Investigating EFL Learners’ Perceptions Towards the Difficulties in Oral Presentation at Kandahar University

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Research Article

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Abstract

This research paper examines the difficulties of oral presentation, strategies coping with difficulties used in oral presentations and the perceived role of lecturer in improving EFL learners’ oral presentation skills. The study used quantitative approach in which a survey questionnaire comprising 34 items based on four likert scales was distributed to EFL learners in a public university. The data was collected from 150 learners from two English Departments through random sampling which 109 were male and 41 were female learners. The data was analyzed and interpreted in terms of mean and standard deviation through SPSS software (22) version. The results of the study revealed that learners had a problem with oral fluency, accuracy and pronunciation during oral presentation, feel frightened when a lot of people are watching them, afraid of being assessed by their classmates in front of the class, having low self-confidence. The results also revealed some strategies coping with difficulties used in oral presentation such as, learners have to prepare themselves properly before an oral presentation, they have to build self-confidence for presentation to present very well and they have to concentrate more on phonetics and phonology of language. Furthermore, considering a crucial role of lecturer in improving oral presentation skills, the following factors such as lecturer has to design a specific course in teaching oral presentation skills for EFL learners, lecturer has to show learners videos of good speakers for enhancing their presentation skill and lecturer has to give learners freedom to choose their own topic that lowers their anxiety were discovered for more consideration.

1. Introduction

As the result of world web contacts and worldwide availability of internet, excessive changes have been made which raised more demands on learning an English language verbally and written as the language of international contact (Karimkhanlooei, 2017). Generally, communication is one of the basic needs of human beings while it aims to get or share information from speaker to listener, and communication is done through language and people use many kinds of languages in the world as English is one of them (Mufidah, 2017). Likewise, English language is a powerful tool for communication and it is a global language that people of different languages use to communicate and engage in business and in other fields. It also provides access to much of the world’s knowledge. Accordingly, for foreign language educators, communication has been the prime goal and foreign language learners must acquire fluency and accuracy to communicate efficiently in spoken and written forms (Angelini & Garcia-Carbonell, 2019). Particularly, oral communication is among the primary goals of foreign language teaching in the target language while educators in higher educational contexts aim to provide opportunities for learners to reach an adequate proficiency level in speaking.

In higher academic institutions, specifically in EFL subjects, an oral presentation is found in almost all subjects and it is essential for students to communicate their ideas effectively to the audience (Zakaria & Razak, 2016). In higher education and future careers, oral presentation skills are considered as one of the most essential proficiencies for students at schools and universities. Also, Angelini & Garcia-Carbonell (2019) provided the clearest definition of oral presentation “a speaking which involves the presenter
talking in front of a group of people the presenter knows or a crowd of strangers usually with some preparation.” In addition, in today’s globalized world where employers require recent graduates with good communication skills, oral communication skills are very essential. Furthermore, for personal growth, oral presentation is the most prolific source and for students with future work purposes, it is significant to enhance the skills and self-confidence in providing oral presentations (Alwi & Sidhu, 2013). Additionally, ELT departments offer courses which typically makes students to create oral presentations as part of extensive speaking activities to enhance their speaking and presentation skills, keenly involve in content, and encourage collaborative learning (Somalz, 2019).

1.1 Problem Statement

Generally appears that oral presentation is very important and essential in EFL classes where students are learning foreign language and they do not feel anxious when articulating their ideas to their peers. However, when students present orally to the audience in front of class, they find it difficult and become nervous. In fact, some even become terrified to ask them for preparing an oral presentation at least for their classmates. This has become a major concern for many higher learning institutions and raised many issues that students graduate with excellent results, but remain incapable of communicating well in English and remain incapable of presenting orally. A similar concern is with many EFL learners in the Education Faculty at Kandahar University who feel hyperventilating when they are asked to make a presentation and stand in front of their classmates and present orally. In other words, when presenting orally, EFL learners express a feeling of stress and nervousness, frustrated and daunted. It is because they are neither well trained to present in front of the audience nor they have the required skills to have a competent oral presentation. It is valuable to note that Ait Atmane and Ahouari-Idri (2016) shared a similar concern that despite the significance of oral presentation in a university environment, students are still considerably short in their capability of delivering decent oral presentations. With attention to oral presentation, Ekmekçi (2018) highlighted that learners were feeling anxious, speaking in fear nervous and shy, and even shook like a leaf during oral presentation.

