

A Comparison of Self-efficacy and oral presentation ability between TEFL students in the class

Samira Habibi Mazaheri

MA in TEFL, Department of English teaching,
Islamic Azad University, Saveh, Iran

Saeed Yazdani

Department of English teaching, Islamic Azad University, Saveh, Iran

Abstract

Self efficacy refers to the beliefs about one's capabilities to learn or perform behaviors at designated levels. It can be considered as individuals' judgments about their abilities to carry out the actions and behaviors needed to succeed and reach to the predetermined goals. This thesis sought to investigate whether students' self efficacy and their oral presentation ability have relationship with each other. Also, the level of students' self efficacy in BA and MA degrees have been compared. In order to address these issues, a total of 75 TEFL students (35MA and 40BA) from Science and Research university in Tehran with age range of 20 to 35 participate in this research. To meet the mentioned aims, all subjects were given background questionnaire, English proficiency test, Oral presentation and self-efficacy (OPSE) questionnaire. By utilizing Pearson correlation coefficient, Levene's Test for Equality of Variances, independent sample t-test which determine whether the relationship in means between the two groups – if it existed – was significant at the .05 level. revealed that there would be statistically significant relationship between the above-mentioned subjects.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, oral presentation ability, MA & BA students and English as a foreign language.

1.1.Introduction

1.1.1. The Importance of Oral Presentation

Hedge (2000) noted that the ability to communicate is the most important goal that communicative language teaching aims to reach. It is to be able to operate effectively in the real world. Students need a lot of opportunity to practice language in situations which encourage them to communicate their needs, ideas and opinions. With globalization graduates need to be proficient in oral communication skills in order to function effectively in the professional setting (Živković & Stojković, 2011).

Generally, effective oral communication is essential for success and promotion in business (Murphy and Hildebrand, 1997). For successful oral communication students need a thorough in-depth instruction and practice. The best practice is to give oral presentations.

Oral presentation skills are essential for employability and true academic study as they lead students to enter into debate and sustained reasoning. They enable students to participate fully in their learning, demonstrate their ability to communicate, and help them develop competencies in an area of their future working places. They demonstrate one of the most successful ways to get the student's attention, encourage curiosity, create challenges" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987).

According to Girard & Trapp (2011) the potential benefits of students' oral presentations include: greater class interaction and participation, increased interest in learning, new perspectives not covered otherwise, improvement in communication and presentation skills.

Oral presentations represent an opportunity for developing real-world communications as well as leadership skills (King, 2002).

According to Hairuzila & Rohani (2008) the importance of oral communication skills in mastering a second language is emphasized by Ellis (1985) when he points out that second and foreign language acquisition involves the ability to use the sound and grammar systems to communicate meaning.

Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory that was published in the year 1986 focuses mainly on the concept of self-efficacy, which is considered as "one of the most theoretically, heuristically and practically useful concepts formulated in modern psychology"

When it comes to the outcomes in learning a foreign language, individuals differ dramatically and the differences encompass a wide scope of causes including learners' factors, such as personality traits, learning strategies, learners' aptitudes, motivation, as well as environmental factors such as means of instruction, media use, the Internet access, course books, the instructors, etc. In the past decades, there has been a growing research interest in self-efficacy beliefs in the context of foreign/second language learning. (Raofi, Tan, and Chen, 2012).

1.1.2.The concept of self-efficacy

Koura & Al-Hebaishi, (2014) pointed out self-efficacy is a set of different self beliefs related to varied areas of functioning (Valentine, Du Bois & Copper, 2004). It refers to the beliefs about one's capabilities to learn or perform behaviors at designated levels. It can be considered as individuals' judgments about their abilities to carry out the actions and behaviors needed to succeed and reach to the predetermined goals. It is not a fixed trait that a

person possesses in a fixed quantity from birth. It is rather a general capacity that develops through time and experience (Bandura, 1997).

Klassen, Krawchuk and Rajani (2008) stated that self-efficacy is a good predictor of human behavior and actions. The beliefs people hold about their abilities have both emotional and behavioral aspects. They determine the choice of whether to engage in a task, the power and effort a person has to exert in performing the task, and the level of persistence and avoidance in accomplishing it.

