International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education 2018, Volume 30, Number 3, 477-496
http://www.isetl.org/ijtlhe/ ISSN 1812-9129

Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Effective Instructional Strategies: U.S. University English Learners' Perspective

Hong Shi
China University of Petroleum-Beijing

This study examined English Learners' (ELs) self-efficacy beliefs in a U.S. university setting by using a survey, interviews, and focus group discussions. The results identified that ELs from different disciplines had positive self-efficacy beliefs about their overall English learning, and self-efficacy was related to ELs' age, years of English learning, country of origin, and previous educational level. However, ELs in this study lacked confidence and self-efficacy in learning in academic courses, and they faced challenges when using academic language. Effective instructional strategies such as social modeling, social persuasion, motivational feedback, group work, and participative assessment methods were identified by ELs in this study.

With the increasing enrollment of English Learners (ELs) in postsecondary education in the United States, linguistic diversity in the classroom may be a benefit as well as an obstacle. In some cases, English may naturally become a lingua franca in classrooms and form a connection among students from different countries. However, in a classroom of high linguistic diversity, students may find little support among their classmates if they cannot understand each other. Studies have identified adjustment issues for ELs, including educational system differences, academic requirements, cultural differences, language challenges, food incompatibilities, time management, and social integration (Catalano, Fox, & Vandeyar, 2016; Fang, 2014; Galloway & Jenkins, 2005; Johnson & Sandhu, 2007; Khawaja & Stallman, 2011; Klapwijk & Walt, 2016; Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007). Limited language proficiency is one of the vital issues for ELs, and mastering a foreign language requires learners to overcome several difficulties. This process usually takes a considerable period of time. Cummins (1981) argues that it generally takes three to five years for ELs to develop basic communication skills and five to seven years to obtain the proficiency level required for academic learning.

Due to the language challenge and other adjustment issues, ELs are not confident when expressing their opinions and communicating with people from other cultures (Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007). Students with high levels of self-confidence and self-efficacy tend to experience lower levels of stress and direct their energy toward improving their cultural adjustment (Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007). However, ELs may lack the skills that contribute to increasing their self-efficacy (Leclair, Doll, Osborn, & Jones, 2009). Efficacious students study for longer periods, and self-efficacy determines their engagement on the task, which includes demonstrated persistence and perseverance with the task (Caraway, Tucker, Reinke, & Hall, 2003; Wiseman & Hunt, 2001). With these circumstances, understanding ELs' self-efficacy is paramount to providing appropriate instruction. The purpose of this study is to examine ELs' self-efficacy beliefs, factors contributing to ELs' self-efficacy and persistence, and instructional strategies perceived as effective by ELs in a university setting.

Literature Review

College students with high self-efficacy beliefs were more likely to invest more effort and persistence towards goals and used better and more strategies than students with low self-efficacy beliefs (Diseth, 2011; Yusuf, 2011). Self-efficacy was found to be associated with many factors, such as length of learning and level of schooling (Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Teng, 2005; Tilfalioglu & Cinkara, 2009), culture (Klassen, 2004), and academic achievement (Diseth, 2011; Kim 2009; Naseri & Zaferanieh, 2012). Diseth (2011) investigated Norwegian undergraduate psychology students in a correlation study and found strong relationships between self-efficacy and learning strategies, as well as self-efficacy and academic achievement. Klassen (2004) reviewed 20 articles collected over the course of 25 years to investigate self-efficacy beliefs across cultural groups. The conclusion was that self-efficacy beliefs were higher for participants from western, individualist cultures than for participants from Asian, collectivist cultures. Naseri and Zaferanieh (2012) found that gender, academic major, English score, learning strategies, and career goals had significant effects on Iranian EFL senior and junior students' self-efficacy. The authors also observed that students who employed a combination of different strategies had the highest self-efficacy scores. Magogwe & Oliver (2007) examined the relationship between language strategies, age, proficiency, and self-efficacy beliefs of EFL students in Botswana by using surveys (i.e., Morgan-Jinks Student Efficacy Scale, Children's Perceived Academic Self-Efficacy: An Inventory). A significant

positive relationship between self-efficacy and overall strategy used by students across all proficiency levels was found, but the relationship was not statistically significant. Most of the studies investigated student's self-efficacy in the EFL (English as Foreign Language) setting; however, few studies examined ELs self-efficacy beliefs in the ESL (English as Second Language) setting. Kim (2009) examined the self-efficacy beliefs of 119 international teaching assistants in the United States and revealed that there were positive relations between English fluency and self-efficacy. It was also pointed out that an international teaching assistant faced additional challenges as compared to those faced by teaching assistants in general. College ELs in the United States in general experience higher levels of stress than American students (Araujo, 2011; Kamhi-Stein & de Oliveira, 2008; Lin & Scherz, 2014). Compared with domestic students, ELs lacked the factors that contributed to increasing their self-efficacy such as support from family, friends, and community (Ambe, Falconer, & Leewer, 2004; Bifuh-Ambe, 2011). Leclair et al. (2009) determined that ELs rated themselves lower in academic self-efficacy and rated their classmates as more likely to succeed. This perception affected their communications in class when discussing issues with classmates or instructors (Holmes, 2004). Furthermore, studies sought to explore more effective methods to improve these students' self-efficacy. Idrus and Sivapalan (2010) concluded that when a student discovered a learning strategy that improved performance, this realization alone could lead to greater overall self-efficacy. Gahungu (2007) revealed that students needed to be taught or trained in the use of strategies to become motivated in their learning and also found significant positive relationships between language learning strategy use and self-efficacy, as well as between self-efficacy and language ability. If learning strategies and strategy instruction are so important to the increase of ELs' self-efficacy, what are the implications for college instructors?

