



Identification Public Speaking Abilities in Online Classrooms Based on Class Observations and Students' Perceptions

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Abstrak

Berdasarkan pengamatan kelas dan pandangan siswa tentang pengalaman mereka, penelitian ini bermaksud untuk mengevaluasi penggunaan kemampuan berbicara di depan umum dalam kursus online. Pendekatan penelitian Desain Campuran Sekuensial Eksplorasi digunakan dengan 85 siswa berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa konten tubuh dan isyarat visual menjadi signifikan saat berbicara di depan umum. Juga temuan survei menunjukkan bahwa peserta tidak ingin hadir secara online karena mereka berada di kamera karena memiliki tampilan layar terbatas. Tidak ada perbedaan substansi dalam presentasi online dan offline, meskipun komponen visual dianggap paling berpengaruh kuat ketika presentasi online karena menarik perhatian. Kursus berbicara di depan umum secara online mencakup area pada pesan secara visual menjadi hal penting.

Kata Kunci: Berbicara di Depan Umum, Kelas Daring, Presentasi

Abstract

Based on classroom observations and students' views of their experiences, this study intends to evaluate the use of public speaking abilities in online courses. The Exploratory Sequential Mixed Design research approach was adopted, and 85 students participated in this study. The findings indicate that bodily content and visual cues are significant while speaking in public. The survey findings showed that participants did not want to attend online because they were on camera and had restricted screen display. There was also no difference in the substance of online and offline presentations, even though the visual component was thought to be the most beneficial and powerful in online presentations for attracting attention. An online public speaking course covering the visual message area in depth is also essential.

Keywords: public speaking, online classrooms, presentations

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INTRODUCTION

In order to become professional speakers, students must learn how to communicate effectively in public. For the most part, a public speaking course is defined as a program that helps students develop the skills necessary for ELT (Karen Kangas Dwyer & Davidson, 2021). These skills include listening attentively, thinking critically about what they are saying, and conveying accurate information, coherence, and routines to develop natural communication. While some people find verbal judging enjoyable and stress-free, others find it unpleasant and stressful due to personal characteristics such as shyness, nervousness, fear of public speaking, lack of confidence in public speaking, and fear of making mistakes. Anxiety is characterized by symptoms such as erratic breathing, intonation, sweating, and impaired vision (LeFebvre et al., 2020).

Evidence shows that students who participate in hybrid programs, which include online and in-person instruction, or take classes that are offered solely online do not demonstrate any differences in their public speaking skills (Jean-Pierre et al., 2021). In another study, researchers found no statistically significant difference in the degree of anxiety experienced while presenting a traditional face-to-face speech versus delivering a speech utilizing web conferencing technology (Gallego et al., 2021). On the other hand, the educational establishments must be mindful that giving courses in an online format is not the same as training students to give presentations to a web-based audience (Bazhenov et al., 2020).

Transforming content from offline to online platforms, managing time and workload, dealing with technological challenges, motivating students online, interacting with students online, and obtaining appropriate institutional support have all emerged as significant obstacles to the effectiveness of online courses. The college requires essential preparation for online teaching and learning activities (Hikmah et al., 2021). High dropout rates, for example, are becoming more challenging to deal with. This is due to a lack of direct social engagement with classmates and lecturers and a lack of face-to-face interaction with other students (Ritonga et al., 2021) (Sidabutar, 2021).

According to the findings of a study, physical messaging applications improve participants' online engagement and help them establish a more engaging online identity. Another research found that no studies have been conducted yet to compare the efficacy of public speaking provided online vs. offline, leading it to propose that undertaking an online Public Speaking Course be reconsidered (Wei, 2021b). Many materials have been written about public speaking; nevertheless, most of them are concerned with relevant issues in face-to-face learning environments. It is claimed that teaching public speaking online has the same issues as teaching language courses, such as speech content, language usage, and linguistic growth, among other things; consequently, from the standpoint of development, online courses are no different from traditional courses. That is consistent with our finding that there was no statistically significant difference in efficacy between online and conventional education (Yee et al., 2021).

