

EMPIRICAL

The problems just kept coming and coming: Addressing unplanned mediation when de-signing multimodal pedagogy through Living Theory research

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ABSTRACT

This research project was initiated due to the lack of effective pedagogy for teaching multi-modal oral presentation skills. Responding to this pedagogical dilemma, I adopted the action-reflection cycle, drawing on Living Theory research, to design and evaluate an intervention named the Responsive Multimodal Oral Presentation Pedagogy (RMO2P). RMO2P aims to enhance degree students' acquisition of multimodal oral presentation skills. This paper discusses the unplanned mediation required to ensure the effective design and implementation of this method in a public speaking course with 20 students. Unplanned mediation included modifying tasks and answering unexpected questions. Being responsive to students' individual needs was the most challenging mediation to manage. The research offers a living-educational-theory based on responsiveness, which can be directly applied in practice.

How can I teach better so that they can learn better?

I am a trained teacher who has taught students of diverse backgrounds in academic English, English as a second language, and English as a foreign language, since 2004. My training has enabled me to familiarise myself with established techniques and principles for language teaching, such as the

Audio-lingual method, the Direct method, the Grammar-translation method and Communicative Language Teaching (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). As a result of my exposure to the action research philosophy and methodology during my post-graduate studies, I have developed an interest in pedagogical approaches informed by this area. What I appreciate most about action research is its commitment to being responsive to individual, contextual, situational and cultural needs – there is

no problem too small to be addressed if the problem is significant to the immediate stakeholder (Kemmis, 2009). Action research provides a framework to investigate and improve practices in the immediate natural setting, drawing on a series of guiding principles: it should be conceived and operationalised by the practitioner, should involve problem-solving and should not be prescriptive (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011; Mills, 2014). Related to participatory research is Living Theory research, which can be described as a practitioner's values-based explanation of their influence on other practitioners' learning, learning within their organisation, and their own personal and professional learning and development (Whitehead, 2018).

Since my first engagement with Living Theory research (Whitehead, 2018) and action research (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011), I have been motivated to generate a living-educational-theory from action research, centred on a core question: How do I improve my practice? When I discovered that this question is the basis of Living Theory research and that practitioners naturally engage with it as part of their practice, I felt myself heard and spoken for. I was also inspired by the claim that systematic reflection on this question can produce a living-educational-theory through a dialectical practice of generating theory (Whitehead, 2018).

Thus, this paper is presented as a discussion of a series of questions which you may ask yourself when adopting the processes of the action-reflection cycle (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011) – observe, reflect, act, evaluate and modify – to reflect on your problem systematically and with validity in mind. Questions that form the core of this paper are: What was the problem I needed to address? How were my teaching and my students affected? What did I do and observe? What were the issues that needed attention? The discussion of these questions will take the reader through the experience of how I adopted the action-reflection cycle under the guidance of Living Theory research to design and evaluate a pedagogical method for teaching multimodal oral presentation skills, named The Responsive Multimodal Oral Presentation Pedagogy (RMO2P). RMO2P is grounded by a synthesis of theories including SCT (Vygotsky

1978), the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015) and effective techniques that may enhance the learning of multimodal oral presentation skills. While earlier publications have evaluated the effectiveness of this method for students' mastery of multi-modal oral presentation skills in the aspects of conceptual knowledge, interests and oral abilities (see Lee *et al.*, 2018; Lee & Hazita, 2020), this paper focuses on discussing the unplanned mediation which I had to address as a teacher-researcher because, as mentioned by Whitehead (2018), the living contradiction that a practitioner faces is often overlooked and thus needs to be acknowledged.

What was the problem I needed to address?

From the outset, I sought to develop a living-educational-theory from action research during a public speaking course at a local college in Malaysia, which resembles English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses in Malaysian universities. English courses such as EAP generally prepare undergraduates by enabling them to develop skills necessary for academia and employment (Masuram & Sripada, 2020). There is no minimum English proficiency level for students to enrol on this course, although the typical student would have completed the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) or Malaysian Education Certificate for secondary school students' English examination.

