Article

Tailoring Presentation Skills to Meet Student Needs

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＜Abstract＞

In this paper, I describe a presentation skills course within our Department of English that focuses on individual instruction. Due to the large number of students in the class, in a conventional classroom it would be difficult to teach, monitor, and assess all the students fairly. However, by creating an online course within which the students study at their own pace, the teacher is able to spend more time with individual students or small groups. Being a self-paced course, each student is an independent learner, so there is more emphasis on making students responsible for their own learning. Assessment is ongoing and transparent, so students can view their progress at any point. Using this format, we have found that students become much more confident and competent in giving presentations.

Keywords: presentation skills, independent learning, self-paced

1. Preface

As an English department within a university, we, as teachers, are tasked with many roles to help our students gain competency in the target language. Some roles are related to the structure of the language through courses that focus on such areas as grammar, pronunciation, intensive reading, test performance, and career-related development. Others are more focused on the communicative nature of the language, and we use a wide variety of activities to activate our students' knowledge and performance skills with the goal of competency in speaking and listening. Within this, one of the most widely used tools is student-created presentations.

In this paper, I will explain the structure of our "English Presentation" course, and how it has been organized to provide individualized instruction to our students. This 2nd-year course focuses on developing students' presentation skills, right from choosing topics through to final presentations. Being self-paced, students can work at a speed that suits them, and because much of the learning is independent, this frees the teacher up to work with students on a one-to-one or small group basis, enabling the students to gain mastery in skills that would otherwise have eluded them in such a large class.

However, is it possible to "learn" how to present? Yes, there are definite skills and techniques that can be learned, but a large part of being a strong presenter comes from within the person—in this case, the student. They need motivation, willpower, confidence, and resilience to present well, and, to succeed in this course, it is really up to the individual and not the teacher. Dörnyei (2001) recognized an element of this when he wrote, "Motivation is one of the main determinants of second/foreign language

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learning achievement." Hence much of this course is built upon the principles of student-centered learning and learner autonomy, which, as Little (1990) says, "is essentially a matter of the learner's psychological relation to the process and content of learning." When the student is fully engaged in the content and aims of the learning situation, they will make a decision to learn. The teacher's role then changes from a giver of knowledge to a facilitator for learning, one element of which is to tailor the class programme to meet individual student's needs.

2. What is a presentation?

A presentation is a way of communicating ideas or concepts to a group of people. In a learning context, presentations can be small and informal, such as when doing an ad lib activity with a group of fellow students that requires sharing of content that has been researched or developed. At the other extreme, presentations can be formal—well-prepared and rehearsed before being performed in an auditorium to a large audience.

Stylistically there are many ways to give presentations. The most popular format these days is to use PowerPoint, though, as Reynolds (2011) points out, "Audiences are so used to death-by-PowerPoint that they've seemingly learned to see it as normal, if not ideal." Thankfully, even within that format of media + device + projector presentations, there are many alternatives, such as *Keynote, Google Slides*, or *Prezi*, which I will explain in greater detail later in this paper.

3. Why tailor to student needs?

So, why do we need to tailor presentation skills to student needs? Within every class we teach, there are wide ranges of student abilities and learner motivation levels. With that in

mind, we need to make sure that every student has access to the resources and support they require to make the most of their time in that course.

In addition, in recent years, there has been a move towards "flipping" the classroom. Simply put, this means that instead of the teacher spending valuable class time on instruction, students use their independent study time for viewing, reading, and mastering the instructional material which they will use in the following classes. Class time itself is used on practical activities, utilizing what the students have learned during their independent study.

From a student point of view, this means they have much more access to teacher help and advice. For the teacher also, this enables them to allocate their time more efficiently, and become much more in touch with each student's needs. In this presentation skills class, we have used this approach to create a course within which teachers and students can work together to address their needs. In essence, this means that instead of having one course that all students partake in, there are in fact multiple courses, each of which is individualised towards a particular student's level and ability.

