

# Influential Factors of Presentation Self-Efficacy in Chinese High School Students

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## **Abstract**

Most of Chinese students in international high school face the task of presenting an oral presentation in Chinese and English. Their presentation performances have implications on their academic achievements, especially for those who plan to study abroad in the future. In order to enhance the ability in presentation, it is important to understand students' self-efficacy in presentation. This study adopted a mixed-method approach. Questionnaire survey was conducted with 74 Chinese students (39 boys and 35 girls, Mean age:15.6) to measure their self-efficacy in both Chinese and English presentation. The result showed students' self-efficacy in English presentation is significantly lower than that of Chinese presentation but there is no significant gender difference in the self-efficacy of both Chinese and English presentations. Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six participants (3 boys and 3 girls) to carry out an in-depth investigation into the influential factors to their self-efficacy. The findings showed that in contrast to Bandura's theory of self-efficacy sources, watching models' performances or receiving other's encouragement and persuasion is not enough to improve self-efficacy in presentations. Beyond Bandura's sources, many other influential factors including students' personalities and contextual factors also affect students' self-efficacy. Moreover, from the interview, it showed that all the participates hold a growth mindset, which is important for the development of self-efficacy in learning in Chinese students. These findings contribute to future research on the development of presentation self-efficacy in Chinese students.

**Keywords:** *Chinese students, English as a second language, presentation, self-efficacy, semi-structured interview, mixed-method*

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Background**

With the rapid development of Chinese society in recent years, there has been an increasing number of Chinese students who want to study abroad to a better education. Thus, many international schools have been built in China, designing for students who wish to go aboard to study in the future. The schools teach AP, IB, or A-level courses rather than using the Chinese curriculum. In this paper, the Chinese students who get prepared to study abroad in these international high schools are referred to as international high school (IHS) students.

One of the biggest challenges for IHS students is that they are required to give both English and Chinese presentations in everyday school life. They need to give a presentation in class or for exams. Teachers judge the quality of their presentations, and the mark affects their GPA. The ability to give effective presentations is essential for IHS students, especially for achieving their future success when they study abroad. Therefore, most of IHS teachers include tasks or assignment of presentation in their daily teaching. It is of paramount importance to help IHS students to improve their ability to deliver excellent presentations.

In social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is a person's belief that she or he is capable of performing a particular task successfully (Bandura, 1977, 1997). A student's self-efficacy influences his perception, motivation, and performance (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy of students plays a vital role in their academic motivation, learning, school engagement and achievement (Caraway, Tucker, Reinke, & Hall, 2003; Cheng & Westwood, 2007; Usher & Pajares, 2006). The self-efficacy of presentation is very important to IHS students because self-efficacy of presentation is an essential element of a successful presentation, which enables students could show their report contents and skills to its full potential. Thus, in order to improve their ability in presentation, it is necessary to focus on the self-efficacy of this task. However, there is no research on the Chinese students' self-efficacy in Chinese presentation or English presentation.

### **1.2. Previous Research**

Since previous studies have not sufficiently explored the topic of study, only a few relevant studies can help us to understand the topic. For this study, one hypothesis is that Chinese students will find it is more challenging to do an English presentation, since English is their second language. One previous research showed that there is an advantage in oral language proficiency in English-as-a-first-language

students compared with English-as-a-second-language students (Geva & Zadeh (2006). The literature on international postgraduates indicated that students have straightforwardly described a lack of confidence for oral English presentations (Adams (2004). Moreover, Ferris (2012) reported that English-as-a-second-language students had difficulties in meeting the requirement in English speaking skills. These studies show that language could be an influential factor for Chinese students' self-efficacy.

Another factor that has been extensively studied by numerous researchers is gender, although inconsistent findings have been reported depending on which domain the study focuses on. For example, Diseth, Meland, and Bredablik (2014) investigated academic self-efficacy in Norwegian students in order to test whether they may differ according to gender. The result showed girls got the better academic achievement, but they reported lower levels of self-efficacy than boys. Similarly, Öztürka and Gürbüz (2012) found that female students got more anxious and had more difficulties than their male counterparts while speaking in English. On the other hand, a study in middle school students' science self-efficacy showed that students' science self-efficacy does not change according to their gender (Kıran and Sungur, 2012). Therefore, it is worthwhile to investigate whether there is a gender difference in Chinese students' self-efficacy of presentation. All of these investigations into self-efficacy in particular academic tasks that have been studied were about western students (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985), but the literature shows that little investigation has been conducted in order to improve self-efficacy in presentations of Chinese students.

Given the powerful influence of self-efficacy on students' development, it is necessary for teachers, parents, as well as students themselves to investigate the influential factors of self-efficacy. Besides, considering the significance of presentation for Chinese HIS, researchers and educators are eager to know their self-efficacy level in presentation and to understand what contributes to its development.

### ***1.3. Self-efficacy and Bandura's Four Sources of Self-efficacy***

As mentioned earlier, self-efficacy is defined as individuals' beliefs of their ability to accomplish a specific task (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (1998), there are four significant sources of information used by individuals when forming self-efficacy judgments, including mastery experience, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states.

Mastery experiences are individuals' accomplishments. Previous successful experience boosts self-efficacy, while failures lower it. Mastery experiences are recognized as the most powerful way to change one's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995).

The second source of self-efficacy comes from the observation of the successes and failures of others,

especially people who are regarded as role models. People are likely to strengthen their beliefs in mastering one task after seeing others accomplish the tasks.

