

# ESL POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' SELF-PERCEIVED PERFORMANCE IN ORAL PRESENTATION: CASE OF MAHARAJA KRISHNAKUMARSINHJI BHAVNAGAR UNIVERSITY

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**Abstract** - Oral presentation is one of the most important tools that is employed to assess learning at higher education. Students in many educational fields are required to make oral presentations. However, many students may find making oral presentations in front of peers and instructors challenging. In order to assess the extent to which students are able to make effective oral presentations, different frameworks are followed including self-regulated learning. In self-regulated learning, self- and peer assessments are used. Thus, this study investigates self-perceived performance among L2 postgraduate students in one University in India in order to determine their needs in oral presentations. The research employed mixed method design. Hence, the data were collected by means of self-assessment questionnaire and classroom observation. The data from self-assessment questionnaire were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics and were computed using the statistical package SPSS 22. The results revealed that students evaluated themselves a little above fairly on the whole in oral presentation. They believed that their non-verbal skills were below fairly, their abilities with regard to content were fairly and their verbal skills were above fairly. The results also indicated that students scored higher in peer assessment than in self-assessment and that there is no statistically significant difference in self-assessment with regard to gender and level of study. These results have implication for teaching and assessing oral presentation.

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**Keywords** - Assessment, Oral Presentation, Peer-Assessment, Self-Assessment, Self-Regulated Learning.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Oral presentation is one of the most important tools that is employed to assess learning in higher educations. It can be used to assess language competence in foreign language classroom (Al-Issa & Al-Qubtan, 2010). It can also be used to evaluate students' language skills and knowledge in many fields including literature, business, engineering etc. The objectives of using oral presentation to assess learning are many. One of them is that it prepares students for professional or academic life. For instance, Murillo-Zamorano & Montanero (2018) points out that oral communication skills are critically important in nowadays-globalized world, where employers need new graduates with good oral communication skills. Therefore, tertiary students in many fields are required to make oral presentations. However, many students are anxious about making oral presentations. Alwi & Sidhu (2013) argue that many tertiary students become nervous with the thought of having to stand in front of their peer to make oral presentations. In addition, Chan (2011) point out that many experts and employers agree that many graduates enter the job market with gaps in English oral communication competence. In this context, it is important to conduct a need analysis to analyse students' self-perceived competence in making oral presentations. This may provide an understanding of the gaps that students believe they have in oral presentations, particularly gaps in presentation skills (non-verbal and verbal skills and skills related organization of content and content

itself). The results from this self-assessment may be supplemented by those from peer assessment in order to design a course that meet the needs and the requirements of the students.

Many studies on self-evaluation to examine the needs of students in oral presentations are conducted. For instance, the study by Alwi & Sidhu (2013) compares the results from self-assessment and educators' assessment in order to evaluate the needs of the students. The study by Ootoshi & Heffernen(2008) explores the use of peer assessment to determine the factors that predict effective oral presentation in EFL classroom. Although these studies provide an understanding of the importance of the use of self-evaluation and peer assessment to evaluate the needs of the students in oral presentations, they take oral presentation as independent skills. The main argument in these studies is that students can learn these skills by attending oral presentation class. They do not focus on how these skills are evaluated through self- and peer assessment within a particular discipline. In addition, in Indian context, there are limited studies on self-evaluation to analyse the needs of tertiary students. The present study fills this gap. Therefore, this study investigates self-perceived performance among students making oral presentation in literature studies. It compares the results from self-perceived assessment and the results from peer assessment. It also analyses whether there is a significant difference in self-perceived performance with regard to gender and level of study.

It addresses the following research questions:

1. How do ESL postgraduate students perceive their own performance in oral presentation?
2. Is there any significant difference in self-perception of performance with regard to gender and level of study?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is increasingly recognized that oral presentations are an important feature of tertiary education in different parts of the world (Alwi & Sidhu, 2013; De Grez, Valcke & Roozen, 2009). Their importance lies in the fact that students need to acquire oral communication skills in order to function effectively in academic and professional settings (Elfering, 2012; Živković, 2014). It is argued that having oral presentation skills increase students' competitiveness in the job market (Murillo-Zamorano & Montanero, 2018) and improve students' ability to enter into debate and sustained reasoning in academic settings (Morley, 2006). As a result, students in higher education need to develop different oral presentation skills.