The study under the title of difficulties in oral presentation is extremely significant and will directly benefit EFL learners at Kandahar University. Since EFL learners are expected to perform oral presentations regardless of the subjects they take, this research, therefore, will assist them as a guide to cope with difficulties when delivering oral presentation. In addition, this study will assist in motivating students’ pursuit of learning and will look for ways to empower and enhance oral presentation, and it will also provide a valuable opportunity to advance the understanding of oral presentation. Furthermore, the results of this research would be valuable to anyone who wants to master in oral presentations. Therefore, this research is guided by the following research questions.

1. What are EFL learners’ perceptions towards the difficulties in oral presentation?
2. What are EFL learners’ perceptions towards the strategies coping with difficulties used in oral presentation?
3. What are EFL learners’ perceptions towards the perceived role of lecturer in improving oral presentation skills?
4. Is there any significant difference in learners’ perceptions towards oral presentation among year?

2. Literature Review

In general, since oral presentations are carried out in English in EFL classes, it, therefore, becomes a challenging task for majority of EFL learners (Ait Atmane & Ahouari-Idri, 2016). Concerning oral presentation difficulties, Van Emden & Becker (2016) highlighted in their carried out study that most of the EFL learners are concerned with presenting orally in front of audience and this may cause a feeling of nervousness and vulnerability as they look at the large number of audience. To emphasize further on audience as difficulty, El Enein (2011) also identified that EFL learners considered eye contact with audience, particularly with instructor who watches their language as their worst fear in oral presentation. Similarly, Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem & Taqi (2015) also found instructor’s interruption in learners’ oral presentation that challenges their performance. Audience, however, plays key role in assisting the presenter to feel comfortable and motivated to keep speaking (Razawi, Zulkomain & Mohd Razlan, 2019).

To be more precise, audience can actively involve themselves by answering questions, applaud at the start and end of presentation, smile, and always show enthusiasm in what the presenter is presenting. The writers emphasized that the presenter will certainly feel motivated and decrease anxiety and stage freight when audience display encouraging attitudes. In addition to difficulties, Whai and Mei (2015) found in their research that lack of experience was another major obstacle in oral presentation. EFL learners, according to the researchers, rarely participated in public speaking activities during school and learners, as a result, find it challenging task to conduct oral presentation in pursuing higher education. Moreover, Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem and Taqi (2015) also pointed out to the lack presentation skills that contributes to poor presentation delivery. To be more precise, El Enein (2011) conclusively stated that being unfamiliar with oral speaking activities and presentations have made EFL learners encounter challenges. EFL learners most often lack either oral presentation skills or unable to consolidate the presentation efficiently.

Another major difficulty for EFL learners when presenting orally, according to Kho, Abdullah and Leong (2015), is shortage of preparedness. Since proper preparation is fundamental before presenting orally, most of the ESL learners even with a lot of preparation, however, worried about forgetting the information and the organization of the ideas logically. Therefore, they preferred to bring notes when presenting orally (Razawi, Zulkomain & Mohd Razlan, 2019). The authors further stated that allowing learners to bring short notes will assist them to be prepared in terms of good flow and coherence of presentations. With proper preparation in mind, Husain, Ganapathy and Mohamad (2015) vividly recommended that there should be more time for learners to prepare and rehearse the presentations. The authors further added that to improve presentations and view progress, it may be useful to video record learners’ presentations. Moreover, Whai and Mei (2015) indicated inadequate preparation as the most common difficulty in oral
presentation and that may be because of the fact that learners prioritized and dedicated their utmost time and efforts to core subjects.

