



The Correlation between EFL Learners' Self-directed and their Level of Productive Skills

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Abstract

The ability to communicate effectively is one of the key goals of learning the English language. Effective communication allows for the exchange of information, ideas, and feelings as well as the expression of opinions, negotiation of themes, and evocation of emotions. The ability to communicate is essential to acquiring the English language. It gives students the chance to practice speaking, pick up new words, and understand different cultures. However, gaining productive skills in a classroom setting can be greatly aided by learning English. These goals may be related to learners' seeking mastery of new skills or gaining better performance and judgments in comparison with others. Accordingly, the current study is conducted to explore the correlation of EFL learners' level of self-directed learning (SDL) with their productive skills. The population of the study represents EFL students at the departments of English of the Iraqi colleges of education, except for the Kurdistan region, for the academic year (2022-2023). The sample, on the other hand, is purposive and includes 310 EFL students selected from the 3rd year students of the English Departments of the College of Education, Ibn Rushd for Human Sciences/ University of Baghdad (110 students), College of Education/ University of Diyala (107 students), and College of Education/ University of Tikrit (83 students). The total number of 3rd year students in the departments included is 995 students from whom a percentage of 30% is relied on in selecting the sample. The research design of the current study is a correlational in nature through which two instruments are used, after being approved and validated by a jury of experts. These are:

- 1) a 28-item questionnaire to assess students' Self-directed learning,*
- 2) a productive skills test.*

The results obtained reveal that there are positive significant correlations between EFL learners' SDL and productive skills.

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المخلص

ان القدرة على التواصل بشكل فعال تعتبر أحد الأهداف الرئيسية لتعلم اللغة الإنكليزية. حيث يسمح الاتصال الفعال بتبادل المعلومات والأفكار والمشاعر وكذلك التعبير عن الآراء والتفاوض حول الموضوعات واستحضار المشاعر. وان القدرة على التواصل هي أمر ضروري لاكتساب اللغة الإنكليزية حيث يمنح الطلاب فرصة لممارسة التحدث والتقاط كلمات جديدة وفهم الثقافات المختلفة.

ومع ذلك ، فإن اكتساب المهارات الإنتاجية في بيئة الفصل الدراسي يمكن أن يساعد بشكل كبير من خلال تعلم اللغة الإنكليزية. قد تكون هذه الأهداف مرتبطة بسعي المتعلمين إلى إتقان مهارات جديدة أو اكتساب أداء وأحكام أفضل مقارنة بالآخرين. وعليه فقد تم اجراء الدراسة الحالية لإيجاد الارتباط بين التعلم الموجه ذاتيا واستعمال المهارات الإنتاجية لدى متحدثي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية. حيث تهدف الدراسة لإيجاد:

١. مستوى التوجه نحو تحقيق الاهداف, التعلم الموجه ذاتيا والمهارات الانتاجية لدى الطلبة متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية.
٢. الارتباط بين التعلم الموجه ذاتيا والمهارات الانتاجية لدى طلبة الجامعة العراقيين دارسي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية.

وقد تم وضع الفرضية التالية لا توجد علاقة ذات دلالة احصائية بين التوجه نحو التعلم الموجه ذاتيا ومستوى المهارات الانتاجية لدى الطلبة متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية. وقد مثل مجتمع الدراسة الطلبة الدارسون للغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية في اقسام اللغة الانكليزية في كليات التربية العراقية باستثناء اقليم كردستان للعام الدراسي (٢٠٢٢-٢٠٢٣). اما عينة البحث فقد اشتملت على ٣١٠ طالب وطالبة من المرحلة الثالثة من كلية التربية/ابن رشد للعلوم الانسانية /جامعة بغداد (١١٠), كلية التربية /جامعة ديالى (١٠٧), وكلية التربية للعلوم الانسانية / جامعة تكريت (٨٣). يبلغ العدد الكلي لطلبة المرحلة الثالثة في الاقسام المشمولة ٩٩٥ والتي اختيرت منها عينة البحث وبنسبة بلغت ٣٠ %.

ان طبيعة منهجية البحث التي تم اعتمادها هو المنهج الارتباطي والذي تم من خلاله استعمال اداتين بعد ان تم عرضها على خبراء من ذوي الاختصاص, وهي استبيان التعلم الموجه ذاتيا والذي يتكون من (٢٨)فقرة, اختبار مهارات المحادثة والكتابة. وقد تم تطبيق الادوات داخل الصف الدراسي وتم تحليل البيانات التي جمعت باستخدام الوسائل الاحصائية المناسبة. وقد اظهرت نتائج البحث وجود علاقات ذات دلالة معنوية بين التعلم الموجه ذاتيا و مستوى المهارات الانتاجية لدى الطلبة متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية.

في ضوء النتائج التي تم التوصل اليها, تم وضع الاستنتاجات وعدد من التوصيات لكل من المعلمين, الطلبة الدارسين للغة الانكليزية لغة اجنبية, ومصممي المناهج التعليمية. كما تم اقتراح بعض الدراسات الاخرى وفق نتائج الدراسة الحالية.

