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Do Students Prefer Oral Surgery to Oral Presentations?

Greta Defeyter & Sarah Malcolm

Introduction

It is generally acknowledged that being able to present material in an oral format is an important transferable skill for students to develop. A recent survey of third year psychology students found that while the majority of students seemed aware of the criteria used for assessing oral presentations many (88%) stated that they did not feel confident in giving oral presentations. Indeed some students said they would rather undergo oral surgery than give an oral presentation.

Organisation

Preparation Phase

Students formed small groups and choose an academic paper relating to their current developmental psychology course, to present at a later date.

Assessment criteria and learning outcomes discussed.

Students actively participated in a variety of techniques used by performing artists to overcome stage fright and help voice projection.

Delivery Phase

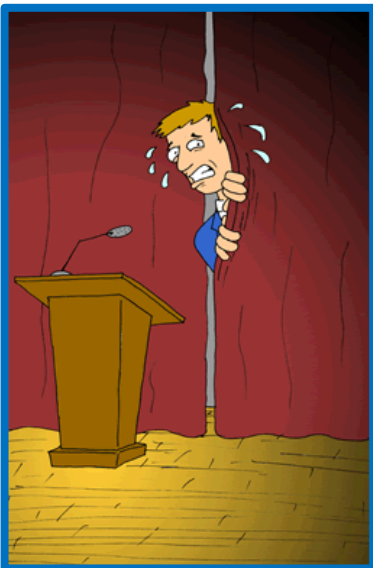
Each group presented their chosen academic paper to their peers.

Each presentation was digitally recorded for subsequent evaluation and reflection.

Evaluation and Reflection Phase

Students viewed their own group's presentation and provided group members with formative feedback.

Each individual student wrote a brief reflective commentary on their own performance.



Evaluation of Programme

Using a 5-point agreement scale, we compared student's ratings at the beginning of the programme to the end of the programme

	Beginning	End	Test
Confidence	2.47	4.73	$t(28) = 7.68, p < 0.001$
Peer Assessment	2.97	3.24	$t(28) = 1.44, p > 0.05$
Self Reflection	2.38	3.24	$t(28) = 8.83, p < 0.001$

Student Comments

"We were able to get into our own groups which help our confidence when we presented the paper. Choosing our own topics ensured that we were interested in that topic."

"The drama session was excellent. It provided us with useful techniques and was fun."

"I learnt a lot from watching myself on DVD. You can actually see what you are doing."

Overall Satisfaction with the programme

97% students rated the programme as excellent.