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# The Effect of Self-Efficacy on Digital Reading Platforms on Early Childhood English Language Development

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### **Abstract**

Early childhood education is crucial in laying a solid foundation for children's language and literacy development. In an era where digital technology is increasingly pervasive in daily life, it is important to understand how digital reading platforms can influence young children's language development. This study aims to explore the relationship between children's self-efficacy in using digital reading platforms and their English language development. Qualitative research methods were employed, collecting data through participatory observation and interviews with parents and early childhood educators. The research sample consisted of 30 children (aged 4-6 years) who regularly use digital reading platforms in formal and informal learning environments. The results indicate a positive correlation between children's self-efficacy levels in digital reading platforms and their progress in understanding and using English. The practical implications of this research emphasize the importance of strengthening children's self-efficacy and selecting appropriate digital reading platforms to support young children's language and literacy development. This study provides valuable insights for educators, parents, and educational technology developers in designing effective learning strategies for young children in the digital age.

Keywords: Self-Efficacy, Digital Reading Platforms, Child Language Development



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### INTRODUCTION

English is one of the world's languages that plays a crucial role in global communication (Sari, Utama, Suhono, & Yawisah, 2019). English has become one of the dominant languages globally, with a significant role in various fields(Sofyan, 2021). One key factor contributing to the influential status of English is its official or semi-official status in many international organizations. For instance, in the United Nations (UN), European Union, World Trade Organization (WTO), and NATO, English is used in policy-making, negotiations, and official communication. The presence of English in these spheres facilitates effective communication among member states and fosters cross-border cooperation (Kidd & Garcia, n.d.). In the business world, English also serves as the primary language for various transactions and communications among multinational corporations. This dominance stems from its prevalence in the global workplace, where companies use English as their official working language.

Consequently, proficiency in English is crucial for individuals aiming for success in international business careers (Putranti, B.E & Ambawani, 2019).

Moreover, English dominates the realms of science and technology. Many scientists, researchers, and technicians use English as their primary language to share knowledge and research findings. Scientific journals, international conferences, and academic literature are often published in English, facilitating the exchange of information within the global scientific community. In the media and entertainment industry, English also plays a significant role (Putranti, B.E & Ambawani, 2019). English-language films, music, television, and popular literature have a substantial global impact. The presence of English-language popular culture worldwide not only entertains but also serves as a tool for expanding cultural understanding and promoting certain values within the global community. Education also contributes to strengthening the dominance of English. Many academic programs and universities worldwide use English as the medium of instruction. This makes proficiency in English a vital requirement for accessing higher education resources and global career opportunities (Alfarisy, 2021). Overall, the combination of these factors establishes English as a crucial communication tool in the era of globalization. It facilitates interaction, cooperation, and cultural exchange among individuals from diverse backgrounds, playing a key role in promoting global connectivity (Putu, 2019). Good English language skills have become a fundamental necessity in the current era of globalization. With the advancement of technology, digital reading platforms have become popular tools for acquiring and learning English, especially for young children (García & Kleifgen, 2020).

The ease of access offered by digital platforms allows children to explore various books and reading materials according to their interests and reading levels without physical constraints (Saed, Haider, Al-Salman, & Hussein, 2021). The interactivity presented by digital reading platforms, with animations, sounds, and games, makes the learning process more engaging and enjoyable. Flexibility in time and place for reading also enriches the learning experience, as children can read at home, school, or wherever they may be (AlAdwani, AlFadley, AlGasab, & Alnwaiem, 2021). With the support of multimedia features such as word pronunciation, images, and translations, digital reading platforms provide additional assistance in effectively understanding and developing children's English language skills (Putu, 2019). As a result, digital reading platforms not only serve as efficient learning tools but also provide engaging and educational learning experiences for the future generation (Kristiani & Pradnyadewi, 2021). Self-efficacy, as an individual's belief in their own abilities, becomes a crucial factor in the language learning process, including in the context of using digital reading platforms (Abdullah, 2019). Digital reading platforms have become an integral part of early childhood education experiences. With increasingly sophisticated technology, children have easier access to explore various English reading materials. However, success in utilizing digital reading platforms is not solely determined by the availability of technology but also by psychological factors that influence how children utilize them.

