***The Use of Digital Videos, LMS, Peer and Self-feedback to Improve Presentation Skills***

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**Abstract**
An issue with conducting presentations in class is the one-off nature of the activity. Students present their topic and have little idea of how their own performance was except for their initial feelings, feedback from the instructor, and the grade they receive. However, improved access to mobile technology for both educators and students, coupled with the enhanced functionality of higher education learning management systems (LMS), has provided additional opportunities for the teaching of presentation skills in the classroom. One such opportunity is combining mobile devices, YouTube, and LMSs to allow teachers and students to record, upload, watch, and give both peer and self-feedback on in-class presentations. This paper will at first outline the need for peer review with oral presentations, focusing on the skills students can improve by watching and giving comments on both their own and their classmates presentations. The author will then outline the results of a survey related to the use of videos and peer review by 44 students in a private university in Western Japan. The results of the survey in general demonstrated that students felt positively towards the use of video and receiving feedback from their peers in this format. However, some were concerned about the privacy of the videos while others worried about receiving critical feedback from their peers. The results showed that re-watching presentations was most effective in improving presentation skills such as voice, grammar, speed, and eye contact.


Keywords: digital videos, LMS, peer review, self-review, presentations

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**Introduction**

Most university students at some point in their education will need to participate in the process of giving individual and group presentations. These presentations are usually based on a topic related to the curriculum and are used as a means of demonstrating that the information they have learned during the semester has been retained to an acceptable level. For some, giving presentations can be a stressful experience for reasons such as a lack of experience designing presentations and a lack of confidence when performing presentations, especially for those students who do not enjoy speaking in front of their peers. A further issue with presentations is the large grade weighting often associated with them considering that many are finished within a few minutes, with no chance to repeat or improve. Given the one-off nature of presentations, feedback that actually helps students improve their technique can often be absent. This paper will outline a study of 44 students at a university in western Japan that aimed to improve presentation skills through the use of digital videos as well as peer and self-feedback. The paper will show through a reflective survey that students are generally positive about their experiences giving and receiving feedback from re-watching their presentations and were able to find some aspects of their presentation that could be improved on in the future.

**Literature Review**

Japanese students come from an input poor environment in regards to English language experience outside of the classroom environment (Ota, 2009). In addition to this, the grammar translation method (Larsen-Freeman, 1986) used in Japanese foreign language education at the primary and secondary level is teacher-centered (Japan Times, 2013) with little to no opportunity for meaningful English output (Richards and Douglas, 2001). This means that by the time Japanese students reach the university classroom they may not have had any meaningful experience in designing and delivering English language presentations in front of an audience. Japanese students also enter university with little to no experience in the use of presentation software such as PowerPoint or Keynote and are thus not only overcoming a lack of presentation skills but also a lack of technical skills (Toland, Mills, & Kohyama, 2016).

Presentations in Japanese universities are often one-off in nature. In many courses the presentation is conducted in the final weeks of semester with little time for feedback or self-reflection. Feedback has been shown to be beneficial to Japanese students in academic writing skills (Morgan, Fuisting & White, 2014). Feedback itself at Japanese universities is often teacher-centered. The teacher as the authority figure in the classroom and provides feedback to the students based on their opinion alone. This can mean that although other students and the presenter themselves may want to contribute to the feedback, they are not given the opportunity to do so.

**Methodology**

This study was conducted in two core English classes and an English medium lecture class at a private university in western Japan. Students had to, as part of the curriculum, take part in at least one oral presentation. The presentations were recorded by the instructor on a mobile device and uploaded to the university learning

management system (LMS). Following this the students were required to re-watch their presentation and answer some questions relating to their performance. The students were also encouraged to watch other presentations and give feedback on them. The questions the students were required to answer are outlined below.

1. What did you and your team member do well in your presentation?
2. What do you think you could do better if you did your presentation again?
3. What do you think you personally did well in your presentation?
4. What do you think you could do better next time?
5. What is something that you noticed in the video that surprised you?

