

# Integrating Video Assessment Into an Oral Presentation Course

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A persistent problem in classes that focus on oral presentations is how to review and evaluate them. Usually, presentation evaluation is a one-time, one-shot affair, conducted by the teacher. The only tangible result is a score and perhaps some short comments written on a score sheet. This paper outlines the development of a method to record, upload and review students' oral presentations using YouTube and the Moodle learning management system (LMS). This method allows for peer assessment and self-reflection by students in addition to assessment by other instructors teaching separate classes of the same course.

オーラル・プレゼンテーションを中心とした授業においては、プレゼンテーションの評価方法が問題点になりかねない。概ね、プレゼンテーション評価は、教師による、その場限り、1回だけの評価である。残される記録は、教師が付けた点数またはコメントだけである。本論文は、YouTube及びMoodleのようなオンライン教育システムを利用し、学生のプレゼンの録画、アップロード、評価する方法を提案する。この方法を用いれば、同じコースを教える複数の教師による評価、そして学生同士の評価、あるいは学生自身による評価が可能になる。

**N-CLASS STUDENT** presentations are a common method of oral evaluation in communication-focused EFL classrooms (Bailey, 2003; Brown, 2007; Bygate, 1998). However, effectively assessing student presentations is challenging, particularly in terms of practical administration of assessment. According to Bachman & Palmer (1996; 2010), practicality is one of six qualities of test usefulness, in addition to reliability, construct validity, authenticity, interactivity, and impact. In Japan, the management of large classes of beginning-level students learning speechmaking skills typically involves lengthy, often tedious sessions of students giving presentations one by one in front of the class. This reduces the amount of class time that could be used for other activities. In this paper, we discuss an alternative approach to assessment that requires learners and peers to evaluate in-class speeches within a blended classroom environment that combines online video streaming in LMS forums.

Speech assessment generally involves in-class scoring of presentations on a number of criteria using a score sheet, or rubric (see Appendix B for a sample). Often, the teacher observes and evaluates individual presentations while other students watch and wait their turn. At the end of class each student has, at best, received a score. Teachers are left with a stack of marked rubrics to be entered into their gradebooks. For classes with sufficiently motivated students,



this procedure may be adequate. However, for classrooms where low student motivation is coupled with apprehension of presenting to peers, a number of complications arise. For example, students may frequently be absent, they may be blatantly disinterested in other students' presentations, or they may try to put minimal effort into their presentations. These behavioral issues can create enormous burdens for teachers and dampen the atmosphere of the class.

It has been acknowledged for some time that recording videos of oral presentations offers a number of benefits (Bradley, 1970). Particularly, it affords the ability to repeatedly observe, analyze, and compare performances by both teachers and students (Quigley & Nyquist, 1992) and increases motivation for students to put more effort into improving their presentations. However, when it comes to assessment, recording and managing video files for larger classes is often not practical. Recently, the Moodle LMS has been reviewed as an important platform for second language learning (Lin, 2011) and YouTube video streaming has been applied to educational situations (Watkins & Wilkins, 2011). However, large-scale online assessment systems have focused mainly on text-based testing tools (Butcher, 2008) rather than video recordings. A significant issue is that online storage for and simple access to a large quantity of video files may be unavailable. Another issue is that processing the video files can be cumbersome and time consuming. Further, enabling students to watch them on a computer requires a degree of technical know-how on the part of both teachers and students. As a result, some teachers who would consider using video to enhance the feedback process for their students feel overwhelmed by the time, technology, and skills required to implement video recording in their own teaching environments, and so they do not pursue the idea. It is our intent, therefore, to develop a video recording and assessment method that can be feasibly sustained in our teaching context and that could also potentially be implemented in other EFL classrooms focusing on oral presentations.

## Research Method

Three teachers of three separate public speaking classes at Sapporo Gakuin University (SGU) employed a collaborative action research methodology (Ferrance, 2000; Burns, 2010) for the spring semester of 2011. We addressed the question of how to overcome problems associated with sustainably recording and managing a large number of videos of in-class student presentations in order to expand the number of presentation assessment options available. We held regular meetings before and after classes and recorded data in the form of reflection and discussion notes. Additionally, at the end of the semester we solicited the opinions of our students in a brief questionnaire. In this article we offer a synopsis of what we observed of our efforts and outline how we have constructed and developed the oral presentation class in the hope that our experience will prove helpful for other teachers considering similar undertakings. Specifically, we:

1. outline the classroom setting and why we began to use videos,
2. identify common problems associated with taking and managing videos for oral presentation assessment and offer our solutions to these problems, and
3. outline five types of assessment—in-class teacher and peer assessment, and out-of-class teacher, peer, and self assessment—that we were able to employ as a result of developing a feasible way to manage videos.

