

# Impact of Synchronous and Asynchronous Presentation Modes on Persuasive Speech Delivery in an English Language Course

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of synchronous (live) and asynchronous (pre-recorded) presentation modes on students' persuasive speech performance and confidence in an online English proficiency course. Employing a quasi-experimental, mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 51 university students through pre- and post-activity surveys, peer evaluations, and actual performance scores across six key assessment areas: language and vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, engagement, and persuasiveness.

The results indicate significant confidence gains across both presentation modes, with strong positive correlations between confidence and performance in engagement ( $r = 0.68$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) and persuasiveness ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Asynchronous presentations proved particularly beneficial for fluency and pronunciation, as the ability to re-record and refine delivery contributed to more polished speech. Conversely, synchronous presentations fostered stronger audience engagement and persuasive impact, emphasizing the role of real-time interaction in dynamic speech adaptation.

Despite overall confidence improvements, nervousness remained a challenge for live presentations, while maintaining energy and engagement posed difficulties in pre-recorded settings. These findings underscore the complementary strengths of both modes and suggest that a blended approach—integrating live and pre-recorded presentations—may be the most effective strategy for developing comprehensive persuasive speaking skills. The study provides pedagogical insights for curriculum design, emphasizing the need for targeted coaching, structured feedback, and multimodal presentation training to optimize students' confidence and performance in persuasive speech delivery.

**Keywords:** Persuasive Speech; Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning; Language Education; English Language Proficiency; Educational Research

## INTRODUCTION

As online learning continues to reshape education, the mode of presentation—synchronous (live) or asynchronous (pre-recorded)—has emerged as a critical factor in oral communication training. Traditionally, synchronous presentations have been considered the preferred format for public speaking, allowing speakers to engage dynamically with an audience and receive immediate feedback. However, the growing prevalence of online learning environments has increased the use of asynchronous presentations, where students pre-record their speeches. This mode offers greater flexibility and reduced performance anxiety, raising an important question: Does the choice of presentation mode affect the effectiveness and persuasiveness of student speeches?

While prior research has examined the effectiveness of synchronous and asynchronous learning environments for general oral presentations, fewer studies have explored their impact on persuasive speech specifically. A study by Indriyani et al. (2024) found that students performed better in asynchronous settings, as the ability to re-record speeches resulted in clearer, more structured presentations. However, their study focused on general speaking skills, without analysing the nuances of audience engagement, delivery effectiveness, and rhetorical persuasiveness—key components of persuasive speech.

This study builds upon the work of Indriyani et al. (2024) by investigating how presentation mode influences persuasive speech performance in an English proficiency course focused on persuasive speaking. Unlike prior studies that assess broad presentation skills, this research specifically examines how students construct and deliver persuasive arguments, engage their audience, and adapt rhetorical strategies depending on the presentation format. Given the distinct advantages of each mode—asynchronous presentations allowing for refined delivery and fluency, and synchronous presentations enhancing engagement and adaptability—understanding their impact on persuasive effectiveness is essential.

The central research question guiding this study is: How does the mode of presentation (synchronous live delivery vs. asynchronous pre-recorded delivery) influence the persuasiveness and effectiveness of student speeches in an online English proficiency course? Drawing from self-efficacy theory and cognitive load theory, we hypothesize that while both presentation modes will yield significant confidence improvements, differences may emerge in how students develop audience engagement, rhetorical effectiveness, and delivery skills across the two formats, with asynchronous modes potentially reducing extraneous cognitive load and synchronous modes enhancing self-efficacy through immediate feedback.

By comparing actual performance scores, self-reported confidence levels, and qualitative feedback, this study seeks to provide preliminary, data-driven insights into how synchronous and asynchronous presentations contribute to students' persuasive speaking abilities. Given the exploratory nature of this investigation with a focused sample, the findings will offer initial pedagogical insights for educators, helping to inform best practices for integrating both live and pre-recorded presentations into language education curricula while identifying areas for future research and replication.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Persuasive Communication Theory**

Persuasive speech effectiveness has long been understood through classical rhetorical theory, particularly Aristotle's three pillars of persuasion: ethos (credibility), pathos (emotional appeal), and logos (logical reasoning). In educational contexts, students must develop competency across all three dimensions to create compelling arguments (Lucas, 2019). The mode of presentation—whether synchronous or asynchronous—may differentially support the development of these persuasive elements.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) provides additional theoretical grounding for understanding how presentation modes might affect persuasive effectiveness. According to ELM, persuasion occurs through two routes: central processing (careful evaluation of arguments) and peripheral processing (reliance on contextual cues such as speaker credibility or delivery style). Synchronous presentations may enhance peripheral processing through real-time nonverbal cues and audience interaction, while asynchronous presentations may promote central processing by allowing speakers to craft more refined, logical arguments without immediate performance pressure.

