

ENGLISH SELF-EFFICACY IN A FAITH-BASED MULTILINGUAL BOARDING SCHOOL: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY FROM INDONESIA

Januba Roudloh Salsabila¹, Sumardi Sumardi², & Kristian Adi Putra³

^{1,2} Sebelas Maret University, Surakarta, Indonesia

³ Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia

janubasalsabila00@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examines students' English self-efficacy in an Indonesian Islamic multilingual boarding school where English, Arabic, and Indonesian are used in daily and academic interactions. Using a qualitative case study approach, data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations involving three purposively selected students. The findings reveal that students' English self-efficacy is shaped by internal factors, including intrinsic motivation and personal aspirations, as well as external influences such as peer support, school programs, and limited family involvement. Students demonstrated higher confidence in informal communication but showed hesitation in formal academic contexts due to concerns about linguistic accuracy and evaluation. The school's multilingual environment through sustained language exposure, structured vocabulary practices, and peer-led activities was found to reinforce all four sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura: mastery experience, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Despite initial challenges such as linguistic overload and adaptation difficulties, continuous engagement in the multilingual setting fostered students' resilience and confidence over time. This study contributes theoretically by illustrating how Bandura's self-efficacy framework operates within a faith-based multilingual boarding school context and offers practical implications for strengthening English learning in similar educational environments.

Keywords: Self Efficacy, Multilingual Education, English Learning, Qualitative Case Study

INTRODUCTION

In the global context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, learners' self-efficacy has been widely recognized as a key psychological factor influencing language achievement, motivation, and sustained engagement. English continues to function as a global lingua franca in academic, professional, and intercultural communication, leading many countries to integrate English more intensively into their educational systems. Across diverse contexts, research has consistently demonstrated that students with high self-efficacy are more willing to use English, employ effective learning strategies, and persist in overcoming linguistic challenges (Bandura, 1997). Conversely, low self-efficacy has been

linked to anxiety, avoidance of communication, and limited language development (Kormos & Csizér, 2014).

At the regional level, particularly in Asian EFL contexts, self-efficacy has gained increasing scholarly attention due to its strong association with academic success and learner autonomy. Recent studies conducted in countries such as Türkiye, China, and Vietnam indicate that students' beliefs about their English abilities are shaped not only by instructional practices but also by sociocultural and institutional environments (Ersanlı, 2021; Huynh & Le, 2023; Cavusoglu & Koyuncu, 2024). These findings suggest that self-efficacy is a context-sensitive construct, requiring closer examination within specific educational and cultural settings. In Indonesia, English language education has undergone significant policy shifts, including government initiatives encouraging the use of English as a medium of instruction. Despite these efforts, the effectiveness of such policies remains debatable, particularly in non-mainstream educational institutions. Previous research has shown that Indonesian EFL learners' self-efficacy plays a crucial role in determining English proficiency, learning motivation, and perseverance (Maulana, 2020; Mulyanto et al., 2022). However, many learners still experience low confidence, leading to limited use of English in authentic contexts (Iswati, 2020). This challenge is further intensified in Islamic educational settings, especially boarding schools, where students must navigate religious values, institutional discipline, and multilingual language exposure simultaneously.

Islamic multilingual boarding schools in Indonesia present a unique learning environment in which students are regularly exposed to multiple languages, including Indonesian, Arabic, and English. While this multilingual setting has the potential to support language development, it may also create cognitive and psychological pressures that affect learners' confidence in using English. Studies have indicated that students who lack self-efficacy tend to avoid real-life language use, thereby hindering their learning progress (Kormos & Csizér, 2014; Goetze & Driver, 2022). Yet, despite the growing body of research on EFL self-efficacy, empirical studies focusing on multilingual Islamic boarding schools remain scarce. Most existing studies on English self-efficacy have concentrated on public schools or higher education institutions and have predominantly employed quantitative survey methods (Malmir & Ebrahimzadeh, 2020). While these studies provide valuable statistical insights, they often fail to capture learners' lived experiences and the influence of institutional culture. Recent international research has called for more qualitative and context-sensitive investigations to better understand how cultural, religious, and environmental factors influence self-efficacy development in language learning (Su et al., 2023; Bai & Wang, 2023). This highlights a clear research gap, particularly concerning EFL learners in multilingual Islamic boarding schools.