One key factor is children's intrinsic motivation to learn and read. Children need to feel interested and motivated to actively use digital reading platforms, which can be influenced by personal interests, comfort levels with technology, and their perceptions of digital reading experiences. Additionally, it is essential to consider children's cognitive abilities and language skills (Septrisia, Suhono, Purnamasari,

Utama, & Mustafidah, 2021). Effective use of digital reading platforms requires text comprehension abilities, app navigation skills, and critical thinking skills to interpret the presented information. Thus, the development of children's cognitive and language skills becomes crucial in their success in utilizing digital reading platforms. Furthermore, environmental factors can also play a role in children's use of digital reading platforms (Parmi, 2019). Support from parents and educators, as well as the availability of appropriate and safe resources, can enhance children's opportunities to effectively use these platforms. A stimulating and supportive learning environment can also strengthen children's motivation to learn and read using digital platforms (Utama, 2017). By addressing these psychological factors, parents, educators, and policymakers can help improve the success of children's use of digital reading platforms. This includes supporting children's intrinsic motivation, developing their cognitive and language abilities, and creating a supportive and stimulating learning environment. Through a holistic and integrated approach, digital reading platforms can become effective tools in supporting children's language learning and development comprehensively. Early childhood is a sensitive and critical period for absorbing and learning languages. Therefore, introducing English at this stage is considered essential to equip children with the necessary skills for a global future.

The use of digital reading platforms as a language learning method has significantly increased, especially in the current digital era. These platforms offer various advantages, such as interactivity, diverse content availability, and ease of access. One psychological factor that plays a crucial role in the use of digital reading platforms is children's self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to individuals' beliefs in their ability to succeed in specific situations. In the context of using digital reading platforms, children's self-efficacy can influence their attitudes, motivation, and behaviors towards technology use. Children with high levels of self-efficacy tend to have more positive attitudes towards using digital reading platforms (Tulasih, Yussof, & Kristiawan, 2022). They believe that they have the ability to master the technology and benefit from its use. This belief can enhance their motivation to actively use digital reading platforms, explore various features, and engage in reading activities offered. On the other hand, children with low self-efficacy may feel anxious or lack confidence in dealing with technology. They may hesitate to try out new features or take risks in utilizing digital reading platforms. This can hinder their participation in using this technology and reduce their potential for learning benefits provided.

Therefore, it is essential for educators and parents to pay attention to and strengthen children's self-efficacy in the context of using digital reading platforms. Support provided, positive feedback given, and opportunities provided to experience success in using technology can help enhance children's self-efficacy (Haslip, Allen-Handy, & Donaldson, 2019). Additionally, providing appropriate guidance and training can also help reduce anxiety and boost children's confidence in dealing with technology. By strengthening children's self-efficacy, they will be better able to overcome challenges and optimize their potential in using digital reading platforms as effective learning tools. This will help create a positive learning experience and strengthen their language and literacy skills comprehensively. In the context of digital reading platforms, children's self-efficacy reflects their confidence in their ability to understand, absorb, and apply the English language they learn through these media. Children's self-efficacy in using digital reading platforms can play a significant role in

their English language learning process. High self-confidence can enhance motivation and perseverance in learning, which, in turn, can accelerate language development.

Research on the influence of self-efficacy on digital reading platforms on the English language development of young children becomes highly relevant, considering the importance of English as an international language and its reading ability as a crucial foundation in the education process. Understanding how children's self-efficacy affects the use of digital reading platforms and its impact on their English language development can provide valuable insights for educators, parents, and

stakeholders in designing effective educational strategies. Previous research has highlighted the influence of self-efficacy in language learning, both conventionally and through digital platforms. For example, research by (Oktavia, Khoironi, Nofriani, & Noviyanti, 2022) on the influence of English language learning on the behavior of elementary school students found that children are accustomed to reading English due to the influence of their daily habits, utilizing digital activities such as playing games that communicate in English. (Westhisi, 2019) also explains in his research about the process of introducing reading using English, starting with simple methods such as showing audio-visual stories in English. This study provides stimulus to young children to motivate them to participate in learning and to read using English (Atikah, Asmawati, & Ekawati, 2023) mention the interest in learning English for young children through a combination of stories packaged in digital applications such as Phonetic-Based Digital Books Through the Book Creator Application for Early Childhood. However, there have been relatively few studies specifically examining the relationship between self-efficacy on digital reading platforms and English language development in young children.

