Presentation vs. Performance: Effects of lecturing style in Higher Education on student preference and student learning

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Conventional lecture approaches view the process as a teacher-led method of imparting knowledge ('presentation' lecture), whereas modern theories suggest that the teaching methods employed should aim to inspire the student to learn rather than simply provide them with knowledge ('performance' lecture). The aim of the current research project was to compare the presentation lecture with the performance lecture by assessing student preferences and student learning. Comparisons within and across student cohorts revealed greater retention, understanding, and preference for the material covered in the performance lectures relative to the material covered in the presentation lectures. These findings suggest that Higher Education should aim to employ a greater use of the methods utilised in the performance lecture in order to enhance learning. Future research should focus on further exploring the relative effectiveness of each of these individual performance methods in order to establish the best possible approach to teaching in Higher Education.
Keywords: *Lecture; Presentation; Performance; Higher Education.*

THE ACCESSIBILITY of Higher Education (HE) in the UK has changed dramatically over the last few decades as student intake rates in all universities have increased every year: Tyrell (2003) noted a 40 per cent increase in the number of HE students in the UK between 1993 and 2003, and UCAS figures indicate a further 22 per cent increase in applicants accepted into HE institutions between 2003 and 2008 (UCAS, 2008). Yet, while the nature of HE has altered substantially in the face of larger class sizes containing a more diverse range of students, the methods underpinning HE appear to have remained somewhat stationary. These conflicting areas of change and stability have led to a number of problems in the HEsector, including reports of dissatisfaction from both lecturers and students (Oshagbemi, 1997) with approximately 60 per cent of students reporting feelings of boredom during their classes (Mann & Robinson, 2009).

It would, perhaps, be advisable for institutes to consider alternative forms of learning (such as e-learning and small groups) in order to better engage students. At present, however, it is important to recognise that the lecture is still the most widely used teaching method in universities (Horgan, 1999) and there are some good pedagogic reasons for maintaining the lecture format (Cashin, 1985). Rather than eliminating the popular and cost-effective lecture format entirely, it may be appropriate for academics to instead reconsider the style in which lectures are delivered.

Conventional approaches to lecturing view the process as a teacher-led method of imparting knowledge. Ramsden (2003) describes this didactic method as education through the transmission of information and suggests that this theory of learning assumes that students are passive recipients of knowledge transmitted by the lecturer. This traditional method of lecturing is prevalent in the HE system: the Robbins Report stated that one of the key functions of HE is the transmission of culture and instruction of skills (Moser, 1988) and this teacher-focused transmission approach is still common today (McKenzie, 2002). The traditional approach to the lecture will concentrate on the presentation of information without seeking to

stimulate the audience. Essentially, the primary aim of this approach is to present information to be internalised by the student and regurgitated at an appropriate time in the future (for example, during final exams or during work-based events requiring the use of such knowledge). The presentation will focus on ensuring that all information is transmitted in a clear and thorough manner by linking theory to experience, speaking slowly with appropriate pauses, planning and structuring all material in a logical sequence, and ensuring that all content is directly relevant to the core topic under investigation. This method emphasises the serious nature of academic study thus highlighting the importance of the concepts and theories: students are not distracted by entertaining sidelines and can focus exclusively on the important aspects of their education. Furthermore, this approach can be adopted for large groups without difficulty or restraint thus it is ideal for the increasing student population in modern HE. This method may not, however, be the optimal approach for successful learning. Common problems associated with students taught through this method include low motivation, high passivity, failure to take responsibility for learning, and reduced levels of understanding of the lecture material (Ramsden, 2003). Bland (2004) suggests that the simple presentation style of lecture is a method of transferring information from the notes of the lecturer to the notes of the student without passing through the heads of either.