### **Self-Efficacy Theory and Confidence Development**

Bandura's self-efficacy theory posits that individuals' beliefs about their capabilities significantly influence their performance and motivation. In the context of public speaking, self-efficacy beliefs directly impact speakers' willingness to engage with audiences, persist through challenges, and deliver compelling presentations (Bandura, 1997). The relationship between confidence and performance in our study draws directly from this theoretical foundation.

Self-efficacy develops through four primary sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Both synchronous and asynchronous presentation modes may provide mastery experiences, but they differ in their provision of immediate feedback (verbal persuasion) and management of physiological arousal (anxiety reduction in asynchronous settings versus real-time adaptation in synchronous settings).

## Cognitive Load Theory and Digital Learning

Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) offers insight into why different presentation modes might affect student performance. CLT distinguishes between intrinsic cognitive load (essential to learning), extraneous cognitive load (imposed by instructional design), and germane cognitive load (contributing to learning processes). Asynchronous presentations may reduce extraneous cognitive load by eliminating real-time performance pressure, allowing students to focus cognitive resources on message construction and delivery refinement. Conversely, synchronous presentations may increase germane cognitive load through real-time problem-solving and adaptation, potentially enhancing learning but also increasing overall cognitive demands.

## Digital Pedagogy and Multimodal Learning

Contemporary digital pedagogy emphasizes the importance of leveraging different technological affordances to support varied learning outcomes. Each presentation mode offers distinct pedagogical affordances: asynchronous modes support reflection, revision, and precision, while synchronous modes foster interaction, adaptation, and immediate feedback. This theoretical perspective suggests that optimal learning outcomes may emerge from strategically combining both modes rather than privileging one approach.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of presentation skills, especially in the context of persuasive speech, has become an essential aspect of language education. Historically, synchronous presentations, where speakers engage with their audience in real time, have been the standard format in both in-person and online learning environments. From a self-efficacy perspective, these presentations allow for dynamic interactions, immediate feedback, and a sense of accountability, which can positively affect students' confidence development and performance (McBrien et al., 2009; Güneş, 2021). Moreover, synchronous learning has been shown to foster a sense of community and social presence, helping students feel more connected to their peers and instructors, which can reduce feelings of isolation often associated with online learning (Kayalar, 2021; Argüello & Méndez, 2019).

However, asynchronous learning, where students record and submit presentations independently of real-time interaction, has also gained popularity, particularly in the context of online education. Through the lens of cognitive load theory, asynchronous learning offers students flexibility and may reduce extraneous cognitive load by allowing them to engage in presentations without the immediate pressure of a live audience. Studies have found that this mode of learning can reduce anxiety and provide more opportunities for self-reflection and improvement (Alwi & Sidhu, 2013; Borup et al., 2012). For example, Pham (2020) showed that students who received asynchronous feedback on their speeches were more thoughtful and deliberate in their revisions, suggesting that asynchronous environments provide an opportunity for more thorough engagement with content. Asynchronous learning offers students flexibility, allowing them to engage in presentations without the pressure of a live audience. Studies have found that this mode of learning can reduce anxiety and provide more opportunities for self-reflection and improvement (Alwi & Sidhu, 2013; Borup et al., 2012). For example, Pham (2020) showed that students who received asynchronous feedback on their speeches were more thoughtful and deliberate in their revisions, suggesting that asynchronous environments provide an opportunity for more thorough engagement with content.

In the context of persuasive speech, the mode of delivery may have a profound effect on not just audience engagement but also on how well the speaker can persuade. Indriyani et al. (2024) found that students performed better in asynchronous settings, with higher scores for clarity and articulation. This suggests that the lack of immediate pressure from a live audience might allow students to craft more polished and well-considered arguments, improving their overall presentation quality. Chang (2012) also found that asynchronous feedback in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) settings increased the depth of student responses, particularly in areas related to argument structure and content complexity, which are key to persuasive speaking.

