



# ENHANCING LEARNERS' AWARENESS OF PRESENTATION LITERACY TO STIMULATE INTERACTIVE AND CREATIVE LEARNING IN TERTIARY EDUCATION

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**Abstract.** Learning methods play a significant role and receive more and more attention in this digital era where everyone wants something exciting, dynamic, effective, and interactive. This paper argues that one of the essential tasks of the current communication age and of a modern-day teacher is the enhancement of presentation literacy through the encouragement and development of students' creative, communicative, and interactive skills. The article provides some of the reasons why present-day teaching should lay account on a new type learner, i.e. a net gener, and his needs as well as his expectations in the learning environment in the 21st century. The skill of effective public speaking or the practice of the commonly called presentations is brought into focus alongside. The study employed a survey on the usefulness and effectiveness of the presentation assignment which integrated *TED Talks* and topic-related creative activities. The research involved the students of Creative Industries study program at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Lithuania. As a result, a more creative and interactive learning method of delivering presentations and becoming more self-confident speakers proved to be beneficial among students. Their reflections revealed their attitude towards the effectiveness of the activity and offered insights into the learning process on how to help teachers cater to changing students' needs. The implications of this article are relevant to all stakeholders in higher education.

**Keywords:** communication age, creativity, interactive learning, Net Generation, presentation literacy, *TED Talks*.

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## 1. Introduction

The 21st century has set a whole row of challenges for the mankind in their both professional and personal life, with education being one of the fields expected to adapt to the ceaselessly emerging tasks. Not only the constantly changing needs of the learners have to be taken into consideration, but also the students being the representatives of the Net Generation. Therefore, teaching happens to become an extraordinarily difficult job to do as it has to tackle both a new type learner with his different learning characteristics and new educational goals based on the digital teaching. Moreover, the importance of fostering creativity in the educational process and practising real-time communication cannot be neglected or forgotten.

As we live in a world of rapidly growing technologies and constant changes, where the ability to communicate effectively is becoming a vital life skill and the necessity for creative and original ideas and solutions is seen as inevitable, the educational process cannot remain unaltered, but should meet the expectations of the advanced age and become more diverse,

flexible, focused, and fun. It should also meet or even surpass the expectations of the Net Generation and help them grow on their own.

The article aims at showing how regular presentations can be developed into more sophisticated sessions delivered by students simultaneously integrating now so widespread and truly powerful *TED Talks* along with some extracreative interactive elements. All of this attempts to trigger students' creativity by carrying out the suggested tasks which require their creative input. Thus, the objectives of this research are the following: 1) to introduce a modified approach to presentation literacy combined with online resources (*TED Talks*) and in-person instruction so as to create a more personalized, creative, interactive, and meaningful learning environment; 2) to study students' attitudes to the usefulness of such an assignment; 3) to analyze students' reflections on success or failure of the presentation experience in their learning. The results have been obtained from a survey that was completed by the full-time students who studied English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the academic year of 2020–2021 at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (VGTU) and students' written self-reflections on a modified approach to delivering a presentation.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2.1. The role of teachers and students in the technology age

Teaching is said to be a profession that is a mother of all other occupations and teachers are considered to be the backbone of the society. Griffiths (2014) supports this statement and maintains that teaching is a complicated activity and a never-ending business. It is never complete and requires a career-long commitment to developing one's skills in order to respond to the teaching contexts which are in a continual state of change. Even though Griffiths (2014) states that self-cultivation is required to become fully competent, doubts raise that in the case of the given profession acquiring total competence or qualification is hardly possible due to the fact that the changes in education and the related technologies never stop being upgraded, so there is no room for rest, completeness, or full competence.