Based on this background, the problem formulation in this study reveals questions about how self-efficacy on digital reading platforms influences the English language development of young children. In this regard, this research aims to explore the influence of self-efficacy on digital reading platforms on the English language development of young children. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the factors influencing English language progress in the early developmental stages of children. Thus, this research not only contributes to the academic literature in the field of early childhood English education but also provides a broader perspective on the importance of psychological factors in digital education in an increasingly connected and rapidly evolving era.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This research was conducted at TK ABA Umar bin Khattab, Central Lampung, using a qualitative approach to understand the influence of self-efficacy on the use of digital reading platforms in the context of English language development in early childhood. The research subjects included young children enrolled in the kindergarten, the teachers teaching there, and the parents/guardians of these children, who were selected through purposive sampling technique. Data collection methods used were in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentary study. Indepth interviews were conducted individually with teachers, parents, and children (with parental guidance) to gain a broader understanding of their experiences using digital reading platforms and perceptions of self-efficacy (Arias, Arias, & Rodríguez-Medina, 2021). Participatory observation was conducted to observe children's interactions with digital reading platforms during the learning process in the

classroom. This observation aimed to capture how children's self-efficacy influenced their interactions with English language learning materials. Documentary study involved analyzing documents such as the curriculum, children's progress records, and digital learning materials. This analysis aimed to complement data from interviews and observations and provide additional context in understanding the use of digital reading platforms.

The data collected from interviews, observations, and documentary study will be analyzed using content analysis method. The analysis stages include data coding, categorization, and theme formation (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, 2018). This analysis aims to identify emerging patterns related to self-efficacy and its usage in digital reading platforms concerning the English language development of early childhood. To ensure data validity, this research will employ source and method triangulation. Source triangulation will be achieved through data collection from various subjects (teachers, parents, and children), while method triangulation will be achieved by combining the results of interviews, observations, and documentary study. By adopting a qualitative approach and utilizing comprehensive methods, this research is expected to provide deep and valuable insights into the dynamics of the influence of self-efficacy on the use of digital reading platforms on the English language development of early childhood at TK ABA Umar bin Khattab, Central Lampung.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

# Self-Efficacy and Digital Reading Platforms

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to perform certain actions or achieve desired goals. This concept was first introduced by Albert Bandura, a social psychologist, who stated that self-efficacy is a crucial factor influencing one's behavior and performance. Self-efficacy encompasses two main dimensions:

- 1. Personal Self-Efficacy: This refers to an individual's belief in their own ability to perform specific tasks or achieve desired goals. For example, someone with high personal self-efficacy in mathematics would believe they can solve math problems effectively.
- 2. Situational Self-Efficacy: This relates to an individual's belief in their ability to handle specific situations or overcome particular challenges. For instance, an athlete with high situational self-efficacy might feel confident in facing pressure during a crucial match.

Self-efficacy is influenced by various factors, including past experiences, observations of others, social support, and responses from the surrounding environment. When someone feels high self-efficacy, they are more motivated to take on challenges, work hard, and persevere in the face of obstacles. Previous experiences play a significant role in shaping one's self-efficacy. Success in overcoming tasks or challenges in the past can boost an individual's confidence in facing similar situations in the future. Conversely, frequent failures can lower one's self-efficacy. Observing others can also affect self-efficacy. Seeing others succeed in tackling tasks or challenges can provide positive examples and enhance an individual's belief in their own abilities. Conversely, observing others fail may diminish self-efficacy. Social support from family, friends, or mentors can also influence self-efficacy. Receiving support and encouragement from close individuals can boost confidence and motivation to face challenges. Feedback from the surrounding environment also plays a role in shaping

self-efficacy. Positive feedback and praise for individual achievements can enhance self-efficacy. Conversely, excessive criticism or experiences of self-doubt from the surrounding environment can damage self-efficacy. When someone feels high self-efficacy, they are more motivated to take on challenges and work hard to achieve goals. Strong belief in one's abilities also makes individuals more resilient in facing obstacles or setbacks that may occur along the way. Therefore, paying attention to factors influencing self-efficacy is crucial in helping individuals develop motivation, perseverance, and the ability to overcome challenges in daily life.

The importance of self-efficacy lies in its impact on individual behavior, performance, and well-being. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be better able to overcome obstacles, perform better in tasks they face, and feel more empowered to manage stress and pressure. In the context of education, self-efficacy plays a crucial role. Children who believe in their ability to learn and succeed are more motivated to face academic challenges, try diverse learning strategies, and persevere in overcoming learning difficulties. Therefore, understanding and strengthening children's self-efficacy is an essential aspect of designing effective educational strategies.