There are several technologies accessible today, such as Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Meets, and Teams, to name a few. On the other hand, Zoom has been selected as one of the most popular applications in the country because of its features that encourage engagement, the convenience of use, and the ability to operate from a laptop or smartphone (Namboodiri, 2022). Considering the urgent necessity to be active during the pandemic, it is worth investigating if Zoom is appropriate for public speaking online or not, despite its current widespread use. The availability of online education is one of the teaching choices offered during the COVID-19 epidemic (Zuñiga-Quispe et al., 2021).

As a result of the pandemic, education systems worldwide are under significant stress, as they must move from traditional or mixed classrooms to virtual classrooms to keep up with the times. Asynchronous distant education uses pre-recorded lectures or online platforms such as Moodle to deliver instruction. As a result of this, synchronous distant education demands the emulation of traditional education communication

models to some extent and synchronized teaching and learning interactions that are similar to those found in a conventional educational setting (Elihami et al., 2021).

Because public speaking research had revealed that students' perceptions, emotions, and experiences before and after the activity resulted in increased levels of satisfaction and decreased levels of fear, doubt, and confusion, this finding regarding synchronous distance education merits consideration for classrooms that include online public communication, the sort of distance education is utilized to explain future online public communication activities that are consistent with classroom teaching techniques, expectations, and experiences.

Students prefer the traditional mode for public speaking courses over the online mode, according to a study aimed at determining whether there are differences between online and traditional public speaking in terms of anxiety levels, speaking performance, and perceptions of challenges in conducting online public speaking courses. The difficulty of connecting to the internet and the lack of live audiences are two of the most significant hurdles to online public speaking (Yee et al., 2021). Another research using multimedia devices to teach public speaking English courses discovered that multimedia-based online teaching approaches might be adapted to other secondary language learning programs (Wei, 2021a).

In its most basic definition, public speaking is a communication skill done by speakers in front of an audience; however, the epidemic has altered the fundamental meaning of public speaking. As a result of the significant increase in public speaking practice during the Covid-19 outbreak, the teaching technique differs significantly from the general speech that teachers typically teach in face-to-face sessions (Ramadhani, 2020). According to the respondents' perceptions of their learning experiences, the purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of speaking skills in online learning to determine whether there is a difference in experience with online presentations compared to offline presentations.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is being conducted using a mixed sequential exploration method with both qualitative and quantitative methodologies (Liu et al., 2022). The information was gathered through course syllabuses, textbooks, and PowerPoint presentations utilized in classrooms. Following that, the class observations were conducted to determine the activities taking place in the class.

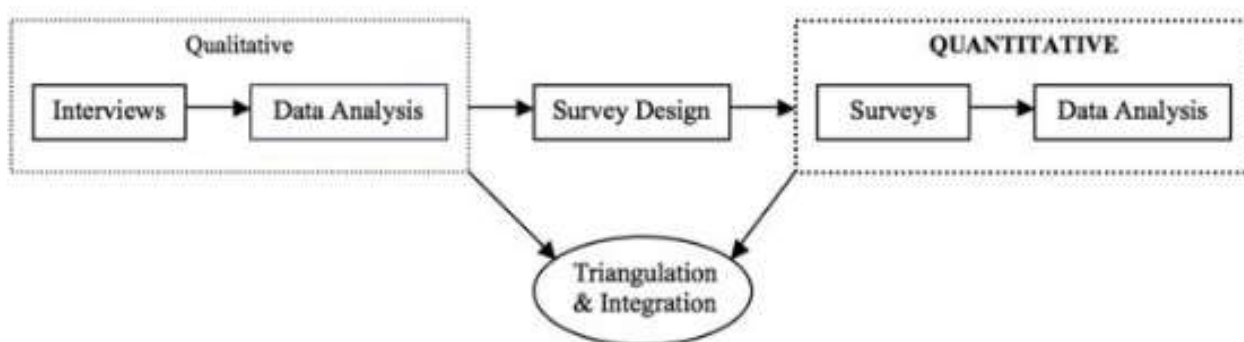


Figure 1. Sequential Exploratory Mixed Methods Design (Wu, 2012)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Following the examples of their teachers and classmates, it was discovered that more pupils gained confidence in exercising their public speaking abilities, according to the findings of this study. According to the sociocultural theory that underpins the study of classroom interactions, which includes the context of online learning, this is the correct approach.

