STUDENTS’ MOTIVATION, CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCES IN DESIGNING VIDEO PRESENTATIONS VS. DELIVERING ORAL PRESENTATIONS IN AN ESP COURSE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Abstract. This paper has two primary goals: 1) to help students understand the effectiveness of using videos; and 2) to promote students’ motivation, interactivity, creativity and communication by designing their own video. The study was conducted at South East European University (SEEU) with 14 students. They were ethnic Albanian students, between 18 and 20 years old, who come from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds, but who were all enrolled in the ESP course for Social Sciences 1. Students were given the task of selecting a topic that is professionally linked to their field of study. They were then instructed to deliver an oral presentation in class according to established criteria from rubrics, and to produce the same presentation at home by using a video with self-evaluation rubrics. I conducted a survey comparing the motivation, experiences and challenges students faced while delivering an oral presentation in class vs. video-recorded presentations made at home. The preliminary research findings showed that most of the students were motivated to create their own videos because they were not limited by time or place: the asynchronous learning allows students to access materials, and to practice their skills, at any time that works for them. The majority of the students found this pilot project very interesting and engaging because it helped them develop their communication skills as well as to become more autonomous in learning English.

Key words: motivation, video-recorded presentations, asynchronous learning, communication skills, creative abilities, autonomous learning

1. INTRODUCTION

At South East European University, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is emphasized because students from various fields develop and improve their language skills through communication in the target language. The use of video for educational purposes is not a new phenomenon and it has been reported and implemented since the early 1960s (Williams & Lutes, 2011, p. 95).
This paper relates an effort to help students from the course ESP for Social Sciences 1 to raise their creativity and to develop their oral presentation skills by producing two presentations: one oral presentation in class and another video presentation made at home. Moreover, students were able to select a topic of their preference from their professional field. The purpose was to compare students’ motivation, challenges and experiences in designing their own video at home compared to the oral presentation delivered in class. One of the most stimulating factors for the students was the fact that they were motivated to create their own videos asynchronously, so that they were not limited by time or place and they could practice and record the video at any time convenient for them. In addition, students who recorded and posted their video-recorded presentations on the software management system Google Classroom were rewarded with bonus points which were added to their final grade points.

Due to globalization and internationalization, the ability to speak a second language has become one of the most important skills when looking for a job. The purpose of universities worldwide is to help students develop their leadership skills through oral and written communication, and to build teamwork, and in those ways to stimulate the development of critical thinking skills (Kerby & Jeff, 2009). Oral presentation skills play a vital role when delivering a presentation in a seminar, conference or any other academic event. Teachers should pay a lot of attention—especially in professional courses such as ESP—to prepare students and help them develop good communication skills that can enhance their opportunities for employment (Campbell, Mothersbaugh, Brammer, & Taylor, 2001; Murillo-Zamoranoa&Montanero, 2018). According to (Chan, 2011) students should be taught to present orally in class at the undergraduate level, and not to postpone it to the postgraduate level. Most importantly, in ESP for Social Sciences, soft skills are taught as part of the curriculum that also helps students develop precise and clear presentation skills that will prepare students for the job market.

2. TEACHER’S ROLE IN PROMOTING LEARNER’S AUTONOMY

The improvement of new technologies helps in adjusting traditional materials to online teaching models, as well as providing enhanced opportunities for students, moving from traditional to more student-centered teaching methodologies. By implementing the Learning Management System (LMS) Google Classroom, students at SEEU are both encouraged and challenged to become more autonomous within and outside the classroom.

E-learning is a type of learning that supports and helps improving the quality of teaching and learning. A Learning Management System (LMS) is developed with the notion of “one size fits all”, however this cannot be applied for every educational institution because it differs in its experience, so it can be concluded that one size cannot really fit all (Dagada & Mungai, 2013, p.151).

The E-learning process at SEEU brought important changes to its educational concept, as well as how challenging it is to successfully and efficiently establish it. It is very important to find balance between teaching, learning and management (Wolley, 1994; Nicholson, 2007). The teacher’s role in promoting learner autonomy is crucial and more complex than in traditional teaching. The teacher’s role is to encourage learners and to promote learner autonomy both in the classroom and, especially, outside the
classroom. Teaching with technology is considered to be one of the most productive ways to promote autonomy by using appropriate exercises which foster learner autonomy in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class.

Furthermore, lecturers will also need to develop technological and educational skills needed for the transmission of information outside the classroom (meaning the preparation of materials for students to work at home—such as videos, digital documents, and web links) and the material needed for reviewing student work (such as practical exercises and questionnaires). This means learning to use technological and educational resources that facilitate these tasks and thus increasing the effectiveness of online presentations. In this type of reverse methodology, it is essential that lecturers conscientiously plan their own and students’ activities before, during, and after classes (Rivera & Guiza, 2017, p.2).