Another key factor causing difficulty when presenting orally is the assessment process El Enein (2011). According to the author, majority of the EFL learners in the study often feared of receiving biased grades and were assessed negatively which made the oral presentations difficult. This is because of the fact that every instructor's assessment criteria varies. With regard to oral presentation assessment, Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem and Taqi (2015) asserted that EFL learners started to have undesirable thoughts about getting low grades in their oral assessment that affected their level of confidence. With this in mind, Karimkhanlooei (2017) revealed in a carried out research in Iranian context that learners made a worthy improvement in their oral presentations when assessment criteria and rubrics on presentation skills were shared with them beforehand to lessen the errors. Indeed, a key part of oral presentation assessment that needs to be taken into consideration is scoring rubrics and should not be considered confidential (Razawi, Zulkomain & Mohd Razlan, 2019). The authors recommended that lecturers always need to have a smile on their faces and nod their heads to give a sign of understanding learners’ delivery while assessing learners’ in the back. This will eventually affect learners’ motivation on the stage and they will feel confident.

Linguistic is another element that contributes to difficulty in oral presentations encountered by Sarawakian learners (Whai & Mei, 2015). According to the researchers, insufficient proficiency in English when orally presenting is considered as linguistic factor. The authors precisely posited that learners had very few chances to speak in target language as they were inclined to communicate in local language particularly outside of the classroom. Also, Rajoo (2010) unearthed how important is oral presentation linguistically. To be more precise, having poor choice of words and poor phrasing of sentences can make oral presentation difficult and confusing and can be barely understood by audience even with interesting topic and good delivery. In addition to linguistic difficulty, EL Enein (2011) in a conducted research at Al-Aqsa University where nonnative speakers declared difficulties with oral presentations stemmed from the linguistics. Furthermore, Kho, Abdullah and Leong (2015) revealed in their study that learners were incapable of English fluently and majority of them tended to make errors and did not use correct structure of the sentences when presenting orally.

To overcome the difficulties in oral presentations, Hanifa and Yusra (2018) suggested carried out a research that learners must have faith on their ability and must expect audiences to pose questions which leads to build presenter's confidence. The authors further added that learners can cope with difficult questions by addressing them to the floor. To have a better performance and build self-confidence in oral presentations, Zivkovic (2015); Hanifa and Yusra (2018) recommended the presenters to master the topic and content well. Considering strategies to cope with difficulties in oral presentation, Hanifa and Yusra (2018) confirmed in a study that speakers seemed relaxed and had faith on their ability which is an effective way of increasing confidence and coping with difficulties. Researchers further added that there were good presenters who commonly expected and addressed questions to audiences. Remarkably, the speaker can also gain confidence with using jokes and humors related to the speaker,
topic, audience, or the occasion. Moreover, according to the authors, using small notes as guidelines prepared prior to presentation is another strategy to cope with difficulties which assist the presenters to recall the idea they intended to deliver.

In addition, to cope with difficulties, Tanveer (2007) suggested three strategies to alleviate oral presentation difficulty. First, EFL learners should cease acting like native language speakers in oral presentation which seems a reasonable step in decreasing difficulty. Second, avoid practicing summative feedback that is likely causing difficulty. Similarly, Chen (2015) found that being assessed by peers in front of the class and lecturer is highly contributing in making learners severe nervous. On the other hand, Otashi and Heffernen (2008) recommended peer assessment to enhance oral presentation because learners are involved in active learning process. Third, there should be single sex classes for receding oral presentation difficulty. In addition to that, free oral and speaking activities like oral participation and free dialogues, role-play and simulation are conducive strategies in developing oral presentations (El Enein, 2011). Another encouraging strategy to cope with difficulties noted by Hanifa and Yusra (2018) which worked well is using gestures to gain audiences’ interest.