Self-efficacy affects learning and performance in three ways (Bandura, 1986):

1. Self efficacy influences the goals that employees choose for themselves. Employees with low levels of self efficacy tend to set relatively low goals for themselves. Conversely, an individual with high self efficacy is likely to set high personal goals. Research indicates that people not only learn but also perform at levels consistent with their self efficacy beliefs.
2. Self efficacy influences learning as well as the effort that people exert on the job. Employees with high self efficacy generally work hard to learn how to perform new tasks, because they are confident that their efforts will be successful. Employees with low self efficacy may exert less effort when learning and performing complex tasks, because they are not sure the effort will lead to success.
3. Self efficacy influences the persistence with which people attempt new and difficult tasks. Employees with high self efficacy are confident that they can learn and perform a specific task. Thus, they are likely to persist in their efforts even when problems surface. Conversely, employees with low self efficacy who believe they are incapable of learning and performing a difficult task are likely to give up when problems surface.

1.1.3. Oral presentations and Second/Foreign Language Learning

Oral communication means communicating orally in a manner which is clear, fluent, and to the point, and which holds the audience's attention, both in groups and one-to-one situations. In second language learning, one of the biggest difficulties for the learners to improve is the lack of self-confidence in using the target language. They tend to be very reticent when it comes to communicating or expressing their thoughts and ideas in the target language (Beebe, 1983; Katz, 1996; Lucas, 1984).

Among the many advantages of designing oral presentations for students are (King, 2002): bridging the gap between language study and language use; using the four language skills in a naturally integrated way; helping students to collect, inquire, organize and construct information; enhancing team work; helping students become active and autonomous learners.

Students are involved in their own learning process as active participants, they are engaged in real-world experience, and they build creative and critical thinking and problem-solving skills as important characteristics for success in the 21st century. The final goal is to help students maximize their potential, both personally and professionally

Richards(1990) said that the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many schools and second language learners; learners consequently often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course in the basis of how well they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency.

1.1.4. Self-Efficacy and Second/Foreign Language Learning

Self-efficacy, according to Bandura (1997) refers to “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. Learners’ beliefs in their capabilities can be better predictors of performance than their real ability (Bandura, 1997; Schunk, 1991). Given its significance in human endeavors, scholars like Pajares and Urdan (2006) believe that it is impossible to examine some aspects of human functions such as learning, motivation, and academic achievements without examining the role of self-efficacy in the learners. Pedagogic transformation not only affects English classrooms but also extracurricular activities that are thought to supplement the inadequate input and out-put practice in English class. Besides the traditional English corners, new English clubs, self-access centers and English learning centers have been set up on university campuses to facilitate students’ learning, especially speaking skills beyond classrooms. (as cited in Raooft, Tan, and Chen, 2012).,

As Al-Hebaish & Al-Munawwarah (2012) has been mentioned several studies have been conducted especially in Asia on the concept of self-efficacy in the academic setting.

A study by Lau et al. (1999) assessed Hong Kong students’ perceptions on listening, speaking, reading and writing in English as their second language. The study focused on the overall feelings of competence, adequacy, and affective reactions regarding the skills.

Chan and Abdullah (2004) found self-efficacy to be one of the elements that could shape a writer’s behavior in writing effectively. In another study conducted in Malaysia.

Wong (2005) found that high self-efficacy pre-service teachers adopted more language learning strategies than did low self-efficacy pre-service teachers. Studies have also been conducted on ESL learners’ self-efficacy and its relationship to English language achievement, and found that the subjects’ achievements corresponded to their perceptions of their own ability (Mahyuddin et al., 2006; Huang and Chang, 1996).

Klassen (2002) found that in the majority of the studies, self-efficacy was found to play a primary role in predicting students’ writing behavior.

Hairuzila and Subarna (2007) have begun to fill this gap with their study on the self-efficacy of pre-university ESL students at a private university. This study found that the students had high levels of self-efficacy regarding their ability to speak in English. The study also reveals that Oral Communication Ability in English those who more confident in their ability performed better than those with low self-efficacy.