Finally, we suggest some options for future development of video assessment methods and further research for oral presentation classes.

## Background and Classroom Setting

The oral presentation course in this study is a 16-week course offered every spring semester at SGU. The course is mandatory

for English majors during their second year. For the 2011 academic year English majors numbered around 75 students. The course is divided into three classes of roughly 25 students each, taught by three separate teachers. Originally, the three teachers of these classes taught and assessed relatively independently, although four years ago they agreed to use a common textbook and to meet regularly to share lesson plans and materials. Teachers have the option of using blended learning classrooms, outfitted with computers on the periphery and movable desks in the middle, as depicted in Figure 1. One year later, they agreed to begin transferring all course materials and quizzes to Moodle, an online Learning Management System (LMS).



Figure 1. Blended CALL Classroom at Sapporo Gakuin University

Students are tiered into three different levels of class according to their scores on an annual placement test as they begin

their second year. The lowest of the three classes has been fraught with poor attendance and lack of effort on the part of some students in the past. The idea to record videos of student speeches originally emerged as a scare tactic by a teacher of the lowest class who, during spring semester 2010, had been encountering increasingly poor effort by students on their in-class presentations. The idea was to instill in presenters the sense that their performances would be reviewed in detail at a later time, and that their effort—or lack thereof—would not simply be a momentary event in a safe haven behind closed classroom doors.

In fact, videos turned out to be useful for exactly that purpose. Some of the criteria evaluated in the speeches included nonverbal elements such as eye contact and posture. The use of gestures, for example, could be more accurately counted by reviewing video files after the presentation. As a result, the other two teachers began experimenting with recording speeches in their own classes (Figure 2) during spring semester 2010.



Figure 2. Image from a Student Presentation Video

Video review was particularly useful when multiple criteria had to be evaluated simultaneously. One teacher elected to operate the camera and evaluate all presentations after class, rather than delegate video-taking to a student and complete rubric score sheets during presentations.

In a classroom setting where video is not employed to record speeches, teachers are restricted to on-spot grading. They may jot notes on a score sheet and assign point values and /or grades later, but in any case, presentations are a one-chance, one-time event, often limited to several minutes. The students present, the teacher marks a score sheet, and the class finishes. Absent students cannot see their classmates' presentations, neither the teacher nor the students can review exactly how they performed, and in cases such as ours where multiple teachers teach the same course, teachers cannot see other class presentations. For teachers teaching a single class with a limited number of students, these issues may not be significant. However, in our case, the inception of video recording opened a number of previously unfeasible possibilities.

As Quigley & Nyquist (1992) commented twenty years ago, "The capacity of video to preserve verbal and nonverbal elements of the oral communication event renders it a tool with considerable power" (p.325). As we took more and more videos of student performances, the potential applications for using video recordings for teacher, peer, and self evaluation became increasingly apparent, leading us to record all four speeches for every student in each of the three classes during spring semester 2011 (see Appendix A for the spring semester 2011 syllabus). However, in order to realistically and sustainably integrate the use of videos in a multi-classroom, multi-teacher course of 75 students, a number of technical issues had to be overcome. Our solutions to these issues are discussed below.

## Development of Video-Integrated Assessment: Issues and Solutions

Using video in our course involves three main processes: 1) recording, 2) storing, and 3) sharing. For each process, several issues had to be addressed in order to reduce the amount of effort involved and make it a sustainable practice.

### I. Video Recording Issues

The use of video for presentation evaluation is documented since at least 40 years ago (e.g., Deihl, Breen & Larson, 1970; McCroskey & Lashbrook, 1970; Porter & King, 1972), when the price of video recording equipment declined to a level that was no longer cost-prohibitive (Bradley, 1970). However, in the pre-digital era, recording and playing back video was laborious, limiting the extent to which it could be practically used. Peer evaluation had to be completed in-class, and distribution of individually recorded tapes for self-review by students outside of class was largely implausible. With handheld digital video cameras the recording process was simplified, removing the need for specialized equipment or expertise, as evidenced by our use of video emerging from a spontaneous decision by one teacher. Recording continued despite lack of a plan for how to utilize the videos, largely because it was relatively effortless.

