

Assessing the Use of PSA Videos: Challenges and Benefits for Technical University Students

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Introduction

Visual communication has appeared as a powerful tool to communicate ideas that will appeal to a variety of people in today's increasingly media-driven world. Public Service Announcement (PSA), in particular, has become one of the effective mediums for raising awareness on social issues, promoting behavioural change, and educating the public. Elliott (2020) mentioned that incorporating PSA-based activities requires students to participate in active learning, inspiring them to analyse problems, gather information, and consider specific purpose and audience. Recognizing this platform's potential in educational settings, integrating PSA video creation as part of assessments would encourage students to improve their language performance and foster other additional skills. According to Greenblatt & McDonald (2022), a group work project to create PSA videos effectively assessed language skills, offering opportunities to improve English proficiency, and engaging in communicative activities.

In technical university settings, students at the diploma level are expected to master a diverse set of skills ranging from technical proficiency to collaborative problem-solving skills. One such application of these skills occurs in the preliminary semester's English course, ULE1212 Essential English. This course requires the students to work on a group visual communication project as part of their assessment. The integration of this project as part of their assessment presents unique challenges that require them to fulfil the demands of language proficiency, content accuracy, as well as creativity and originality. Kartika (2020) revealed that students have positive perceptions and attitudes toward utilising project-based learning in English classes. Similarly, Song et.al. (2024) concluded that students typically demonstrate positive attitudes toward project-based learning, while teachers recognize its effectiveness in nurturing critical thinking and creativity. This type of assignment pushes students beyond theoretical understanding and helps them overcome real-world challenges, including language barriers,

technical constraints, time management, and teamwork.

Chang (2022) found that students received significantly higher creativity scores on fluency, flexibility, originality, and usefulness from their project work. However, when tasked with producing a Public Service Announcement (PSA) video as part of their final assessment in the ULE1212 Essential English course—where they had to integrate moral values from a selected story with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—students encountered some challenges. Excelling both in content creation and in demonstrating creativity and originality in the video proved to be particularly demanding. Instructors could provide structure, resources, and advice for students to engage in the project, but they are responsible for figuring out how to learn and make discoveries on their own. Some students tend to focus heavily on delivering accurate content or showcasing creativity, while neglecting one or the other. As a result, the average scores for students' PSA projects on these two critical components reflect the challenges faced by them in the video creation process.

Thus, this paper aims to explore the learning experiences and challenges faced by technical university diploma students in creating PSA videos as part of their assessment. To achieve this aim, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

RQ1: What are the perceived benefits that technical university students gained from the PSA video assessment?

RQ2: What are the challenges faced by technical university students during the preparation of the PSA video assessment?

Methodology

A total of 64 respondents were involved in this study, and they were identified through purposive sampling. They were first year Diploma in Computer Science students enrolling in the ULE1212 Essential English course during the Preliminary Semester Session 2024/2025 at a technological university in a district of Pahang. Table 1 displays the demographic profile of the respondents of this study. Majority of the respondents were male (61%) and only 39% were female. Their SPM English grades were between A+ and D with more than half of them (65.6%) obtained A and A+. In terms of English CEFR level, most of them (57.8%) were at B2 level.

Table 1: Demographic profile of the respondents

Variables	Frequency
Gender	
Male	25 (39%)
Female	39 (61%)
SPM English Grade	
A+	13 (20.3%)
A	29 (45.3%)
A-	8 (12.5%)
B+	8 (12.5%)
B	5 (7.8%)
D	1 (1.6%)
English CEFR Level	
C2	2 (3.1%)
C1	16 (25%)
B2	37 (57.8%)
B1	9 (14.1%)

This study employed a mixed-methods approach by incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection through an online survey instrument. The survey was designed to gather data on participants' opinions on the benefits gained as well as the challenges faced while preparing their PSA videos for the course final assessment. The survey consisted of three sections; the first section covered the demographic information of the respondents such as gender, SPM English grade and English CEFR level. The second section contained two items to gauge responses on the perceived benefits gained from the PSA video creation.

The first item utilised a multiple-choice question with 'other' as the last option that allowed the participants to write their answer and the second item was an open-ended question that enabled the participants to provide short-written responses. Similarly, the third section consisted of two items to elicit responses on the perceived challenges faced while preparing the PSA video. All the items included in the survey were verified by the expert panel to ensure that the questions reflect the objectives of the study.