To address this gap, the present study focuses on students' English self-efficacy in a multilingual Islamic boarding school in Indonesia. The central problem underpinning this research is the limited understanding of how students in such educational contexts develop and negotiate confidence in using English across both academic and informal settings while simultaneously managing multiple linguistic demands. Grounded in Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1997), which emphasizes the role of belief in one's capabilities in shaping motivation and behavior, this study seeks to explore the interaction between learning

experiences, environmental influences, and students' confidence in English use. Accordingly, this research aims to answer the following questions: (1) What factors influence students' English self-efficacy in a multilingual Islamic boarding school? (2) How do learners perceive their own confidence in using English across academic and informal contexts? and (3) How does the school's multilingual program shape students' English self-efficacy? By addressing these questions, this study is expected to contribute to the broader body of EFL and educational psychology research while offering practical insights for educators, institutions, and policymakers in designing learning environments that foster students' confidence, engagement, and English language performance.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of how students construct their English self-efficacy within a multilingual Islamic boarding school context. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because self-efficacy is a subjective and context-dependent construct that is best explored through participants' lived experiences and perceptions. Following Yin (2018), the case study design allows for a holistic examination of complex educational phenomena within their real-life settings, enabling the researcher to explore how institutional routines, peer interactions, religious values, and multilingual demands interact to shape learners' confidence in using English.

Three students participated in this study. The selection of a small number of participants was intentional and methodologically justified, as qualitative case studies prioritize depth of understanding over breadth (Yin, 2018). Focusing on a limited number of participants allowed for prolonged engagement, detailed exploration of individual experiences, and rich contextual analysis. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure variation in English proficiency levels and levels of participation in the school's multilingual programs. This variation enabled the researcher to capture diverse perspectives on how self-efficacy is developed and negotiated across different learner profiles within the same institutional context. The participants came from similar educational environments but differed in their confidence, engagement, and perceived competence in using English. Such diversity was expected to provide meaningful insights into the factors that facilitate or hinder the development of English self-efficacy in a multilingual Islamic boarding school.

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and documentation, allowing for triangulation and a richer understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The use of multiple data sources enabled triangulation and strengthened the credibility of the findings. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore students' perceptions, emotions, and experiences related to their use of English. Each participant undergoes one interview session, with each session lasting approximately 30–45 minutes. Conducting interviews allows researchers to clarify responses, explore emerging themes in greater depth, and build rapport with participants. The interview protocol is guided by Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy (1997) mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states, while also allowing flexibility for participants to share experiences beyond the predetermined

questions. All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and then transcribed word-for-word for analysis.

Non-participant observation was conducted to record the actual behaviour and interactions of students during English-related activities. Observations were conducted over a two-week period during regular school activities, including English speaking sessions, vocabulary memorisation programs, and informal interactions among friends in the dormitory environment. The researcher focused on students' participation, use of English, confidence indicators, and responses to feedback from teachers and peers. Detailed field notes were recorded systematically to contextualize and support the interview data. Documentation was collected to provide contextual and institutional background relevant to the study. These documents included school language policies, schedules of multilingual programs, and guidelines related to English use in daily activities. The documentation was used to support and contextualize findings from interviews and observations, helping the researcher understand institutional expectations and the learning environment in which students developed their self-efficacy.

Data analysis followed the thematic analysis framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Interview transcripts, observation field notes, and relevant documentation were read repeatedly to achieve familiarization. Initial codes were generated and subsequently grouped into broader themes reflecting factors influencing students' English self-efficacy, learners' perceptions across academic and informal contexts, and the influence of the multilingual environment. The themes were reviewed and refined to ensure coherence and alignment with the research objectives. To ensure trustworthiness, several strategies were employed. Credibility was enhanced through data triangulation across interviews, observations, and documentation, as well as prolonged engagement in the research setting. Member checking was conducted by sharing interview summaries with participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations. Dependability was ensured by maintaining a detailed audit trail of research procedures and analytical decisions. Confirmability was supported through reflexive journaling to minimize researcher bias and enhance transparency.

Ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection. Informed consent was secured from all participants, who were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage of the study. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities, and all data were stored securely to maintain confidentiality. The researcher conducted interviews and observations with sensitivity to participants' comfort and well-being, particularly given the personal nature of self-efficacy beliefs.