Additionally, practicing is another key aspect of good presentation that enables presenters to identify their weaknesses and work them out to speak smoothly and naturally. Accordingly, presenters need to seek further information regarding the audience to assist them in determining proper presentation style. In light of strategies coping with difficulties, Barrett and Liu (2016) indicated that EFL learners observed their peers during oral presentation and noted lecturer’s feedback, thoughtful use of slides and proper time management to overcome the difficulties. Speakers, according to Raja (2017), should not only ask someone to record the presentation and watch it later several times for the improvement during practicing session but also look for the feedback at the same time. Likewise, Imaniah (2018) advocated in a carried out research that planning materials well is an integral part of oral presentation that EFL learners must consider to manage their allotted time in academic oral presentation. In the same manner, Raja (2017) posited that presenters essentially need to concentrate on the materials rather than on audience because audience mainly focus on the information being presented. Finally, El Enein (2011) found in a conducted study that to improve pronunciation during oral presentation, EFL learners should necessarily concentrate phonetics and phonology courses and expand their vocabulary and expressions.

As per lecturer’s role in oral presentations, Husain, Ganapathy and Mohamad (2015) elucidated that lecturers should allot enough time to learners for preparing their presentations and video record their own presentations which will enable them to improve and ensure their oral presentation progress. First and foremost, lecturers should facilitate a friendly and motivating atmosphere and should always put a smile when assessing learners’ performance in the back (Subaşi, 2010; Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem, & Taqi, 2015; Karimkhanlooei, 2017; Razawi, Zulkomain & Mohd Razlan, 2019). This, as a result will make them comfortable, motivated and confident. In addition to that, lecturers should share the grading criteria with learners before the presentation to assist them reduce the errors and also notify learners to avoid having lengthy notes for coherent presentation. The authors added that lecturers should show learners several authentic videos of good speakers with good command of English.
With this in mind, El Enein (2011) considerably focused on lecturers’ role that to notify learners as audience while listening to oral presentation to maintain academic behavior and convince them to raise questions, comments, provide feedback after the presentation and support each other without considering individual variances in ability. In light of lecturers’ role from EFL learners’ perspective, Alwi and Sidhu (2013) and Brooks and Wilson (2014) recommended lecturers in a carried out study to design tailor-made courses and cater efficient guidelines using presentations in classroom for EFL learners by creating a better learning environment for becoming an effective presenter. Also as part of lecturers’ role in improving EFL learners’ oral presentation skill, Subaşı (2010) perceived from EFL learners’ responses that lecturers should categorize learners with strong fear of negative evaluation and then take initiatives by showing individual interest to weak performers, provide supportive assistance from early stages and prepare them mentally that it is personality traits which is not easy to be removed. The last foremost role of a lecturer in improving oral presentation according to Wang, Yu and Teo (2018), is that lecturers must give convincing feedback to EFL learners to improve public presentation task considering mode and function of oral delivery.

3. Research Design

As the current research tries to explore EFL learners’ perception of the difficulties in oral presentation and the perceived strategies to cope with these difficulties, a descriptive quantitative survey research method is considered to be suitable. A quantitative research, according to Creswell and Poth (2016) is a type of research that is explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods.

3.1 Population and Sampling

In this study, the participants are EFL learners pursuing their studies at the English Department at Kandahar University as one of leading and reputable public universities in Afghanistan. The rationale why the researcher has chosen this particular public university and the participants is due to their accessibility. The population where the research is intended to be executed is a total of 150 subjects consisted of 109 male and 41 female learners aged between 20 to 30 years old. Participations were selected through random sampling because it is the most popular method for choosing a sample among population for a wide range of purposes. In random to sampling, each member of population is likely to be chosen as part of the sample (Gravetter & Forzano, 2011).

3.2 Instrument

The main instrument used in this research was questionnaire adapted from various studies (Zakaria & Razak, 2016; Hanifa & Yusra, 2018) including relevant literature review and observations of the researcher who accumulated during the four years of learning. Minor changes were made to the questionnaires to suit the purpose and context of the current study. Moreover, the questionnaire had two sections, the first
section included questions about demographic information and the second section is designed in three parts. First part collected information about EFL students’ perceptions toward the difficulties in oral presentation. Second part collected information about EFL students’ perceptions towards the strategies coping with difficulties used in oral presentation. The last part collected data about lecturer’s role in improving EFL learners’ oral presentation skills. It consisted 40 items as the questionnaire fell in four ranks of likert scale: 1- Strongly Agree, 2- Agree 3- Strongly Disagree 4- Disagree.