Morreale et al (2007) points out that these presentation skills are of many types. They include selection of the content of the presentation depending on the context, making the purpose of the presentation clear, appropriate organization of ideas, the inclusion of other semiotic resources (video, images), the use of grammatically correct language, and the use of non-verbal aspects (gestures, body movement, etc.), and so forth. In order to assess students' ability to integrate these skills in oral presentation, different frameworks are followed. One of these frameworks is self- and peer assessment. Self-assessment involves students assessing their own work and peer assessment involve students evaluating the work of their peer (Hanrahan & Isaacs, 2001). Many studies show that self-and peer assessment allows students to self-monitor their own progress and to participate constructively in collaborative effort (Hanrahan & Isaacs, 2001 ; Siow, 2015). They also show that these forms of assessment can help students find problems and solutions by themselves (Alwi & Sidhu, 2013). This means that self and peer assessment can be used in order to help students monitor their progress, or find out by themselves what they are able to do in oral presentations.

Many studies on self- and peer assessment in oral presentations are conducted. For instance, the study by De Grez, Valcke & Roozen (2012), investigates the effectiveness of self-and peer assessment in comparison with teachers' assessment). The findings in this study revealed that self-assessment scores are higher than teachers' score. These findings agree with the results in the study by Campbell (2001) in which the findings revealed that students scored higher in self-assessment than in peer assessment and that there was positive correlation between peer assessment and

teachers' assessment in terms of the scores. Other studies, such as the study by Ootshi & Heffernan (2008) investigates the use of peer assessment to determine the factors predicting effective oral presentation. The findings in this study revealed that factors predicting effective oral presentations are clarity of speech and voice quality, correctness of the language and interaction with the audience. However, studies are limited, which investigate how students self-evaluate in order to determine their needs in oral presentation.

## III. RESEARCH METHODS

### 3.1. Context of the study

The study was conducted at one University in India in the department of English. This department offers postgraduate course in literature studies. Students in this department are involved in many activities including oral presentations. In fact, students are required to make oral presentations towards the end of each semester. The objectives of these presentations are twofold. First, they are used to assess students' ability to make oral presentations. Hence, students are evaluated on their non-verbal skills (delivery skills), verbal skills (language) and content (organization and knowledge). Second, they are used to assess students' ability to demonstrate academic knowledge orally. These presentations are assessed by peers on the basis of assessment rubric developed by the head of department. It is important to note that these presentations activities follow those in other universities in India.

### 3.2. Research Design

The study adopted a mixed method. It followed a quantitative approach to research and employed a descriptive survey design. It also followed a qualitative research designed and used classroom observation. The survey was intended to measure self-perceived performance among postgraduate students in literature.

### 3.3. Participants

The participants in this study were postgraduate students in the department of English at Maharaja Krishnakumarsinhji Bhavnagar University. The total number of students were sixty-six. Thirty-three of them were in semester two while thirty-three were in semester four. Fifteen of them were male while 51 were female.

### 3.4. Research Instrument

The research instruments employed in this study were survey questionnaire and classroom observation. The survey questionnaire consisted of a self-assessment questionnaire adapted from the assessment rubric developed by the head of department and from Alwi & Sidhu (2013). The self-assessment questionnaire consisted of nineteen items. Of the nineteen items, six

items were concerned with self-assessments of nonverbal skills, four items with self-assessment of verbal skills and nine items with the assessment of the content. The observation was conducted while students were making presentations. The observation (appendix 1) was intended to supplement the results from the questionnaire.

### 3.5. Data collection and analysis procedures

To collect the data, the researcher himself administered the questionnaire and conducted the observation. All the students were requested to complete the questionnaire. The total number of completed copies obtained after administration added up to 66.

To analyze the data, the researcher assigned scores for each items. The items in self-assessment were assigned the following scores : (1) poor, (2) limited, (3) fair, (4) good, (5) excellent. The data were analyzed by means of descriptive and inferential statistics. The statistics were computed using the statistical package for social sciences SPSS 22.

## IV. THE RESULTS

### 4.1. Students' perceived performance

In table 1, students' self-perceived performance in making oral presentations was indicated for all the presentation skills. Overall, students evaluated themselves a little above fairly (mean = 3.1408, SD = .70655). In the presentation skills, they rated themselves below fairly in nonverbal skills (mean = 2.9641, SD = .80226), fairly in content organization (mean = 3.0335, SD = .75508), and above fairly in verbal skills (mean = 3.4206, SD = .83137). They evaluated themselves the highest in verbal skills and the lowest in nonverbal skills. This shows that students are confident that they possess verbal skills, which they use to make oral presentations.