Respondents' perceptions of the learning experience are nearly the same when presented with physical signals. The survey results are displayed in Table 1, which shows that around 55% of respondents believed that physical communications could be seen and experienced but were periodically interrupted by internet signals. The strength of the distraction is approximately the same as the intensity of the distraction that prevents people from giving an excellent online presence.

Table 1
Physical Message Perceptions of Respondents

Questions	Yes	No	Not Sure
Is it possible for you to see the presenter's exact position on the screen?	47%	8%	54%
Are you able to maintain eye contact with the presenter?	54%	19%	37%
Is it possible to watch the presenter's movements when he or she is giving a presentation?	46%	7%	58%
Were you able to have a good interaction with the speaker	51%	19%	37%
Is it possible for you to hear the presenter's voice?	69%	3%	40%

Visual communications, in contrast to direct messages, were deemed to be more clearly portrayed (81 percent) and to be more compelling in online presentations, according to 85 percent of respondents. If we compare it to other public speaking abilities, this one is provided more straightforwardly. In addition, respondents (79 percent) feel confident in using the Zoom tool to ensure that the pictures given are clear.

Table 2
Visual Message Perception of Respondents

Questions	Yes	No	Not Sure
Are you able to view the slideshow that the presenter is using clearly?	91%	3%	15%
Is it possible to display your visual presentation with the Zoom capability enabled?	79%	3%	27%
Do you believe your visual presentation is more persuasive than your written presentation?	63%	16%	30%

According to the other findings, the presentation material is perceived to be similarly understood and presented both online and offline, with no variation in how the presentation content is organized online and offline.

Table 3
Perceptions of the Story Message among Respondents

Questions	Yes	No	Not Sure
Do you believe that you have grasped the message that has been communicated by the presenter?	68%	5%	36%
Do you believe that the presenter has done a sufficient amount of preparation for the presentation?	56%	8%	44%
Do you believe that the presenter communicated the message's main point clearly?	59%	4%	45%
Do you believe that communicating a message during an online presentation becomes more difficult as time progresses?	38%	41%	40%

However, most of the respondents agreed that they felt more secure during online presentations because the audience was on camera. Similar studies have indicated that virtual environments can increase confidence to interact with audiences. Offline presentations are more demanding and distinct from online presentations since they do not incorporate emotions. Overall, physical messages are more effective when presentations are offline.

In contrast to tangible messaging, the majority of the respondents claimed that they depended on visual messages during online presentations. Most believe that images play an essential role in online presentations.

Therefore, preparation in generating graphics is taken more seriously because of its relevance in online presentations. Even when presented online, the graphics may still be presented and seen well, even with a signal problem. Compared to physical communications, images are less influenced by signal difficulties.

When respondents were asked about the differentiating factors between online and offline learning when creating presentation content, most of them emphasized no difference. In both contexts, content needs to be structured effectively in the order of 'introduction,' 'main content,' and 'conclusion,' and the tools used to deliver content are the same online and offline.

CONCLUSION

In this study, experiences concerning public speaking abilities are used, and how students perceive them is stressed. Qualitative findings revealed that lessons are found to be in the three categories of messaging physical, visual, and content/story. These abilities constitute an essential feature of classroom activity. In addition, discrepancies in all physical characteristics were noticed, including gestures and eye contact that felt surreal. From the perspective of speech content, the participants did not identify any significant difference between online and offline courses. However, guaranteeing the usage of visuals is where the primary emphasis should be put in online presentations. It is indispensable that future online public speaking classes, blended with technology improvements, should obtain technical instruction, notably how to appropriately and correctly communicate visual messages.

Based on the findings, a minority of respondents acknowledged having internet connection issues in their online classes. However, most respondents did not consider internet connectivity as an issue. The deployment of online public speaking training elsewhere may be more beneficial when done in an online learning environment and not confined to physical, visual, or content communications.

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