

## Exploring Thai EFL Pre-service Teachers' Level of Self-Efficacy and Its Sources\*

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#### Abstract

This study aimed to 1) investigate the level of self-efficacy beliefs of Thai EFL pre-service teachers before they experienced teaching practice, in the area of Efficacy of Student Engagement (SE), Efficacy in Instruction Strategies (IS), and Efficacy in Classroom Management (CM); and 2) explore sources of self-efficacy beliefs which have the strongest influence to the level of self-efficacy beliefs of the Thai EFL pre-service teachers before having teaching practice. For data collection, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) was administered by 26 Thai EFL pre-service teachers and then an open – ended questionnaire was employed. The verbal responses from the participants were analysed based on Bandura's sources of self-efficacy. The findings indicated that the highest efficacy beliefs of the student teachers were Efficacy of SE and IS. On the other hand, their lowest sense of self-efficacy beliefs was Efficacy of CM. All of the three sub-factors were most strongly influenced by mastery experiences. The other two sources, verbal persuasion and physiological or emotional states, also affected the

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pre-service teachers' self- efficacy beliefs, but they were less influential than the mastery experiences. However, vicarious experience had not found in the results.

**Keywords:** Self-efficacy beliefs, sources of self-efficacy

### บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อ 1) ศึกษาระดับความเชื่อด้านความสามารถของตนเองของนักศึกษาฝึกสอนวิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษก่อนที่จะไปปฏิบัติการสอนจริง ภายใต้หัวข้อต่อไปนี้ ความสามารถในการสร้างความมุ่งมั่นให้กับผู้เรียน ความสามารถด้านการใช้กลยุทธ์การสอน และความสามารถในการจัดการชั้นเรียน 2) สำรวจถึงแหล่งที่มาที่มีอิทธิพลที่สุดในการเกิดความสามารถของตนเองของนักศึกษาฝึกสอนวิชาเอกภาษาอังกฤษก่อนที่จะออกไปปฏิบัติการฝึกสอนจริง สำหรับการเก็บข้อมูล ผู้วิจัยได้แจกแบบบันทึกความสามารถของตนเองสำหรับครูให้นักศึกษาฝึกสอนจำนวน 26 คน หลังจากได้ผลจากการวัดระดับความสามารถของตนเอง แล้ว ผู้วิจัยได้แจกแบบสอบถามแบบปลายเปิดซึ่งตัดแปลงมาจากผลของการตอบแบบสอบถามชุดแรกของนักศึกษา ผลจากการตอบคำถามปลายเปิดได้รับการวิเคราะห์โดยใช้หลักทฤษฎีที่มาของความสามารถของตนเองของแบบดูร่า (Bandura's sources of self-efficacy) ผลการวิจัยพบว่า นักศึกษาเชื่อว่าพวคเขามีความสามารถของตนเองในด้านการสร้างความมุ่งมั่นให้กับนักเรียนและความสามารถด้านการใช้กลยุทธ์การสอนมากที่สุด ขณะที่ความเชื่อว่าตนเองมีความสามารถในด้านควบคุมขั้นเรียนมีน้อยที่สุด แหล่งที่มาของการเกิดความสามารถของตนเองที่มากที่สุดของความเชื่อเหล่านี้เกิดจากประสบการณ์ตรงของนักศึกษา ส่วนแหล่งที่มาของลงมาอีกสองแหล่งคือการได้รับคำแนะนำจากผู้อื่น และการควบคุมสภาวะทางกายและทางอารมณ์ของตนเอง ส่วนแหล่งที่มาในการเกิดความเชื่อด้านความสามารถของตนเองที่ไม่พบในการศึกษาครั้งนี้คือ การรับรู้จากประสบการณ์ของผู้อื่น

**คำสำคัญ:** ความเชื่อด้านความสามารถของตนเอง, แหล่งที่มาของการเกิดความสามารถของตนเอง

### Introduction

Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs have also been one of the aspects in social cognitive theory. According to US Department of Education (2002), over the past 25 years, issues and studies involving teacher efficacy have become increasingly important. It is because teachers' self-efficacy beliefs have been associated with positive teaching behaviours and student outcomes such as motivation and achievement (Bandura, 1997). Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (2001) state the definition of teacher efficacy as "a teacher's judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcome of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (p. 783). Teacher efficacy is related to teachers' effectiveness and influences students' achievement, attitudes, and effective growth.