Overall skills	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Nonverbal Skills	65	1.33	4.83	2.96	.803
Verbal Skills	63	1.25	5	3.42	.831
Content	63	1.11	4.89	3.03	.755
Overall Pernce	63	1.4	4.77	3.14	.706

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of students' overall perceived performance

These results from self-assessment are compared with the results from peer assessment. Table 2 presents the results from self-assessment and peer assessment. On the table, it is clear that students scored slightly higher in peer assessment (mean = 3.3679, SD = 61748) than in self-assessment (mean = 3.1408, SD = .70655). This shows that students evaluated

themselves a little lower than when they are evaluated by their peer.

	N	Min	Max	Mean	S D
Self-assessment	63	1.40	4.77	3.14	.706
Peer assessment	66	1.88	4.50	3.36	.617

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of self-assessment and peer assessment

### 4.1.1. Students' self- perceived performance in non-verbal skills.

Table 3 presents detailed students' self-perceived performance in non-verbal skills. After the statistical analysis, the results indicate that students evaluated themselves below fairly in the following sub-skills- helping the audience visualize (Mean = 2.84, SD = .99603), making appropriate gesture (Mean = 2.72, SD = .88657) and making powerful impression on the audience (Mean = 2.92, SD = 1.0651). The results also show that students were of the opinion that their abilities to maintain eye contact with the audience (Mean = 3.00, SD = 1.0524), to display self-confidence about the topic (Mean = 3.18, SD = .99087) and to hold the attention of the audience from the introduction to the conclusion (Mean = 3.10, SD = .9702) ranged from fairly to little above fairly. These results show that students rated themselves below and above fairly in non-verbal skills. These results are supported by the classroom observation. During presentations, some students were able to make eye contact with the audience, to display confidence while presenting, but others were not.

Items in the questionnaire	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. Ability to maintain eye contact with the audience	66	1.00	5.00	3.00	1.05
2. Ability to make body movement to help the audience visualize	66	1.00	5.00	2.84	.996
3. Ability to make appropriate gestures during presentation	66	1.00	5.00	2.72	.886
4. Ability to make powerful impression on the audience	65	1.00	5.00	2.92	1.06
5. Ability to display self-confidence about the topic while I am presenting	66	1.00	5.00	3.18	.990
6. Ability to hold the attention of the audience from the introduction to the conclusion	65	1.00	5.00	3.10	.97

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of students' self-perceived performance in non-verbal skills

### 4.1.2. Students' self-perceived performance in verbal skills

Table 4 presents detailed students' self-perceived performance in verbal skills. The results on the table indicate that students evaluated themselves above fairly in all the sub-skills. The results also show that students believed that their abilities to pronounce words correctly and precisely (M = 3.38, SD = .9133) and to use appropriate words relevant to the topic (M = 3.34, SD = 1.026) were lower than their abilities in other sub-skills. This is supported by the result from classroom observation. Some students had difficulties in pronunciation, grammar and spelling. This is also in accord with the comments of teachers after presentations. After presentations, they indicated some of the grammatical, pronunciation and spelling errors that some students made.

Items in the questionnaire	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
7. Ability to use clear voice so that the audience can hear the presentation	65	1.00	5.00	3.47	.95
8. Ability to pronounce terms correctly and precisely during presentation.	65	1.00	5.00	3.38	.91
9. Ability to use correct spelling and grammar	65	1.00	5.00	3.46	.96
10. Ability to use appropriate words relevant to the topic during presentation	64	1.00	5.00	3.34	1.026