Teachers designed their own instructional strategies according to their teaching objectives and to adapt to different learners and contexts (Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Uzum, 2013). Previous studies found some of the factors that contributed to ELs' self-efficacy and persistence included interest, motivation, social persuasion, social modeling, psychological responses, and strategy instruction (Bandura, 1977; Hsieh & Kang, 2010; Naseri & Zaferanieh, 2012; Samimy, Kim, Lee, & Kasai, 2011). Interest in the subjects taught influenced ELs' self-efficacy, and teachers influenced to a large degree the learners' self-efficacy (Huang & Chang, 1996), which indicated that teachers could increase interest in a topic to improve learners' self-efficacy. Social persuasion and psychological responses could also increase learners' self-efficacy and confidence (Bandura, 1977). A study conducted by Hsieh and Kang (2010), proposed that successful ELs attributed their success to internal and personal factors. The study also suggested that teachers should be more attentive to the self-efficacy beliefs of ELs, and if teachers could facilitate learners in becoming more aware of their cognition, motivation, and behavior in language learning, then students could achieve more control of the outcomes and achievements (Hsieh & Kang, 2010). Wong (2005), Idrus and Sivapalan (2010), and Naseri and Zaferanieh (2012) claimed that ELs' self-efficacy could be increased by teaching and modeling learning strategies; the negative attitude of learners with low self-efficacy should be addressed so that the overall performance in the classroom could be improved. Other studies (e.g., Kim, 2007; Krase, 2003, 2007) stressed the importance of a more collaborative relationship between instructors and ELs. Myles and Cheng (2003) concluded that the collaborative relationship between instructor and ELs, advisor's guidance, motivational feedback, group work, and psychological support were effective strategies for ELs to overcome difficulties, increase self-efficacy, and participate properly and effectively in their respective disciplines. Samimy et al. (2011) related the importance of mentoring, helping students develop mastery, modeling correct social use of language, and persuading students of their own effectiveness in support of ELs' participation in their academic endeavors. Daoud (2003), and Cheng (2013), further suggested more in-class participation and discussions, as well as more paired or group work, as essential teaching strategies. Furthermore, previous studies were not able to offer effective solutions to help ELs have full access to appropriate curricula, instructional resources, and methods that matched the student's level and needs (Cho & Reich, 2008; Sharkey & Layzer, 2000). In addition, learners' self-efficacy beliefs and methods to improve their self-efficacy had not yet been adequately examined when integrated into an ESL context (Lee & Zentall, 2012). The majority of previous research explored different methods to help ELs comprehend learning course material effectively and efficaciously across levels of pre-kindergarten to the twelfth grade; however, fewer studies in the L2 literature explored the perspectives of ELs at the postsecondary level (Bifuh-Ambe, 2011). Moreover, most previous studies were quantitative in nature. In order to adapt to the local context, including the perceptions of ELs, the language abilities of ELs, and approaches to ensure the ELs success in academic courses, this study examined U.S. college-level ELs' self-efficacy beliefs, factors contributing to ELs' self-efficacy and

persistence, and instructional strategies perceived as effective by these ELs by using survey, interviews, and focus group discussion. The research questions were as follows:

1. What are college-level ELs' self-efficacy beliefs about English language learning?
2. What is the relationship between self-efficacy and demographic characteristics for these college-level ELs?
3. What factors hinder or contribute to ELs' self-efficacy and persistence in English language learning and academic learning in courses?
4. What instructional strategies are perceived as effective for ELs to increase their self-efficacy and performance in their academic learning, as well as English language learning?

Theoretical Framework

Self-efficacy is an aspect of social cognitive theory. McCombs (2001) explains self-efficacy in reference to the learner's judgment of his or her competency for successful task completion. This theory assumes that people possess the ability to reflect and regulate their actions and to shape their environment rather than merely react to it.

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacious individuals view attainments as under their control. When students believe they are capable of performing well on an academic task, they are motivated to perform well, work harder, and persist in the task for longer periods of time. These behaviors (or positive self-efficacy) are essential for academic success. High levels of self-efficacy have been associated with high levels of achievement. The level of perseverance devoted to a task is supported by perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Efficacious students "sustain their work longer" because they anticipate that they will succeed at the end of the task (Wiseman & Hunt, 2001, p. 40). Conversely, students with a low self-efficacy tend to believe that difficult tasks are not achievable and lack confidence in their abilities (Bandura, 1997). Schunk (1995) claims that learners are likely to have low self-efficacy if they think they have great difficulty in understanding the academic material while those who feel capable of understanding the material have a higher self-efficacy. "Self efficacy determines aspect of task engagement including which tasks individuals choose to take on, the amount effort, persistence, and perseverance they demonstrate with regard to the task, and their feelings related to the task" (Caraway, Tucker, Reinke, & Hall, 2003, p. 423). Students with higher self-efficacy or positive perceptions in their ability tend to be involved in challenging tasks and show a positive affect and greater persistence in the face of difficulties, whereas students with low self-efficacy or negative self-perceptions are more likely to show low persistence in the face of difficulties (Dweck & Elliott, 1984).

It is necessary to examine some terms that can mistakenly be confused with self-efficacy: motivation and self-confidence. While self-efficacy is used interchangeably with motivation in some literature, there is a significant difference in the definitions. Motivation is a broad concept including both external and internal influences that affect outcomes while self-efficacy is focused only on the internal beliefs of the learner. Self-confidence shares features with expectancy and self-efficacy, but it tends to include anxiety, while self-efficacy does not. Self-confidence is usually measured at the time of testing, while self-efficacy is considered a perceived proficiency and is therefore tested in the future or at the end of a study (Bandura, 1997; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995).

There are four main contributors to a person's self-efficacy: mastery experiences, social modeling, social persuasion, and psychological responses (Bandura, 1977). Mastery experiences mean that an individual's self-efficacy can be increased when the person successfully completes tasks or assignments. However, if the individual fails to deal with challenges, his or her self-efficacy decreases. Social modeling refers to observing others accomplish tasks. A person's self-efficacy is increased if that person believes that he or she can also successfully perform the same tasks that he or she has observed others perform. Social persuasion facilitates a person's self-efficacy because the encouragement of others raises an individual's confidence in completing difficult tasks. Psychological responses refer to a person's mood, level of stress, and state of mind. A high level of stress towards a particular task can lower the person's self-efficacy. If the person can elevate his or her mood to overcome stress, then self-efficacy increases (Bandura, 1977).

Method

In order to investigate self-efficacy beliefs of college-level ELs and the relationship between self-efficacy and demographic characteristics for these college-level ELs, a questionnaire adapted from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & McKeachie, 1991) was used in this study. To examine contributors to ELs' self-efficacy, persistence, and effective instructional strategies for ELs, interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect data.

Participants

The participants in this study were ELs enrolled at a major public university in the southeast of the United States. These participants were students who were taking

English courses in an ESL program at the university. The ESL programs were designed to develop functional and interpersonal English communicational skills. There were no English native speakers in the ESL courses. Courses included classroom instruction, small group discussions, language labs, and out-of-class work. The program was open to persons eighteen years of age or older who had already attained a basic knowledge of English, but were not proficient in English. The ELs in this study were selected as possible participants because they were enrolled as students in the ESL program. Participants were age 18 or older, and all were English language learners whose primary language was not English and who were not yet proficient in English. Each participant had to have attended at least one semester of ESL classes. They attended regular academic classes in their major area of study outside the English as-a-second-language curriculum. The above criteria were required to ensure that the ESL participants had a similar educational background prior to their participation in the study.