On the other hand, synchronous modes provide the unique benefit of real-time interaction, which can be critical in persuasive speaking where audience engagement and immediate feedback play a central role. Research by Joughin (2007) highlighted that the opportunity for live interaction allows students to fine-tune their arguments

based on audience reactions, making the persuasive process more dynamic. However, this can also lead to higher levels of stress and anxiety, which may undermine the effectiveness of the speech. Al-Nouh et al. (2015) found that students often struggled with anxiety during live presentations, which can negatively affect their ability to present persuasively.

Despite the clear differences between synchronous and asynchronous presentation modes, few studies have directly compared how these modes affect the persuasiveness of speeches. Indriyani et al. (2024) laid important groundwork by comparing overall presentation skills in synchronous and asynchronous formats, concluding that asynchronous learning environments may be more conducive to student performance in oral presentations. However, this study did not specifically measure persuasive effectiveness or examine the rhetorical strategies that make a speech convincing.

Additionally, other studies have examined the effect of technology and feedback mechanisms on persuasive speaking. Shang (2017) demonstrated that asynchronous peer feedback, as part of a learning management system (LMS), helped students improve the clarity and depth of their arguments. This is particularly relevant to persuasive speech, where structure, clarity of argument, and effective use of evidence are crucial for persuasion. Similarly, Borup et al. (2012) emphasized the importance of asynchronous video feedback in improving student engagement with the content and the persuasive elements of their presentations.

While the existing literature provides valuable insights into how both synchronous and asynchronous learning environments affect presentation skills, there is a gap in research focusing specifically on the persuasiveness of student speeches. The majority of studies, including Indriyani et al. (2024), concentrate on general presentation skills, such as clarity, articulation, and overall delivery, without examining how the mode of delivery influences the rhetorical effectiveness and audience impact of persuasive speeches. This research will address this gap by directly comparing the persuasive effectiveness of speeches delivered synchronously and asynchronously, providing new insights into how different learning modes shape persuasive communication in language education.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental, mixed-methods design to investigate the relationship between presentation modes, confidence levels, and persuasive speech performance. This exploratory investigation utilized a focused sample to provide preliminary insights into the complex relationships between presentation modality, self-efficacy development, and performance outcomes in persuasive speech delivery. The research was conducted in an online English proficiency course, where students engaged in both synchronous (live) and asynchronous (pre-recorded) persuasive speech activities. By integrating quantitative performance scores, self-reported survey data, and qualitative reflections, the study sought to triangulate findings and provide a comprehensive analysis of how different modes of presentation affect students' confidence and delivery effectiveness.

The study utilized a pre- and post-activity design, assessing students' self-reported confidence before and after completing speech activities. In addition to survey responses, actual speech performance scores were collected based on five key competency areas: Language and Vocabulary, Grammar, Fluency, Pronunciation, Engagement, and Overall Persuasiveness. This approach allowed for a correlation analysis between self-reported confidence gains and objective performance improvements, enhancing the reliability of findings.

### Participants

The study involved 51 undergraduate students enrolled in an English proficiency course, with B2 in CEFR language competency level as determined by institutional placement tests. While this sample size represents a limitation for generalizability, power analysis indicates sufficient statistical power ( $\beta = 0.80$ ) to detect medium to large effect sizes (Cohen's  $d \geq 0.5$ ) in correlation analyses, which aligns with typical effect sizes found in self-efficacy and performance studies (Bandura, 1997). Students represented various academic disciplines, ensuring

a diverse sample for evaluating the impact of presentation modes across different fields of study.

While most students had some prior exposure to public speaking, a notable 25.5% had never delivered a live presentation, a factor that was expected to influence their initial confidence levels. Additionally, students' presentation mode preferences varied, with 52.9% initially preferring asynchronous presentations, 21.6% preferring synchronous (live) presentations, and 25.5% remaining undecided. This distribution allowed for meaningful comparisons in how preferences and performance evolved over the course of the study.