Undoubtedly, with the continual development of technologies and their penetration into all areas of life, major transformations in the teaching field are unavoidable. Changing technologies have challenged and continue to challenge teachers whose goal is to prepare students and give them the tools they need to be effective in academic, business, and social settings (Ramaila & Junior Molwele, 2022). Even though students are asked to use technology in their learning experiences, the traditional academic experience does not always prepare students for the digital present and future (Ventimiglia & Pullman, 2016). It is here where the problem occurs and when the teacher is supposed not to neglect the potentially risky scenario but willingly step in with his own initiative and expertise to fill in the gap – to show, employ, and encourage students to use and experiment with available digital tools and platforms with confidence and curiosity. So the teacher's goal is to recognize students' needs and allow them to learn in a way which will motivate them to attain more competences, especially of digital literacy (Klibavičius, 2014, p. 89). Such behavior does not only imply teacher education, but also corresponds to the needs of the new generation of university students.

The argument made here is that educators have to simultaneously handle both the digital revolution and the so-called Net Generation which developed together with the Internet and is also known as Generation Y, Millennials, digital natives, or how Berk (2009) calls it “born with a chip”. According to Klibavičius (2014) and Kopáčková (2015), these new type learners have an alternative approach to the process of learning which in its turn moves beyond the standard textbooks to various non-traditional and alternative digital materials. Other authors attempt to single out the differences between today’s students and previous generations. The main Net Generation learning characteristics according to Prensky (2001, p. 2, 2012, p. 70) are the following ten: 1) high speed *versus* conventional speed; 2) parallel processing/multitasking *versus* linear processing; 3) graphics first *versus* text first; 4) random access *versus* step-by-step; 5) connected/networked *versus* stand-alone; 6) payoff *versus* patience; 7) play *versus* work; 8) active *versus* passive; 9) fantasy *versus* reality; 10) technology as friendly *versus* technology as enemy. As it can be inferred, net geners tend to do things faster and in groups and this process is supposed to be playful and a bit imaginative, they prefer to get involved rather than stay aside and there should be a certain reward for their input. They prefer to multitask and visual information in comparison to text is seen as more appealing. In the meantime, Tapscott (2009, p. 122) provides his four essential characteristics of the learning process of the Net Generation: 1) from teacher-centered to student-centered learning; 2) from broadcasting/lecturing to interactive learning; 3) from one-size-fits-all to one-size-fits-one; 4) from individual to collaborative learning. It can be noticed that the dividing line of the roles of a teacher and a student is almost blurred and it is the student and his individual way of learning that take center stage. Also, teachers are invited and awaited by students to participate in the given activities and play with them so as to know each other better and lay the foundations for a more meaningful, enjoyable, truthful and rewarding learning experience.

Tapscott further argues that the Net Generation expects to be given freedom to decide on the educational content, its forms, place and time:

“Net Geners are not content to sit quietly and listen to a teacher lecture. Kids who have grown up digital expect to talk back, to have a conversation. They want a choice in their education, in terms of what they learn, when they learn it, where, and how” (2009, p. 126).

Thus, students become creators of the educational content simultaneously willing and ready to use the technology of their time which apparently corresponds to their needs and becomes one of the most effective means of education nowadays. Additionally, students of the Net Generation are truly looking forward to group discussions, simulations, games and web-surfing activities as they need to be actively involved in the learning process. A dialogue and collaboration among students are also seen as vital learning aspects since they motivate students to discuss relevant issues and express their point of view as well as listen to the opinions of other participants in order to learn to respect the differences and broaden their world outlook (Klibavičius, 2014; Berk, 2009).

## 2.2. Presentation literacy, creativity, and TED Talks

Learning the art of public-speaking is no longer an option but a mandatory skill to succeed in the 21st century and delivering oral presentations is ubiquitous in both school and tertiary

