates in developing students' self-efficacy. When debating, students are engaged in something real rather than an abstract exercise; therefore, it improves their ability to grasp complex information authentically and efficiently. In a debate, a range of learning aspects are tackled; hence, it helps to build academic, social, and emotional skills. Additionally, it sharpens their ability to think and listen critically, and express their ideas explicitly. This would increase their elegance and self-efficacy since they need to back up their ideas with evidence like facts and sources.

To answer the third research question which reads "Which strategy is more effective in promoting Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy?", the analysis of variance (ANOVA- one way) is used to examine the differences between the means of the three strategies. Since the P-value of the F-test is smaller than 0.05 (**0.0001**), there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the 3 strategies as is shown in table 6 below:

Table 6 ANOVA Comparing the mean scores of the three strategies

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-Ratio	P-Value
Between groups	5.47967	2	2.73984	9.45	0.0001
Within groups	52.1862	180	0.289923		
Total (Corr.)	57.6659	182			

Table 7 below presents the summary statistics of the three strategies, their pre-post total means:

Table 7 Paired Samples Statistics of the three strategies



	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	Sig
Brainstorming Pre-post	.26503	.35010	.04483	5.912	.000
Cooperative work Pre-post	.36066	.37562	.04809	7.499	.000
Debating Pre-post	.29508	.43901	.05621	5.250	.000

As the frequencies stated above show, cooperative work strategy got highest mean score than brainstorming and debating strategies. This means that cooperative work worked better than the other two strategies in increasing students' self-efficacy. This result aligns with that of Abe, Elwood, and Kobayashi (2023), who asserted that PBL setting (the strategies being used are part of PBL) had a positive effect on students' self-efficacy. Besides, they regard cooperative learning as the key predictor of self-efficacy. Moreover, the finding conforms to Salih's (2022) conclusion that group discussion activities, as a part of socio-cognitive factors, advance Kurdish EFL students' self-expression, analysis, and synthesis skills, which are mirrored in their self-efficacy promotion.

6.2 The Interview

For collecting the qualitative data, an interview was carried out with ten students so as to unveil their attitudes toward their self-efficacy. After transcribing the interviews' responses, the researchers developed a coding framework to categorize the responses into themes identified on the basis of the theoretical framework. The interview comprised four questions, which were mainly based on Bandura's four major sources of self-efficacy, namely: mastery experiences, social modeling, social persuasion, and psychological responses.

The responses were carefully scanned so as to detect the main themes for the analysis. Below are the main themes with their codes as perceived in the responses:

- **Self-efficacy in task accomplishment-** successful task completion, scheduling tasks, breaking down tasks, and motivational self-talk.



- **Peer influence and vicarious learning-** influential peers, positive peer pressure, belief in own potential
- **Impact of feedback encouragement-** insightful feedback, recognition and value, directional power of feedback, and reducing diffidence
- **Psychological state and success perception-** psychological resilience, emotional stability, and keeping negative feelings distant from study

In response to the first question, which reads: “Can you successfully perform a task assigned to you? How can you manage to handle the challenges encountered during performing the task?”, all the students reported that they almost have the ability to carry out tasks successfully, especially after practicing the three strategies. It seems that implementing the strategies increased their self-confidence and paved the way for them to better be familiarised with their own capabilities. As for the second part of the question which asked them how could they manage to handle the challenges encountered during performing the task, different answers were provided. Student1 said “I tried to better schedule the task and break it down into parts taking into account time limits for accomplishing the task in question”. Student2 added “I tried to give task accomplishment priority in my to-do list”. A third student proceeded by saying “Whenever I felt tired and disinterested, I resorted to motivational self-talk and I thought about the marks (reward) when the task gets completed successfully”. These responses indicate the students’ high self-efficacy, particularly in managing challenges and maintaining motivation.