The main objective of this course is for students to acquire and develop formal oral presentation skills in the English language. The instructional period runs for 14 weeks each semester. The time allocated for each class when data were collected was 2.5 hours each week. The textbook is an important resource in this course, and at the point the current study was carried out, the accredited course outline stipulated Lucas's (2007) internationally acclaimed textbook as the main reference. At present, the most updated version is Lucas and Stob (2023) which includes extended guidelines for online speeches and updated student speeches. A teacher assigned to each class usually works independently to decide on

the teaching method and learning activities after the curriculum and assessment have been standardised and agreed upon at the departmental level.

When I first taught the course, I followed the existing teaching plan of organising lessons according to the chapters of the assigned textbook. At a fundamental level, the existing teaching plan and the prevalent methods employed, such as Communicative Language Teaching, which I have been trained in, did not address the multimodal skills required to deliver oral presentations. This presented a dilemma when considering my teaching approach because in contrast to viewing oral presentations as primarily disseminated through the oral mode, interpreting them as multimodal implies that presenters express themselves in a range of semiotic modes in a single presentation, such as written language, media (audio, animation and/or video), pictures, gestures, or speech, whereby the presentation is frequently enhanced by technology (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021). As educators, we expect students to present in multiple modes, and we often assess them based on their multimodal performances; yet, we do not teach them how to master these skills (Gray, 2021; Morrell, 2015).

The 20 Media Studies Degree students in the public speaking course which were selected for this study were ethnically Malaysian Chinese aged between 19 and 22 years old, and were mostly from middle-income or lower-income families. The institutional environment was non-English speaking, where the majority of students conversed with each other in Mandarin. Most of them had gone through the Mandarin national primary school system in Malaysia, which uses Mandarin as the medium of instruction, and the Malaysian national secondary school system, which uses Bahasa Malaysia as the medium of instruction. Their multilingual language profile resembled an average Malaysian Chinese student, who would have mastered some Mandarin, Malay and English, in addition to speaking one or more Chinese dialect by the time they enrolled in tertiary education (Ting, 2013). Their abilities in the English language were heterogeneous, with most of them scoring a B or C in their SPM English exam.

Furthermore, through observing my students, I confirmed the results of previous research, which found that Malaysian students are accustomed to teacher-centred styles (Anuar *et al.*, 2023). In turn, this may have contributed to them being passive listeners (Crosling *et al.*, 2023). The fact that most classroom learning in Malaysia from primary to secondary education focuses more on writing and vocabulary acquisition (Benedict & Shabdin, 2021; Jaafar *et al.*, 2022) which subsequently may account for why Malaysian students struggle with anxiety and have not acquired the necessary level of English communication skills when they left the secondary schools for tertiary level education (Tee, 2022). I also observed that students could not relate to the speech topics in Lucas's (2007) textbook, which were mostly based on American interests. The topics in the updated version (Lucas & Stob, 2023), such as the living wage problem and literacy network in USA, were equally culturally alienating. There needs to be more cultural references that directly connect with the students' lived experiences.

I found myself experiencing a living contradiction, an issue highlighted in Living Theory research, which refers to holding certain educational values at the same time as negating them (Whitehead, 2018). I have always believed that the fundamental role of a teacher is to support the learning of students, but the materials for learning oral presentation skills and the students' prior learning experiences consistently undermined the attempts to realise this belief. I could not continue working in this state of inertia, where the existing pedagogy did not assist the most motivated students in developing multimodal oral presentation skills, which could be valuable for their employability and civic participation (Lim *et al.*, 2022). I knew that if I did not try to intervene as a teacher, there would be a continued wastage of curriculum time, which would in turn exacerbate the issue of student disengagement. The problem seemed too significant and urgent to ignore. The National Education Blueprint (2013-2025) also urges teachers to reinvent themselves to prepare students for 21st-century needs by giving teachers more flexibility in deciding more effective

pedagogical approaches for their localised needs. Therefore, this policy which underlined reinvention implicated that the teachers themselves have to spearhead the development of alternative approaches based on their own initiatives.