The third source of self-efficacy is social persuasion. When people such as parents, teachers, or peers encourage a person, his belief that he can succeed in this task can be strengthened. Vice versa.

Last but not least, people's interpretation of their physical and emotional states also affects their self-efficacy. For example, if they regard to stress and anxiety as signs of poor performance and positive emotions like excitement and expectation as signs of successful performance, their self-efficacy will be decreased or boosted accordingly.

### ***1.4. Current Study***

The aim of this study is:

- 1) To explore the difference of self-efficacy in English presentations and Chinese presentations among Chinese international high school (e.g. the difference between Chinese and English presentation; and gender difference.)
- 1) To find out how do Bandura's four source of self-efficacy influence Chinese HIS students' self-efficacy in presentation.
- 2) To find out other influential factors in students' self-efficacy in presentation beyond Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy.

## **2. METHODS**

### ***2.1. Research Design***

This research adopted a mixed-method approach (e.g., survey research and semi-structured interview). Survey research was conducted to answer the first research question, that is, whether there are a) differences between self-efficacy in English presentations and Chinese presentations among Chinese IHS students and b) differences between male and female students.

Meanwhile, Semi-structured interviews were conducted to address another two research questions, namely, "How do Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy influence students' self-efficacy in a presentation?" and "Are there any new factors that can affect Chinese high school students in presentations?".

As mentioned earlier, little previous research has been conducted to investigate Chinese students' self-efficacy in presentation; this is an innovative research topic. Therefore, the semi-structure interview allows the researcher to find new information and gives back the voice to participants. According to Usher and Pajares (2008), existing quantitative research mainly focused on the degree to which the four sources predict self-efficacy, which may have oversimplified the complexity of self-efficacy development. However, in the semi-structured interview, a

few predetermined questions are asked, and then follow-up questions would be asked according to the answers of participants, which allows considerable flexibility in interviews. For this reason, by conducting the semi-structured interview, participants are allowed the opportunity to provide more detailed and in-depth information on their perceptions and interpretation of the sources of self-efficacy.

By combining the two methods, this study attempts to provide an in-depth understanding of Chinese high school students' presentation self-efficacy.

## 2.2. Participants

Participants of the study were recruited from a Chinese international high school in Chengdu, which is a modern and developed city in Sichuan province. The reason why

*Table 1 Demographic Information of the Six Participants*

participant	Gender	Age	CSE	ESE
MHCHE1	M	16	94	100
MHCHE2	M	16	95	90
MLCLE1	M	16	45	32
FHCLE1	F	15	81	49
FHCHE1	F	15	92	85
FHCME2	F	16	87	76

Note: "M" indicates male; "F" indicates female; "HC" indicates high self-efficacy in Chinese presentation; "LC" indicates low self-efficacy in Chinese presentation; "HE" indicates high self-efficacy in English presentation; "LE" indicates low self-efficacy in English presentation. "ME" indicates middle self-efficacy in English presentation.

## 2.3. Materials

### 2.3.1. Presentation Self-efficacy Scales

Two separated scales were developed to measure the self-efficacy of Chinese and English presentations respectively. The scales of self-efficacy beliefs were developed in Chinese by the researcher in accordance with Bandura's (2006) guideline of constructing self-efficacy scales. According to Bandura's guideline, developing specific items fitted with the situation and circumstance was more credible. Both the two scales consist of ten items which represent presentation tasks at different difficulty levels. The items were based on the authentic presentation tasks that participants face in school, like the daily book sharing or presentation examinations. All of these items reflected the real situation of students. For example, "When I was doing an English presentation, I can express all my ideas clearly." Participants were required to rate the extent to which they were certain that they can accomplish each task by choosing a number ranging from '0' (cannot do at all) to '10' (highly certain can do). The overall score of the ten items was regarded as self-efficacy level. The internal

consistency of items was 0.966 (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) for the scale of English presentation self-efficacy and 0.955 (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) for the scale of Chinese presentation self-efficacy.

selecting the school is that the courses of school-owned programs that require students to do several presentations in both Chinese and English every semester. In the survey research, 74 participants in grade 10 (mean age= 15.6 years (SD= 0.575), 39 boys and 35 girls) completed two questionnaires of self-efficacy beliefs in Chinese presentation and English presentation. All participants are learning English as a second language and preparing to study abroad after graduating from high school. In the semi-structured interview, 6 Participants (3 boys and 3 girls) were selected randomly from the participants who had finished the questionnaires of self-efficacy in presentation. They volunteered to take part in the interview. They were interviewed about their self-efficacy in presentation and their experience of doing presentation. Table 1 shows the demographic information of participants in the interview study.

### 2.3.2. Semi-structured Interview Protocol

The interview protocol was developed by the researcher in Chinese. The protocol is comprised of five parts, as follows:

- What is the difference in doing English and Chinese presentations?
- Second part is about participants' personal experience in doing English and Chinese presentations?
- Third part is how do others like friends, teachers or parents influence them?
- Forth part is using what kind of methods could help them to gain confidence in presentation?
- Last part is part is what their attitudes to presentations or physiological response to presentations?

The interview protocol can be found in the supplementary materials of this article.

## 2.4. Procedure

The survey was administered in groups during evening self-study time. The researcher explained the study and provided some necessary information about it in the classrooms. Then, the researcher distributed and collected the questionnaires from the students on the day of data

collection. Students' tutors consented before students completing the questionnaires. Each student completed both of the two questionnaires; The completion of questionnaires took about ten minutes.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with participants individually. Each interview lasted about 20-30 minutes. Before the interview, the researcher checked the students' schedules and made sure that their interview would not be interrupted. Each interview was managed in the students' native language (Chinese) so that the participants were able to express their ideas fully. The whole process of interviews was audio-recorded.