RESULTS

Factors Shaping Students' Confidence in English Language Proficiency

Analysis of interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation revealed that students' English self-efficacy was shaped by several interconnected factors. Four major themes emerged from the data: (1) motivation and personal goals, (2) school-based English activities and language policies, (3) peer support and a non-judgmental learning

environment, and (4) mild encouragement from family members. These themes were consistently reflected across participants, although their intensity and form varied.

Motivation and Personal Goals

All participants described personal motivation as a central reason for continuing to learn English despite difficulties. Students frequently referred to their desire to become fluent, communicate confidently, and use English for future purposes. One student stated:

"I think English is important. Even though learning English is difficult, I still want to learn it and become fluent in English." (S3/Interview)

Similarly, another participant emphasized fluency as a primary goal:

"One of the reasons is that I want to be more fluent in English." (S1/Interview)

For some students, motivation was also linked to specific communicative goals, such as public speaking:

"I want to be able to speak English, and I want to be able to give speeches too." (S2/Interview)

Observation data supported these statements. During classroom activities and English programs, students continued to participate, attempt tasks, and practice speaking even when they hesitated or made mistakes. Students were observed repeating vocabulary, responding to instructions, and engaging in speech practice despite visible difficulty. These findings indicate that students' confidence in learning English was strongly supported by internally driven goals rather than external pressure alone. Personal aspirations and the desire for self-improvement appeared to sustain students' engagement and confidence over time, particularly when they perceived gradual improvement through continued practice.

School-Based English Activities and Language Policies

Students consistently identified structured school programs and language-use policies as influential in shaping their confidence. Regular activities such as English lessons, speech practice, and daily vocabulary programs were frequently mentioned. One student explained:

"Once a week, there is an English speech activity and English lessons that require the use of English." (S1/Interview)

Another student highlighted the impact of compulsory daily language use:

"Because we have to use it every day, eventually we become confident." (S2/Interview)

Observations confirmed that English was embedded in students' daily routines. Students participated in morning vocabulary sessions, took notes, and attempted to use new words during class and informal interactions. One participant commented:

"Every morning there is also a language program that provides new vocabulary, so it is quite helpful in expanding my vocabulary." (S2/Interview)

Although students sometimes showed hesitation, they continued to use English in accordance with school regulations. The data suggest that consistent exposure and repeated practice through school-based programs created habitual language use. While initially challenging, these structured activities appeared to gradually increase students' confidence by normalizing English use in both academic and daily contexts.

Peer Support and a Non-Judgmental Learning Environment

Peer interaction emerged as a strong factor influencing students' confidence, particularly in informal settings. Students reported feeling more comfortable using English with friends due to the absence of ridicule or harsh correction. One participant stated:

"When interacting with friends, the conversation just flows because it's part of our daily routine." (S1/Interview)

Another student emphasized the importance of mutual understanding among peers:

"When communicating with friends, I feel more confident because we are all in the same learning process, so we do not blame each other if someone makes a mistake." (S2/Interview)

Observation data showed frequent informal English use in dormitories, such as casual conversations and jokes. When mistakes occurred, peers often offered friendly assistance rather than criticism. One student explained:

"We are still learning together, but sometimes the smarter ones are also willing to teach." (S3/Interview)

These findings indicate that a supportive peer environment functioned as a safe space for practice. The absence of judgment reduced anxiety and encouraged experimentation with English, contributing to gradual confidence development through everyday interaction.

Mild Encouragement from Family Members

Family support was described as limited but emotionally supportive. Some students mentioned encouragement from siblings or parents, although direct involvement in English learning was minimal. One student shared:

"Not much, but there is some, like learning with my brother who can speak English, because he is used to using English, so I am more confident in practicing speaking." (S1/Interview)

Another student referred to parental advice:

"Sometimes I am advised to learn the language properly, because the language can be used in the future." (S2/Interview)

In contrast, one participant noted minimal family involvement:

"My family knows that I study at the boarding school." (S3/Interview)

While family involvement varied, students generally perceived family attitudes as supportive rather than pressuring. This mild encouragement appeared to function as emotional reassurance, helping students sustain motivation and confidence even though families were not directly involved in language instruction. Overall, the results show that students' English self-efficacy in a multilingual Islamic boarding school was shaped by a combination of personal motivation and contextual support. Motivation and personal goals formed the foundation of confidence, while school programs and peer interactions reinforced language use through daily practice. Family encouragement, though limited, contributed emotional support. The convergence of interview and observation data across all themes strengthens the credibility of these results.

