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COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND ACADEMIC SELF-
EFFICACY AMONG ESL UNDERGRADUATES:
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Abstract:

This quasi-experimental study investigated the effect of presentation skills training on communication skills and academic self-efficacy among English as a Second Language (ESL) undergraduates. The main aim of this research design is to find the effect of the training program on the communication skills and academic self-efficacy of the students. A total of 100 students participated in the study, comprising an experimental group ($n = 50$) and a control group ($n = 50$), which did not receive the intervention. Pre-test and post-test assessments were conducted to evaluate students' communication skills and academic self-efficacy before and after the training programme. In addition, a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire was administered to the experimental group to examine students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the training. The findings revealed significant improvements in both communication skills and academic self-efficacy among students who participated in the presentation skills training, whereas only minimal changes were observed in the control group. Participants also reported positive perceptions of the programme, particularly regarding increased confidence, improved presentation competence, reduced public speaking anxiety, and greater preparedness for future academic presentations. The findings suggest that presentation skills training is an effective pedagogical strategy for enhancing communication competence and strengthening academic self-efficacy among ESL undergraduates. The study highlights the

value of incorporating structured presentation skills training into ESL curricula to support students' academic success and professional development.

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Keywords:

Academic Self-Efficacy; Communication Skills; ESL Undergraduates; Presentation Skills Training; Undergraduate Students.



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Introduction

Effective communication skills are necessary for academic success as well as for successful careers. However, it becomes difficult for ESL learners because of language and cultural barriers (Leki, 2007). It becomes difficult for them to effectively communicate in English within academic contexts, which makes it challenging for them during their assignments, presentations, and discussions in class. In the case of higher education institutions, effective oral communication skills become more and more crucial since they form part of academic literacy skills that will enable them to discuss issues, deliver presentations, and interact with scholarly communities (Hyland, 2022). Current research reveals that good communication skills and academic self-efficacy continue to be significant factors in predicting academic success in the case of ESL/EFL students in higher education institutions, especially when engaging in oral presentations and collaborative activities (Kutuk et al., 2023; Tsang, 2020).

In addition, low self-efficacy, which refers to the perception of one's capacity to accomplish certain tasks successfully, may aggravate such issues for the students, affecting their motivation, persistence, and academic achievement (Bandura, 1977). Academic self-efficacy has always been linked to the readiness of students to participate actively in classroom activities, communicate orally, and cope with language barriers. In light of these findings, enhancing the level of self-efficacy of the students has turned into an essential objective in language studies. One of the most popular approaches to teaching that has attracted growing attention is presentation skills training. This approach attempts to enhance the learners' skills to present their ideas efficiently, address the problem of anxiety, and communicate effectively in front of different audiences via proper training and practice (Chou, 2011; Tsang, 2020). Recent research has shown that presentation skills training enhances students' communication competency, public speaking confidence, and classroom participation in particular among the students' taking classes in a second language (Tsang, 2020). More recently, Adnan (2025) has

found out that college students involved in outdoor video presentations showed higher levels of confidence, less presentation anxiety, and better self-efficacy perceptions.

The significance of training for presentation skills goes further than that. First, good communication plays a vital role in achieving academic success since it affects students' participation in class discussion, public speaking, and academic writing (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Second, good communication skills are highly appreciated in the workplace where there is an increasing demand for graduates with good verbal skills (Robles, 2012). Third, training for presentation skills might help ESL students to cope with the challenges related to language and culture through building up their self-efficacy.

Although the above-mentioned advantages could be expected from the study of the effects of such training programs on the self-efficacy of undergraduates who are second-language English speakers, the literature review reveals that current research on the topic lacks sufficient attention paid to the target population of undergraduate ESL students. The majority of previous studies analysing the effect of presentation skills training on self-efficacy involved only native English speakers or mixed groups of students (Chou, 2011; Tsang, 2020). Thus, there is scarce information concerning the influence of the training program on communication skills and academic self-efficacy of ESL students.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of presentation skills training on communication skills and academic self-efficacy among ESL undergraduates.

Specifically, the objectives of this study were to:

1. To investigate the effect of presentation skills training on the communication skills and academic self-efficacy of ESL undergraduates.
2. To examine ESL undergraduates' perceptions of the effectiveness of presentation skills training on their overall academic performance.