settings. Presentations not only play a significant role in students' acquisition of knowledge, but presentation skills, one of the facets under communication skills, are also indispensable of many students' academic growth. Anderson (2017), the curator of *TED Talks*, is of the firm belief that presentation literacy should be encouraged at schools and become a core requirement along with other fundamental subjects such as maths or science. In the past, public speaking, under its old-fashioned name *rhetoric*, was regarded as a core part of education and was also called a noble art. Therefore, Anderson (2017, xii) promotes an idea with his tremendously successful worldwide project of *TED Conferences, LLC* and reminds the education system of the need to "recast rhetoric for the modern era". In Anderson's book, *TED Talks: The Official TED Guide to Public Speaking*, he writes: "At a time when the right idea presented the right way can ripple across the world at the speed of light [...]" and public speaking is "[...] the key to unlocking empathy, stirring excitement, sharing knowledge, and promoting a shared dream" (2017, xiv). Given the fact that public-speaking is more important today than ever, students should be given more opportunities to hone this craft.

At schools or higher education institutions public speaking or the so-called art of speaking effectively can be successfully taught by giving students various types of presentations which in ESP classes are a great way to have students practice such language areas as vocabulary, grammar, discourse and phonology. In addition, presentations benefit learners in a number of other significant ways, in particular, they help build confidence, become better communicators, and deepen their knowledge in the chosen topic. It is a necessary skill for students' personal and professional development as throughout their lives they will have to communicate with, present to or persuade other people, invoke feelings or reactions.

However, specifically in a learning environment, there is often this impression of presentations being strictly structured, repetitive, and uninspiring. Moreover, they are often perceived as one-way communication which is not exactly characteristic of effective public speaking. What may also create a bad impression of a presentation is an inappropriate use of *Microsoft PowerPoint* presentation which often seems to lack personality, creativity, variety, and interaction. Being the world's most widely used presentation program, the advantages of using *Microsoft PowerPoint* have unquestionably surpassed its disadvantages, however, there are still many instances when *Microsoft PowerPoint* is used as a substitute for a presenter but not as an ancillary tool to reveal a talk's organization, to illuminate a speaker's points, to illustrate ideas, to visually attract, and engage the audience (Cornwell, 2014; Samiei Lari, 2014; Xingeng & Jianxiang, 2012).

In order to raise a regular presentation to a higher level, the teacher should come to play with a different approach – a challenge and a creative force and set the new goals for an already familiar assignment to make it relevant for the age of technology and communication. First of all, the word *presentation* itself should not send a learner into panic mode, but it should be considered and turned into a conversation where the audience becomes an inherent part of it. It cannot be forgotten that a presentation should benefit both the presenter and the listener; listeners should be told or given a clue how they are expected to respond to the presentation, whether with a set of questions or an activity. Respectively, what the Net Generation expects is to be enlightened, engaged and entertained.

Secondly, if teachers really want to foster students' creativity, they should require or encourage them to add various creative elements to their presentations. As Shaheen (2010) states it, the inclusion of creativity in education is seen as a fundamental life skill which has to be developed to prepare future generations. The article further suggests and highlights the teacher's role in the encouragement of creativity and its transmission and communication to students. This important task guarantees satisfaction, excitement and tangible outcomes for both parts as will be later seen from the research. So in order to challenge students' creativity, teacher's creativity should come as an instance to encourage others to excel, *i.e.* teaching by example.

Multimedia presentations in particular challenge students to think creatively and teachers may ask students to create their own graphics, images, audio, or video clips. Besides, when students must create something, they are also expected to figure out how to represent those ideas in the most convincing, effective, and original way. As far as *Microsoft PowerPoint* presentations are concerned, students get an excellent chance to experiment and express their creativity with regard to the *Microsoft PowerPoint* design which may tremendously add to the overall success of a presentation. *Microsoft PowerPoint* presentations make the content more appealing via highlighting, colour, different fonts, and visual effects to satisfy the learning needs and objectives of today technology-dependent students (Samiei Lari, 2014; Xingeng & Jianxiang, 2012).