1. Introduction

1.1 Problem of the Study

Garrison (1997), argues that self-directed learning (henceforth SDL) require individuals to have strong cognitive abilities, such as decision-making skills which are essential for academic success. Therefore, providing individuals with the necessary cognitive abilities to take control of their learning and achieve their goals. Additionally, allowing individuals to apply their cognitive skills in real-world situations and develop a deeper understanding of academic concepts.

However, learning as a foreign language (EFL) can help develop cognitive abilities such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills, which are crucial for academic success. These skills are required not only in language learning but also in academic tasks such as research, analysis, and writing (Steinberger, 1993).

Accordingly, it is proposed that this factor is crucial in shaping students' performance in productive activities, that is, students who use their academic intelligence for engagement in conversation, whether they seek better performance or mastery of the skills, will consequently adjust themselves to achieve their goals, cope with difficulties and challenges and ultimately be successful communicators.

1.2 Aims

Thus, it aims are to find out:

1. EFL students' level of SDL and productive skills.
2. The correlation between EFL students' SDL and productive skills.
3. Finding out the extent to which SDL contribute in interpreting the variation in productive skills for Iraqi EFL university students.

1.3 Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that there is no statistically significant correlation between the SDL and productive skills of EFL university students.

1.4 Limits

This study is limited to:

1. Iraqi EFL 3rd year students at the English departments of colleges of education.
2. The academic year 2022-2023.

1.5 Value

This study is hoped to be of value to:

1. EFL students should be made aware of how their SDL which may aid in the improvement of their productive abilities.
2. English language instructors should emphasize the significance of these factors in assisting students to be able to regulate their studies and academic activities, specifically in productive skills.
3. Educators and researcher who may benefit from the findings of this study in approaching investigation of the variables involved in this study from different perspectives.

2. Theoretical Framework

Self-directed Learning (SDL): Definitions & Theories^{٢,١}

According to Garland (2017), SDL is an instructional strategy in which students, with the teacher's guidance, determine what and how they will learn. Individual or group learning is acceptable, but the overall concept is that students assume responsibility for their education.

Moreover, it is viewed as both a goal and a process, and SDL interaction between a student and his environment, knowledge acquisition without awareness of the social environment, is defined. In addition, it is regarded that self-management as an outcome of education and as a training method (Candy, 1991).

According to Van der Walt's (2019) SDL can happen both inside and outside of formal educational institutions. Active educators should help their students learn rather than simply teach them.

Knowles's (1980) states that it is a process by which students proactively, with or without the assistance of others, diagnose their learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify human and material resources for learning, choose and implement appropriate learning strategies, and evaluate learning outcomes.

Students engage in SDL when they take responsibility for their own education by deciding what they want to learn, how they want to acquire it, what resources they want to use, and how they want to keep track of their progress. Several SDL theories attempt to explain this process. They are:

1. Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

According to Garrison (1997), students are more likely to participate in SDL when they feel autonomous, competent, and connected. In other words, they feel in charge of their education, capable of picking up new knowledge and ideas, and connected to others who have similar hobbies. SDT is a theory of human drive that contends that when students feel a sense of agency, competence, and relatedness, they are more likely to participate in SDL. The idea of autonomy is that students can choose what and how they learn and are in charge of their own learning processes. The idea of competence is that students are capable of acquiring new knowledge and skills and that their efforts will result in fruitful learning results. When students are able to share their educational experiences with students who have comparable hobbies as themselves, they feel a feeling of connection and belonging. This is referred to as relatedness (Knowles, 1988).

2. Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

Bandura (1986) states that students with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to participate in SDL because they have a strong sense of their ability to establish and meet their own learning objectives.

According to SCT, mastering experiences, vicarious experiences, social reasoning, and physiological and emotional states are the four major factors that impact self-efficacy. Students who have firsthand encounters with effective learning outcomes are said to have had mastery experiences, which can boost their self-assurance and trust in their own abilities. Vicarious experiences involve observing others who have accomplished comparable learning objectives effectively, which can be an inspiration and motivational source. Receiving supportive criticism and praise from others is a component of social influence that can also boost self-efficacy. Finally, physiological and affective states that affect confidence and ability, such as worry or nervousness, can impact how effective a person feels about themselves (Bandura, 1997).

3. Andragogy Theory of SDL

According to Knowles (1975), the significance of SDL contends that when offered the chance to take charge of students' educational experiences and personalize their education to costume their needs and interests, students are more likely to participate in SDL. Adults may have distinct learning needs and characteristics than children, making conventional teacher-led learning methods less successful for this group. Instead, internal motivations like personal development, job advancement, or a wish for self-improvement are more likely to drive adult learners. According to andragogy, a number of fundamental concepts which help to promote SDL, are listed in the following:

- Learner autonomy: When adults have control over their own learning experiences and have the freedom to choose what and how they learn, they are more apt to participate in SDL.
- Setting goals: When adults have specific learning targets that are pertinent to their own needs and interests, they are more likely to participate in SDL.
- Experience: Adults bring an abundance of previous knowledge and experience to their learning, and when they are able to expand on this knowledge and experience, they are more apt to participate in SDL. Adults are more apt to participate in SDL when they can see how it applies to their lives (Knowles, 1988).