In collecting the data for the current study, the researchers firstly designed the online survey by using Google form. The link of the online survey was then distributed to the participants via class WhatsApp group at the end of the semester after they have submitted their PSA video

for the final assessment. Prior to the administration of the survey, the participants were clearly informed about the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the information provided as it will mainly be used for research purposes. The participants were given 2 days to complete the survey. Their responses were then downloaded into excel form and analysed using simple statistical analysis. As for the qualitative data gathered through open-ended questions, a thematic analysis was conducted to determine the main categories.

Findings and Discussion

This section explores the perceptions of technical university students regarding the benefits, challenges, and additional skills acquired through the completion of the PSA video as part of the Final Assessment.

RQ1: What are the perceived benefits that technical university students gained from the PSA video assessment?

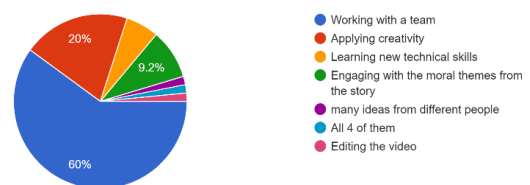


Chart 1

The chart illustrates the distribution of perceived benefits gained by students during the preparation of a PSA video assessment. A majority of the students (60%) indicated that working in a team was the most significant benefit, reflecting the importance of collaboration in educational projects. Creativity was the second most common benefit, with 20% of the students recognizing it as a valuable skill honed through the process. A smaller portion (9.2%) emphasised the engagement with moral themes from the story as a key learning outcome, suggesting that the video project fostered critical thinking and ethical reflections.

Only 6.2% highlighted learning new technical skills, indicating that while technical development was present, it was not the primary focus for most participants. The remaining respondents pointed to editing techniques and the contribution of diverse ideas from team members as additional benefits. These findings align with recent research indicating that video-based assessments can significantly enhance teamwork, creativity, and ethical reasoning in academic contexts, such as a study on group creativity in music education, where collaboration and creative thinking were the dominant outcomes (Sangiorgio, 2023).

Student 11: *The outcome of a project is very creative as a result from having multiple creative ideas*

Student 12: *it benefited me because my groupmate gave me an idea how to make the video looks good*

Student 13: *Everyone shares their opinions on creating the script of the video*

Student 14: *I think it improves our communication skill and allows us to get to know more people*

Student 15: *Variety ideas and ways to make the video more engaging and related with current generation*

Student 16: *Can support each other*

Student 17: *split the task fairly*

Student 18: *it can have so many ideas*

Student 19: *each team members have their own potential in certain things they good at*

Student 20: *The task gets divided equally, so the producing didn't take a long time.*

Students' feedback

The students' responses highlight the key benefits of collaborative learning, which align with the challenges outlined in the pie chart. A significant number of students, such as Student 11 and Student 15, emphasized the creativity that emerged from sharing multiple ideas, correlating with the 43.1% of the students who found developing the concept or script challenging. The exchange of ideas among group members, as noted by Student 12 and Student 13, fostered a collaborative environment in improving the video's overall quality. Furthermore, Student 14

and Student 16 pointed to enhanced communication skills and mutual support, reflecting how group dynamics, despite being difficult for 13.8% of the students, ultimately led to stronger interpersonal skills. The division of tasks, mentioned by Student 17 and Student 20, demonstrates effective collaboration, which helped mitigate the time management challenges faced by 18.5% of the students. This aligns with collaborative learning theory, which suggests that shared responsibility and diverse inputs can improve both the learning experience and the quality of the final product by encouraging peer interaction and cooperative task completion as mentioned by Khoo & Khuan (2020). The benefits of creativity, teamwork, and skill development are related to the collaborative process and its challenges.

RQ2: What are the challenges faced by technical university students during the preparation of the PSA video assessment?