To address these objectives, the study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of presentation skills training on the communication skills and self-efficacy of ESL undergraduates?
2. How do ESL undergraduates perceive the effectiveness of presentation skills training on their overall academic performance?

Literature Review

The significance of communication skills in today's world cannot be overemphasised. In fact, academic success, career success, and socialisation all require effective communication skills (Gee, 2014). There is a growing trend that oral communication skills have emerged as an increasingly important attribute of graduates in the twenty-first century. Universities around the world have been focusing more on presentation, public speaking, and interpersonal communication skills since these attributes lead to academic success, employability, and career readiness. Public speaking skills have been increasingly regarded as an integral part of language learning, for they promote communication competence, confidence, and interaction. Speech practice and peer evaluations can improve speaking performance and self-efficacy (Urena-Rodriguez et al., 2025). From the literature, it can be found that even today,

communication skills are among the most essential skills that employers seek from their candidates (National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), 2024).

Nevertheless, ESL students commonly experience difficulties when communicating effectively and confidently using the English language. This negatively affects not only the academic performance but also their ability to participate actively in academic and professional situations (Leki, 2007). It is also worth mentioning that similar results have been obtained concerning Malaysian ESL learners who showed better presentation skills after being taught how to do presentations. At the same time, teaching presentation skills helped to decrease communication apprehension and increase students' positive attitudes towards performing oral communication tasks (Mohd Amin et al., 2022). When it comes to oral communication tasks for students whose first language is different from the language they study, such assignments often cause anxiety and apprehension. Academic settings, for instance, create anxiety around presenting information, making students reluctant, reducing practice opportunities, and influencing their self-perception (Mohd Amin et al., 2022). Thus, it becomes clear why presentation training and a proper learning environment are viewed as ways to lower communication apprehension and motivate language learners to be more active communicators (American Psychological Association, n.d.).

Academic self-efficacy has been recognised as an important motivational determinant in ESL and EAP learning success since those learners who hold greater self-efficacy beliefs tend to be more engaged, persistent and successful in their language learning endeavours (Chen & Ooi, 2025). In recent studies, it was revealed that learners with higher speaking skill self-efficacy exhibited better results in terms of confidence and academic achievement during the performance of oral communication tasks. What is more, peer-assisted learning settings allow increasing self-efficacy and speaking skill performance in learners by means of observation, modelling and reinforcement (Jara & Gutema, 2025). In addition, it has recently been revealed that peer feedback activities have a positive impact on the English public speaking self-efficacy and speaking confidence of university learners. According to Urena-Rodriguez et al. (2025), learners who used different digital platforms for peer feedback activities showed improvements in public speaking self-efficacy.

The mastery experience is an important component of the Social Cognitive Theory of Bandura in building self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy plays a major role in affecting the motivation, emotion, and performance of students in their academic endeavours. It results in the greater achievement of language learning because of the perspective held by Bandura, Chen & Ooi (2025). If the students are able to master the challenging tasks and get constructive feedback on it, then they will develop confidence in performing similar tasks in the future.

Consistent with Bandura's concept of mastery experiences, structured oral presentation training has been shown to reduce public speaking anxiety while simultaneously improving learners' self-esteem and confidence. Rohilla et al. (2025) reported significant reductions in glossophobia and notable improvements in self-esteem among Allied Health students following a six-session oral presentation skills training programme. Similarly, Mohd Amin et al. (2022) reported that presentation skills activities supported learners' self-efficacy development by providing opportunities for practice, feedback, collaboration, and gradual improvement in presentation performance. Recent studies in higher education have reported positive associations between presentation-based learning activities and students' confidence, engagement, communication competence, and self-efficacy. For example, Adnan (2025) found

that outdoor video presentation tasks enhanced university students' confidence, reduced presentation anxiety, and strengthened self-efficacy beliefs. These findings suggest that presentation-based interventions can provide meaningful opportunities for students to develop communication competence while simultaneously improving their confidence in academic contexts.

Presentation skills training develops critical thinking skills and encourages active learning and interaction among peers. Presentation skills training will not only be effective in reducing communication apprehension but also make the learners feel more confident when they speak in public as suggested by more contemporary studies concerning interventions. As stated by Rohilla et al. (2025), students who were trained in oral presentation skills reported that they felt more relaxed while public speaking and gained more respect from themselves after the intervention. This will lead to increased self-confidence in communication and high academic self-efficacy (UNESCO, 2024).