Following the conclusion of the formal feedback period, students were invited to participate in a 12-statement survey relating to the process of self and peer feedback on the presentations. The students were informed that participation in this survey was to be done on a volunteer basis and that participation had no effect on their grade; forty-four students completed the survey.

**Results and Discussion**

The results and discussion will aim to answer the following research question:

Did recording presentations on mobile devices, uploading them to the LMS and getting students to self-reflect have an impact on presentation skills?

The survey used a four-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4).

Statements one "I enjoy giving individual oral presentations in English" (3.09) and two "I enjoy giving group oral presentations in English" (3.03) demonstrated that students enjoyed making individual and group oral presentations. These statements were important as it showed the base level of enjoyment of the students. While as an instructor it may be easy to assume that all students do not like giving presentations, the results of these questions showed the opposite to be true. Statement three "I watched my presentation on YouTube" (3.04) also highlights that students did actually watch their own presentation on YouTube. This is a critical statement for this research as without watching the video the students would not be able to proceed with the survey and make comments about their performance. It also shows that students are using the LMS resources provided by the instructor. Statement four "It was interesting to watch the video of my presentation on YouTube" (2.36) emphasizes that students were not particularly interested in watching their own video on YouTube when tasked to do so. There are many possible reasons for this result including a possible lack of interest in their videos or not wanting to participate in the extra work involved in watching the video. Statement five "I was nervous watching the video of my presentation on YouTube" (2.80) provides more answers to statement four. The students did not indicate that they were nervous about watching their own video which would suggest that the result for statement four are more to do with the extra work involved in watching the video again rather than any fears related to the re-watching of the presentation video.

Table 1

|  | Mean | Median | Mode | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I enjoy giving individual oral presentations in English | 3.09 | 3 | 3 | 0.63 |
| 2. I enjoy giving group oral presentations in English | 3.03 | 3 | 3 | 0.62 |
| 3. I watched my presentation on YouTube | 3.04 | 3 | 3 | 0.71 |
| 4. It was interesting to watch the video of my presentation on YouTube | 2.36 | 2 | 2 | 0.93 |
| 5. I was nervous watching the video of my presentation on YouTube | 2.80 | 3 | 3 | 0.92 |

Statements six through nine of the survey related to the results of self and peer feedback. Statement six "I did not like getting advice from other students after watching my presentation on YouTube" (2.00) showed that students did like receiving feedback from other students, while statement seven "I received useful advice from other students after watching my presentation on YouTube" (2.76) in contrast highlights that the feedback received was not always useful in nature. Encouragingly statement seven demonstrated that the feedback received was not perceived as hurtful. When these three statements are analyzed together, we can see that there is some peer feedback being given by the students which is of a positive nature. Unfortunately, the feedback lacks any depth and is not considered to be particularly useful by the students. For example, common comments from students were set phrases such as "good job", "I like your slides", and "interesting topic." While it is encouraging that students feel they want to give some feedback to their classmates, the researcher can also see that there is a need to spend more class time focused on the appropriate way to give meaningful feedback to others. This could also indicate that students feel a sense of pressure and anxiety when asked to give feedback on others. This is similar to the results found by White, Fuisting & Morgan (2014) in peer feedback in academic writing in Japanese universities.

Table 2

| | Mean | Median | Mode | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. I did not like getting advice from other students after watching my presentation on YouTube | 2.00 | 2 | 2 | 0.67 |
| 7. I received useful advice from other students after watching my presentation on YouTube | 2.76 | 3 | 3 | 0.80 |
| 8. I received hurtful comments from other students after watching my presentation on YouTube | 1.69 | 2 | 1 | 0.79 |
| 9. I was worried about the privacy of the video being available on YouTube | 2.31 | 2 | 2 | 0.90 |
| 10. By watching my presentation on YouTube I found issues in relation to my PowerPoint Slides | 2.87 | 3 | 3 | 0.73 |
| 11. By watching my presentation on YouTube I found issues in relation to my English vocabulary and grammar use. | 3.07 | 3 | 3 | 0.72 |
| 12. By watching my presentation on YouTube I found issues in relation to my voice (volume, speed, and pronunciation) | 3.18 | 3 | 3 | 0.65 |

Interestingly, statement nine "I was worried about the privacy of the video being available on YouTube" (2.31) showed that students were not overly concerned about their privacy when the presentation videos were uploaded to YouTube. The results here were most likely influenced by the instructor and researcher who anticipated some students might feel some anxiety when uploading presentations to YouTube. Due to this, the researcher informed the students on several occasions in class that the videos would be only available to the class members, would be unlisted, and would be taken down after the completion of the reflection period. Without the researcher doing this in class the results of this statement would probably have been much different.