Normally, experienced teachers have strong teachers' self-efficacy, since they are provided with the source of information, as well as a great quantity of mastery experience to develop their teaching efficacy (Oh, 2011). On the contrary, from Chan's study (2008), it indicated that pre-service teachers generally do not have this source of information, until they have teaching practice in schools in which they have a chance to experience some sources of self-efficacy beliefs, namely emotional arousal, verbal persuasion and feedback from supervisors, mentor teachers and other peers. With the different amount of self-efficacy between experienced teachers and pre-service teachers, as well as different teaching experiences, it is interesting to discover whether pre-service teachers might have different levels of belief in teaching efficacy or not. In addition, most of the studies in this area just have been focused on in-serviced teachers. Little is known about the research on the area of pre-service teachers. Besides, the research concerning with pre-service teachers' sources of self-efficacy beliefs has not been widely conducted (Anderson & Betz, 2001; Poulou, 2007), comparing with the studies on the area of relationships among sources of self-efficacy. From the reasons above, the investigation of level of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy and the discovery of sources of self-efficacy beliefs are worth studying.

## Theoretical Background

### *Self-efficacy Theory*

The study is based on self-efficacy theory, developed by Bandura's social cognitive theory (1997), which educational and psychological researchers attribute the concept of teacher efficacy to this theory. Self-efficacy is defined as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce giving attainments" (Bandura, 1997: p. 3).

Self-efficacy, more simply, is an individual belief he or she can accomplish using his or her skills under certain circumstances (Synder & Lopez, 2007). The basic idea behind the Self-Efficacy is that performance and motivation are determined by how effective people believe they can be. Self-efficacy theory also maintains that people's efficacy beliefs play a crucial role in psychological adjustment, psychological problems, physical health, as well as professionally guided and self-guided behavioral change strategies. Persons with high self-efficacy intend to finish tasks and persist even if tasks are difficult whereas ones with low self-efficacy spend minimum effort on tasks and even easily give up (Bandura, cited in Redmond, 2010; Maddux, 2000).

Bandura (1997) suggests that an individual self-efficacy can be affected based on four sources of information : 1) mastery experience, 2) vicarious experiences, 3) verbal or social persuasion, and 4) physiological and/or emotional states. Firstly, *Mastery experience*. According to Bandura, performance outcomes or past experience are the most influential source of self-efficacy. Positive and negative experiences can influence the personal ability to perform a given task. If one has performed well at a previous task, he or she is more likely to be competent and perform well at the similar task (Bandura, 1977). However, if an individual experiences a failure, he or she will reduce his or her self-efficacy as well. Secondly, *Vicarious experiences*. Other people's performances can help individuals develop their self-efficacy. A person can watch other people's performance to compare with his or hers. If a person sees someone similar to them succeed, it can increase his or her self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). On the other hand, seeing failure from someone similar can also decrease self-efficacy. Next, *Verbal Persuasion*. Redmond (2010) states that self-efficacy is influenced by encouragement and discouragement resulting in an individual's performances and ability to perform. It comes from activities, such as talks, professional development workshop, and feedback about achievement. These have positive influences on the learners. However, the negative verbal persuasion can lead to lower self-efficacy and chance of success. Although verbal persuasion is regarded as the weaker source of efficacy than performance outcomes, it is widely used because of its simplicity and ready availability (Redmond, 2010). Lastly, *Physiological or Emotional states*. When people perceive the emotional arousal, it can influence their belief of efficacy (Bandura, 1977). It has an impact on how people interpret their physical and emotional reactions. For example, sweaty palms and a racing heart are often interpreted by individuals as signs of a lack of confidence or a poor performance. It is important to note that if people feel comfortable with the given task, they will be capable to do it with a higher belief of self-efficacy. Negative thought or fears about individuals' ability to task can lower their self-efficacy.

