

HOMOGENEOUS AND HETEROGENEOUS GROUPING IN ENGLISH PRESENTATION SELF-EFFICACY DEVELOPMENT OF ESP STUDENTS

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Abstract

Communication skills, including, in this case, presentation skills, are crucial for employability. Employers prefer individuals with good communication skills, as communication plays an essential role in the success of the individual employees and the company. For that purpose, the students taking English for specific purposes (ESP) in this study were trained to develop English presentation skills. This study compared English presentation self-efficacy development between students assigned to have homogeneous group presentation tasks (N=79) and heterogeneous group presentation tasks (N=73). The study adopted an experimental research design with a single research objective: To compare the effectiveness of homogeneous and heterogeneous group presentation tasks in enhancing ESP students' English presentation self-efficacy. The data of the study were collected through a Likert-type 'can-do' presentation-self-efficacy questionnaire previously validated by exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which was administered before and after the interventions, which lasted for a semester. The data were analyzed descriptively and inferentially using SPSS application. The study found that homogeneous group presentation tasks enhanced the ESP students' presentation self-efficacy better, as the self-efficacy mean score of the group was higher than that of the heterogeneous group.

Keywords: English presentation skills; experimental research design; homogeneous and heterogeneous groups; self-efficacy

Introduction

Developing students' communication skills is urgent nowadays. Studies proved that these skills are crucial for employability, effective job performance, career advancement, and organizational success (Bennett et al., 2016; Tucker & McCarthy, 2001). Employers prefer individuals with good communication skills, as communication plays an essential role in the success of the individual employees and the company (Luthy & Deck, 2007; Murphy et al., 1997). A 2014 Graduate Careers Council Australia's Graduate Outlook Survey report identified that employers used communication skills as essential criteria for recruitment (Grant-Smith et al., 2016). The skills are necessary conditions for individual progress and successful social interactions (Simona, 2015), become a specific proficiency required for employment (Dixon & Beverly, 2015), and indicators of

professionalism (Smirnova & Nuzha, 2013).

For the reasons above, the syllabus of the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course at the Management study program of the university where the study was conducted was directed at developing students' English communication skills. Among the competencies on target are English presentation skills. Upon completing the course, the students are expected to be able to deliver simple English presentations on some topics, such as presenting products to customers, presenting data in the forms of tables, graphs, and charts, presenting financial statements, and the like. Following Chauvin et al. (2020), the EFL teaching practice should focus on the use of communication abilities tailored to specific contexts. Furthermore, teaching English communication skills will help students function more effectively in their academic fields and gain competitive advantages in

the global market and individual career development opportunities after graduation.

However, doing a presentation in a foreign language is not an easy task. This public speaking skill is hard to master (Bankowski, 2010). When doing English presentations, many students lack topical knowledge, experience low self-esteem, and overuse of their mother language (Thao, 2019). In the Indonesian context, students' presentation skills are still under the expectation (Hanifa & Yusra, 2018). The study of Mardiningrum and Ramadhani (2022) found that when doing English presentations, Indonesian students faced nervousness. Group dynamics, audience, missing points, and language boundaries are serious challenges. Some students may also experience glossophobia, a type of social phobia resulting in extreme avoidance of speaking in front of people because of fear of embarrassment and humiliation (Hancock et al., 2010). For some others, the reason for not participating in presentation practice is their low self-efficacy (Amirian & Tavakoli, 2016).

Self-efficacy, a construct derived from the social cognitive theory (SCT) has become an essential construct in the study of human behavior. It is defined as people's judgments or beliefs about their capabilities to successfully carry out specific tasks and exercise control over events that affect their lives (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Gerhardt & Brown, 2006). SCT suggests that human functioning is a result of a triadic reciprocal interplay between personal, behavioral, and environmental factors. According to Bandura, beliefs influence human performance through motivational, decision-making, and affective processes. People's beliefs about their capabilities to accomplish a certain task predict their behaviors better than their actual capabilities (Pajares, 2003). Beliefs also affect outcomes such as learning interest, task performance, efforts, and persistence (Bandura, 1997; Huang & Mayer, 2018).