Furthermore, to make a presentation look and sound like a conversation, *TED Talks* can be taken as examples to learn the strategy and not only. The nonprofit phenomenon *TED Conferences, LLC*, the brand name for the concepts of technology, education, and design (TED), founded in 1984, launched into popular culture and expanded to a global market in 2006 when the organization's curators on their own website as well as on *YouTube* started to offer no longer than 18 minutes in length unrestricted and educational video segments on various topics or ideas that were deemed "worth spreading" (TED, 2023; Romanelli et al., 2014; Gallo, 2014; Sugimoto et al., 2013). The platform turned to be a successful disseminator of free knowledge and became a viral video phenomenon for the digital generation and their preference for learning that occurs in the virtual space. Topics range from science to business to global issues and *TED Talks'* mission is to make great ideas accessible and spark conversation (TED, 2023). The *TED Talks* website is regarded as the gold standard of modern presentations as well as an effective medium to convey accurate easy-to-understand information to a target audience (Lares, 2023).

*TED Talks* conferences benefit both the presenter and the listener. Unarguably, *TED Talks* conferences have given scientists and other researchers a real-time, mass media driven opportunity to disseminate their research, theories and ideas that would otherwise have been known only in their surroundings (Romanelli et al., 2014). They have also given business people, innovators, philosophers, religious leaders, musicians, philanthropists, authors, educators, environmentalists, and many others a chance to reach every curious person from every discipline and culture who seeks a deeper understanding of the world (TED, 2023). Presenters, most of them coming from a scientific background, challenge themselves with a task of communicating complicated scientific information to the lay public in the educational modules condensed into 18 minutes; in other words, they take on a teacher's role to

intellectually and emotionally make a difference to the world. In order to increase the satisfaction and the intelligibility of the presentation, speakers make use of various infographics and other visual methods, and so as to entertain the audience, they use humor, satire, and other forms of comedy (Gallo, 2014; Sugimoto et al., 2013). Therefore, *TED Talks* presenters are often selected not only for their expertise on a given topic, but also for their ability to effectively, passionately and succinctly communicate information to learners (Romanelli et al., 2014). In turn, *TED Talks* become the gold mine for students to attain mastery in the area of communication, persuasion, and powerful public speaking.

The platform which has grown a worldwide community and is watched all around the world, with an average of 17 new page views a second, has proved to be popular among younger generations of learners and adult learners as well (TED, 2023; Romanelli et al., 2014). The conferences and events continue to inspire, motivate and thrill not only attendees, but also those who want to satisfy their hunger for knowledge in front of the computer screens. Students at schools or higher education institutions may often be very new to this experience and learning resource, that's why it is teachers' task to acquaint them with this medium and include it in the curriculum. By using *TED Talks* as a component of an overall course, students may better connect with the material and get interested in exploring a particular topic in greater detail on their own (Romanelli et al., 2014). Moreover, the *TED Talks* platform could be used as an active-learning strategy when students are asked to discuss or even criticize and expand on various aspects of an existing *TED Talks* so as to sharpen their critical thinking skills. This also creates a perfect environment for students to engage with other learners and learn to listen to others' opinion and reason on their own (Ramaila & Junior Molwele, 2022). In such a way a two-way communication occurs which allows students to personalize the assignment and deliberate upon matters that they need to talk about in daily life. All of this forces students not only to expand their horizons in terms of the range of subjects and their peculiarities, but *TED Talks* also provide a brilliant opportunity for students to improve their presentation literacy and delivery skills by observing the presenters and adopting their techniques (Romanelli et al., 2014). Another important benefit is that students are encouraged to question each other what plays a crucial role in meaningful learning and learning motivation (Aflalo, 2021). One of the basic skills that learners must develop is to ask questions, mainly in-depth questions so as to develop higher order thinking, reasoning, and creativity (Aflalo, 2021).

### 3. The research methodology

The article aims at researching the undergraduates' perceptions of delivering presentations in English classes and self-reflections on their performance.

The results were obtained from two sources: 1) a survey completed by the full-time students who studied ESP in 2020 at VGTU, and 2) students' written self-reflections on the usefulness of the presentation assignment during the course.