There have been a number of studies probing into the effects of self-efficacy on the second/foreign language learning in general and the effects on specific skills, such as writing, reading and listening as well as strategy use in particular.

Similar studies in Turkey (Tilfarlioğlu and Ciftci, 2011) revealed that there was a positive relationship between academic success as defined by grades and learners’ self-efficacy beliefs. Mills, Pajares and Herron (2006), after surveying 95 college students who were learning French as a foreign language in the USA found that there was a significant positive relationship between the learners’ reading self-efficacy beliefs and their reading proficiency.

1.1.5. Relationship between self-efficacy and other skills in English language

There are several research studies examining the writing self-efficacy beliefs of young adolescents, Klassen (2002) discovered that self-efficacy was important in predicting students' writing behavior. In their study of the elements that influence the development of writing skills, Chan and Abdullah (2004) found self-efficacy was one of the factors that could shape a writer's ability to write effectively.

Rahimi and Abedini (2009) examined the relationship between self-efficacy and listening proficiency in Iranian context. The results of the study showed that the two were positively correlated. Moreover, quite a few results from the survey studies suggested that the use of strategies is significantly related to self-efficacy beliefs.

Magogwe and Oliver (2007) did a longitudinal study on 480 Botswana students who were learning English as a second language. They found that there was a significant relationship between the learners' strategy use and their self-efficacy beliefs. Suand Duo's study (2012) of 200 Taiwanese students, found that learning strategies are significantly associated with self-efficacy beliefs. Wong (2005) interviewed six Malaysian participants to examine their language learning strategies and self-efficacy beliefs. The study revealed that high-self-efficacy learners used more language learning strategies.

In a similar vein, Wang and Li (2010) discovered that Chinese students' reading self-efficacy was positively correlated to their reading strategies namely metacognitive, social/affective and cognitive strategies. Readers with higher self-efficacy used more reading strategies than readers who had low self-efficacy

In Australia, the last reported study of self-efficacy in the context of faculty work was conducted by Bailey (1999) who collected data from lecturers (n=100) working in one institution.

The aim of the study by Tai (2006) identified the impact of training framing on the motivation and self efficacy of employees. The findings indicate that supervisor training was found to impact employee self efficacy and motivation and ultimately affected their reaction, learning and transfer motivation. This study did not take into account some contextual determinants including post training accountability and organizational climate which is a limitation which needs to be acknowledged.

The study by Liu et al., (2010) examined the association between leadership, self efficacy and employee satisfaction. The results indicate that self efficacy of the leader mediates the relationship between leadership and employee satisfaction and performance. higher self efficacy and motivation enabled better ability to deal with transactions and disputes.

The study by Ghafoor et al., (2011) confirmed that the relationship between performance and creativity of the employees is extremely moderated by self-efficacy and there is no such mediation in the case of relationship between transformational leadership and creativity of the employees.

In China, there has been a study on the impact of self-efficacy of 226 employees who were from four different manufacturing firms (Pan et al, 2011). It was identified from this study that supervisory mentoring is determined by the self-efficacy of an employee. The impacts of supervisory mentoring on work related performance and job satisfaction are moderated by

self-efficacy via personal learning. Thus, there exists a positive correlation between the self-efficacy of an employee and mediated effect on work related performance. However, self-efficacy and the mediated effect on job satisfaction are found to be negatively correlated.

The primary objective of study by Chaudhary et al., (2012). the current study is to determine the effects of occupational self efficacy and human resource development in relation to work engagement among the business executives who are working in various organizations across India.

Judeh (2012) evaluated whether the characteristics of a job had any influence or impact on the workers performance and self efficacy. The authors utilized a methodology that consisted of a questionnaire based survey in which 279 respondents working for corporations listed in technology and communication sector in Amman Stock Exchange participated. The analysis of the results indicated that job characteristics did have an impact on job performance and self efficacy; however there was no conclusive evidence that showed that self efficacy had an influence on job performance.

1.4. Research Questions and hypotheses

The present thesis will set out to find answers to the following research questions:

Q1: Is there any significant relationship between Self-efficacy and oral presentation ability in MA and BA TEFL students?

On the basis of above questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1: There is a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and oral presentation ability in MA and BA TEFL students

Hettthong and Teo (2013) searched the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing performance and explored whether students' overall writing self-efficacy predicts their overall writing performance.