4. Breaking the "create-then-present" cycle

One of our first activities in the course is to ascertain the students' current presentation skill levels, and we almost universally find the same pattern repeating. When tasked with preparing a presentation in any class, students will spend the minimum possible time on researching and collating content, paying scant attention to the assignment brief. What they will spend much of their prep time on is creating the media—usually a PowerPoint presentation. They will rigorously search for images and clipart with which to decorate their slides, and then add seemingly random items of text, all carefully packaged with animations and transitions. From there they go

straight to presentation, often with minimal (if any) practice. This results in presentations that stutter along with uncomfortable silences and total reliance on the impact of their "wonderful" PowerPoint slides. To make matters worse, they will often just read the slides—usually badly, and which the audience can do themselves anyway—so they lose contact with the people they are addressing. As they are reading text rather than speaking naturally, their voices become a monotone and the audience switches off. On top of that, even their meticulously prepared slides contain many faults, some of which are listed next.

4. 1. Typical faults in student-created PowerPoint slides

Despite their reliance on media for their presentations, even students' PowerPoint slides almost always have flaws. The most common problems are:

- *Too much text*: Instead of pulling out key words, phrases, or concepts, they use full sentences—even paragraphs. This is not only difficult to read, but limits what the speaker can say as they are following a script. We recommend students follow the "*six-by-six*" rule—a maximum of six lines of text, and each line having no more than six words.

- *Text is too small, inappropriate fonts*: Tied in with the first point are slides with text that is too small, making it difficult to read. Students will often use fonts that are also difficult to read, such as serif or decorative fonts. We advocate the use of strong sans-serif fonts.

- *Poor choice of images*: Images can be the most powerful way to deliver a message, but they need to be the right ones. As well as being appropriate to the message, they need to be high quality. When placing photos, they need to maintain their original proportions with no stretching or squeezing. And, of course, they must be copyright free, either by using the student's own photos or by downloading from Creative Commons sites such as Pixabay <pixabay.com>. Even then, attribution needs to be given. They should never use images that have been watermarked from commercial sites.

- *Over use of animations*: A few well-chosen animations can break up the tedium of a long presentation, or be used to reveal, move, or hide content. However, many of the animations in PowerPoint are simply frivolous, and their use distracts from the message. Sadly, students tend to love them. We also find problems with transitions, which can be a good way to break up slides or to mark divisions between content areas. Here too, however, their overuse or inappropriate use can distract from the real intent of the presentation.

- *Bad use of colour*: What looks attractive, cute, or "cool" on the computer monitor will probably wash out and look terrible once it has gone through a projector and onto the screen. Colours that are garish or similar on the colour spectrum need to be avoided. There needs to be a strong contrast that takes into account the conditions in the presentation room, and, as a rule of thumb, dark-coloured text on a very light coloured background often works the best.

- *Lack of consistency*: Whether it is colours, templates, fonts, or animations, students tend to love variety. Generally speaking, however, in a presentation, too much variety can be very distracting, and consistency will carry the message much better.

- *Negligible proofing of content*: On top of all the other problems students face, they also lack the skills for effectively proofing and checking their work. This often results in slides containing glaring spelling, grammatical, or factual errors. Even if these errors don't interfere with

the presentation message, they do distract from the overall performance, especially if speaking to a capable audience.

Any one of these issues, in and of itself, would not be too much of a problem when giving a presentation to one's peers. However, when combined with other issues, they do reduce the effectiveness of a presentation and need to be addressed at an early stage in the preparation process.

4. 2. A better way

One of the main instructional goals of the course has been to break this *"create-then-present"* cycle. To do that, we first recommend the following preparation process for any presentation:

