

Low Self-Confidence and its effects on Oral Presentation Performance Among EFL Students at the Faculty of Education, Yefren

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انخفاض الثقة بالنفس وآثاره على أداء العرض الشفوي بين طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية

كلغة أجنبية في كلية التربية، يفرن

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المخلص :

هدفت هذه الدراسة الى بحث اثر الثقة بالنفس في تحسين أداء العروض الشفوية لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية بكلية التربية في يفرن. شملت عينة الدراسة 32 طالباً، سعت الدراسة الى تحديد التحديات التي قد يواجهها الطلاب أثناء عروضهم الشفوية، والكشف عن التقنيات الفعالة التي يمكنهم استخدامها لتحسين أدائهم. اعتمدت الدراسة منهجاً وصفيّاً كمياً باستخدام استبيان. أظهرت النتائج الدور المهم للثقة بالنفس لدى الطلاب في تنظيم افكارهم، والتفاعل مع الجمهور، وتحسين أدائهم العام. كما كشفت أن العديد من الطلاب يواجهون عقبات تمنعهم من بلوغ كامل امكانياتهم في هذا المجال. ومع ذلك، فإن الطلاب الذين يدمجون استراتيجيات فعالة جديدة في عروضهم يتمتعون بثقة أكبر. في ضوء نجاح هذه الدراسة، ينبغي على المؤسسات التعليمية الليبية تركيز جهودها على دعم الطلاب والمجتمع من خلال توفير برامج تدريبية منظمة وموارد تكنولوجية كافية لتطوير أداء الطلاب في العروض الشفوية.

Abstract

The present research was conducted to investigate the effect of self-confidence on improving oral presentation performance among English

foreign language students at the College of Education in Yefren. The sample included 32 students. This research aimed to identify the challenges which students may face during oral presentations and reveal the effective techniques they have to use in order to improve their oral performance.

The study adopted a descriptive-quantitative approach using a questionnaire. The results demonstrated the important role of self-confidence for students in organizing ideas, interacting with an audience, and improving their overall performance. It also revealed that many students face obstacles prevent them from reaching full potential in this area. However, those who incorporate new effective strategies in to their presentations are mor confident. In the light of success of this study, Libyan educational organizations should concentrate efforts to support students and community in providing structured training programs and adequate technological resources in order to develop student's presentation performance.

Keywords: oral presentation, self-confidence, EFL learners, effective strategies.

Introduction:

English language is the most important language in modern societies, as a foreign language in many countries. The spoken language is considered vital in the area of teaching language for many years. Brown and Yule (1983) mentioned that the oral language as a subject for teaching had its own importance and history. Students who learn English as a foreign language aim to enhance their speaking ability in order to succeed in communicating with language accurately, fluently as well as effectively. In this following study, the researcher observed the importance of self-confidence as a psychological factor which might affect students' speaking performance while learning a foreign language.

Oral presentation is among the most important skills that plays a vital role in student's academic and professional journeys. It is not only away of presenting information, but also an effective tool that develops critical thinking, builds the ability to persuade, and even enhances communication skills. In an ever-evolving educational environment, students' understanding of scientific material depends on their ability to master this

skill, organize and convey their ideas clearly and effectively to an audience. However, many challenges prevent students from achieving their full potential in this area. These challenges are often linked to several factors and the most significant of which is a lack of self-confidence. The absence of confidence negatively affects the students' academic achievement in oral presentation, even after years of learning. As Norman and Hyland (2003) stated, confidence is a factor of learning that may affect students participation and oral presentations. Those who have self confidence are able to work hard, set goals for themselves to achieve their outcomes without worrying.

Although student's motivation has been shown to be enhanced by self - confidence, students with low self-confidence often face challenges in presenting. Rubio (2007) noted that low self-confidence causes several psychological barriers, such as insecurity, fear, social isolation and anxiety. These barriers may affect oral performance, negatively. Based on the researcher's observation, most students in the English Department at the Faculty of Education in Yefren struggle with poor oral presentation skills. This highlights the importance of conducting research on the low self-confidence impact on oral presentation performance .

Identifying the challenges encountered by English language students at the faculty of Education in Yefren during oral presentation requires investigating the relationship between self—confidence and presentation performance. The findings are expected to explore the reasons behind these challenges and to propose effective strategies to help students manage anxiety and improve confidence.

The present study is of great importance in the academic field, as it focuses on improving speaking skills for high school students and employs a descriptive-quantitative methodology using a questionnaire and a qualitative method using published materials such as scientific journals and online research articles to identify patterns between confidence and presentation effectiveness, offering practical recommendations for teaching and learning.