In contrast to the presentation approach, current theories of lecturing suggest that the teaching methods employed should aim to inspire the student rather than simply provide them with knowledge. It is proposed that 'education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire' (attributed to William Butler Yeats, Poet, 1865–1939) and this proposal has been adopted in a wide range of educational settings: for example, Bland (2004) notes that the slogan of the General Medical Council for the UK is that 'we should seek to light fires rather than fill vessels'. This approach to teaching in HE argues that effective lecturing should incorporate an equal balance of clarity of information and generation of interest (Brown & Atkins, 1988). While the traditional lecture will focus exclusively on the clarity of information, contemporary lectures attempt to incorporate many of the factors associated with both enhancement of clarity and generation of interest. Brown and Atkins (1988) suggest that this interest in the material is generated by demonstrating ones own enthusiasm in the topic through body language and vocal inflection, developing a rapport with students through eye contact and discussions, and the appropriate yet lively (perhaps even controversial and/or humorous) use of visuo-auditory aids, student activities, examples, analogies, and anecdotes. Indeed, it could be argued that this approach to lecturing is in actuality more like a performance: Germano argues that 'the teacher is a performer … the classroom and lecture hall prove that, like it or not, you need performance skills to get your ideas across' (Germano, 2003, p.1).

The aim of the current research was to compare the presentation lecture with the performance lecture by measuring student preferences and testing both retention and understanding of information. These lectures differed on six key aspects: Visual Presentation, Verbal Presentation, Audience Interaction, Personal Links, Humour, and Controversy. It was hypothesised that students would indicate greater preference and demonstrate enhanced learning for the material covered in the performance lecture relative to the presentation lecture. This was initially tested by comparing the outcomes of two lectures (presentation and performance) on different topics delivered to the same cohort of students. To control for the potential confound of topic content, further tests compared the outcomes of the presentation lecture from the initial test with a performance lecture on the same topic in the following year. All lectures were compared in terms of preference and learning.

Method

Participants

Participants were selected using opportunity-sampling methods from the population of undergraduate psychology students registered on the Cognitive Psychology module in the School of Psychology at Bangor University. This module was one of the BPS accredited compulsory options in the second year of the Psychology undergraduate degree course. Approximately 204 students participated in this study during the academic year 2007–2008 and a further 280 students participated in this study during the academic year 2008–2009 (approximate figures taken on the basis of final examination attendance). Every effort was taken to ensure that all participants remained naïve to the true hypothesis of this study. Confidentiality was ensured by use of student numbers rather than actual names, and all participants were informed that they could withdraw their data from the experiment at any time by emailing their unique student number to the exam coordinator. Extensive written debriefing was provided after the completion of the study and participants were invited to request further information or a copy of the final results.

Design

This experiment adopted a between-subjects design evaluating student preferences and learning following lectures delivered as part of the Cognitive Psychology module in a second year undergraduate Psychology degree.

Initial testing compared the outcomes of a presentation lecture and a performance lecture delivered to the 2007/08 cohort of students. The same tutor delivered each of these lectures to the same group of undergraduate students in the same lecture theatre on the same day. Both lectures were delivered on the subject of memory: the presentation lecture focusing on the topic of Forgetting was followed by the performance lecture focusing on the topic of Misremembering. Although the same group of participants was exposed to both lectures, the design remained between-subjects for the evaluation of student learning because analysis compared grades of different students within this cohort (those who answered the Forgetting question vs. those who answered the Misremembering question). Similarly, for the evaluation of student preference, audit data made it impossible link the preference scores reported for the two lectures to the same individual student thus it was more appropriate to conduct analysis using a stringent between-subjects design.

The topic of Forgetting focused on memory research relating to the process of learning and explored evidence for effective revision techniques. The topic of Misremembering focused on memory research relating to false memories and explored evidence for ineffective eyewitness testimonies. Each lecture was deemed approximately equivalent in terms of difficulty and amount of content covered, and the tutor reported that previous cohorts had indicated approximately the same degree of enthusiasm for each topic (Forgetting is directly relevant to the world of the student whereas Misremembering is interesting in relation to criminal justice). Despite these considerations, it was still important to control for the possibility that one of the topics was inherently more engaging or easier to understand. Unfortunately, ethical constraints prevented the possibility of direct counterbalancing for the topics and teaching approaches in the following academic year – if the findings indicated enhanced student learning for one of the approaches, it would be inappropriate to switch this method for a less effective approach with the next student cohort. Instead, the lecturer adopted a reflective practice approach to her teaching by changing only the least effective lecture to the style deemed most effective: in this case, the less effective presentation lecture on Forgetting was delivered in the performance style for the next student cohort. Therefore, further testing compared the outcomes of the Forgetting presentation lecture delivered to

the 2007/08 cohort of students and a Forgetting performance lecture delivered to the 2008/09 cohort of students. The same tutor delivered each of these lectures in the same lecture theatre using the same topic content.