Despite a large body of research on self-efficacy development, studies focusing on the presentation self-efficacy are still very limited (Amirian & Tavakoli, 2016). This study aimed to fill a niche within the broad field of self-efficacy and presentation research by focusing on how student groupings into homogeneous and heterogeneous group presentation tasks affect the development of the student's English presentation self-efficacy. The research question was which group presentation task was more effective in enhancing ESP students' English presentation self-efficacy.

The study was urgent because of some reasons. Firstly, research on presentation self-efficacy has not been very comprehensive. By focusing on the development of presentation self-efficacy of undergraduate ESP students, this current study had a research gap to fill. Secondly, self-efficacy is a driving force of action. Students' judgment of their self-efficacy influences their decision on activities (Bandura, 1986). They will take the tasks they believe they will be able to accomplish and avoid the ones they believe they will not. Enhancing students' self-efficacy, therefore, becomes an important issue facing teachers and researchers in education, teaching, and learning, including lecturers and teachers teaching English presentations. Thirdly, teachers need to be informed on how students' self-efficacy in English presentations develops in order to be able to help students improve. Investigating how learners develop their presentation self-efficacy will be able to equip teachers with enough information so that intervention strategies to enhance it can be formulated and implemented.

Method

Research Design

The study adopted the quantitative paradigm (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative approach has the benefit of establishing the effects of interventions by collecting quantitative data using Likert-

type questionnaires. The pre-and-post-test experimental research was applied.

The participants

The participants of the study were the students of the Management Study Program and Accounting Study Program who took ESP English in the 2022/2023 academic year. The students in 4 classes were recruited. Two classes were from the Management study program (N=79). They were assigned to homogeneous group presentation tasks. The other two classes were from the Accounting study program (N=73). These groups were assigned to heterogeneous group presentation tasks. By age, they were between 17 to 19 years old. By gender, 48 participants were male (31.57%), and the rest, 104 (68.43%), were female.

The Interventions

The study participants were assigned to English presentation tasks in a group of two students. The students in the homogeneous groups had approximately the same capabilities, while the heterogeneous group had approximately different abilities. During the semester, they had four presentation tasks: Presentation Task One (PT-1), PT-2, PT-3, and PT-4. PT-1 was an individual task and was assigned in week 3 of the semester, PT-2 was assigned in Week 8, PT-3 was assigned in Week 12, and PT-4 was assigned in Week 16. PT-2, PT-3, and PT-4 were all group work.

Instrument and data collection

To measure the students' presentation self-efficacy, a 15-statement presentation self-efficacy questionnaire was used. It was a 7-scale Likert-type questionnaire, following Bandura (2006), with 'can do' statements from scale 1 = "I absolutely cannot do it" to scale 7 = "Surely, I can do it". It measured the students' beliefs in their ability to perform the move structures in a presentation.

Data analysis

Quantitative data on presentation self-efficacy was analyzed descriptively and inferentially. The mean score of the self-efficacy survey of each group was obtained to indicate the participants' presentation self-efficacy level. The t-test was run to see the possible difference in students' self-efficacy in English presentations across the two interventions.

Finding and Discussions

Findings

The research question of the study was about the effects of presentation tasks on ESP students' self-efficacy in English presentations. The presentation tasks in this study were delivered in two types: homogeneous group presentation tasks and heterogeneous group presentation tasks. Homogeneous group presentation tasks were the tasks assigned to two students to work in a group, and the group members had similar or relatively homogeneous abilities. Meanwhile, the heterogeneous group presentation tasks were the tasks assigned to two students to work in a group, and the group members had different or relatively heterogeneous abilities. A pre-and post-intervention analysis was conducted to see the effects of the presentation tasks assigned to the participants. In the first step, the students' self-efficacy before the interventions was compared to the one after the intervention so that changes in self-efficacy could be identified. Secondly, the mean scores of the post-intervention self-efficacy of the two groups were compared so that the effectiveness of each intervention on the students' self-efficacy of each group could be analyzed. The descriptive analysis of the pre-intervention self-efficacy is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The students' presentation self-efficacy before the intervention