In statements ten to twelve we can see that students agreed with statements eleven and twelve. The only statement that disagreed is number ten "By watching my presentation on YouTube I found issues in relation to my PowerPoint Slides." (2.87). This was expected as the students had spent several weeks in and outside of class designing and making the presentation and as such any issues with the slides were found at an earlier stage. Statements eleven "By watching my presentation on YouTube I found issues in relation to my English vocabulary and grammar use" (3.07) and twelve "By watching my presentation on YouTube I found issues in relation to my voice (volume, speed, and pronunciation)" (3.18) highlight that through watching the videos again the students were able to find mistakes in all areas of their presentation from vocabulary, grammar, and voice. The answers to these statements are the most encouraging for the current research as they demonstrate the need for peer and self-review when doing oral presentations. These results clearly indicate that the benefits will be long lasting meaning that the students will produce better oral presentations throughout their time at university and possibly in their future working career due to this simple activity.

The survey also had a free comments section where the students could share anything in relation to peer and self-review of oral presentations. These comments also provide evidence for the need for peer and self-review of oral presentations.

By watching my presentation on YouTube, I found many mistakes in my voice, speed rate was not as good as I was expecting and my pronunciation was also not as clear as it should be, the idea of watching your own presentation was really useful for me.

In this comment we can clearly see the benefits of self-review. The students while not mentioning their PowerPoint slides, has managed to find several issues with their own presentation delivery and specially comments on the useful nature of watching their presentation again.

I think it's better to upload the presentation video on YouTube, because on the positive side, we can reflect to ourselves, and see what we look from an audience perspective.

A second student commented in a similar positive manner to the first. As with the first student, this student also highlights the positives of watching their own presentation on YouTube. This student seems to be more concerned with what they look like to the audience, which may in this case be the driving factor for them to watch their presentation and improve for the future.

The purpose of this study was to examine the following research question:

> Did recording presentations on mobile devices, uploading them to the LMS and getting students to self-reflect have an impact on presentation skills?

Encouragingly, it is the belief of the researcher that we can answer this question in the affirmative. Even though students mainly had a positive view of doing oral presentation by themselves and in groups, the results confirmed that students benefited in a positive manner from being a part of the review process. However, the results also indicated the students need training on how to conduct appropriate reviews on the presentations of other students.

We can see from the results presented above that it is most likely that watching their presentations again on YouTube and giving peer and self-reflection was beneficial for their overall presentation ability. The benefits were focused around the students' presentation skill related to English content, grammar, eye contact and voice. This is to be expected as these skills are the most difficult to teach and due to the student not previously being able to see themselves, also the most difficult to learn. Peer and self-review had made little difference to the slides. This result could be expected as the slides are able to be checked multiple times within the classroom setting. To find out concretely if this is the case the researcher would need to survey the students again after they had participated in other oral presentations.

**Conclusion**

This study of the use of peer and self-review in presentation has shown that there is a need for it in presentation classes. With presentations being one-off in nature students are not given the opportunity to view their own presentation techniques and are missing out on valuable opportunities to learn and improve. This study has demonstrated that students not only enjoy the process of giving presentation, but also can see how getting feedback from others and from themselves after reviewing their own presentations is a valuable activity. This research has also demonstrated that students need to be taught how to effectively give feedback to other students, as currently the student receiving the feedback does not believe it to be a useful experience. Although this is just one study with a limited number of students, the practical implications of this research are clear as is the need for further research in this area.

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