Self-efficacy in young children refers to their belief in their ability to overcome certain tasks or challenges in daily life. Although young children are still in the developmental stage, they begin to form perceptions about themselves and their abilities to interact with the surrounding environment. In young children, self-efficacy develops through various experiences of exploring their surroundings, interacting with others, and trying new activities. Factors influencing the development of selfefficacy in young children include responses from adults (such as parents and teachers), social interaction with peers, and experiences of success or failure in tasks faced. The role of adults, especially parents and teachers, is crucial in shaping the selfefficacy of young children. Positive responses and encouragement from adults can help strengthen children's belief in their own abilities. Conversely, critical or unsupportive responses can hinder the development of children's self-efficacy. Social interaction with peers also plays a significant role in shaping the self-efficacy of young children. Collaboration with peers in play and learning activities helps children feel motivated and confident. Shared experiences with peers also provide opportunities for children to learn from others and develop important social skills. Success or failure experiences in tasks faced by children also affect their self-efficacy. Children who frequently experience success in their tasks tend to have higher self-efficacy, while those who often experience failure or difficulty may have lower self-efficacy. In the context of early childhood education, it is important for educators and parents to pay attention to the development of children's self-efficacy. Creating a supportive environment, providing opportunities to try new things, giving positive feedback, and providing support when children face difficulties can help strengthen the self-efficacy of young children. Thus, they will be more prepared to face learning challenges and growth in subsequent developmental stages.

The use of digital reading platforms in young children has significant relevance to their self-efficacy development. The concept of children's self-efficacy includes their belief in their ability to overcome certain tasks or challenges. In the context of using digital reading platforms, children's self-efficacy can be reflected in their belief in their ability to understand, absorb, and apply English reading materials accessed through these media. Through easier and diverse access to reading materials, children who feel confident in using these platforms may be more motivated to explore more texts and

improve their English language skills. Additionally, the use of digital reading platforms can also help strengthen children's self-efficacy through the positive feedback provided, the development of technology skills, and increasing independence in learning.

However, it is important to note that the importance of support and guidance from educators and parents is crucial to ensure that the use of digital reading platforms is tailored to the needs and interests of children, and provides a positive learning experience that strengthens their self-efficacy in facing learning challenges. This support may include selecting appropriate reading materials, providing constructive feedback, and guiding in the productive and safe use of technology. Additionally, the role of positive models can also influence children's self-efficacy in using digital reading platforms. When children see adults or peers with high self-efficacy in using these platforms, they are likely to feel more motivated and confident to follow their footsteps. Therefore, a supportive environment, both at home and at school, is crucial in shaping and strengthening children's self-efficacy in using digital reading platforms.

# Language Development in Children through Self-Efficacy in Reading on Digital Platforms

Language development in young children is a complex and crucial process in their growth stage. During this period, children experience significant progress in their ability to understand, use, and master language. One crucial aspect of language development in young children is phonological development. At this stage, children start to develop the ability to produce and understand language sounds. They learn to recognize and differentiate between language sounds, as well as learn correct pronunciation patterns. Additionally, young children also experience an increase in their vocabulary. They learn to recognize and actively use new words in their everyday communication. Furthermore, the development of grammar is also an important aspect of language development in young children. Children learn about basic rules in sentence formation, including the use of pronouns, verbs, and adjectives.

Moreover, the development of speaking and listening skills also becomes a significant focus in this stage. Children learn to express their thoughts and feelings verbally, as well as to understand messages conveyed by others. For children exposed to more than one language from an early age, they also experience development in speaking various languages. They learn to distinguish between different languages and develop the ability to communicate fluently in each language they master

Overall, language development in young children is a dynamic and multifaceted process that encompasses various aspects of linguistic competence. In the context of language development, self-efficacy plays a crucial role. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform certain tasks or achieve desired goals. In the context of language learning, self-efficacy influences children's motivation, perseverance, and confidence in mastering language skills. Children with high self-efficacy in language learning tend to be more motivated to engage in language activities, practice language skills, and persist in overcoming language challenges. On the other hand, children with low self-efficacy may feel discouraged, avoid language-related tasks, and struggle to make progress in language learning.

The use of digital reading platforms can significantly contribute to language development in young children by enhancing their self-efficacy in reading. Digital

reading platforms offer various benefits that can support language development, including access to a wide range of reading materials, interactive features, and multimedia resources. Through digital reading platforms, children can explore diverse texts, such as stories, articles, and informational texts, which can expand their vocabulary and knowledge of language structures. Interactive features, such as audio narration, animations, and interactive games, can also enhance children's engagement and comprehension of reading materials. Additionally, multimedia resources, such as videos and images, can provide visual support and context to aid children's understanding of the text.