To gain insights into the students' experience of learning ESP at a university in Lithuania, a quantitative research was conducted and students' perceptions on the performance and achievements of the given assignment were analyzed. The data was collected through the structured feedback questionnaires that were filled in by the students at the end of the course of ESP.

### 3.1. The context of the study

The respondents in this research were the first year undergraduate students specializing in Creative Industries at VGTU and studying ESP. There were 70 participants aged 18 to 22 in this project. They were predominantly females at the upper-intermediate and advanced levels. The amount of time spent in L2 environment is 3 academic hours a week for 3 semesters, which amounts to about 135 academic hours of English instruction. The project was carried out in the first semester during 2020–2021 academic year.

The questionnaire to gather primary data consisted of closed questions. The survey was designed according to the accepted scientific standards of constructing surveys (Dörnyei, 2009). All the statements of the survey are presented on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

The limitation of the study is that it was conducted in only one Lithuanian university where ESP is a mandatory study subject in all undergraduate study programs, which does not allow for generalizations on the scale of Lithuanian higher education.

### 3.2. Data analysis

The data was collected through the structured feedback questionnaires. There were 6 research statements given to the students based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Then an item analysis was done to find out students’ perceptions about the effectiveness and usefulness of the TED presentation assignment. The learners’ responses are summarized in Table 1. For the sake of clarity, positive answers (strongly agree and agree) and negative answers (strongly disagree and disagree) were added up.

## 4. Research results

The specifications for the assignment for students were given at the beginning of the first semester. In order to enhance their presentation literacy and creativity skills, students were asked to develop a presentation based on a *TED Talks* in the areas of education, culture, innovation and invention. A regular and rather boring one-way presentation was asked to be transformed into a powerful and gripping conversation, two-way communication by adding such components as a discussion with the audience and an interactive task to make the whole experience more meaningful, enjoyable, and memorable. Moreover, this modified type of presentation meant to stimulate the development of creative thinking and provide a space for creative solutions in the ESP classroom. Students were enabled to take on a role of a teacher and a moderator what respectively challenged them to take on extraresponsibility for the quality of their performance and their audience satisfaction as at the end of the presentation peer-student feedback was given. The project itself presupposed to become personalized and students were provided with another opportunity to learn more about each other by discussing scientific, educational, or day-to-day issues raised in *TED Talks*. Overall, the initial goal of this modified type of presentation was to enrich learning and offer useful stepping-stones towards a new presentation literacy and creative implementation of students’ ideas.

It is worth highlighting the fact that all students are studying Creative Industries where creativity and its communication are at the forefront of a rapidly changing world. The objective of the Faculty of Creative Industries at VGTU is to develop a new generation of creative communication, business and technology professionals, *i.e.* to bring together a vibrant, intellectually inquisitive, and professionally engaged community of specialists who are looking for ways to implement their ideas (Vilnius Tech, 2023). Therefore, the focus of the study program is to provide students with as many opportunities and chances as possible to exploit their creative potential what was respectively highly significant of the course syllabus of ESP.

The first row in the Table 1 shows whether students are in favor of a variety and are willing to be challenged with some new ways of delivering their presentations. Almost everybody had no doubts about the usefulness of this activity in language classes, with only less than 2% of the learners being negative about it. The more diversity the students are suggested being confronted with, the bigger the engagement and interest is.

The second row in the Table 1 suggests respondents' attitudes to *TED Talks*. As many as almost 96% of students found *TED Talks* as great examples of public speaking and a source of new and creative ideas. Only 1.4% of students did not hold to this opinion and 2.9% were undecided. Overall, students tend to appreciate this well of thought-provoking talks and the platform unravelling the secrets of public speaking.