Descriptives								
SE before intervention								
Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Homogeneous group PT	79	56.861	11.547	1.299	54.2744	59.447	22.00	90.00
heterogeneous group PT	73	53.151	12.486	1.461	50.2377	56.064	27.00	84.00

The table displays that 79 students were assigned homogeneous group presentation tasks, and 73 were assigned heterogeneous group presentation tasks. The mean score of the homogeneous group PT is 56.861 (SD=11.547), and the mean score of the heterogeneous group PT is 53.151 (SD=12.486). The homogeneous group PT had a higher mean score than the

heterogeneous group PT. To see whether these mean scores were significantly different, a t-test was run. The criterion for the decision is if the Sig. (2-tailed) is higher than 0.05, the two data sets being compared do not have a significant difference, while if the Sig. (2-tailed) is lower than 0.05, they have a significant difference. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The results of t-test between the mean score of the homogeneous and the heterogeneous groups

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
PSE 1	Equal variances assumed	.499	.481	1.903	150	.059	3.710	1.949	-.141	7.561
	Equal variances not assumed			1.897	146.382	.060	3.710	1.955	-.154	7.574

The table shows that the Sig.(2-tailed) is 0.059 for equal variance assumed and 0.600 for equal variance not assumed. As it is higher than 0.05, it is concluded that there was no significant difference in the English presentation self-efficacy before the interventions between the students assigned to homogeneous group presentation tasks

and those assigned to the heterogeneous group presentation tasks.

After the interventions, the data on the students' English presentation self-efficacy were collected again. They filled out the questionnaire on self-efficacy in Week 16 just after completing the final exam. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Self-efficacy after the Interventions

Descriptives								
Self-efficacy after the interventions								
Groups	N	Mean	SD	SE	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Homogeneous group PT	79	80.038	13.058	1.469	77.113	82.963	36.00	105.00
heterogeneous group PT	73	73.671	13.092	1.532	70.617	76.726	45.00	100.00

Table 3 shows that the mean score of the homogeneous group PT (presentation

tasks) is 80.038 (SD=13.058). The mean score of the heterogeneous group PT is

73.671 (SD=1.532). The homogeneous group PT has a higher mean score than the heterogeneous group PT. Compared to the presentation self-efficacy before the intervention, both groups display significant increases. Before the intervention, the homogeneous group PT had 56.861 for the mean score (SD=11.547). After the intervention, it significantly rose to 80.038 (SD=13.058). This group reached a score of 23.177.

Before the heterogeneous group PT had 53.151 (SD=12.486). After the intervention, it rose to 73.671. The gain score is 20.52. To better see the differences in self-efficacy before and after the treatment of the two groups, the self-efficacy mean scores before the interventions and the ones after the interventions are projected in Figure 1 below.

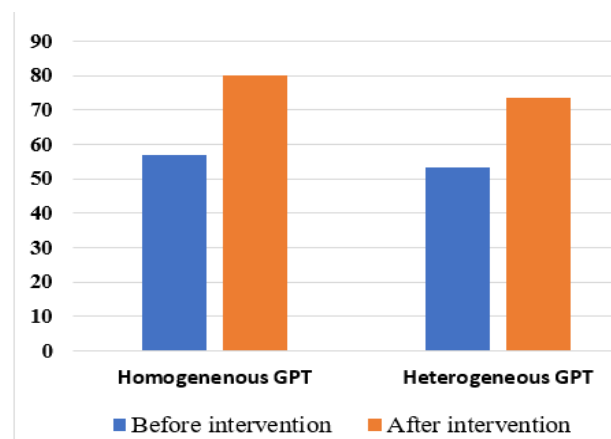


Figure 1. The Presentation Self-efficacy before and after interventions.

The figure shows that self-efficacy after the intervention of the two groups of treatments is higher than self-efficacy before the interventions. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was an increase in self-efficacy after the interventions. As the homogeneous group presentation task has a higher mean score, for simplicity's sake, it can be concluded that the homogenous group PT in which students were assigned to work in a group of two students having a similar/homogeneous ability was more effective than the heterogeneous group in enhancing the ESP students' English presentation self-efficacy. The superiority of the homogenous group presentation task over the heterogeneous group was also proven by the t-test comparing the mean scores of the homogeneous group and the

heterogeneous one. Table 4 presents the results.