**2.5. Analysis**

Participants' scores of the scales of self-efficacy beliefs were inputted into Jamovi for quantitative analysis. There was no missing data. The data met the assumption of normality. Descriptive data were presented to show the levels of Chinese and English presentation self-efficacy of participants; Independent sample T-tests were conducted to compare self-efficacy levels between boys and girls; Paired sample T-tests were conducted to compare participants' self-efficacy of Chinese presentation with that of English presentation.

*Table 2. Descriptive Data of Self-efficacy Level*

Presentation Self-efficacy	NO. of participants	M	SD	Mdn
Chinese presentation	74	71.4	16.3	74.0
English presentation	74	58.1	19.3	53.5

**3.1.1. Difference in Chinese Presentation Self-efficacy and English Presentation Self-efficacy**

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to examine the hypothesis that the self-efficacy of Chinese presentation is higher than self-efficacy of English presentation.

The result shows that there was a significant difference in the scores of Chinese presentation self-efficacy (M=71.9, SD=16.3) and English presentation self-efficacy (M=58.1, SD=19.3) conditions;  $t(73)=7.69$ ,  $p < .001$ . Effect size Cohen's  $d=0.894$ .

The result suggests that the Chinese presentation self-efficacy is higher than English presentation self-efficacy

**3.1.2. Gender Difference in Presentation Self-efficacy**

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to examine the hypothesis that there is no gender difference in presentation self-efficacy.

The results show that there was not a significant difference in the scores of Chinese presentation self-efficacy for boys (M=73.7, SD=16.6) and girls (M=69.9, SD= 16.1) conditions;  $t(72)=-.986$ ,  $p=.327$ .

Likewise, there was not a significant difference in the scores of English presentation self-efficacy for boys

The qualitative data analysis was guided by the research questions mentioned earlier. The qualitative analysis took an exploratory perspective, which means that it enables novel evidence to emerge from the data instead of holding presumptions of the issues under investigation. Accordingly, Thematic Analysis was adopted to analyze the qualitative data of the present study. As a widely used method of qualitative analysis, Thematic Analysis enables researchers to gain "a rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.78). In order to ensure the credibility of findings, the present study rigorously followed the step-by-step guideline of Thematic Analysis, which was proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006).

**3. RESULTS**

**3.1 Results of Quantitative Analysis**

Table 2 shows the data of the self-efficacy of presentation in terms of Chinese and English. The mean score of the self-efficacy of Chinese presentation is 71.4 and the total score is 100. The mean score of the self-efficacy of English presentation is 58.1 and the total score is 100. The result indicates that the self-efficacy of Chinese presentation is much higher than the self-efficacy of English presentation.

(M=58.5, SD=20.5) and girls (M=57.6, SD=18.1) conditions;  $t(72)=.202$ ,  $p = .841$ .

The results for the self-efficacy of both Chinese and English presentation are not significant, so it suggests that there is no gender difference in presentation self-efficacy.

**3.2. Results of Qualitative Analysis**

The following figure (Figure 1) illustrates the patterns that represented the data of interviews.



Figure 1: The influential factors in Chinese International High Schools Students of Presentation

Patterns regarding the influential factors, including Bandura’s four hypothesized sources of self- efficacy were pervasive in the whole data set. As the figure shows, Bandura’s four hypothesized sources of self- efficacy had an impact on participants’ self-efficacy of presentation. Moreover, the reasons for the difference in the level of self-efficacy in Chinese and English presentations are shown in the figure (i.e., participants presented two difficulties that are specific to English presentations but not Chinese presentations). Additionally, due to the open-ended semi-structured interview questions, innovative, influential factors besides the four hypothesized sources have emerged from the data. As is shown, these factors were categorized as contextual factors (e.g., audiences, preparation, and presentation topics), extroversion versus introversion, and nature versus nurture. All these factors will be discussed in the following discussion section.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The discussion part is conducted to combine quantitative result and qualitative result to answer the research questions. It starts with the discussion of quantitative data, and it discusses about the qualitative analysis subsequently.

##### 4.1. Discussion of Quantitative Data

This study investigated the self-efficacy in international high school students’ self-efficacy of English and Chinese presentation and the gender difference in self-efficacy in presentation. The results of presentation self-efficacy scales show that students’ self-efficacy in English presentation is significantly lower than that of Chinese presentation. This finding is consistent with several studies (e.g., Esther Geva & Zohreh Yaghouz Zadeh (2006); Karen

Adams (2004); Ferris, (2012); Morita (2000)). Students find it is difficult for them to use English to express their ideas when giving a speech, since English is not students’ mother language. That is why students’ self-efficacy in English presentation is significantly lower than in Chinese presentation. Therefore, teachers should offer help in children’s English learning, like helping them in English class and letting them speak English more in daily school life. Also, for parents, they need to encourage children to take the activities in which they can practice speaking English. The interview data of this study provides more detailed reasons why there is a difference between Chinese and English presentations, which is presented in the following discussion of the qualitative study.

The results of the second part of the research question suggest that there is no significant difference between presentation self-efficacy in terms of gender. The self-efficacy of both Chinese and English presentations in the presentation self-efficacy of boys and girls are not significant. The result shows a consensus with another study, which showed there were no significant differences for both male and female from the comparison level of general self-efficacy (Norwati and Salwa, 2013) However, this study did not offer a detailed explanation about why there is no gender difference of general self-efficacy. Also, few studies have conducted to explore self-efficacy differences between females and males in language learning or presentation. Therefore, more empirical studies are needed to explore this gender issue further.

