Study of Significance of Oral presentation and its impacts on Students of College of Applied Medical Sciences, Khamis Mushait, King Khalid University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia- A Pilot Study

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Abstract
In this present era, the students oral presentations have become a significant part not only for English teaching language but also for another core and optional subjects either belong to applied medical sciences or any course material at college or university levels. In fact, English language instruction today is often one of the crucial aspects of preparing students for their roles in a highly competitive international professional environment. It is to be able to operate effectively in the real world (Hedge, 2000).[1] Students need a lot of opportunity to practice language in such a situation which encourage them to communicate their needs, ideas and opinions. Oral presentation is one of the best platforms where skills adding a broader aspect to the best communication. It allows individuals to present their ideas and views confidently in front of a live audience.

This paper aims towards a significant point to make the students to prepare a perfect oral presentation skills. In this pilot study a conceptual framework has been used to illustrate our starting point. It has been practically examined the significance of designing an effective oral presentations at the college level. Practice is the one of the best platforms to succeed. ‘Practice makes a man perfect’, therefore it is essential to prepare the topic well prior to its presentation. By making students aware of basic points, types, characteristics and styles of scientific and technical communication. These sentences explained during the students oral presentations from different departments of college of Applied Medical sciences, Khamis Mushait, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and after presentation a scientific questionnaires method performed among the students of college of applied medical sciences to get a positive or negative impacts.

Methods of the study
In this pilot study, a questionnaire method on student’s opinions (attitudes, concepts and reactions) towards the significance of oral presentations in the college Auditorium (Masrah building-C) of college of applied medical sciences and classrooms have been developed with the help of different departments of the college. It aims at finding students’ attitudes towards the use of oral presentations in the classroom. Finally, it is also suggested to faculties of each department to make best use of oral presentations in their teaching with a view to improve and enhance the student’s communication skills.

Key words: oral presentations, university students, professional and academic settings

1.Introduction
This paper focuses on oral presentations designed to help college students to improve their communicative skills. “Today’s challenging economic situation means that it is no longer sufficient for a new graduate to have knowledge of an academic subject; increasingly it is necessary for students to gain those skills which will enhance their prospects of employment” (Fallows & Steven, 2000).[2] Employability skills include the abilities like the retrieval and handling of information; communication and presentation; planning and problem solving; and social development and interaction, creative thinking, problem solving critical thinking, active and reflective application of knowledge (Driscoll, 2000).[3] These are the skills based on that students need to succeed in their future workplace.

One especially relevant part of language curriculum at universities is teaching students how to prepare, organize and deliver successful oral presentations for professional purposes. Oral presentations provide a rewarding and stimulating experience both for teachers in developing facilitating skills and for students in training themselves to have confident presentations in public “(King, 2002). [4]

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3. Significance of framing an effective student’s oral presentations
In this 21st century students are engaged in real-world experience, and they build creative and critical thinking and problem-solving skills as important characteristics for success. The final goal is to help students to maximize their potential, both personally and professionally. Students need a lot of opportunity to practice language in situations which encourage them to communicate their needs, ideas and opinions. On global basis graduates need to be proficient in oral communication skills in order to function effectively in the professional setting (Živković & Stojković, 2011). [5]

Globally, effective oral communication is essential for success and promotion in business (Murphy and Hildebrand, 1997). [6] For successful oral communication students need a thorough in-depth instruction and practice. The best practice is to organize oral presentations. Oral presentation skills are essential for employability and true academic study as they lead students to enter debate and sustained reasoning (Morley, 2006). [7] They enable students to participate fully in their learning, demonstrate their ability to communicate, and help them to develop competencies in an area of their future working places. They demonstrate one of the most successful way to get the student’s attention, encourage curiosity, create challenges“(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). [8] Teaching principles of oral presentations at college level is an especially relevant curriculum segment and is done with the ultimate purpose of better communicating professional knowledge to other professionals and to non-specialists (Živković & Stojković, 2013). [9] Students can gain knowledge not only from the research, but also by observing the other presenter’s strengths and weaknesses to develop better communication and presentation skills” (Girard & Trapp,2011). [10] Oral presentations represent an opportunity for developing real-world communications as well as leadership skills (Gray, F.E.2010) [11]

Among the many advantages of designing oral presentations for students it is bridging the gap between language study and language use; using the four language skills in a naturally integrated way; helping students to collect, inquire, organize and construct information; enhancing team work; helping students to become active and autonomous learners. The final goal is to help students maximize their potential, both personally and professionally.