There were a total number of 198 ELs participating in the questionnaire. This study mainly focused on demographic characteristics including gender, age (ELs more than 25 years old vs. ELs less than 25 years old), Asian ELs vs. non-Asian ELs, years of English learning (less than 5 years, between 5 to 10 years, more than 10 years), and previous educational level (e.g., high school diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctorate).

The participants consisted of 55.6% males and 44.4% females. The participants who had high school diplomas consisted of 47.0%, bachelor's degree holders were 33.8%, and master's and doctoral degree holders were 19.2%. The participants who were less than 25 years old (between the age of 18-24) were 58.1%, and those over 25 years of age consisted of 41.9%. The participants who came from Asian countries were 70.2%, while non-Asian students were 29.8%. Table 1 (see Appendix A) shows the frequency distribution of the 198 survey participants by each demographic group.

Next, eight participants were individually interviewed. These eight participants were selected because they were from different countries and majors. These participants spoke Malayalam, Korean, Turkish, Bengali, Malay, Persian, Chinese, and Egyptian Arabic as their native languages. The length of time they resided in the United States ranged from one to four years, and all of them had never lived in an English-speaking country other than the United States. Table 2 (see Appendix B) presents the demographic information of these participants.

Measurements and Procedures

The questionnaire adapted from the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) was used first in this study to measure ELs' self-efficacy beliefs (see Appendix C). The questionnaire consisted of two measures: Demographic Information and the MSLQ. The demographic information was developed based on previous studies (i.e., Oxford, 1990; Park, 1995; Yang, 1992). The MSLQ was based on a social-cognitive view of motivation (Pintrich, 2003). It was developed by Dr. Paul Pintrich and his colleagues at the University of Michigan to evaluate the effectiveness of a "Learning to learn course" for college undergraduates (Pintrich et al., 1991). The MSLQ has been validated and used in many studies (e.g., Pintrich, 2003; Pintrich et al., 1991, 1993). This questionnaire is a self-report instrument designed to assess college students' motivational orientations and self-regulated learning for a specific course (Pintrich et al., 1991). The questionnaire was used in this study to measure ELs' self-efficacy beliefs about the English courses provided by the ESL program. The MSLQ consisted of 15 sub-scales, six within the motivation section and nine within the learning strategies section. Since the self-efficacy subscale in MSLQ was designed particularly to measure self-efficacy beliefs of learners, the subscale was used in this study to examine college-level ELs' self-efficacy. The items measured the participants' beliefs about their capabilities to learn or perform a task such as, "I'm certain I can understand the most difficult material presented in the readings for this course," "I'm confident I can learn the basic concepts taught in this course," and "I'm confident I can understand the most complex material presented by the instructor in this course" (Pintrich et al., 1991). Students rated themselves on a seven-point Likert scale, from one (Not at all true of me) to seven (Very true of me). Scores for the individual scales were computed by taking the mean of the items that made up the scale. With the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha test, the value of Cronbach's Alpha for the self-efficacy subscale was .903. A value of .70 or higher was considered evidence of reliability (Becker, 2000).

Eight participants were then given individual interviews by this researcher. Individual interviews with open-ended questions related to ELs' learning experience in U.S. university classrooms were used to collect the data which explored contributors to self-efficacy and effective instructional strategies (see Appendix D). The questions were developed based on the literature in the area. Each interview lasted approximately 40 minutes. After taking interviews, six participants agreed to participate in a focus group discussion facilitated by this researcher. Questions in the protocol of focus group discussions were designed based on the analysis of the data collected from individual interviews (see Appendix E).

These interviews and focus group discussion were recorded and transcribed. After transcribing, the data were coded and analyzed using the qualitative analysis software package Atlasti, with a specific focus on research questions of the present study. Major themes

Table 3
Summary of Variation in Self-efficacy by Gender

	Female (N=88)		Male (N=110)			
Self-efficacy	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	*t*	*p*
	5.58	.857	5.40	.933	1.337	.183

*p<.05

Table 4
Summary of Variation in Self-efficacy by Age

	<25 (N=115)		≥25 (N=83)			
Self-efficacy	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	*t*	*p*
	5.36	.932	5.65	.835	-2.230	.027*

*p<.05

Table 5
Summary of Variation in Self-efficacy by Country of Origin

	Asian Els (N=139)		non-Asian Els (N=59)			
Self-efficacy	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	*t*	*p*
	5.41	.929	6.00	.416	-3.15	.002*

*p<.05

emerged, and two researchers from the field of adult education reviewed, compared, and analyzed the codes and themes to establish the reliability by using an inter-analyst agreement. Participants then read the transcriptions to verify their own words and comments. Data was collected confidentially with protection of linkages to identifiable information. Student responses were presented using fictitious initials.

Results

Results of the Survey

SPSS-PC 17.0 was used to perform the descriptive statistics to examine the scores of self-efficacy beliefs. The mean score of self-efficacy was 5.48. The survey was a seven-point Likert scale. The results indicated that participants in this study had a positive self-efficacy belief about their English language learning. Three independent sample t-tests were used to examine the differences of self-efficacy based on demographic factors, which included age, country of origin, and gender. Table 3 shows that there were no statistically significant differences of self-efficacy in terms of gender. However, as shown in Table 4 and 5, ELs who were more than 25 years old (M=5.65) had a significantly higher level of self-efficacy than those less than 25 years old (M=5.36), t (198)=-2.23, p<.05, and the effect size (Cohen's d effect=0.33) was moderate. Asian ELs (M=5.41) had a significantly lower level of self-efficacy than non-Asian ELs (M=6.00), t (198)=-3.15, p<.05, and the effect size (Cohen's d effect=-0.83) was large.

Two one-way ANOVAs were used to examine the differences of self-efficacy based on demographic factors, which included years of English learning and previous educational level.