## Materials and Instruments

Data collection consisted of three main components:

### Pre- and Post-Activity Surveys:

1. The Pre-Activity survey gathered baseline data on students' confidence levels, prior presentation experience, anticipated challenges, and preferred mode of delivery.
2. The post-activity survey assessed changes in confidence, documented reflections on students' experiences, and identified persistent challenges in both live and pre-recorded presentations.
3. Both surveys utilized a 5-point Likert scale for self-assessment and included open-ended questions for qualitative insights.

### Speech Performance Scores:

Each student's persuasive speech was evaluated using a standardized rubric assessing six key dimensions:

1. Language and Vocabulary (H): The richness, variety, and accuracy of language used.
2. Grammar (I): The correctness of sentence structures and grammatical accuracy.
3. Fluency (J): The clarity, flow, and coherence of speech.
4. Pronunciation (K): The accuracy of articulation, intonation, and vocal variety.
5. Engagement (L): Eye contact, body language, audience connection, and overall delivery.
6. Persuasiveness (M): The overall effectiveness of the speech in convincing the audience.
7. Scores were collected on a 10-point scale for Engagement and Persuasiveness and a 5-point scale for Language Competency metrics (Language, Grammar, Fluency, and Pronunciation).

### Statistical and Correlational Analysis:

1. To analyze the relationship between self-reported confidence and actual performance, paired t-tests and correlation analyses were conducted.
2. The relationship between confidence in delivering persuasive speeches and Persuasiveness scores ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and confidence in engaging an audience and Engagement scores ( $r = 0.68$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) was measured to determine the extent to which confidence influenced speech performance.

By combining self-perceived confidence measures with actual speech performance data, the study aimed to provide a deeper, more objective understanding of how presentation mode and confidence interact in persuasive speech development.

## Procedure

The study followed a structured four-phase process, allowing for pre- and post-measurements of confidence and performance while maintaining the natural flow of the course.

### Pre-Activity Assessment and Training (Weeks 1-4)

1. Students completed the Pre-Activity survey, assessing their initial confidence levels, prior experience, and anticipated challenges in delivering persuasive speeches.
2. Training sessions were conducted to familiarize students with effective public speaking techniques,



audience engagement strategies, and technical skills required for both synchronous and asynchronous presentations.

### **Synchronous Presentation Phase (Weeks 5-8)**

1. Students delivered live persuasive speeches via Microsoft Teams. Each speech lasted 6-10 minutes, followed by a Q&A session to assess real-time audience engagement.
2. Peer evaluations and instructor assessments were conducted immediately after each presentation, focusing on persuasiveness, engagement, and delivery effectiveness.
3. Students received immediate feedback, which was documented for post-activity comparisons.

### **Asynchronous Presentation Phase (Weeks 9-12)**

1. Students submitted pre-recorded persuasive speeches of the same length (6-10 minutes).
2. Peer reviews were conducted over a structured one-week feedback period, during which students provided evaluations based on the assessment rubric.
3. Instructor evaluations focused on fluency, pronunciation, and delivery consistency, reflecting the differences in preparation and control between live and pre-recorded formats.

### **Post-Activity Assessment and Data Analysis (Weeks 13-14)**

1. Students completed the post-activity survey, assessing changes in confidence, challenges encountered, and reflections on presentation mode effectiveness.
2. Speech performance data was compiled, and paired t-tests were conducted to determine whether confidence gains were associated with improved performance scores.
3. Correlation analyses were performed, linking self-reported confidence levels with actual Engagement and Persuasiveness scores to measure the impact of confidence on speech performance.

### **Data Analysis**

A combination of descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and qualitative thematic analysis was employed to interpret the data:

1. Descriptive Statistics: Mean, median, and standard deviation values were calculated for Language and Delivery scores to identify general performance trends.
2. Inferential Statistics: Paired t-tests were used to compare pre- and post-activity confidence levels with performance outcomes, ensuring statistical validity.
3. Correlation Analysis: Relationships between confidence levels and actual performance scores were measured to determine the strength of association.
4. Thematic Analysis: Open-ended survey responses were analysed to identify common themes related to student challenges, improvements, and reflections on synchronous vs. asynchronous presentations.

By integrating multiple data sources, this study provided a comprehensive evaluation of how confidence, presentation mode, and actual speech performance interact, offering valuable insights for pedagogical improvements in persuasive speech instruction.

## **RESULTS**

The results of this exploratory study provide preliminary insights into the relationship between confidence, presentation mode preferences, and actual persuasive speech performance. By triangulating self-reported confidence levels with actual performance scores, the findings offer deeper insights into how presentation modes influence students' effectiveness in delivering persuasive speeches.