The course involved is accredited, and I have gathered experience since 2004, but in spite of this, effective pedagogy for multimodal oral presentation skills appeared to be lacking. Researchers in multimodal pedagogies (Lim *et al.*, 2022; Yi & Angay-Crowder, 2016) consistently encourage practitioners to continue developing and exploring pedagogies that can help facilitate the development of students in multimodal skills. Hence, I decided that I needed to design a multimodal pedagogy for oral presentation skills because of my exasperation with teaching these skills without a verified method. My curiosity about exploring multimodal pedagogies has been piqued since my first contact with multimodal pedagogies. It was the New London Group (1996), through their writings on the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies, that inspired me to explore pedagogical designs to address the increasing multilingualism and multimodality of everyday communication in the 21st century.

According to the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies, new technologies have made meaning-making “increasingly multi-modal – in which written-linguistic modes of meaning interface with oral, visual, audio, gestural, tactile and spatial patterns of meaning” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015, p. 3). The design of presentation slides, for example, is one requirement of engaging multimodal literacies that classroom teaching has not effectively addressed (Hung *et al.*, 2013).

What did I do and observe?

Living Theory research advocates the use of action-reflection cycles to validate systematic enquiry related to any educational issue (Whitehead, 2018). Seeking to proactively respond to the pedagogical dilemma by adopting the dual roles of teacher-researcher, I adopted the pro-cesses of observe, reflect, act, evaluate and modify from the action-

reflection cycle (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011) to design and evaluate The Responsive Multimodal Oral Presentation Pedagogy (RMO2P) during a 14-week semester. The teacher-researcher, according to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993), positions teachers as generators of knowledge about their profession who are capable of systematic and intentional inquiry. Due to the criticisms that the teacher-researcher may be more driven by own personal goals, as much as possible, I involved other stakeholders, such as other teachers and students, and applied theoretical rationalisations to enhance the validity and efficiency of RMO2P. Table 1 below depicts how each component of the action-reflection cycle (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011) guided the development of RMO2P. While students only learnt using RMO2P for 13 weeks, the completion of one round of the action-reflection cycle occupied 30 weeks.

Through the observe process of the action-reflection cycle, I verified the critical need for a theoretically-supported pedagogical method that could target multimodal oral presentation skills and suggest pedagogical guidelines for practitioners. I came to this observation through analysis of student interviews, teacher interviews and document analysis. Although the motivation for this research was personal and situated in a particular context, the observation that there is a pedagogical gap related to the teaching and learning of multimodal oral presentation skills may resonate with broader professional and learning communities.

Through the reflect process of the action-reflection cycle, I synthesised theories to underpin the pedagogical design of RMO2P to ensure that it could systematically and effectively support the acquisition of multimodal oral presentation skills. The synthesised theories included the Sociocultural Theory of Learning, or SCT (Vygotsky, 1978), the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015), and four effective pedagogical techniques which are linked by the value they place on responsiveness to students’ sociocultural background, 21st century multimodal communication challenges, and pedagogical needs.

Table 1*Research Process and the Development of RMO2P (Lee, 2021)*

Research Process Based on Action-Reflection Cycle (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011)	Development of RMO2P
Pre-implementation (13 weeks)	
Observe	Identified the pedagogical issue which should be addressed by RMO2P based on the teacher-researcher's personal reflections, study of documents, informal conversations with 20 graduated students and 3 teachers from the site of study, and a literature review.
Reflect	Designed RMO2P by synthesising the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015) and the principles of semiotic mediation from Social Cognitive Theory [SCT] (Vygotsky, 1987) with four pedagogical techniques.
During implementation (13 weeks)	
Act	Implemented RMO2P in the classroom.
Evaluate	Evaluated the impact of the pedagogical model through analysing multiple data sources.
Post-implementation (4 weeks)	
Modify	Delineated the design and pedagogical principles of RMO2P for future implementation based on the evaluation.