A one-way ANOVA was based on the assumptions of having independent random samples, homogeneity of variance, and a normal distribution of variables. The results of the homogeneity of variance showed that no statistically significant difference existed at the .05 level. In terms of years of English learning for participants in this study, the results of a one-way ANOVA displayed a mean score of 5.47 for ELs who had learned English for less than five years, 5.32 for those who had learned English for between 5 to 10 years, and 5.73 for those who had learned English for more than 10 years. As shown in Table 6, the one-way ANOVA data depicted that the differences of self-efficacy scores among them were statistically significant, F (2, 195) = 3.55, p <.05, the effect size (η^2=0.035), which was moderate. A Bonferroni post-hoc test was selected to further analyze the data. As shown in Table 7, the post-hoc test revealed that ELs who had learned English for more than 10 years had a significantly higher level of self-efficacy than those who had learned English between 5 and 10 years (p <.05). There were no other significant differences of self-efficacy based on years of English learning. Concerning the previous educational level, the results

Table 6
ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	*p*
Between Groups	5.626	2	2.813	3.549	.031*
Within Groups	154.584	195	.793		
Total	160.210	197			

*p<.05

Table 7
Post Hoc Test

(I) Years of English Learning	(J) years of English learning	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	*p*
<5 years	5-10 years	.15476	.15054	.916
	>10 years	-.25846	.16556	.360
5-10 years	<5 years	-.15476	.15054	.916
	>10 years	-.41322	.15518	.025*
>10 years	<5 years	.25846	.16556	.360
	5-10 years	.41322	.15518	.025*

*p<.05

Table 8
ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	*p*
Between Groups	7.452	2	3.726	4.756	.010*
Within Groups	152.758	195	.783		
Total	160.210	197			

*p<.05

Table 7
Post Hoc Test

(I) diploma	(J) diploma	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	*p*
ELs who had high school diplomas	Els who had bachelor's degrees	-.35745	.14183	.038*
	Els who had master's and doctoral degrees	-.43364*	.17041	.035*
Els who had bachelor's degrees	Els who had high school diplomas	.35745*	.14183	.038*
	Els who had master's and doctoral degrees	-.07620	.17974	1.000
Els who had master's and doctoral degrees	Els who had high school diplomas	.43364*	.17041	.035*
	Els who had bachelor's degrees	.07620	.17974	1.000

*p<.05

of a one-way ANOVA displayed a mean score of 5.28, 5.63, 5.71 for ELs who had high school diplomas, bachelor's degrees, and master's and doctoral degrees respectively. As shown in Table 8, the differences of self-efficacy scores among them were statistically significant, F (2, 195) = 4.76, p <.05, and the effect size (η^2=0.047) was moderate. The Bonferroni post-hoc test in Table 9 revealed that ELs who had high school diplomas had a significantly lower level of self-efficacy than those who had bachelor's degrees (p <.05) and those who had master's and doctoral degrees (p <.05).

Results of Interviews and Focus Group Discussion

After coding and analysis, the following five code categories describing the broad topics emerged: (1) academic language, (2) persistence, (3) social persuasion and social modeling, (4) immersion, and (5) participative assessment.

Academic language. Academic language is a set of linguistic "registers" associated with academic disciplines (Schleppegrell, 2009). The participants must learn not only interpersonal communication language, but also the content of different subjects. The participants reported that the complex and abstract vocabulary and technical terms used in academic courses was challenging. It showed that the academic language hindered their self-efficacy in academic learning in courses. The ELs in this study measured how good (or bad) they felt about their academic achievements by comparing themselves with their peers instead of comparing themselves with their prior learning, which, according to Bandura (1977, 1995, 1997), can lower a person's self-efficacy. How a person feels about performing a task can raise or lower self-efficacy. Learners' beliefs about themselves, their belief in their capacity to achieve, and the value they placed on effort, ability, and strategies can be interpreted as part of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1995, 1997). This researcher found that the participants had a negative perception about academic language learning. The comments of participants are as follows:

- "I can't understand professor well, and she give instruction, but I cannot understand the vocabulary she used. I made many mistakes of special terms. I lost confidence and interest in this course" [Z].
- "Sometimes professors in class talk very fast. They suppose I understand. I can't follow them and feel frustrated. I don't know technically what the words mean, and I have to pretend I understand them" [P].
- "I felt native speakers read papers more quickly. It is easier for native speakers to understand some terms. I could not remember the correct academic vocabulary" [A].

In the focus group discussion, participant A further stated his perceptions of academic experience, "[S]ometimes I don't have the power to face the [academic language] challenge. I will go to learn other subject and maybe I don't feel positive about this class." When asked to describe one of the successful assignments in their academic courses, two participants, Z and S, commented that they didn't have any successful assignments or accomplishments. This study revealed that they didn't have mastery experiences and that they had negative psychological responses. These data showed that their self-efficacy beliefs about academic learning were, to some degree, negative. Additionally, a high level of stress towards a particular task can lower the person's self-efficacy. Participant Z further pointed out, "I feel the school work is really stressful and I did not and cannot perform well. I have to take extra time to remember the abstract terms." This indicated that academic language was an issue for the participant to obtain positive self-efficacy and achieve academic success.

Persistence

Support and encouragement from teachers and peers seemed to influence ELs' self-efficacy and persistence in English language and academic learning.

- "English learning is a gradual and continuous process. I have to always work hard, and if I give up I will go back to my previous level. If I want to be successful I have to persist on it. Now I find I have made progress. My native-speaker friends and classmates helped me a lot" [A].
- "I felt really stressful at the first semester [in the United States], but the professor [from an academic course] is always ready to help me. I ask native speakers help my [English] writing. After that I had more confidence to continue my study. I know how to do research and my [English] writing skills improved a lot…we graduate students have more time and opportunity to stay with American professors and colleagues in the office to do research and discuss and communicate with each other and it really helps me to learn more" [F].

This student benefitted from many opportunities to communicate and interact with professors, peers or other English native speakers, which assisted in improving and gaining confidence in English language and academic course learning.

However, participant L noted: "We don't have so many opportunities to communicate with professors, and I feel lonely. I feel my English vocabulary, especially some academic vocabulary, does not improve after I came to the U.S." [L]. Participant L was an undergraduate student, and compared with graduate students, he had less opportunity to communicate with others. Also, he was more likely to have less effective strategies to deal with stress or difficulties.

Interestingly, there was a finding from the focus group discussion that ELs had a high level of self-efficacy in certain subject areas. Participant X noted, "We are better than native speakers in math, programming, or calculations. In experiment we use a computer language instead of English language." Self-efficacy was specifically related with a certain course or class content. He continued to note, "But when it comes to presentation, American students always do better than us [in academic courses]. Their critical thinking and their English are better than *[sic]* us." All the participants in the focus group discussion agreed that their English native-speaking peers performed better in presentation or other interactive class activities than them. They further agreed that the basic information exchange between teachers and students in their home countries was in a one-way transfer rather than a two-way communication. Participant X stated, "In my home country [China] we don't have group work or group presentation in class, the major way of teaching is lecture and teachers rely on textbook." Many students in their home countries lacked self-directed learning experience and did not take the initiative to think, and gradually developed a dependency on textbooks and professors. Group work or more interactive class activities were agreed as effective instructional strategies by these participants. For instance, participant A further noted: "Through group project I can practice my English listening and speaking and I know how to cooperate with other students" [A].

