Enhancing EFL students' speaking performance in university English courses through video peer feedback

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Abstract: This work in progress used video peer feedback to explore college students' speaking performance in oral presentations. Based on a pre-test, a sample of 51 college students studying English as a foreign language (EFL) was divided into control and experimental groups, with 23 and 28 students in each group, respectively. Both groupings were further divided into groups of two or three students to develop oral presentations. Data collection consisted of pre- and post-tests and evaluations of the group project presentations. The control and experimental groups uploaded their projects to an online learning platform and gave brief presentations. The two teachers then evaluated students' projects. The difference between the control and experimental groups was that in addition to written feedback, the latter recorded video-mediated oral feedback, providing verbal comments regarding other teams' oral presentations. The results of this study indicated that the students in the experimental group positively perceived their learning process in the oral presentation exercise and performed better than those in the control group. They offered encouraging and immediate feedback to their peers and perceived peers' annotations, which enhanced their oral presentations in terms of fluency, content, organization, and delivery. This study suggests that EFL college students can use the video peer feedback to improve their engagement to learn during oral presentation exercises.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, video peer feedback, technology-enhanced language learning

1. Introduction

Students at technical universities need support to develop their English speaking skills, since their English proficiency tends to be relatively poor. The contribution of this study is the embedding of online community-based flipped learning into *Taiwanese Culture in English* courses, cultivating students' ability to use simple English to introduce their hometowns and compare them with foreign cultures. Based on Lin & Hwang (2018), this research sought to explore factors affecting EFL students' oral performance and determine whether video-based peer feedback would have a significant impact on students' speaking performance and serve as a useful application of technology in the process of learning English.

2. Literature Review

Peer feedback is a learning activity that requires students to provide and receive reactions to and from peers working on the same assignment, helping them to improve their learning performance (Gielen, Peeters, Dochy, Onghena, & Struyven, 2010). Feedback can be in different forms, including- ratings and comments made according to scoring criteria. Previous studies have shown that peer assessment helps students to understand teachers' grading criteria and expectations regarding assignments, enhancing their learning outcomes (Hsia et al., 2015; Lai & Hwang, 2015). Hsia et al. (2015) found that web-based peer assessment approach could improve students' learning performance, self-efficacy and motivation in dance courses. Students felt confident enough to receive and respond to peer feedback. It

was also found that the peer assessment ratings were highly correlated with the teachers' ratings for every criteria item; furthermore, students were able to evaluate peers' assignments and revise their own work based on peers' comments.

Integrating technology into English learning helps teachers guide students to cultivate their language skills through real-life scenarios and meaningful learning experiences (Angelova & Zhao, 2016; Wu, Yen, & Marek, 2011). Overall, teachers teach topics ranging from the familiar to the unfamiliar, moving step by step. Learners rely on established schematic knowledge and the scaffolding of new systemic knowledge when engaging in English learning.

3. Methodology

Research Question

The research question was as follows: Can the video constructive peer feedback enhance students' speaking performance more than conventional video-based learning?

Participants

Two *Taiwanese culture in English* classes at a technological university were the subjects of this experiment, a total of 51 students. Students were 20-22 years of age and were formed into groups of two or three. The control group was comprised of 23 participants. The experimental group, 28 students in total, used the cloud-based collaborative learning platform *1know* for online community-based flipping learning. The same instructor taught both groups of students. The experimental group applied constructive peer feedback via video. The 23 students in the control group were taught using the conventional approach.

Collaborative learning tool

The learning management platform, *1know,* was adopted for students to: (a) view other team's presentation videos, (b) write comments, and (c) read peers' comments. Each group developed a PowerPoint presentation that contained descriptions of their hometown as their group project. Both classes spent 40 minutes per session working together for six weeks. Both groups discussed and edited the files via google slides. After six weeks, participants uploaded their projects and images to the *1know* platform and made oral presentations for their final projects. Two experienced college English teachers then evaluated the group projects.

Measurement tool

The scoring rubric of speaking performance was developed based on the measure proposed by Lin & Hwang (2018) and Chen & Hwang (2020) and revised by two senior teachers of English. The rubric consisted of four categories: fluency, content, organization, and delivery. For each item, a 5-point scheme was used to rate the students' speaking performance, with 1 indicating poor and 5 indicating excellent. Two teachers were asked to rate the students' performances. The average correlation coefficients of the ratings given for each item by the raters were then determined. Pearson's correlation was 0.68, indicating that the consistency of the raters' ratings was acceptable.

Procedure

The *Taiwanese culture in English* course was held once a week for 100 minutes. Both groups of students received traditional teaching in English on the Taiwanese culture for the first four weeks. They were then given a pre-test and pre-questionnaire on speaking performance and classroom engagement. Each week, the two groups of students were scheduled to complete the learning sheet in class, summarizing what they had learned from the instructional videos posted on the *1know* platform. The in-class activities for the two groups were identical. The experiment lasted eight weeks, with 100 minutes of class per week. The students in both groups then uploaded their PowerPoint presentations to the *1know* platform. Also, the instructor went over the main structures of each unit with both the experimental and control groups, employing slide presentations, audio, and videos tools. Then learners participated in video instruction, with the experimental group using the video-based constructive peer feedback and the control group learning through digital slide presentations. While groups were making oral presentations, other students did peer evaluation via Zuvio. After the teaching activity, all participants were required

to complete a posttest on speaking skills and the questionnaires on classroom engagement.

4. Results & Conclusion

Overall, twenty-eight participants from the experimental group made satisfactory progress, with significant differences (p=0.038<.05). The survey items reached a Cronbach's α value of .78. This preliminary work used the *1know* platform, which allows students to upload group PowerPoint projects, record group oral presentations, and further record video-mediated oral feedback in response to other teams' oral presentations. It sought to explore the ability via Zuvio to support peer review. This research, a work in progress, identified the effectiveness of using the *1know* platform. In response to the open-ended questions on the survey, students reported that they enjoyed using *1know* to work on their group projects and interact with other groups. This was especially true for the experimental group, who used *1know* as the peer review platform. Through the post-open-ended questionnaire, students expressed positive reactions to edit their projects with their peers, especially because they could provide instant feedback. They felt that interacting while working on the group project was useful and educational. The result was that technology was integrated into the oral training activity, allowing students to learn from one another and their own perspective, comparing it to foreign cultures.

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