Despite being the foundation of all human relationship, communication is still seen as the number one issue that many students struggle with and public speaking appears to be the biggest challenge and nightmare. In order to overcome this fear, students should be provided with opportunities to practice this skill. In the given case, more than half of students agreed that the assignment of TED presentation helped them improve their self-confidence and

**Table 1.** Students' responses to the structured feedback questionnaire (source: created by author)

Survey statements	Agree, %	Not sure, %	Disagree, %
1. Different types of presentations are beneficial to students' personal and professional development.	98.6	0	1.4
2. <i>TED Talks</i> are resourceful, powerful and memorable examples of public speaking.	95.7	2.9	1.4
3. I have become more self-confident, improved my public speaking and communication skills by delivering the <i>TED Talks</i> -based presentation.	55.4	34.3	10
4. I have acquired and developed linguistic skills and competences by delivering the <i>TED Talks</i> -based presentation.	61.4	32.9	5.7
5. I have found an interactive task in a presentation to be motivating and involving.	74.3	17.1	8.6
6. The given approach to presentations has encouraged me to look at the presentation assignment from a different perspective.	82.8	17.1	0
7. I would describe the given assignment in three words – please choose and circle them.	Beneficial, engaging, creative, relevant, funny, challenging, irrelevant, complicated, unclear, confusing, entertaining.		



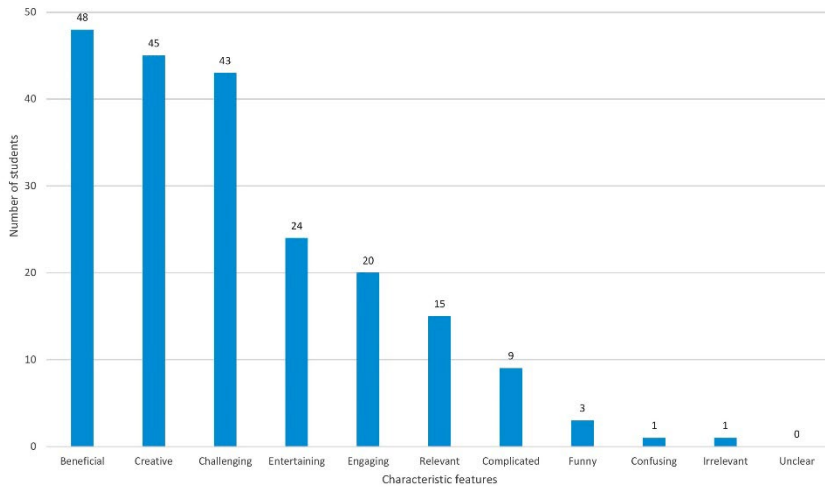
communicative skills. A little bit more than a third of them were hesitant about their success and improvement of skills, and one out of ten disagreed. Generally speaking, to fully master the skill of public speaking does not literally happen overnight but needs a continuous practice, that is why not that many students felt strong enough in their development.

Since the research was carried out with students studying ESP, their acquirement of linguistic skills and competences was of the key importance. Almost two thirds of students felt they had improved in their second language learning, a third was not sure and a mere 5.7% of the learners were negative whether this type of activity was useful for them to become more fluent in L2.

Modern education stresses students' independent activity, the organization of self-learning environments and experimental and practical training (Yakovleva & Yakovlev, 2014). Therefore, the researched group had a choice of actions and could use their own initiative to create an interactive task to further engage the audience in the topic and learn how to make a contact with their listeners, how to keep them focused and interested till the end of the presentation. Besides, the creative task had to be relevant to the topic and it had to have certain educational as well as entertaining purposes. The fifth statement shows students' attitudes towards creativity and self-expression. Almost three quarters of students enjoyed being creatively challenged and were positive about this extra-element of the presentation, whereas 17.1% were not so sure if the task had helped them become more inventive, and 8.6% of the respondents disagreed on the effectiveness of the activity.

New activities are supposed to trigger learners' interest and make them discover, therefore, a lot of stress was put on how differently and creatively a student will complete the task. As the findings suggest, a significant majority of students (82.8%) recognized and appreciated the new mode of presenting, and presumably will apply new strategies to future assignments. Only 17.1% of learners were not sure whether they found any novelty while giving a presentation.