The independent variable in this study was the style of lecture delivery: presentation lecture style or performance lecture style. The first dependent variable in this experiment was the preferences reported by the students. Student preferences were assessed in a short questionnaire at the end of each lecture in order to determine the immediate level of enjoyment and engagement experienced by the students. However, it was also important to ensure that these tests of preference did not focus exclusively on whether the student had 'fun', but instead explored the issue of whether the student felt that the lecture experience was positive and the topic coverage effective for learning. This was accomplished by a second assessment of student preferences focusing on the choice of essay question in the final examination. This choice was assumed to reflect the internal belief that the topic was well learned and understood. The second dependent variable in this experiment was the degree of learning experienced by the students. Information retention and topic understanding was assessed in a final exam at the end of the course.

Procedure

Lectures

Each lecture lasted approximately 50 minutes: five-minute introduction outlining the aims and objectives of the lecture, 40-minute presentation of information through PowerPoint, and five-minute summary of the material. The intended learning outcomes for the topic of Forgetting were for the student to be able to outline the key theories of forgetting, present evidence for the theories of forgetting, and explain the effects of context-dependent, state-dependent, and mood-congruent memory on retrieval. The intended learning outcomes for the topic of Misremembering were for the student to be able to discuss the reliability of memory, explain the main factors responsible for creating false memories, and outline methods for improving eyewitness testimony.

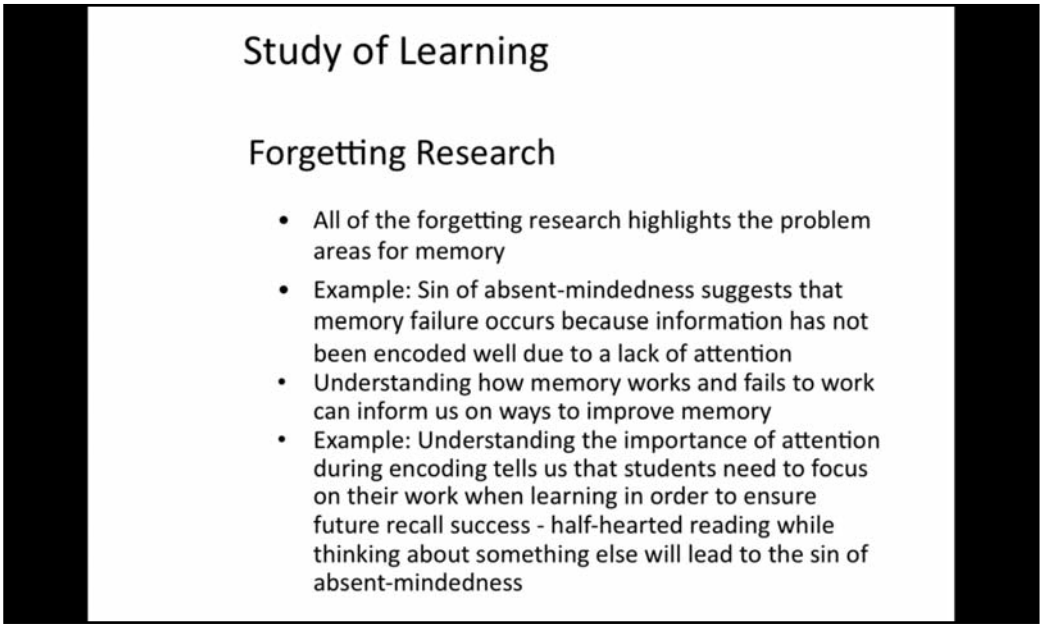
Each of these lectures used a different balance of time devoted to student engagement and time devoted to information delivery. For the presentation lectures, the primary aim was to deliver the maximum amount of information. The student was provided with detailed lecture notes and all concepts were explained in full. However, the lecture did not contain any entertainment and incorporated a minimal degree of interaction. In short, this class was the lecture equivalent of an instruction manual for the topic – highly informative, but lacking in entertainment value. For the performance lecture, the primary aim was to engage the audience. The student was provided with amusing personal anecdotes and invited to interact with the lecturer. However, the lecture did not cover all of the topics in detail and the student was frequently required to complete extra reading. In short, this class was the lecture equivalent of a novel – highly entertaining, but lacking in all of the information on the topic.