- *Choosing a topic*: Unless clearly defined by the teacher, this is often an area the students have the biggest problem with. Choose a topic that's too wide and it is difficult to define your message or intent. Choose one that's too focused or rigid and you risk not having enough content or alienating the audience who may have little interest in that topic.
- *Finding appropriate content*: Whether it is researching the Internet, library, or other resources for relevant information, or conducting surveys to collect your own data, getting the content that fulfills your presentation aims is an important—and often neglected—part of the process.
- *Choosing presentation media*: Although most people think of Microsoft's PowerPoint when doing a presentation, these days with the advent of smartphones and apps, not to mention more responsive web services, there are many other choices available, including:
  - *Apple Keynote*: In the same genre as PowerPoint, but with superior graphic and typographic capabilities. Works well on iPad and iPhone devices.
  - *Google Slides*: A free service that is part of Google's online Drive suite, it offers watered down functionality that is made up for by its portability (can be accessed from any Internet-capable device), safety (no chance of losing a file), and collaborative tools (files can be shared and worked on as a team).
  - *Prezi*: Instead of a linear succession of slides, Prezi offers a 3-dimensional workspace which a presenter can "fly" through on either a predetermined path or in an ad lib manner, depending on the needs of the presentation
  - *Popplet*: This is not so much a presentation platform as a mind-mapping application, but it can be used as a freeform presentation tool in similar ways to Prezi.
  - *Haiku Deck*: This presentation app helps users focus on the content more as it does all the image selection for them. Once the text is inputted, Haiku Deck extracts keywords, then searches the Internet for copyright free images that can be safely used.
  - *Posters*: Instead of going digital, analogue posters are still a very viable option, and for many inexperienced presenters, they are often a less threatening way to begin.
- *Creating media*: This is not so much a step in the process as an ongoing activity that continues through the whole activity as the media is first created as a draft, then refined until it is ready.
- *Writing scripts*: Students can choose whether to write a full script or work from notes. While we accept a full script in the early stages of a course, we strongly encourage students to trust their speaking skills and knowledge of the material and just work from comprehensive notes for their presentations.

- *Editing material*: This is important! First the students review their material themselves, and then within their group. Finally, they bring it to the teacher for comment and advice. This editing process may be repeated many times until they reach a standard they are satisfied with.
- *Reviewing material*: After editing, this step allows for an objective view of their presentation so that comments and recommendations can be given. Again, the teacher can play a role in this, but we place a lot of emphasis on peer review. The most important people to pitch their material to are their peers, as it is they who must not only show an interest in the material but understand what is being said. As well as face-to-face reviews, we use video to assist with this.
- *Rehearsing*: Probably this is the most overlooked part of the process by students prior to this course, but it is one of the most important. Rehearsal allows for checking of the material, assessment of familiarity with the script and the media, and building of confidence prior to their final presentations.
- *Presenting*: After all that preparation, this is almost the final step, and it shows where all the prior work has led. Groups or students who have prepared well stand out, as do those who haven't, but in a negative way.
- *Post-mortem*: The final step in the process is for students to examine how well their presentation succeeded, both from their own observations and from peer or teacher feedback. From there they can set goals for their next presentation.

This entire process is not a series of sequential steps but an organic process, with many of the steps being repeated or revised prior to the final presentation. Now, I will explain how this process has been integrated into our presentation skills course.

5. Our presentation skills program

"English Presentation" is a compulsory course which is available to all second, third, and fourth year students, with the majority of students taking it in their second year. In any given year, there will be upwards of 40 students taking the course, and a class this size poses many logistical problems. Trying to teach, assist, supervise, and assess that many students for such a practical course would be a nightmare for any teacher. However, with the approach that I am going to introduce from here, to some degree we have been able to meet students' needs.

The aims of the course revolve around building presentation skills, with a focus on creating and using presentation media competently. Within this, we are aware that our students' future work needs dictate a certain level of business-related presentation ability. However, our view is that by adopting a more holistic approach, and giving students a wider range of skills, we can intrinsically increase their ability to present competently in any business setting.

5. 1. Course structure

For this course, we do not use a textbook. Instead, all class materials are hosted online using a Moodle installation. Moodle is a type of course management system within which we can upload resources, create forums and journals, and set up file upload facilities. Students are able to access this installation at any time of the day or night using personal computers, tablets, or smartphones. This allows students to work their way through the course material at their own pace. This self-paced aspect of the course means that attendance for many classes is not a specific requirement. Certain elements of the course, such as presentation times or teacher workshops <u>do</u> require attendance. However, for other times, whether the students are there or not is not such an issue. The degree to which they access the online material and submit assignments on time is carefully monitored by

both the teacher and by the students themselves in a self-monitoring mode.

There are other elements of the Moodle installation that also help with this program. Recent versions of Moodle have task completion capability built in. What this means is that students are unable to access or continue with the next section's material until they have completed prior activities. This makes it easy to manage what students have access to. If they did not complete an activity and get a passing grade for it, then the next section of work will not display on the student screen.