4. Humanistic Theory

According to Candy (1988), the humanist philosophy has affected the conceptualization of adult education as an alternative to traditional pedagogy. The foundation of SDL is integrating the human experiences of the educator and the learner into the classroom setting. To do so, students must utilize SDL contents to establish personal, professional, and societal bonds. SDL should facilitate students' realizing and developing their maximum potential so that it can lead to transformation (holism). SDL must be of a transformative and holistic nature, which means that students must be exposed to a body of knowledge, must reflect on their experience (their thoughts and feelings), and must thereby give meaning to their learning experience.

In this view, the learner is in the best position to choose whether or not their education is tailored to their specific goals. However, the concept of humanism is multifaceted and ambiguous (Taylor and Hamdy, 2013).

2.1.1 Dimensions of SDL

Long (1989) identifies three dimensions of SDL: ‘Sociological, Pedagogical, and Psychological’.

In contrast to the claim that SDL is typically connected with social independence in the learning context, the sociological dimension places special emphasis on the learner's social isolation. Individualistic learning will occur in a non-communal setting. One crucial issue is that educational pursuits should not be decided by any one institution of power. An SDL learner is one who acts on their own initiative and pursues knowledge for its own sake.

- Pedagogical dimension implies that the ‘procedures’ of pedagogy are carried out by the student. Whether learning is self-directed depends on the degree of freedom in determining learning objectives, influence on planning, implementation, and evaluation, and other pedagogical aspects of learning activities. From the pedagogy side, self-direction can be learned and developed and is considered a goal. SDL can take place without social isolation. SDL can take place in groups as well or in cooperation with institutions or others. Neither social isolation nor total independence is necessary.
- Psychological self-direction is concerned with the learner's characteristics, with an emphasis on the abilities and skills required for SDL. Psychologically, SDL concerns the extent to which the learner exercises active control over the learning process. In a learning situation, the inner psychological control is the most essential factor, not the external factors.

2.1.2 Benefits of SDL

The benefits of SDL can be effectively described in terms of the categories of learners it cultivates. Students who participate in SDL are required to implement certain procedures, including the ones stated below:

- Firstly, they must conduct an analysis of the areas in which they wish to develop expertise.

- Secondly, they must observe others, particularly when they are carrying out the tasks.
- Thirdly, taking notes is effective, especially during the production and manufacturing processes.
- Fourthly individuals are required to carry out the task either independently or under the supervision of others.
- Fifthly, they must engage in ongoing practice.
- Sixthly, appropriate evaluation methods must be implemented in order to identify flaws and inconsistencies and implement enhancements. Therefore, it can be stated that when students implement these procedures, they will be able to achieve the desired results (Abdullah, M., 2001).

2.2 Productive Skills

According to Nunan (2003), a student's capacity to create words, whether in spoken or written form, is referred to as 'productive skills'. Writing and communicating are the two most important useful abilities.

Speaking entails using speech to create language in both official and casual contexts, such as when delivering presentations, conversing with friends, or taking part in group discussions. It involves not only producing grammatically correct sentences, but also using appropriate intonation, stress, and rhythm to convey meaning effectively (Nunan, 2003).

Writing is the process of creating words through written text, and it can take many different forms, including letters, reports, essays, and artistic writing. In addition to language and grammatical proficiency, productive skills also call for the capacity to successfully interact in a particular setting and arrange ideas. It takes practice, feedback, and introspection to develop strong effective skills, as well as knowledge of the norms and standards of various communication styles. On the whole, having strong creative skills is crucial to the successful pedagogic and business endeavors, effective communication, and strong productivity (Hyland, 2003).



Speaking and writing abilities are essential because they allow students to practise real-world activities in the classroom. These two skills can be used as a 'barometer' to determine how much the students have learned. Unless a person is learning English solely for academic purposes and has no intention of communicating in English, which is quite uncommon, learning to speak is essential. A strong command of speaking skills fosters a genuine sense of advancement and enhances the confidence of students. Learning how to write is essential because written communication is a fundamental life skill. Students may be required to take notes, complete forms, and compose letters, reports, and stories, etc. (Al-Jamal & AlJamal, 2014).

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants of the Study

The population of the study represents EFL students at the departments of English of the Iraqi colleges of education, except for Kurdistan region for the academic year (2022-2023). The sample, on the other hand, includes (310) EFL students purposively selected from the 3rd year students of the English departments of the college of education, Ibn Rushd for Human Sciences/ university of Baghdad 101 (115 students), college of education/ university of Diyala (110 students), college of education/ university of Tikrit (85 students). The total number of 3rd year students in the departments included is 995 students from whom a percentage of 30% is relied on in selecting the sample which is regarded as highly reliable in correlational studies (AERA, 2006).