Presentation Lecture

The format of the presentation lecture style involved the delivery of topic material through a slide show accompanied by a verbal description of information by the lecturer.

- Visual Presentation: All visual information was presented through PowerPoint with slides containing detailed lecture notes, black and white colour scheme, and no irrelevant imagery (please refer to Figure 1 for a sample lecture slide). Slides contained an average of 100 words per slide and students were informed that all of the important content was present on the slide.
- Verbal Presentation: All verbal information was delivered in a formal manner as the lecturer adopted a serious demeanour throughout the lecture. The lecturer

Figure 1: PowerPoint slide for the presentation Forgetting lecture. All visual information contained detailed lecture notes, black-and-white colour scheme, and no irrelevant imagery.



maintained a calm level speaking voice throughout the lecture. She did not laugh or alter the volume or tone of her voice for impact in any discernable manner. The lecturer explained every point in detail. Students were directed to the textbook only for additional information as all of the core content was covered in the class.

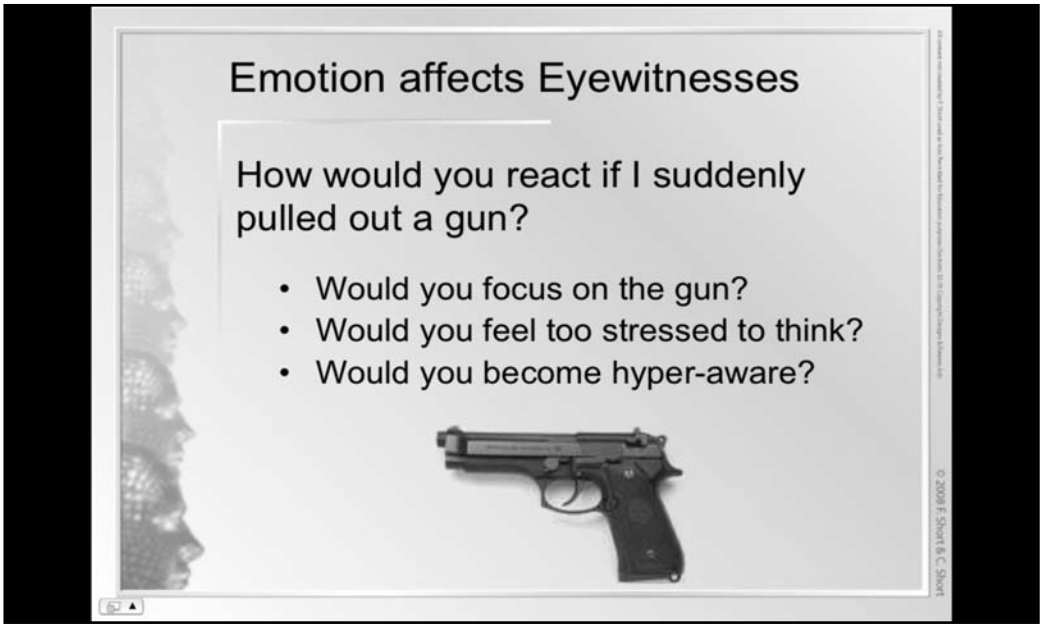
- Audience Interaction: The lecture did not include any direct interaction with the audience, except for one invitation to ask questions at the end of the presentation (students did not ask any questions).
- Personal Links: The lecture did not contain any personal anecdotes or examples linking the topic material to the lecturer herself through the use of the first person.
- Humour: The lecture did not include any comments or asides designed to elicit laughter from the audience and the lecturer reported no occasions of frivolity or comedy throughout the lecture.
- Controversy: The lecture did not contain any controversial examples designed to elicit shock, surprise, wonderment, or intrigue from the audience and the lecturer reported no occasions of discord in the lecture thus suggesting that the information was not met with any strong emotional reactions.

The presentation lecture covered the material on every slide with detailed verbal explanations and the lecture was completed 10 minutes early.

Performance Lecture

The basic format of the performance lecture was similar to the presentation lecture as it involved the delivery of topic material through a slide show accompanied by a verbal description of information by the lecturer. However, this lecture incorporated a number of activities designed to engage the audience by adopting a performance approach.

