



Evaluation Self-Presentation Skills of HUST's students

Nguyen Dac Trung¹, Nguyen Thi Huong Giang^{2*}

^{1,2} Faculty of Education, Hanoi University of Science and Technology

ABSTRACT: The article discusses the significance and role of presentation skills among university students as a vital tool for academic success and career preparation. Evaluating the self-presentation skills of students in general knowledge years helps lecturers design effective methods to enhance these skills. A presentation-based evaluation was conducted in a Soft Skills course at Hanoi University of Science and Technology, involving 95 students and 940 feedback comments from audiences. The results indicate that students performed well in the introduction and content development phases of their presentations. However, the conclusion phase, particularly delivering a message to inspire audience action, was less persuasive and requires improvement.

KEY WORDS: Cultivation of presentation skills, Evaluating the presentation skills, Presentation skills.

1. INTRODUCTION

The cultivation of presentation skills among university students in Vietnam holds significant importance in fostering comprehensive development of communication abilities, critical thinking, and confidence within academic and professional environments. Presentation practice enhances students' ability to convey information clearly and coherently, a skill vital not only in academia but also in future workplace settings.

Preparing for presentations requires students to research, analyze, and evaluate information, sharpening their independence and critical reasoning. Furthermore, presentations help students build confidence when speaking before an audience. Developing these skills during university years equips students for future careers and can be a decisive factor in making them stand out to potential employers, thus broadening their post-graduation career opportunities.

In professional environments, presentation skills are crucial for individuals to express opinions, persuade colleagues, superiors, or clients effectively. At the university level, courses requiring group discussions, project reports, and capstone assignments often demand strong presentation abilities. Mastering this skill enables students to present and defend their ideas effectively, fostering impactful communication during their studies.

In conclusion, honing presentation skills is a vital aspect of university education, helping students not only enhance their academic capabilities but also develop essential soft skills for their careers and lives beyond graduation.

Compared to students in other countries, Vietnamese students often lack opportunities to practice presentation skills in formal educational settings. Research highlights that students in nations such as the United States or the United Kingdom tend to exhibit higher confidence in presentations, largely due to education systems that foster the development of such skills from an early stage.[1] Specifically, international students are frequently trained in environments that encourage group activities and presentations, enabling the cultivation of soft skills.

Statistics demonstrate that Vietnamese students generally possess significantly lower confidence in public speaking than their peers in developed countries. This gap can be attributed to limited hands-on practice and anxiety about speaking in front of an audience. However, thanks to advancements in teaching methodologies and the adoption of technology, Vietnamese students are gradually improving their presentation skills.[2] This improvement is especially noticeable when they are provided with structured guidance and regular practice opportunities.

Recognizing the importance and practical necessity of soft skills, Hanoi University of Science and Technology introduced the Soft Skills course in 2007 as part of the curriculum for the Technical Education Department. Since 2012, the university has included this course in the social knowledge module for all students across faculties.

Currently, Hanoi University of Science and Technology plans to expand its soft skills training programs. The Faculty of Education is focusing on teaching teamwork and effective communication skills, with particular emphasis on enhancing presentation abilities.



2. Evaluating Self- Presentation Skills of Hanoi University of Science and Technology Students

2.1 Organization of Student Presentations

Given that university students are adults who have developed basic self-directed learning skills, the research team organized presentations on specific learning topics under the guidance of professional lecturers. The purpose of these activities was to assess students' self-directed presentation skills, allowing the team to identify strengths and areas for improvement. This insight enables the proposal of appropriate methods for enhancing these skills.

Students were divided into groups of 4-5 and assigned topics related to fundamental personal skills such as:

- Maintaining positive thinking and fostering proactive habits.
- Identifying life values and developing goal-oriented habits.
- Learning effective time management to prioritize what matters most.

Other topics included collaborative skills such as listening, persuasion, and presentation. Each group began with foundational knowledge from online course videos hosted on the university's LMS platform.[3] To deepen their understanding, lecturers provided reference materials and keywords for further research, alongside basic and extended content requirements. Students were guided in preparing a presentation script and creating a collaborative preparation plan, encouraging teamwork.

Upon completing their presentation slides, group leaders organized meetings to finalize the script and assigned roles for each member. The groups then delivered their presentations in class according to the schedule set by their instructor. While lecturers provided direction, the presentation skills showcased by students were entirely self-directed.