The population is defined as "any set of items, individuals, etc. which share some common and observable characteristics from which a sample can be selected" (Richards et al, 1992: 282) (as cited in Kamel, N., 2018).

Table (1)

Population & Sample of the Study

Department of English		3 rd ye ar
College of Education, Ibn Rushd for Human Sciences/ University of Baghdad	No.	250
	30 %	115
College of Education/ University of Diyala	No.	255
	30 %	110
College of Education/ University of Tikrit	No.	153
	30 %	85

3.2 Instruments**3.2.1 Self-directed Learning Scale**

The self-directed learning scale (SDL) used in this study is adopted and adapted from Khiat (2015). The scale is composed of 28 items assessing a variety of aspects of SDL necessary for effective communication including six dimensions as, assignment management task, time management, learning efficiency from workshops, Efficiency of discussion electronically, procrastination management and examination management. The SDL scale prepared consists of 28 items and a 5 point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The scale also includes items which have reversed direction, thus scored reversely. Moreover, the higher score to be 77 obtained by participants is (140), whereas the lower score is (28) with a theoretical mean of (84).

3.2.2 The Productive Skills Test

The second instrument used in this study is the productive skills test. It is constructed by the researcher. The participants are tested orally through an interview between participant A (the interviewer) which is the researcher and participant B (the interviewee) which is the student

through which a variety of speaking skills are used. The speaking tests should be designed to assess students' ability to use language for various purposes, such as making requests, giving opinions, and making comparisons and the writing tests should be designed to assess learners' ability to write for various purposes and audiences, such as writing a letter of complaint, a job application letter, or an essay.

The test of productive skills in the current study in its final form consists of two skills: speaking skill which consists of six standards (grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, interaction), and writing skill which consists of five standards (content, organisation, grammar, vocabulary, writing technique).

Accordingly, the higher score that can be obtained by the participant in speaking skill is (30) and the lower score is (6) with a theoretical mean of (18). Whereas, the higher score that can be obtained by the participant in writing skill is (20) and the lower score is (5) with a theoretical mean of (12.5).

3.3 Face Validity

In order to assess face validity, as stated by Salkind & Rasmussen (2010, p.473) (as cited in Hindi, N. & Hamid, S., 2022), “experts with substantial expertise of the study area of interest should be given the exam to provide constructive insights and observations that aid in the development of the research project”.

Harris (1969:19) puts his view of validity within two questions: “(1) What precisely does the test measure?” and “(2) How well does the test measure?”(as cited in Albakri SH., 2018).

Thus, the measures of the current study are exposed to a jury of (16) experts in the field of methods of teaching English and the field of linguistics to provide their viewpoints concerning the adequacy and appropriateness of the items of each measure. The experts show their approval of the appropriateness of the items for the topic and sample concerned after some slight modifications.

3.4 Test Reliability

As far as the current study is concerned, two types of reliability are addressed, test-retest and internal consistency.

One of the fundamental features of a good instrument is its dependability, which refers to the consistency or stability of the results it produces (Franzen, 2002). About the current study, test-retest and internal consistency are addressed as categories of dependability. Reliability is “the actual level of agreement between the results of one test with itself” (Davies et al., 1999, p. 168) cited in (Krebt, Dh., 2017, p. 48).

The researcher relied on the internal consistency method to find test stability, which is a method that depends on the correlation between the test items with each other within the test. In order to extract the stability in this way, the equation (Queder Richardson 20) was applied to the scores of the sample (310) male and female students, so the value of the test stability coefficient was (0.91), and thus it is considered a good and appropriate value, so the test is considered stable, “as the tests are not standardized. It is good as its stability coefficient is (0.67) or above” (Odeh and Al-Khalili, 1988, p.122).

For the purpose of extracting stability in this way, the scale was re-applied on a sample of stability, which consisted of (40) male and female students, with a time interval of (14) days from the first application. It is indicated that re-application of the scale for the purpose of identifying its stability should not exceed from two weeks. The first application, then the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the scores of the first and second applications, and the correlation coefficient was (0.91) for the scale. 0.70) or more, as this is a good indicator of the stability of tests in educational and psychological sciences (Al-Issawy, 1985).

This method is used because obtaining a high stability value indicates that the scores (the stability value) are less likely to be affected by random daily variables in the conditions of the subject, or in the environment in which the test is conducted (Anastasi, 1976).

In general, internal consistency approaches allow each item to be considered as a single measurement and the test to be viewed as a sequence of repeated measures (Ravid, 2020).

Cronbach Alpha coefficient can range from 0.00 to 1.00 to indicate very low to very high internal consistency. In addition, an Alpha of (0.65-0.80) is often considered adequate for a measure used in human dimension research (Vaske et al, 2016). Accordingly, the measures of the

study (SDL test and Productive skills) are found to be of high internal consistency with r- values of (0.67, and 0.89) respectively.

