

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Foreign Practices In Teaching Public Speaking Skills To University Students: Evidence From EFL Contexts

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Abstract

Proficiency in public speaking is an essential academic and professional skill expected of university graduates, especially in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environments. Many higher education students encounter challenges associated with self-confidence, language proficiency, anxiety, and restricted instructional methodologies. This essay seeks to analyze international methodologies for imparting public speaking skills to university students by integrating empirical findings from recent global research. This study used a literature-based qualitative research approach to examine chosen open-access scholarly papers that address project-based learning, oral presentation tasks, and the perceived internal and external factors affecting students' public speaking performance. The results demonstrate that student-centered instructional methods—particularly project-based learning and organized presenting assignments—substantially improve learners' public speaking skills, self-assurance, and involvement. Moreover, both intrinsic elements (self-assurance, subject proficiency) and extrinsic factors (classroom atmosphere, instructor evaluation, time allocation) significantly influence students' oral performance. The discourse underscores the ramifications for higher education pedagogy and advocates for the incorporation of genuine, practice-based teaching paradigms to enhance public speaking education. The article finishes with suggestions for EFL educators and prospective research avenues.

KEY WORDS

Public speaking, oral presentation skills, project-based learning, EFL students, higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Public speaking is acknowledged as a crucial competency for academic achievement and professional advancement in higher education. University students often must articulate ideas, research findings, and arguments before an audience, rendering oral presenting proficiency a crucial educational objective across several disciplines (Waluyo & Rofiah, 2021). In EFL environments, public speaking is particularly arduous due to linguistic constraints, fear, and insufficient exposure to

authentic communication opportunities (Seli & Santosa, 2023).

Prior research indicates that numerous university students experience difficulties in public speaking due to diminished self-confidence, apprehension of errors, limited vocabulary, and insufficient instructional assistance (Ningsih et al., 2023; Seli & Santosa, 2023). These issues indicate a necessity for effective pedagogical methods that transcend conventional,

teacher-centered instruction.

Global studies underscore the efficacy of learner-centered approaches, including project-based learning (PBL) and presenting challenges, in enhancing students’ speaking abilities (Shi et al., 2024; Sirisrimangkorn, 2021). Furthermore, empirical research underscores the significance of both internal and external factors—such as self-assurance, mastery of topic, classroom atmosphere, and instructor feedback—in influencing students’ public speaking ability (Balolong et al., 2025).

This article seeks to examine international practices in imparting public speaking abilities to university students through a review of recent empirical research undertaken in EFL higher education settings. The research aims to determine effective teaching methods and critical elements affecting students' oral presentation ability.

METHODS

This study used a qualitative literature-based research methodology. The research conducted a systematic review of selected empirical studies on public speaking and oral presentation skills among university-level EFL students, instead of gathering primary data.

Data Sources

The data consisted of peer-reviewed, open-access journal articles. The selected studies examined:

- Project-based learning and speaking skills,
- Presentation tasks in higher education,
- Factors affecting oral presentation performance.

Data Analysis

The articles were analyzed thematically. Key findings related

to instructional strategies, learning outcomes, and influencing factors were identified, categorized, and synthesized to highlight dominant trends and foreign practices in teaching public speaking skills.

RESULTS

The analysis revealed three major findings.

Effectiveness of Project-Based Learning

Multiple studies have validated that project-based learning markedly enhances university students’ public speaking abilities. Students participating in PBL exhibited improved fluency, pronunciation, confidence, and subject organization (Nugroho & Anugerahwati, 2019; Shi et al., 2024). The cooperative and genuine characteristics of projects fostered active engagement and significant language application.

Role of Presentation Tasks

Instruction centered on presentations proved beneficial in enhancing students’ oral communication abilities. Consistent presentation assignments enhanced students’ confidence, refined their delivery, and alleviated anxiety (Ningsih et al., 2023). Presentation assignments connected academic learning with the communication requirements of the workplace.

Influencing Internal and External Factors

The public speaking performance of students was significantly affected by internal elements including self-confidence and material mastery, along with external factors such as classroom atmosphere, time management, and teacher feedback (Balolong et al., 2025; Waluyo & Rofiah, 2021). A nurturing educational atmosphere and constructive criticism were essential for alleviating speaking anxiety.

Key findings on teaching public speaking skills based on foreign practices

| Study | Participants | Instructional Approach | Main Results |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Nugroho & Anugerahwati (2019) | Vocational EFL students | Project-Based Learning through Vlogs | Significant improvement in fluency, pronunciation, |

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|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|
| | | | vocabulary, and confidence |
| Sirisrimangkorn (2021) | EFL undergraduates | Project-Based Learning using presentations | Speaking performance increased significantly; students showed positive attitudes |
| Shi et al. (2024) | University EFL students | Project-Based Learning (mixed-method) | Experimental group outperformed control group in public speaking skills |
| Waluyo & Rofiah (2021) | Thai university students | Presentation course with feedback | English proficiency was the strongest predictor of presentation performance |
| Balolong et al. (2025) | English major students | Survey-based analysis | Confidence, content mastery, and time management were key influencing factors |
| Seli & Santosa (2023) | English education students | Qualitative questionnaire | Major difficulties included anxiety, lack of confidence, and limited vocabulary |
| Ningsih et al. (2023) | Polytechnic students | Individual presentation tasks | Presentation tasks improved confidence and public speaking ability |

DISCUSSION

The results correspond with global literature highlighting the transition from conventional, grammar-centric teaching to learner-centered educational frameworks. Project-based learning and organized presenting assignments offer students genuine speaking experiences, enhancing both linguistic

proficiency and self-assurance.

International experiences indicate that successful public speaking education necessitates consideration of both linguistic competence and psychological and environmental elements. In alignment with prior research, confidence and subject mastery were identified as key factors influencing the

performance of oral presentations (Waluyo & Rofiah, 2021). Moreover, the classroom atmosphere and instructor feedback profoundly affected students' readiness to engage in verbal communication.

These findings indicate that higher education institutions ought to use experiential learning methodologies and establish conducive classroom conditions to improve public speaking instruction.

CONCLUSION

This research analyzed international methodologies for instructing public speaking abilities to university students in English as a Foreign Language situations. The analyzed research demonstrate that project-based learning and presentation-oriented education significantly enhance students' public speaking skills. Internal and external factors significantly influence oral performance.

The study advocates for EFL educators to implement student-centered techniques, deliver structured feedback, and cultivate supportive learning environments. Future study may encompass empirical investigations in various cultural situations to further substantiate effective instructional strategies.

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