American University of Armenia

Հայաստանի Ամերիկյան Համալսարան

# A Case Study on Confidence and Fluency in Teaching Advanced Speaking Course via Videoconferencing-Based Lessons

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# Overview

# Introduction

# Introduction

**Videoconferencing (VC) helps to develop L2 speaking skills.**

(Sevy-Biloon et al, 2019; Wu et al, 2017; Alshahrani, 2016; Lu et al 2014; Lee, 2007).

# Problem Statement

Shortage of literature on:

❑ The role of confidence in developing speaking fluency in VC lessons.

❑ The kinds of speaking activities that are used to develop fluency in VC mode.

# Research Questions

1. How are speaking confidence and fluency developed during VC lessons?
2. What types of activities are used to develop speaking fluency in VC lessons?
3. What is the teacher's perception regarding teaching speaking via VC?
4. What is the learners' attitude towards VC-based learning aimed at developing speaking?

# Significance of the Study

The research study will showcase

❑   Types of speaking activities which are used in VC lessons.

❑   Insights into how to manage VC classroom to build up speaking confidence and

fluency.

# Literature Review

**Functions of the spoken language**

- Interactional

- Transactional

- Performance

(Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015; Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 23; Derakhshan et all, 2016; Richards, 2008).

**Language anxiety absence and self-evaluation of L2 achievement define self-confidence.** (Macintyre et all, 1998, p. 551)

**The EFL teacher needs to**

- Diminish the affective filters for students' confidence.

- Involve different functions of the spoken language in the lessons.

- Include cooperative activities to tackle fluency and confidence issues.

(Richards, 2008; Krashen, 2009; Doqaruni, 2014; Tridinanti , 2018; Zondag, 2020; Alrayah, 2018)

# Advantages of VC in Teaching Speaking

**To develop speaking skills in VC mode, the teacher needs to**

- *Meticulously plan the lessons.*
- *Make the activities student-centered.*

(Bueno Alastuey, 2011; Loranc-Paszylk, 2015; Vurdien, 2019; Iino et all, 2016; Hampel, 2006; Lim & Pyun, 2016)

# Disadvantages of VC in Teaching Speaking

- Technical glitches decrease students' motivation to speak.

(Sevy-Biloon & Chroman, 2019; Gillies, 2008; Bueno Alastuey, 2011; Lim & Pyun, 2016)

- Possible interruptions, overlaps or no turn-taking happening during the VC lesson make the learners stay silent.

(Al-Samarraie, 2019; Vurdien, 2019; Taillefer et all 2014; Bueno Alastuey, 2011)

- Teacher-dominance in VC lessons diminishes speaking opportunities for the students.

(Gillies, 2008; Bueno Alastuey, 2011; Hampel & Stickler, 2012; Clarke, 2015; Sevy-Biloon & Chroman, 2019)

# Methodology

# Methodology

**Mixed-Method Research**

⬇

**Qualitative** ➕ **Quantitative**

## Context

❑ Yerevan, Armenia
❑ AUA Open Education (OE) Program "Advanced Speaking English" course
❑ 30 hours of instruction
❑ Mode: Zoom VC platform

## Participants

❑ Non-probability, convenience sampling
❑ Course teacher
❑ Course students: 9 Armenians, 1 Iraqi
❑ Students' age: young adult, adults
❑ Students' proficiency level: Upper-Intermediate and Advanced

# Data Collection

## Qualitative

**Lesson Observations (10 hours)**

- *Pre-designed checklist, field notes*
- *Inductive approach*
- *Coding common themes*

**Semi-structured interview with the teacher**

- *Recording and transcribing*
- *Content analysis of the syllabus*

## Quantitative

**Anonymous online survey**

- *Likert-scale, yes/no Qs, open-ended Qs*
- *9 students*

**Paired t-test via JASP program**

- *Placement speaking interview (7 students)*
- *Post-course speaking interview (7 students)*
- *Inter-rater reliability*

# Results

## Results
## Part 1: Developing Speaking Confidence and Fluency via VC

❑ The lesson routine:

1. *Task introduction (VC room)*
2. *Preparation (Breakout rooms)*
3. *Pitching (VC room)*

❑ Most of the speaking was done by the students.

❑ Error-correction of the spoken mistakes was hardly conducted.

❑ VC main room and breakout rooms were used for specific tasks.

# Results
## Part 1: Teaching Speaking Confidence and Fluency via VC

**Figure 1**     *p =* **0. 05**

**Paired Samples T-Test**

| Measure 1 | | Measure 2 | t | df | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Post overall | - | Pre overall | -3.724 | 6 | 0.010 |

*Note.* Student's t-test.