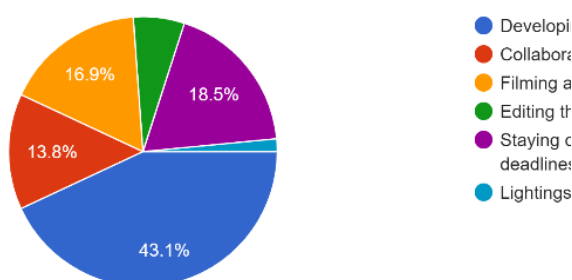


Chart 2

The chart highlights the challenges faced by students in preparing a PSA video. 43.1% found that developing the concept or script was the most challenging aspect of the project. Staying organized and meeting deadlines posed difficulties for 18.5% of the students, while 16.9% found technical aspects, such as filming, to be challenging. Collaboration with team members was another notable challenge, with 13.8% reporting difficulties in this area. The remaining respondents identified issues related to editing and lighting work, reflecting the diverse range of challenges encountered throughout the production process. These findings align with a recent study on student perceptions of video creation assignments, which noted similar difficulties in concept development and technical execution as significant barriers to success (Dinç, et al., 2024). These data show the difficulty of video assessments, and the multiple skills required to complete them successfully.

Student 1: *It is hard to find a time to gather all members to discuss about the video.*

Student 2: *It's challenged because everybody have different personalities*

Student 3: *manage our meeting point and time before submitting the video*

Student 4: *some people just silent and not answering when i ask him to edit*

Student 5: *it was a bit chaotic since no one in our group had any experience on making a PSA video but we managed to sort it out*

Student 6: *It was quite interesting as there as many trial and error to complete this English PSA.*

Student 7: *Obviously misunderstanding others idea*

Student 8: *Everyone's schedule is pretty packed, so I find it's a little bit hard to make a meeting with my group members*

Student 9: *I think we didnt bond too much because we didnt have enough time to recognise each other, since the teammate are all random.*

Student 10: *being discipline to meet the deadline and show up on time for any meeting*

Students' feedback

The students' responses reveal challenges that confirm the data in the pie chart. Many students cited issues with time management and meeting organization, which corresponds to the 18.5% of the students in the chart who identified staying organized and meeting deadlines as difficult. Several students, such as Student 1 and Student 8, mentioned difficulties in coordinating group meetings, and Student 3 highlighted the challenge of managing submission timelines, reflecting organizational struggles. Collaboration issues, as mentioned by Student 2 and Student 7, such as differing personalities and misunderstandings, align with the 13.8% who found collaborating with team members challenging. Similarly, technical difficulties and lack of experience were noted by Student 5 and Student 6, similarly with the 16.9% who struggled with filming and technical aspects. Additionally, Student 4's frustration over a teammate's silence

when asked to edit the video links directly with the challenges of video editing, represented in the smaller portion of the chart. These findings indicate that both language skills, such as communication and collaboration, and technical skills, like editing and filming, are connected and pose significant challenges in completing a public service awareness video project effectively.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In conclusion, this study underlines the effectiveness of using PSA video projects in enhancing students' learning outcomes, particularly in language proficiency and multimodal literacy. The findings highlight the benefits and challenges experienced by technical university students as they developed critical skills in communication, teamwork, creativity, and technical execution in integrating sustainable development goals (SDGs) issues into content creation. Project-based learning creates an environment that effectively supports the development of both critical thinking and language proficiency skills which are essential in today's educational context (Song et al., 2024). Most students recognized the project as an opportunity to improve their collaborative and creative skills, with many citing teamwork and communication as key growth areas.

However, the challenges presented by the project underscore the demanding

nature of PSA video creation as assignments. Kartika (2020) observed that students faced challenges with project based, with the majority of them concentrating more on completing the project than on learning through the process. Kartika (2020) observed that while students faced challenges with project-based learning, many focused more on completing the project rather than on engaging deeply with the learning process. Many students faced difficulties in conceptualizing the video, managing time, handling technical aspects like filming and editing, and navigating group dynamics. Despite these obstacles, the experience ultimately fostered essential soft and technical skills, with students acknowledging the value of the PSA video project as a transformative learning experience. These insights affirm the effectiveness of project-based assessments in cultivating skills that are vital for students' academic and future professional pursuits.

Future research could provide a deeper understanding of PSA video assessments in education by exploring several key areas. One area of interest would be on skills retention to determine if the skills acquired through PSA projects particularly in teamwork, creativity, and technical skills, are maintained and applied by students in later coursework or professional environments. Comparative studies across disciplines could also reveal

how PSA video assessments impact skills development differently in diverse fields, especially when comparing technical and non-technical disciplines. Finally, examining the benefits of structured peer assessment and reflective practices could offer insights into whether these components enhance the educational value of PSA projects. Such studies would be valuable for optimizing PSA video assessments and gaining a clearer understanding of their long-term impact, supporting the more effective use of project-based learning across academic disciplines.

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