According to Britner and Pajares' studies, they indicated that individuals use combination of these sources in their self-efficacy judgments. The effect of each source depends on the domain and cognitive processing strategies of individual (Britner & Pajares, 2006). In the majority of the studies, individuals' efficacy is most strongly influenced by mastery experiences or performance outcomes (Bandura, 1977). Nevertheless, there are contradictory results the strength of other sources of self-efficacy. For example, some research found that vicarious experience had the most influence on self-efficacy (Hampton,

1998; Klassen, 2004), other revealed no influence (Anderson & Betz, 2001; Lopez & Lent, 1992). In terms of social persuasion and emotional states, there have been inconsistent findings (Hampton, 1998; Klassen, 2004; Anderson & Betz, 2001; Lopez & Lent, 1992).

#### *The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)*

In this study, besides the theory of self-efficacy mentioned above, the content of teacher self-efficacy as a teacher's belief is also importantly conceptualized. The whole content used to measure the teacher self-efficacy beliefs basically is originated from Tschanen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy's (2001) the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES). Bandura (1997) agrees that teacher efficacy as a teacher's belief should be measured in order to capture and represent individual teaching capabilities. Hence, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) developed by Tschanen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (2001) has been internationally utilized as content of self-efficacy belief to measure teacher efficacy that aligns with Bandura's (1997) theory (Fives & Buehl, 2010; Klassen et al., 2011).

Teaching is considered as a complex activity and a representation of teacher efficacy construction. Therefore, a measure of teacher efficacy is an essential part to indicate the successful teaching (Duffin, French & Patrick, 2012). As a result, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) is employed to measured people's evaluations of their likely success in teaching. More particularly, teacher efficacy which measured by the TSES long (24-item) and short (12-item) forms has constantly been presented three sub-factors in an area of teaching: Efficacy in Student Engagement (SE), Efficacy in Instruction Strategies (IS), and Efficacy in Classroom Management (CM) (Tschanen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Moreover, the TSES is becoming the predominant measure of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy (Capa Aydin & Woolfolk Hoy, 2005; Fives & Buehl, 2010; Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008; Martinez, 2003; Poulou, 2007). Tschanen-Moran & Hoy (2001) indicate that the intention in creating the instrument, the TSES, is to generally measure teacher efficacy using the total score of all scale items and subscale scores to indicate level of efficacy for engaging learners, providing effective instructional strategies, and managing the classroom.

It can be informed that measuring and examining pre-service self-efficacy beliefs during teacher preparation is important for pre-service teachers themselves and the quality of teacher education programs. It is because teacher efficacy beliefs are changeable early in learning (Bandura, 1977, 1997). Additionally, once they are established, are rather resistant to change (Pajares, 1996). Furthermore, examining pre-service teacher efficacy beliefs will allow teacher education programs to act upon the findings and create learning opportunities for pre-

service teachers in terms of building knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy beliefs to become successful practitioners upon program achievement (Duffin, French & Patrick, 2012).

### Research questions

1. What will be the level of self-efficacy of Thai EFL pre-service teachers before they will have teaching practice?
2. Which sources of self-efficacy beliefs have the strongest influence to the level of self-efficacy belief of the Thai EFL pre-service teachers before having teaching practice?

### Research objectives

This study aimed to

1. investigate the level of self-efficacy beliefs of Thai EFL pre-service teachers before they experienced teaching practice; and
2. explore sources of self-efficacy beliefs which have the strongest influence to the level of self-efficacy beliefs of the Thai EFL pre-service teachers before having teaching practice.

### Research design

The research design employed in the study is mixed-methods research, consisting of quantitative and qualitative data. The participants were asked to complete two sets of questionnaire. Quantitative data were collected in form of survey. The first set of questionnaire contained information regarding of their level of self-efficacy belief in teaching before they have teaching practice. Qualitative data were collected in form of written answers from the open-ended questions from the second set of questionnaire, concerning the sources of self-efficacy. The data were collected from the fourth year students, majoring in English, at the Faculty of Education of a university in the central part of Thailand. They are all preparing to be English pre-service teachers in secondary schools in Nakhon Pathom province in academic year 2016.

