Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH) (e-ISSN : 2504-8562)
2022, Volume 7, Issue 4, e001416
DOI: https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v7i4.1416

Blended Learning to Learn Presentation Skills Among English Second Language (ESL) Learners

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KEYWORDS:
Presentation skills
Blended learning
Self-facilitating
Expert facilitating
Reciprocal facilitating

CITATION:
Mohd Hafiszudin Mohd Amin, Saiful Farisin Md Ramlan & Wahiza Wahi. (2022). Blended Learning to Learn Presentation Skills Among English Second Language (ESL) Learners. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH), 7*(4), e001416. https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v7i4.1416

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to explore and understand how the collaborative blended learning environment affects students' presentation performance. It also intends to examine students' perceptions of this learning environment. 25 ESL students participated in this study. This study lasted for 14-weeks and involved students participating in the conventional class and group discussion delivered both face to face in the classroom and online mode via ifolio to collaboratively develop their presentation skills. Data collected were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively using the thematic and content analysis methods. The study concluded that integrating collaborative blended learning presentation skills activities in an ESL classroom enhanced students' positive feeling towards presentations, decreased their communication apprehension and improved their presentation performance. The study implied that in order to create an ideal learning environment that helps students improve their presentation skills, collaborative blended learning presentation skills activities need to be integrated into learning and teaching. With the emergence of rapid technology, blended learning has become a useful teaching and learning approach for teachers and ESL learners, especially in learning presentation skills. However, most English courses are still practising teachers centred, thus, neglecting the important element of integrating technology with face-to-face learning activities in learning presentation skills.

Contribution/Originality: This study is one of very few studies which have investigated into the usage of ifolio and face-to-face facilitation in developing presenting skills.

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1. Introduction

The Malaysian government is implementing DePAN (Nation's e-learning policy) to meet the Critical Agenda Projects (CAP) and the National Key Result Areas (NKRA) of the Ministry of Higher Education. DePAN focuses on the integration of the pedagogical approach with online learning (e-learning). The ministry agreed that DePAN will offer a reinforced education system and information accessibility for students. The idea of DePAN was initiated by Malaysia's ICT council in 2001. DePAN requires that at least 50% of the courses offered in the university must be conducted using a blended learning platform.

Shrikant (2015) agreed that language learning needs presentation skills as most subjects require learners to do a presentation. However, many students are still struggling to conduct proper academic presentations. Zitaouni (2013) indicated that this is due to insufficient in-class facilitation.

Alexander (1997) claimed that an online platform is a low-anxiety setting for students to learn particularly presentation skills. Thus, *ifolio* was designed to promote blended learning and served as an alternative learning medium for students after undergoing face to face facilitation.

This research examines the use of blended learning to facilitate presentation skills for Workplace Communication subject. This study focused on *ifolio* and face to face learning to explore the opportunity to shift teaching and learning culture. The main objective is to determine respondents' perceptions on blended facilitation and how it helps to understand the process of doing presentation skills.

A plethora of research studies conducted in the area of language learning have been reported to have focused on outmoded learning techniques. Thus, to explore blended learning as an alternative approach is vital. It employs *ifolio* as a formal, popular e-learning medium that is essentially a mobile and online way to learn presentation skills. The objectives of this study are:

i. To investigate students' perceptions towards learning presentation skills in a blended learning environment through *ifolio* and face to face particularly in the Workplace Communication class.
ii. To investigate how the contents of presentation skills provided in blended learning environment help learners to improve the process of doing presentation skills.

The research questions for this study are as follow:

i. What are the students' perceptions on learning presentation skills using blended learning environment through *ifolio* and face to face particularly in Workplace Communication class?
ii. How do the contents of presentation skills provided in blended learning help learners to improve the process of doing academic presentations?

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2. Theoretical Framework

This research is directed by these two theories: Collaborative Learning Theory (Bruffee 1984) and Social Constructivists Theory (Bruner, 1966). The study looks into the effects of learning presentation skills in a blended learning environment through *ifolio* and face to face in ESL classroom. A theoretical framework of CLT (Collaborative Learning Theory) was first introduced by Bruffee (1984; 1987).