##### 4.2. Discussion of Qualitative Data

During the interviews, the researcher found that all the participants think that giving presentations is very important. Some participants believed doing presentation is crucial because when they get into colleges or universities,

this skill also plays an essential role in their grades and participation in class. Other participants pointed out that the ability to give a great presentation is essential to their future job. Thus, participants underscored the importance of improving their ability in presentation. Because of the importance of presentation, it is worthwhile to find out the factors influencing the self-efficacy of presentation.

#### *4.2.1. The Differences Between English Presentation and Chinese Presentation*

As the self-efficacy of both English and Chinese presentations was under investigation, participants were asked to indicate whether their self-efficacy is different between delivering presentations in English and Chinese in the first part of the interview. After analyzing the answers to the questions, the researcher noticed that all the participants found that English presentations are much more complicated than Chinese presentations. More specifically, there are two difficulties in delivering English presentation, namely, language problems and cultural differences.

##### *4.2.1.1. Language Problems*

Most students who participated in the interview seemed to experience difficulty with English presentation. Students make a considerable distinction between English and Chinese language. In particular, they indicated that they find it difficult to use English to express their ideas when they are giving a speech. English-as-a-second-language students seem to be English insufficiency. They reported that it is difficult to find the correct words, sentences, or grammar that can express their ideas completely. The following quotes show why participants find English presentation is harder:

Although I have learned English for a long time, I still do not have a very high level of English. Especially in spoken English, I usually cannot express what I mean. I know what to say, but I do not know how to say it out in English correctly. -- FHCHE1

A lot of good points come to my mind when I am speaking, but I could not make my audience understand my points because of my unclear and inadequate English expressions. -- FHCME2

Using Chinese is like holding a knife with my right hand, while using English is like holding the knife with my left hand. I know how to cut fruit with my left hand, but I do not know how to cut as skillfully as when I use my right hand. --MHCHE2

I often struggle to use English to express my thoughts. -- FHCLE1

##### *4.2.1.2. Culture Difference*

The second difficulty in delivering an English presentation for students is the culture difference. Participants mentioned that background made it harder to communicate with English audiences. Since there is a vast difference in cultural background between Chinese students and native English-speaking audiences, when students add Chinese stories or Chinese terms, it is hard to make English-speaking audiences get the information that they want to tell the audiences. Because of the difficulty, students found they cannot make resonances with foreigners, which result in weak interaction and communication between the orators and the foreign audiences. The following quotes show why culture difference make English presentation become difficult:

When you are trying to describe something by giving an example like a Chinese story, they have no idea what you are talking about. But it will not happen in Chinese presentation. Everyone is familiar with all the classic Chinese stories and historical events. --FHCHE1

They always fail to understand your points and to get the jokes in your words. Then you cannot resonate with audiences. --FHCHE1

##### *4.2.2. Past Experiences*

After the participants talked about the difference between Chinese and English presentation, they were also asked to share their positive and negative experiences in presentation. The question was devoted to finding out whether one of Bandura's one source, mastery experience, can influence students' self-efficacy in presentation and whether students' self-efficacy in presentation is consistent with Bandura's hypothesis. The hypothesis is that Bandura (1997) postulated four primary sources of information that consolidate self-efficacy, and in these four sources, mastery experience being the most influential. In general, success increases self-efficacy, and failure lowers it (Bandura 1999). Moreover, the results are consistent with Bandura's hypothesis.

##### *4.2.2.1. Positive and Negative Experience*

Participants agreed that mastery experience is the most influential factor in their self-efficacy in presentation. Meanwhile, they mentioned that their positive experiences boost their self-efficacy, while negative experiences decrease their self-efficacy, which is consistent with Bandura's hypothesis. The following quotes show participants' responses about the positive and negative presentation:

I think the most influential factor is a positive experience, because you receive a good response after the presentation, and you will find that your confidence has increased naturally. --MHCHE1

I did it so well this time, and I know I am going to do it better the next time. --FHCME2

I felt frustrated after I experienced failures. --MHCHE1

#### 4.2.2.2. *Quantity of Experiences*

When asking participants about their experiences, the researcher noticed that participants' number of experiences seemed to play an essential role in affecting their self-efficacy. The number of presentations that they participated in matters of their confidence. For example, the four high self-efficacy students have many experiences in presentation. They indicated that they gained confidence and courage because of these participations and trying, which made them not fear this kind of activity. The following quotes show the quantity of presentation that participants delivered and the relationship between the quantity of presentation and their self-efficacy:

I attended many activities similar to public speaking. --MHCHE1

There are many examples of giving a speech. --MHCHE2  
After you gave a speech in front of 1000 people, you will not be afraid of speaking to 100 people. The more you experience, the more you are confident. --MHCHE2

I just started to do the presentation after I went to high school, and I really do not have many experiences in this area. --FHCLE1

The most practical way to increase my confidence is to engage in doing public-speaking activity more. --MLCLE1

