

Video Recordings of Oral Presentation Skills and *Edmodo App* to
Enhance Presentation Skills of Students

Dr. H. Sofia, M.A., M.Ed., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Abstract

The potentials of the mobile app Edmodo and video recordings of presentations in improving the speaking skills of ESL students are explored in this paper. The fifteen participants of the study were Second year Civil Engineering students of B. S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology pursuing the course ENB 2282 Confidence Building and Behavioural Skills. The research instruments used for the study were: 1) the scoring rubric for oral presentations 2) video recordings of the students' presentations and 3) Edmodo app. The results showed that students gained confidence and were able to improve their performance with the integration of the web 2.0 tool Edmodo and viewing the recordings of their presentations.

Keywords: Edmodo, web 2.0 tools, ESL students, rubric, oral presentation skills

Introduction

Engineering is a professional course and engineering graduates should possess good communication and presentation skills. These skills are much sought after by any industry apart from the candidate's analytical and subject knowledge. Ability to communicate effectively is a skill which every professional should possess to be successful in their jobs.

Oral communication refers to a broad area of speaking skills that range from presentation skills, group discussion, interview skills and taking part in meetings. Learning to speak in English is an important skill as it enables the learners to express their opinions freely. It involves in communicating or transmitting the information during social interactions and personal lives. Inability to speak effectively in English can lead potential candidates seeking jobs to embarrassing situations which could also deprive them of their jobs in an interview. So, "by becoming an effective communicator one will be able to conduct himself in a variety of personal, professional, and academic environments with confidence" (Rahman, 2010).

The present study is based on the author's ten years of teaching experience in an institute of Science and Technology. She has been teaching Oral Communication for third semester engineering students since 2009 and has followed the syllabus to train them in Just a minute

(JAM), Role-play, Debates, Group Discussion and Mock interview. She observed that all these activities are good enough for learners who already are proficient in speaking. But learners who lack good speaking skills, those who have inhibitions to speak before others due to nervousness or some kind of phobia of being mocked by their own peers, seldom take part in the class room activities except for the award of marks and exams. Moreover, in a traditional English classroom, students are more dependent on their teachers which makes them only passive listeners. The implementation of ICT tools paves way for blended learning which makes learning joyful and interesting and makes students responsible for what they learn. According to Pešut (2014) using technology “adds a new dimension to the formerly used traditional approaches.”

The aim of the present author is to make such learners speak effectively by giving them sufficient practice beyond the class room by using the mobile app Edmodo. On the basis of this study, the use of video recordings and Edmodo were found to be useful tools in improving students 'classroom presentations. These tools were perceived by students to improve their learning.

Research Questions

The study attempted to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. How to improve the speaking skills of EFL learners?
2. What strategies can be adopted to improve second language learners' oral communication skills?
3. Can ICT tool like Edmodo App and video recordings help develop the presentation skills of the learners?

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

The development and rapid growth of Information and communication technologies (ICT) has given rise to mobile devices which has opened new horizons for M-learning and is facilitating learning among students. These kinds of technologies assist learners in learning foreign languages in sharing information. Most often in a classroom we find students sitting in the classroom with a tablet or a smart phone and looking for information on educational matters and entertainment. The mobile devices function as a multi-purpose tool to communicate, “providing SMS and MMS, clock, stopwatch, calendar, games, multimedia player, and enabled to browse the internet to send and receive e-mails or to share multimedia experience as the text, audio and images in addition to voice”(Al-Said,2015).In fact mobile technologies are gaining so much prominence that language teachers “take advantage of the time and place that suits them”(Stockwell,2012) to impart language learning.

Edmodo

Edmodo is a social network designed for education. It is a free learning management system that is very popular and easy to use. It is a great resource for teachers, students, and parents, allowing communication, collaboration and sharing.

Edmodo is a simple M-learning tool used to present the lesson contents, it is common to all operation systems of smartphones; it provides useful tools for students and teachers to

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:6 June 2018

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online outside class anywhere, anytime (Hourdequin, 2014). According to Miangah and Nezarat (2012) “There is no need for the learners to sit in a classroom or at a computer to get learning materials. In fact, MALL can be considered an ideal solution to language learning barriers in terms of time and place”.