4. Motivate students to develop better presentation and communication and skills
It is essential to transferred the speaking and communication skills from lecture class rooms to the workplaces (Russ 2009) [12] Students of graduate and university levels are expected to improve the ability to speak and communicate effectively (Reich, 1991) [13] Students oral presentations are a common part of many courses at colleges and universities as they are one of the ways to improve learning of course material. To be an effective communicators, innovators, critical thinkers and problem solvers today’s students “enhance their skills and capacities by improving their means of linking their skills and capacities to the world market” (Meloni, C., & Thompson, S. (1980). [14] Because of the necessity for these skills, students need instructions and guidance in preparing, organizing and delivering oral presentations. Despite the positive aspects of using presentations in the classroom, some students may show resistance to do extra work, have fear in public speaking. Therefore, such students may have generally negative beliefs about giving classroom presentations (Gopen, G. D., & Swan J. A. (1990) [15]. But, on the other hand, if properly guided and organized, oral presentations provide a learning experience and teach lifelong skills that will be beneficial to students in all school subjects, and later in their careers (Dunlap, J. C., & Grabinger, S. (1996)). [16]

5. Study pattern and design
As an oral presentation involves multi-skills, a carefully structural plan and guideline will help to develop students’ perceptions to these presentations. The fundamental purpose of scientific research is not only the presentation of information and concept, but its actual communication (Kennedy, R. (2007)). [17] The success largely depends on judging all the objectives of the presentation plot and responding to those properly.

6. Important tips those may help in good preparation for oral presentation: Greet the audience, introduce yourself, explain the purpose of your talk, start by introducing the topic, state your purpose and announce the outline of your presentation in very simple, precise language.
Move to a point – outline your talk, State main ideas clearly and present examples.

1. Try to avoid overloading slides with excess of information and numbers.

2. Be cautious while choosing the colour of text and background. It is also advisable to avoid using distracting background which can divert the focus of your audience.

3. Adequate font size should be used. 32 point for text and 36 point for the headings.

4. Trick to highlight important text with prominent colours has always proven to be of great success. This not only attracts quick user attention, but also helps in better retention of your text.

5. Add simple and easily understandable figures rather than using complicated ones.

6. Try to maintain a proper sequence of slides so that your audience can easily grab the matter which is being discussed. People are adopting this technique due to the numerous benefits attached with it. Some of them are being discussed here.

7. Instant method of conveying as well as receiving information.

8. Provides better chance to the audience for understanding speaker’s context.

9. Effective oral presentation helps in saving efforts, time and money for listeners as well as the speaker

10. Oral communication increases level of participation. Sometimes, to be more ambitious and excess of anxiety can ruin your entire presentation. Whether you are a first-time presenter or are delivering a presentation for tenth time, no matter whatever is the situation, try to include above points into your presentation and attain quick results. The facts that need close attention are the following:

   **Recognise the audience**

   The first thing to be done when preparing a spoken presentation is to identify the audience as precisely as possible (experts, technicians, executives, no specialists). Different audiences require and are prepared for different amount and depths of information.

   **Goals of presentation**

   The presentation can have one of these goals, to inform, to persuade, to teach. Depending on these, the structure and the shape of the presentation will vary significantly.

   **Frames the presentation**

   Students should gain the mastery of organizing and selecting their arguments or pieces of information so as to respect the time allotted. Also, for the sake of their assertiveness they should familiarize themselves with the physical space for their presentation and visualize their movements within.

   **Effective summary**

   An effective conclusion develops naturally from the structure and content of the preceding material. It reaffirms the connection between the audience and the material presented.