While all these results have been obtained, there is still insufficient information about how precisely presentation skills training affects ESL students' communication and their academic self-efficacy. Research specifically focusing on presentation skills training and self-efficacy among ESL students is limited, despite increased interest in communication skills training (Tsang, 2020). What is more, the methodologies that have been used in previous studies were quite inconsistent, which makes it difficult to draw definite conclusions about the effect of presentation skills training on ESL students. The most common method is self-reporting of self-efficacy; however, it may not always be completely accurate because students themselves can misinterpret their ability (van Dinther et al., 2011). Finally, most of the current studies have used quite limited samples of participants in their experiments (Tsang, 2020).

Additionally, very little research has been done on the interaction between communication skills and academic self-efficacy within the setting of ESL education. It is important to understand the interaction between improved communication skills and self-efficacy so as to be able to design effective intervention strategies for such students. Hence, it is important to know how the development of presentation skills can influence the self-efficacy of ESL students. Even though there have been various studies conducted which prove the interaction between academic self-efficacy and the ESL or EAP learning process, specifically reading, writing, listening, and speaking proficiency, it has been seen that there is limited empirical research done on the influence of presentation skill development on self-efficacy among ESL students.

Methodology

Research Design

A quasi-experimental research design was employed to investigate the effects of presentation skills training on the communication skills and academic self-efficacy of ESL undergraduates. Specifically, a pre-test–post-test control group design was utilised to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. Communication skills and academic self-efficacy were measured before and after the intervention to determine any changes resulting from the training programme. In addition, a researcher-developed questionnaire was administered to the experimental group following the intervention to obtain students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the

presentation skills training programme and its influence on their confidence, communication competence, and overall learning experience.

Participants

The participants that were selected for this research study included ESL undergraduates studying the English for Communication course offered at a private university in Malaysia. Purposeful sampling was used to select participants who met the criteria for this programme. In total, 100 participants, aged between 17 and 26 years old, were involved in the research. These participants were divided into an experimental group (n=50) and a control group (n=50) according to their current class composition. Participants included the first-year undergraduates majoring in different fields, such as psychology, accounting, information technology, design, computer science, and management. Both experimental and control groups participated in a three-hour English for Communication class weekly throughout one semester. Before the experiment, both groups were tested for the measurement of communication skills and academic self-efficacy. Post-experiment testing was carried out to measure the change in communication competence and academic self-efficacy of participants.

Instrumentation

Three researcher-developed instruments were used in this study: (a) an English Communication Skills Assessment, (b) an Academic Self-Efficacy Assessment, and (c) a perception questionnaire. All instruments were developed based on the objectives of the study and informed by the literature on communication competence, academic self-efficacy, and presentation skills training (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 1996; Hsieh, 2004; Chou, 2011; Tsang, 2020). To establish content validity, the instruments were reviewed by two English language education specialists who evaluated the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of the items. Minor revisions were made based on their feedback prior to data collection.

The English Communication Skills Assessment was used as both pre-test and post-test instruments to measure the communication competency level of students. There were two parts of the test. The first part involved a written test assessing basic ideas on presentation skills, such as what should be done to deliver an effective presentation and what should not be done. The number of questions was forty, and each question brought one point to the total score; that is, the part counted for 40 per cent. The second part of the test was individual presentation. This task accounted for 60 per cent of the total score. The evaluation was based on content and organisation of the presentations, the quality of visual materials and body language usage. The total score was 60 points. To compare results of the academic self-efficacy test and perception questionnaire, scores were transformed into the five-point scale.

Following that, the Academic Self-Efficacy Assessment became the second pre-test and post-test tool. The researcher-generated tool included 20 questions intended to assess the level of confidence of the students regarding their ability to perform academic tasks involving communication and succeed academically. The tool was created using the theory of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1997) and literature concerning academic self-efficacy. The participants answered the questions using a five-point Likert scale, where 1 stood for 'Strongly Disagree' and 5 represented 'Strongly Agree'. The higher the score, the more the students believed in their academic self-efficacy. The tool was used before and after the intervention to identify the effect that the presentation skills training programme had on students' self-efficacy

levels. The Academic Self-Efficacy Assessment was structured into three dimensions related to students' confidence in academic tasks, communication, and presentations. Table 1 provides information about the structure of the Academic Self-Efficacy Assessment.