Using the same criteria applied to the t-test of self-efficacy mean scores before the intervention, the table shows that the Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.003, which is lower than 0.05. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant difference in the ESP students' English presentation self-efficacy between the students assigned to homogeneous group presentation tasks and those assigned to heterogeneous group presentation tasks. The mean score of the homogeneous group presentation task was higher than the mean score of the heterogeneous group one. Therefore, the homogeneous group presentation task enhanced the ESP students' English presentation self-efficacy more effectively than the heterogeneous group one.

Table 4. The Results of t-test of the Self-efficacy mean scores after the Interventions

Independent Samples Test									
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
									Lower Upper
PSE-2	Equal variances assumed	.227	.635	3.00	150	.003	6.367	2.123	2.173 10.561
	Equal variances not assumed			2.99	148.99	.003	6.367	2.123	2.172 10.561

Discussion

The research question of the study was about the effects of presentation tasks on ESP students' self-efficacy in English presentations. To answer this question, quantitative data were collected and analyzed. The data were in the form of self-efficacy scores collected before and after the interventions. The study found that there was a significant difference in the mean scores of the ESP students' self-efficacy in English presentations before and after the interventions, which indicated that the students' self-efficacy improved. This means that the effect of presentation tasks on self-efficacy development was positive. The presentation tasks assigned to the ESP students developed their self-efficacy in English presentations. Furthermore, students assigned to homogeneous group presentation tasks outperformed those assigned to the heterogeneous group presentation tasks. This underscores the superior effectiveness of homogeneous group presentation tasks in enhancing ESP students' self-efficacy.

The finding of the study proved that presentation tasks as a form of mastery experience effectively developed the ESP students' Self-efficacy in English presentations. By doing the task of presentations, the ESP students under study gained confidence in delivering English presentations. This finding aligns with Bandura's source of self-efficacy. Mastery experience is the strongest factor affecting self-efficacy development (Bandura, 1997; Palmer, 2006; Usher & Pajares, 2008; van Dinther et al., 2011; Wright et al., 2016). A high efficacy expectation for a particular

task is enhanced as a person successfully completes the task at hand (Ferrell & Barbera, 2015). Amirian and Tavakoli (2016) also found that students' experience in making presentations positively relates to oral presentation self-efficacy. A manageable presentation task resulting in high achievement positively affects subsequent self-efficacy of a similar task (Honicke et al., 2023).

The finding supports the study of Zhang et al. (2020), suggesting a unique contribution of mastery experience on presentation self-efficacy development. At the same time, the study negates the study of Huang et al. (2020), which suggests that mastery experience alone is ineffective in enhancing self-efficacy. Huang claimed that mastery experience is effective only if it is presented with the other three sources of self-efficacy: vicarious experience, social persuasion, and affective and psychological states. However, this study clearly shows that the effect of a mastery experience on self-efficacy development is not the same. The participants had the same number of English presentation tasks, but their level of self-efficacy after the intervention was not the same. Among the groups of presentation tasks, there was a significant difference in the mean self-efficacy scores.

It has long been acknowledged that group work offers many benefits in academic and social contexts. Students can help and strengthen one another and provide mutual assistance, social support, and feedback. All are important for developing confidence. Attitudes and commitment to task completion are