Literature review

Oral presentation in educational and professional contexts

Oral presentations are common and effective form of communication that individuals use to convey information and ideas to the audience. Biggs & , 1987 as cite Telfer d in Nunan & Lamb, 2001, P. 132 described an oral presentation as a form of "high structure tasks", emphasizing its organized nature within academic contexts. Yet, this structure is not fixed. Rather, the structure of presentations may change depending on lower and higher levels of reciprocity, planned and unplanned delivery, and aided and unaided performance (Cook,2000). Presentation's style may also change according to whether the speaker is using a formal style or an informal style. While a formal style relies on scripting, an informal style indicates minimal preparation (Ellis,1990).

Teaching oral presentations, therefore, is more than just knowing words and grammar. Gesture, posture, visual support, and eye contact are all important in the teaching method to shape how meaning is conveyed and received. In teaching oral presentations, teachers show students how to use and present new language so that students can actually use it not only in schools, but also in the real world with real people. (Burns, et al., 1996).

In an English class, students should follow various presentation skills, such as filling pause with words, asking for clarification, and maintaining the conversation even when interrupted by an audience. Strong and successful presentations require clarity, confidence, and fluency and they are highly evaluated in both educational and professional settings. However, whether presentations are formal or informal they are often linked to several factors affecting them and preventing the students from reaching their full potential in this area. Minghe & Yuan (2013) classified two related affective factors: relational factors, which consider the interaction with others, and individual factors, which refer to the learners themselves. The learners' factors include self-confidence, motivation, and anxiety. Among all of these, self-confidence is the most influential factor in the progress of one's oral performance.

Self-confidence is the most essential factor that determines learners' willingness to participate in oral activities in language classrooms (Yashima, et al.,2004). In other words, we can say that where there is self-confidence, there will be good communication. On the other hand, lack of

self- confidence is thought to be the most dangerous barrier for effective communication. In line with the two previous researches, Brown (2000) asserted that self-confidence is one of the most influential variables which affects learning

Self-confidence: concept and definition

Self-confidence is an essential psychological factor in language learning, especially in the context of oral performance among students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It is a term used to describe an individual perceived ability to achieve a certain level of performance. Higgins, 1996, p. 1073 defined self-confidence as an individual's overall evaluation of their own competence and their belief of their ability to succeed. Kakepoto (2012:71) stated that: "Confidence is an essential aspect of any good presentation. It provides impetus to speakers to communicate his or her ideas effectively". So, learners who show their confidence in the class or among group of people, have the chance to attract their attention because confidence makes them more successful and creative while producing the language.

With self-confidence, students can perform presentations fluently without fear of mistakes. This is supported by Al-Hebaish (2012), a learners' willingness to practice their speaking performances in class is dependent on their level of self-confidence. In other words, learners need not only to be able to communicate but also be willing to communicate. It can be said that students' excellent speaking performances are a result of their level of confidence. Thus, we can also say that where there is self- confidence, there will be good communication.

Lack of self-confidence, on the other hand, is considered to be a dangerous barrier for effective communication because it can lead to reluctance, anxiety, and overall poorer performance and thus affecting students language learning progress (Brown, 2007).Overall, in the point of view of the researcher, this aspect of confidence becomes an essential area of study in order to understand its effect on the oral performance and to recognize the suitable way to enhance it within the EFL context.

Factors influencing self-confidence

Scholars examining the origins of self-confidence agree on the view that it develops through several factors together rather than from only one source. The most important factors are as follows:

1. Personal experiences: successful experiences tend to strengthen high self-confidence, while experiences of failure or destructive beliefs can steadily weaken it.
2. Social messages received from the surrounding environment including community, school, home and peers are important for the development of confidence. Positive messages encourage learning and enhance confidence, whereas negative messages can decrease the level of confidence (Glend& Anstey, 1990).
3. Worrying and fear of future failure generate uncertainty and reduces motivation and confidence (Rubio,2007).
4. Facing difficulties in communication such as hesitating, stuttering, making slips of the tongue or losing words prevent students from communicating or performing orally and thus leading to low- self confidence (Wright, 2008).

Techniques for enhancing confidence during the presentation

The majority of EFL learners are struggling to improve and develop their speaking performance. However, oral presentation techniques are very important and helpful for EFL students to overcome their obstacles, attract their audience and build up their self-confidence

1. preparation

Students should prepare in advance what they will talk about in order to have an idea about the topic. Chen (2009) noted that lack of preparation was one of the major sources of increasing anxiety. Similarly, Whai and Mei (2016) discovered that the main cause of challenges students face during oral presentations was lack of practice and preparation.

2. Using Visual Aids

Using the visual aids organizes students' presentations and enhances their performance as well as, gives extra information and facilitates the understanding. Effective use of images, charts and videos can make more engaging and dynamic presentations. According to Tanveer (2007), positive audience engagement through visual aids helps reduce speakers' anxiety.