Figure 2: PowerPoint slide for the performance Misremembering lecture. All visual information contained only key terms, extensive use of colour, and imagery that was either directly relevant or humorously associated with the topic.



- Visual Presentation: All visual information was presented through PowerPoint with slides containing only key terms, extensive use of colour, and imagery that was either directly relevant or humorously associated with the topic (please refer to Figure 2 for a sample lecture slide). Slides contained an average of only 20 words per slide and students were invited to refer to the core textbook for further information.
- Verbal Presentation: All verbal information was delivered in an informal manner as the lecturer adopted a relaxed demeanour throughout the lecture. The lecturer changed the volume and tone of her voice frequently throughout the lecture in order to demonstrate her own enthusiasm or emphasise a particular point. She laughed on numerous occasions during the lecture. The lecturer did not explain every point in depth and focused on key issues only. Students were directed to the textbook for further information.
- Audience Interaction: The lecture included a number of activities designed to promote direct interaction between the lecturer and the audience, including questions directed at the students with opportunities for responses through raised hands and the interactive student response system. Five students were also invited onto the stage to take part in an activity designed to demonstrate one of the concepts discussed in the lecture. Furthermore, six short pauses were incorporated into the lecture for audience members to converse with the people seated close to them about the topic under discussion.
- Personal Links: The lecture contained several personal anecdotes and examples linking the topic material to the lecturer herself through the use of the first person.
- Humour: The lecture included numerous comments designed to elicit laughter from the audience and the lecturer reported several events leading to laughter throughout the lecture theatre.

- Controversy: The lecture contained several controversial examples designed to elicit shock, surprise, wonderment, or intrigue from the audience. Some of these examples were presented in an excited tone of voice with expansive physical gestures in order to encourage a sense of amazement with regards to the material. Some of these examples were presented with an initial disclaimer inviting students to disagree with the research theory or conclusions in order to inspire a sense of curiosity and develop analytical thinking. The lecturer reported approximately several occasions of discord in the lecture thus suggesting that the information was met with some strong emotional reactions.

The performance lecture covered the material on every slide with brief verbal explanations and the lecture was completed two minutes late.

Assessment

At the end of each lecture, students were invited to answer five questions through the anonymous interactive student response system to indicate their feelings about the lecture experience. Each question was rated on a five-point Likert scale: How much did you enjoy this lecture? How much did this lecture hold your attention? How much did you understand the material covered in this lecture? How much did you learn in this lecture? How much are you likely to recall from this lecture in the future? Students were asked to make a note of their scores for each of these questions in order to calculate a final mean score from these figures. They were then invited to indicate their total score for the lecture through the student response system. These ratings provided an average score for each lecture with regards to the perceived lecture experience from the perspective of the student.

At the end of the module, students were required to complete a final exam consisting of one essay from a choice of three questions. All of the students were required to sit the final exam in order to pass the course (any student failing to sit the final exam was excluded from this study). The final exam for the 2007/08 cohort consisted of one essay question selected from a choice of three and three short-answer questions. The final exam for the 2008/09 cohort consisted of one essay question selected from a choice of three and 40 multiple-choice questions (exam format was changed across cohorts due to external influences). Both examinations contained almost identical essay questions with one question on Forgetting, one question on Misremembering, and one question on an alternative area of the course. All of the short-answer and multiple-choice questions focused on other areas of the course. Students were given 90 minutes to complete the test under exam conditions: 45 minutes to write an essay and 45 minutes to answer the short-answer/multiple-choice questions. All of the final exam scripts were marked anonymously by the lecturer responsible for delivering the module and then moderated by the module organiser. It is important to note that this moderation process involved close scrutiny across all of the exam questions in order to ensure that there was no bias caused by the fact that the lecturer delivering the module acted as first marker for the examination scripts. The school administrator compiled the final grades for each question in accordance with student numbers rather than participant names. Student selection of essay question was recorded as an indication of topic preference with specific focus on how effectively this topic was perceived to have been learnt from the perspective of the student. Student performance on the selected essay was recorded as evidence of information retention and topic understanding.