Additionally, students were asked to more precisely and from their point of view outline the main features of the activity by describing it in three words. The options given are seen in the Table 1 in the last row and the frequency of the characteristics of the assignment are presented in the Figure 1. As it can be seen from the graph, the majority of students thought that the TED presentation assignment was *beneficial* to them, *i.e.* produced good and expected results and helpful effects which they elaborated on more in the reflection part of the questionnaire. The second most popular answer was *creative* and such an answer corresponded to one of the main goals of the activity to develop students' creativity while learning and carrying out various tasks. The assignment itself was not supposed to be an easy one, therefore, many students indicated it as being *challenging*. The difficulty may have depended on the fact that the students were supposed to take on a teacher's role and teach their peers in the most possible effective way; students had to take on responsibility for the content and its relevance to their interests and needs. The fourth and fifth most chosen words were *entertaining* and *engaging* which suggests students' preference to be provided with amusement or enjoyment as well as involvement. Furthermore, there were 15 responses of the task seen as *relevant*. Eight students thought that such a project was too *complicated* for them. The difficulty may have come from the fact that learners had never been given



**Figure 1.** The frequency of the characteristic features of the assignment as chosen by students (source: created by author)

such an assignment before and were not used to a more interactive way of presenting. Then one student felt that it was *confusing* and another one that *irrelevant*. None of the students said that the activity was *unclear*. All in all, students' responses on the characteristics of the presentation give a clearer idea of their perception of the activity and specifically indicate how they assess it and what they care most about.

## 5. Students' reflections on the technology, education, and design presentation assignment

Students' reflections on the usefulness of the TED presentation assignment give supplementary information and insights into its effectiveness as well as make an important contribution to present and future class activities. The excerpts from the reflections of some students are reproduced below. The language has not been corrected for the sake of authenticity, and there are no students' names as they did it anonymously. It is obvious from the reflections that learners sincerely and benevolently describe their experiences in carrying out the task as they realize the importance of self-evaluation in learning and the significance of the feedback needed for the teacher. Critical thinking regarding achievements or failures encourages learners to put more effort into their learning:

"I feel like *TED Talks* presentation was one of the most beneficial, challenging tasks we were given in these two semesters combined. It is useful for our creativity, because we could literally express and present it in our own style and way. I loved it. Still to this day I carry some ideas and information from our colleagues' presentations" (Student 1);

"It was very useful, because I had to search and listen to the most interesting and creative *TED Talks*. This task is helpful for public speaking, stage fear, because as you speak for a long time, you tend to get feel more and more comfortable with audience" (Student 2);

"I think that these presentations gave us feeling of what it is like to be in front of audience, how to speak clearly, how to interact with the audience. I think that this experience is very useful in our profession" (Student 3);

"This opportunity gave a chance to research certain topic better and find more synonyms and more complex phrases to express ideas. It helped a great deal to revive my knowledge of English. Working in team was also a good idea, although in the beginning I was sceptical" (Student 4);

"It was one of the most challenging experiences in English but in a good way. This gives a new perspective and encourages to renew your knowledge about public speaking and creativity" (Student 5);

"I really enjoyed the *TED Talks*-like presentation because it challenged me and made me reveal more of my creative side when presenting. Although it was stressful, I found myself in a position when I wanted people to be entertained and curious about what I am presenting. The *TED*-like presentation I like more than ordinary ones, it requires more of your involvement in it and passion about your subject. I believe schools should have them too" (Student 6);

"It is a very useful method to use *TED Talks* database for teaching. It allows to make presentations more interesting as students are using real life experiences. As well, students can take an example and learn from qualified presenters how to make their own presentation" (Student 7);

"The idea of including *TED Talks* presentations in the programme is a good idea, because students not only have a challenge to make useful, informative and creative presentations *TED Talks*, but also have an opportunity to listen to others and get information not only from the teacher, but also from classmates in an unusual way" (Student 8);

"When I first heard of it, it sounded terribly hard. But when the time came to do it, it appeared easy. There are several reasons for that – we could choose the theme we are interested in, we could express our opinion and design presentation how we wished. There weren't very strict rules and that really helped to express our thoughts easily" (Student 9).