Figure 1 illustrates the component theories which underpin RMO2P. SCT outlines the principles of semiotic mediation and guides the teacher's responsive behaviours. The Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015) informs the interpretation of oral presentations as multimodal compositions, and the Knowledge Processes direct the stages of learning in RMO2P. I also integrated pedagogical techniques such as videos, Web 2.0, collaborative learning and feedback to mediate learning based on data obtained from a systematic literature review. After carefully considering easy access, students' backgrounds and preferences, I decided to utilise self-recorded videos and TED videos in the formal classes while selecting Facebook as the Web 2.0 tool to assist learning outside of class. Self-recorded

videos can be easily managed through the students' own mobile phones; TED videos provide free presentation models for diverse topics and Facebook was the students' preferred Web 2.0 platform for out-of-class communication at the time of study.

To identify a set of multimodal skills required for delivering oral presentations which are relevant to ESL students in Malaysian higher education, I completed the following two processes:

- i) Analysis of rubrics from empirical research, textbooks, and Malaysian tertiary institutions, and
- ii) Validation by three Malaysian experts (Lee *et al.*, 2016).

Table 2 summarises the ten multimodal components of oral presentation skills which are required for delivering informative speeches in Malaysian tertiary-level groups. One important outcome of completing the reflect process is a weekly schedule scaffolding the learning of these components. Appendix A presents the weekly schedule of teaching and learning activities, progressing according to stages of learning, which are informed by the Knowledge Processes discussed in the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015). Through the processes of act and evaluate as part of the action-reflection cycle, I implemented RMO2P while evaluating its impact by triangulating multiple data sources, namely: descriptive statistics generated from pre-test and post-test data, interviews with students, my reflective diary as a teacher-researcher, and Facebook tasks which students completed to support their learning. I conducted all the interviews as the teacher-researcher and involved two other teachers from the faculty in assessing student performances in the pre-test and post-test. To minimise bias in the analysis, I involved the

students in member checks of the data analysis and expert validation to strengthen the validity of the analysis. I briefed all participants on the aims of and commitment required to be involved in the research, and obtained ethical consent from them. The participants were fully aware that pseudonyms would represent their identities and that they could withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. After completing the modify process of the action-reflection cycle, I delineated five design and pedagogical principles of RMO2P for future implementation: 1) systematically identify the multimodal components of oral presentation skills, 2) develop a strong awareness of contextual realities, 3) synthesise appropriate theories to create a robust theoretical foundation, 4) integrate the most appropriate techniques to mediate learning, and 5) anticipate multiple layers of integration in the instructional design (for full explanation, refer to Lee, 2021). According to Living Theory research, this is a crucial step for making the findings available for public criticism (Whitehead, 2018).