Another factor contributing to self-efficacy and persistence was internal motivation. Learners who were internally motivated learned a language for purposes such as career advantages, acceptance into college, or attaining an academic degree; or for altruistic purposes such as a more comprehensive understanding of people or in the development of cultural competencies. Participants had a high internal motivation in their English language learning. For instance, participants noted:

- "I really wanted to learn and become fluent in the language I decided to take. I always enjoyed my weekly [English language] lessons. I want to acquire the highest level of English to learn more about the world and to have the feeling of great success. [A]
- It [English] is the most useful for the future and I will have better career chance [if I learn English well]" [L].
- "My kids study here [in the United States]. I want to be qualified to teach my kids and help them in their homework, so I study hard and I feel my English improved a lot…English language level is an ability of communication and it is a required skill. If I decided to go back home for a teaching position in a college, English is a necessity to facilitate my teaching performance" [A].

Social persuasion and social modeling. Social persuasion was one of the sources or contributors of a learner's self-efficacy, and raised an individual's confidence in completing tasks. Comments regarding the value of social persuasion included:

- "My instructor [from an ESL course] always says "I love your pronunciation, it is different but I love to hear it, you are smart and keep your hard work ongoing". She always praised my writing and all my efforts although it is not exemplary. As lots of encouragement from her, I decided to pursue my doctorate degree" [P].
- "I once worried about my language level, my grammar, my academic writing. I talked to my professor and she said, 'Don't worry, you are fine, I just want you learn *[sic]*, and you can do it.' She always offers me assistance if I have problem…and sometimes I don't know how to do a research, and when I talked my professor, she give me praise, encouragement and suggestions or useful feedback which make me think it became easier" [F].
- "She [the professor from an academic course] helps me a lot and encourages me a lot. We usually…usually we…because it is also a distance course, and we have only three people in classroom, and I am the only international student. She pay a lot attention on me. Whenever comes into a topic, she may ask me what is the case in China. And also she was very nice. When I first register her class she bought the textbook for me" [X].

Teachers' support, encouragement, approval, or recognition for a student can reinforce his or her behaviors. Social persuasion facilitates students' self-efficacy and raises their confidence in completing difficult tasks (Bandura, 1977). Social modeling was also reported and agreed as a contributor to self-efficacy, as well as an effective instructional strategy by

participants in the focus group discussion. For instance, participant F noted:

> My international classmates talk a lot in the class and they did class work very well. I was asked to work in a small group with them. They praise my pronunciation and help to correct my grammar mistakes. It is good for me because I want to learn well, just like them [F].

Also, Participant P observed:

> My American classmates are very good at presentation and asking and answering questions. In the group work, I try to interact more with them because they are good example[s] for me to follow, and I can learn a lot from them"[P].

Participant X agreed and continued:

- "I once had a group project with one of my international colleagues. I had much contact with him in the same office. He helped me a lot. When I met some cultural differences, like what is "tailgate", and I don't know and ask him and he explained it to me, and also told me if I don't know I should ask and then I can learn. He set a good model or example for me" [X].
- "Professors [from academic courses] provide us some exemplary work of classmates, which is very helpful. For example, sometimes the work shows me the correct use of language in paper and sometimes the model tells me how to do research. The model or example is not same as mine but I can follow it and it makes my work easier and more successful" [X].

Immersion. Immersion was reported as another effective instructional strategy. Participant X in the interview commented: "When a student [who is learning English] is forced to speak the [English] language and there is no one else speaking their native language, a person is bound to learn quickly" [X].

In their home country, participants did not have many opportunities to use and speak the English language. As participant A noted:

> The teachers [in my home country] don't care about the [English] pronunciation or speaking. What teachers focus on are [English] reading, [English] writing and memorizing [English] vocabulary…If you master reading, grammars, and writing that will be very fine and enough to join colleges in my home country. But here [in the United States], we can communicate and cooperate with others by using English in class. In the group discussion, my group members were from different countries, and I have to try to communicate with them [A].

Participant X also noted:

> In my previous English learning, it is more like an exam-oriented study concentrating on vocabularies and reading comprehension. Now [in the United States] my focus has changed to practical communication with others, not on the book any more. My learning strategy changed from memorizing to thinking in English and communicating and cooperating with others, which improve my spoken English a lot [X].

Participative assessment. Regarding assessment methods, participants noted:

- "Final exam was very stressful because of the language issues, even I know the answer of the question but I could not remember the correct vocabulary. It made feel frustrated" [F].
- "We just had one final exam for a class. I have to spend more time than my American peers to prepare the final exam. It was really stressful and I worried about it a lot at that time" [S].

Comprehensive tests given at the end of the semester for grading purposes increased ELs' anxiety and decreased self-efficacy. Participants X and A explained the value of alternate assessment methods:

- "I like presentation. I can express my ideas and practice my oral English and Americans are better in presentation and they can have a better communication with audience, so I can learn from them [through class presentations] and I hope I can also do it well. Gradually, I get more confidence. One professor [from an academic course] let us do assessment for our classmates. I was happy I could participate in the assessment. It is good because we can get more feedback from our classmates [than from only one teacher]. It helped me a lot" [X].
- "Here [in the United States] we have assignment and test, and maybe three or four tests in each semester. It is good because students can improve through these assignment and test. In my home country we only have test at the end of semester, we can't study step by step. Besides, in this kind of test I just got a final score. I couldn't get comments or feedback. I don't know where was my mistake and how to make progress" [A].

Discussion and Conclusions

This study examined college-level ELs' self-efficacy beliefs and effective instructional strategies for ELs in the ESL setting. Based on the survey results, ELs in this study had positive self-efficacy beliefs about their English language learning. Asian ELs had a significantly lower level of self-efficacy than non-Asian ELs. According to Bandura (1997), there has been a great amount of variation on how cultures operated within their social structure. ELs in U.S. university settings were faced with an environment unfamiliar to them. Those coming from collective societies were faced with greater stress and a prolonged adaptation process when trying to adapt to an individualistic culture (Oyserman & Lee, 2007). The finding of the present study was consistent with the findings of Klassen (2004). Interestingly, Bandura pointed out that self-efficacy should not to be confused with individualism, since both individualistic and collective societies experienced the same level of efficacy. The difference was in the way self-efficacy was directed. Collective societies used "group-directedness" to acquire the results they sought while individualistic societies used "self-directedness" (Bandura, 1997, p. 31).

Also revealed were age differences in ELs. ELs who were more than 25 years old had a significantly higher level of self-efficacy than those less than 25 years old. ELs who had learned English more than 10 years had a higher level of self-efficacy than those who had learned English between 5 and 10 years. ELs who had high school diplomas had a significantly lower level of self-efficacy than those who had bachelor's degrees and master's or doctoral degrees. The findings affirmed previous studies that determined self-efficacy was related to the length of English learning and the level of schooling (Magogwe & Oliver, 2007; Teng, 2005; Tilfalioglu & Cinkara, 2009).

