Moving assessed student presentations online: how a change in practice brought "...a breath of fresh air" to the student experience

Megan Juss, Val Chamberlain, David Callaghan
Edge Hill University
"While in school, many students create digital materials without the benefit of instruction from faculty, information technologists, or librarians, but such products are typically recreational in nature and do not have the hallmarks of academic work. When students employ multimedia in their assignments, for example, they are often criticized for being facile in their work or for not developing a narrative or argument in an academically rigorous manner."

A little background

Primary Teacher Training Programme

Subject Specialist Module
Language and Communication Literacy

80 students

3 Part Assessment
- Presentation to Peers
- Annotated Bibliography
- Discussion
Exploring the ‘problem’

**hybrid presentation approach**
online: slides with script notes and face-to-face: brief verbal summary

**new genre**
limited prior experience of online presentations

**limited delivery, review & discussion time**
only 15 mins in class

**no ‘real’ audience**
electronic copy shared only with tutor hard copy of slides with script notes and brief verbal summary shared with two peers

**superficial dialogue**
brief and ineffectual feedback and Q&A session tutor unable to use presenter-audience interactions to inform assessment as entire cohort cannot be observed
Our Aims:

- engender intrinsic motivation
- involve active engagement
- provide a context for the authentic application of digital literacy skills
- retain academic rigour
What we did

- **evaluation**
  - the assessment format is a bit confusing

- **enhancement**
  - there has to be a better way  
  - I’m going to ask for help

- **discussion**
  - what do you want to do?  
  - what are the options?

- **planning**
  - we will support the effective use of familiar technology  
  - we will embed support throughout the module  
  - primary pedagogy & genre theory will inform our design

- **action**
  - we scheduled the activities
  - we co-created the resources
  - we set up the VLE

- **quality assurance**
  - we reviewed & tested the resources

- **implementation**
  - the module was delivered
  - queries were responded to
  - submissions were assessed
  - how did it go?

- **how will we ensure the form is not an obstacle?**
  - how will we ensure the technology is not an obstacle?
Discussing potential solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology Options</th>
<th>Synchronous</th>
<th>Asynchronous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>A presentation that is <strong>delivered by a presenter</strong> in real time (- with or without: video, audio, controlled navigation, text chat)</td>
<td>A presentation that is prepared and <strong>delivered without the presenter</strong> being present. (- with or without: video, audio, auto-animation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>A discussion that occurs in <strong>real time</strong> allowing the presenter and audience participants to interact with each other during or following the presentation.</td>
<td>A discussion that occurs <strong>over an extended period of time</strong> allowing the presenter and audience participants to interact with each other following the presentation.</td>
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</tbody>
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- Web cast
- Web meeting
- Virtual world
- IM chat
- Smartphone app

- Slidesharing / File sharing
- Discussion forum
We chose…
not to introduce new technologies
but instead
to explore how to
use existing, *familiar* technologies
more effectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we used</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creating</strong></td>
<td>Powerpoint</td>
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<tr>
<td>to produce standalone presentation slides containing text &amp; image in order to be inclusive - video, audio, screencasts, etc, could be acceptable but not a requirement</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Delivering</strong></td>
<td>BB – Assignment Dropbox</td>
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<tr>
<td>to submit their presentations online for peer review and assessment to ensure equity – the publish option could be used by the tutor to control the timing of the presentations availability</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discussing</strong></td>
<td>BB – Discussion Board</td>
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<td>to exchange feedback and Q&amp;A to ensure participation - the boards were chosen (rather than chat) to give everyone a chance to contribute over an extended period, as a specific period for the activity was not timetabled</td>
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Aligning our pedagogy & planning to embed assessment support into the module

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Pedagogy</th>
<th>Our Strategies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>familiarise</strong></td>
<td>students engage with the tutor’s online presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>focus</strong></td>
<td>students discuss the features of an online presentation, tutor guides the discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>define</strong></td>
<td>students interpret &amp; prioritise the assessment criteria using a rubric designed specifically for online presentations, tutor guides the discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>scaffold</strong></td>
<td>students engage with written guidance on creating an online presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>increased independence</strong></td>
<td>students submit presentations and engage in discussion, tutor provides support as required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introduction to the module</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Class Briefings 97%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2 |
| introduction to the assignment |
| Handbook Outline 88% |