Figure 1

Theories which underpin RMO2P

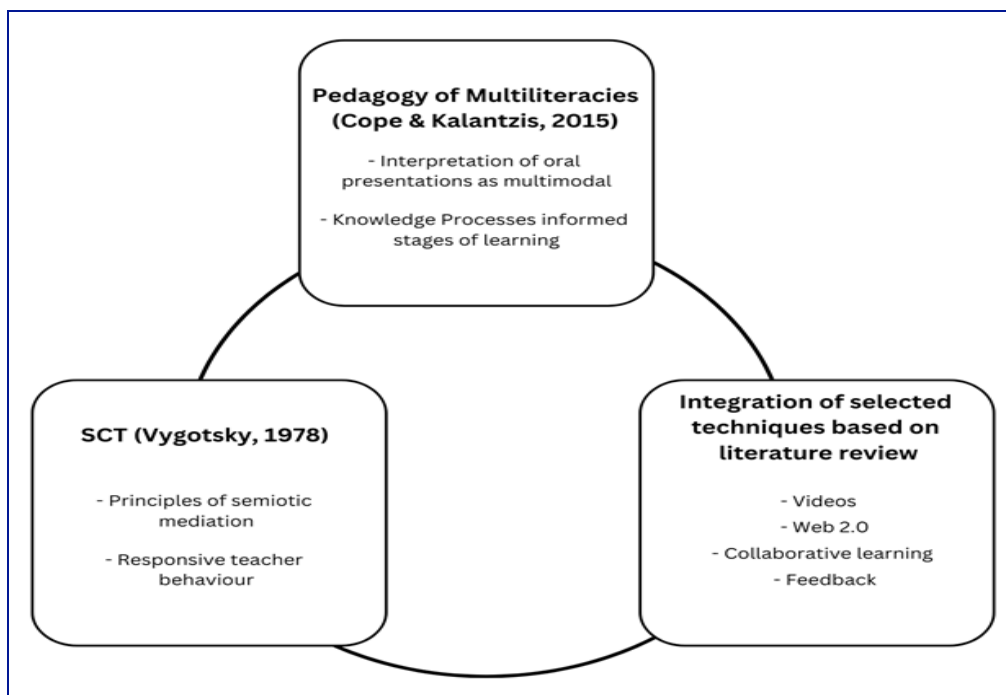


Table 2*Multimodal oral presentation skills for group presentations: components and descriptions*

Components	Descriptions of proficiency across the various components
Content and Structure	
Introduction	Successful use of creative techniques to gain attention and interest Complete, clear and interesting introduction of topic Strong establishment of credibility Clear preview of body of speech
Content development	Very suitable topic choice Clear identification and purpose – achievement of specific purpose and main points Main points supported by appropriate, credible, and engaging content
Organisation of speech	Clear distinctions between introduction, body and conclusion Organisational pattern enhances the understanding of content Consistent use of connectives to achieve smooth and purposeful organisation
Conclusion	Reinforces central idea memorably and creatively Relates central idea to audience convincingly
Team dynamics	
Coordination	Effective time management Effective and smooth member-to-member transitions
Delivery	
Linguistic ability	Consistently accurate grammar and expression Consistently appropriate vocabulary
Oral ability	Loud and clear voice Clear articulation throughout presentation Evidently strategic and effective pauses and emphasis
Visual engagement ability	Creative and appropriate use of visual aids to support content Clearly and purposefully explains visual aids
Gestural ability	Maintains eye contact with the audience at strategic points throughout the presentation Confident posture Effective use of physical actions
Overall credibility	Expert familiarity with content Unquestionable expression of conviction and confidence Maintains audience attention throughout delivery Appearance of a speaker which enhances credibility, including grooming, style and fit of clothing and posture

How were my teaching and my students affected? What were the issues that needed attention?

The triangulation of multiple types of data in the first author's unpublished PhD thesis (Lee, 2020)

indicated that in terms of learning outcomes, RMO2P mediated learning by contributing positive impacts to the following aspects: conceptual knowledge, skills development, self-awareness and affective factors such as interests and emotional support. Students experienced the most significant improvement in certain component skills such as content development, organisation of speech,

linguistic ability, visual engagement ability and overall credibility (refer to complete descriptions of the components in Table 2). For other component skills such as the coordination of time and member-to-member transitions, in addition to the structuring and writing of the introduction and conclusion, substantial suggestions of positive impact could only be inferred from two data sources – test scores and observations by three teachers. In terms of oral and gestural ability, the interviews demonstrated that students had strong impressions that they had enhanced these component skills, although the test scores recorded the smallest overall improvement.

Each integrated technique, such as videos, Facebook as a Web 2.0 tool, collaborative learning and feedback, displayed unique strengths, while the integration of these four techniques had the most notable impact. In particular, videos were outstanding in showcasing multimodal models. Facebook effectively extended learning outside of the classroom, while collaborative learning empowered each student to extend their learning at the same time as motivating others to do the same. Finally, teacher feedback was the fundamental technique that mediated every instance of technical integration.

The focus of this paper is the unplanned mediation teacher-researchers need to engage in to increase the effectiveness of RMO2P, referring to insights from a reflective diary. Even though a detailed semester-long weekly schedule with specific teaching and learning activities had been prepared based on the reflect process of the action-reflection cycle, RMO2P is only effective if the teacher is willing to constantly modify scaffolding as learning progresses based on SCT principles (Smagorinsky, 2013). Throughout the implementation of RMO2P during the semester, I had to anticipate unplanned mediation such as modifying learning tasks and providing answers to unexpected questions. Unplanned mediation occurred as early as Week 2 during the students' first oral presentations because the teacher-evaluators observed that students significantly lacked creativity. As a result, I modified the collaborative learning tasks in Week 10 by inserting a knowledge transfer activity (Cope & Kalantzis,

2013) and identifying more TED videos that could inspire creativity. The knowledge transfer activity required students to show their understanding through completing concept maps.