### Research Method

#### *The participants*

The participants of the study are 26 Thai fourth year students, 6 male and 20 female students. They are all undergraduate students, majoring in English of the Faculty of Education, at Silpakorn University. They are about to finish studying course work for the curriculum of the faculty and are preparing to have teaching practice in secondary schools around Nakhon

Pathom. They all have English background from their primary and second education. Furthermore, during their first three years of their study, they have been studying and practicing English language skills with foreign instructors. Consequently, they are assumed to have intermediate English language skills. They also have several presentations relating to teaching and learning in English. Besides some of them have experience in foreign countries. Thus they should have some knowledge of teaching and learning activities. They are all purposive sample of study since all of them are selected to get involved in this study and to be source of collected data. Even though they have no teaching experience in a real EFL classroom, they received some experience of classroom observation and micro teaching from attending the general teaching methodology courses. Moreover, some of them had part-time jobs as English tutors in several tutorial schools.

### ***Instruments***

#### ***The questionnaire for levels of pre-service teachers' belief of self-efficacy***

The objective of this set of questionnaire was to investigate the level of self-efficacy beliefs of the pre-service teachers before they have teaching practice. The questionnaire is a useful instrument for collecting survey information, being administrated without the presence of the researcher, and often reasonably straight forward to analyse (Wilson & Mc Lean, 1994). The data was gathered in form of numeral information. The questionnaire consists of two parts: (1) general information of the participants; (2) Pre-service teachers' belief of self-efficacy scale. This part of the questionnaire was adapted from Teacher Sense of Self Efficacy Scale (TSES) which was developed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001). The TSES part of the questionnaire was considered in three sub-factors which totally consisted of 24 five-point Likert scale, from 1= nothing to 5= A great deal. The three sub-factors were: 'Efficacy in Student Engagement'(SE); 'Efficacy in Instruction Strategies'(IS); and 'Efficacy in Classroom Management'(CM); 8 items contained in each sub-factor.

#### ***The questionnaire for discovering source of self of efficacy of Thai EFL pre-service teachers before having teaching***

The second set of questionnaire was consisted of 9 open-ended questions. The questions were developed based on the three sub-factors. Since the researcher needs to know and get the in-depth information from the participants, open-ended questions allow the respondents can contribute more individual points of view and more detail information (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). The first three items (Nos. 1-3) were originated from the sub-factor, 'Efficacy in Student Engagement' (SE). The second three items (Nos. 4-6) were from 'Efficacy in Instruction Strategies' (IS). The last three items of this questionnaire (Nos. 7-9) were

from ‘Efficacy in Classroom Management’ (CM). The first and the second sets of questions (Nos.1-6) were based on the three highest mean scores of the first and the second sub-factors from the first set of questionnaire. However, the last three items of questions (Nos. 7-9) were based on the three lowest mean scores of the last sub-factor from the first set of questionnaire. This set of questionnaire was used to explore the sources of teacher’s self-efficacy. The data was collected in verbal form to get the in-depth information of the participants.

#### *Data collection procedure*

The first set of questionnaire was distributed to the participants in the classroom after finishing the course called “Teaching English Listening and Speaking” at the end of the second semester. The fourth year students were informed of the instruction and the purpose of the questionnaire. The researcher translated and gave explanation for those who did not understand some questions in the questionnaire. Two weeks later, after the data from the first questionnaire were collected and analysed, the second set of questionnaire was sent to all participants through an individual e-mail. As soon as the student teachers answered all questions on the questionnaire, they sent their answers back through the researcher’s e-mail address. The participants completed all of the questionnaires before they are sent to several secondary schools for teaching practice in mid of May 2016. The participants’ names were anonymous and confidentially kept by the researcher.

#### *Data analysis*

This study employs one research instrument which consisted of four types of questionnaire; factual questions multiple -choice, scaled questions, and close-ended questions. In order to analyse and interpret data, two main analysis approaches were used.

##### *Quantitative data analysis*

###### *The questionnaire for levels of pre-service teachers’ belief of self-efficacy*

For quantitative data from the first set of questionnaire, the researcher employed frequency, means, standard deviation, and percentage in quantitative data analysis.