| 3 |
| language variation & diversity online presentation |
| Practise Q&A 96% |

| 4 |
| in-class features analysis tutor guide |
| In-class Identification 96% |

| 5 |
| reading an online text |
| Assignment Samples 85% |

| 6 |
| perspectives on literacy |
| Suggestions 90% |

| 7 |
| assignment samples & topic suggestions topic chart |
| Group Tutorial 100% |

| 8 |
| assignment content & focus tutorials |
| |

| 9 |
| Define assessment criteria interpretation & submission demo assessment rubric |
| Specific Criteria 96% |

| 10 |
| Scaffold presentation tips & submission guidance written guides |
| Submission Model 92% |

| 11 |
| Independence online assignment submission and Q & A |
| Response to Submission Difficulties 99% |

| 12 |
| evaluation |
| Response to emails 100% |
The **collaboration** between academic and learning technologist ensured subject knowledge, technical and presentational design expertise **informed the production** of an online presentation about ‘language variation and diversity’.
Some sample slides from the exemplar presentation

**Language Variation and Diversity: Accent, Dialect and Standard English**

**Analysing the language sample ...**

Tom’s non-standard English is highlighted and the standard English equivalent is shown followed by the grammatical term for that aspect of language.

Miss I’ve **fell**. He’s just tripped me and **took** the ball off me. It’s not fair I didn’t do **nothing**, **we** was just playing and he **could of** had **them ones** over there instead.

**How can subject knowledge help ...**

Developing your subject knowledge about language variation and diversity will help you make informed judgements about:

- ways of responding to children and developing their language and communication;
- ways of teaching the Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Programmes of Study for English

- **Review the National Curriculum Programmes of Study**
- and
- **Develop your understanding of the terms ‘Dialect’, ‘Accent’, ‘Standard English’ and ‘Received Pronunciation’**

**How are language and identity linked ...**

we have to remember that language is an integral part of being human, not an optional extra like playing the flute. So an attack on a person’s language becomes an attack on the person himself... Language is so closely bound up with home and family, with community and friends that its emotional roots are strong and deep

Perera (1987:12)

No child should be expected to cast off the language and culture of the home as he [sic] crosses the school threshold, not to live and act as though school and home represent two separate and different cultures which have to be kept firmly apart.

"While in school, many students create digital materials without the **benefit of instruction** from faculty, information technologists, or librarians, but such products are typically recreational in nature and do not have the **hallmarks of academic work**. When students employ multimedia in their assignments, for example, they are often criticized for being facile in their work or for not developing a narrative or argument in an **academically rigorous manner**."

*Lippincott, J,K. (2007)*
1. Thorough, explicit knowledge & understanding of the topic

2. Can present a coherent critical argument demonstrating the ability to synthesise concepts, theories and practice in a critical argument

3. Organisational rationale complements and enhances the clarity of the argument and there is evidence of independent thought

4. Effective use of online presentation techniques to communicate research
a range of theories are applied to the sample

the argument is expressed clearly and concisely

an effective layout complements the analysis

a questioning and instructional tone is used to engage the reader
**Audience Question:**

"Do you believe that Isobel's teacher's approach could cause confrontation between pupils when offering one another guidance/support? How could this be tackled?"

**Presenter Response:**

"If this approach was used within a different class and a child became upset because their partner suggested lots of improvements for their work, this would be a different matter...the children would need a class discussion with the teacher about how to support each other. For example - 'We might think that our partners work needs lots of improvement, but you have to remember it is their writing and they might have spent a lot of time over it. So maybe you could suggest 2 good things about the work and 2 improvements'. By scaffolding the way children go about peer work, the teacher can ensure that the children use the experience to their advantage and it does not dishearten them."
Peer Feedback:

"There has been a great use of theory throughout this presentation and it was very informative, it has provided a range of writing strategies that I could use."
1. The sample is examined comprehensively

2. Relevant theory is used to support the argument

3. Annotated imagery is used to clearly and effectively illustrate the argument

4. A questioning and conversational register is used to engage the reader
Peer Feedback:

I would like to compliment you on producing such a **visual and interactive** PowerPoint. I found your sample book very interesting as I have not come across this before. We have covered the same topic and yet you have brought new ideas and considerations to the idea of picture books ... your analysis of it as a quality picture book has made me aware of this and I would definitely consider using this myself with children.
a range of theories are discussed

2 synthesis of concepts, theory and practice is clear

3 the presentation structure and format frames the argument

4 meaningful web and audio links are used to further inform and engage the reader
Teaching Writing Skills (2)

It is important that children have an understanding of how writers write and Horner and Riff (2007) suggest that by providing opportunities for children to look at authors’ websites they will begin to develop an awareness of purpose and audience when writing fiction.