In addition to this, assessment is easily monitored. When a student uploads an assignment, it is a quick process for the teacher to grade the material. If the grade is above the minimum requirement for this activity, then that student can access the next section of study material. Students are also able to view their full grades for the course at any point in the program. This transparency is an important facet of the program as it places responsibility directly and openly on the students, increasing both their autonomy and independence.

5. 2. Course assignments

Throughout the course, there are regular assignments to be completed. These can be actual presentations, creating material with other software, research activities, speaking tests, or peer reviews. In addition to this, students are required to keep an online journal throughout the course, detailing what they have been working on, and what they would do to improve it. For all of these assignments, they receive a grade. As detailed before, this grade is available to them at all times on the website, so they know their progress at every stage of the course. Details of grading for each activity can be found in the "*Assessment guidelines*" section.

As well as all the ongoing activities, there are two major assignments they need to complete during the semester:

- *Zion Cup English Contest*: Every year in the Department of English we hold this English contest. For first-year students, they have a speech contest in which every student writes and performs a speech, with the top eight going through to the final contest. For second-year students and above, we hold a presentation contest. Students can work in groups of two or three students to create a presentation on that year's theme. This year, the theme is "*A Better World*." For second-year students, it is compulsory and they can prepare for it in this presentation skills class. A preliminary contest is held in class in December, and three groups are chosen to go through to the final contest in January. Older students do this as part of their Advanced English Discussion class or English Extension class. Their presentation is only 4 minutes long, so during that time they must capture the interest of the audience. It is a big challenge, but some of the groups do exceedingly well.

- *Final Presentation*: During the whole semester, students work towards their final presentation using the skills and techniques they have learned along the way. This is an open topic assignment, but (as explained above) we spend much time on choosing an appropriate topic that is neither too wide, nor too focused. Within limits, they are free to use whatever media they wish. They are expected to submit their ongoing progress for checking and review, and to rehearse fully before the presentation. In addition, they must work with their peer groups to give feedback to other students, as well as receive feedback on their own presentations. During the final two weeks of the course, each student will give their presentation and receive a grade based on content, media, and delivery.

5. 3. Course workflow

The course is divided into five modules, each focusing on a particular skill area. Each of the modules leads towards the final presentation, which is a chance for the students to show what they have learned. Although the modules are separate, there is a lot of overflow of content from one to the other because each area is intrinsically linked to all stages of the presentation process. Within each module there is a series of practical information tutorials and lectures, practice activities, assignments, and a journal for reflection.

5. 3. 1. Module 1: Getting started

This module provides a starting point for the course so students can learn what is expected of them. We begin with each student giving a presentation on a topic they prepared in the summer break. These presentations, which will be videoed, function as a "before" version to show what skills the students currently possess, plus how much they will (hopefully) have improved when compared to their final presentations later in the course. Following their presentations, I will give a full introduction to the course, explaining the whole process, showing what is expected of them, plus viewing a series of exemplars from previous years to show the standards we hope they will achieve.

5. 3. 2. Module 2: Keynote, topics, and design

This module begins with a workshop on Apple's presentation software, Keynote, explaining the features of it, and giving an overview of how to use it. From there, the students will create a Keynote presentation which they will give in the next module. There are also two self-study units; one on how to decide a topic, and another on effective design principles.