3.5 Final Application

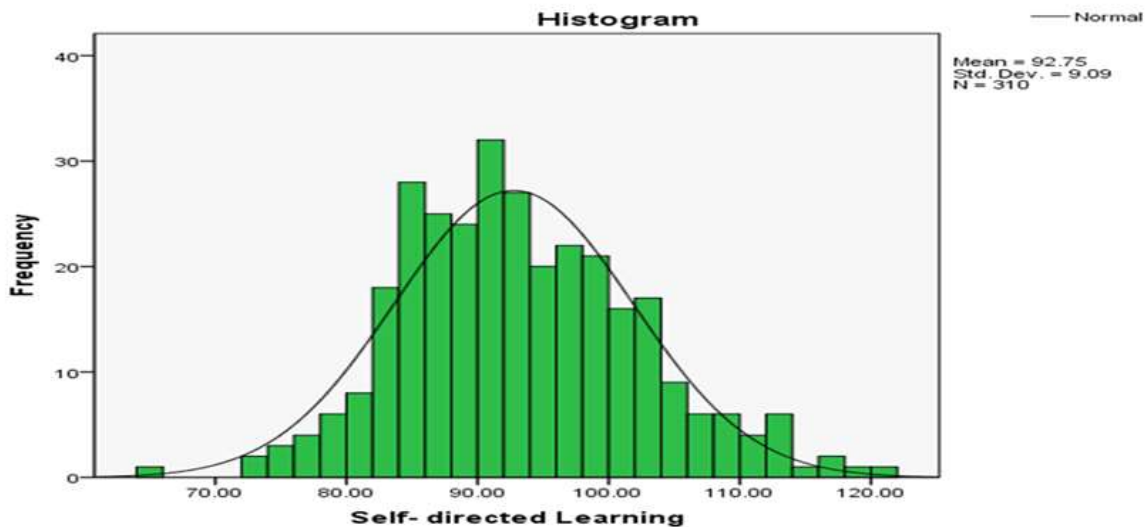
The process of statistical analysis of the items of the scale is one of the basic steps for its construction, and the adoption of items that are featured by good psychometric characteristics makes the scale more valid and reliable (Anastasi, 1988). The aim of statistical analysis of items is usually to calculate their discriminatory power and determine their reliability coefficients, as these are the two most important indicators of items accuracy and measurement of what they were prepared to measure (AlKubaisi, 2001, 32).

Therefore, “statistical analysis of items is more important than logical analysis because it verifies the content of the item in measuring what it was prepared to measure by verifying some standard indicators of the item, such as its ability to discriminate between respondents and its reliability coefficient” (AlKubaisi, 1995: 5).

Table (2)
Statistical Indicators of the SDL Scale

N o	Statistical Indicators	Values
١	Mean score	٩٢,٧٥
٢	Medium	٩٢,٠٠
٣	Mode	90
٤	Standard deviation	٩,٠٩
٥	Variance	٨٢,٦٢
٦	Skewness	٠,٣٥١
٧	Kurtosis	٠,١٣٨
٨	Lower score	65
٩	Higher score	121
١٠	Range	56

Figure (1)

The Distribution of the SDL Scale Scores

In order to find out the correlation coefficient between the degree of each item and the degree of the dimension to which it belongs, the researcher used Pearson correlation coefficient to calculate the validity of the items of the SDL scale in each dimension. When compared to the critical value of (0.113) at the level of significance (0.05) and with a degree of freedom (308), and through this indicator, it became clear that all items of the scale express their dimensions, and Table (3) shows that.

Table (3)

Correlation coefficients between each item and the dimension to which it belongs

Item No.	The link of the item to the dimension to which it belongs	No. of Dimension	Dimension
1	0.353	1	Task Management
2	0.379		
3	0.523		
4	0.657		
5	0.396		
5	0.570	2	Time Management



Item No.	The link of the item to the dimension to which it belongs	No. of Dimension	Dimension
7	0.564		
8	0.626		
9	0.573		
10	0.440		
11	0.511	3	Examination Management
12	0.507		



Item No.	The link of the item to the dimension to which it belongs	No. of Dimension	Dimension
13	0.520		
14	0.534		
15	0.485		
16	0.517		
17	0.668	4	Symposiums/ Workshops Learning Proficiency



Item No.	The link of the item to the dimension to which it belongs	No. of Dimension	Dimension
18	0.718		
19	0.751		
20	0.584	5	Online Discussion Proficiency
21	0.580		
22	0.680		



Item No.	The link of the item to the dimension to which it belongs	No. of Dimension	Dimension
23	0.662		
24	0.656		
25	0.527		
26	0.780	6	Procrastination Management
27	0.826		

Item No.	The link of the item to the dimension to which it belongs	No. of Dimension	Dimension
28	0.790		