### 3.3 Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

Before the questionnaire was given for pilot testing to establish the validity of the instrument, the researcher consulted the supervisor for constructive feedback and comments. Supervisor was consulted regarding the context, content, structure, and to ensure that the questions included in the questionnaire covered all features of the research and its objectives (Collis & Hussey, 2009). It was also done to ensure that correct wording was used, and that grammatical errors that can influence the result of the study were addressed. In order to examine the internal reliability of the questionnaire, the coefficient alpha method, used to evaluate internal reliability (Huck, Cormier & Bounds, 2012), was calculated using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, edition 23.0). Based on the data gathered, the reliability of the instrument was calculated .791 which is acceptable.

### 3.4 Data Collection and Ethical Issues

According to Kirk (2007), important ethical issues are involved in any social research including that into education, which deals with the beliefs, values, and lives of people. The researcher collected data from participants via questionnaire. Before data collection, the researcher took the permission from the heads of English Department to collect the data, and then the researcher went to the classes, described the research title with the questionnaire to participants and described the aim of conducting this research that the questionnaire would be used for the research purposes only. Thus, the participants were also able to freely give their attitudes without being conscious that they are being observed or judged. Besides, there was no time limitation for the participants in filling the questionnaire.

### 3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The data was analyzed in terms of the means scores and standard deviation of each item in the questionnaire were employed to measure student’s perceptions.

### 4. Findings Of The Study

Table 1

presents the demographic information of the participants
Table 1 shows that there were 150 participants, from which 109 were male and 41 were female students. Regarding learners’ level of education, 31 were freshmen, 36 were sophomore, 35 junior, and 48 were senior students. Regarding to their age, 74 respondents were in the age of 18-21, 49 respondents were in the age of 22-26, 27 respondents were in the age of 27-30.

### 4.1 RQ 1: What are EFL learners’ perceptions towards the difficulties in oral presentations?

Table 2 presents the relevant findings
### Difficulties in Oral Presentations

| Difficulties in Oral Presentations                                                                 | M    | SD  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-----|
| I start to panic when I give the oral presentation without enough preparation.                    | 3.17 | .903|
| I shake when I know that I will be the next one to give oral presentation.                         | 3.13 | .914|
| I find it difficult to maintain eye contact with audience in oral presentation.                    | 3.11 | 1.031|
| The instructor’s interruption with questions or criticism affects my performance.                  | 2.95 | .789|
| I am afraid that I would get an unfair grade for my oral presentation.                             | 2.94 | .884|
| I forget everything during oral presentation even if I am prepared well.                           | 2.87 | .917|
| It frightens me when I know the in-class oral presentation will be graded by the teacher.         | 2.85 | .854|
| I find it difficult to present orally a challenging topic.                                         | 2.76 | .880|
| I am afraid that my teachers tend to correct mistakes I make during the presentation.              | 2.75 | .926|
| I find it difficult to organize my ideas logically during oral presentation.                       | 2.71 | .900|
| I don’t like the idea of doing oral presentations because I don’t have oral presentation skills.  | 2.65 | 1.062|
| There is no time for me to prepare and rehearse the presentation.                                 | 2.59 | 1.317|
| I find an oral presentation difficult because I have low self-confidence.                          | 2.01 | .897|
| I am afraid being assessed by my classmates in front of the class.                                | 1.99 | .948|
| I feel frightened when a lot of people are watching me.                                            | 1.77 | .814|
| I have a problem with oral fluency, accuracy and pronunciation during oral presentation.         | 1.73 | .940|