# Results
## Part 1: Teaching Speaking Confidence and Fluency via VC

**Figure 2**

**Paired Samples T-Test**

| Measure 1 | Measure 2 | t | df | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Post flu** | **- Pre fluency** | -2.521 | 6 | **0.045** |
| Post grammar | - Pre Gramm | -2.121 | 6 | 0.078 |
| **Post vocab** | **- Pre vocab** | -4.599 | 6 | **0.004** |
| **Post content** | **- Pre content** | -3.970 | 6 | **0.007** |
| Post pronun | - Pre pronun | 0.225 | 6 | 0.829 |

*Note.* Student's t-test.

# Results
## Part 2: Types of Speaking Activities Done during VC Lessons

**Prepared speech**

- **Tourism Sector**
- **Dragon's Den**
- **Presentation**
- **Room 101**
- **Political Debate**
- **Granvile Island Debate**

**Task-based activities**

**Impromptu speech**

- **What would you do?**
- **Family fortune**
- **Picture Narration**
- **Hot Air Balloon**
- **True and False game**

**Role Plays**

- **Alibi**
- **Hot Air Balloon**

**Debates**

- **Political Debate**
- **Granvile Island Debate**

According to the teacher,

- The majority of course speaking activities were successfully adapted to the VC mode.

- Personalizing speaking activities for the students played a key role during VC lessons.

- Breakout rooms were the only biggest advantage of VC mode.

- Error-correction was frequently disregarded.