Listen to the author Julia Donaldson, using the link below. How does she describe her writing process for her book ‘The Gruffalo’?


[www.julialonaldson.co.uk](http://www.julialonaldson.co.uk)

Explore Julia Donaldson’s website. Can you find any other authors websites that would be suitable for children to explore in school to develop their awareness of the writer’s role?

How do the learning theories link to the writing process?

It is the role of the teacher to scaffold the children through the different stages of writing as suggested by Horner and Riff (2007: 92) ‘to plan, draft, edit and publish work’. This links to Vygotsky’s (1978) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development as the teacher provides a guidance for children to follow in the structure of writing, with the intention that on future occasions the child will be able to do this independently.

When children are writing and re-visiting their work through re-drafting they are addressing Bruner’s (1973) idea of a spiral curriculum which argues that true learning occurs when children use what they already know to develop and refine their ideas further.

How do teachers incorporate creativity and the development of skills in the writing process?

Listen to the interview, below, with an experienced primary teacher who talks about how he addresses both creativity and writing skills in his teaching in the primary classroom.

Whilst listening, note down any ideas he suggests that you find interesting and would use/ would not use in your own teaching?

Can you label the diagram of the book below as to the writing approach that the interviewee suggests?

Peer Feedback:

"You have looked at opposing perspectives in order to create a debate involving creativity and writing skills. You effectively linked learning theories to the information you presented and implications for teaching.

The format was well structured and it was very accessible to read. I liked the different ways in which you presented the information e.g. using arrows to read in a circle, simple text down the page."
Some student feedback

Like

Different from an assignment
Enjoy
Creativity
Choice
Motivation
Pictures
PPT
Time between Q & A
Wasn't an Assignment
Access to others presentations
Discussion q and a
Guidance
Own pace
Lesson content
Focus My Writing

Dislike

Procedures
Level of Detail
Expected
Schedule
Choice
Technical difficulty
Having to rely on Peers (time delay)
Using the Discussion Board
Uploading
Not enough (useful) examples
Grades

% Grade Comparison 09-10 / 08-09

1 12.6 15.7 12.6
2 33.8 39.4 33.8 31.5
2ii 33.8
3 12.6 10.5
Returning to our aims

- engender intrinsic motivation
  relevant, new, creative and challenging format
- involve active engagement
  professional and insightful presenter-audience dialogue
- provide a context for the authentic application of digital literacy skills
  alignment with module content – ‘new literacies’
- retain academic rigour
  analysis, synthesis, critical thinking and reflection clearly demonstrated
What next? What we intend to consider

**Digital Literacy**

- **Student Exemplars**
  Provide and discuss examples of student presentations and critical dialogue from this years cohort

- **Additional Modelling**
  Produce an online presentation to support the text-based tips and tricks support handout

**Technology**

- **Multimedia Exemplars**
  Demonstrate additional technical capabilities – eg. the introduction of audio / video

- **Technical Guides**
  Support the students in extending their technical skills

**Submission**

- **Submission Practice**
  Integrate an online submission task midway into the module

**Assessment & Feedback**

- **Grading exemplification**
  Redesign the wording and criteria included in the assessment grid

- **Online feedback**
  Explore the Blackboard grade tool as a possibility for providing online feedback
Recommendations (if you move assessed student presentations online)

- **Collaboration**
  - Provide a **Meaningful Context**
  - Create and use a **Model Text**
  - Ensure students present to a **Real Audience**
  - Provide opportunities for **Extended Dialogue**
  - Embed opportunities for **Assessment Practice**
  - Make the most of available and **Familiar Technology**
Questions
References


*Student presentation slides and discussion contributions are used with kind permission.*
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Journal/Publisher</th>
<th>Pages/Publication Date</th>
<th>URL</th>
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</thead>
</table>


The Case Study presented here illustrates work undertaken by Megan Juss, Val Chamberlain and David Callaghan in 2009/10, Edge Hill University.

*Please attribute* Juss, M., Chamberlain, V. and Callaghan, D. *when referring to this case study.*