The teacher can download the Edmodo app from the Google Playstore and as an administrative head invite students to join the group. A group code is created by the teacher and the students can sign in to view the assignments. The group code can also be locked after assigning the assignments. Feedback can be provided after assessing the assignments submitted. Website links and files can also be attached as learning resources for the students.

Literature Review

There is abundant literature suggesting that the use of video recordings can significantly help improve the Oral Presentation skills of Students. According to **Morales and Rosa**, students who get to watch their performances on video tape, are given the opportunity to evaluate their performances, prior to delivering a second oral presentation, which is also assessed and evaluated. In Guo’s (2013) view, “Students come to know themselves better in the learning process because the use of video data provides individuals with unique opportunities to reflect on their experiences in a tangible manner, therefore allowing for improvements to be possible”. Bussard (1982) singled out videotaping feedback of oral presentations as “a significant learning tool”. Voth & Moore (1997) claimed that, “when students were provided with the opportunity to carefully observe and reflect on their presentations, they improved their presentation skills.

Deshpande’s study (2016) has worked on the hypothesis that, “Edmodo can be a good pedagogical devise which can arouse curiosity, enhance motivation and ameliorate the learning process”. Fatimah Al-Kathiri’s (2014) findings revealed that, “students’ perceptions towards Edmodo were highly positive and that although there were considerable challenges to its integration, it appeared to have excellent potential for generating more positive attitudes towards EFL learning. Al-Said’s (2015) findings indicated that, “majority of students have positive perceptions towards Edmodo since they think that learning using Edmodo facilitates and increases effectiveness communication of learning, and they appreciate Edmodo because it saves time”.

Web 2.0 technologies in EFL Learning

The application to Web.2.0 is rapidly changing the field of education with many new developments. Web 2.0 tools like blogs, wikis, Podcasts, Twitter, and RSS make it easier for students to connect and learn with one another. According to Chartrand (2012), “they are easy to use, inexpensive, and readily available through the Internet”. It enables collaboration among students where they can share their ideas and make decisions with others in groups and communities. Web 2.0 tools create a positive language learning environment among students which leads to their progress in learning outcomes. It can enhance language learning development of the learners beyond the classroom. To maximize the potentials of technology, students have to be self-initiated to use technology for effective language learning. This study

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has made use of the Edmodo app, a web 2.0 tool which happened to be an excellent potential for generating interest in speaking skills.

Research Methodology

The present study focuses on training the students to improve their speaking skills using Edmodo app and video recordings of their presentations. Despite its importance, assessing speaking activities is difficult for both teachers and students. This problem could be addressed by video recording the performance and allowing it to be viewed as many times as necessary to accurately evaluate the speaker's strengths and weaknesses. The students were required to make two presentations for the study. A comparative analysis was done to see if there was any improvement in the second presentation with the integration of technology. The fifteen participants from the class of sixty were second year Civil Engineering students attending the course ENB 2282 Confidence Building and Behavioral Skills in B.S. Abdur Rahman Crescent Institute of Science and Technology. The participants were selected based on their inability to converse in English. The teacher has also observed their poor speaking skills in the class when she was their course teacher in the first semester. The study took place inside the campus during the free slots.

In the first week, the students were oriented on the importance of oral presentation skills in their work place. They were also informed about the different strategies that will be followed in the class to enable them to make effective presentations.

In the second week, they were made to download the Edmodo app from their smart phones and invited to join the group by the teacher. They were allowed to explore the features of the tool and become familiar with it. They were asked to make a short presentation individually on the topic of their choice for three minutes which was recorded in the mobile phone. After that the videos of their presentations were shared to the group through the Edmodo app. The idea was to encourage them to watch the video clip and share their views with one another and the teacher through Edmodo on various aspects like structure, organization preparation, language, time management, delivery, visual aids, etc. (Appendix 1) This way they will learn by their strengths and weaknesses and improve on the differences based on the feedback given initially.

This Peer learning or cooperative learning in small groups “assists students to meet a variety of learning outcomes” (Boud & Cohen 1999). Students learn better in an environment where they can explain their ideas and take part in activities which they can learn from their peers. Moreover, they learn to organize their ideas, plan activities and work collaboratively giving productive feedback from their own learning.

In this study, the students were given inputs on how to analyze verbal and nonverbal aspects of their performance while observing their videotaped presentations. They realized that practice can help them to equip their oral skills and they also have to learn by watching the performance of efficient speakers of English language. They also understood the importance of body language and positive attitude which is vital for oral communication.