Some participants reported negative self-efficacy beliefs about their academic courses and faced challenges from academic language. Academic language is often highly abstract and contextualized, and it requires greater mastery of a language than interpersonal communication language (Brown, 2007; Scarcella, 2003). ELs may lack the linguistic background that is taken for granted by teachers (Bifuh-Ambe, 2009; Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000). Instructors must be cognizant of the language and material used in classrooms and increase comprehensibility of courses for ELs. It is recommended that teachers assist students to develop mastery, model correct use of academic language, provide visual support, use hands-on activities, and connect with multicultural students. Additionally, this study revealed that ELs didn't have mastery experiences and that they had negative psychological responses. These two factors are both sources and contributors of self-efficacy. Lack of these two factors hindered their self-efficacy beliefs about academic courses in learning. It is suggested that teachers accommodate needs of this group of learners and help them to contend with stress and negative affective factors that may interfere with learning.

It is worthy to note that the results of the survey indicate that the ELs in this study had a positive self-efficacy belief about their English language learning courses in general, but from the individual interviews the findings uncovered negative perceptions about the participant's academic language level. The rationale for this discrepancy may be that more than half of the participants interviewed were graduate students. The graduate level courses require mastery of a higher level of complex professional terms and formal language. Moreover, the English language knowledge taught in English language courses may be different from the academic language knowledge required for academic courses across different disciplines. The English language courses provided by ESL programs are mainly designed to develop functional and interpersonal English communicational skills. College-level ESL courses continue to experience difficulty in developing students' academic language competency, and many ELs do not acquire English skills quickly enough to ensure subsequent academic success in different disciplines (Bifuh-Ambe, 2011).

ELs' self-efficacy and persistence could be influenced by support and encouragement from teachers and peers. Internal motivation was also reported as a contributor to self-efficacy and persistence. Individuals' level or type of motivation and affective states were associated with their self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (1997), increasing motivation could raise learners' self-efficacy. ELs in this study also benefited from social persuasion and social modeling, which are both sources and contributors to increasing ELs' self-efficacy beliefs. Teacher support and peer support were helpful for ELs to increase confidence and persistence in their academic learning. Peers' exemplary performance or behaviors can increase ELs' self-efficacy. Teachers can provide exemplary models, group activities, motivational feedback, encouragement, and reinforcement to establish a supportive environment for ELs. ELs also noted the differences between the U.S. classroom and their home country classrooms, which affirmed the findings of Fang (2014) that the learning styles, class discussion and participation, and student-teacher relationship were all different for ELs when adjusting to a new academic environment in the United States. From this perspective, the participants of the present study agreed that they had more opportunity to interact with teachers and peers, and group work was reported as an effective instructional strategy for these particular ELs.

Immersion was reported as another effective strategy for ELs in this study. It is suggested that ELs have access to more authentic materials and be provided more opportunities to speak out and interact with others in English. Teachers should facilitate class interactions and should group students from different countries so that ELs can learn from each other and communicate with others from different cultures by using authentic English.

Additionally, ELs in this study identified the value of various assessment tools including performance tasks, frequent quizzes or tests, and peer assessment. These assessment methods can be used as diagnostic tools to improve ELs' learning and provide step-by-step feedback. Traditional assessment tends to focus on competition for grades, which could increase learners' anxiety and reduce their self-efficacy. Traditional assessment can be combined with different approaches that encourage teaching innovations by using participative methods and problem-solving strategies to facilitate a much deeper approach to learning and understanding. Giving learners the power and freedom to evaluate their peers' learning helps them to reduce anxiety and to feel more efficacious and in control of their own learning. In addition, teachers can provide timely guidance for assessment in order to increase accuracy, thoroughness, and relevancy.

Teachers can also design class materials and class tasks that emphasize an individual's interest and skill development, as well as use strategies to make class tasks easier. Teachers can provide motivational feedback or positive appraisals of accomplishments and measure success in terms of self-improvement rather than by a comparison to native English speakers. Under positive conditions ELs will believe they are capable of completing a task, and ultimately this belief will result in greater confidence and self-efficacy.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study explored ELs' self-efficacy beliefs and effective instructional strategies from the student's perspective in U.S. university classrooms. However, the findings are limited to one university context. There was also a small sample size of ELs participating in interviews and focus group discussions. Most participants were graduate students. The interviews and the focus group discussions cannot accurately reflect an ELs' self-efficacy and report all of the effective instructional strategies to increase self-efficacy. Moreover, participants from different majors, class standings, and nationalities can be investigated, and the teacher's perspective can also be explored, in future studies in order to examine effective instructions and services for ELs.

References

Ambe, E. A., Falconer, R., & Leewer, S. L. (2004). Content area reading: A case study of an English second language college student. *Journal of Content Area Reading, 3*(1), 37-69.

Araujo, A. A. (2011). Adjustment issues of international students enrolled in American colleges and universities: A review of the literature. *Higher Education Studies, 1*(1), 2-8.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Bandura, A. (Ed.). (1995). *Self-efficacy in changing societies*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, NY: Worth Publishers.

Becker, G. (2000). Creating comparability coefficients: The case of Cronbach alpha and Cohen kappa. *Psychological Reports, 87*, 1171-1182.

Bifuh-Ambe, E. (2009). Literacy skills acquisition and use: A study of an English language learner in a U.S. university context. *Adult Basic Education & Literacy Journal, 3*, 24-33.

Bifuh-Ambe, E. (2011). Postsecondary learning: Recognizing the needs of English language learners in mainstream university classrooms. *Multicultural Education, 18*(3), 13-19.

Brown, C. L. (2007). Supporting English language learners in content-reading. *Reading Improvement, 44*(1), 32-39.

Caraway, K., Tucker, C. M., Reinke, W. M., & Hall, C. (2003). Self-efficacy, goal orientation, and fear of failure as predictors of school engagement in high school students. *Psychology in the Schools, 40*(4), 417-427.

Catalano, T., Fox, J., & Vandeyar, S. (2016). Being "in a limbo": Perceptions of immigration, identity and adaptation of immigrant students in South Africa and the United States. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education, 15*(3), 137-150.

Cheng, R. (2013). A non-native students' experience on collaborating with native peers in academic literacy development: A sociopolitical perspective. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 12*(1), 12-22.

Cho, S., & Reich, G. A. (2008). New immigrants, new challenges: High school social studies teachers and English language learner instruction. *The Social Studies, Nov/Dec*, 235-242.