2.2 Theoretical Basis for Developing Assessment Criteria

The development of presentation skill assessment criteria was grounded in theories from education, psychology, and communication. At first, **Experiential Learning Theory** which emphasizes the value of learning through experience, suggesting criteria like the ability to derive lessons from practical experiences and apply them in presentations. [4] Secondly, **Communication Theories** require **Clarity and Organization**: The ability to logically organize information and connect with the audience; Or **Berlo's SMCR Model** [5] that key assessment elements include (1) **Speaker**: Speaking skills, demeanor, and body language; (2) **Message**: Structured and accurate content; (3) **Channel**: Effective use of slides, videos, and visuals; (4) **Audience**: Interaction and engagement. Thirdly, **Bloom's Taxonomy** which composes of **Understanding**: Accurate content delivery; **Analysis**: Highlighting key points; **Synthesis**: Offering logical solutions or conclusions; Fourthly, **Psychological Factors** such as (1) **Audience Engagement**: Effective use of non-verbal communication (eye contact, gestures); (2) **Vocal Expression**: Tone, emphasis, and modulation. (3) **Situational Handling**: Responding to unexpected questions or challenges.

In summary, a comprehensive assessment framework for presentation skills can include:

- **Content**: Logical structure, accuracy, and creativity.
- **Presentation Skills**: Clear and fluent speech, time management.
- **Communication Skills**: Interaction with the audience, effective use of visual aids.
- **Personal Demeanor**: Confidence, professionalism, and appropriate body language.

2.3 Development of Assessment Criteria

Based on the selected criteria, the research team proposed a framework for evaluating presentations in three stages: introduction, main content, and conclusion. Criteria for the introduction and main content (from IT1.1, IT 1.2 to IT2.5 as below table) were rated on a 5-point Likert scale: Point 1 (Completely Inappropriate); Point 2 (Inappropriate); Point 3 (Neutral); Point 4 (Appropriate) and Point 5 Completely Appropriate. The conclusion stage (from IT3.1 to IT3.3) was evaluated on a binary scale: Yes/No.

Table. Evaluation Criteria for Presentation Skills

Stage 1 – Introduction	
IT1.1	The introduction captures the audience's attention.
IT1.2	The introduction clearly states the purpose of the presentation.
IT1.3	The introduction highlights key points of the presentation.
Stage 2- Content	
IT2.1	The speaker uses real-life examples to illustrate solutions.



IT2.2	The speaker proposes specific actions.
IT2.3	The speaker maintains a positive demeanor during the presentation.
IT2.4	The presentation duration is adequate, not overly long.
IT2.5	Visual materials (e.g., slides, images) are of high quality.
	Stage 3 – Conclusion
IT3.1	The speaker clearly communicates the message of the presentation in the conclusion.
IT 3.2	The audience finds the solutions proposed in the conclusion impactful.
IT 3.3	The audience feels motivated to act upon the speaker's suggestions after the presentation.

This structured framework ensures a comprehensive evaluation of presentation skills, focusing on key areas like engagement, content clarity, visual support, and audience impact.

2.4 Evaluation Methodology

The instructor organized student presents sequentially, with each group presenting in front of a peer evaluation panel (students from other groups).

Evaluation Period: July 2024, during the third semester of the 2023–2024 academic year.

Class Size: 95 students

Total Presentation Groups: 20

Evaluation Records: A total of 940 evaluations were recorded, conducted by students in the class who acted as the audience and listeners.

2.5 Results of Student Presentation Skills Evaluation

2.5.1 Statistical Analysis of Students Evaluated by Academic Year

Based on the statistical data of the academic years of the students presenting, it was observed that first-year students accounted for the highest proportion (41 out of 95), followed by second-year students (37 out of 95). This indicates that most students participating in the Soft Skills course are those in their general education phase. Therefore, evaluating the presentation skills of students to analyze their strengths and limitations provides valuable feedback. This allows students to adjust and improve their skills during their learning process. Additionally, instructors can adopt effective methods to enhance the presentation skills of their students.

2.5.2 Evaluation Results of Students' Self-Presentation Skills

Opening Section:

Descriptive Statistics

Criteria	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The opening captured your attention	940	1.00	5.00	4.2128	0.76076
The opening stated the presentation's purpose	940	2.00	5.00	4.2819	0.72847
The opening highlighted the main points	940	1.00	5.00	4.2521	0.76758

Valid N (listwise): 940

Based on the table of statistics regarding the effectiveness of the presentation's opening section:

- The criterion “**The opening captured your attention**” had a mean score of **4.2128**, indicating that most participants rated this aspect quite highly for its ability to capture attention. The standard deviation was **0.76076**, reflecting moderate variation in responses.
- The criterion “**The opening stated the presentation's purpose**” had the highest mean score of **4.2819**, indicating that participants rated this aspect very highly. Its standard deviation of **0.72847** was the lowest among the criteria, showing consistent agreement among participants.
- The criterion “**The opening highlighted the main points**” had a mean score of **4.2521**, showing a strong positive evaluation for this aspect. The standard deviation was **0.76758**, suggesting slight variability in responses.