Furthermore, the use of digital reading platforms can also help strengthen children's self-efficacy in reading. As children engage with reading materials on digital platforms, they have the opportunity to practice reading skills independently, at their own pace, and in a comfortable environment. Success experiences in reading, such as understanding the text, decoding words, and making connections between ideas, can boost children's confidence in their reading abilities. Moreover, digital reading platforms often provide feedback and rewards, such as badges or points, which can reinforce children's motivation and sense of accomplishment. Through repeated practice and positive reinforcement, children can develop a sense of efficacy in their reading abilities, leading to increased motivation and engagement in language learning.

However, it is essential to consider that the effectiveness of digital reading platforms in supporting language development depends on various factors, including the quality of reading materials, the design of interactive features, and the level of adult support and guidance. Educators and parents play a crucial role in facilitating children's use of digital reading platforms and ensuring that it aligns with their language learning goals and developmental needs. By providing appropriate support, scaffolding, and encouragement, educators and parents can help children build confidence, motivation, and competence in reading on digital platforms, thereby promoting their language development and overall academic success.

## Digital Reading Platforms and Socio-Emotional Development in Children

Socio-emotional development refers to the growth of social and emotional skills that enable individuals to understand and express their feelings, interact with others, and navigate social situations effectively. This aspect of development is crucial for children's overall well-being and success in various areas of life, including academic achievement, relationships, and mental health. Socio-emotional development encompasses various dimensions, including self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These skills develop gradually over time through interactions with others, experiences in different social contexts, and guidance from adults.

The use of digital reading platforms can contribute to socio-emotional development in children by providing opportunities for social interaction, emotional engagement, and perspective-taking. Although digital reading platforms are often perceived as individual activities, they can also support social interaction among children through features such as discussion forums, collaborative reading activities, and shared reading experiences. By engaging in collaborative reading activities, children can learn to communicate, collaborate, and exchange ideas with peers, thereby enhancing their social awareness and relationship skills. Furthermore, digital

reading platforms often feature stories and characters that evoke emotional responses in children, such as empathy, compassion, and moral reasoning. Through emotional engagement with reading materials, children can develop greater self-awareness, empathy, and understanding of others' perspectives.

Moreover, the use of digital reading platforms can also support children's self-regulation skills, such as attention control, impulse control, and emotional regulation. Digital reading platforms offer interactive features, such as multimedia resources, interactive games, and customizable settings, which can help children regulate their attention and engagement with reading materials. By allowing children to control their reading experience, digital platforms promote autonomy and self-directed learning, which are essential aspects of self-regulation. Additionally, digital reading platforms often provide feedback and rewards, such as progress tracking and virtual rewards, which can motivate children to set goals, monitor their progress, and regulate their behavior accordingly.

However, it is important to recognize that the impact of digital reading platforms on socio-emotional development depends on various factors, including the quality of reading materials, the design of interactive features, and the level of adult support and guidance. Educators and parents play a crucial role in facilitating children's use of digital reading platforms and ensuring that it promotes positive socio-emotional outcomes. By selecting high-quality reading materials, promoting collaborative reading experiences, and providing guidance on digital citizenship and online safety, educators and parents can help children develop social and emotional skills that are essential for their overall well-being and success in life.

Digital reading platforms offer significant potential to support children's development in various domains, including cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional development. By providing access to diverse reading materials, interactive features, and multimedia resources, digital reading platforms can engage children in meaningful learning experiences that promote their overall growth and academic success. Furthermore, digital reading platforms can enhance children's self-efficacy in reading, language learning, and technology use, thereby empowering them to become confident, motivated, and self-directed learners. However, it is essential to consider the quality of reading materials, the design of interactive features, and the level of adult support and guidance to ensure that digital reading platforms promote positive outcomes for children's development. Through collaborative efforts among educators, parents, and technology developers, digital reading platforms can serve as valuable tools for supporting children's holistic development and preparing them for success in the digital age.

# **CONCLUSION**

From the results of the conducted research, it can be concluded that children's self-efficacy in using digital reading platforms significantly influences their English language development at an early age. This finding highlights the importance of considering psychological factors in the context of educational technology, especially in early childhood education. The practical implications of this research are that educators and parents need to pay attention to and strengthen children's self-efficacy in using educational technology, while introducing them to digital reading platforms that are suitable for their age and developmental level. Furthermore, this research also emphasizes the importance of integrating digital technology wisely and effectively

into the educational curriculum to maximize the learning potential of young children. However, this research has limitations that need to be considered, such as a limited sample size and challenges in controlling external variables. Therefore, further research is expected to deepen understanding of the relationship between self-efficacy and the use of digital reading platforms, as well as explore their long-term implications for the language development of young children. Thus, the conclusions of this research provide a more comprehensive view of how to effectively utilize educational technology to support children's language development in the early stages of their lives.

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