Results

Student Preferences

Perception of each lecture was rated on a five-point Likert scale with a higher rating indicating a more positive perception of the lecture. Analysis revealed no significant

difference between the responses to the three performance lectures delivered across the two cohorts (Misremembering 2007/08 M=4.1, Misremembering 2008/09 M=4.08, and Forgetting 2008/09 M=4.1), $F(2,761)=.05$, $p=.96$. This finding suggests that there is no difference in ability between the two cohorts and no difference in topic preference between the lectures on Misremembering and Forgetting. However, further analysis incorporating responses to the presentation lecture (Forgetting 2007/08 M=3.65) revealed a significant difference between the four conditions, $F(4,964)=11.72$, $p=.001$. Post-hoc Tukey's test showed that the responses to the presentation lecture indicated significantly less preference than the responses to all three of the performance lectures. As illustrated in Figure 3, these findings suggest that the performance lectures were viewed more favourably than the presentation lecture, and this preference did not simply reflect topic preference or cohort variance.

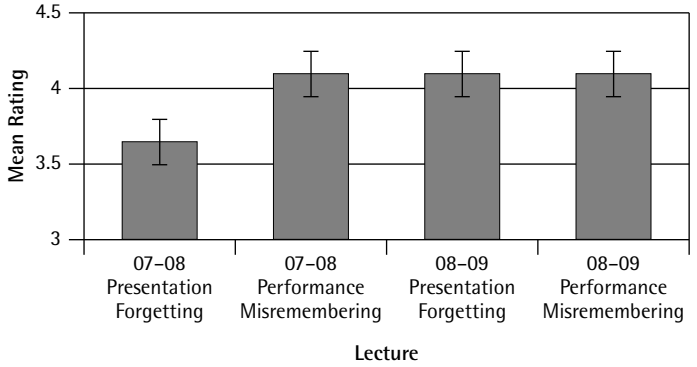
Lecture preference was also analysed by comparing the number of students selecting the exam question corresponding to the presentation lecture with the number of students selecting the exam question corresponding to the performance lecture.

Analysis revealed a clear preference for the performance Misremembering question (42 per cent of students) relative to the presentation Forgetting question (three per cent of students) during the 2007/08 cohort. This bias was not maintained when the Forgetting material was presented in a performance lecture during the following year. In fact, analysis revealed a reverse preference for the performance Forgetting question (59 per cent of students) relative to the performance Misremembering question (36 per cent of students) during the 2008/09 cohort. These findings further support the suggestion that the participants preferred the performance lecture to the presentation lecture.

Student Learning

Information retention and topic understanding was analysed for the 2007/08 cohort by comparing the grades for the Misremembering performance lecture exam question with the grades for the Forgetting presentation lecture exam question. Analysis revealed that the mean grade for the performance Misremembering question (M=62.93) was significantly higher than the mean grade for the presentation Forgetting question (M=49.33), $t(90)=-2.38$, $p=.02$.

Figure 3: Mean rating given by students for each type of lecture. Errors bars illustrate one standard error from the mean.



To control for the potential confound of the Misremembering question attracting intellectually superior students, further analysis compared the grades for the short-answer questions on the same exam papers. Short-answer questions (SAQs) covered all topics so it would be expected that there would be no discernable difference in SAQ grades for those who then went on to select the Misremembering essay and those who went on to select the Forgetting essay. Analysis revealed that the mean SAQ grade for those students who went on to complete the Misremembering essay (M=58.47) was no different to the mean SAQ grade for those students who went on to complete the Forgetting essay (M=58.00): $t(90)$=–.06, p=.95. This result suggests that the enhanced grade for the Misremembering essay question could not have simply been the result of more capable students selecting that particular question. All of the findings for the SAQs and Essays are illustrated in Figure 4.

Further analysis compared the essay grades from the 2007/08 cohort with the essay grades from the 2008/09 cohort in order to control for the potential confound of lecture topic. Analysis revealed that the mean grade for the presentation Forgetting question in the 2007/08 cohort (M=49.33) was lower than the mean grades for any of the performance lectures across the two cohorts (Misremembering 2007/08 M=62.93; Forgetting 2008/09 M=57.55; 08/Misremembering 2008/09 M=59.83), $F(3,354)$=5.56, p=.001. These findings support the suggestion that student learning was greater in the performance lecture relative to the presentation lecture. These findings are illustrated in Figure 5.