5. 3. 3. Module 3. Speaking out

At the beginning of this module, students will have a workshop on presentation styles and will be taught techniques for giving effective presentations. Then, they will use these techniques to give a presentation using the Keynote presentation they created in Module 2. They will finish with a lesson on how to plan and create their presentations for both Zion Cup and their Final Presentation.
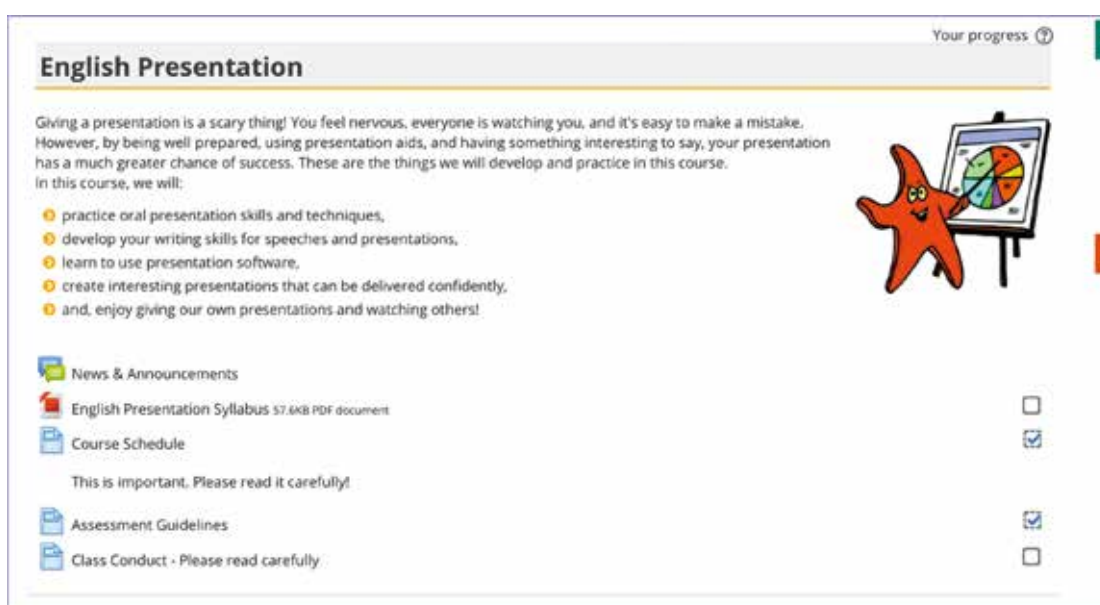

Figure 1. Course introduction on the Moodle website.

Module 1: Getting Started

📅 **Module 1 Dates**

- Class date: **9/26**
- Completion date: **10/3** (*All activities must be completed and uploaded by this date. Late submissions will lose points.*)
- Cut-off date: **10/10** (*No submissions will be accepted after this date without teacher approval. You will not be able to continue this course.*)

Your progress ⑦ ☐

Pre-Course Activity

During the summer vacation, please complete this activity:

Before you start this course, you will create a short PowerPoint presentation and upload it to "Upload: Presentation 1" [5 : 4/5]. This must be uploaded by **9/20**. On the first day of the course, you will make a presentation using this PowerPoint to a group of about 10 other students. We will video your presentation.

Guidelines

- PowerPoint must be 4 slides - the title slide (*write your topic and your name*) and 3 other slides.
- You can choose one of the five topics below.
- Your presentation time will be 3 minutes only. After 3 minutes, we will stop you.

Topics (choose ONE)

1. *My hometown's special point*
2. *My summer vacation's best (or worst) memory*
3. *A message to my future self*
4. *The importance of English*
5. *My amazing mother (or father)!*

📄 Upload: Presentation 1 ☐

☐

First Class

In our first class, we are going to be very busy! Here's what we will do:

1. **Presentations**. Look in "*Groups & Places*" below. That will tell you which group you are in and where you will be presenting. Go to that space and you will find your PowerPoints ready for you. Do your presentations quickly. You only have 3 minutes each.
2. **Orientation**: At 17:00, come back to Room 531. We will have an orientation session for this course. You will need to take notes during the orientation.
3. **After Class**: Write up your notes in "*Orientation Notes*" [3 : 2/3] below. Follow the directions.
4. **Workshop**: In the next few weeks, you'll be doing workshops, so choose your time in "*Workshop 1 Sign Up*"
5. **Zion Cup**: During the next week, think about what you would like to do for your Zion Cup presentation, and who you would like to do it with. We will discuss this in our next class.

📋 Groups & Places ☐

📝 Orientation Notes ☐

❓ Workshop 1 Sign Up ☐

📊 Module 1 Checklist ☐

Figure2. Module 1 guidelines on the Moodle site.

5. 3. 4. Module 4: Advanced techniques

This module covers presentation techniques that go beyond the basic skills, and uses a self-study format. The first unit covers how to collect, collate, and present data, using techniques such as carrying out surveys, then using charts and graphs to present the data. The second unit introduces Prezi <prezi.com>, an online service that allows students to create multi-dimensional presentations that can either be shown in a preprogrammed format, or used freeform, moving about the material in a flexible manner.