Perceptions of English self-efficacy in academic and social settings

This section presents the findings related to Research Question 2, which explores how students perceive their English self-efficacy in academic and social settings. Analysis of interview and observation data revealed that students' confidence in using English varied across contexts. Four themes emerged: (a) higher confidence in informal or social interactions, (b) lower self-efficacy in formal or academic settings, (c) shaped by perceived comparison with others, and (d) increased confidence through sustained practice over time.

Higher Self-Efficacy in Informal and Social Interactions

All participants reported feeling more confident using English in informal settings, particularly in the dormitory environment. Students explained that interactions outside the classroom were more relaxed and involved less pressure. One student stated:

"Outside the classroom, especially in the dormitory, we just hang out. In class, we are more supervised by the teacher, but in the dormitory it's just with friends, so the language feels freer."
(S1/Interview)

Another student described informal communication as more natural and spontaneous:

"When we talk with friends, it just happens naturally because it's part of our daily activities."
(S2/Interview)

Observations in the dormitory confirmed these statements. Students frequently used English mixed with other languages during casual conversations, joking, or group discussions. They appeared willing to speak without hesitation, even when their sentences were incomplete or grammatically inaccurate. Mistakes were rarely followed by correction, and communication continued smoothly. These findings indicate that informal social settings provide a supportive space for language use. The relaxed atmosphere and absence of strict evaluation allow students to experiment with English, which contributes to higher perceived confidence in these contexts.

Lower Self-Efficacy in Formal and Academic Settings

In contrast, students described lower confidence when using English in formal academic settings, especially during classroom activities. The presence of teachers and

expectations of linguistic accuracy were frequently mentioned as sources of anxiety. One student explained:

"In class, we are monitored more closely by the teacher, and I feel anxious because I'm afraid of making grammar mistakes." (S1/Interview)

Another participant linked low confidence to personal linguistic features:

"I'm not confident when I speak English because my accent is still Javanese." (S3/Interview)

Classroom observations supported these accounts. Some students hesitated before responding, spoke only when directly asked by the teacher, or remained silent during discussions. In several instances, students appeared less focused and required additional prompting to participate. The formal classroom environment places students in an evaluative situation that heightens anxiety and self-doubt. Concerns about accuracy, accent, and teacher judgment appear to limit students' willingness to use English, resulting in lower self-efficacy compared to informal settings.

Self-Efficacy Shaped by Perceived Comparison with Others

Students' confidence was also influenced by how they perceived their abilities relative to their peers. Several participants explicitly compared themselves to others. One student stated:

"I don't feel confident yet because there are still friends who are better than me." (S1/Interview)

Another student observed differences in classmates' language abilities:

"Some of my friends are very good at English, but some still mix languages." (S2/Interview)

A third student described how ability differences affect learning experiences:

"If you are smart, it's easier. But if you're not, it's hard to keep up." (S3/Interview)

Observations revealed similar patterns. Students with stronger English skills tended to participate more actively and speak voluntarily, while others waited to be called on or avoided speaking altogether. These findings suggest that students evaluate their self-efficacy through social comparison. Observing peers with higher proficiency can lower confidence, especially in academic settings, making self-efficacy relative rather than fixed.

Practice Leads to Increased Confidence Over Time

All participants reported that repeated practice contributed to increased confidence in using English. Daily language use and participation in performance-based activities helped students become more comfortable over time. One student explained:

"Because I had to use English every day, I gradually became more confident. After joining an English speech contest, I felt more confident speaking in front of people." (S2/Interview)

Another student emphasized habit formation:

"Because I'm used to using it every day, I have no choice but to keep using it, and eventually it feels normal." (S1/Interview)

Observations showed that students who initially appeared nervous during speech or conversation activities became more relaxed and fluent after repeated participation. Students who had performed multiple times spoke more calmly and showed clearer organization compared to first-time participants. These findings indicate that sustained practice allows students to gain confidence gradually. Familiarity with language tasks and repeated exposure reduce anxiety and support the development of stronger self-efficacy over time. Overall, students' perceptions of English self-efficacy differed across academic and social contexts. Informal environments fostered higher confidence, while formal classroom settings tended to lower self-efficacy due to evaluative pressure and linguistic concerns. Social comparison influenced students' self-assessment, and continuous practice played a key role in strengthening confidence over time. The convergence of interview and observation data supports the credibility of these findings.