Although I had carefully planned the teaching and learning based on the literature review, students asked unexpected questions because they were confused by the terms which were used to describe various components of multimodal oral presentation skills such as linguistic ability, oral ability, organisation, connectives, content development and conviction. For instance, they were unable to differentiate between linguistic ability and oral ability, or to identify the differences between content development and content familiarity. The following is a sample of unexpected questions that were asked by students when they were learning how to develop and strengthen the content of their presentations:

- i) How can we decide if the author is credible?
- ii) What is the difference between the publication date and the copyright date, if any?
- iii) Is the interview a type of testimony?

There was one critical learning moment during the implementation of RMO2P when there was a need for immediate modification. In Week 5, after the students viewed a TED presentation by Amy Cuddy, which illustrated the possibility of increasing students' level of confidence through doing what she termed a 'power pose', I instructed the students to demonstrate their 'power pose'. This activity aimed to help students address their public speaking anxieties, which they had discussed in their interviews and which I had observed in their first oral presentations in Week 2.

However, many young women were too shy to demonstrate their power pose in class. They stood behind their tables and refrained from demonstrating any pose. This was understandable, given that their school experiences which were predominantly teacher-centred may have reinforced this passive attitude (Crosling *et al.*, 2023) and caused them to be very uncomfortable when placed in the center of classroom attention.

Hence, I promptly proposed that they demonstrate the pose collaboratively instead of individually, giving them more time to deliberate their ideas and find support in each other. As a result, this quick and sympathetic modification to the planned activity boosted their willingness to display various power poses, and also enhanced their creativity. [Figure 2](#) and [Figure 3](#) illustrate some of the power poses. In summary, the teacher's unplanned mediation – providing answers to unexpected questions and modifying the learning tasks – reinforced SCT researchers' suggestions that

teachers need to constantly monitor students' affective experiences and modify the scaffolding support (Smagorinsky, 2013).

Apart from responding to classroom issues, I tried to be sympathetic to individual students' needs by being aware of their personalities, comforting and sensitive to their anxieties, supportive of the unique assistance each student required and open to offering constructive suggestions to address their dilemmas. This ability

Figure 2

Power pose (example 1)



Figure 3

Power pose (example 2)



to attend to individual students' needs was made possible because the natural setting was a small class which was assisted by Web 2.0. With a bigger class, the individual assistance with Web 2.0 would still be possible but it would require a longer time for completion. Before responding to their needs, I reflected on the following critical questions based on my interpretation of the principles of scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1978).

- i) What is the sociocultural background of each student? What aspects may enable or undermine learning?
- ii) What are the personal characteristics of each student which may enable or undermine learning?
- iii) If the student seems naturally competent, how can I further scaffold learning?
- iv) How can I support the learning of introverts who are anxious about speaking or un-likely to seek help?

Three students who had personal issues with delivering English oral presentations will be discussed in the next section to further exemplify how teachers can be responsive to individual needs. All names of students are represented by pseudonyms.

Minnie was an introvert who usually avoided seeking the teacher's help. Although she had scored an A in her SPM English examination, her speaking ability was of no consequence to the grade, so she had never developed confidence in speaking. I suspected that Minnie would not voluntarily ask me for guidance, so I offered my guidance without being asked. The comments Minnie received included positive encouragement and constructive suggestions for using her voice. Minnie expressed her appreciation for the individualised feedback she received in this way: "I think we can see our own self clearly during presentation which we can't see that usually... Help us to understand ourselves better. Hmm how to say... I seldom have eye contact with the audience in previous presentations. But this course had given me a chance to learn to use eye contact in front of audience. And through their eyes I can know they are listening or not." Minnie attributed the

individualised feedback to the teacher's observance: "I learnt new things obviously... and the skills to improve in public speaking... and teacher is very observant which help me a lot in improve [sic] my skills."