The lecturer ceases to be a mere presenter of information and evaluator of assimilation. During the class, the lecturer must lead, guide, observe and evaluate students by providing relevant feedback when necessary. The lecturer’s role as an assessor also becomes more difficult because he or she must perform additional monitoring and assessment and offer more formative feedback to students. The lecturer will also have a decisive role in determining what should be taught and what should be studied by students. For this reason, teachers must possess or acquire knowledge of the methodologies that are particularly effective at encouraging student effort and learning, and in promoting learners’ autonomy. Lecturers must make a personal commitment to student learning and this will mean more hours of work (especially during the first year of the new methodology).

The use of the Learning Management System (LMS) makes it possible for teachers to create and deliver a course online with additional resources and activities; students can access the course content and participate online, at any time and place. The difficulties that appear with LMS are how to maintain the efficiency in communication, and how to balance learning and management. The problem that comes as a consequence of e-learning and the application of LMS in higher educational institutions is that many institutions lack an adequate comprehensible plan for which LMS are to be deployed, and with what aim, how much teachers and students are motivated to apply it in the process of teaching and learning.

3. THE USE OF VIDEO-RECORDED PRESENTATION TO MOTIVATE AND IMPROVE STUDENTS’ PRESENTATION SKILLS

Teaching ESP learners is indeed challenging. ESP teachers are constantly looking for new materials that can enhance the teaching and learning processes. Video is an important tool that can be implemented successfully with ESP students and, at the same time, it offers learners content, context and language that can stimulate them to develop critical thinking skills. The use and the potential of various websites, particularly video-sharing services such as YouTube (Ted Talks), can be explored in an ESP class and can motivate students to become more fluent in the target language.

For ESP courses effective communication is one of the most important learning outcomes. Students at this level are advanced learners of English as a foreign language, and they can easily communicate in both oral and written forms. In addition, in ESP for
Social Sciences 1, students’ performance in delivering oral presentations was assessed according to established criteria from rubrics. Students in this project-based learning demonstrated all the experience gained in the course in the form of a project. According to recent studies (Condilffe, 2016; Iwamoto et al., 2016; Harmer & Strokes, 2014; Holmes, 2012; Bell, 2010; Thomas, 2000; Katz & Chard, 1992) PBL increased critical thinking skills, the acquisition and application of information, collaboration, and academic achievements. The video presentation made students became (to some extent) self-directed and it involved them in constructive investigation. According to Bell (2010) PBL is an innovative approach that integrates several disciplines where teachers act as a guide who motivates students to take action. Teachers who successfully used PBL, according to Harmer and Strokes (2014), found many benefits: development of communication and social skills, increased student motivation and enjoyment, and deepened engagement beyond their school interaction.

The implementation of this kind of PBL requires planning and the use of scaffolds to engage students in the process of constructing knowledge. In this research, students were required to demonstrate and perform by creating a project that was presented in class, and would be evaluated by the teacher and the students by giving feedback and reflection. Moreover, students were also given an opportunity for self-evaluation and self-critique by preparing a video-recorded presentation at home. The use of video-recording, according to the empirical research, is an effective technique for evaluating and improving students’ oral presentation skills (Hamilton, 2012; Guo, 2013; Nikolic, Stirling, & Ros, 2018). It can also help students obtain cognitive insights and identify their areas of improvement; student feedback additionally helps teachers assess and enhance students’ communicative competence (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hamilton, 2012).

After delivering an oral presentation in class students submitted presentation feedback and written work in the form of a project. However, taking into consideration the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that SEEU implemented a hybrid mode of teaching, students were given an opportunity to design their own video in order to stimulate their interactivity and to improve their communication skills. The video-recorded presentation was part of a pilot project whose purpose was to stimulate students’ interaction and to engage them at home. The goal was to prepare them to become more autonomous in English as their foreign language by using innovative technological methods that should ready them for their future jobs.

In addition, for the oral presentations students were able to present in front of a class and to receive feedback from the teacher evaluating their performance. Most of the students had problems with self-confidence; eye contact and body language; voice quality; and appropriate preparation. The teacher noted that these skills needed improvement. Nevertheless, by using video-recordings students could capture, review and evaluate their performance by themselves. In addition, students’ video presentations were voluntary and experimental and the assignment raised students’ interest and motivation for the future use of video-recorded presentations in other advanced proficiency courses. Students had the chance to complete a self-assessment questionnaire at home about their video presentation. In addition, all ESP students completed a peer evaluation feedback form for each oral presentation conducted in class.

The results from the survey conducted at the SEEU Language Center with my students from the course ESP for Social Sciences 1 showed that oral presentation skills
are very important when teaching English as a foreign language and students need them especially for their future jobs.

4. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The Language Center offers language instruction that is a central part of every SEEU student’s academic career, both as obligatory and as optional courses. The University’s mission is to promote a multilingual approach to learning—stressing both the importance of local and international languages—and Language Center primary mission is to provide courses specified in the curricula of the five SEEU faculties. For this purpose, the Language Center offers classes in English starting from the basic skills up to English for Specific Purposes in fields such as law, computer sciences, social science, and business administration.

The E-learning processes present an essential part of teacher and student coursework at South East European University. The wide use of Google Classroom is now an integral part of the annual staff evaluation process. Students’ use of the system is also evaluated per semester due to the high percentage of the grade allocated for the successful integration of Google into the coursework.

This particular research was carried out during the fall semester of 2021 and the findings and results of this study showed that students in the ESP Social Sciences 1 course were very motivated and challenged to prepare a video presentation at home. A total number of 14 students who were actively engaged in the ESP course participated in the study. This particular group of students was between 18 and 20 years old; they were ethnic Albanian students who came from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds. I conducted a survey comparing motivation, experiences and challenges students faced while delivering an oral presentation in class vs. video-recorded presentations made at home. The purpose of this research was to stimulate students to become more autonomous in learning English, as well as to become prepared for 21st century skills (notably soft skills) at their workplaces. In addition, this experiment attempted to motivate students to communicate in the target language by promoting their creativity, specifically by producing a video presentation at home, an assignment intended to be unlimited by day, time and place.

The questionnaire was designed with the sole purpose of measuring the perception of students of the different educational, as well as methodological aspects of integrating technology in their educational process. The data focuses on students’ profiles by comparing the results about their motivation for presenting in class vs. producing their own video presentation at home. There were surprising aspects about the results that were produced by the students. Around (75%) of the interviewed students enjoyed delivering oral presentations and projects in the ESP for Social Sciences 1 course, while (25%) did not like to deliver presentations in class. Similarly, 62.5% of the students liked making video presentations at home, while 37.5% did not like making their own video at home.
Results from the questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like delivering Oral presentations and doing projects in my ESP Social Sciences 1 course.</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I like making Video presentations at home for my ESP Social Sciences 1 course.</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I like to make Video presentation at home more than deliver Oral presentation at home.</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I like to use new technologies and video presentations instead of Oral presentations.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I like the Oral presentations more than video presentations.</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I don’t like to be limited by day, time and place.</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I like Video presentations because they don’t limit you by day, time, place.</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I like to present my Video presentation in my ESP Social Sciences 1 course</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How important is for you to deliver a good oral presentation in class?</td>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>Important</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Not very important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Do you feel confident in your Oral presentation skills?</td>
<td>Very confident</td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Not confident</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How much time do you use to do research on the Internet before making your presentation?</td>
<td>2-5 hours</td>
<td>6-10 hours</td>
<td>More than 10 hours</td>
<td>I don’t do research on internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. How much time do you use to prepare your PowerPoint presentation?</td>
<td>2-5 hours</td>
<td>6-10 hours</td>
<td>More than 10 hours</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. How much time do you use to write your project?</td>
<td>2-5 hours</td>
<td>6-10 hours</td>
<td>More than 10 hours</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Are you satisfied with your proficiency in English?</td>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Are you satisfied with your communicative skills in English?</td>
<td>Very satisfied</td>
<td>Satisfied</td>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I like to evaluate my colleagues’ presentations (peer review) by using rubrics.</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The teacher gives clear instructions how to do Presentations and projects in class.</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The teacher posts useful materials on GC about how to do Presentations and projects in class.</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I am satisfied with my Oral (video) presentation done in class.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>25% and should improve 25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is worth mentioning that most of the students found this pilot project very interesting and engaging: 75% of the students preferred to produce a video at home, and only 25% expressed an interest to present an oral presentation in class. The majority of the students (63.5%) liked the use of new technologies, such as video presentations, being implemented in ESP courses, and only 37.5% disagree. Asynchronous learning is one of the most beneficial factors that motivate students to present at any time or place possible for them. Most of the students (62.5%) did not like to be limited by day, place or time and only (37.5%) disagreed. 87.5% of the students preferred the video presentations because they could be delivered at any time and only 12.5% disagreed.

Since the video-recorded presentation was a pilot project, most of the students liked to receive feedback only from the teacher and completed a self-evaluation check; they disliked for their video presentations to be officially presented (seen) in class. I found this interesting information, because it might be that this was a completely new experience for them, as well as making them question their confidence in their language skills. However, the percentage of students that liked to present their video presentation in class was 50%, while the other 50% disagreed.

The data showed that the majority (87%) of the students spent 2-5 hours researching on the internet, and only 12.5% spent 6-10 hours to do research online. The same percentage of students uses those times to prepare their PowerPoint presentations. As for their writing part—the project that students need to submit after completing their presentation—75% of the students use only 2-5 hours, and only 25% spent 6-10 hours.