2.1. Collaborative Learning Theory

Collaborative learning theory (henceforth, CLT) promotes sharing of information through group interaction. In CLT, sharing information is seen as just as important as sharing personal experience, insights, and perspective. Network of thoughts is believed to happen in the cognitive spectrum when students are learning collaboratively. Bruffee (1995) opined those learners who are actively involved in collaboration will immerse themselves in a network of thoughts. Thus, it is very helpful in shaping learners who are independent and interdependent. Therefore, facilitating presentation skills particularly in this research is aligned with CLT subsequently.

2.2. Social Constructivists Theory

Social constructivist's theory believes that knowledge is fluid and unfixed. Constructivism observes teamwork as an opportunity for learners to define problems arising from different perspective to meet appropriate solutions through one consensus. Therefore, there is a strong correlation between blended learning with social constructivist theory as BL serves as a collaborative platform for knowledge development.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Blended Learning Experience

The integration of technology in the classroom has transformed the pedagogical approach. According to Feenberg (2008) elements of blended learning help students to be more active and reflective. Garrison and Vaughan (2008) believed that blended learning offers vast opportunities to reconstruct how learning courses are supposed to be constructed, planned and distributed through the integration of physical and online instruction.

A blended learning environment develops the best features of a learning experience that stimulate active, self-directed teaching and learning opportunities. Hartman and Moskal (2003) believe blended learning abolishes the limitation of the learning environment. Learners are supposed to adequate themselves with necessary information using online platforms apart from face-to-face facilitation.

There is a multitude of advantages of blended learning (BL) which can be manipulated by 21st-century learners. Knowledge conveyance is capable of going beyond geographic and time barriers in providing students access to education. Blended learning offers more opportunities for students to leverage their existing curriculum to surpass regional and international levels. It helps them connect with online virtual friends and hard-to-come-by resources to boost their professional satisfaction.

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The assortment of online courses is seen by students and instructors as one of the rewarding facets of learning and teaching online. 21st learners figured out that blended learning is an excellent platform for them to indulge in convenient learning. BL offers conveniences not obtainable in the physical classroom settings. Since flexibility learning is not limited by space; and can be conducted anywhere at all, it can help them plan their work schedules effectively and with ease.

3.2. Blended Learning and Presentation Skills

Facilitating presentation skills in a higher learning institute is a great challenge for the instructor. One such challenge is the difference in the level of apprehension that a particular learner feels in an activity. According to Hassall et al. (2013), the high levels of apprehension can ensue in a discouraging repercussion, acting as an impasse for students to engage in activities designed to help them ameliorate their presentation skills. Higher learning institutes should focus on the self-efficacy of the student to help keep such concerns at bay with aims to improve their presentation skills. Bandura (2012) has well-defined self-efficacy as one's belief in one's ability to thrive in specific situations or accomplish a task. Having understood that, we should accentuate facilitating presentation skills in the context of higher education. One's sense of self-efficacy can play a significant role in how one approaches goals, and challenges. Students, therefore, must be told to do to the best of their abilities when presenting. This manner of intervention made using *ifolio* is considered extremely constructive.

3.3. *ifolio* as Blended Learning Tool

A study conducted by Das et al. (2013) acknowledged the advantages of *ifolio*. Based on his research, students enjoy reading genuine text from the online library via *ifolio.* Besides, *ifolio* is found to be one of the best online learning tools for knowledge transfer. Students can access their course materials with a single click, discuss with their lecturer or classmates, answer quizzes and more. *ifolio* interfaces allow a facilitator to post announcements, upload course materials, construct assignments, design online tasks and promote online discussions for students. It eases teaching and learning for both teachers and students.

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants

The participants of this study included 25 undergraduate students at one of the research universities in Selangor, Malaysia. The students were enrolled in three levels of English language courses which are LMCE 1012 Academic Communication 1, LMCE 2012 Workplace communication 1, and LMCE 3011 Speech communication. The participants are MUET Band 2 and 3 students. All respondents were asked to participate in *ifolio* and face to face activities before they answered the questionnaire and contributed to the semi-structured interview session. They were expected to give their views on blended learning using *ifolio* as a tool to learn presentation skills.

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4.2. Instruments

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to address the research questions of this study. The first research instrument is a questionnaire. Section A captured demographic questions whereas section B used Likert scales to collect data on the users' experience of using *ifolio* in a blended environment. The second research instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview. The itemised questions would elicit responses from the respondents during the interview sessions. Out of 25 students who had participated in this research six students were chosen for the interview. These students were selected based on their Malaysian University Test Result (MUET). The rationale behind picking up students from different MUET levels were to understand how they perceived blended learning and how they learned in such an environment.