5. 3. 5. Module 5. Preparing ourselves

This module is still under development but will cover techniques for reviewing, assessing and editing their work, as well as ways to rehearse effectively. There will be peer review and peer advisor components as well.

Figure3. Module 2 guidelines on the Moodle site.

5. 3. 6. *Zion Cup English Cup Presentation and Final Presentation*

The final section of the course covers the whole process for preparing for and taking part in these two presentations.

5. 4. *Assessment guidelines*

As stated before, assessment is both ongoing and transparent. At all stages, students are able to challenge or question their assessments, and within certain boundaries, they can resubmit improved material or performances for reassessment. The goal of the course is not to penalize them, but to help them grow and the grades are a motivational instrument towards that. Here is an overview of how assessment is carried out

Module 3: Speaking Out!

Restricted Not available unless:
- The activity **Keynote Workshop Summary** is complete and passed
- The activity **My Keynote** is complete and passed
- The activity **Presentation Design Summary** is complete and passed

📅 **Module 3 Dates**

⊙ Class dates: **10/17, 10/24, 10/31**
⊙ Completion date: **11/7** *(All activities must be completed and uploaded by this date. Late submissions will lose points.)*
⊙ Cut-off date: **11/14** *(No submissions will be accepted after this date without teacher approval. You will not be able to continue this course.)*

Your progress ⑦
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📻 **Using your voice**

During these three classes, you'll learn how to present with **Keynote**, and start writing the outlines and scripts for your **Zion Cup** and **Final Presentations**.

Before Class

- Be sure to finish **writing** and practice **reading** your script for your Keynote presentation.

"Giving a Presentation" Workshop

In the next 2 weeks, every student will perform their Keynote presentation in front of a group. To prepare for that:

- Listen carefully to Malcolm's talk on giving a presentation. Take careful notes.
- Choose what time you want to do your presentation in "*Keynote Presentation Sign Up.*"
- Write up a summary of your notes in "*Giving a Presentation Summary*" [3 : 2/3]

❓ Keynote Presentation Sign Up ☐

📝 Giving a Presentation Summary ☐
☐

📻 **Presenting with Keynote**

Presenting to a group can be a scary thing. If you **practice** carefully beforehand, you'll be much more confident!

Here's how to do your **Keynote** presentation:

- Practice carefully before class. You'll only get 3 minutes for your presentation, so use it well.
- After your presentation, listen to Malcolm's comments carefully and write notes.
- Write up a summary of your notes in "*My Keynote Report*" [8 : 5/8 for presentation and report]

📝 My Keynote Report ☐
☐

📻 **Self-Study: Making a Plan**

The first step in making a presentation is to make a **plan**. In this self-study section, you'll prepare for your final presentations.

Before you even begin writing a script or building a PowerPoint presentation, you need to make a plan. In this section, you'll learn how to plan your presentations effectively. Follow these steps:

1. Watch Malcolm's "*Planning a Presentation Mini-Lesson.*"
2. Brainstorm ideas using a whiteboard, paper, or the *SimpleMind* app on the iPads.
3. Download the planning template file from "*Download: Planning Template.*"
4. Create 2 plans:
   - **Zion Cup Presentation plan** - work with your partner on this. One partner needs to upload this plan to "*Upload: Zion Cup Presentation Plan*" below.
   - **Final Presentation plan** - upload this plan to "*Upload: Final Presentation Plan*" below.

Once you have finished this self-study section, go onto the next section about creating your presentation file.

Figure 4. Module 3 guidelines on the Moodle site.

Module 4: Advanced Techniques

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Restricted Not available unless:
- The activity **Giving a Presentation Summary** is complete and passed
- The activity **My Keynote Report** is complete and passed

📅 **Module 4 Dates**

- Class dates: **11/7, 11/14, 11/21**
- Completion date: **11/28** *(All activities must be completed and uploaded by this date. Late submissions will lose points.)*
- Cut-off date: **12/5** *(No submissions will be accepted after this date without teacher approval. You will not be able to continue this course.)*

Your progress ⑦

In the next 3 weeks you'll have a chance to build your presentation skills even further. We're going to look at how to use data in presentations, an ☐ then look at a different kind of presentation software called Prezi.