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Meanwhile a formal presentation evaluation form was designed (Appendix). Self-analysis was conducted by each student individually using their videos. Viewing these recordings was expected to facilitate students' self-development in presentation skills. All of them felt that they have to improve in presentation skills

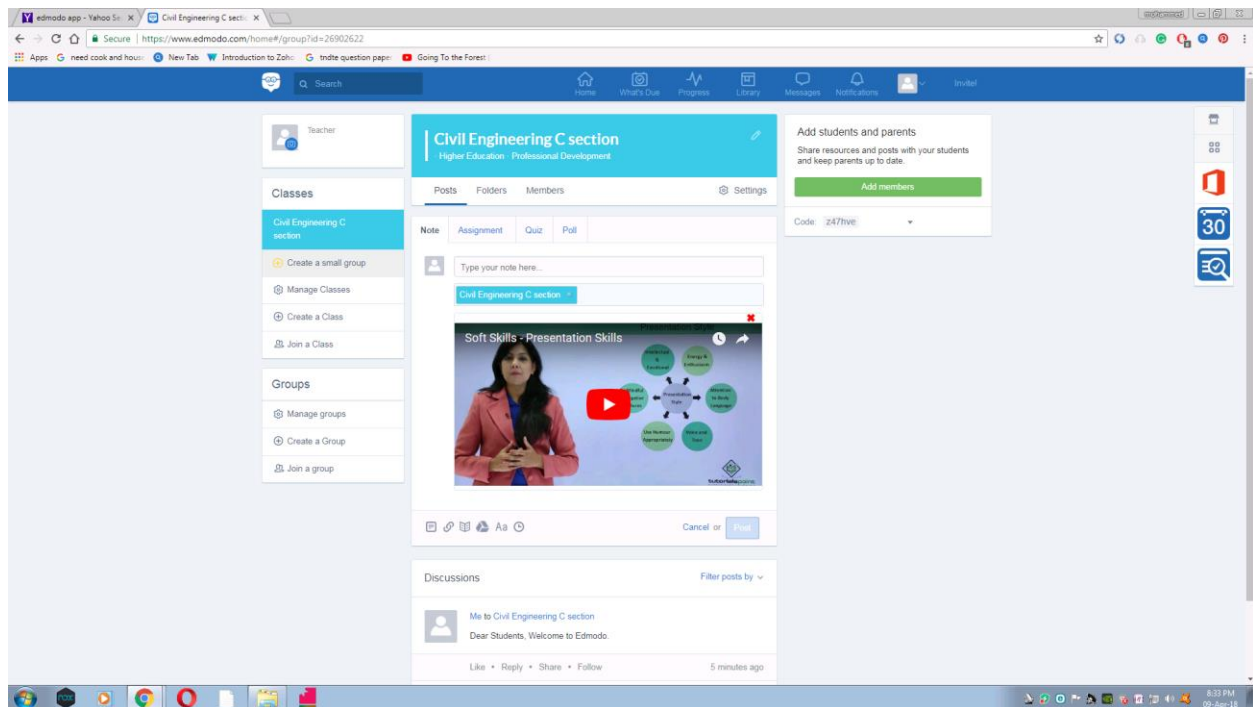


Fig:1 Screen shot of the lessons shared through edmodo app.

Intervention Strategy

In the third week, the teacher devised a new intervention strategy to help improve the poor results of the learners. She spent considerable time discussing on the elements of a good presentation skill and showed them some samples using her laptop. She reviewed their videos and individually commented on their performance. She reinforced the importance of presentation skills in job interviews and career success. According to Darling & Dannels (2003) “engineering practice takes place in an intensely oral culture and while formal presentations are important to practicing engineers, daily work is characterized more by interpersonal and small group experiences. Communication skills such as translation, clarity, negotiation, and listening are vital.” She motivated the students to spend more time while preparing for their presentations next time which would be recorded once again.

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In the fourth week, the students were made to present on the topics assigned by the teacher. The time duration was increased to five minutes. The entire presentation was once again recorded and shared with the group through Edmodo. The group received verbal feedback and also evaluated in the scoring rubric for oral presentations. The teacher observed that their performance in presenting improved with the integration of the tools Edmodo app and video recordings. The students also admitted they were satisfied with their improvement in oral presentation skills.