## Results
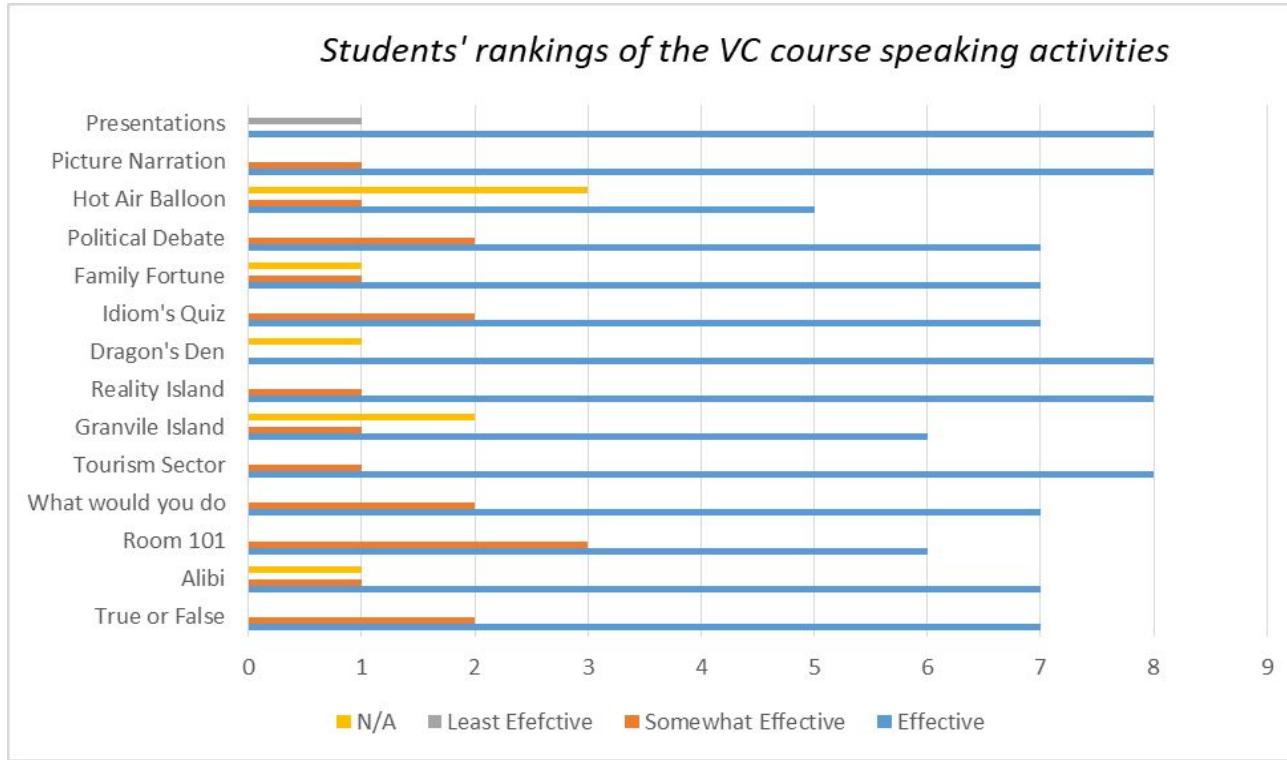## Part 4: Student's Attitude towards VC Speaking Lessons

- **More than a half (77,8 %) of the students felt satisfied with:**

  - the course speaking activities

  - the speaking opportunities


- **All the students agreed that the course helped them increase their confidence in speaking English.**
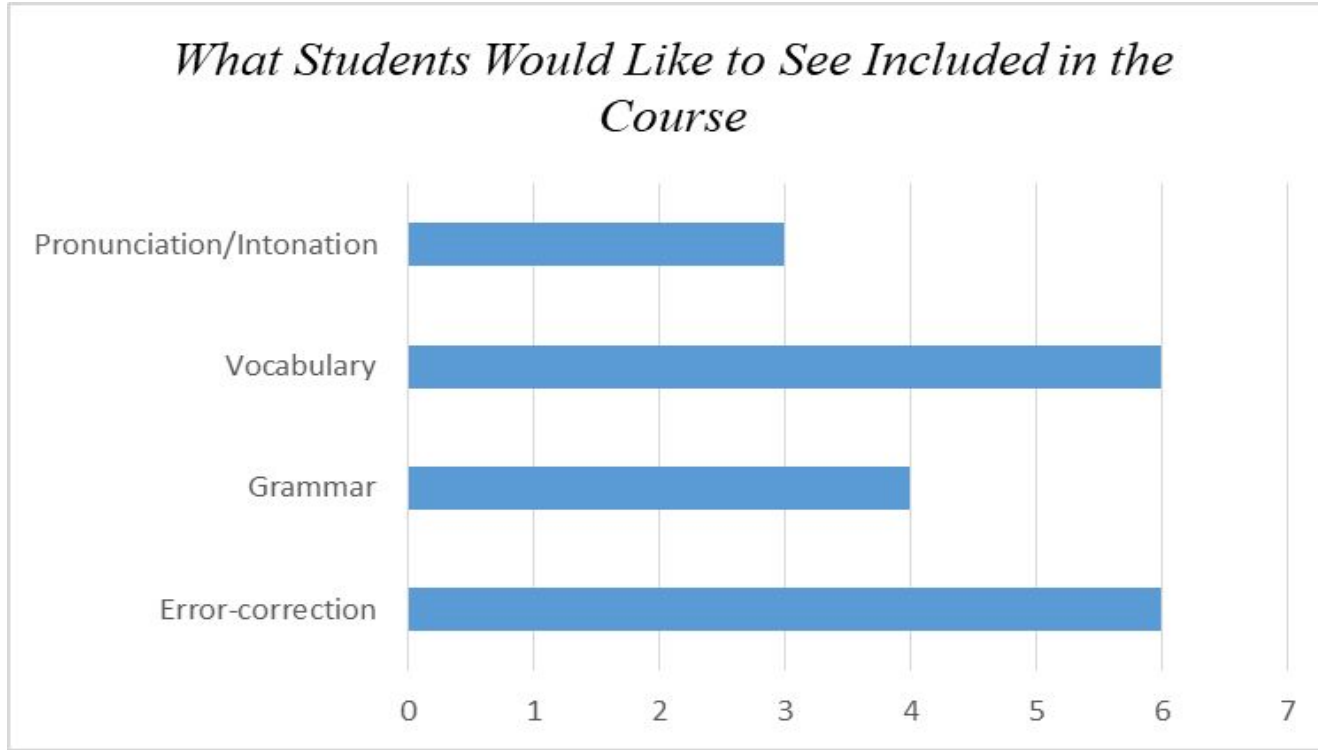
# Results
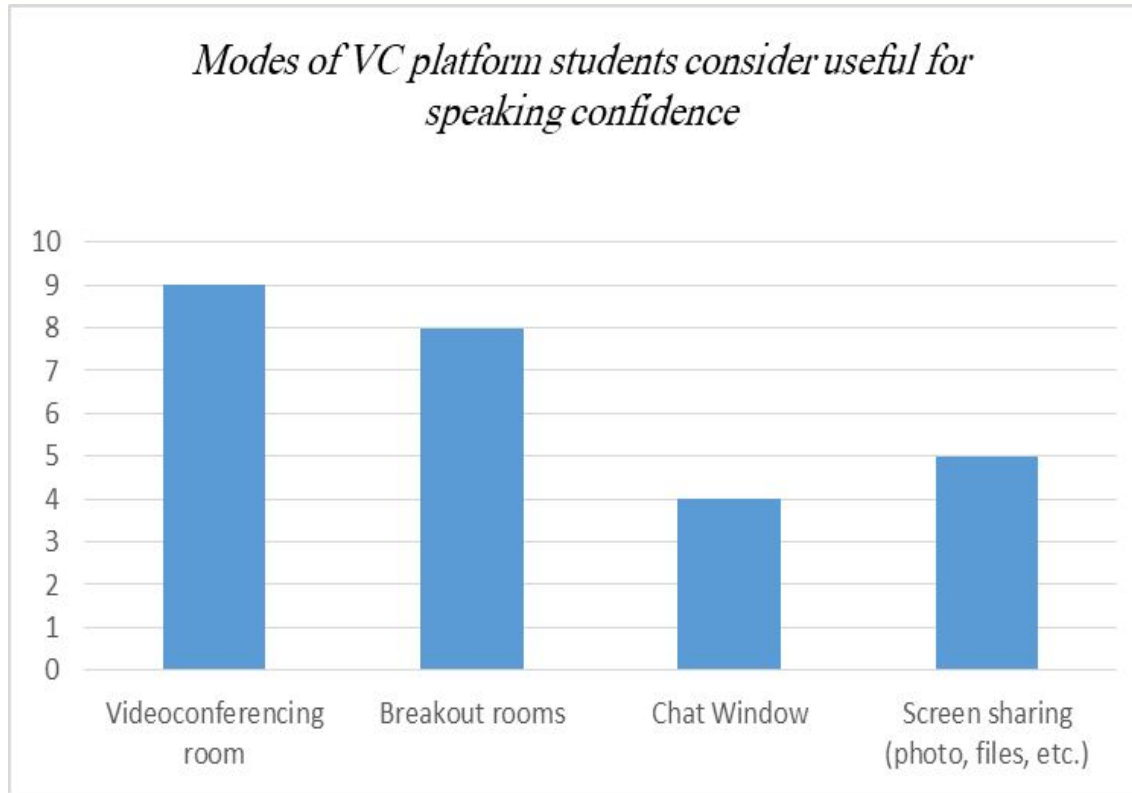# Part 4: Student's Attitude towards VC Speaking Lessons