### **Pre- and Post-Activity Comparisons of Confidence Levels**

A key objective of this study was to assess changes in students' confidence levels after engaging in both

synchronous and asynchronous persuasive speech activities.

### Confidence in Delivering a Persuasive Speech

Before the activity, 45.1% of students reported feeling neutral, while only 25.5% expressed confidence in their ability to deliver a persuasive speech. A notable 27.5% felt somewhat not confident, with only 2.0% indicating extreme confidence.

Post-activity results indicate significant confidence gains, with 54.9% of students now reporting themselves as somewhat confident and 11.8% as extremely confident. Meanwhile, the proportion of students who felt somewhat not confident dropped significantly from 27.5% to 5.9%, suggesting that structured exposure to speech delivery improved students' self-efficacy.

### Confidence in Engaging an Audience During a Live Presentation

Confidence in live audience engagement was lower at baseline, with 49.0% of students reporting themselves as somewhat not confident and only 15.7% expressing some level of confidence.

Post-activity results show modest but significant improvements. The percentage of students who felt somewhat confident more than doubled from 15.7% to 35.3%, while those who initially reported feeling somewhat not confident dropped from 49.0% to 21.6%. However, a large proportion (39.2%) remained neutral, indicating that while progress was made, live audience engagement continued to pose challenges for many students.

### Confidence in Creating a Pre-Recorded Persuasive Speech

Students generally exhibited higher confidence in pre-recorded presentations compared to live delivery. Initially, 39.2% of students reported feeling neutral, while only 11.8% expressed extreme confidence.

Post-activity, confidence increased substantially, with 52.9% of students now somewhat confident and 23.5% extremely confident. Additionally, neutral responses dropped from 39.2% to 19.6%, suggesting that students became increasingly comfortable with the asynchronous format as they gained more experience.

### Performance Analysis: Language Competency and Delivery Scores

In addition to confidence gains, the study examined actual speech performance using six key assessment categories:

Table I Statistics for Persuasive Speech Performance Across Assessment Categories

Metric	Mean Score	Median Score	Standard Deviation
Language & Vocabulary (5-point scale)	3.45	3.5	0.45
Grammar (5-point scale)	3.52	3.5	0.38
Fluency (5-point scale)	3.48	3.5	0.42
Pronunciation (5-point scale)	3.38	3.5	0.50
Engagement (10-point scale)	7.12	7.5	1.02
Overall Persuasiveness (10-point scale)	7.08	7.5	1.05

### Key Observations

1. Students performed strongest in Engagement and Persuasiveness, with mean scores above 7.0/10, suggesting that most students were able to effectively convey their arguments and establish presence.

2. Language, Grammar, and Fluency scores remained consistent, averaging around 3.5/5, indicating a moderate level of proficiency but room for refinement in speech articulation and coherence.
3. Pronunciation had the lowest mean score (3.38/5), highlighting a common challenge in articulation and vocal variety, particularly in live settings.

### Confidence Levels vs. Actual Performance Scores

A correlational analysis was conducted to assess whether higher confidence levels translated into stronger speech performance scores.

Table II Correlation Between Confidence Levels and Actual Speech Performance

Confidence vs. Performance Metric	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value	Significance
Confidence in Delivering Persuasive Speech vs. Persuasiveness Score	0.72	< 0.001	Strong positive correlation
Confidence in Engaging an Audience vs. Engagement Score	0.68	0.002	Moderate positive correlation

These results confirm that students who expressed higher confidence levels tended to achieve higher performance scores, particularly in Persuasiveness ( $r = 0.72$ ) and Engagement ( $r = 0.68$ ). This suggests that building confidence through structured practice has a direct, measurable impact on students' persuasive speaking effectiveness.

### Presentation Mode Preference and Its Impact on Performance

The study also examined whether students' preferred presentation mode (synchronous vs. asynchronous) influenced their performance in specific skill areas.

#### Asynchronous (Pre-recorded) Presentations

1. Students who preferred asynchronous presentations scored higher in Fluency and Pronunciation, benefiting from the ability to re-record and refine their delivery.
2. Example: Student NAS preferred asynchronous presentations and achieved a Persuasiveness score of 7.3/10, highlighting the effectiveness of structured preparation in pre-recorded settings.