positively affected (Situmorang, 2021). These can be among the reasons why group work in this current study was effective in developing students' self-efficacy. This finding supports the study of Öntaş and Tekindal (2015), suggesting that group work positively affected self-efficacy development. However, debates are going on concerning the heterogeneous/homogeneous groupings. The heterogeneous grouping advocates, such as Webb (1989) and Slavin (1987), have long claimed that heterogeneous grouping is better because both low achievers and high achievers can get mutual benefits. The supporters of homogeneous grouping, such as Fuchs et al. (1998) and Robinson (1990), on the other hand, argued that heterogeneous grouping gives advantages to low achievers but not to high achievers. High achievers in heterogeneous groups worked less effectively and produced lower-quality work. The homogeneous group in this study was proven more effective in developing the ESP undergraduate students' self-efficacy than the heterogeneous group. The students who worked in a homogeneous group seemed to be more easily tuned in with one another and shared similar expectations of performance level. These helped them work more conveniently and share mutual contributions and commitment to task completion. Low achievers working in heterogeneous groups experienced higher anxiety and stress as they had to keep up with high achievers. Being unable to contribute mutually and moving in the same phase as the high achievers lowers their efficacy. Being graded for the exam can be another factor causing heterogeneous groups to be less effective. High achievers in heterogeneous groups seemed worried about the group performance and burdened for not losing points.

English presentation tasks assigned to the ESP students developed their self-efficacy in English presentations as they improved their confidence in delivering the presentations. This is aligned with the study

of Malureanu, et al. (2021), which found that self-confidence significantly predicted self-efficacy as an increase in self-confidence increased the value of self-confidence. Self-confidence implies a person's professed capability to tackle situations effectively on his own without leaning on others. Self-confidence is an optimistic look at oneself (Kalita, 2021) and one's belief and trust in him/her capabilities, which is defined by inter- and intra-personal experiences (Al-Hebaish, 2012).

During the study, the ESP students were assigned several presentation tasks, which improved their experience. Further, the tasks eliminated the fear and anxiety as they got used to having the presentations. One of the students wrote in the reflection that making a presentation was not as threatening as he used to think. Several factors that contributed to the confidence and presentation self-efficacy were the practice that the students did during the semester and the sense of improvement in the aspects of both language and speaking skills.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The current study, conducted over a semester-long, delved into the effects of English presentation tasks on the ESP students' self-efficacy in English presentations. This research, designed in an experiment method, is significant as it sheds light on the potential of these interventions. The study administered presentation tasks in two forms: homogeneous group, and heterogeneous group presentation tasks. After a careful and thorough analysis, the found that presentation tasks had a positive effect on the ESP students' English presentation self-efficacy enhancement. The ESP students' self-efficacy in English presentations developed as they completed the tasks. This was proven a significant difference in self-efficacy between before and after the students received the interventions. In addition, there were significantly different

levels of the ESP students' self-efficacy among groups of students assigned to different presentation tasks. The homogenous group presentation task resulted in higher development in self-efficacy.

The findings of the current study bring some implications for classroom practices. Firstly, since the ability to use the target language communicatively is an important indicator of successful language learning (Fitriati et al., 2021), and given the important roles of communication skills for employability (Bennett et al., 2016; Tucker & McCarthy, 2001), English presentation skills need to be intensively taught to English learners, especially ESP students. Secondly, as many students perceive that doing English presentations is difficult, even threatening (Bankowski, 2010), while presentation self-efficacy is an essential factor in developing presentation performance (Schickel & Ringeisen, 2020), developing presentation self-efficacy in the first place is profoundly urgent. Thirdly, homogeneous grouping is better recommended than heterogeneous grouping, as students in homogeneous groups can tune in to one another and share similar performance expectations much more easily (Hartono et al., 2023).

Relevant to the current study's findings, suggestions are proposed to future researchers, the study program management, syllabus developers, and ESP teachers. Future researchers are expected to conduct more research on the roles of self-efficacy in developing English presentation skills of different types of students. They can explore how the four sources of self-efficacy development (mastery and vicarious experience, social persuasion, and affective states) affect students' self-efficacy development, either individually, in combination with two or three sources, or even the four sources as a whole. To enhance the generalizability of the findings, randomization of participants is highly recommended. The effects of the sources on self-efficacy should be explored not only to

the general students but also to specific students, such as low-achievers, moderate achievers, and high-achievers. More explorations on issues related to presentation self-efficacy, such as presentation performance, presentation confidence, learning efforts, and the effects of gender on presentation self-efficacy, are urgent. The use of more sophisticated tools of data analysis such as structural equation modeling (SEM), path analysis, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), Rash models, and the like can offer a better understanding of the data behaviors.

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