As it can be inferred from students' reflections above, they found the modified and interactive approach to the delivery of a presentation relevant and beneficial as well as engaging and creative. They felt they had a chance to express their creative potential and improve their skills by becoming more self-confident and comfortable when speaking in front of their peers as they also learned some of the techniques from *TED Talks* speakers. Moreover, it was useful for them to learn from others' mistakes and use this knowledge in the future. They appreciated the possibility to get in touch with other students and hear their opinion on the discussed subject. The novelty of the task was not overlooked either; a newer perspective on a rather well-known task motivated them. However, on the other hand, at the same time the novelty of the task caused a sense of fear and stepping out of their comfort zone seemed to be challenging, but still sufficient enough to be tackled. Furthermore, there were some other responses when students suggested giving even more freedom to their choice rather than narrowing it to four subject areas – education, culture, innovation, and invention. Others

thought the opposite, *i.e.* they were happy to choose from a really big *TED Talks* database and find out a lot more useful and inspiring talks than they expected in the beginning. There were some doubts on the length of the presentation as it was at times difficult to concentrate and listen for more than 40 minutes including the *TED Talks* itself.

## 6. Discussion and conclusions

It has been argued here that the 21st century has set a myriad of goals for the education system and all its constituents. First of all, it is important for teachers to view the learning environment and process through the eyes of today technology-dependent students and modify their teaching methods to meet students' expectations and needs (Ramaila & Junior Molwele, 2022). As Klibavičius (2014) mentions, instead of taking on an instructor's role, a teacher should become an up-to-date facilitator and show a direction, give advice on students' decisions or chosen activities, promote active learning, develop learners' learning skills, equip them with effective communication skills and assist them in many other various ways. Simultaneously, by taking into account the special and different characteristics of the current digital generation, teachers should reeducate themselves and let also students be actively involved in knowledge production and learning, *i.e.* let them have a part in the control of their education and learning experiences (Prensky, 2012; Tapscott, 2009). Such an approach is of primary importance in designing current learning environments. Secondly, both innovation and creativity are necessary in teaching and learning as both translate to personal growth and professional development (Shaheen, 2010). Innovative and creative teachers who act with passion and teach by example can inspire students to learn with desire, experiment, freely express and implement their ideas. The purpose of the research was to put to the test a more creative and interactive learning method of delivering presentations with in-person instruction which was suggested to and practiced by the students of Creative Industries during their ESP classes. The research findings showed that the new approach created a space for creative thinking and creative solutions, placed students in the role of a moderator, broadened their horizons by listening to the best *TED Talks* speakers, increased the motivation and improved their presentation and public speaking skills. Students' reflections implied a need to break away from more traditional learning routines and embrace new learning streams which make them more curious about the learning content, let them create their own creative and interactive content in the classroom, through which students increase their level of cooperation with the peers and more actively participate in the learning process, and all of which were argued by Tapscott (2009). In other words, new strategies must be used to engage a newer generation of learners. Moreover, students' reflections on the effectiveness of the presentation assignment offered insights into the learning process that may help teachers cater to changing students' needs and help the net generations thrive in today's world.

However, it should be understood that this study has some limitations that should be considered in future research. One of them is a group of ethnically similar learners in a specific educational setting; some of the criteria of the presentation assignment may therefore be inapplicable in other contexts, hence, creating concerns in generalizability. One possible future study can be the enlargement of the scope of the research, *i.e.* a larger study involving

more learners from different universities or even different countries. Another possible further research on similar studies can also improve the questionnaire and can investigate whether learners have genuinely improved their presentation (delivery) skills. Although a much more research is needed, in the context of the results obtained from this study, the current findings suggest students' positive perceptions towards interactive and exploratory learning.

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