Results and Discussion

Sample student s	Presence (5)		Language Skills (5)		Organization (5)		Mastery of the subject (5)		Visual Aids (5)		Overall impression (5)		Final score (30)	
	1st	2 nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
S1	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	4	2	4	14	19
S2	2	3	2	3	2	4	3	4	3	4	2	4	14	22
S3	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	13	15
S4	2	3	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	14	17
S5	2	3	3	4	3	4	2	2	3	4	2	3	15	20
S6	2	2	1	2	2	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	14	19
S7	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	12	16
S8	2	2	2	3	2	5	3	2	3	3	3	4	15	19
S9	2	3	3	3	3	4	2	2	2	3	2	4	14	19
S10	3	4	2	4	3	4	3	3	3	5	3	5	17	25
S11	2	3	3	5	3	3	2	4	2	3	2	4	14	22
S12	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	16	19
S13	3	5	1	3	3	3	4	2	3	3	3	5	17	21
S14	2	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	17	21
S15	2	3	3	3	3	4	2	3	2	4	2	4	14	21
Mean	0.27	0.44	0.43	0.33	0.4	0.47	0.27	0.4	0.27	0.53	0.27	0.53	1.87	2.67

Table 1. The comparative scores of the students' presentation. The rubric for the data adapted from Ruth X.Guo.(2013)

Table 1 provides the description of the scores of the two presentations. The rubric for the data was adapted from Ruth X. Guo and it shows the comparison of scores. The evaluation was done by the peers and the instructor. The assessment was conducted for thirty marks with a weightage of 5 marks for each criterion. It is evident from the table that the students have performed well compared to the first assessment.

The inclusion of technology to improve the oral presentation skills of the students proved to successful.

Limitations

- The assessment of these students' performance could be made more valid and reliable by triangulating the results with other sources of data like the students' feedback, density of errors, etc.).
- Slow *wi-fi* connectivity proved to be a hindrance to access the app by many a time.
- Lack of students' interest was also a matter of concern as a few students were reluctant to attend the classes allotted for the study.
- Small-sized screen and battery of the mobile device posed a challenge to the learners.

Recommendations

The study also suggests that teachers who teach English as foreign language try to be innovative in their teaching strategies by integrating technologies like M-learning environment which will boost the self-confidence of the learners not only in learning the language but also provide them an opportunity to learn beyond the classroom.

Conclusion

Based on the study it can be concluded that Edmodo app and video recordings of the students' presentation skills proved to be effective technological tools for improving oral presentation skills. The students also realized that not only practice will help them to learn the skill but also the fact that smart phones and apps could also be used to learn a foreign language .Through the first video recording they were able to identify their strengths and weaknesses and confidently improve their presentation in the second video. Another important observation to be made is regarding the effectiveness of giving feedback on recorded presentations. According to Andeweg, Laaken & Swennen (2005), giving feedback "improves the possibilities to focus the feedback on a speaker's behavior".

The inclusion of Edmodo app generated positive attitude towards learning. The instructor was able to post, share and upload files, photos and videos on various topics with the students. She was able to connect and collaborate with them outside the class room too.

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Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:6 June 2018

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APPENDIX

Scoring Rubric for Oral Presentations:

PRESENCE	5	4	3	2	1	0
-body language & eye contact						
-contact with the public						
-poise						
-physical organization						
LANGUAGE SKILLS	5	4	3	2	1	0
-correct usage						
-appropriate vocabulary and grammar						
-understandable (rhythm, intonation, accent)						
-spoken loud enough to hear easily						
ORGANIZATION	5	4	3	2	1	0
-clear objectives						
-logical structure						
-signposting						
MASTERY OF THE SUBJECT	5	4	3	2	1	0
-pertinence						
-depth of commentary						
-spoken, not read						
-able to answer questions						
VISUAL AIDS	5	4	3	2	1	0
-transparencies, slides						
-handouts						
-audio, video, etc.						
OVERALL IMPRESSION	5	4	3	2	1	0
-very interesting / very boring						
-pleasant / unpleasant to listen to						
-very good / poor communication						

TOTAL SCORE _____ / 30

Adapted from: hplengr.engr.wisc.edu/Rubric_Presentation.doc

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