#### Synchronous (Live) Presentations

Students who preferred live presentations scored higher in Engagement and Persuasiveness, reflecting their ability to adapt dynamically to audience feedback.

Example: Student NS favoured live presentations and also scored 7.3/10 in Persuasiveness, illustrating that real-time interaction enhances audience connection.

These findings reinforce the distinct strengths of each presentation mode:

1. Asynchronous presentations allow for controlled, refined delivery, improving clarity and pronunciation.
2. Synchronous presentations develop adaptability and real-time audience engagement skills.

### Challenges Identified in Speech Performance

Analysis of qualitative survey responses and performance scores revealed key challenges faced by students in each mode:



Table III Challenges and Impact on Performance

Challenge	Impact on Performance
Nervousness during live presentations	Lower Engagement and Persuasiveness scores
Technical difficulties (e.g., unstable internet, sound clarity issues)	Affected live presentations more than pre-recorded ones.
Editing/re-recording difficulties	Some students found it time-consuming but still performed well in Fluency and Pronunciation.
Difficulty maintaining energy in pre-recorded speeches	Impacted engagement and vocal variety, requiring additional coaching on delivery strategies.

## Key Findings

### Confidence Gains and Performance Improvement:

- Confidence in persuasive speech delivery increased significantly, and this improvement correlated with higher performance scores.

### Presentation Mode Impacts Skill Development:

- Asynchronous (pre-recorded) presentations enhanced Fluency and Pronunciation.
- Synchronous (live) presentations fostered Engagement and Persuasiveness.

### Nervousness Remained a Challenge for Live Presentations:

- Students who expressed higher anxiety in live presentations tended to score lower in Engagement and Persuasiveness, highlighting the need for confidence-building exercises.

These results underscore the importance of a blended approach that leverages both live and pre-recorded presentations to optimize learning outcomes in persuasive speech training.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal key insights into the relationship between confidence, presentation mode preference, and actual speech performance. By examining both survey responses and actual performance scores, the results highlight how different presentation formats shape students' persuasive speaking abilities. Confidence emerged as a critical factor, with higher self-reported confidence correlating strongly with better engagement and persuasiveness scores. However, persistent challenges—particularly in live settings—suggest that while structured practice improves self-efficacy, some students continue to struggle with real-time audience interaction.

### The Role of Confidence in Speech Performance

Confidence played a significant role in determining students' effectiveness in persuasive speech delivery. Those who felt more confident before their presentations tended to score higher in key performance areas, particularly in Engagement and Overall Persuasiveness. The strong correlation ( $r = 0.72$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) between confidence in delivering persuasive speeches and actual persuasiveness scores suggests that self-assurance contributes directly to how convincingly students present their arguments. Similarly, the moderate correlation ( $r = 0.68$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) between confidence in engaging an audience and engagement scores reinforces the idea that speakers who believe they can connect with an audience are more likely to succeed in doing so.

These findings align with previous research on public speaking anxiety, which suggests that confidence allows speakers to organize their thoughts more effectively, maintain composure, and engage their listeners (Gregersen

& Horwitz, 2002). The results also confirm that structured practice—whether through live or recorded presentations—helps students build confidence. However, despite these improvements, 39.2% of students remained neutral about their ability to engage an audience in real time. This suggests that while practice improves self-efficacy, additional strategies may be needed to help students feel more comfortable interacting with a live audience.

### **Presentation Mode and Skill Development**

The results also highlight distinct strengths associated with synchronous (live) and asynchronous (pre-recorded) presentations. While asynchronous presentations allowed students to refine their fluency and pronunciation, synchronous presentations helped them develop stronger engagement and persuasiveness skills.

### **Advantages of Asynchronous Presentations**

Students who preferred pre-recorded presentations generally scored higher in Fluency ( $M = 3.48$ ) and Pronunciation ( $M = 3.38$ ). The ability to re-record and refine their speech likely contributed to greater clarity, articulation, and pacing. This supports research suggesting that asynchronous speech practice allows students to polish their delivery without the pressure of immediate audience feedback (Kerr, 2020).

Despite these advantages, some students reported difficulty maintaining energy and enthusiasm in a pre-recorded setting. Without an audience reacting in real time, some presentations felt less dynamic, affecting persuasiveness scores for certain students. This suggests that additional training on vocal variation and expressive delivery may help students sound more engaging, even when speaking into a camera.