The participants were 51 third-year students of a Thai university, and a questionnaire and a paragraph writing test were used. The results showed "there is a significant positive relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing performance both at the section level and the sub-skill level. Furthermore, the overall writing self-efficacy predicts the overall writing performance" (p. 157).

Raooifi, Tan and Chan (2012) examined the role of self-efficacy on second or foreign language learning contexts. They reviewed the related empirical literature and at last found "several factors enhance the level of students' self-efficacy, and self-efficacy is a strong predictor of performance in a different language skills and tasks" (p. 60).

Hosseini Fatemi and Vahidnia (2013) examined the relationship between self-efficacy and motivation of 93 Iranian B. A. and M. A. university students. Also, some positive relation between their self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation were found, "Moreover, a motivation, among the subscales of motivation, was found to be negatively related to students' self-efficacy (p. 79)

Ghonsooly and Elahi (2010) studied the effect of self-efficacy of learners in their reading. The

participants of this study were 150 sophomore Iranian university students majoring in English literature. The instrument used in the study to meet this goal was an author-designed scale on EFL learners' self efficacy in reading comprehension. The results showed "high self-

efficacious participants achieved higher scores in reading comprehension course than low self-efficacious participants" (p. 45).

Kalanzadeh, et. al. (2013) examined the impact of Iranian EFL students' self-esteem on their speaking skill. The participants of this study were selected by using a questionnaire in order to diagnose the high and low self-esteem ones. After that, a standard oral proficiency test was used in order to measure five sub-skills related to speaking: vocabulary, structure, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehensibility. After analyzing the data, the results showed a statistically significant correlation between the participants' self-esteem and speaking ability.

Ebrhimzadeh, Khodabandehlou and Jahandar (2013) searched the impact of self-efficacy on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' paragraph writing. This study included both experimental and control group and each of them with 69 participants. The experimental group received treatment for paragraph writing, but the control group experienced it in the traditional way.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research population and sample

A total of 75 TEFL students (35MA and 40BA) from Science and Research university in Tehran with age range of 20 to 35 participate in this research project. They would be selected among 90 TEFL students based on their availability and willingness. To determine participants' homogeneity, a sample of proficiency test (Transparent) administered. Those participants whose scores fall between one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean select as the participants of the study. Based on the result of the homogeneity test 75 students who meet the necessary condition chose for this study.

2.2. Instruments:

The following instruments would be used in this thesis:

.A .Language Proficiency Test (Transparent)

It was utilized for determining the subjects' English proficiency level in students. This test was composed of 30 questions about grammar, 10 questions about vocabulary and 10 questions for reading comprehension, totally it contained 50 questions. For English proficiency test scores are tabulated out of 50, so each question had one score. All parts were in the form of Multiple-Choice questions. In order to make sure of the reliable proficiency test at the piloting stage, the test was given to 15 students, who were selected randomly, and its reliability was estimated through the K-R21 formula as .85, therefore the test was found reliable for the purpose of this study.

The time allotted for taking this test was also determined at the piloting stage as 40 minutes. Duration of the test was estimated by calculating the time spent by the fastest and the slowest students in answering the test divided by 2. Thus, the time allotted for the test was:

$$\frac{50+30}{2} = 40$$

B. Background questionnaire:

A background questionnaire would be cover issues as the subjects' full name, gender, language status, academic degree, times of presentation in the class.

C .Oral presentation and self-efficacy (OPSE)questionnaire:

This questionnaire would be focus on students' attitudes towards their oral presentation and self –efficacy and includes 38 items. The items put in a 5-point Liker scale from Level 1: Strongly certain to Level 5: Strongly uncertain. This would be design based on Lecturers' Self-efficacy Instrument (LSE) (Hemming & Kay 2008) and Bandura Guide for Constructing Self-efficacy Scale (2006).On the other hand, the test items were evaluated by some experts in the field to validate the feasibility of test items, the suitability of the allotted time, suitability of the tasks to the students' abilities and test organization. So, necessary changes to the test items were made based on the feedback from the experts.