4.3. Procedure

This research adopted two stages of the research procedure. For the first procedure, students were asked to partake in *ifolio* activities on various topics about presentation skills. The online activity is meant to expose students to a blended learning experience through an e-learning platform. The activities in *ifolio* trained students to be more prepared in conducting a formal presentation. Topics selected were Do's and Don'ts of a presentation, language for presentation and engaging the audience. Face to face discussions were focused on intonation and articulation, body language and eye contact as well as academic presentation management. Six students were selected to answer interview questions to enhance this research. Data collected from the interview questions were examined using thematic analysis. Three themes were constructed to analyse the data which were a) blended learning environment improves students' learning acquisition, b) blended learning improves presentation skills and c) blended learning helps to identify problems related to presentation skills. The data contributed to the quantitative and qualitative parts of the study. Data were triangulated to corroborate and support the findings and address the research questions of this research.

5. Findings and Discussions

5.1. Participants' Awareness of Blended Learning

The findings showed 96% (n=24) of respondents had experience in using *ifolio.* For this research, 84% (n=21) of respondents agreed they were aware that Workplace Communication 1 is a blended course. Besides that, 60% (n=15) of respondents stated that they had taken a blended course beforehand. The frequency of the respondents' awareness of blended learning is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondents' awareness of blended learning

Question	Yes	No	Total
Are you undertaking a blended learning course for th first time?	40% (10)	60% (15)	100% (25)
Is this your first time/semester using *ifolio*?	4% (1)	96% (24)	100% (25)

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Are you aware that workplace communication is a blended learning course?	84% (21)	16% (4)	100% (25)

From the data, it is obvious that the participants were familiar with the blended learning environment especially using *ifolio* and that they used it regularly. Therefore, issues such as technical abilities and knowledge about the blended course are lessened.

5.2. Preferred blended learning topics

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics obtained from the respondents on preferable topic learning in a blended environment. The majority of them agreed (72%, n=18) and preferred the topic on how to do effective presentation via *ifolio* and face to face. It helped them to ace presentations on other subjects, respectively.

Table 2: Preferred blended learning topic

Question: Which learning area in workplace communication has helped you the most?	How to conduct effective meetings (*ifolio* & Face to Face)	How to do effective presentation (*ifolio* & Face to Face	How to do academic self-reflection Total (*ifolio* & Face to Face)
Feedback given by the respondents	20% (5)	72% (18)	8% (2)
Total		100% (25)	

5.3. Quantitative Findings from the Closed-Ended Items

The quantitative findings present the data from the close-ended items of the questionnaire to illicit students' perceptions towards a blended learning environment. The items were divided into three categories which are expert facilitation, self-facilitation and reciprocal facilitation.

Table 3 shows that 80% (n=20) agreed and 16% (n=4) strongly agreed with the feedback given and it has helped them in understanding the contents of doing an effective presentation. Expert facilitation played a significant role in the learning process. A great number of respondents 88% (n= 22) agreed the expert gave quick responses.

Table 3: Respondents' perceptions of the blended environment through expert facilitation.

Item	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Total**
Feedback given by the expert in the discussion forum enriched my contents doing effective presentation.	16% (4)	80% (20)	0% (0)	4% (1)	100% (25)
Feedback was given promptly by the expert.	0% (0)	88% (22)	0% (0)	12% (3)	100% (25)

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Table 4 shows most respondents agreed 88% (n=22) that activities in *ifolio* helped them in developing a sense of belonging as compared to only 8% (n=2) who disagreed. Online discussions in *ifolio* spurred collaboration which is 72% (n=18). The collaboration improved social interaction as 60% (n=15) agreed and 16% (n=4) strongly agreed. Respondents felt comfortable discussing with their friends using *ifolio* which 48% (n= 12) of them agreed and 12% (n=3) strongly agreed.

Table 4: Respondents' perceptions on the blended environment through reciprocal facilitation

Item	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Total**
Activities in *ifolio* helped me in developing a sense of belonging, or mutual rapport among students	4% (1)	88% (22)	0% (0)	8% (2)	100% (25)
Online discussions in *ifolio* helped me develop a sense of collaboration.	12% (0)	72% (18)	0% (0)	16% (4)	100% (25)
ifolio is an excellent medium for social interaction.	16% (4)	60% (15)	0% (0)	24% (6)	100% (25)
I felt comfortable to discuss with my friends using *ifolio*.	12% (3)	48% (12)	0% (0)	40% (10)	100% (25)

Table 5 indicates that knowledge gained in this course are useful for work or other off-classroom activities with 76% (n=19) agreed whereby 80% (n=20) of respondents were satisfied with blended learning activities to improve their presentation skills. 92% (n=23) agreed self-reflection activities offered in *ifolio* helped learn presentation skills.