**Table 4 : Descriptive statistics of students' perceived performance in verbal skills**

#### 4.1.3. Students' self-perceived performance with regard to content.

Table 5 presents detailed students' self-perceived performance with regard to content. The results on the table indicate that students were of the opinion that their abilities to present reasoned argument (M = 2.85, SD = 1.052) and to appropriately cite and write the bibliography (M = 2.39, SD = 1.115) ranged from below fairly to above limited respectively. Although it is indicated that students evaluated a little above fairly in other sub-skills, they believe that their abilities to organize supporting points through the use of logical connectors (M = 3.00, SD = .9759), to draw on external sources to support the argument developed in the presentation (M = 3.03, SD = 1.031), to present well-researched material (M = 3.07, SD = 1.028), to reinforce the main argument before ending the presentation (M = 3.11, SD = 1.064), and to make a good thesis statement in the introduction (M = 3.12, SD = .9417) were lower than their abilities in making clear the main points (M = 3.35, SD = .9149), and in signaling the conclusion by the use of some terms (M = 3.32, SD = 1.039). This is supported by the results from the classroom observation. During the observation, it was clear that students were able to signal the conclusion by the use of some terms, but many of them were not able to state the thesis statement or the objective of the

presentations at the beginning of the presentation. It was clear during observation that many of students were not able to cite sources and to support the argument developed in the presentation by drawing on external sources.

Items in the questionnaire	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
11. Ability to make a good thesis statement or objective of the presentation in the introduction	63	1.00	5.00	3.12	.9417
12. Ability to make clear main points (topic sentences)	64	1.00	5.00	3.35	.9149
13. Ability to organize supporting point through the use of logical connectors (therefore, in addition, etc.)	64	1.00	5.00	3.00	.9759
14. Ability to signal the conclusion by the use of some terms (to conclude, in conclusion, to sum up, etc.)	64	1.00	5.00	3.32	1.039
15. Ability to reinforce the main argument before ending the presentation	63	1.00	5.00	3.11	1.064
16. Ability to present well-researched material	64	1.00	5.00	3.07	1.028
17. Ability to insert and draw from external sources to support the argument developed in the presentation.	63	1.00	5.00	3.03	1.031
18. Ability to present reasoned argument	64	1.00	5.00	2.85	1.052
19. Ability to appropriately cite and write the bibliography	63	1.00	5.00	2.39	1.115

**Table 5: Descriptive statistics of students' perceived performance with regard to content**

#### 4.2. Differences in self-perceived performance with regard to gender and level of study

The results in this section indicate whether there is a statistically significant difference in self-perceived performance with regard to gender and level of study. In order to obtain these results, the inferential statistics, namely, the independent sample t-test was performed.

##### 4.2.1. Difference in self-perceived performance with regard to gender

On table 6, the results indicate although female and male students evaluated themselves fairly in overall performance, female students rated themselves a little higher (Mean = 3.18, SD = .68118) than male students (Mean = 3.00, SD = .79098). This probably means that female students are more confident in their ability to make oral presentations. In order to test whether such a difference is statistically significant, an independent samples T-test was conducted. The results on the table 7 show that the difference in self-perceived performance between male and female students is not statistically significant (T = -.875, df = 61, two-tailed P = .385).

Sex	N	Mean	S.D.S.	Error	Mean
Overall self-perceived performance	Male	15	3.00	.790	.204
	Female	48	3.18	.681	.098

**Table 6 : Descriptive statistics of self-perceived performance with regard to gender**

Levene's test for equality of variance

Equality of variance	T-test for equality of variance
95% Confidence interval of the difference	
F (2-tailed)	Sig. #nce
T #nce	Df
Sig. Lower	Sig. Upper
Mean	Sdt.Error

Equal variance assumed .606 439 -.875 61 .385 .18318 .20940 -.60189 -.23553

Equal variance not assumed -808 20.9 428 -.18318 .22666 -.65468 -.28832

**Table 7 : Independent samples t-test for self-perceived performance with regard to gender.**

#### 4.2.2. Difference in self-perceived performance with regard to level of study

On the table 8, the results show that students in semester two and students in semester four evaluated themselves a little above fairly. However, students in semester II rated themselves a little higher (Mean = 3.25, SD = .73467) than students in semester four (Mean = 3.03, SD = .67389). This probably means students in semester two were more confident in their ability to make oral presentations than students in semester four were. In order to analyze whether such a difference is statistically significant, an independent samples T-test was conducted. The SPSS output on the table 9 show that the difference in self-perceived performance between students in semester two and students in semester four is not statistically significant (T = 1.245, df = 61, two-tailed P = .218).