Table 1: Dimensions and Item Distribution of the Academic Self-Efficacy Assessment

Dimension	Number of Items
Confidence in Academic Tasks	8
Communication-related Self-Efficacy	7
Presentation Self-Efficacy	5
Total	20

Third, a researcher-developed 20-item questionnaire was administered to the experimental group. The questionnaire was developed based on Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy framework and informed by previous studies on academic self-efficacy, language learning self-efficacy, and oral presentation skills (Pajares, 1996; Hsieh, 2004; Chou, 2011; Tsang, 2020). Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with higher scores indicating more positive perceptions of the training programme. The questionnaire assessed four dimensions: (a) academic self-efficacy and confidence, (b) presentation self-efficacy and communication competence, (c) perceived academic and professional effect, and (d) training effectiveness, engagement, and satisfaction. The dimensions were derived from the literature on self-efficacy, communication competence, and presentation skills training. Table 2 presents the questionnaire dimensions and the corresponding items associated with each construct.

Table 2: Dimensions and Item Distribution of the Researcher-Developed Questionnaire

Construct	Items
Academic self-efficacy and confidence	1, 17, 19
Presentation self-efficacy and communication competence	2, 3, 7, 9, 10, 15, 16
Perceived academic and professional effect	4, 8, 11
Training effectiveness, engagement, and satisfaction	5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 18, 20

Although content validity was established through expert review, future research should further examine the psychometric properties of the researcher-developed instruments through reliability testing and factor analysis.

Procedure

The study was conducted over one academic semester. At the beginning of the semester, both the experimental and control groups completed the communication skills assessment and academic self-efficacy assessment as pre-tests. Following the pre-test phase, the experimental group participated in a structured presentation skills training programme specifically designed for ESL learners, while the control group continued with regular instruction and classroom activities.

The presentation skills training focused on presentation organisation, effective use of visual aids, delivery techniques, audience engagement strategies, and confidence-building in public speaking. The training incorporated guided instruction, presentation practice, constructive feedback, and opportunities for reflection, consistent with Bandura's (1997) emphasis on mastery experiences as a source of self-efficacy development. At the conclusion of the intervention, both groups completed the communication skills assessment and academic self-efficacy assessment as post-tests. The experimental group also completed the researcher-developed perception questionnaire to evaluate their experiences and perceptions of the training programme.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were used to summarise students' performance and perceptions. Paired-samples t-tests were conducted to compare pre-test and post-test scores within each group and determine the effectiveness of the presentation skills training programme. Questionnaire responses were analysed using descriptive statistics to identify students' perceptions of the training and its effect on communication competence, confidence, and academic self-efficacy. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level.

Ethical Considerations

The ethics of conducting the research on human subjects have been considered during the entire study process. All participants provided informed consent before the collection of data. Participants were clearly informed that their answers would be kept confidential and used only for research. The participation was voluntary, and the participants were told about their right to quit from the research at any time.

Results

Research Question 1: What Is the Effect of Presentation Skills Training on The Communication Skills and Academic Self-Efficacy of ESL Undergraduates?

To determine the effect of presentation skills training on ESL undergraduates' communication skills and academic self-efficacy, pre-test and post-test scores were compared between the experimental and control groups. The experimental group participated in the presentation skills training programme, whereas the control group continued with regular instruction without receiving the intervention. Comparisons of the pre-test and post-test scores were conducted to determine the effectiveness of the presentation skills training programme.

Table 3 presents the communication skills assessment results for both groups, while Table 4 presents the academic self-efficacy scores before and after the intervention.

Table 3: Scores of the Communication Skills Assessment

Group	Pre-test Communication Skills Mean	Post-test Communication Skills Mean	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Experimental	3.7	4.4	<i>t</i> (49)=3.89	<i>p</i> <0.001 (significant)
Control	3.6	3.7	<i>t</i> (49)=0.87	<i>p</i> >0.05 (not significant)

Note. Communication skills scores were converted to a five-point scale for analysis. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level.

The pre-test results indicated that the experimental group ($M = 3.7$) and the control group ($M = 3.6$) had comparable communication skills prior to the intervention. However, the post-test results revealed a notable difference between the two groups. The mean score of the experimental group increased substantially to 4.4, whereas the control group's mean score showed only a marginal increase to 3.7.