3. Using Relaxation Techniques

When there is a good and relaxed atmosphere, students will feel free to express their ideas clearly without hesitation. Taking breath is also a very relaxed technique that students should use after speaking; it helps them to deliver a better presentation. Griffin (2009: 4) claimed that: “Take some calming breaths in your seat before you get up to speak”.

Previous studies

A number of studies have been carried out on the influence of self-confidence on learners readiness to participate in classroom communicative activities.

For instance, Fitrah et al. (2024) aimed to find out the levels of self-confidence among EFL students regarding their oral performance. This study used a quantitative descriptive method. Based on another research study conducted by Salim(2015), a positive correlation exists between oral performance of the students and their self-confidence as both variables affect each other. This study used a questionnaire and documentation technique which revealed that students with high self-confidence are able to communicate well and to control anxiety and negativity where as low self-confident students appear to have challenges in presenting in front of the class. Azizah’s study (2024) inquired into the significant correlation between students’ self-confidence and speaking ability. This study used a speaking test and a questionnaire technique for collecting data. By the same token, Al-Hebaish (2012) sought to investigate the relative effects of self-confidence on the quality of oral performance of a students’ academic achievement. Also, Novia et al. (2023) discussed the same thing. In their study, questionnaire and speaking exam served as the instruments.

According the previous studies, there is a close relationship between self-confidence and oral presentations. High self-confidence can increase students’ courage.

Purpose of the study

The driving aim of this research is to investigate the challenges faced by students of English as a foreign language at the Faculty of Education in Yefren during oral presentations, focusing on factors related to low self-confidence which hinder students oral performance. It also aims to explore

the reasons behind their challenges and proposes strategies to enhance their oral communication performance in English.

Research questions:

This research sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between self-confidence and oral presentation performance among EFL students at Yefren Faculty?
2. What challenges do EFL students at Yefren Faculty face due to low self-confidence when presenting orally?

Methodology

Sample

The research population consisted of 32 Libyan tertiary-level EFL students aged between 18-22 who enrolled in the second and fourth semesters of the English Department at Yefren Faculty of Education, University of Alzintan.

Research Instrument

Two instruments were utilized to collect the data in this research. These instruments are discussed below:

1. An online survey:

A questionnaire was used as a primary tool for collecting data. The researcher distributed a closed-ended questionnaire to 32 students via WhatsApp. It consisted of 15 multiple choice questions to ensure high response rates and facilitate statistical analysis.

2. A document analysis:

Published materials such as scientific journals and online research articles were examined to address the research questions.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Google forms automatically generated the data summary and analysis. Published researches were reviewed to examine how other authors addressed the impacts of low self-confidence and to propose solutions to minimize its impact on performance.

Results and Discussion

The researcher showed the descriptive statistics after filling out the structured questionnaire of oral presentation confidence in table 1 below

No.		No	Yes
1.	Do you believe that a lack of self-confidence affects your ability to give a successful oral presentation?	3.2%	%96.8
2.	Do you avoid participating in oral presentations because you fear making mistakes?	29%	71%
3.	Do you forget what you want to say when speaking in front of others?	12.9%	87.1%
4.	Do you feel more comfortable giving a presentation in front of people you know well?	3.2%	96.8%
5.	Do you perform better when using visual aids such as slides?	12.9%	87.1%
6.	Do you make sure to practice your oral presentation before giving it?	9.7%	90.3%
7.	Do you practice deep breathing or relaxation techniques before speaking to reduce stress?	22.6%	77.4%
8.	Do you use an audio or video recording to review and improve your speaking style?	35.5%	64.5%
9.	Do you hold a tangible object, such as a pen, to reduce stress during an oral presentation?	35.5	64.5
10.	Do you participate in group activities to improve your speaking skills?	35.5	64.5%
11.	Have you ever had a bad experience giving an oral presentation that affected your self-confidence?	38.7	61.3%
12.	Have you ever given a successful oral presentation that boosted your self-confidence?	38.7%	61.3%
13.	Do you believe that learning from mistakes helps you improve your performance in future presentations?	6.5%	93.5%
14.	Do you feel more confident the more oral presentations you give?	9.7%	90.3%
15.	Do you find it difficult to choose the right words during a presentation?	32.3%	%67.7

As shown above, self-confidence plays a crucial role in the success of presentation. Almost all respondents (96.8%) believed that their low self-confidence negatively affects their ability to perform better oral presentation. In addition, about 61.3 % reported a successful presentation experience boosted their confidence and that previous negative experiences reduced their confidence during oral presentation.

Based on the results of the descriptive data in table (1), it is clear that some emotional factors significantly affect students' oral presentation performance. About 71% of students reported that they avoid presentations for fear of making mistakes due to low confidence, while more than 64% reported difficulty choosing the right words. A large percentage 87.1% also confirmed that they forget what they intended to say when speaking in front of an audience, indicating the impact of lack of confidence. This clearly demonstrates the close relationship between self-confidence and oral performance.