##### *Part 1: General information of the participants*

Part 1 of the questionnaire aimed to find out the personal information of the each participant, including age, gender, English background knowledge, experiences in English tutoring and using English in other countries. It included 6 items. The respondents chose only one choice from each item or wrote down information of their own. The data collected from this type of questionnaire was analyzed by using frequency. By using frequency and

percentage, the data revealed factual information of participants and their English background knowledge, experiences in tutoring English and using English in foreign countries.

#### **Part 2: Pre-service teachers' belief of self-efficacy**

The objective of Part 2 of the questionnaire was to explore the highest sense of pre-service teachers' belief of self-efficacy before they have teaching practice. It consisted of 24 items on five points Likert scale. To analyse the collected data, means, standard deviation, and percentage were utilized to label the most belief of self-efficacy of the participants before they have teaching practice in the real EFL classroom.

#### *Qualitative data analysis*

*The questionnaire for discovering source of self of efficacy of Thai EFL pre-service teachers before having teaching*

The data from the second set the questionnaire were qualitative data, the researcher employed general content analysis to analyse the collected data.

This set of the questionnaire had a purpose to discover the sources of the self-efficacy of the pre-service teachers before they have teaching practice. The data were written as the answers of nine questions. The analysis of the open-ended questions was basic qualitative analysis method, employed to group the answers depending on the four sources of self-efficacy: 1) mastery experience; 2) vicarious experiences; 3) verbal or social persuasion; and 4) physiological or/ and emotional states.

### **Results**

According to the 26 respondents of the first set of questionnaires, the 6 items of the first part of the questionnaire were completed. The participants chose only one choice from each item or wrote down information of their own. The participants were 6 males (23.07%), and 20 females (79.62%). Based on their age, 25 were between 21-24 years old (96.15%) while only one was over 24 years old (3.84%). In relation to their number of years of learning English, 5 of them (19.23%) had between 6 to 10 years, 9 participants (34.61%) had between 10 to 15 years, and 46.15% of the participants (12) had more than 15 years. Regarding having experience in using English in foreign countries, 17 (65.38%) had less than one week, 5 (15.38%) had experience between 1 to 3 weeks and between 2 to 4 months, and only one (3.84%) had between 4 to 6 months. With reference to their experience in tutoring English, three choices, 1 to 3 weeks experience, 4 weeks experience and 10 to 12 months experience, had the same number of the participants which was 2 participants or 7.69%. Two choices, 2 to 4 months experience and 6 to 8 months experience, had the same number of the participants which was

3 participants or 11.53%. 4 participants (15.38%) experienced between 4 to 6 months while 9 participants (34.61%) had 2-4 years of English tutoring experience. Only one (3.84%) experienced in tutoring English for 4 to 6 years.

The second part of the first questionnaire was The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) with 24 items. Each of sub-factor consisted 8 items. The reliability for the 24 item scales was 0.94. Twenty-six pre-service teachers completed the survey questionnaire. Mean scores of three sub-factors are indicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Means scores of Three sub-factors of The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale

In response to Table 1, it reveals that the highest sense of self-efficacy of Thai EFL pre-service teachers before they will have teaching practice were the Efficacy in student engagement and the efficacy in instruction strategies. On a 5-point scale, the total mean scores of the two sub-factors were 3.65. The lowest one was the Efficacy in Classroom management with the mean score of 3.61.

The three highest mean scores of the items in each sub-factor were presented as well. For the first sub-factor, Efficacy in Student Engagement (SE), the three highest were 4.04, 3.92, and 3.85 on a 5-point scale. The first three highest mean scores fell onto the following three items; “How much will you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?”, “How much will you do to help your students’ value learning?”, and “How much will you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?” respectively.

For the second sub-factor, Efficacy in Instruction Strategies (IS), the item with the highest mean score was “Two what extent will you provide an alternative explanation or examples when students are confused?” (Mean=3.92). The two items with the second highest

| No. | Sub-factors                             | Means (5.00) |
|-----|---|--------------|
| 1.  | Efficacy in Student Engagement (SE)     | 3.65         |
| 1.  | Efficacy in Instruction Strategies (IS) | 3.65         |
| 3.  | Efficacy in Classroom Management (CM)   | 3.61         |

mean scores were “How much will you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for your individual students?” and “How much will you use a variety of assignment strategies?” (Mean=3.73). The item with the third highest mean score was “How well will you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?” (Mean=3.69).