The paired-samples *t*-test results further demonstrated the effectiveness of the presentation skills training programme. For the experimental group, the analysis yielded a *t*-value of 3.89 with a *p*-value of less than .001, indicating a statistically significant improvement in communication skills following the intervention. In contrast, the control group recorded a *t*-value of 0.87 and a *p*-value of .067, suggesting that the observed change in scores was not statistically significant.

To examine the effect of presentation skills training on students' academic self-efficacy, an academic self-efficacy questionnaire was administered to both the experimental group and the control group before and after the intervention. Comparisons of the pre-test and post-test scores were conducted to determine changes in students' self-efficacy levels following the training programme. Table 4 presents the academic self-efficacy scores of the experimental and control groups.

Table 4: Academic Self-Efficacy Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Experimental	3.5	4.2	<i>t</i> (49)=3.91	<i>p</i> <0.001 (significant)
Control	3.4	3.5	<i>t</i> (49)=0.82	<i>p</i> >0.05 (not significant)

Note. Higher scores indicate higher levels of academic self-efficacy. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level.

Academic self-efficacy in the experimental group increased significantly from a pre-test mean of 3.5 to a post-test mean of 4.2. The paired-samples t-test indicated a statistically significant increase in academic self-efficacy among students in the experimental group ($t(49) = 3.91, p < 0.001$). The results indicate an increase in academic self-efficacy among students in the experimental group following the intervention. By comparison, the self-efficacy of the control group increased only little, from a pre-test mean of 3.4 to a post-test mean of 3.5. The results of the paired t-test ($t(49) = 0.82, p > 0.05$) show that this shift is not statistically significant, indicating that students' self-efficacy remained mostly stable in the absence of intervention.

Research Question 2: How Do ESL Undergraduates Perceive the Effectiveness of Presentation Skills Training on Their Overall Academic Performance?

To evaluate participants' perceptions of the presentation skills training programme, a researcher-developed 20-item questionnaire was administered to the experimental group at the end of the intervention. The questionnaire assessed students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the training, its influence on their confidence and communication competence, and its contribution to their academic engagement, professional development, and overall learning experience. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, with higher mean scores indicating more positive perceptions of the training programme. Mean scores were calculated for each item to determine the overall level of agreement. Table 5 presents the mean ratings of students' perceptions of the presentation skills training programme.

Table 5: Ratings of Students' Perceptions of the Presentation Skills Training Programme

No.	Item	Mean
1	My general confidence in academic contexts has increased as a result of the presentation skills training.	4.7
2	After the training, I'm more at ease talking in front of my peers.	4.6
3	The training has improved my capacity to arrange my ideas for speeches.	4.5
4	My grades have improved since taking part in the program, I think.	4.3
5	During the session, constructive and useful criticism was provided.	4.8
6	The training sessions were lively and participatory.	4.7
7	Since the course, my fear of public speaking has lessened.	4.4
8	The instruction imparted abilities that are transferable to other academic assignments including group debates and writing.	4.6
9	After the course, I feel more equipped to give academic presentations in the future.	4.7
10	I've found that the training has improved my ability to participate in class discussions.	4.4
11	I think my professional career will benefit from the presenting skills training.	4.8
12	The training sessions were easy to follow and had a clear structure.	4.6

13	The instructors provided me with sufficient assistance throughout the training.	4.8
14	The training's hands-on activities were beneficial to my learning.	4.7
15	My ability to use visual aids in presentations more skillfully has improved as a result of the training.	4.5
16	Through the course, I have improved my time management abilities for creating presentations.	4.4
17	My desire to engage in academic pursuits has increased as a result of the instruction.	4.5
18	To other ESL students, I would suggest the presentation skills training.	4.9
19	In other facets of my academic life, the abilities I gained from the training have increased my confidence.	4.6
20	I am happy with the presenting skills training program overall.	4.8

Note. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with higher mean scores indicating more positive perceptions of the presentation skills training programme.

The questionnaire findings indicate that ESL undergraduates held highly positive perceptions of the presentation skills training programme. All items recorded mean scores above 4.0, demonstrating favourable evaluations of the training and its effect on students' confidence, communication competence, academic engagement, and overall learning experience. Several items obtained mean scores approaching 5.0, indicating strong agreement regarding the benefits of the programme.