Cummins, J. (1981). Age on arrival and immigrant second language learning in Canada. *Applied Linguistics, 2*, l32-l49.

Daoud, A. M. (2003). "The ESL kids are over there": Opportunities for social interactions between immigrant Latino and white high school students. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 2*, 292-314. doi:10.1177/1538192703002003006.

Diseth, A. (2011). Self-efficacy, goal orientation and learning strategies as mediators between preceding and subsequent academic achievement. *Learning and Individual Differences, 21*, 191-195.

Dweck, C. S., & Elliott, E. S. (1984). Achievement motivation. In P. Mussen & E. M. Hetherington (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology* (Vol. 4, pp. 643-691). New York, NY: Wiley.

Fang, Z. (2014). A discussion about college teachers' roles in English viewing, listening and speaking autonomous learning. *International Forum of Teaching and Studies*, *10*(1), 50-55.

Gahungu, O. N. (2007). *The relationships among strategy use, self-efficacy, and language ability in foreign language learners* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (UMI 3257728).

Galloway, F. J., & Jenkins, J. (2005). The adjustment problems faced by international students in the United States: A comparison of international students and administrative perceptions at two private, religiously affiliated universities. *NASPA Journal*, *42*, 175-187.

Hakuta, K., Butler, Y. G., & Witt, D. (2000, January). *How long does it take English learners to attain proficiency?* Berkeley, CA: University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute. Retrieved from http://escholarship.org/uc/item/13w7m06g

Holmes, P. (2004). Negotiating differences in learning and intercultural communication: Ethnic Chinese Students in a New Zealand University. *Business Communication Quarterly*, *67*(3), 294.

Hsieh, P. P. H., & Kang, H. (2010). Attribution and self-efficacy and their interrelationship in the Korean EFL context. *Language Learning*, *60*(3), 606-627.

Huang, S. C., & Chang, S. F. (1996). *Self-efficacy of English as a second language learner: An example of four learners* (Report No. FL 023 879). Washington, DC: Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED 396536).

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.

Johnson, L. R., & Sandhu, D. S. (2007). Isolation, adjustment, and acculturation issues of international students: Intervention strategies for counselors. In E. B. Singaravelu, & M. Pope (Eds.), *A handbook for counseling international students in the United States* (pp. 13-37). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Kamhi-Stein, L. D., & de Oliveira, L. C. (2008). Mentoring as a pathway to leadership: A focus on nonnative English-speaking professionals. In C. Coombe, M. L. McCloskey, N. L. Stephenson, & N. J. Anderson (Eds.), *Leadership in English language teaching and learning* (pp. 38-49). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Khawaja, N. G., & Stallman, E. B. M. (2011). Understanding the coping strategies of international students: A qualitative approach. *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counseling, 21*(2), 203-224.

Kim, E. (2009). Beyond language barriers: Teaching self-efficacy among East Asian international teaching assistants. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 21*(2), 171-180.

Kim, Y. (2007). Difficulties in quality doctoral academic advising. *Journal of Research in International Education, 6*(2), 171-193.

Klapwijk, N., & Walt, C.V. (2016). English-plus multilingualism as the new linguistics capital? Implication of university students' attitudes towards languages of instruction in a multilingual environment. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education, 15*(2), 67-82.

Klassen, R. M. (2004). A cross-cultural investigation of the efficacy beliefs of South Asian immigrant and Anglo Canadian nonimmigrant early adolescents. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 96*(4), 731-742. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.96.4.731

Krase, E. (2003). *Sociocultural interactions and ESL graduate student enculturation: A cross sectional analysis* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from http://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article1⁄43549&context1⁄4utk_graddiss

Krase, E. (2007). "Maybe the communication between us was not enough": Inside a dysfunctional advisor/L2 advisee relationship. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 6*, 55-70.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). TESOL methods: Changing tracks, challenging trends. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*, 59-81.

Leclair, C., Doll, B., Osborn, A., & Jones, K. (2009). English language learners' and non-English language learners' perceptions of the classroom environment. *Psychology in the Schools, 46*(6), 568-577.

Lee, J., & Zentall, S. S. (2012). Reading motivational differences among groups: Reading disability (RD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), RD + ADHD, and typical comparison. *Learning and Individual Differences, 22*(6), 778-785. doi:10.1016/j.lindif.2012.05.010

Lin, S. Y., & Scherz, S. D. (2014). Challenges facing Asian international graduate students in the US: Pedagogical considerations in higher education. *Journal of International Students, 4*(1), 16-33.

Magogwe, J. M., & Oliver, R. (2007). The relationship between language learning strategies, proficiency, age and self-efficacy beliefs: A study of language learners in Botswana. *System, 35*, 338-352.

McCombs, B. L. (2001). Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: A phenomenological view. In B. J. Zimmerman & D. H. Schunk (Eds.), *Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: Theoretical perspectives* (2nd ed.) (pp. 67-123). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Myles, J., & Cheng, L. (2003). The social and cultural life of non-native English speaking international graduate students at a Canadian University. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 2*(3), 247-263.

Naseri, 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.

Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York, NY: Newbury House/ Harper& Row.

Oyserman, D., & Lee, S. W. (2007). Priming "culture": Culture as situated cognition. In S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds.), *Handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 255-279). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Park, G. P. (1995). *Language learning strategies and beliefs about language learning of university students learning English in Korea.* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (UMI 9534918).

Pintrich, P. R. (2003). A motivational science perspective on the role of student motivation in learning and teaching contexts. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *95*(4), 667-686.

Pintrich, P. R., Smith, D. A., Garcia, T., & McKeachie, W. J. (1991). *A manual for the use of the motivated strategies for learning questionnaire (MSLQ).* Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED338122).

Pintrich, P. R., Smith, D. A., Garcia, T., & McKeachie, W. J. (1993). Reliability and predictive validity of the motivated strategies for learning questionnaire (MSLQ). *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 53,* 801-813. doi: 10.1177/0013164493053003024

Poyrazli, S., & Grahame, K. M. (2007). Barriers to adjustment: Needs of international students within a semi-urban campus community. *Journal of Instructional Psychology, 34*(1), 28- 45.

Samimy, K., Kim, S., Lee, J., & Kasai, M. (2011). A participative inquiry in a TESOL program: Development of three NNES graduate students' legitimate peripheral participation to fuller participation. *The Modern Language Journal, 95*(4), 558-574.

Scarcella, R. (2003). *Academic English: A conceptual framework* (Tech. Rep. No. 2003-1). Irvine, CA: The University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute, University of California.