Table 5: Respondents' perceptions on blended environment through self-facilitation

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Total
I can apply the knowledge in this course into my work or other off-classroom activities.	20% (5)	76% (19)	0% (0)	4% (1)	100% (25)
Self-reflection activities offered in *ifolio* are interesting	0% (0)	92% (23)	0% (0)	8% (4)	100% (25)
I am satisfied with this blended learning activities to help me improved contents of effective presentation.	16% (4)	80% (20)	0% (0)	4% (1)	100% (25)

5.5. Qualitative Findings from the Semi-Structured Interview

Responses from the semi-structured interview sessions were used to strengthen this research. Data collected from the interview questions were analysed using thematic analysis. There are three themes constructed to analyse the data which are i. blended learning environment improves students' learning acquisition ii. blended learning

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improves presentation skills and iii. blended learning helps to identify problems related to presentation skills. In order to analyse data from the respondents. They were given coding which were categorised as (S1), (S2), (S3), (S4), (S5), (S6). The code for the interview is (I) whereas the code for numbers indicating the respondents' line of verbatim responses were code as (S1) I 03.

5.5.1. Blended facilitating improves learning.

Interviewees are very much concerned about how *ifolio* and face to face facilitation has greatly impacted their presentation skills. One of the interview participants, S3 agreed that blended learning improved her learning.

> S3I04: "*…Okay [6 seconds pause] first of all I think ermm…the contents in ifolio teaches me what I have to do what I have to prepare before my presentation....in order to get an effective presentation*."

S3 agreed that providing contents in *ifolio* empowered her prior to doing a formal presentation. However, S3 stated that face to face facilitation is still greatly needed.

> S3I04: "*…but still I think the content is still not enough..we still need the face to face facilitation..in order to get a better presentation*."

Respondent S1 is positive with blended learning as it helped her to understand the list of *dos* and *don'ts* of an effective presentation.

> S1I04"… *Okay ..aaa for me ermm… the contents of the presentation aaa helped me to… do well in my presentation…for example aaa there are the content about the do's and don'ts so I know what should I do and what should not do*."

S1 reckoned the *do's* and *don'ts* help with the audience's acceptance of what is being conveyed during the presentation. Thus, S1 perceived blended learning as helpful to capture the audience's attention. S5 believed blended learning enriches the contents of doing a presentation.

> S5I20: "*…yes of course both helped me to understand to do a presentation and also ifolio gives me broad understanding*."

This is because the use of *ifolio* permits them to search for additional information to leverage on learning to understand. When question probed on face face, S5 said:

> S5I20: "*…face to face we can see the lecturer's opinion and what the suggestions to be improved to our presentation are*."

S2 believed that blended learning improved her presentation skills. S2 uttered;

> S2I18: "… f*ace to face if I got questions I can ask directly and I can improve my soft skills and it is a two-way communication…while ifolio I can ask anything in the discussion if I don't understand*."

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Blended learning stimulates communication because it offers two-way interaction. Those not articulate during face-to-face discussion can manipulate online platforms because it is a non-threatening & low anxiety learning setting. S6 preferred blended learning to be conducted since learning can still be done when they were away for compulsory clinical posting.

> S6I28: "*…Especially in our class we have clinical at different places we also a physiotherapy we have different time and our lecturer also from Bangi to get the syllabus done even we are not doing the physical class*."

The accessibility of getting learning materials through online platforms promotes self-autonomous learning to catch up with the syllabus. When asked about the difference between learning online via *ifolio* and face to face, S6 stated that:

> S6I22 "*…Aaa I think during face to face we get elaboration … actually we can rewind the video in ifolio…in the class before we go to the lecture*."

S6 perceived positively blended learning as a medium of continuous learning source. Besides, it is convenient to get further explanations during face-to-face sessions. In further discussion on blended learning, S4 agreed that learning in such an environment helps to monitor their self-learning process.

> S4I14: "*...aaa we can now we can get information in ifolio so that we can keep on updates and everything*."