Timmy's individual needs were almost the opposite of Minnie's because he had contrasting personal characteristics. Timmy was gregarious but had many issues with pronunciation in his oral delivery. He requested me to listen to and comment on recordings of his speaking, and I supportively obliged. Timmy elaborated his problem that was attended by the individual attention given to him: "When I speak, I would naturally speak faster and faster, teacher told me that I speak so fast that I swallow my words, so I do not sound clear, I realized I have this problem... not that my pronunciation is weak, but the fast rate of speech caused me to swallow many sounds." By the end of the course, Timmy was voted one of the most improved speakers by his classmates.

Kai Yin was not anxious about speaking, but she needed to gain public speaking experience in English. While observing her first presentation and her performance in class activities, I noticed that she needed a lot of scaffolding for linguistic accuracy. Since Kai Yin was not an introvert and accepted criticism, I made it a point to always provide explicit feedback on her linguistic errors, especially in the use of transitional expressions. Kai Yin said she had never received this kind of feedback and individual attention: "There has never been a teacher who corrected our mistakes, so we used the wrong expressions. The most interesting point is need to have eye contact with audience, in the past, we just continued speaking to the slides. I finally realised that how we usually present is wrong, how to introduce, and how to invite the next student to present."

Responsiveness to individual needs is arguably the most challenging aspect of implementing RMO2P in class due to the level of personalised mediation that needs to be managed. The success of this kind of responsiveness is highly dependent on the extent of student willingness (Kim, 2014). Students must be willing to express their problems or accept the feedback and suggestions which are conveyed to them. Without

this openness to learning and constructive change, even when personalised feedback is given, there will be hardly any impact on the improvement in knowledge or skills.

Despite the constant unplanned mediation, I had to be prepared to take on, I anticipate adapting RMO2P for new contexts and other levels of study because students demonstrated improved skills and awareness of themselves as presenters, in addition to being more engaged and invested in their learning. Since the implementation of RMO2P discussed in this study, I have adapted it for students with lower English proficiency from Japan and bigger classes of up to 90 students. I look forward to adapting RMO2P for bigger classes, and different levels of study, and integrating other types of social media such as TikTok and Instagram, since recent chats with university students have suggested that Facebook has lost its appeal to Generation Z. For students with lower English proficiency, the speech length may be reduced to one minute for each individual presentation. Students who are more familiar with TikTok can opt to record their presentations on this platform to ensure relevance to current digital platforms. There are also more updated publications on multiliteracies pedagogy (e.g. Lim *et al.*, 2022), which I intend to engage with in future work. Lim *et al.* (2022) suggested a wider repertoire of learning activities that may appeal to the cognitive, social-material, affective and embodied of learning domains.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed how I adopted the action-reflection cycle under the guidance of Living Theory research to design and evaluate The Responsive Multimodal Oral Presentation Pedagogy (RMO2P). RMO2P is a pedagogical method which aims to enhance the acquisition of multimodal oral presentation skills among degree students, which I applied in the context of this paper as part of a public speaking course.

This paper discussed the unplanned mediation I had to address to ensure the effectiveness of the design and implementation of

this pedagogical method. The unplanned mediation included modifying tasks and providing answers to unexpected questions. The research found that being responsive to students' individual needs was the most challenging mediation to manage. Despite the numerous unplanned mediations which I had to confront, I have generated and experienced a living-educational-theory based on the value of responsiveness which can be directly related and applied to the teaching of multimodal oral presentation skills. As a result, I have become a more effective practitioner who uses theory to inform my pedagogical practices instead of relying on external workshops and textbooks that provide only general guidelines. Due to the systematic and reflexive development process I went through with RMO2P, I now have a semester-long weekly schedule that is detailed and flexible enough to be adapted to teaching plans for different contextual situations.


Although there were instances of unplanned mediation that had to be resolved at both the class and individual student levels, I understand that this is a natural living contradiction which I can manage. Thus, I now look forward to further linking theory with practice to address any pedagogical issues that trouble my students or me. I expect the problems to keep emerging and evolving, but also that they can be addressed with each tailored intervention. Echoing Whitehead's (2018) work, I am now experiencing Living Theory research as a way of life.


Declaration

The personal 'I' refers to the first author whose PhD research informed this paper. The second and third authors assisted in the drafting, editing and formatting of the paper.

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