The role of multilingual program in supporting English self-efficacy

This section presents the findings related to Research Question 3: *What is the role of the multilingual program in supporting students' English self-efficacy?* Analysis of interview and observation data revealed that the multilingual program plays a central role in shaping students' confidence in using English. Four recurring patterns emerged: (a) frequent exposure builds familiarity and comfort, (b) initial challenges followed by gradual adaptation, (c) vocabulary development through structured programs, and (d) peer dynamics in program implementation.

Frequent Exposure Builds Familiarity and Comfort

All participants reported that constant exposure to English through the multilingual program helped them feel more comfortable using the language. English was not limited to classroom instruction but was embedded in daily routines, including announcements, discussions, and casual conversations. One student explained:

"Because we are required to use the language in our daily lives here, we are encouraged to keep practicing, and we become accustomed to using it." (S3/Interview)

Another student emphasized that daily use made English feel more natural:

"We don't only use English in class. We use it every day, so slowly it becomes normal." (S1/Interview)

Observations supported these accounts. During designated English weeks, English was frequently used in dormitory interactions, school announcements, and routine communication. Students were observed switching between languages according to the weekly rotation system, showing increasing ease over time. These findings indicate that frequent and mandatory exposure allowed students to develop familiarity with English. Regular use in everyday situations reduced hesitation and helped English become part of students' routine communication, contributing to increased confidence.

Challenges at the Beginning, but Better Adaptation Over Time

Students described the early stages of the multilingual program as challenging. Initial reactions included confusion, anxiety, and difficulty adjusting to the requirement to use foreign languages daily. One student reflected:

"At first it was difficult because I was not used to the language, so I felt confused. But over time, because I kept practicing, I became familiar with it." (S2/Interview)

Another student shared a similar experience:

"In the beginning, it was hard to speak because I didn't know many words, and I was afraid of making mistakes." (S1/Interview)

Observations during the early phase of program implementation showed frequent pauses, code-switching, and hesitation. However, as time passed, students became more responsive during announcements, participated more actively in conversations, and showed reduced hesitation when speaking English. The data suggest that although the multilingual program initially created emotional and linguistic challenges, repeated exposure supported gradual adaptation. As students became accustomed to daily language use, anxiety decreased and confidence increased.

Improved Vocabulary through Structured Programs

Students consistently reported that structured activities within the multilingual program contributed to vocabulary development. Daily vocabulary sessions, sentence construction exercises, and scheduled conversation practices were frequently mentioned. One student stated:

"Every morning there is a language program that gives new vocabulary, and we also have to make sentences. Before sports on Tuesday and Friday, we have conversation practice, so it really helps increase vocabulary." (S2/Interview)

Another student added:

"When we learn new words every day and use them in conversations, it's easier to remember them." (S3/Interview)

Observations confirmed that vocabulary instruction occurred regularly, both in morning programs and before English lessons. Students were seen recording new words and attempting to use them in classroom and informal interactions. These findings show that structured language programs supported systematic vocabulary growth. Increased lexical knowledge enabled students to express themselves more easily, contributing to greater confidence in using English.

Influence of Peer Dynamics in Program Implementation

Peer interaction emerged as a key component of the multilingual program. Because all students were required to participate, students reported feeling supported rather than isolated. One participant explained:

"Because all students must use the language, if there are difficulties, we help each other."
(S1/Interview)

Another student highlighted the motivating role of peers:

"When I see my friends speaking English, I feel encouraged to try too, even if I'm not good yet."
(S2/Interview)

Observations showed that students often practiced together during group activities, corrected one another informally, and encouraged participation. Mistakes were typically responded to with assistance rather than criticism. These findings suggest that peer dynamics within the multilingual program fostered a supportive learning environment. Collective participation and mutual assistance reduced fear of mistakes and strengthened students' confidence in using English. Overall, the multilingual program played a significant role in supporting students' English self-efficacy. Frequent exposure normalized language use, initial challenges were gradually overcome through adaptation, structured activities enhanced vocabulary, and peer interaction created a supportive atmosphere. The consistency between interview and observation data reinforces the credibility of these findings and highlights the importance of immersion-based, community-oriented language programs in building learners' confidence.

DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this study was to examine the factors influencing students' English self-efficacy within the unique context of an Indonesian Islamic multilingual boarding school. The findings reveal that students' confidence in using English is shaped by a dynamic interaction of motivational, social, and institutional forces, highlighting the multidimensional and context-sensitive nature of self-efficacy. By drawing on interview data, classroom and dormitory observations, and documentation, this study provides a triangulated understanding of how English self-efficacy is constructed in a faith-based multilingual environment.

Factors Shaping Students' Confidence in English Language Proficiency

This study confirms prior research showing that motivation, instructional support, peer interaction, and family encouragement are central to the development of English self-efficacy (Cadiz & Alona, 2021; Maharani & Wahyuningsih, 2024). However, the present findings extend these studies by demonstrating that in a boarding school context, these factors do not operate independently. Instead, they intersect within a communal ecosystem that amplifies their impact. Interview data revealed strong intrinsic and future-oriented motivation, while observational data showed sustained participation in English activities even in the absence of direct teacher supervision. This convergence suggests that motivation is not merely expressed cognitively but enacted behaviorally through persistent engagement.

Contrary to studies conducted in individualistic or competitive learning environments where peer comparison often undermines confidence (Raoofi et al., 2012), this study found that peer interaction generally functioned as emotional reinforcement rather than a source

of threat. Observation of daily peer interactions in dormitories and language programs showed frequent mutual assistance and informal correction, which softened the negative effects typically associated with social comparison. This divergence from earlier findings suggests that cultural and religious norms emphasizing humility and cooperation can mediate the impact of comparison on self-efficacy. Thus, peer influence in this context operates less as a competitive benchmark and more as a shared learning resource. An unexpected finding was the relatively limited yet positive role of family involvement. While previous studies have emphasized strong parental engagement as a determinant of language confidence, this study found that minimal but non-pressuring encouragement was sufficient to sustain students' motivation. Triangulated interview data indicated that families largely entrusted language development to the institution, which contrasts with research in non-boarding contexts where parental involvement is more direct. This suggests that in residential religious schools, institutional authority and communal structures may substitute for intensive family involvement without diminishing students' self-efficacy.

Perceptions of English Self-Efficacy in Academic and Social Settings

Consistent with previous studies by Liu (2013) and Wang et al., (2018), students in this study reported higher self-efficacy in informal social contexts than in formal academic settings. However, this study adds nuance by showing that the gap between these contexts is moderated by communal living. While classroom observations revealed hesitation and anxiety during formal tasks, students did not disengage entirely; instead, they relied on peer cues and collective participation to navigate academic demands. This pattern contrasts with findings from conventional schools, where low self-efficacy in formal contexts often leads to withdrawal.

Triangulation across interviews and observations revealed that anxiety in academic contexts was not primarily driven by fear of failure, but by heightened self-awareness of linguistic accuracy and accent. This partially contradicts studies that attribute low classroom self-efficacy mainly to teacher authority or assessment pressure. In this boarding school context, emotional discomfort stemmed more from internalized standards of correctness than from punitive evaluation. Yet, the presence of trusted peers mitigated this discomfort, allowing students to re-engage after initial hesitation. Social comparison also emerged as a complex influence. While some students reported diminished confidence when comparing themselves to more proficient peers, observational data showed that such comparisons rarely resulted in disengagement. Instead, students often continued participating, suggesting that comparison was interpreted as a motivational reference rather than a deterrent. This finding challenges assumptions in prior research that social comparison is uniformly detrimental and highlights the importance of examining how comparison operates within specific cultural and moral frameworks.

The Role of the Multilingual Program in Supporting English Self-Efficacy

The multilingual program functioned as a structural catalyst for self-efficacy development by transforming English from an academic subject into a lived practice. Consistent with prior immersion studies by Irawati et al., (2025); and Rohman et al., (2025), daily exposure facilitated skill development and confidence. However, this study extends existing research by showing that immersion alone is insufficient; emotional adaptation and peer mediation are equally critical. Interview data revealed initial feelings of overload and anxiety, while observational data documented gradual behavioral changes, such as increased spontaneity in speech and reduced reliance on code-switching. This triangulated pattern underscores that confidence develops through a process of emotional acclimatization, not immediate proficiency gains.