> S4I114: "*...face to face means we can ask any question to clear the doubt at the times itself. That is the advantage using face to face*."

It is clearly seen that respondents agreed that blended learning is valuable for learning as supported by Lorenzetti (2005) who strongly believed that blended learning is an effective approach to promote a paradigm shift in knowledge building.

5.5.2. Blended Learning Improves Presentation Skills.

All participants claimed that blended learning helped strike a chord with their content on doing a presentation. S3 learned that part of the contents of doing a proper presentation is to wear proper attire and to comprehend the *dos* and *don'ts* of a presentation.

> S3I11 "*…Okay I have.aa.I think there are two contents that helped me a lot.. first is the proper attire. The proper attire... for presentation…and also do's and don'ts...in order to get good aaa presentation…effective presentation*."

S3 managed to differentiate between formal and less formal dress codes.

> S3I03: "*…business-formal one is suitable for a more formal presentation such as delivering an executive report. Less formal dress code… is suitable for the less formal presentation*."

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S3 postulated further that blended learning improved another skill of the presentation that is expressed during the presentation.

> S3I09: "*…ermmm the effective ermm ermm expression in presentation and we also can discuss in the discussion part in ifolio which is I can view another opinion from my classmates... from my lecturer and my friends – lah*."

One of the activities designed in a blended environment was to list proper expressions which were applied during the real presentation. According to S1, blended learning is greatly beneficial in improving her skills in doing a presentation.

> S1I10: "*…Okay the most effective one is the do's and dont's which I can know what should I do and what should not I do ….to do well in my presentation and can improve what..what mistakes I have done before*."

S1 was made aware of mistakes made and reiterated that similar mistakes would not be made during real presentations. S1 preferred using index cards before blended learning. It was ditched during a real presentation.

Besides that, other presentation skills such as preparing good presentation slides are essential to ace the presentation. S2 said;

> S2I14: "*… you need to prepare better slides ...good slides and then the slides need to use point forms and sentence must be short*."

S2 described the importance of good slides with other elements of presentation skills.

> S2I14:"*…we need greetings…can't just standing have to walk around to make the presentation more attractive*."

Therefore, it is conclusive to say that S2 managed to relate the process of preparing good presentation slides with effective presentation skills. Furthermore, S6 mentioned the other benefits of blended learning that may improve the contents of presentation skills like voice projection.

> S6I06:"*...actually some of us have a very good voice projection have very good skills ...so I think it is very effective because this is the platform where we can learn to. To create presentation and prepare us for the next our final-lah especially presentation in FYP*…"

S6 agreed voice projection is part of effective presentation skills which is very important for final year presentation (FYP). Thus, it reflected authentic learning or real-life learning.

Davies (2021) agreed that real-life learning helps students to become more intimately involved in lesson planning if the course subject is relevant to their daily lives The student will develop a better understanding of a field as a distinct "culture" molded by distinct ways of perceiving and interpreting the world. Finally, S4 explained that blended learning enabled her to learn effective meetings prior to real presentations.

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> S4I08: "*…Okay aaa for the first content I read it the video about how about to start effective meeting*."

Before blended learning, S4 was not exposed to meetings to improve her presentation.

> S4I08: "*So before this, we didn't even know we didn't search effective meeting how to conduct we just do presentation in our class*."

Conventional learning does not focus on meetings to discuss effective presentation skills until it has affected students' presentation abilities. Thus, blended learning offers a better way.

> S4I08 "*…in ifolio when once we read up so we learn the basic things so that we can improve ourselves for further presentation in future so the contents are very helpful for us for further to improve our knowledge and it is very useful for conducting meeting and presentation in future*."

Blended learning supports learning improvement as research participants perceived the integration of technology particularly *ifolio* with face-to-face facilitation improved presentation skills.

The reason why students are not able to do an effective presentation is because previous facilitation was insufficient to learn presentation skills.

> S4I08: "*we didn't even know…we didn't search…we just do presentation in our class*."

Blended learning offers various facilitations namely self, reciprocal and peer which could improve presentation skills. Respondents were trained to follow steps prior to the presentation like conducting meetings. Some students pointed out:

> S6I12: "*… the organization. The steps to do the presentation*."

> S5I06: "*…it gives me the guidelines how to do a presentation*."