#### 4.2.2.3. *Reciprocity between the Quantity of Presentation and Self-efficacy*

The researcher also found that the quantity of presentation that participants have experienced is associated with their self-efficacy. In other words, self-efficacy and the number of past experiences have reciprocity with each other. The quantity of experiences influences a student's self-efficacy; meanwhile, the student's self-efficacy influences his quantity of experiences. For example, the participants with high self-efficacy who want to do more presentations, because they know they are good at it. Those participants who did presentations a lot, they get smoother in doing presentation and feel more natural and comfortable, and their self-efficacy in presentation increased. On the other hand, students with low self-efficacy always want to avoid doing presentation. This is because, first, they do not know whether they can handle the task or not, so they choose not to try in the first place. Second, they have failed in doing a presentation once, and later they afraid to fail next time, so they avoid doing presentations. Therefore, those participants who always avoid doing presentations have lower self-efficacy in presentation. The following quotes show the high self-efficacy participant's attitude towards presentation and the low self-efficacy participant's attitude towards presentation:

I often very active when there is an opportunity to give a speech. --MHCHE1

I am not sure whether I am able to handle it or not, so I just let others do. --MLCLE1

My phobia of public speaking was basically due to a massive fear of looking stupid. --MLCLE1

#### 4.2.3. *Influence by Others*

Subsequently, the participants were asked questions like "how your parents and teacher help you to increase your self-efficacy," and "will you increase your self-efficacy in presentation after you watched a good presentation presented by others." "These questions are eager to find out whether the other two sources in Bandura's four sources, vicarious experience, and verbal persuasion, are able to influence students' self-efficacy in presentation or not. However, most of the participants pointed out, watching model's presentation or getting verbal persuasion cannot be an effective way to increase their self-efficacy, which is not consistent with Bandura's hypothesis. In Bandura's hypothesis, watching someone accomplish one task, and receiving others' persuasion can increase individuals' self-efficacy. From the participants, the reason why two factors cannot improve their self-efficacy is that they think the self-efficacy of presentation mainly depends on their capabilities. The only way to increase their self-efficacy directed is to improve their ability in presentation rather than watching others or accepting persuasions.

##### 4.2.3.1. *Peer Modeling*

The participants thought their models would influence their motivation to improve their presentation skills. When they watch others present, they often learn what they do well in their speech and try to apply similar strategies in their speech. Moreover, by watching their models' presentations, they recognized the gap between themselves and their models, thereby eager to be as good as they are. Thus, they were motivated by their models. Although peer models motivated participants, participants mentioned that purely by being an audience is not enough to gain self-efficacy, because they did not improve their ability simply by watching others' presentations. What is more important for them to gain self-efficacy is to practice and do the presentation by themselves in order to make progress and learn the skills. In this way, their self-efficacy can truly be boosted. This result is consistent with one existing research. From Karen Adams's study in students' self-efficacy for research seminar presentations, the researcher found the students who observed the expert model experienced no statistically significant gain in self-efficacy for the task. (2004) Adams also found that student increases little self-efficacy from an excellent model. One possible reason that seems likely for the finding is that presentation is an activity that requires people's high strong ability to deliver their thoughts and ideas. The ability needs people to practice the skills and rehearse presentations multiple times. When students listen to expert models to give a speech, and they do not practice by themselves, their ability could not improve. As a result, their self-efficacy cannot be increased. The following two quotes illustrate how participants interpret two different aspects of vicarious learning: Watching their performance could bring motivation to me. If they did something that I am not able to do, I would like

to apply the techniques to the rest of my speech. --MHCHE1

Watching other's performance definitely will not increase your confidence, because they have nothing to do with your performance. Only if you practice the skills by yourself and you become familiar with the skills, you can be confident when you speak. --FHCHE1

#### 4.2.3.2. *Social Persuasions*

The same as the influence of gaining vicarious experiences, others' persuasions are not effective in boosting their self-efficacy. Participants mentioned that encouragement alone is not enough to boost students' self-efficacy, since self-efficacy can be truly enhanced is when people improve their skills and practice several numbers of presentations. However, participants mentioned that encouragement was important, because persuasions or encouragement from others can make participants feel better and less desperate after setbacks. As mentioned above, one failure is a great blow to one's self-confidence. Therefore, encouragement from teachers or parents can reduce the frustration of students. The quotes above show participants attitudes toward verbal persuasions:

Verbal persuasion like "You can do it" has nothing to do with my ability, that is why it cannot increase my self-efficacy of presentation. Nevertheless, teachers' encouragement after losses makes me feel less frustrated. --MHCHE1

The encouragement from others is just like medicine. You have been relying on the medicine to maintain your life, and once you stop the medicine, you will still get sick. However, your ability is like resistance and immunity; you are still healthy without medicine. Others' encouragement is fake. --FHCHE1

#### 4.2.3.3. *Parenting Behaviors*

Besides teachers and peers, the participants also mentioned the strong influence of their parents. According to participants, parenting behaviors affected their self-efficacy in presentation a lot. Both of the two low self-efficacy participants had experienced bad parenting behaviors, which made them afraid of doing a public speech after that. On the other hand, positive parenting behaviors include communicating with children about their interests, practice, and share the ideas with them on some topics and provide them opportunities in presentations at a young age. These are very important to children's growth or the sense of speaking and expressing thoughts. First two quotes from low self-efficacy students imply how bad parenting behaviors affected them negatively, and the following three quotes show the influence of good parenting behaviors on students:

I wanted to go back home before the speaking competition. However, my mom noticed I had the intention of running

away, and she started to scold me, like "you are a coward." --MLCLE1

My parents once compelled me to practice speech in front of them, and they also recorded a video. I felt so embarrassed that I did not say a word. However, my parents did not let me go to sleep until I was finishing practicing it. In the end, we fell into bickering, which caused me to stop talking to them for a long time. --FHCLE1

My mother and I used to have some debates on certain topics in life. Most of the time, we have different opinions since we have a generation gap. Because of this "debate competition", my persuasive skills are honed. --MHCHE2

They would ask me to share my opinion about controversial topics since I was very young. --MHCHE1

They advised me to learn something related to performing, like dancing, broadcasting, and hosting. They also helped me to sign up and join the competition in these kinds of activities. --FHCME2

#### 4.2.3.4. *Teacher's Teaching*

Participants pointed out that there are two main ways for teachers to help them to improve their abilities and skills. The first one is that teachers can teach students about some speaking skills and provide strategies for students to make body language. The second one is the teachers' feedback. Teachers can summarize the strengths and weaknesses of students at the end of their performance, which will help students notice their shortages and make progress next time. There are two quotes that participants mentioned how teachers could help them to gain improvement.