🎯 Self-Study: Survey Data & Charts

A useful way to get information and data for your presentations is by using a **survey** (アンケート), then present it with **charts** and **tables**.

In this section, we're going to practice collecting data, then creating a presentation using tables and charts. Finally, you'll video yourself making a presentation with that data! Follow these steps:

1. You can work alone on this, or choose a partner to work with. Decide now!
2. Choose **a topic** for your survey. There are some suggestions in "*Survey Topic Suggestions*" or you can make a survey for your Zion Cup or Final Presentation topic.
3. **Download** and **print** out the "*Collecting Survey Data*" file (there are some copies already printed in Room 531).
4. Make **5** questions - each question should be a different type (see *Question Examples*). **Show** your questions to Malcolm.
5. Ask your questions to **at least 20** people (more is better!).
6. **Collate** the results of your questions - make **data** you can use in a chart or table.
7. **Read** the page "*Charts and Tables*."
8. **Create** a presentation in PowerPoint or Keynote that shows the data you collected using *charts and tables*.
9. **Record** a video of your presentation in the "*Flipgrid Video Assignment*." You will need to show your presentation on an iPad or use one of the projectors. To record your video, use the *FlipGrid* app on your smartphone or use one of our iPads. If you're not sure what to do, ask Malcolm for help.
10. **Write** your "*Charts and Tables Report*." [8 5/8]

📄 Survey Topic Suggestions ☐

📄 Collecting Survey Data 68.7KB Word 2007 document

📄 Question Examples ☑

📄 Charts and Tables ☑

🌐 Flipgrid Video Assignment ☑

📝 Charts and Tables Report ☐

☐

🎯 Self-Study: Prezi

Prezi is an online tool for creating amazing "3D" presentations. Let's try it! Prezi link: [**https://prezi.com**]

Prezi is a presentation tool that can be used instead of slide-making programs such as PowerPoint or Keynote. Instead of slides, Prezi uses a large canvas that allows you to **pan** and **zoom** to various parts of the canvas and emphasize the ideas presented there. This gives you lots of flexibility to change the order of your presentation material. In this self-study activity, you can try making your own Prezi presentation. Follow these steps on a PC.

- **Note**: You'll find this much easier on a PC instead of a smartphone or iPad!
- First, go to "*Watch Malcolm's Prezi*." Try watching it in full screen, and use the arrow keys on your keyboard to move around.
- Next, you need to sign up to Prezi. Look at the "*Prezi Sign Up Guide*" first. You can change the Prezi page to 日本語 if you wish. Follow the steps to sign up there using your Seinan email address.
- After you've signed up and logged on, create a Prezi (you can find some guides under "Help" at the top right). Here are some topic ideas:
  - *My best holiday*
  - *My Seinan friends*
  - *How to cook _____ (choose a dish)*

Figure 5. Module 4 guidelines on the Moodle site.

5. 4. 1. Assessment criteria
- Module 1 (8 points)
  - *Presentation 1 - [5]*
  - *Orientation Notes - [3]*
- Module 2 (11 points)
  - *Keynote Workshop Summary - [3]*
  - *My Keynote Presentation - [5]*
  - *Presentation Design Summary - [3]*
- Module 3 (11 points)
  - *Giving a Presentation Summary - [3]*
  - *My Keynote Presentation Report - [8]*
- Module 4 (16 points)
  - *Charts and Tables Report - [8]*
  - *My Prezi Presentation - [8]*
- Module 5 (9 points)
  - *Rehearsal & Peer Support - [9]*
- Zion Cup Presentation (100% ÷ 5 = 20 points)
  - *Content [20%]*
  - *Media [32%]*
  - *Performance [48%]*
- Final Presentation (100% ÷ 4 = 25 points)
  - *Content [20%]*
  - *Media [32%]*
  - *Performance [48%]*
- **TOTAL 100%**

Although much of the assessment completed in this course is subjective, it is done in consultation with the students and through considering the submissions of other students. For each of the performance assessments, there is a full list of grading criteria which the students are shown both before and after their presentations.

6. How is this different to other English courses?

To understand how this course functions to support students' specific needs, it is perhaps best to quickly review some of the differences between this and most other English language courses.