There are many activities conducted in a blended environment for example;

> S2I01: "*I had learned that how to a presentation better. To start a presentation, there are 4 tips to make it easier…simplified as A, B, C and D. A is attention…showing picture. To grab attention from audience. B is benefit…tell what they will learn …C is credibility…tell audience your experience… D is direction…start with the first point …second point*."

S2 outlined steps on how to start a presentation by suggesting an alphabetical concept. (A) for attention, use picture as an attention grabber, (B) for benefit, outline the advantage of the presentation, (C) for credibility, establish presenter's credibility by telling self-experience, (D) for direction, use transitional devices. Such awareness indicates student's higher-level learning comprehension on presentation skills.

Learning through an online platform is reinforced with face-to-face facilitation. Students were encouraged to discuss collaboratively to accomplish learning objectives that were

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aligned with the Collaborative Learning Theory (CLT) subsequently. CLT promotes group interaction as a way to establish a network of thoughts in the cognitive spectrum. Most respondents agreed that blended learning has helped them to improve presentation skills. This is because these respondents favoured the integration of technology in education.

> S6I29: "*…ifolio it can help those who are doing clinical so the class is still continuing*."

> S4R04: "*…we can use them anywhere and anytime*."

> S3R01: "*…E-learning are important…helps students to engage more on learning process and experiences*."

The incorporation of technology may create a platform for active learning while also satisfying the student-centered strategy. Therefore, blended learning may offer a solution for another problem statement on the pedagogical approach. In their research, Martin and Bolliger (2018) agreed that institutions must develop and offer compelling learning experiences for students to succeed in online learning. Face-to-face facilitation aided in providing a chance for in-depth interaction on many issues relating to presenting skills.

> S1I08: "*…we can do the discussion in the ifolio with the students and also with lecturer*."

> S6I20: "*…we have to…conduct the meetings to prepare the presentation. I think that is to prepare….is important*."

In a blended environment, students interact actively by sharing ideas. Respondents used self, expert and reciprocal facilitation to learn about presentation skills. Below are some of the responses:

> S4I08: "*…once we read up so we learn the basic things*." (Self)

> S2I20: "*… I also discus. with my course mates*." (Reciprocal)

> S1I03: "*…ask any question….to the lecturer*." (Expert)

Hence, a blended environment deters the limitation of the physical classroom and improves presentation skills. Oliver (2007) stated that physical classrooms are restrictive due to time, size and space constraints. Blended learning provides an alternative to doing discussion beyond those constraints.

Findings from a reflective journal found that their communication skills are significantly improved;

> S2I04: "*…can improve soft skill like communication skills." echoed by S4*,

> S4I03: "*I improved my speaking skills when communicate in English".*

> S1I02: "*…I can use the good communication skill*."

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Blended learning reduces language anxieties when doing a presentation. Azeline (2012) defined language anxieties as a type of shyness to communicating with others. Many activities were designed to diminish shyness hence, respondents' level of communication is speedily improved.

5.5.3. Blended Learning Helps to Identify Problems Related to Presentation Skills

Respondents realised a blended environment helped them identifying problems with presentation skills such as minimal eye contact. S3 said:

> S3I17: "…*I can ask directly to my lecturer…. I can talk aaaa directly from my classmates…we can directly correct our mistake like no eye contact*."

S3 believed that she can learn better and improve her presentation skills via *ifolio* too.

> S3I06: "…*Yes I agreed that the ifolio aa …the ifolio helps me... the ifolio is effective in order to get the good presentation*."

S3 agreed that the use of *ifolio* is helpful and effective because she can get access to information promptly. S3 said:

> S3I09: "…*content in ifolio helps me to get more information*."

IS1 agrees *ifolio* activities had helped her to catch up with learning when she was out of focus in class.

> S1I16: "…*it's good when they (we) are loss in class*"

S1 provided information on both *ifolio* and face to face to discuss with peers and teachers.

> S1I08: "… *ifolio there are the written info so the student, understand well and also, do the discussion in the ifolio with the students and also with lecturer*."

Therefore, blended learning promotes self-facilitating besides expert and reciprocal facilitation. S4 mentioned that she was a passive learner before blended learning.

> S4I04: "…*as a student we are not active student... to search contents about how to conduct presentation. We are not searching in the google*."

Blended learning helped the respondent to minimise that problem.

> S4I04: "…*contents are uploaded in ifolio so it can alert us to read the contents*."

Through *ifolio*, S4 is more alert with contents of presentation skills such as good introduction.