The most significant impact from teachers is the help in teaching me some skills of speech, including the organization of language, and how to interact with the audience. --MHCHE1

I think a teacher should point out some practical problems in my performance rather than praise me. Because I can never notice my problems and improve without pointing out my problems. --FHCHE1

Although teachers' persuasions and encouragement have no significantly increase participants' self-efficacy, teachers can help them to improve their skills and ability to deliver a presentation. After participants making improvements in presentation, students' self-efficacy can benefit.

#### 4.2.4. *Emotional States*

All participants indicated that their physical and emotional states affected their performance to some extent when they were making presentations. All participants expressed at least a brief moment of anxiety when they speak in front of a group. Participants with high self-efficacy can cope with this anxiety, worry, or stress, for the participants with low self-efficacy; however, they cannot manage their emotions and become more nervous. This finding is consistent with Bandura's hypothesis that emotions will affect a person's

perceived self-efficacy in coping with the situations. (Bandura & Adams, 1977).

#### *4.2.4.1. Negative Emotions--Anxiety and Nervousness*

Both low and high self-efficacy participants experienced feeling anxious before giving a presentation when they gave their first presentation. For the high self-efficacy students, they went through a learning curve like the practice and experience in giving speeches. Thus, they do not feel so nervous when they give presentations in front of a small group of people, but there are occasions in which they will feel anxious, especially when the presentation is very important or with large audiences. High self-efficacy participants indicated that they know how to deal with their negative emotions and know how to do emotional management, by either regarding these emotions as a common thing or not worrying that anxiety may affect their performance. On the other hand, low self-efficacy students always feel very anxious before doing a presentation, and they would be worried about their performance. Furthermore, these worries further increase their anxiety, which generates a vicious circle. The quotes show above are participants negative emotions that they felt in their previous experience:

Nervous, very nervous ! My chest would tighten, my breathing became shallow, and I even trembled with nervousness before I start my speech. I am afraid that I will make mistakes during the speech and just feel more and more nervous. --MLELC1

I felt nervous and anxious in my first three presentations, but now that is okay for me to do speak in front of my classmates. --FHEHC1

Now I am not so nervous before doing a presentation, but I felt extremely nervous when I was young. This probably is because I already experienced several presentations, I think. --MHEHC1

#### *4.2.4.2. Positive Emotions--Enjoyment*

In terms of positive emotions, some high self-efficacy participants like MHEHC2 and FHEHC1 mentioned that they felt happy when they were doing presentations. This kind of positive emotion creates a comfortable and delightful environment for the audiences, which makes the presentation more attractive. For presenters themselves, positive emotions let them be able to express ideas clearly. The quotes show above are participants positive emotions that they felt in their previous experience:

I love speaking. I just love the feeling that when people sit on the other side and listen to me. After my audiences listened to my presentation and learned new things, I just feel a sense of accomplishment. --MHEHC2

When I am speaking with happiness, my audiences also seem interested in my words. I can make my speech more attractive and not boring at all. --FHEHC1

#### *4.2.5. Other Factors*

In addition to Bandura's four sources, research found there are some other factors could influence the self-efficacy in presentation. The factors include situational factors, and whether participants are introversive or extroversive. These factors will be discussed detailedly in following paragraphs.

##### *4.2.5.1. Contextual Factors*

There are also contextual factors, which is not so relevant to students' long-term or stable self-efficacy but is vital to self-efficacy of giving a specific presentation. These contextual factors, including whether students like or are familiar with the topic or not, the size of the audiences, and the preparation time before the speech. If participants develop a full understanding of the context of the presentation, they will be more confident before the presentation. If the presentation is to a small group of people, participants will feel less nervous and more confident. If the participants are given more time to prepare, they will result in high self-efficacy. The three quotes are the contextual factors that participants mentioned:

When you are doing the topic you like or familiar, you have more confidence, because you can say a lot. Your compassion towards the topic can attract audiences more efficiently. --MHEHC1

I feel much more nervous in speaking in front of a large number of people, especially to those whom I am not familiar with. --FLEHC1

If my teacher asks me to give a temporal speech without advance, I will feel very uncomfortable and unprepared. But if teachers give me enough time to prepare, I may have more confidence. --FHEHC1

##### *4.2.5.2. Introversion and Extroversion*

The second factor beyond Bandura's four sources is the participants' personality. The researcher noticed that whether students are introverts or extroverts affects their self-efficacy of presentation a lot. The theory of extroversion versus introversion is explained first. (1) An introvert is someone who prefers calm, minimally, stimulating environments. Introverts tend to feel drained after socializing and regain their energy by spending time alone. Introverts often have an accompanying tendency to withdraw from social contacts. (2) Extrovert: Extroverts are often described as the life of the party. Their outgoing, vibrant nature draws people to them, and they have a hard time turning away their attention. They thrive off the interaction. Introverts enjoy the silence, and they often do not speak unless they have something that they feel is worthwhile to say. Extroverts, on the other hand, do not feel comfortable in silence. They like to talk to other people, and they do not feel comfortable with a long silence. The reason why extroversion and introversion are essential in the self-efficacy in presentation is that the two types of

personality have a strong relation in people's attitude toward talking. Giving a presentation is one type of speaking, which need people to interact with their audiences and deliver their thoughts. For that reason, presenting to a roomful of people can be a challenge for introverts, since introverts can find that it takes a lot of their energy. However, for extrovert presenters who are outgoing and talkative, they enjoy taking and self-expressing since they get their energy from their audience.