Table 2 presents the mean scores for the difficulties in oral presentation. All of the items had the mean scores between the ranges of one to three. It was deduced that the average level of EFL learners perceptions towards the difficulties in oral presentations was in the range of ‘Strongly agree, and ‘disagree. Items which gained higher mean scores in this dimension were identified as “I start to panic when I give the oral presentation without enough preparation.” with a mean score of M=3.17 (SD=.903). This is followed by “I shake when I know that I will be the next one to give oral presentation.” (M=3.13, SD=.914), and “I find it difficult to maintain eye contact with audience in oral presentation.” (M=3.11, SD=1.031). Meanwhile, the four dimensions with comparative lowest mean scores were “I have a problem with oral fluency, accuracy and pronunciation during oral presentation.” with a mean score of (M=1.73, SD=.940), “I feel frightened when a lot of people are watching me.” (M=1.77, SD=.814) and “I am afraid being assessed by my classmates in front of the class.” (M=1.99, SD=.948). Overall, the results indicate that the major items which affect EFL learners’ oral presentation are: 1) Learners have a problem with oral fluency, accuracy and pronunciation during oral presentation 2) They feel frightened when a lot
of people are watching them. 3) They afraid being assessed by their classmates in front of the class. 4) They find an oral presentation difficult because they have low self-confidence.

4.2 RQ 2: What are EFL learners’ perceptions towards the strategies coping with difficulties used in oral presentations?

Table 3

| Strategies Coping with Difficulties                                                                 | M   | SD  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| I prepare answers to anticipated questions, and practice responding to them.                      | 2.90| .932|
| I have to observe other presentations to help me present my presentation well.                   | 2.81| .872|
| I have to use thoughtful slides and proper time management.                                     | 2.79| .987|
| I thoroughly analyze my audience.                                                                | 2.76| 1.041|
| I have to use gestures and maintain good eye contact with the audience at all times.            | 2.72| 1.063|
| I prepare small notes as guidelines before presentation to avoid reading from manuscript.       | 2.71| 1.078|
| I rehearse so there is a minimum focus on notes and maximum attention paid to my audience.     | 2.30| 1.035|
| I have to concentrate more on phonetics and phonology of language.                              | 1.96| .834|
| I have to build self-confidence to present very well.                                            | 1.76| .841|
| I prepare myself properly before an oral presentation.                                          | 1.66| .776|

Table 3 indicates the strategies coping with difficulties used in oral presentations. All of the items had the mean scores between the ranges of two to one. It was deduced that the average level of EFL learners’ perceptions towards the difficulties in oral presentations was in the range of ‘strongly agree, and ‘agree’. Items which gained higher mean scores in this dimension were identified as “I prepare answers to anticipated questions, and practice responding to them.” with a mean score of M=2.90 (SD=.932). This is followed by “I have to observe other presentations to help me present my presentation well.”, “I have to use thoughtful slides and proper time management.” and (M = 2.79, SD = .872). “I thoroughly analyze my audience.” with mean scores of M=2.81 (SD=.922), M=2.72 (SD=.902) and M=2.76 (SD=.933) respectively. On the other hand, the three items with comparative lowest mean scores were “I prepare myself properly before an oral presentation.” (M=1.66, SD=.890), “I have to build self-confidence to present very well.” (M=1.76, SD=.976) and “I have to concentrate more on phonetics and phonology of language.” (M=1.96, SD=.994). Overall, the perceived strategies coping with difficulties used in oral
presentations are: 1) When learners prepare themselves properly before an oral presentation, 2) When they build self-confidence for presentation to present very well and 3) they have to concentrate more on phonetics and phonology of language.

4.3 RQ 3: What are EFL learners’ perceptions towards the perceived role of lecturer in improving oral presentation skills?

Table 4 presents the relevant findings

| Role of lecturer in improving oral presentation skills. Lecturer should:                                      | M     | SD  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Give enough time to learners to prepare well.                                                              | 2.73  | 1.175 |
| Should convince and provide useful feedback after oral presentation.                                       | 2.70  | 1.041 |
| Create a fun learning environment and positive reinforcement.                                              | 2.66  | 1.116 |
| Share grading rubrics with EFL learners before the presentations.                                          | 2.17  | .993  |
| Encourage the peers to be more supportive.                                                                 | 2.09  | 1.055 |
| Allow learners to choose their own topics that lowers their anxiety.                                       | 1.99  | 1.023 |
| Show learners videos of good speakers for enhancing their presentation skill.                              | 1.98  | 1.020 |
| Design a specific course in teaching oral presentation skills for EFL learners                             | 1.97  | .919  |