The statistical indicators of the productive skills test are examined to provide data related to the mean score, standard deviation, variance, shape of distribution, and coefficients of 'skewness' and 'kurtosis' and to investigate whether they approximate the normal distribution. See the table below:

Table (4)

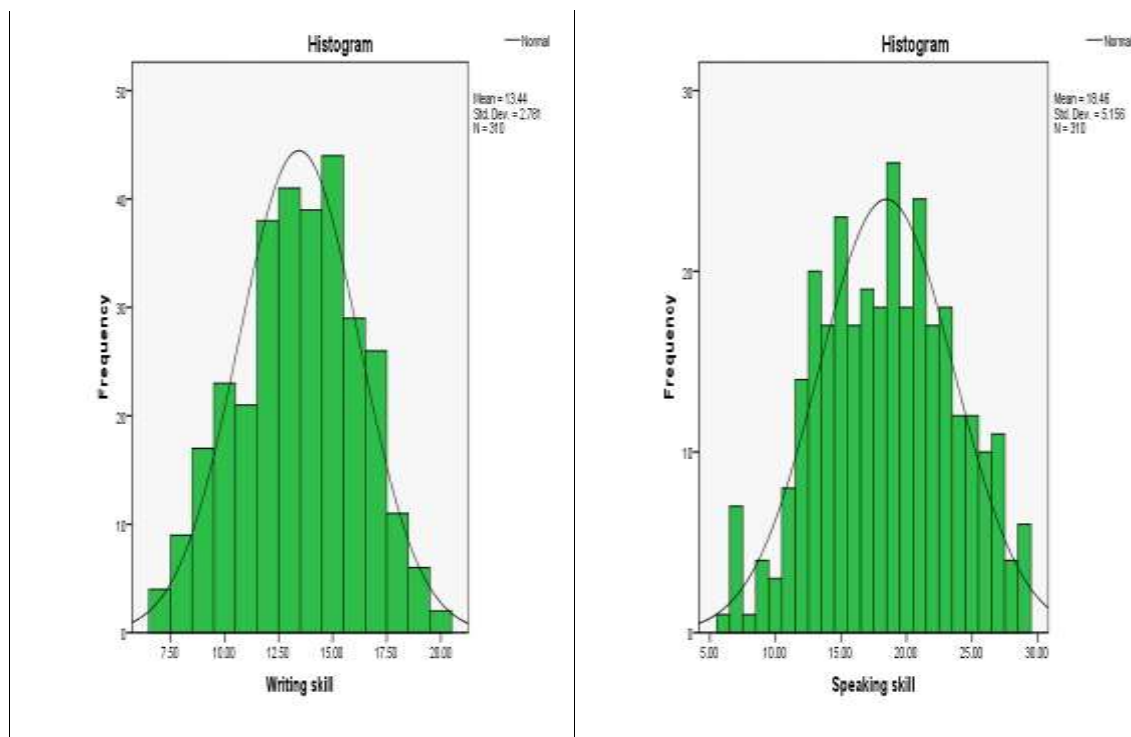
Statistical Indicators of the Productive Skills Test

Ite ms No.	Statistical Indicators	Speaki ng	Writi ng
١	Mean score	18.46	١٣,٤٤
٢	Medium	١٩,٠٠	١٤,٠٠
٣	Mode	19	15
٤	Standard deviation	٥,١٥	٢,٧٨
٥	Variance	٢٦,٥٨	٧,٧٣
٦	Skewness	-٠,٠٥٠	٠,١٣٧
٧	Kurtosis	-٠,٥٨٠	٠,٥٢٧
٨	Lower score	6	7
٩	Higher score	29	20
١٠	Range	23	13

When observing the values of the statistical indicators for the test of productive skills, we find that these indicators are consistent with most of the indicators of the scientific tests, as the degrees of the test of productive skills and their frequencies are relatively close to the moderation distribution. Figure (2) shows this.

Figure (2)

Distribution of the Scores of the Productive Skills Test



The researcher calculated the discriminatory power for each item of the test items using the discrimination equation for the essay items, and found that its value ranges between (0.317 and 0.400), and thus the test items are considered good and their coefficient of distinction is acceptable as the specialists prepare the acceptable item if the discrimination coefficient is (0.30) or more.

Therefore, the test items are considered acceptable in terms of their discriminatory ability, and therefore none of them were omitted (Al-Kubaisi, 2010).