#### 4.2.5.2.1. *Introversion*

The researcher found that the two relatively low self-efficacy participants are introverts. The two introverted participants mentioned that they do not enjoy public speaking; it even can be devastatingly painful for them. During the interview, these two participants showed a lack of self-expression ability and shyness. When they were answering the questions, they tended to use one or two sentences to respond to the questions without more explanation.

Moreover, both of them mentioned that the biggest hurdle for them is to conquer the high level of anxiety before presentations. As these two introverted students agreed their feeling towards doing a presentation as the quotes showed:

MLCLE1 noted that "I do not like public speaking, because it is really overwhelming for me as an introvert. Every time I stand in front of people, I will feel so nervous that I cannot stop myself shaking all over."

In a similar vein, FHCLE1 mentioned that "I am an introvert, and I have always feared public speaking."

#### 4.2.5.2.2. *Extroversion*

On the other hand, it is evident that the other four extroverts in this study have a strong ability to express their ideas, and they feel reenergized by being around people. Since they enjoy sharing their ideas with people, it seems that doing a presentation is not challenging for them. They also mentioned that they typically feel excited after a speaking gig. During the interview, they are willing to give as much information as they can to answer the research questions. The quotes show some extroverted participants' attitudes toward delivering a presentation.

Since I was a child, I have been talking a lot. When I grew up, I also like to make speeches; I feel like it is very suitable for my personality. --FHEHC1

Well, I like to express myself, so I think doing a presentation is part of self-expression. --FHCME2

#### 4.2.5.3. *Nurture versus Nature*

All participants reported that their personality (extroversion or introversion) is very influential in their self-efficacy and performances in presentations. However, they still believe

that their ability and presentation performances can be improved by putting effort and good communication or presentation can be developed through practice and learning. Even the two extroverted participants believed that practice brings confidence and makes them feel less stressful. The quotes show why participants think they can improve their skills, although the hereditary factor is important:

I have two friends who are quite introverted. In fact, they have a lot of their incredible ideas, but once they are asked to express themselves on a big occasion, it is difficult for them to describe them. I do think there are intrinsic factors in it. For example, you cannot make someone who has been absolutely introverted and shy gives a speech that is very passionate and appealing. --FHEHC2

Although there is an innate ability, I believe no one is born with the ability to give a perfect presentation. Thus, whether you can do good or bad presentation is depends on your efforts. --FLEHC1

Genuinely, I am more inclined to working hard. If I just love to talk, but I do not practice speaking, then what I said is illogical, and people do not know what you are talking about. If you can learn some skills in speaking. What people can get your point from your word. --FLEHC1

#### 4.2.5.4 *Growth Mindset and Fixed Mindset Combine*

Since all the participants thought their presentation ability could be improved by working hard and practicing more, the researcher found that all participants held a growth mindset rather than a fixed mindset. These two terms were coined by Dr. Dweck in 2004 to describe the underlying beliefs people have about learning and intelligence. (1) In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. Dr. Dweck pointed out when students believe they can get smarter, they understand that effort makes them more durable. Therefore, they put in more time and effort, and that leads to higher achievement and more significant accomplishment. (2) In a fixed mindset, people believe their intelligence is fixed and does not change or changes very little with practice. These people can be devastated by even the smallest setbacks.

In addition, participants, even the two introverted participants, believe that personality can be changed. They described that they did not talk a lot at a young age, but after encountered many opportunities in those kinds of activities and experienced a particular practice or training, they became more outgoing and talkative. In their minds, it is easier to build a new personality when people are at a young age because children are more likely to accept new ideas. The finding is consistent with research, which found that trait changes were more profound in childhood than adulthood. And both genetic and non-shared environmental factors accounted for personality changes. (2012, *J Pers Soc Psychol*) Two participants mentioned their personality had changed when they were young

When I was young, I was not good at expressing myself, but a talkative friend changed me. We always hang out together. As time goes by, I became talkative unconsciously. --MHEHC1

When I was young, I do not like talking at all, but then I gradually became talkative. The personality of talkativeness can be changed, perhaps the people around you or your environment changes you. --FHEHC2

Another essential quality that all the participants shared is that they are very positive toward their future accomplishments. They believe they can get a satisfying result in presentation through working harder, even when met drawbacks. This value is very important because in an academic environment, those who believe intelligence is not fixed and can be changed exert more effort to succeed. Therefore, for these six participants, they are willing to work harder in improving the presentation skills, even though some of them have a weak ability to express their ideas. Just like the quotes show:

I think the acquired factors are more important than intrinsic factors. If you are not the kind of person who completely has no verbal expression ability and an unnormal language system, as long as you are willing to train, there is no big problem. --FHEHC1