> S1I12: "…*Yes, it is very useful cos it teaches me how to start it with a good introduction*."

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S6 mentioned that before blended learning, many students were not sure about the *Do's* and *Don'ts* of a presentation.

> S6I06: "…*doesn't know what they should do what should they not do*…"

Due to that, S3 said most students are doing obvious mistakes during presentation.

> S6I06: "…*they just go directly to the content*."

> S6I06: "…*they do not introduce about the topic."*

> S6I06: "…. *they did not tell the audience their name their objective."*

S4 when describing the role of the teacher stated that:

> S5I24: "…*while the face to face… lecturer gives opinion or gives suggestion*…"

S2 concurred that:

> S2I21 "…*yeah our lecturer gives us response and he try give us… make us more involved in the discussion…"*

Blended learning in this context is very much useful for them to improve their presentation by acknowledging the existing presentation problems.

6. Discussion

Analysis of data reveals the crucial need to shift learning from outmoded to blended. Through blended learning, discussions are not confined to the physical classroom solely. This satisfies collaborative learning theory which sees discussion as the main source of learning accomplishment. Bruffee (1995) confirmed that learners who work collaboratively will immerse themselves in a network of thoughts like using self, expert and reciprocal facilitation strategies. It is justified that all activities provided in a blended environment have helped students learn better. The online platform offers more opportunities to manipulate the time, space and size of the learning. Students can edit and review their discussion at their own time convenience and in such low-anxiety setting. For face-to-face facilitation, further elaborations could be obtained from the expert and peers. Thus, learning is enhanced significantly.

Learning through expert and reciprocal facilitation is derived from the idea of social constructivist theory where knowledge is seen as fluid through engagement and teamwork. In this regard, students took the opportunity to discuss with their peers and teacher to learn presentation skills in a blended environment.

One problematic issue in blended learning is the scarcity of internet connectivity. Internet infrastructure must be reliable to motivate learners to learn online. Burton and Brown (1979) stated that learning with technology works wonders to enhance educational value. Besides that, presentation mastery is a must as the university requires

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them to do a presentation. Presentation skills when facilitated in a blended environment increases their understanding because students favoured the integration of technology.

In this research, those who preferred online learning would get access to various information. Those who prefer face to face learning would enjoy discussions and meetings. Blended learning offers both ways. Students posted videos or articles related to presentation skills via *ifolio* and while also doing presentations in class. The role of the teacher is to determine the validity of the information for learning assurance. Blended learning bridges the knowledge, skills and comprehension gap towards presentation skills.

7. Conclusion

It was consistently found that the participants favoured blended learning to improve their presentation skills. Blended learning as agreed by the respondents enhanced their presentation skills based on three different strategies such as expert facilitating (teacher), reciprocal facilitating (peer) and self-facilitating (Self).

Students are likely to shift from traditional learning to blended learning without ditching the significant roles of a facilitator. An online platform such as *ifolio* encourages research participants to discuss and share their findings from various online sources. It spurred a sense of belongingness stemming from the trust they put on their peers. Respondents perceived blended learning as a useful learning platform to improve their presentation skills because they felt comfortable interacting online and face to face.

Another element scrutinised within the discourse is how blended facilitation improved their skills of doing a presentation. Contents such as *do's* and *don'ts* of presentation, language expressions were adequately facilitated to improve skills of doing a presentation. Through *ifolio*, respondents can interact in the discussion forum to leverage their understanding. This is because the course module, notes and instruction of the facilitator can be obtained easily via *ifolio*. While in class, respondents can ask questions to receive prompt feedback.

Various implications have emerged from this study to suggest some significant numbers of new data. Blended learning discourse provides the opportunity for awareness for facilitators and researchers alike. It allows a whole new horizon of opportunities for educators. It serves as a platform for instructors to design new learning edu-culture. In noting the patterns of the study, a current pedagogical approach favoured by the participants is able to be brought forth to invoke awareness on presentation and communication skills with the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT).

21st-century learners who are more ICT literate can make use of a new mode of technology in teaching to learn various subjects particularly presentation skills. Research participants are actively creating and developing the meaning-making process via blended learning discourse. Hence, the exploration into this research gives an important impact on the roles of participants who appreciate learning in a blended environment to stimulate teaching and learning comprehensively.

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Acknowledgement

Part of this article was extracted from research conducted in Faculty of Health Science, UKM.

Funding

This study received no funding.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest in this study.

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