   **Deliberation**

   During the presentation, a presenter need to face the audience - maintain eye contact with the audience as much as possible, use natural hand gestures, look presentable - it means to dress well for the presentation, usually a formal outfit is preferred to show the level of professionalism. Appearance says a lot about someone’s personality and confidence, speak in a clear and audible voice to get your presentation through to the audience even the ones sitting further away.

   As mentioned above, it is important to point out that oral presentations for academic and professional purposes need to occupy a significant part of language teaching classes.

   **Results**

   In this pilot study, it was found that students have perceptions of the development of their communication skills during the study of this course. The results obtained in the study show that students perceive the significance of preparing and delivering oral presentations for successful communication in the future professional surrounding. Reports obtained from the students showed that communication classes are more interesting and effective compared to the traditional ones. In this pilot study, it is found that how oral presentations can be effectively integrated among the college students. In a pilot study a conceptual framework has been used to illustrate our starting point. The study has grown out of a large research project investigating the significance of oral presentations in college of applied medical sciences classrooms. During the study, it has been observed that how students got the significance of oral presentations in applied medical science courses. The investigation was performed at Auditorium (Masrah) of the college based on the sample of 35 students and other students (about 150) of the college campus. The collection of data was done during the Oral presentation of the students in the month of November -2016 during the first semester of the session. Data analysis was carried out through qualitative analysis technique. Insightful results have been observed into students’ perceptions of the significance of classroom oral
Presentations. Unlike the traditional classroom model students to take an active role in forming new understandings, and are not just passive receptors (Platow, J. M. (2002)). [18] Students reported that through collaboration with colleagues they are engaged in learning that is authentic, holistic, and challenging. Significantly, through collaboration with their colleagues, students develop skills that prepare them to deal with situations and problems they will encounter in the workplace. Students claim that discussions within the class provide them with the opportunity to practice sharing their experiences with their colleagues. They share ideas with each other and help each other build elaborate and refined knowledge structure. They must present new ideas or progress reports to their colleagues. Finally, students agree that it is a new experience and the best way to create new knowledge. Students also have a very positive attitude towards oral presentations in the classroom. In fact, they are highly positive in their beliefs about benefits and usefulness of doing oral presentations. They agree that doing oral presentations helps them learn English better and practice their speaking skills.

**Discussion**

This pilot study has reported on well-designed oral presentations which enable students to function successfully in the future professional surrounding. It presents a challenge to both students and the teacher. The challenge for the teacher is to provide a relevant framework for students upon which they construct knowledge and become active participants in the learning process Galway: [19] The teacher involves preparing detailed guidelines, organizing groups, helping students to select topics, guiding their research and helping them learn the use of various visual aids, providing feedback on the sequencing of ideas, and evaluating their performance. Importantly, the teacher is no longer perceived as the knowledge dispenser and decision maker. Instead, the teacher becomes the facilitator of learning whose main task is to set goals and organize the learning process accordingly. Crystal, D. (2003) [20] The teacher creates social and intellectual climates, where collaborative and cooperative learning methods are supported. The teacher creates opportunities for students to interact with other learners and with the teacher as well. Overall, the teacher is responsible for leading and coordinating the work and make learning progress easier. In the classroom, the teacher is the instructor, (direct and guide the learning process) who should try and encourage students to discover principles by themselves. Moreover, there is a demand for the teacher in the classroom not to be only a guide, organizer, instructor, mediator and supporter, but, as comments, to hold questions and answers sessions, provide feedback, and evaluation of student’s performance.

We must agree with who claims that the actor and the teacher inhibit the same role. They both must put on a show like the actor on a stage and the teacher in the classroom.

**Conclusion**

Authors are thankful to the participated students for their participation and attention towards this pilot study in the college campus. In this study, it is concluded that In this present competitive world and rapidly changing needs young people who are flexible, active, innovative and creative in problem solving and decision making, they can communicate effectively and work collaboratively as ability to communicate is important in order to be able to operate effectively in the real world. Students need a lot of opportunity to develop and practice communication skills. Communication skills are required by students (future specialists) whether they are expected to give presentations at conferences, symposia or other meetings. This innovative framework provides a holistic approach in assessing a student’s performance based on the content and the delivery of their presentation.

**References**


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