Improvement in Confidence and Skills

Students reported notable improvements in confidence and communication competence following the training. High mean scores were recorded for increased confidence in academic contexts (Item 1, $M = 4.7$) and greater comfort when speaking in front of peers (Item 2, $M = 4.6$). Participants also reported improvements in organising ideas for presentations (Item 3, $M = 4.5$) and the transferability of presentation skills to other academic activities (Item 8, $M = 4.6$).

Reduction in Anxiety and Increased Preparedness

Students also perceived the training as beneficial in reducing public speaking anxiety and improving presentation readiness. Positive ratings were reported for reduced fear of public speaking (Item 7, $M = 4.4$) and increased preparedness for future academic presentations (Item 9, $M = 4.7$).

Instructor Support and Engagement

The training programme was positively evaluated in terms of instructional support and student engagement. Participants reported high levels of satisfaction with the usefulness of feedback provided during the training (Item 5, $M = 4.8$), the support received from instructors (Item 13, $M = 4.8$), and the interactive nature of the training sessions (Item 6, $M = 4.7$).

Overall Satisfaction and Recommendations

Overall, students expressed a high level of satisfaction with the presentation skills training programme. The highest mean scores were recorded for willingness to recommend the programme to other ESL students (Item 18, $M = 4.9$) and overall satisfaction with the training experience (Item 20, $M = 4.8$). These findings suggest that participants perceived the programme as beneficial for improving their confidence, communication skills, and academic development.

Discussion

This study investigated the effects of presentation skills training on the communication skills and academic self-efficacy of ESL undergraduates. The findings revealed that students who participated in the presentation skills training programme demonstrated significant improvements in both communication skills and academic self-efficacy compared to those in the control group. In addition, students reported highly positive perceptions of the training programme and its contribution to their confidence, communication competence, and academic development.

The first research question was to determine the impact of presentation skills training on communication skills and academic self-efficacy. It is noteworthy that the findings have shown that there were statistically significant increases in the level of communication skills among the experimental group after the intervention but not for the control group. Thus, the findings are consistent with previous studies that highlight the impact of structured presentation training on helping learners organise their ideas and communicate effectively (Tsang, 2020; Mohd Amin et al., 2022). Moreover, the findings confirm the fact that communication skills may be taught explicitly and improve through practice. Given that ESL learners find it hard to express themselves in English, structured presentations may be used as a means of developing oral communication skills.

Another important finding that needs to be mentioned is the increase in academic self-efficacy among students in the experimental group. Academic self-efficacy rose significantly after the training programme, implying that presentation skills training helped not only improve communication but also enhanced students' belief in their academic abilities. This is consistent with the Social Cognitive Theory of Bandura (1994, 1997), which states that the most powerful source of self-efficacy belief is mastery experiences. Mastery experiences have been achieved by students through the process of practising presentations, receiving constructive feedback and experiencing success in performing various tasks. The results obtained by the authors confirm the conclusions made in other studies proving positive correlations between communication competence, presentation experience and self-efficacy development in language learners (Chen & Ooi, 2025; Jara & Gutema, 2025; Urena-Rodriguez et al., 2025).

Apart from all these findings, the results of this study have also been found to be compatible with earlier studies on the advantages of learning by means of presentation activities to relieve oneself from the fear of public speaking and communication. The subjects became more comfortable while interacting with their fellow students and showed less fear for public speaking after the training session. These kinds of attitudes can be justified in light of the findings of a study conducted by Rohilla et al. (2025). The same conclusions were made by Adnan (2025).

Positive perceptions shared by the participants further substantiate the effectiveness of the intervention. In particular, all questions showed a high mean rating on the questionnaires, which implies strong consensus about the benefits of the programme. Among other things, the students appreciated constructive feedback offered at training sessions, help of the instructors and interactive format of the learning process. Such an outcome suggests the significance of supportive learning conditions as regards increasing the level of learners' motivation. This finding is also consistent with the results of previous studies conducted by Zimmerman and Schunk (2001) who claim that feedback, encouragement, and practice can play a significant role in the development of self-efficacy. Besides, this outcome corroborates the findings of Mohd Amin et al. (2022).