Table (5)

Item Difficulty & Item Discrimination Power of the Productive Skills Test

Standards	Responses of the Upper Group	Responses of the Lower Group	Easy Coefficient	Difficulty Coefficient	Discrimination Coefficient
Speaking Skill Grammar	1	1	5		0.317
	2	2	5		0.454
	3	3	2		0.546
	4	4	8		5
	5	5	2		8
	1	1	31		2
	2	2	38		31
	3	3	28		38
	4	4	20		28
5	5	13		20	
1	1	14		13	
2	2	9		14	
3	3			9	



Discrimination Coefficient	0.345	0.4	0.338
	Difficulty Coefficient	0.411	0.486
Easy Coefficient	0.589	0.514	0.519
	5	1	0
Responses of the Lower Group	9	5	3
	10	2	14
	24	25	26
	36	51	41
	34	28	27
Responses of the Upper Group	21	17	21
	15	20	9
	7	13	16
	7	6	11
	Vocabulary	Comprehension	Fluency



Discrimination Coefficient	0.374	0.357	Discrimination Coefficient
	0.449	0.4	
Easy Coefficient	0.551	0.6	Easy Coefficient
	0	5	
Responses of the Lower Group	6	8	Responses of the Lower Group
	12	10	
	27	29	
	39	32	
	30	30	
	20	28	
Responses of the Upper Group	15	16	Responses of the Upper Group
	16	7	
	3	3	
	3	3	
Standards	Pronunciation	interaction	Criteria



Discrimination Coefficient					0.366
Difficulty Coefficient					0.406
Easy Coefficient					0.594
Responses of the Lower Group	4				2
	3				11
	2				26
	1				45
Responses of the Upper Group	4				36
	3				28
	2				13
	1				7
Standards			Writing Skill	Content	



Discrimination Coefficient	0.321	0.345	0.345
	0.366	0.408	0.387
Easy Coefficient	0.634	0.592	0.613
Responses of the Lower Group	8	1	5
	14	15	10
	23	24	29
	39	44	40
Responses of the Upper Group	37	38	40
	30	22	23
	12	15	14
	5	9	7
Standards	Organization	Grammar	Vocabulary

Standards	Responses of the Upper Group				Responses of the Lower Group				Easy Coefficient	Difficulty Coefficient	Discrimination Coefficient
	8	11	23	42	46	25	7	6			
Writing technique									0.607	0.393	0.375

4. Results & Discussions

-EFL Students' Level of SDL

To achieve this goal, the researcher applied the SDL scale to the research sample consisting of (310) male and female students. The results of the research showed that the arithmetic mean of the scores of this sample on the scale reached (92.752) degrees, with a standard deviation of (9.090) degrees. The difference is statistically significant at the level of significance (0.05), as the calculated t-value reached (16.952), which is greater than the tabular t-value of (1.96), with a degree of freedom (309), and this means that the research sample has SDL and Table (6) and Figure (3) illustrate this.

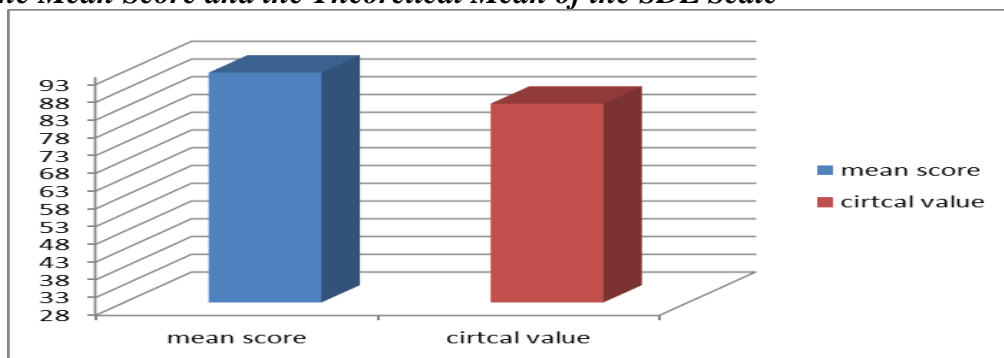
Table (6)

Mean Score, Standard Deviation and T-Value of the SDL Scale

Variable	Sample Size	M	S.D	Theoretical Mean	t-Value		Significance 0.05
					Computed	Critical	
Self-directed Learning	310	92.752	9.090	84	16.952	1.96	significant

Figure (3)

The Mean Score and the Theoretical Mean of the SDL Scale



-EFL Learners level of Productive Skills

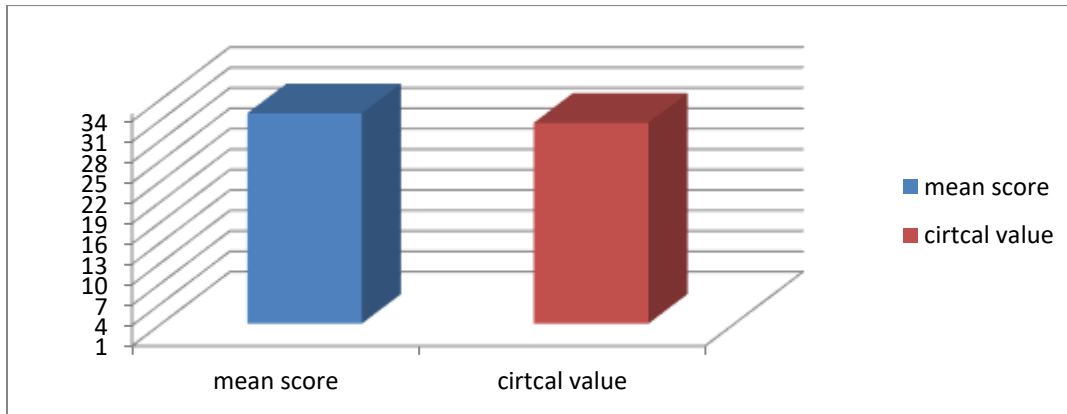
To achieve this goal, the researcher applied the productive skills test on the research sample consisting of (310) male and female students. The results of the research showed that the arithmetic mean of the scores of this sample on the test amounted to (31.906) degrees, with a standard deviation of (7.462) degrees. It was found that the difference is statistically significant at the level of significance (0.05), as the calculated t-value reached (3.319), which is smaller than the tabular t-value of (1.96), with a degree of freedom (309), Table (7) and Figure (4) make this clear.