One way to free the teacher for classroom management is to ask students to operate the cameras, but to do this successfully a simple user interface was essential. In particular, we used cameras with removable media (e.g., an SD chip). An SD chip can be instantly removed and replaced with another empty chip and doesn't require the camera operator to deal with a computer video-capture interface. Further, the built-in omnidirectional microphones on some cameras were sometimes insufficient to record student speeches in a large classroom, especially when students spoke quietly, so this is another point to keep in mind

when making purchasing decisions.

When considering a digital camera model to use for video recording in classrooms, we recommend considering whether it has a:

- Simple user interface
- Unidirectional microphone compatible with large, open classrooms
- Replaceable memory card
- Replaceable battery

If multiple cameras are to be used simultaneously, having several copies of the same model is helpful for dealing with the inevitable technical difficulties such as failure of batteries and memory cards, averting unnecessary interruptions of student presentations.

## 2. Video File Storage Issues

In smaller classes with limited numbers of students and presentations, video file storage may not be a significant problem. This may have been the case with older technologies such as videotapes. However, in our case (75 students who each gave four speeches, for a total of about 300 videos), video storage required innovation. Hundreds of high-definition video recordings can quickly consume disk space if stored on an external hard disk. In our case it required over 30 gigabytes of hard disk storage.

Storage on a hard disk may be good for archival purposes, or for when only the teacher is reviewing videos for evaluation. However, where students need to view their own and others' videos, providing a direct link to an external drive is troublesome in class, and unworkable out of class. Initially, when we were experimenting with videos in spring 2010, we attempted to upload all videos to the Moodle website, hosted on the SGU server. Although server space was adequate, the large number

of videos significantly slowed the Moodle site and caused problems with transferring the Moodle contents from one semester to the next. Our solution was to avoid local storage altogether and take advantage of YouTube for hosting videos, which solved other problems with the next process: playback and sharing of video files.

## 3. Issues With Playback and Sharing of Video Files

Uploading videos to a YouTube account offered two advantages over uploading them directly into our Moodle server. First, bulk upload was possible, so a large number of files could be uploaded at once with a few clicks. Uploading files directly to Moodle could only be done one at a time. Second, YouTube provides a convenient link for each video. The link can simply be copied and pasted into a Moodle forum for viewing by students and teachers. Videos uploaded directly to the university server had to be individually and manually linked.

A significant concern with YouTube was the matter of privacy. By default, videos on YouTube are publicly searchable and publicly viewable, which creates ethical problems for student videos taken during a required university course. Fortunately, YouTube offers a number of privacy options. Choosing the “unlisted” option provides unlimited access to class members through a private link for the video. In other words, anyone can watch the video without the need for a special invitation or permission as long as the correct link is provided. The video is not listed in search results, effectively hiding it from the regular YouTube public. Explaining this to our students proved sufficient to allay their concerns.

The process of uploading videos to YouTube is relatively simple, and while videos are uploading the title and privacy settings of each video can be edited. Manually entering student names into recorded video files was initially confusing, so to

overcome this we asked students to write their names and student numbers in large letters on the whiteboard behind them, so they were visible in the recording.

Finally, we wanted to provide a simple interface for students to view, peer assess, and discuss the uploaded oral presenta-

tions. Through an optional Moodle feature we could embed the YouTube videos into a Moodle forum, which allowed discussion of each video. This allowed students and teachers to, with minimal Moodle know-how, view all the uploaded presentations and comment on them. As online digital storage and recording

**Table 1. Five Types of Assessment Employed in the 2011 SGU Oral Presentation Course**

Type	Procedure	Tools	Evaluation
In-class teacher assessment	Teacher watches and records performance, marks checkboxes for each criterion, writes comments, tabulates scores, and may give oral feedback on good or weak elements of the speech.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complex paper rubric sheet</li> <li>• Digital camera</li> </ul>	Physical presence and performance with a large class watching was an important experiential skill for students to master. However, it was time-consuming, especially when the teacher provided oral comments.
In-class peer assessment	Students watch 15-20 speech performances, marking 4-5 key points of information or evaluation on a paper sheet (e.g., good posture, clear voice, etc.). Alternatively, students do not evaluate, but submit a relevant question to the speaker on a small sheet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simplified paper rubric sheet</li> <li>• Paper question sheet</li> </ul>	Students focused and engaged in writing and rating. Nearly impossible to tabulate all the paper results for each presenting student. Online feedback module able to tabulate, but could not be done synchronously.
Out-of-class teacher assessment	Teacher uploads recorded videos of speeches into YouTube, adjusts privacy setting, pastes links into Moodle forums, and inputs total scores into a Moodle assignment task. Grades are automatically displayed on front page and in the Moodle gradebook.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YouTube video site</li> <li>• Moodle forum, assignment</li> <li>• Front page block for displaying grades</li> </ul>	Teacher can review and revise previous scores. More precise assessment (e.g., teacher can count number of gestures). Students can view past grades and new grades within one week after their presentation.
Out-of-class peer assessment	Students watch 2-3 videos of speeches assigned to them, then rate performance and write comments in a Moodle forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YouTube video</li> <li>• Moodle forum</li> </ul>	Students can view videos multiple times without the pressure of in-class time limits. More precise assessment. Currently, no way to tabulate or integrate peer marks into overall grade.
Out-of-class self assessment	Students watch their presentations and self-evaluate using the same rubric as the teacher. Ratings and comments are added to the form text in the forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YouTube video</li> <li>• Moodle forum</li> </ul>	Students can view videos multiple times without the pressure of in-class time limits. More precise assessment. Currently, no way to tabulate or integrate self-assessment marks into overall grade.