Table 4 indicates the perceived role of a lecturer in improving oral presentation skill. All of the items had the mean scores between the ranges of one to two. It was deduced that the average level of the perceived role of lecturer in improving oral presentation skills was in the range of ‘strongly agree, and ‘agree’. The highest mean score is obtained for the item “Lecturer should give enough time to learners to prepare well.” With a mean score of M=2.73 (SD=1.238). This is followed by “Lecturer should convince and provide useful feedback after oral presentation.” and “Create a fun learning environment and positive reinforcement.” with mean scores of M=2.70 (SD=1.150) and M=2.66 (SD=1.103) respectively. On the other hand, the two items with comparative lowest mean scores were “Lecturer should design a specific course in teaching oral presentation skills for EFL learners.” (M=1.97, SD=.881), and “Lecturer should show learners videos of good speakers for enhancing their presentation skill.” Overall, the perceived roles of a lecturer in improving learners’ oral presentation skills are: 1) Lecturer should design a specific course in teaching oral presentation skills for EFL learners. 2) Lecturer should show learners videos of good speakers for enhancing their presentation skill and 3) Lecturer should allow learners to choose their own topics that lower their anxiety.
4.4 RQ 4: Is there any significant difference in learners’ perceptions towards oral presentation among year?

| Table 5                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **One-Way ANOVA: Oral Presentation among Level of Education**          |
| Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F     | Sig.   |
|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|--------|
| Oral Difficulties       |     |             |       |        |
| Between Groups          | 1.482 | 3     | .494  | 4.947  | .003  |
| Within Groups           | 14.584 | 146  | .100  |        |       |
| Total                   | 16.066 | 149  |       |        |       |
| Coping Strategies       |     |             |       |        |
| Between Groups          | .260  | 3     | .087  | 1.180  | .320  |
| Within Groups           | 10.706 | 146  | .073  |        |       |
| Total                   | 10.966 | 149  |       |        |       |
| Lecturer’s Role         |     |             |       |        |
| Between Groups          | 1.870  | 3     | .623  | 3.599  | .015  |
| Within Groups           | 25.290 | 146  | .173  |        |       |
| Total                   | 27.160 | 149  |       |        |       |

An ANOVA was conducted, and results (Table 5) showed that there were significant differences among freshman, sophomore, junior and senior EFL learners and oral presentation in terms of: oral difficulties ($f (3, 146) = 4.947 & p=.003$) and lecturer’s role ($f (3, 146) = 3.599 & p=.015$).

Similarly, the Post-Hoc LSD multiple comparison analysis also indicated that there were significant difference between the level of education and self-regulated learning.

5. Discussion

In terms of the potential difficulties faced by EFL learners, the results of the current study revealed that EFL learners have major issues with fluency, accuracy and pronunciation during oral presentation. Mostly, EFL learners concentrated on the three factors amidst oral presentation that caused them to become hesitant and made errors. As mentioned in the literature review, Kho, Abdullah and Leong (2015) revealed in their study that learners were incapable of English fluently and majority of them tended to make errors and did not use correct structure of the sentences when presenting orally. The current study also found that EFL learners feel apprehended and vulnerable when presenting orally in front of a large audience. The participants of the study acknowledged that they feel uncomfortable and uneasy which makes them reading from the slides rather than presenting to the audience and maintaining eye contact. These findings are in line with the results of Imaniah (2018) who found that most of the EFL learners were lost and unable to present. EFL learners, therefore, started reading from the slides. Moreover, the current results indicated EFL apprehensive with assessment process and also they lack self-confidence. The
participants are edgy being assessed negatively in front of the peers and they find oral presentation challenging because there is a shortage of self-confidence. These results agree with the findings of Razawi, Zulkomain and Mohd Razlan (2019) in which the assessment process should not be kept confidential to make oral presentation difficult and make EFL learners lose their self-confidence.