Regarding the third sub-factor, Efficacy in Classroom Management (CM), the highest mean scores of the three items were identified as well. The item with the highest mean score was “To what extent will you make your expectations clear about student behaviour?” (Mean=3.88). The second highest mean score was 3.73. It fell onto “How much will you do to

control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?" The two items with third highest mean scores were "How well will you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?" and "How much will you do to get children to follow classroom rules?" (Mean=3.69).

Concerning the qualitative data from the second set of questionnaire, nine open-ended questions were answered by the 26 participants. The nine items of questions were categorized into three sub-factors. The answers from the participants were classified according to four sources of self-efficacy; 1) mastery experience, 2) vicarious experiences, 3) verbal or social persuasion, and 4) physiological or/ and emotional states. The questions 1 to 6 aimed to discover the sources that increase the participants' self-efficacy beliefs whereas as questions 7 to 9 explored the sources that decreased the participants' self-efficacy beliefs.

The answers of the nine questions from the participants under the three sub-factors, based on the sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1986, 1997) are presented.

#### A. Efficacy in Student Engagement (SE)

Q1: You believe that you can get students to believe they can do well in school work because \_\_\_\_\_.

Q2: You believe that you can help your students' value learning because \_\_\_\_\_.

Q3: You believe that you can improve the understanding of a student who is failing because \_\_\_\_\_.

The answers from most participants revealed that their source of self-efficacy of Efficacy in Student Engagement before they have teaching practice was **mastery experiences**:

*"I believe in my ability which is from studying hard for 4 years."*

*"I have studied about methods of teaching and many strategies that could support students to do well. Moreover, I had some experiences that I practiced in Satit School."*

*"I can use my experience to solve or help them to learn."*

*"I have taught a student with autism and failing students for years. I learned a lot of teaching strategies which I can adapt to my students."*

*"I used to work at a tutorial school; there were many poor students who hated English. I walked around and I explained to them over and over."*

*"I used to be like them (failing students), so I think I understand what they cannot understand."*

Furthermore, some respondents presented that **verbal or social persuasion** as a source of self-efficacy belief:

*“I have ever spoken and talked with many people from many fields. I got ideas and good thoughts from them.”*

*“I got some suggestions from experienced pre-service teachers, such as my seniors”.*

According to the answers above, the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy before having teaching practicum were increased and indicated in the high level because of the two mean sources of self-efficacy beliefs; mastery experiences and verbal or social persuasion.

The next three answers of three questions responded by the participants, concerning the sub-factor of Efficacy in Instruction Strategies, were revealed below:

#### B. Efficacy in Instruction Strategies (IS)

Q4: You believe that you can provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused because \_\_\_\_\_.

Q5: You believe that you can adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students because \_\_\_\_\_.

Q6: You believe that you can use a variety of assessment strategies because \_\_\_\_.

The answers from some participants reflected that **mastery experiences** became their self-efficacy belief of Efficacy in Instruction Strategies:

*“I have learned many techniques from 4 years of studying at the university.”*

*“I had learned about educational psychology that I learned how to manage activities for students at each age and what they can do in their ages regarding to their abilities”.*

*“I had learned at the university on how to assess students' achievement in various kinds of assessment methods”.*

*“I have experience (in tutoring English) which can help me to solve the problem”.*

*“I have learned a lot of theories and ideas which talking about problem so I can use those knowledge to deal with the problems”.*

*“I have learned about advanced English for many years so it is easy to choose and create the proper contents for students”.*

*“I've studied about the way to evaluate students and teaching methods from my faculty, so it's not difficult to adapt for my lesson”.*

*“I have done micro teaching with different levels of students, so I can provide some techniques in each lesson that suit students' learning styles”.*

Besides, some participants mentioned that **verbal or social persuasion** was their source of their self-efficacy;

*“I passed a staff training course that trained me to speak clearly, I am pretty sure that I can give students an example which makes them understand when they get confused”.*

*“I have my supervisor and school teacher to help or suggest me about this (students’ learning assessment)”.*

From all of the answers above, the participants indicated their self-efficacy beliefs were increased at the high level. Moreover, they believed they could provide the appropriate lessons and learning assessment for their students. Once again, mastery experiences and verbal or social persuasion were their sources of self-efficacy beliefs.