options continue to be developed, a way of directly recording into a YouTube site, for example, from an iPad, is now possible, which could further reduce the steps required to get videos from a physical class into a virtual space for online review.

## Presentation Assessment

Having reduced technical matters to a sustainable minimum, such that videos could be taken from camera to LMS and viewed by teachers and students without unreasonable effort, we were now open to a wider variety of ways to review student presentations, particularly out-of-class student peer- and self-assessment. Following Fallows & Chandramohan's (2001) recommendation to employ multiple approaches to assessment (self, peer, and tutor-based), we used five types of assessment in spring 2011 (see Table 1). Teacher and peer assessment were conducted synchronously during class as students gave their presentations. Teacher, peer, and self assessment were conducted asynchronously outside classroom time through the Moodle forums. Each method was repeated four times during the semester, one cycle for each of the four presentations. At the end of the semester, we recorded our experiences and opinions on each of the assessment types we used. Table 1 summarizes these five assessment types and how we evaluated each.

There is still considerable room for revising and improving the implementation of these assessment methods. Nevertheless, we conclude it is feasible to include students in the presentation assessment process both in and out of class. A wide variety of assessment methods, rather than the conventional teacher-only marking method, contributes to greater specificity in marking, and the visual posting of results on the website makes the evaluation process more transparent to the students. Rather than simply receiving a mark from the teacher after a presentation is finished, students can experience the evaluation process for themselves.

## Student Opinions on Course Assessment Methods

Finally, we asked the students their impressions of these assessment methods, which require more time and effort on their part. We solicited student opinions through a short, anonymous online survey, the abridged results of which are presented in Table 2 (authors' translation from Japanese in brackets). We used

Table 2. Short Questionnaire Results from the SGU Oral Presentation Course, Spring 2011

1. Is the level of this class appropriate for you?	簡単すぎる Too easy	簡単 Easy	丁度良い Just right	ちょっと難しい A little hard	難しすぎる Too hard
このクラスはあなたのレベルに合っていると思いますか。					
Total responses (N=53)	0	4	31	16	2
2. What did you like most about this class?(このクラスで一番良かったと思うことは何ですか?)					
スピーチやプレゼンテーションを通して、最初は抵抗があったが、徐々に発表することに抵抗を感じることがなくなったこと。また、自分自身の発音のスキルが少しずつあがったこと。[At first, I was averse to giving presentations, but I liked the fact that I gradually I lost that sense of resistance. Also, I liked that my confidence to present gradually went up.]					
Presentation1から、自分の成長がわかりました。練習したら話せるようになったり、スムーズに進行できるんだなと思いました。[From Presentation 1, I knew I was getting better. I thought hey, if I practice, I can speak and move forward.]					
3. Did you think the "Watch Again" activities were useful?	とても役立つ Very useful	役立つ Useful	どちらでもない I don't know	役立たない Not useful	全然役立たない Not useful at all.
「Watch again」というビデオ評価のアクティビティーはどう思いましたか?					
Total responses (N=53)	21	21	11	0	0
4. Any comments about "Watch Again"? その他に何かありましたら記入してください。					
I think "Watch Again" is good system.					
自分でも復習できるので、よかったと思う。[I can practice even by myself, so I think it's good.]					

the term “Watch Again” to refer to our online self- and peer-assessment activity.

Our students provided a number of written comments, a fuller representation of which cannot be accommodated here. There were considerably fewer comments for question 4 than for question 2, possibly because question 4 was so open-ended. A more specific question in a future questionnaire might solicit a better idea of what students feel they are getting out of this activity. Student responses tentatively suggest they viewed the assessment process positively, and although the workload was considerable, felt it was not overwhelming. While the responses are encouraging, they should not be generalized too widely without first being supported by additional research.