Content Section:

Descriptive Statistics

Criteria	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The speaker used real-life examples to illustrate solutions	940	1.00	5.00	4.2840	0.77855
The speaker proposed specific actions	940	1.00	5.00	4.2787	0.78659
The speaker's demeanor was positive	940	1.00	5.00	4.2915	0.74996
The presentation duration was appropriate	940	1.00	5.00	4.2979	0.75876
The visuals were of good quality	940	1.00	5.00	4.3309	0.74281

Valid N (listwise): 940

From the content section evaluation:

- The criterion **“The speaker used real-life examples to illustrate solutions”** had a mean score of **4.2840**, reflecting high appreciation for this aspect, with a standard deviation of **0.77855**, indicating slight variability.
- **“The speaker proposed specific actions”** had a mean of **4.2787**, showing positive evaluations, though with a standard deviation of **0.78659**, indicating diverse opinions.
- **“The speaker's demeanor was positive”** scored **4.2915**, with a standard deviation of **0.74996**, reflecting a highly positive reception.
- **“The presentation duration was appropriate”** achieved a mean score of **4.2979**, suggesting satisfaction with the timing, and a standard deviation of **0.75876**, indicating consistency in evaluations.
- The highest-rated criterion, **“The visuals were of good quality,”** had a mean score of **4.3309** and the lowest standard deviation of **0.74281**, showing strong and consistent agreement among participants.

Overall, the content section received very positive feedback, with all criteria scoring above 4.2 and relatively consistent agreement among participants.

Conclusion Section:

Did the speaker clearly state the message of the presentation?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	619	65.9%	65.9%	65.9%
Yes	321	34.1%	34.1%	100.0%
Total	940	100.0%	100.0%	

From the data, **619 participants (65.9%)** indicated that the speaker did not clearly state the message of the presentation, while **321 participants (34.1%)** felt the message was clear. This suggests that a significant proportion of participants found the message to be unclear, pointing to an area for improvement in ensuring clarity and impact in the conclusion.

Were you impressed with the solutions presented to the issue?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	658	70.0%	70.0%	70.0%
Yes	282	30.0%	30.0%	100.0%
Total	940	100.0%	100.0%	



Based on the data regarding how impressed participants were with the solutions presented:

- Out of 940 participants, **658 people (70.0%)** responded "No," indicating that the majority were not impressed or convinced by the solutions proposed by the students.
- Conversely, only **282 people (30.0%)** responded "Yes," showing agreement or satisfaction with the solutions.

With 70% of participants selecting "No," there is a notable gap between the speaker's solutions and the audience's expectations. This indicates that the solutions need to be clarified or made more specific to increase their persuasive power and create a better impression on the audience. This result highlights an area for improvement, particularly in presenting engaging and relevant solutions to the issues discussed.

Will you follow the speaker's suggestions after this presentation?

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	674	71.7%	71.7%	71.7%
Yes	266	28.3%	28.3%	100.0%
Total	940	100.0%	100.0%	

Based on the data on participants' willingness to follow the speaker's suggestions after the presentation:

- Among 940 participants, **674 people (71.7%)** answered "No," showing that the majority had no intention of acting on the speaker's suggestions after the presentation.
- Only **266 people (28.3%)** responded "Yes," indicating a willingness to implement the suggestions.

With **71.7%** of participants unwilling to act on the suggestions, it seems the proposed actions lacked sufficient persuasiveness or inspiration for most of the audience. This indicates that student presenters need to improve the content and delivery of their suggestions to better engage and motivate the audience to apply the proposed actions in practice.

3. SUMMARY AND APPLICATION

This article underscores the significance of fostering presentation skills among university students in Vietnam, focusing on an evaluation of self-presentation capabilities at Hanoi University of Science and Technology. While Vietnamese students generally have fewer opportunities for hands-on practice compared to their international peers, structured soft skills programs, such as those implemented at Hanoi University of Science and Technology, are helping bridge this gap through strategic teaching methods and frequent practice.

Evaluation results highlighted strengths in the introduction and content sections of student presentations. However, significant challenges remain in delivering clear messages and effectively persuading audiences during conclusions. Addressing these areas is essential for students' comprehensive development in both academic and professional settings.

Insights from other studies [6], reveal that online presentations often yield better performance than in-person ones. This is attributed to the extended time available for reviewing content and addressing questions, as opposed to the time constraints and immediate feedback pressure of live presentations. Incorporating such findings, instructors can advise students to integrate technology and online tools into their skill-building processes.

Moreover, feedback—both from instructors and peers—plays a pivotal role in skill enhancement. Research highlights that iterative feedback after each presentation session significantly improves performance. This suggests that soft skills courses could be enriched with more detailed feedback mechanisms and increased opportunities for practice to optimize learning outcomes. Such improvements would support students in excelling in diverse presentation scenarios, both offline and online. [7]

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