Discussion

The current study found a preference for performance lectures relative to presentation lectures: students rated the performance lecture higher in terms of a pleasurable

Figure 4: Mean grade for the 2007/08 cohort on the essay questions and short-answer questions. Errors bars illustrate one standard error from the mean.

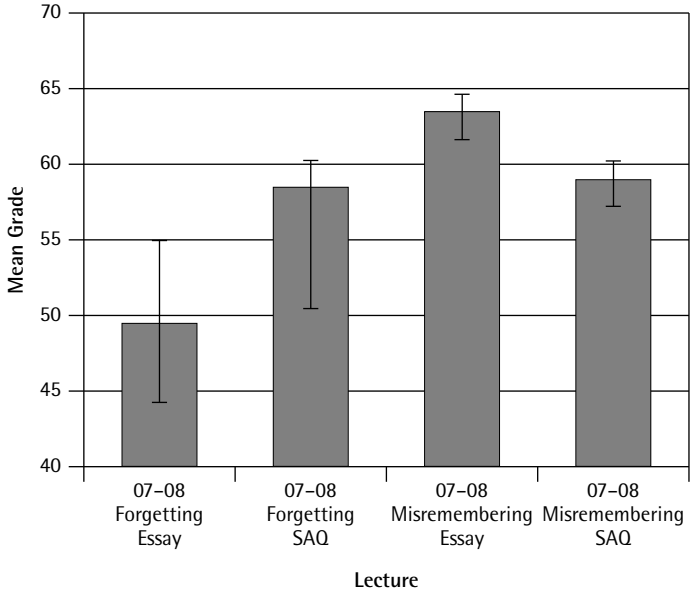
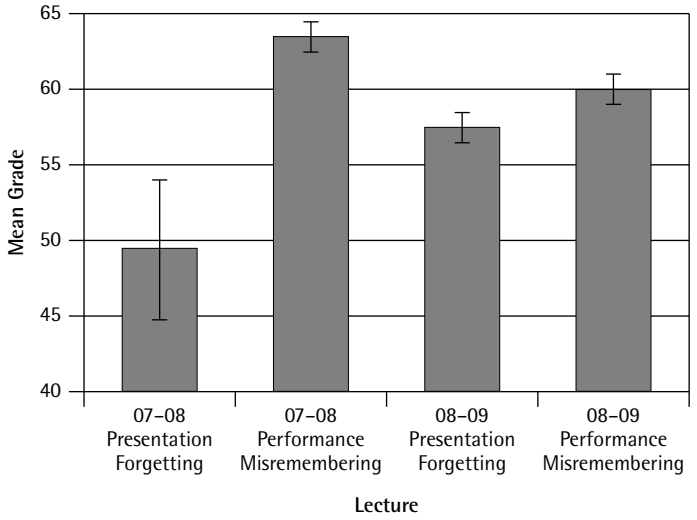


Figure 5: Mean grade for the essay questions for each lecture topic across the two student cohorts. Errors bars illustrate one standard error from the mean.



educational experience and students elected to focus on the material covered in the performance lecture in their final examination. This study also found that information presented during the performance lecture had been better retained and understood: essay grades for exam questions focusing on the performance lecture topics were higher than grades for questions focusing on the presentation lecture topics. These findings were not the result of student capability or topic ease. In short, empirical research conducted in this paper reveals greater preference and learning for the material covered in performance lectures relative to the material covered in presentation lectures. These findings suggest that the methods employed in the performance lecture are more effective for learning than the methods employed in the presentation lecture.

Performance lectures provide an opportunity to engage students in material without requiring direct physical interaction. Physical interaction with material can often be an effective teaching method and direct experience of doing something with the material is a wonderful way to inspire and motivate students: for example, a brain dissection may be the ideal method for teaching the topic of Neuropsychology. However, these methods are usually impractical for large classes: for example, the class sizes in the current study exceed 200 students and brain dissection in these numbers would involve a major feat of organisation. For large classes, such teaching methods are restricted to one or two major events per semester and would be extremely difficult to employ in every lecture. These teaching methods may be more feasible if one could significantly reduce the class sizes, but this is not an option for institutions already financially stretched in the current economic climate. If we re-evaluate the needs of the student today, however, we will see that it may not be absolutely necessary for them to participate in the class in this kinaesthetic manner. Our students are experienced information receivers. They are the generation of computer users, cinema-goers, television watchers… they are well practised at focusing on a specific area of action for a prolonged period of time. A cinema documentary *'Earth'* following the migration of four animal families took $8.8m at the