## Conclusions

Through selective use of evolving video recording and LMS technologies, student self- and peer assessment in larger oral presentation classes was feasibly incorporated into the presentation assessment process. Based on teacher and student evaluations of the process, we believe the method described here is sustainable and potentially applicable in other contexts. Further, the five types of assessment we used appeared valuable to students both as a learning experience and as a transparent lens into how their performances were evaluated. Students were able to review their speeches, make a limited number of ratings, and view their speech grades online at any time. We found that, with class sizes of between 15 and 30 students, the video assessment system was practical and sustainable across the assessment of four different speeches over a course of 16 weeks with only one class per week.

Certainly the processes we describe here should be further streamlined before they are implemented in classrooms outside of SGU. For example, more research is needed to determine how many students completed peer and self assessments, and what degree of effort they put into those assessments. Also, technological improvements that would enable uploading of recordings directly into an LMS would eliminate the uploading / file naming / pasting process currently employed. Further, if rubric score sheets can be converted from free-form text into database forms, data from presentation criteria evaluations could be processed digitally, and more specific and composite evaluations could be performed.

For a future cycle of action research, we have developed a video assessment module for Moodle that is currently being tested in the SGU oral presentation class for spring 2012. The module allows for drag-and-drop bulk-upload of videos directly to the Moodle site. Uploaded files can be easily associated with student names through a drop-down menu of students registered in the site. Once each video is associated with a student name, the videos are automatically distributed to a viewable window for each student. The video window is accompanied by an online, multi-scale rubric that can be easily completed by both teachers and students. Provided sufficient server space is available, this module would eliminate the need for YouTube completely as well as significantly streamline the file naming and rubric completion processes. Finally, mobile and tablet-based tools also show potential in the next iteration of this action research initiative.

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## Bio Data

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## Appendix A. SGU Oral Presentation Course Syllabus, Spring 2011

(based on *Speaking of speech*, 2nd ed., Harrington & LeBeau, 2008)

Week 1 (第1回、4月11日) Three messages: Physical, Story, Visual (+Quiz 1)

Week 2 (第2回、4月18日) Posture, eye contact, gestures PART I (+Quiz 2)

Week 3 (第3回、4月25日) PRESENTATION 1

Week 4 (第4回、5月2日) Posture, eye contact, gestures PART II (+Quiz 3)

Week 5 (第5回、5月9日) Voice change: Stress, Stretch, Pause (+Quiz 4)

Week 6 (第6回、5月16日) PRESENTATION 2

Week 7 (第7回、5月23日) Making visuals (PowerPoint) (+Quiz 5)

Week 8 (第8回、5月30日) Explaining visuals (+Quiz 6)

Week 9 (第9回、6月6日) Making an introduction (+Quiz 7)

Week 10 (第10回、6月13日) PRESENTATION 3

Week 11 (第11回、6月20日) Using examples and numbers (+Quiz 8)

Week 12 (第12回、6月27日) Transitions (移行句) sequencers (順序語) (+Quiz 9)

Week 13 (第13回、7月4日) Making a conclusion (+Quiz 10)

Week 14 (第14回、7月11日) PRESENTATION 4 ※

※ 7/11 Special Speech Event with Korean, Chinese, and British students visiting SGU

Week 15 (第15回、7月25日) Presentations Evaluation

Week 16 (前期試験、8月1日) Final Exam

## Appendix B. SGU Oral Presentation Course Assessment Rubric (Presentation 3), Spring 2011

Presentation 3 Teacher Checksheet		Student Number: _____	
Presentation Title: _____		Name: _____	
Check Point		Score	Comments
1	<b>Voice Change &amp; Volume</b>	/ 20	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 pts. Many voice changes, 150% volume.		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 pts. Some voice changes, 100% volume.		
2	<b>Visuals: Posture &amp; Gestures</b>	/ 20	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 pts. Looks often, expressive face.		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 pts. Sometimes looks.		
3	<b>Visuals: Design</b>	/ 20	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 pts. Excellent design. All five types.		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 pts. Good design. Missing graphs/charts.		
4	<b>Visuals: Explanation</b>	/ 20	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 pts. Introduced slides, gave evidence.		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 pts. Some numbers and examples.		
5	<b>Time &amp; Content</b>	/ 20	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 pts. Over 3 min, very interesting content		
	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 pts. Over 2:30 min, good content.		
Comments:		Total Score:	
		_/ 100	