A notable contradiction with some immersion studies is that structured routines did not constrain students' autonomy. While rigid language policies are often criticized for increasing pressure, participants in this study perceived structure as supportive rather than restrictive. This divergence may be explained by the integration of language routines into religious and communal life, where discipline is normalized and shared. Thus, structure functioned as emotional scaffolding rather than control, supporting sustained engagement. Peer dynamics was particularly influential in this immersive environment. Unlike in daily, where peer interaction is limited to class hours, boarding school students engage continuously, intensifying vicarious learning and social persuasion. Observations of collaborative vocabulary practice and informal peer correction corroborated students' accounts of mutual support. This finding contributes theoretically by reframing self-efficacy as a collective phenomenon shaped by shared routines and identity, extending Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory beyond its individualistic emphasis.

Theoretically, this study advances understanding of self-efficacy by situating it within a collectivist, faith-based educational model. It demonstrates that self-efficacy can be co-constructed through communal practices, emotional safety, and shared moral values, rather than solely through individual mastery. This perspective enriches Bandura's framework and extends Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System by incorporating spirituality, communal identity, and emotional resilience into the formation of the L2 self. Practically, the findings suggest that English instruction in multilingual boarding schools should prioritize emotionally safe immersion, peer collaboration, and structured yet supportive routines. Rather than focusing exclusively on linguistic accuracy, educators should design programs that normalize error, promote shared responsibility, and leverage communal values. Such approaches are more likely to foster durable self-efficacy and sustained engagement in English learning.

CONCLUSION

This qualitative case study examined how English self-efficacy is constructed and sustained within a faith-based multilingual boarding school in Indonesia. The findings

demonstrate that students' confidence in using English is shaped by the interaction of personal motivation, institutional language policies, peer dynamics, and the broader religious-communal environment. Rather than developing in isolation, English self-efficacy in this context emerges as a socially and emotionally grounded process, reinforced through daily immersion, shared routines, and collective responsibility for learning. The study highlights that students' self-efficacy is not static but context sensitive. Learners reported higher confidence in informal and social interactions and lower confidence in formal academic settings, yet communal living and peer support helped mitigate anxiety and encouraged continued participation.

The multilingual program played a central role by normalizing English use as part of daily life, allowing students to gradually adapt, build vocabulary, and gain confidence through repeated practice. Importantly, peer collaboration and emotional safety functioned as key mechanisms that transformed early hesitation into sustained engagement. These findings underscore that in faith-based boarding schools, self-efficacy is not merely an individual belief, but a collective outcome shaped by shared values, social cohesion, and institutional structure.

At the policy level, this study suggests that multilingual education policies in Islamic boarding schools should emphasize consistency, emotional safety, and community participation rather than linguistic enforcement alone. Language policies that embed English into daily routines, social interactions, and residential life can foster sustainable confidence when they are implemented within a supportive and non-punitive environment. Policymakers should recognize that faith-based institutions possess unique social capital that can be leveraged to support language learning through communal norms and shared responsibility. Pedagogically, the findings indicate the importance of creating learning environments that balance structure with emotional support. Teachers are encouraged to design activities that promote repeated practice, peer collaboration, and gradual exposure to formal language tasks. Reducing fear of mistakes, valuing effort over accuracy in early stages, and integrating cooperative learning strategies can help maintain students' self-efficacy across academic and social settings. In boarding school contexts, informal learning spaces such as dormitories and daily routines should be recognized as valuable extensions of the language classroom.

This study is limited to a small number of participants within a single institution, and therefore its findings are not intended to be generalized. Future research could explore English self-efficacy in other faith-based or residential educational contexts to examine similarities and differences across settings. Longitudinal studies may also provide deeper insight into how self-efficacy develops over time in multilingual immersion environments. Additionally, further research could include teachers' perspectives or examine the relationship between self-efficacy and specific language skills to enrich understanding of how confidence translates into measurable language outcomes.

Overall, this study contributes to the understanding of English self-efficacy by demonstrating how it is co-constructed within a faith-based multilingual boarding school environment. By highlighting the roles of immersion, peer support, and emotional safety, the study shows that effective language education in such contexts requires more than instructional input. It requires a holistic approach that integrates language learning with community life, identity formation, and emotional well-being. Such an approach holds significant promise for fostering confident, resilient, and engaged English language learners in culturally grounded educational settings.

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