US box office in the opening weekend (Box Office Mojo, 2010): this movie required people to sit silently in an audience watching the delivery of factual information on a screen for approximately 90 minutes. Our students are experienced in the art of mentally engaging with delivered information for approximately two hours. The difference, of course, is that information in a cinema documentary is usually presented in a manner that is interesting and engaging whereas information in a lecture may be presented in a manner that is staid and dull. The findings of the current study suggest that performance techniques – such as lively body language, animated on-stage activity, intriguing anecdotes, humorous examples, exciting audio-visual aides – can help to make the typical educational lecture significantly more engaging.

Modern technology has placed education firmly within the realm of entertainment. Many of the most popular television programmes are documentaries (BBC documentary *'The Fallen'* about the families of those who died in Afghanistan was rated as the second best television programme of 2008 in the UK by *The Daily Telegraph*) and some of the most viewed websites are fact-based (encyclopaedic website Wikipedia receives approximately 51m hits per day). People are thirsty for knowledge, but they wish to quench this thirst in the most entertaining way possible.

We cannot argue that students do not wish to learn: indeed, some students will seek out documentaries or YouTube clips focusing on a topic from their course (one YouTube clip from the BBC documentary focusing on amnesia patient Clive Wearing has received over 200,000 hits). Often these students will simply disengage with lectures because they fail to entertain as well as other forms of media. Students entering HE today are arriving as consumers from the information age. Previous generations may have felt that knowledge was restricted to libraries and lecture halls, whereas modern students are able to access all of the knowledge required on a subject at the click of a mouse. These students do not need to listen to the words of the lecturer or wait for handouts to be distributed – they can easily gather all of the pertinent information by Googling some key search terms!

Students are acutely aware that they are paying for their education and it is increasingly likely that they will react to unappealing lectures in the way that every consumer will respond to a poor product: voting with their feet by refusing to attend classes. Many established academic report a general decline in lecture attendance indicating that this trend may have already begun (Kewley, 2005) and the experience of lectures perceived to be 'boring' (Mann & Robinson, 2009) may be contributing to this decline. Clay and Breslow (2006) explored student reasons for non-attendance to find that the lecturer's ability to engage and entertain was rated at 3.71 on a scale of 1-to-5 with 5 indicating extreme importance: indeed, one student is quoted as stating that 'What matters most for me is how much I like the class'. These findings predict a dark future for HE if the current trajectory remains unchanged, particularly in the face of evidence suggesting that lecture attendance is closely associated with degree outcome (Woodfield, Jessop & McMillan, 2006). It would appear that students today are bored in many of their lectures and they are less inclined to attend boring lectures, thus lecture attendance is likely to fall even more significantly in the future and this decline will have an inevitable impact on degree learning.

Although the current study should not be used as evidence to suggest that a lecture should be transformed into a circus act designed to amuse and entertain, it must be acknowledged that these findings suggest that the performance style of lecture may be one method for enhancing student interest in lectures. The methods outlined in this paper propose that the performance approach should focus on six key elements: Visual Presentation, Verbal Presentation,

Audience Interaction, Personal Links, Humour, and Controversy. All of these aspects can be integrated into the lecture style to both educate and entertain without impacting on the gravitas of the topic content. Indeed, one could argue that the controversy element offers one aspect of the approach that could lead to high levels of engagement yet be described as neither 'fun' nor 'light'. For example, lectures exploring the psychology of evil may present disturbing real-world stories from a controversial angle in order to inspire and motivate the student to further understand the topic. Persuasive speakers throughout the world adopt this approach as they seek to present gripping material in a manner designed to excite the audience. In a similar manner, the current study reveals that these performance methods could improve academic success both directly by enhancing learning and indirectly by increasing lecture attendance.

In conclusion, the findings of the current study suggest that HE should strive to employ a greater use of the methods utilised in the performance lecture in order to enhance learning and ensure student retention. Future research could further examine the impact of the performance by exploring the relative effectiveness of the various methods employed in the lecture in order to highlight those teaching methods with the greatest degree of educational and entertainment success.

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