An additional key finding is the transferability of presentation skills to academic contexts other than oral communication. The participants felt that the skills developed in the course of the programme could be used for other academic pursuits, such as participating in classroom discussions, completing group projects and writing essays. Such a result reinforces the claim that the ability to communicate effectively is an essential academic skill, which is instrumental in gaining success in other academic contexts and career advancement (Robles, 2012; NACE, 2024).

The results are also a way of solving an important research gap noted in the literature. Research that has been done in the past has looked at communication skills and self-efficacy individually. However, very few researchers have analysed these concepts together within the setting of ESL education among undergraduates (Tsang, 2020; Chen & Ooi, 2025). In the current study, the results show that there is a positive impact of training on presentation skills on both concepts.

However, there are certain limitations of the current research that have to be noted. Firstly, the current study was carried out in one particular university only; therefore, the generalisability of results to other ESL learners is questionable. Secondly, the time span of implementation of the intervention was rather short, which means that the possibility of assessing the sustainability of changes cannot be assessed. Finally, some of the measurements used the perceptions of participants as an indicator; thus, their subjectivity might affect results.

Overall, the study's findings demonstrate that presentation skills training is an effective instructional strategy for enhancing communication competence and academic self-efficacy among ESL undergraduates. By providing structured opportunities for practice, feedback, and performance, presentation skills training can support both the linguistic and psychological development of ESL learners. These findings suggest that presentation-focused interventions should be considered an integral component of ESL undergraduate programmes aimed at fostering confident, competent, and academically successful learners.

Implications of the Study

The outcomes obtained through the current study have some pedagogical implications regarding ESL instruction in higher education institutions. First of all, the research findings show an increase in students' communication skills and self-efficacy associated with presentations; therefore, it is necessary to incorporate presentation skill training into the ESL undergraduate curriculum. Instructors are expected to give their students sufficient time for practising skills, getting feedback, and giving presentations to increase both their communication skills and their confidence while communicating in the academic environment.

One more implication for educators involves the creation of a positive and interactive learning environment that will encourage students to participate actively in the process and will decrease the level of communication anxiety. As far as curriculum development is concerned, presentation-based activities should be included in different courses to allow students to develop transferable skills that are required for academic success as well as for employability and professional readiness. Moreover, the results confirm the Social Cognitive Theory proposed by Bandura.

Limitations of the Study

There are multiple limitations of this study that should be taken into account while analysing the results. Firstly, the sample consisted of students from one higher education institution only, so the results cannot be generalized to other ESL learners and other learning environments. Secondly, the intervention was conducted during one semester, and thus it is difficult to state whether the progress in communication skills and academic self-efficacy can be maintained for a longer time. Thirdly, even though pre- and post-assessments were conducted, there were cases where the data collected was from students' self-perception that might be skewed because of social desirability factors. Finally, the research has concentrated on the two dependent variables, but other important independent variables such as academic performance, communication apprehension or professional skills remain unexamined.

Future Research

Several directions for further research arise out of this study. Firstly, future research should be conducted using longitudinal designs to determine whether the gains in terms of improvement in communication skills and self-efficacy acquired due to presentation skills training have lasting effects. Secondly, a broader sample from different universities would enhance the generalisability of the results of the current study. Thirdly, researchers could compare different kinds of presentation training, such as face-to-face, online, technology-enhanced, and video-based exercises, to see how they influence the improvement of communication skills and self-efficacy among university students. Furthermore, research techniques such as interviews, group discussions, and reflective diaries can be utilised in an attempt to gain more insight about the perspective of the students on how they developed presentation skills. In terms of future research, the connection between presentation skills development training and other factors such as classroom performance, employability skills, critical thinking skills, communication apprehension, and class attendance can be considered.

Conclusion

This research examined how the presentation skills training programme affected the communication skills and academic self-efficacy of ESL undergraduates. It was discovered that the participants who received the training made considerable progress in their communication skills and academic self-efficacy compared to the participants of the control group. In addition, the participants evaluated the training positively, which means that it raised their confidence, reduced anxiety related to public speaking, and provided them with necessary preparation for future academic presentations. In other words, one can state that the results of the study prove the assumption that presentation skills training may provide ESL students with useful learning opportunities, contributing to the development of their communication skills

and self-efficacy. Overall, the study is a valuable contribution to the growing body of literature on presentation training programmes in higher education institution.

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