The last three questions that covered the Efficacy in Classroom Management were replied by the participants. Some of their answers were presented below:

### C. Efficacy in Classroom Management (CM)

Q7: You believe that you cannot respond to defiant students because \_\_\_\_\_.

Q8: You don’t believe that you can keep a few problem students from ruining a lesson because \_\_\_\_\_.

Q9: You don’t believe that you can calm a student who is disruptive and noisy because \_\_\_\_\_.

The most influential source that decreased most of the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs was **mastery experiences** as shown from the answers below:

*“It’s about experience in real classroom. The more experience we have, the more effectiveness we receive”.*

*“I have a lot of knowledge but a few field experiences”.*

*“I want more experiences from teaching practicum to improve my confidence”.*

*“May be I have less experience for this situation”.*

*“I have no experiences about students who are ruining a lesson before so it may be difficult to control them at first”.*

*“Maybe I fear to face unfamiliar situations and I have less experience in teaching”.*

In addition to this, **physiological or emotional states** were also a strong influential source for decreasing pre-service teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs:

*“I, sometimes, am an impatient girl, so I pretty scared if students make problems. I don’t know how to deal with it in the right way.”*

*“Maybe, my voice is too soft, so students may not obey me”.*

*“I am panic and I have never seen that problem. I may not have any plan to deal with it.”*

*“I get angry easily and I might not control my emotion”.*

*“I feel nervous when I first see new students”.*

Regarding the answers mentioned above, the participants indicated the efficacy in classroom management was reduced because of mastery experiences and physiological or emotional states as sources of self-efficacy.

## Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the highest and lowest sense of self-efficacy of Thai EFL pre-service teachers before they will have teaching practice, and to explore sources of self-efficacy beliefs which have the strongest influence to the level of self-efficacy beliefs of the Thai EFL pre-service teachers before having teaching practice. The 26 participants were asked to complete two sets of questionnaires; the first one was a survey questionnaire with multiple choices questions and 24 –item the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scales with 5-point Likert scale, the second one was a questionnaire with 9 open-ended questions. Findings revealed that the highest senses of self-efficacy of Thai EFL pre-service teachers were the sense of Efficacy in Student Engagement and Efficacy in Instruction Strategies. Their lowest sense of self-efficacy was the sense of Efficacy in Classroom Management. Based on the highest and lowest senses of self-efficacy beliefs, the sources of self-efficacy beliefs were explored. The results stated that mastery experiences were the most influential sources of all sub-factors. The other two sources, verbal or social persuasion and physiological or emotional states were also effective, but less than the mastery experiences. On the other hand, the vicarious experiences were not found in the findings.

Most of the participants identified that they had the highest senses of Efficacy in Student Engagement and Efficacy in Instruction Strategies before they have teaching practice because of mastery experiences. As shown in the results of the second questionnaire, most of the participants indicated that they believed they could engage their students and could provide the appropriate instruction strategies because they worked as English tutors and had micro teaching during the teacher education course. Relating to the result from Part 1 of the first set of questionnaire, it presented most of the respondents had the experience in tutoring English for 2-4 years. Also, the pre-service teachers in the study emphasized the courses they had learned at the university. Particularly, those courses were essential in terms of enhancing increasing their self-efficacy beliefs before they have teaching practicum. For example, they studied various kinds of learning assessment, and a lot of teaching techniques during the courses at the university. They believed that they could have good teaching performance

because they had been studying theories and practices of teaching for many years. The findings in the study related to Bandura's theory, which states that previous experiences are the most influential source of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

In addition, this study showed that the second source of self-efficacy of the first two sub-factors, after the mastery experiences, was verbal or social persuasion. Pre-service teachers developed their self-efficacy by receiving some advice and suggestions from the experienced or professional teachers and instructors. Although this source of self-efficacy does not make the strongest influence on efficacy belief, it can result in a great impact to individual self-efficacy belief when it is coupled with mastery and vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1997).