As for the second question, which reads “Does seeing your peers successfully completing a task cause you to believe in your abilities much more? How?”, most of the students asserted that they felt pleased for their peers’ progress. A student maintained “I consider peers who were committed to accomplish their assignments punctually and successfully very influential that led me to be more goal orientated”. By the same token, another student said “Peers who were hard-working and distinguished left a positive impact on me to be the same”. Another response is “Positive peer pressure helped me initiate the coping required for language progress and individual growth”. The students’ affirmative answer to the second question is a clear



indication of the powerful role of vicarious experiences in shaping their self-efficacy. In other words, being inspired when they see peers successful in achieving an aim provides a compelling evidence that they, too, possess the potential to successfully accomplish comparable activities.

When responding to the third question, which reads as “Does receiving positive feedback or encouragement help you overcome self-doubt so that you exert your best effort to have better outcomes? How?”, the majority of the students stated that peers’ feedback was useful in promoting their self-confidence and reducing their diffidence. Student4 declared “My peers’ feedback provided me with the opportunity for continuous performance improvement. It also aided me not to go off track and waste energy”. Student5 said “The feedback I received were insightful and appreciative. I found the sense of being fully recognised and valued in them”. However, a student had a different view of the feedback and considered them as “disregarding and brushing her abilities aside”! This question elicits a largely affirmative reply from students, with peer feedback emerging as a powerful catalyst to increase self-confidence and reduce diffidence. They mostly underscored the directional and corrective power of feedback.

The fourth question, which reads “Does your psychological state (mood and emotions) affect how you feel about your ability to succeed? How?” This question delves into the complex interplay between students’ internal psychological state and their external performance and perception of success. The students were of divergent views, eight students showed more psychological resilience and emotional stability. They maintained that they were successful to keep their personality characteristics apart from their being successful academically. Student6 stated “Despite the negative feelings I was suffering from, I tried to keep it distant from my study and avoided these negative feelings to be mirrored academically”. On the other hand, the mediating influence of students’ psychological state was negative for the other two students. It seemed that the tremendous academic and social pressure made them experience negative emotions that led to a noticeable decrease in their self-efficacy. Student7 clearly expressed this point by saying “At some time of my study, I was disappointed and felt



doubtful about my own potentials and ability to manage to successfully go through the hard times I was going through”.

From what has been discussed, we can infer that the students have built good self-efficacy that led them to be more confident, self-regulated, and capable to successfully cope with different people and situations.

6. Conclusions

1. Quantitative results revealed that the implementation of three strategies (brainstorming, cooperative work, and debating) in teaching *academic skills* to first-year student resulted in a substantial and statistically significant difference in increasing Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy.

2. Furthermore, all three strategies were found to be effective, and cooperative work was found to be the most effective one in positively promoting students' self-efficacy.

3. Investigating students' attitudes about their own abilities and the factors influencing their success reveals that self efficacy is a dynamic construct profoundly shaped by a combination of personal involvement, social learning, and environmental feedback. The findings clearly indicate the power of the chosen strategies and supportive peer interactions in fostering an unshakable belief in one's capacity to succeed.

7. Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this research carry significant implications for pedagogical practices in teaching EFL and fostering Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy. This research provides significant evidence of the potency of implementing the three strategies in promoting Kurdish EFL students' self-efficacy. Hence, it is incumbent on teachers to examine and embrace implementing such strategies to elevate students' self-efficacy. It is essential for teacher to search for the best practices in order to alleviate the deficits found in their current instruction. The implications of these results enhance educational practices that accentuate the vital role of teacher support and interventions that work toward elevating academic self-efficacy to promote the psychological health of EFL students within the learning environment.

Based on these implications, the following recommendations are put forward for EFL teachers:



- using growth-oriented language that promotes skills and celebrates progress, and avoid using a language that gives students brushing aside feeling
- giving priority to self-efficacy development
- integrating active learning strategies
- fostering collaborative learning environments

8. Suggestions for Further Study

Further studies are suggested to:

1. Assess the sustained effectiveness of other strategies (problem solving, role-playing, task-based language learning) on students' self-efficacy over an extended period.
2. Explore the relationship between teacher self-efficacy in implementing these strategies and students' self-efficacy outcomes.

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