Table (7)

Mean Score, Standard Deviation and T-Value of the Productive Skills Test

Variable	Sample Size	Mean Score	S.D	Theoretical Mean	t- Value		Significance 0.05
					Computed	Critical	
Productive Skills	310	31.906	7.462	30.5	3.319	1.96	significant

Figure (4)

Mean Score and Theoretical Mean of the Productive Skills Test**-The Correlation between EFL Students' SDL and Productive Skills**

To extract this result, it is necessary to confirm the null hypothesis, which states that (there is no statistically significant correlation at the level of significance (0.05) between SDL and productive skills among Iraqi university students.

To verify this hypothesis, the researcher took the answers of the research sample on the self-directed learning scale and the productive skills test, and the results were as shown in Table (8).

Table (8)

The Correlation between SDL and the Productive Skills

Productive Skills	Sample Size	r- Value	t- Value		Significance level 0.05
Speaking Skill	310	0.419	7.618	1.96	Significant
Writing Skill	310	0.391	7.109	1.96	Significant
The Total Skills	310	0.435	7.909	1.96	Significant

The following appears in the table above:

- 1.The value of the correlation coefficient between SDL and speaking skill was (0.419), and to find out the significance of the relationship, the researcher used the t-test for the significance of the correlation coefficient.

The calculated t-value reached (7.618), which is greater than the tabular value of (1.96) at the level of significance (0.05) and a degree of freedom (308), which means that the relationship between self-directed learning and speaking skill is a direct statistically significant relationship, that is, the more students have SDL at a high level, the better their speaking skill.

2. The value of the correlation coefficient between SDL and writing skill was (0.391), and to find out the significance of the relationship, the researcher used the t-test for the significance of the correlation coefficient. The calculated t-value reached (7.109), which is greater than the tabular value of (1.96) at the level of Significance (0.05) and a degree of freedom (308), and this means that the relationship between SDL and writing skill is a direct and statistically significant relationship, that is, the more students have SDL at a high level, the better their writing skill.

3. The value of the correlation coefficient between SDL and productive skills was (0.435), and to find out the significance of the relationship, the researcher used the t-test for the significance of the correlation coefficient.

The calculated t-value reached (7.909), which is greater than the tabular value of (1.96) at the level of significance (0.05) and a degree of freedom (308), which means that the relationship between SDL and productive skills is a direct statistically significant relationship, that is, the more students have SDL at a high level, the better their productive skills.

Thus, the null hypothesis, which confirms the absence of a relationship, is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis, which confirms the existence of a relationship between the two variables, is accepted.

Results concerning the correlation between EFL students' SDL and productive skills also prove positive correlation. The positive correlation may be due to the necessity for students' high cognitive abilities, such as critical thinking, problem- solving, and decision-making, are necessary for SDL and academic achievement.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

On the basis of the results obtained, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Results provide evidence that EFL learners are SDL and this suggests that they can adapt their behaviour to meet the demands of different learning situations.
2. By investigating EFL learners' level of productive skills, data analysis provides evidence that they are able to communicate satisfactorily employing a variety of skills in communication.
3. With respect to the productive skills tested in this study, EFL learners succeed to use speaking and writing skills which constitute a large amount of human communication.
4. The major difficulties faced by EFL learners, as observed throughout study procedures, are their speaking rate that influences how speech is perceived by listeners.

In the lights of the study results, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. To strengthen learners' productive abilities, teachers should provide as many speaking opportunities and students-talking time in and out of the classroom as possible to boost fluency and focus on errors made during the activity afterward. Furthermore, it is proposed that pronunciation should be taught through related speech.
2. It is essential for teachers to encourage students to use their creativity and imagination in their writing and speaking tasks to enhance their communication skills. By providing students with opportunities to practise their writing and speaking skills, teachers can help them improve their language proficiency, critical thinking, and communication skills, which are crucial to academic and personal success.
3. Encourage students to collaborate with their peers on writing and speaking tasks to enhance their language use and communication skills by allowing students to choose topics and tasks that are relevant to their interests and goals.

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