In addition, the finding of the research indicated that they are some strategies coping with difficulties used in oral presentations. The finding of this study demonstrated that EFL learners have to prepare themselves properly before an oral presentation. According to the participants of this research, preparation for an effective delivery is a key factor. The finding of this study is in harmony with the finding of Whai and Mei (2015) who indicated inadequate preparation as the most common difficulty in oral presentation and EFL learners have to prioritize it to master the subject matter. Moreover, the finding also discovered that learners have to build self-confidence for presentation to present very well. EFL learners have to increase confidence to speak and present in front of an audience in a well-managed presentation, and try to confidence levels. This result was confirmed by Hanifa and Yusra (2018) in which speakers seemed confident using humors and joke amidst oral presentations. Likewise, when it comes to strategies coping with difficulties, majority of the participants in this research agreed on concentrating more on phonetics and phonology of language. This finding seem to be consistent with El Enein (2011) who found that EFL learners have to inevitably consider phonetics and phonology of language to make the oral delivery more effective.

Furthermore, the results of this study discovered that lecturers are required to design a special course for EFL learners to develop their oral presentation skills. EFL learners strongly agreed that specific course for strengthening oral presentation skills would assist them become experienced presenters in the future. This finding corroborates with Brooks and Wilson (2014) who suggested EFL lecturers to accommodate optional classes for EFL learners and train them to become skillful presenters. Additionally, the results of this study revealed that lecturers need to show some videos from professional presenters to contribute EFL learners in becoming qualified presenters. EFL learners believed that their oral presentation skill will have improved if they are facilitated with various videos of speakers with decent presentation skills. In accordance with the present result, Karimkhanlooei (2017) reiterated that presenting number of realistic videos of expert presenters will have a great deal contribution in boosting EFL learners’ oral presentation skills. Another key finding this research found was that lecturers should allow learners to select their own presentation topics. This means that EFL learners will have less anxiety and fear during delivery if they are given the opportunity to decide on their favorite issues for presentation. The finding observed in this study mirror that of previous result by Ait Atmane and Ahouari-Idri (2016) who advised EFL lecturers to provide freedom to EFL learners by choosing oral presentation topics.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to determine EFL learners’ perceptions toward the difficulties in oral presentation, some coping strategies for decrease of these difficulties and lecturers’ role in improving their oral presentation skills. The researcher collected the data through the questionnaire, where the
following conclusions can be drawn from the present study that EFL learners fluency, accuracy and proficiency as well as range of pronunciation are the difficulties in mastering oral skills, they feel frightened when a lot of people are watching them, they are afraid of being assessed by their classmates and they have low self-confidence. Furthermore, the study also found the strategies in decreasing these difficulties. The results of this investigation also indicated that learners have to get prepared properly before oral presentation, they have to build self-confidence and concentrate on phonetics and phonology of language. Finally, regarding to the role of lecturer in improving oral presentation, this research has several suggestions for lecturers to design a specific course in teaching oral presentation skills for EFL learners, show learners videos of good speakers for enhancing their presentation skill and lecturer has to permit learners to choose their own topic that lowers their anxiety.

6.1 Limitation and Recommendations

A number of important limitations need to be considered. First, the study was conducted on a small sample size. Second, this study could not be generalized to all EFL learners of public universities in Afghanistan, therefore it could only be generalized to EFL learners of one public university. Third, due to the instrument used in this research, there might be issues of dishonest responses, rushed responses which may affect the findings. The researcher should have included EFL classroom observation to more reliable data collection because this research is about oral presentation.

Based on the limitations of this study, recommendations for future studies on the same topic are listed as below.

1. The current study recommends to conduct interviews with the participants to obtain in-depth information and deeper reasons pertaining to this topic.
2. For further researches, it would be better to observe EFL classrooms during oral presentations and also to consider EFL learners in other public universities.

Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

Declarations

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Availability of data and materials

Data supporting the findings of this quantitative research will be shared upon request.

Authors’ contributions

The first author wrote sections of introduction, literature review and discussion. The second author wrote sections of methodology and analyzed data. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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