Level	N	Means	D	S. Error	Mean
Overall self-perceived Performance	Sem II	30	3.25	.73467	.13413
	Sem IV	33	3.03	.67389	.11731

**Table 8: Descriptive statistics of self-perceived performance with regard to level of study**

Levene's test for Equality of variance

95% Confidence interval of the difference

F (2-tailed)	Sig. #nce	T #nce	Df	Sig. Lower	Sig. Upper	Mean	Sdt.Error
Equal variance assumed	.191	.664	1.245	61	.218	.22085	.17745
Equal variance not assumed			1.239	59.03	.220	.22085	.17819

**Table 9 : Independent samples T-test for self-perceived performance with regard to level of study**

## V. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The objectives of this study was to investigate self-perceived performance among L2 postgraduate in oral presentation in order to determine their needs. It compares the results from self-assessment to the results from peer assessment. It also analyzes differences in self-perceived performance with regard to gender and level of the study. The results obtained for the first objective indicate that students evaluate themselves a little above fairly on the whole. Students were of the opinion that their non-verbal skills (delivery) were below fairly, their abilities with regard to content (organization and content) were fairly and their verbal skills (language) were above fairly. These results are a little bit in accord with the results in the study by Alwi & Sidhu (2013). In their study, students evaluated themselves above fairly on the whole. However, findings of their study also revealed that students believed that their non-verbal skills were below good, their verbal skills were below fairly and their abilities with regard to content were above fairly. The differences in results between this study and the study by Alwi & Sidhu (2013) are due to the fact that the students involved in this study were L2 postgraduate students and the students involved in their study were L2 undergraduate students. Nevertheless, the results in this study revealed that students feel that they need to develop delivery skills, skills related to contents and language skills. This is in accord with the finding in the study by Ootshi & Heffernen (2008). The findings in his study showed that students needed to develop delivery skills and language skills in order to make an effective oral presentation.

The results obtained for the second objective indicate that students scored a little bit higher in peer assessment than in self-assessment. These results are in contrast with the results in the study by De Grez, Valcke & Roozen (2012) & Campbell et al (2001). In their studies, the findings revealed that students

scored higher in self-assessment than in peer assessment and that there is a positive correlation between peer and instructors assessment. Nevertheless, the results in this study foreground other researchers' (for instance, Campbell et al, 2001 ; De Grez, Valcke & Roozen, 2009 ; Miller, 2003) ideas that self- and peer assessment can be used for self-regulated learning and to find out the needs of the students in oral presentation.

The results for the third objective indicate that female students evaluated themselves higher than male students did, and students in semester four rated themselves lower than did students in semester two. However, the independent T-test indicates that these differences are not statistically significant. These results are in contrast with the findings in the study by Langan et al (2008). In their study, it was found that female students evaluated themselves lower than male students did and that the difference in self-evaluation between male and female was statistically significant.

## CONCLUSION

This study investigated self-perceived performance among L2 postgraduate students in order to determine their needs in oral presentations. It compared the results from self- and peer assessment and analysed differences in self-perceived performance in terms of gender and level of study. Major findings indicated that students evaluated themselves a little above fairly on the whole in oral presentation. They believed that their non-verbal skills were below fairly, their abilities with regard to content were fairly and their verbal skills were above fairly. Therefore, it can be argued that students were of the opinion that they still needed to develop non-verbal skills and skills related to content. This means that they need an oral presentation course, which can help them develop these skills. The results also showed that students scored a little bit higher in peer assessment than in self-assessment. Indeed, it can be concluded that self- and peer assessment can be used to determine the needs of the students in oral presentation. In addition, the results indicated that there is no statistically significant difference in self-assessment with regard to gender and level of study. Therefore, it can be inferred that students were of the opinion that they were not yet good or excellent at oral presentations and that they still need to develop some oral presentation skills.

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## APPENDIX 1

### Classroom Observation Protocol

The classroom observation protocol was organized as follows.

#### Students' delivery skills

- Eye contact with the audience
- Body movement and gestures
- Self-confidence about the topic
- Holding the attention of the audience from the beginning to the end of the presentation
- Students' language skills
- Correct spelling and grammar
- Pronunciation of words
- Appropriate words relevant to the topic
- Students' organization skills

- Organization of the content of the presentation
- The use of logical connectors.
- to signal the thesis statement or the objective of the presentation at the beginning
- to reinforce the objective in the conclusion of the presentation
- Students' knowledge about the topic
- well reasoned argument
- well researched material
- Inclusion of external sources to support arguments developed in the slides.

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