Students' rankings of the VC course speaking activities

# Results
## Part 4: Student's Attitude towards VC Speaking Lessons



What Students Would Like to See Included in the Course

# Results
## Part 4: Student's Attitude towards VC Speaking Lessons



Modes of VC platform students consider useful for speaking confidence

# Discussion

## Research Question 1:

*How are speaking confidence and fluency developed during VC lessons?*

- Temporary scaffolding (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005) in CMC keeps the learners' speaking motivation and confidence (In line with Lim & Pyun, 2016, research study).

- Dividing the speaking task into a few stages enables the students to practice different functions of the oral speech (In line with Loranc-Paszylk, 2015, research study).

**Research Question 2:**

*What types of activities are used to teach speaking confidence and fluency in VC lessons?*

- CLT task-based activities help to practice fluency and develop confidence in VC mode.

- Personalized (student-centered) speaking activities engage the students in interaction (In line with Hampel, 2006, suggestion).

# Research Question 3

*What is the teacher's perception regarding teaching speaking via videoconferencing?*

- VC mode requires enough preparedness on the teacher's part.

# Research Question 4

*What is the learners' attitude towards videoconferencing-based learning aimed at developing speaking?*

- VC speaking lessons need more error-correction.

- Breakout rooms and the VC main room diversify the communication types and maintain interest throughout the lesson.

# Limitations

- Small sample size.
-  Bias in participants' responses.

# Delimitations

- Focus on one proficiency level.
- Focus on one age group.
- Questionable validity of placement test results because of different raters.

# Recommendations

# Pedagogical Implications

Delayed feedback helps students to improve their fluency errors (Lazaraton, 2001).

- Flexible error-correction when developing speaking fluency in VC mode.

- Breakout rooms are a valuable pedagogical tool to diversity the communication in VC lessons (pair work, group work) and the authentic functions of spoken language.

- Scaffolding is essential both in the VC main room and in the breakout rooms.

# Recommendations for Further Research

1. Developing speaking confidence and fluency via VC mode to different proficiency levels and age groups.

2. How to manage error-correction and provide feedback on speaking performance in VC speaking classes.

3. Error-tracking and error-correction in VC-based breakout rooms.

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# Thank you!

Questions & Comments