Regarding the third sub-factor of sense of self-efficacy beliefs, mastery experiences could lower the Efficacy in Classroom Management. Having not enough teaching experience made the participants less efficient pre-service teachers. They were afraid of facing unfamiliar situations and unexpected problems which could happen in the classroom. It is related to the study of Lent et al. (1991) which stated that participants will have sufficient abilities to solve problems through their personal experiences and performance over past years. The second source of self-efficacy that decreased the pre-service teachers' efficacy in classroom management was physiological or emotional states. According to the findings from the participants, besides mastery experiences, their own physiological or emotional states, such as soft voice, nervousness, anger, and impatience, can lower their self-efficacy in managing classroom. Therefore, as Bandura (1986) stated that individuals' physiological arousal affected their performances. In fact, Bandura claimed that people who perceived their arousal because of their own personal failures tended to have lower self-efficacy beliefs than those who viewed their arousal as common mistakes (Bandura, 1986).

Moreover, the findings from the study indirectly indicated that the increase of the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs would have a good effect to their teaching performance. They mentioned that the more experience they have, the more effectiveness they will receive. That means when they believe that they have enough experience, they can have a good teaching performance. As in Pintrich & De Groot's study (1990), it concluded that self-efficacy beliefs enhanced one's performance. Likely, pre-service teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs, in terms of the quality of their teaching, can affect their classroom students' high learning performance. It is worth examining ways to increase pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1986) stated that self-efficacy beliefs develop early in learning. Therefore, teacher education is important in forming pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Moreover, teacher self-efficacy is a critical factor in improving teacher education and

promoting Education reform, in terms of generating positive students and teacher behaviours (Oh, 2011).

However, from the studies of Vancouver, Thompson, Tischner, and Putka, (2000), they reported that when people had a high level of self-efficacy, it did not mean that they had high level of performance. In fact, it could lead to a low level of performance. Similarly, Stone (1994) also found that people with high self-efficacy were over confident in their abilities and that these individuals also had less motivation and contributed less to reaching their goals.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, the findings of the study revealed the highest and lowest senses of self-efficacy beliefs of Thai EFL pre-service teachers before they have teaching practicum in secondary schools, as well as the sources of their self-efficacy, based on Bandura's theory. Self-efficacy beliefs of the pre-service teachers in this study were at the highest level on the Efficacy in Student Engagement (SE) and Efficacy in Instruction Strategies (IS). The sources of the two self-efficacy beliefs of SE and IS were mostly influenced from mastery experiences. Mastery experiences played the most important role to enhance the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs before having teaching practice. After mastery experiences, verbal persuasion was another source that increased the student teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Once they took the teacher education program, they experienced a variety of learning opportunities (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). Hence, they believed that they could have a good teaching performance. Concerning the lowest sense of self-efficacy belief, it was Efficacy in Classroom Management (CM). The strongest source that decreased the self-efficacy of CM was mastery experiences. The answers from the participants indicated that they had no sufficient experiences in teaching in the real classrooms. Therefore, it made them less self-efficient in teaching. It can be said that mastery experiences have the most influence in developing teacher efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997). The second source that minimized the pre-service teachers was physiological or emotional states. Physical and mental conditions of the participants were considered to be the obstacles in shaping their self-efficacy.

For further study, the level of Pre-Teachers' Self-efficacy Beliefs after a semester of teaching practicum should be investigated. Attention should be paid to the highest mean score of the sub-factors of the TSES; whether there are any differences between before and after the teaching practice or not. In addition to this, the sources of the self-efficacy after the pre-service teachers experience teaching practice should be explored as well in order to see

that if the teaching experience have a strong influence to their teaching performance or not. From exploring the sources of self-efficacy, the further study might reveal the other sub-sources of self-efficacy beliefs. More or less, what we will get from the further study could affect the pre-service teachers' self-efficacy.

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