75% of the students are satisfied with their proficiency in English, 12.5% are not satisfied, and 12.5% think that they should work on improving their language skills. Furthermore, 50% of the students are satisfied with their communicative skills, 37.5% are very satisfied, and 12.5% are not satisfied.

In addition, most of the students strongly agreed (75%) that the teacher gave clear instructions on how to do the presentations and projects; (25%) agreed. Students also agreed that the teacher posted useful materials on the Google Classroom about how to do presentations and projects. 75% of the students agreed, and 12.5% strongly agreed, that they liked to evaluate their colleagues by using rubrics; an identical percentage (12.5%) disagreed.

At the end students were satisfied with how they presented in class: 25% strongly agreed, 12.5% agreed, 37.5% were not satisfied with their presentation, and 25% stated that they thought that they should improve.

Although these are overly enthusiastic positive responses, the access and availability of technology in education is omnipresent, and it can definitely be concluded that teachers should engage and stimulate students’ progress by implementing new technological methods that can help students become more autonomous in learning English.

5. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that video is a visual medium and can be used as a valuable tool, especially when used as part of an active learning approach. It is an effective intrinsic motivator and it shows that it has a positive impact on student motivation when implemented in an ESP course. Furthermore, video is an important tool for stimulating students to learn a language. It provides communication and it promotes language acquisition.
The results from the survey showed that around 75% of the interviewed students liked to deliver oral presentations and projects in the ESP for Social Sciences course. Most of the students found this pilot project very interesting and engaging. 75% of the students preferred to produce a video at home. However, only 25% expressed an interest in presenting an oral presentation in class. The majority of the students (63.5%) liked the use of new technologies (such as video presentations) when implemented in ESP courses. Most of the students (62.5%) liked asynchronous learning and did not like to be limited by day, place or time, while 87.5% of the students liked the video presentations because they could be delivered at any time preferred.

Teachers should keep motivating students by helping them to engage and interact within and outside language classes. In addition, students obtain information outside the classroom by using digital software, and the time spent in the classroom is dedicated to real interaction between the teacher and the student (which ensures the correct assimilation of information). In this way, teachers use their role in the teaching-learning process with different techniques that promote student learning. Taking into consideration Bloom’s Taxonomy, teachers should assign content materials for study outside the classroom from the lowest levels of the taxonomy (comprehension and recall). Furthermore, students can take advantage by assimilating contents linked to higher levels (create, evaluate, analyse and implement). In this study the results showed that a majority of students (87%) spent 2-5 hours doing research on the internet. As for their writing part—the project that students needed to submit after completing their presentation—75% of the students used only 2-5 hours, and only 25% spent 6-10 hours. 75% of the students were satisfied with their proficiency in English, while only 12.5% were not satisfied. Furthermore 87.5% of the students were satisfied with their communicative skills.

In addition, students strongly agreed (75%) that the teacher gave clear instructions on how the presentations and projects should be done; the same percentage strongly agreed that the teacher posted useful materials on the Google Classroom about how to do presentations and projects. 75% of the students agreed and 12.5% strongly agreed that they liked to evaluate their colleagues by using rubrics. At the end students were satisfied by how they presented in class: 25% strongly agreed, 37.5% were not satisfied with their presentation, and 25% stated that they think that they should improve.

It is very important for teachers to raise students’ productivity online by engaging them actively in online communication activities. The implication for higher educational institutions is that they should shift their focus and invest in online learning, thus stimulating students to become more autonomous in learning English as a foreign language. One of the drawbacks of this pilot project was that students did not want their video presentations to be officially presented (seen) in class. It can be concluded that students found this experience motivating from perspective, but from another point of view they probably lacked self-confidence in their language skills.

Teachers should engage and stimulate students’ progress by implementing new technological methods that can help students become more autonomous in learning English. Creating their own video presentations can help students become more interactive, and promote their creativity and communication. The results from the study showed that students’ motivation was increased and that they enjoyed designing their own videos asynchronously; they also enjoyed practising their language skills, body language, and critical thinking skills at their convenience.
It is a fact that by the use of contemporary methods such as blended learning, teachers help students use the learning time flexibly outside the classroom in order to facilitate and enhance (theoretical and practical) teaching and learning. Implementing contemporary methods of engaging students in online activities at home asynchronously is much more effective and efficient than just the traditional learning model.

The purpose of higher educational institutions is to motivate students to develop leadership skills through oral presentations, video presentations, project-based learning, teamwork, and the stimulation of students’ critical thinking skills. Teachers at universities should help students improve their communication abilities by giving them opportunities for enhancing experiences—such as delivering presentations in class or online—and giving them chances for new advanced experiences that will prepare them for the job market.

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