### **Advantages of Synchronous Presentations**

Conversely, students who preferred live presentations performed better in Engagement ( $M = 7.12$ ) and Persuasiveness ( $M = 7.08$ ). Real-time interaction with an audience helped speakers adapt dynamically, respond to nonverbal cues, and adjust their delivery based on listener feedback. Research on public speaking has consistently shown that real-time audience engagement strengthens a speaker's ability to adjust pacing, tone, and content to better connect with listeners (Lucas, 2019).

However, nervousness remained a major challenge for students delivering live presentations. While confidence increased overall, those who struggled with public speaking anxiety continued to experience lower engagement scores. Students who felt uncomfortable speaking live often hesitated more, avoided eye contact, or spoke with less vocal variety, which negatively impacted their ability to hold the audience's attention. These findings suggest that additional coaching in real-time delivery strategies, such as controlled breathing techniques and structured audience interaction exercises, may be beneficial.

### **Challenges in Persuasive Speech Delivery**

The study identified several challenges that impacted students' performance across both presentation modes.

#### **Nervousness in Live Presentations**

Students who reported feeling nervous about speaking live generally scored lower in Engagement and Persuasiveness. For example, Student W reported feeling neutral about audience engagement and received a 5.5/10 in Engagement. This confirms previous research indicating that speech anxiety reduces a speaker's ability to project confidence and maintain strong delivery (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012).

While structured practice helped students become more comfortable, some continued to struggle with performance anxiety. This suggests that exposure alone may not be enough to address nervousness. Incorporating gradual exposure strategies, guided relaxation techniques, and practice with small audience groups before a full live presentation may help students manage anxiety more effectively.

## Technical and Editing Challenges in Pre-Recorded Presentations

Students working with asynchronous presentations often cited technical difficulties as a challenge. Some found editing time-consuming and struggled with background noise or video clarity. However, these challenges did not appear to significantly impact overall performance. Despite initial difficulties, students who spent time refining their recordings still performed well in Fluency and Pronunciation, suggesting that the ability to re-record allows speakers to compensate for early mistakes.

This finding reinforces the idea that asynchronous presentations support precision and clarity, even for students who may struggle with speaking fluently in a live setting. However, since maintaining energy and audience engagement remains a challenge in pre-recorded speeches, students may benefit from strategies such as recording in multiple takes or using visualization techniques to imagine an audience reaction while speaking.

## Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study suggest that an integrated approach to persuasive speech training—incorporating both synchronous and asynchronous presentations—may be the most effective strategy. Since each mode supports different skill sets, educators can design instruction that balances the refinement opportunities of pre-recorded speeches with the real-time adaptability required for live delivery.

To optimize learning outcomes, educators should consider:

1. Providing targeted coaching for live presentations, with an emphasis on reducing anxiety, increasing confidence, and improving real-time engagement strategies.
2. Helping students develop technical and vocal expression skills for pre-recorded speeches, ensuring that delivery remains engaging and natural despite the lack of a live audience.
3. Integrating structured feedback mechanisms, such as peer reviews, audience engagement simulations, and instructor critiques, to help students refine both live and recorded presentations.

These strategies can help students build confidence in both settings while strengthening their overall persuasive speaking abilities.

## CONCLUSION

This study contributes to ongoing research on persuasive speech instruction in online learning environments by providing empirical evidence that confidence, presentation mode, and actual speech performance are closely interlinked. The results confirm that structured practice improves confidence, which in turn enhances students' ability to engage an audience and deliver persuasive arguments effectively.

While asynchronous presentations support fluency and articulation, synchronous presentations remain critical for developing adaptability and audience engagement skills. The shift in students' perceptions post-activity suggests that direct exposure to live speaking opportunities—paired with appropriate support—can help students become more comfortable speaking in real time.

Ultimately, the study highlights the importance of integrating both live and pre-recorded presentations into persuasive speech training. A well-balanced curriculum that leverages the strengths of each mode can help students develop confidence, refine their delivery, and prepare for real-world communication scenarios in academic and professional settings. Future research could further explore the long-term impact of these training methods and how individual differences, such as personality traits or learning styles, influence speech performance across different presentation modes.

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