For investigation of the tests' internal consistency, Cronbach's Alpha formula was applied to the data from the pilot study mentioned above. The value of Alpha reached 0.87, which is considered quite high. Thus, the test was found statistically reliable.

3.Results and Discussion

The main aim of this paper was to explore whether students' self efficacy and their oral presentation ability have relationship with each other .Also, the level of students' self efficacy in BA and MA degrees have been regarded.

Testing the Questions and hypotheses:

The present researcher intended to work on the following question:

Q:Is there a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and oral presentation ability in MA and BA TEFL students

On the basis of above questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H: There is a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and oral presentation ability in MA and BA TEFL students

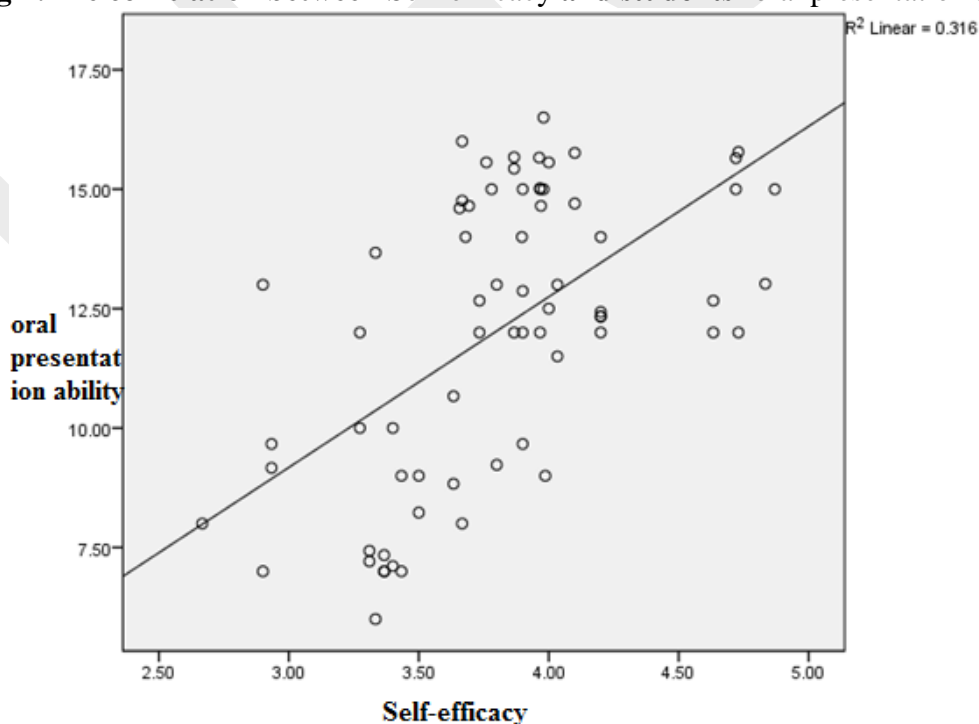
To analyze the first hypothesis, that is, to investigate the significant relationship between Self-efficacy and oral presentation ability in MA and BA TEFL students the data were analyzed based on Pearson correlation coefficient and independent sample *t*-test.

Table1 :Pearson correlation test between Self-efficacy and oral presentation ability

Group		Self-efficacy	oral presentation ability
Self- efficacy	Pearson correlation	1	.564
	Meaningful level		0.000
	Number	88	88
oral presentation ability	Pearson correlation	.564	1
	Meaningful level	0.000	
	Number	88	88

According to meaningful level of above test($\text{sig}=0.000$),it is clear that for every error level, there isn't any reason for rejecting correlation hypothesis between two variables. In other word, H_0 is rejected. It means, the correlation between two variables isn't base on opportunity and accident .So, meaningful relationship between two variables is confirmed .Also, the amount of Pearson correlation (.564) shows significant relationship between two variables and positive value shows the direct relationship between them. It means, by increasing self-efficacy, students' oral presentation ability increased, too. Figure 1 presents this correlation.