Practicing and repeating oral presentations were found to enhance confidence and improve performance. About 90.3% of participants revealed that more presentations increased their confidence, and 87.1% reported effective strategies such as visual aids and practicing beforehand contributed to better oral presentation performance. A large percentage also confirmed that presenting in front of familiar audiences can help in reducing stress and improving clarity. 77.4% of students use relaxation or deep- breathing techniques to reduce stress and improve their performance before presenting, while some of the participants 64.5% believed that tangible tools such as holding a pen are used as stress-relief strategies during oral presentations. These results suggest that regular practice and using various strategies help students enhance their self-confidence and oral presentation performance, particularly in English.

Discussion and Conclusion

The primary purpose of this research study was to explore the relationship between self-confidence and oral presentation performance among students of English as a Foreign Language at the University of Alzintan, Faculty of Education, Yefren. It also aimed to inquire into the most significant challenges students encounter due to low self-confidence during oral presentations.

Regarding the first research question, "What is the relationship between self-confidence and oral presentation performance?", the researcher concluded that the correlation between the two variables was a close

positive correlation. Students with higher levels of self-confidence performed significantly better in their presentations. They were more capable of managing the structure of their oral performance, engaging with the audience and even expressing their thoughts and ideas fluently. This finding was in line with previous studies. Azizah (2024) found self confidence and EFL student, speaking ability are closely related. Her research revealed that students with high self-confidence demonstrated significantly better speaking performance than those with lower levels of confidence. Similarly, Lucas (2012), in the *Art of Public Speaking*, emphasized that a confident speaker is more persuasive and impactful, regardless of the topic. This finding is also supported by Fitrah et al. (2024) who looked into the possible effects of self-confidence on enhancing students' active participation and speaking performance in EFL classrooms. The findings of their study showed that students with low self-confidence are mostly stay quiet and unsure, which in turn makes their communication skills weaker.

About the second research question, "What challenges do students face do to low self-confidence during presentations?" many participants reported experiencing a variety of personality aspects such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, forgetting key points, difficulty in choosing the right words and even in presenting in front of other people. These factors negatively influenced the students ability to present and communicate effectively and fluently. The findings of my study were in agreement with those of previous research studies which employes similar variables. The study of Salim (2015), for instance, indicated that students who have low self-confidence find it hard to speak in front of other people to perform better in terms of fluency, vocabulary mastery, and pronunciation. Moreover, in line with Fook et al. (2011), who revealed that students prefer to present their oral performance in a classroom because it makes them less nervous instead of presenting individually in front of other people which makes them afraid to commit mistakes and to be laughed at and judged by another person. My findings also accorded with Al-Hebaish's (2012) which revealed that students who are not so confident were the ones who are nervous and afraid.

Agreeing with the study of Novia et al., (2023) which emphasized that psychological factors such as self-perception and past learning experiences have significant influence on students' speaking performance. The majority of students with high self-confidence in their study attained good scores in their speaking tests. This fact shows the importance of improving confidence in the process of learning a language for the academic achievement of students.

The findings mentioned and discussed above for both research questions highlighted the importance of integrating self-confidence development into the oral presentation training in a foreign language. This can be achieved through creating a supportive learning environment and using interactive teaching strategies that encourage students to speak and participate publicly without fear of failure.

Thus, the implementation of techniques such as preparation, deep breathing, and relaxation before giving oral presentations and using visual aids, and holding tangible objects during presentations tend to decrease levels of stress and increase confidence of learners. In consistency with this, the data showed that 77.4% of participants use such techniques to be aware of committing mistakes and to be more confident.

All in all, my study reflects how psychological barriers, particularly those related to low self-confidence, negatively impact oral performance of EFL students at the Faculty of Education, Yefren . This provides the importance of incorporating effective strategies to help students improve their confidence and manage anxiety when speaking in front of others.

Pedagogical implications

The results of the researcher's study confirm that self-confidence plays a crucial role in improving students' oral performance. When learners feel confident, they participate more in oral activities and be able to express their thoughts and ideas clearly. Therefore, teachers should provide supportive learning environment that enhance learners to speak fluently without fear of making mistakes. They should not only focus on language accuracy of learners but also on encouraging them to incorporate educational strategies that can reduce anxiety and help them become more comfortable in front of others. Regular practice, more oral activities such as

group work and discussions can promote interaction and motivate learners to improve their self-belief and oral performance.

Limitations and further research

Despite the positive outcomes, some limitations of this study, such as a small sample size and restricted study setting, need to be considered in order to inform further investigations. There for, future research should consider larger and more diverse populations.

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