I think I can still make progress in speaking through practice. --MLELC1

## 5. CONCLUSION

By combining the semi-structured interview with survey research, the present study conducted an in-depth investigation into the influential factor of presentation self-efficacy of both Chinese and English in Chinese international high school students. The result of survey research shows that students' self-efficacy in English presentation is significantly lower than in Chinese presentation, and there is no significant difference in self-efficacy in terms of gender. From the semi-structured interview, all the participants believed presentation plays a crucial role in their study, and they also believed the ability to give a well-performed presentation is even more crucial when studying abroad. However, it provided evidence that international students reported difficulties in speaking English in presentations. Students mentioned they have an insufficient ability in oral English, including making grammar mistakes and mispresent the ideas. To address the problem, students need to put more effort into learning speaking English. For teachers, they should encourage their students to use more English in their classes and after-class time. Also, teachers could change from the whole-class instruction to less teacher-led mode to increase the engagement of students. And more small groups, where students can practice the language with their peers in a more personal.

In addition, the results show both consistency and inconsistency with Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy. In terms of consistent results, the study shows that the most potent source is the interpreted result of their previous attainments or mastery experience (Bandura, 1995). More

specifically, positive experiences boost their self-efficacy, while negative experiences decrease their self-efficacy. These findings are consistent with Bandura's theory. Besides, the number of experiences plays an essential role in self-efficacy, the more experiences of doing a presentation, the higher of student's self-efficacy. Also, students think nervousness is a common emotion before doing presentations, thus negative emotions like nervousness cannot be a sign of a bad performance, thereby having little impact on their self-efficacy. However, managing nervousness is still one of the most important things for students when delivering a presentation.

In contrast, the following findings have shown a certain degree of inconsistency with Bandura's theory. In terms of the sources of vicarious learning and social persuasion, this study showed that participants who observed the model or obtained the persuasion or encouragement had no significant gain in self-efficacy for the task. Also, teacher's teaching, such as teaching some skills or giving feedbacks, is not enough to increase students' self-efficacy. According to participants, this is because the ability of the presentation needs to be improved by practicing. If they do not practice the skills or theories learned from others, the only thing they know is about the theories rather than actually applying in their presentation. Thus, in order to improve self-efficacy, they should put what they learn from excellent models and the theories from teachers into practice.

Furthermore, there are three other influential factors beyond Bandura's sources in students' self-efficacy. First of all, three contextual factors, including 'well-prepared,' 'familiar audiences,' and 'favourite topics' have a positive impact on students' self-efficacy in a specific task. Second, students' personality, such as introversion and extroversion, can also affect their self-efficacy in presentation, since extroverts are more enjoyable in talking in front of audiences in the presentation. At the same time, introverts find it is tiring to do public speaking. The study finds all the high self-efficacy participants shared a similar outgoing and talkative personality, which means all of them like giving a speech in front of people and enjoying talking with each other.

In contrast, low self-efficacy participants do not enjoy giving presentations, and they are kind of introverted, shy, and talk less. Third, it is interesting to find that all the participants held a growth mindset. Students believe their abilities in presentations can be developed with effort, learning, and persistence, and they believe their necessary abilities are simply a starting point for their potential. Although they have different personalities and presentation abilities, they all hold onto the idea that they can do better if they proactive more.

### Limitations of the Study

Interpretation of the results should take into account several limitations. First, as mentioned above, this study did not provide reasons why the gender difference in presentation self-efficacy is not significant. Although the result is consistent with previous research, the reason why self-efficacy in terms of gender is not significantly different in the presentation should be focused on future studies.

Second, the study pays a little attention to the reason why purely watching models' presentation and receiving other' persuasion are not effective ways to increase the students' presentation self-efficacy. The researcher only supposed that the ability of presentation is related to one's own ability in expressing, so they only way to improve the ability is to practice. However, more studies are needed to investigate the reasons behind it and further explore the influence of the two sources, vicarious learning, and social persuasion, in another task. Lastly, the study only takes a small sample size (74 Chinese international high school students) in China, due to the limitation of resources and time and. However, there is a large number of international high school students in China, which means the result of the study cannot best represent the whole story in international students in China. Therefore, future studies should seek to obtain a larger sample size.

#### Implications of the Study

This study is helpful for people who need to give many presentations in daily life, typically for high school students who plan to study abroad in the future. By understanding the factors of self-efficacy of presentation skills, students can know through which method can help them to increase self-efficacy of presentation skills. Whereafter, they can improve their presentation ability by increasing their self-efficacy of presentation. The study provided many ways to increase self-efficacy in presentation. For example, try to do more presentations, because more practice will improve the ability of presentation directly. Second, after watching other models' presentation, individuals have to practice the skills and methods in order to make them his own. Third, find an effective way to adjust the nervousness, because the lousy interpretation can cause unnecessary mistakes. Last, maintain a growth mindset, which could make people be not afraid of failures or negative experiences in presentation. Individuals with a growth mindset can make progress and improve their skills.

Furthermore, the results suggest important implications for parents' education. As discussed in parenting behavior, it is not an effective way to teach children or improve children's abilities by forcing them to practice the tasks when they do not want to do the tasks. Children will be more resistant to the task rather than making progress.

By understanding whom to increase self-efficacy in delivering a presentation, a student can better achieve a higher score in daily school's presentation tasks. Also, students are able to build a fundamental ability in presentations in order to confront the following tasks which colleges' teachers will require them to do.

Although some limitations exist in the study, this study has generated many interesting findings, which can be used by teachers, parents, and students to improve self-efficacy in presentations. Moreover, it contributes to future research on the development of presentation self-efficacy in Chinese students.

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