Fig1 :The correlation between Self-efficacy and students' oral presentation ability



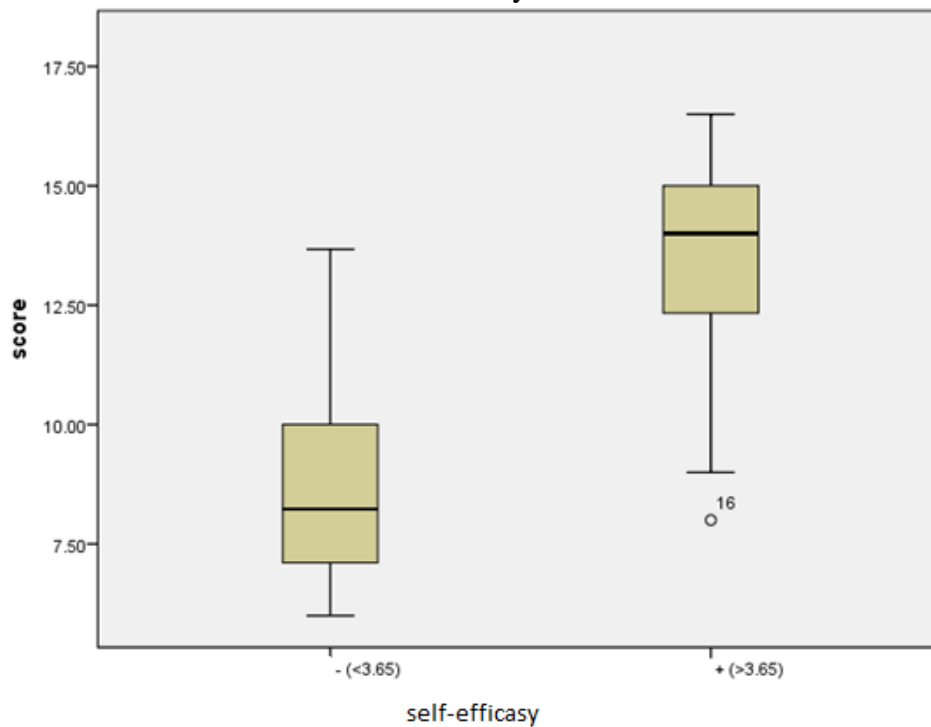
Independent sample t-test has been used ,in order to analyze, meaningful relationship between students' self-efficacy and oral presentation ability. Table 2,indicates mean score of students regarding oral presentation ability.

Table2: Descriptive statistics of students' self-efficacy variables regarding oral presentation ability

Self-efficacy		Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error mean
oral presentation ability	Low self efficacy	26	8.8846	2.19277	.40719
	High self efficacy	49	13.6047	1.89352	.24652

Regarding table2,students' mean score who have Low self efficacy is 8.8846 and students' mean score who have high self efficacy is 13.6047.It seems ,there is meaningful difference between two groups.Figure2 indicates this difference ,clearly.

Fig2 :The significant correlation between Self-efficacy and students' oral presentation ability



In this part ,for investigating significant difference between two variables, first by using Levenes test equality in variances has been tested, the hypotheses are as follows:

H0: $\sigma_1 = \sigma_2$

H1: $\sigma_1 \neq \sigma_2$

Table3: Descriptive statistics of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
		Fisher	Meaningful level
Self efficacy	Equality in variances assumed	0.368	.546
	Equality in variances not assumed		

Regarding small value of fisher(0.368)and high value of meaningful level(.546), equality in variances assumed has been accepted. In other word, there isn't any reason for rejecting H0.

In order to analyze, research hypothesis, independent sample t-test has been applied. So there are two hypotheses as follows:

$$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$H_1: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