Schleppegrell, M. J. (2009, October). *Language in academic subject areas and classroom instruction: what is academic language and how can we teach it?* Paper presented at workshop on The role of language in school learning sponsored by The National Academy of Sciences, Menlo Park, CA. Retrieved from http://www7.nationalacademies.org/cfe/Paper_Mary_Schleppegrell.pdf

Schunk, D. H. (1995). Self-efficacy and education and instruction. In J. M. Maddux, (Ed.). *Self-efficacy, adaptation, and adjustment: Theory, research, and adaptation* (pp. 281-303). New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Sharkey, J., & C. Layzer. (2000). Whose definition of success? Identifying factors that affect English language learners' access to academic success and resources. *TESOL Quarterly, 34*(2), 352-366.

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. (UMI 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.

Uzum, B. (2013). *Foreign language teacher socialization: A multiple case study of foreign language teachers in an American higher education institution*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (UMI 3565701).

Wiseman, D. G., & Hunt, G. (2001). *Best practice in motivation and management in the classroom*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Wong, M. S. L. (2005). Language learning strategies and language self-efficacy: Investigating the relationship in Malaysia. *RELC Journal, 36*(3), 245-269.

Yang, N. D. (1992). *Second language learners' beliefs about language learning and their use of learning strategies: A study of college students of English in Taiwan*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest. (UMI 9225771).

Yusuf, M. (2011). The impact of self-efficacy, achievement motivation, and self-regulated learning strategies on students' academic achievement. *Procedia Social and Behavioral*

Sciences, 15, 2623-2626.

HONG SHI is a lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages at China University of Petroleum, Beijing. Her academic areas of interest include English language teaching and learning, second language acquisition, learning strategies, learning styles, self-directed language learning, English language learners' self-efficacy and goal orientation, and the assessment of English language learning. Her work is supported by Science Foundation of China University of Petroleum, Beijing [grant numbers2462017YJRC005] and Education and Teaching Reform Project of China University of Petroleum, Beijing.

Appendix A

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants in Survey

Characteristics	f	Percent
Gender		
Female	88	44.4%
Male	110	55.6%
Age		
18-24	115	58.1%
25-59	83	41.9%
Geographic Background		
African	4	2.0%
Asian	139	70.2%
European	3	1.5%
Middle Eastern	30	15.2%
American (including Brazilian, Colombian, Mexican)	22	11.1%
Years of Study English		
Less than 5 years	61	30.8%
5-10 years	82	41.4%
More than 10 years	55	27.8%
Highest Education Level		
High school	93	47.0%
Bachelor	67	33.8%
Master	33	16.7%
Ph.D.	5	2.5%
Self-Perceptions of Overall English proficiency		
Excellent	14	7.1%
Good	108	54.5%
Fair	71	35.9%
Poor	5	2.5%

Appendix B

Table 2 Demographic Characteristics of Participants in Interviews

Pesudonym	Age	Gender	Country of origin	Major	Length of time in the U.S.	Class standing
B	26	male	India	Electric Engineering	2 years	Doctoral student
L	20	female	Korea	Statistics	2 years	Undergraduate student
F	29	female	Turkey	Agricultural Economics	4 years	Doctoral student
Z	24	male	Bangladesh	Geology	1.5 years	Graduate student(master)
A	35	male	Malaysia	Adult Education	3.5 years	Doctoral student
S	21	male	Iran	Geology	2 years	Undergraduate student
X	24	male	China	Electric Engineering	1 year	Graduate student(master)
P	32	female	Egypt	Foreign language & literature	1 year	Doctoral student

Appendix C

Questionnaire

The following questions ask about your self-efficacy about English language learning. Answer in terms of how well the statement describes you. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. Remember there are no right or wrong answers; just answer as accurately as possible. This usually takes about 5 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, let the researcher know immediately.

Demographic Information

Please first answer the following questions about yourself. Your answers will be treated in a confidential manner and only identified to the researcher for this study.

1. Gender:
   - o Male
   - o Female
2. Age: _____
3. Country of origin:_____
4. First (Native) Language: _____
5. Highest education level: _____
6. How many years have you been studying English in your life? _____
7. Please indicate the program or course you are now enrolled:
   - ☐ Intensive English Program
     - ☐ Level 1
     - ☐ Level 2
     - ☐ Level 3
     - ☐ Level 4
     - ☐ Level 5
   - ☐ INTL 1820
   - ☐ INTL 1830
8. How do you rate your overall English proficiency?
   - o Excellent
   - o Good
   - o Fair
9. How do you rate your overall English proficiency as compared with the proficiency of other students in your class?
   - o Excellent
   - o Good
   - o Fair
   - o Poor
10. Why do you want to learn English? (Check all that apply)
    - o I have an interest in learning English
    - o I am interested in English speaking countries
    - o I have friends who speak English
    - o The need for future jobs
    - o The need for future education
    - o Need it for traveling
    - o Required to take English courses to graduate
    - o English is a tool of communication
    - o Other (list):_____
11. Besides the U.S., have you ever lived in an English-speaking country?
    - o Yes
      Indicate country_____
      Length of stay_____
    - o No
12. How long have you been in the U.S.? _____

○ Poor	

Please read each statement and check the box that best describes how you feel:
1= Not at all true of me to 7= Very true of me

	Not at all true of me 1	2	3	4	5	6	Very true of me 7
1. I believe I will receive an excellent grade in this English class.							
2. I'm certain I can understand the most difficult material presented in the readings for this English class.							
3. I'm confident I can understand the basic concepts taught in this English course.							
4. I'm confident I can understand the most complex material presented by the instructor in this English course.							
5. I'm confident I can do an excellent job on the assignments and tests in this English course.							
6. I expect to do well in this English class.							
7. I'm certain I can master the skills being taught in this English class.							
8. Considering the difficulty of this English course, the teacher, and my skills, I think I will do well in this class.							

Appendix D

Questions for Interviews

1. Can you describe one of your most meaningful learning experiences in your English language learning and academic courses learning respectively?
2. How do you feel about your English level and your English language learning? What challenges did you overcome as an English language learner in this university? What factors contribute to your progress? What did you learn in this process?
3. How did others help and support your learning in this university?
4. What instructional strategies do you think are most effective for your learning?
5. Other comments you may have:

Appendix E

Questions for the Focus Group

1. Can you talk about one of your successful class assignments or projects? How did the professor help you?
2. Can you talk about one of the challenging class assignments or projects for you? What do you think the professor should do?
3. Do you notice any differences between American classrooms and your home country classrooms? Do these differences have any effects on your English language learning or academic courses learning?
4. Compared to your native speaking peers, what do you think your academic courses learning?