Firstly, in most classes, the pace of the course and what is studied in each class is to a large degree decided by the teacher. When a student walks into the classroom, she can know that the content has been set, and it is her role to use and learn from that material. In this course, however, although there are certain activities and presentations that will take place on specific days and times, the students are free to use the remainder of the class time as they choose. They might work on material, or use the devices in the school for research, or even not come to class (which is not an issue as long as the student completes each of the assignments in a diligent fashion). One thing we hope they will do is to use this open time for consultation with the teacher, and this is something that will need to be strongly promoted in early classes. For students who complete assignments without consultation but who could have definitely benefited from help, they will be given a post-activity briefing, explaining how they could have improved their work by having followed the advice which would have been given.

The second difference is the way in which grading and assessment takes place. In most classes, grades are given at the end of the semester, and while some of the criteria for that grade have been met through quizzes or activities during the semester, students will not have access to much of that data till the end. For this class, more than half of the grade points will be assessed and given before even reaching the final two presentation assignments, so students will have a clear idea of their progress during the semester. This will motivate them to raise their performance, hopefully by seeking advice and help from the teacher or her peers, as well as through their own efforts.

Tied in with this is the system where students will be unable to proceed through the course until they have completed and passed earlier activities. For example, students will be unable to even access Module 2 until they have completed the presentation and journal in Module 1 to a satisfactory level. This may require them to redo the assignments, or to work outside

class time with the teacher to move ahead. In other English courses, because the class is all moving at the same pace through the material, even if assignments have not been completed, the class programme will still move ahead

What this all means is that there is both opportunity and motivation for the students to receive consultation and advice from the teacher who will then guide their instruction and progress by referencing their specific needs. Although this means that everyone's progress will be different, it does mean that progress will actually be made, and all of the important activities will be both attempted and completed to a satisfactory level.

7. Conclusion

As teachers, we are always striving to give our students strong learning environments within which to thrive. We study, we plan, we create, and we prepare courses and content so that students have the best possible opportunities to learn. Yet, we also need to consider the role and the responsibility of the learner in that process, and we actually do them a disservice when we take that away from them. To that end, and in the context of learner autonomy, Dam (2003) stated,

> "Teachers who aim to promote a learner-directed learning environment encourage learners to reflect on their learning, understand the process of learning and the function of language, and adopt patterns of learning in which they themselves take initiatives and feel in control of their progress." (p. 126)

This is never more so than when faced with large, content-based classes, for these provide an opportunity to encourage a higher degree of autonomy by the students. With clear goals and defined tasks, all linked to transparent assessment criteria and using a self-paced

programme of study, the teacher is freed from much of the instructional process and can then devote his or her time to tailoring the content to meet specific student needs.

In this paper, I have described a programme that does just that. Students have access to the materials they need to complete the aims of the course, either online or by attending workshops throughout the semester. Much of this they can work through at their own pace, and where needed, they can attend specific in-class clinics for help, or work directly with the teacher.

It remains to be seen how successful this approach is, as this format will be offered for the first time in the coming semester (Semester 2, 2017). However, much of this process has been in development for the last decade, and bringing it all together under the one course umbrella should be just another step on a road already traveled. We are confident we have the potential to meet our students' needs with this course.

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学生のためのプレゼンテーション技術の構築について

マルコム・ロス・スワンソン

<要　旨>

　本論は、英語学科におけるプレゼンテーション技術の個人指導に焦点を当てて論じたものである。従来の授業においては、クラスサイズが大きければ、全受講生を公平に指導、観察、評価することは困難であった。しかしながら、学生が自分のペースで学習できるオンライン授業であれば、担当教員は学生一人一人や小さなグループにもっと関わることが可能となる。自分のペースで学習できる授業であれば、各学生が個人学習者となり、その学生に対して自分の学習に責任を持つように仕向けることが可能になる。そして評価は、継続的で分かりやすいものとなるため、学生はいつでも自分の進歩を確認できるのである。このような方法を活用することによって、学生たちはプレゼンテーションの場面において、自信が強まり能力も向上したことが分かった。

キーワード：プレゼンテーション技術、個別学習、個別進度

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