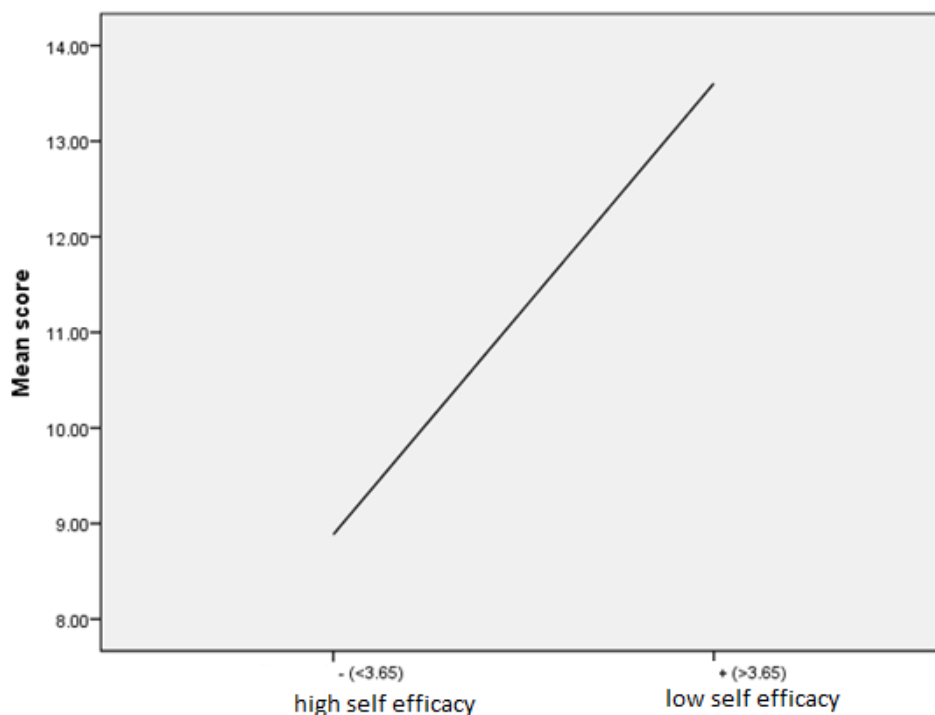
Table4:Independent sample t-test of two groups by low and high self efficacy

	Independent sample t-test					t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
	Mean Difference	S.D	S.E.M	95%Confidence interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Groups	-4.72009	1.40527	.45267	-5.61991	-5.61991	-10.438	74	0.000

It would be mention that t=-10.438 and df is 74 and also, sig=0.000.,So ,there is a significant difference between students' oral presentation ability regarding low and high self efficacy.

Regarding the above statistics and discussion ,the first hypothesis about the relationship between two main variables is confirmed. So ,the first hypothesis was accepted. Fig3, has been drawn for better understanding of this relationship.

Fig3: The significant difference between students' low and high self efficacy and students' oral presentation ability



The results of study by Al-Hebaish (2012) indicated a positive significant correlation between the two variables that are self confident and oral presentation score of students. These results are in line with the result of this hypothesis.

4. Conclusion

This thesis sought to investigate whether students' self efficacy and their oral presentation ability have relationship with each other. Also, the level of students' self efficacy in BA and MA degrees have been regarded. In the following sections the findings of this study will be summarized followed by implications and limitations of the study and finally some suggestions for further research.

To remind the hypothesis of this study, the researcher express them again as follows:

H: There is a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and oral presentation ability in MA and BA TEFL students

To analyze the first hypothesis, the data were analyzed based on Pearson correlation coefficient and independent sample *t*-test. The correlation between two variables wasn't base on opportunity and accident. So, meaningful relationship between two variables was confirmed. Also, the amount of Pearson correlation (.564) shows significant relationship between two variables and positive value indicated direct relationship between them. It means, by increasing self-efficacy, students' oral presentation ability increased, too.

On the other hand, students' mean score who have Low self efficacy was 8.8846 and students' mean score who have high self efficacy was 13.6047. It seems, there was a meaningful difference between two groups. Based on the findings of this analysis we can come to the following conclusion that the first hypothesis about the relationship between two main variables is confirmed. So, the hypothesis was accepted.

Contrary to the results of this thesis, some more recent studies indicated a modest or low correlation between self-efficacy and oral presentation such as (Elrafei, 2008; Pullmann & Allikk, 2008; Nagar et al., 2008), and the results of other studies revealed that no correlation was found between the two variables (Ahmed et al., 2011; Zahra, 2010; Kaur et al., 2009; Naderi et al., 2009; Yahaya & Ramli, 2009; Zubrick et al., 2006; Bodkin-Andrews et al., 2008; Miraei, 2005; Craven & Marsh, 2004; Kimura, 2002).

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