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Research paper

Improving the oral language skills of elementary school students through video-recorded performances

Stéphane Colognesi [a], Thibault Coppe [b, *], Silvia Lucchini [c]

[a] University of Louvain, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, IPSY: Psychological Sciences Research Institute, PSP, Place Cardinal Mercier 10/L3.05.01 1348, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium
[b] University of Groningen, Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences, GION, Grote Rozenstraat, 3, Groningen, the Netherlands
[c] University of Louvain, Faculty of Philosophy, Arts and Letters, IACS: Institute for the Analysis of Change in Contemporary and Historical Societies, Place Blaise Pascal 1/L3.03.321348, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

HIGHLIGHTS

- "Itineraries" is an instructional program that improves students' oral skills.
- Reviewing oneself on video does not improve all components of oral communication.
- Reviewing oneself on video improves the verbal and non-verbal aspects of speaking.
- Video recording for oral instruction is useful for television-related genres only.

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ABSTRACT

This study is situated in the context of teaching first language (L1) oral communication in elementary school in Fr-Belgium. According to the literature, the quality of oral performances can be improved through revision. Using video recording could offer this possibility. However, research on this topic addresses neither elementary students, nor L1 instruction. We compared two conditions in which students either did live performances or created video performances with twelve school classes following a 3-week instructional program. Oral communication skills improved under both conditions. However, students in the video condition showed greater improvement in verbal and non-verbal communication for televisual genres.

1. Introduction

In the school environment, oral language is elicited on all sorts of occasions (Dupont & Grandaty, 2020; Wiertz et al., 2022). It is used as a pedagogical tool, for example, during question-and-answer time with students, or when they are asked to share their points of view. Teachers also invite students to express themselves orally during more specific school activities. For example, students may be asked to express their feelings about the day. Oral expression is also used at school for its reflective dimension. In that case, teachers ask students to verbalize their learning strategies. And oral language can also be a teaching and learning domain in its own right.

Several studies have shown the value of offering students explicit instruction in oral language at school, just like other subjects. Oral language skill predicts reading comprehension (Massonnié et al., 2019) and contributes to the development of thinking (Muijs et al., 2014). Lack of proficiency in oral language skills is a major obstacle to learning (Alexander, 2013; Sweller et al., 2011). Oral language skills are also needed to engage socially and communicate with others (Hunt et al., 2014). Teaching oral language skills to students ultimately helps to reduce educational and social inequalities (Alexander, 2012; Lahire, 2019). It is a key competency across school subjects (Kaldahl et al., 2019). In this sense, the ability to communicate orally is essential for personal satisfaction, academic and professional success, and integration into the

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: t.coppe@rug.nl (T. Coppe).

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society (Morreale & Pearson, 2008).

Despite this, in contrast to the teaching of second languages, research has shown that oral language is not typically a subject for teaching and learning in first language (L1) classes (Colognesi et al., 2022; Daszkiewicz et al., 2020; Kaldahl et al., 2019; Sénéchal et al., 2019; Wurth et al., 2022). Two major difficulties lie behind this. First of all, the teachers themselves did not have any oral language instruction in their own schooling. Moreover, the didactics of oral language instruction are not yet presented in all teacher training programs for L1 instruction. As a result, activities dedicated to the explicit teaching of oral language are generally absent in their practices (Dupont, 2016). Second, teachers feel that L1 oral language is a more complicated discipline to teach than others (Simard et al., 2019). They do not necessarily know the specific aspects of oral language to be taught and assessed (Mercer et al., 2017). They find it difficult to develop and implement lessons for teaching oral language skills and to evaluate these skills (Dobinson & Dockrell, 2021; Wiertz et al., 2020). One need only think of oral presentations, which are required of L1 students throughout their schooling, but which are not necessarily the subject of instructional programs (Stordeur et al., 2022).

One cause of the difficulties that arise in teaching and evaluating oral language skills is that oral language products are complicated to store and revise (Garcia-Debanc, 1999; Lefeuvre & Parussa, 2020). Indeed, an oral performance situation usually involves interactivity. The communication situation is direct. In an oral performance situation, the memory of what has just been said is taken into account in order to keep the thread of the subject. This raises the question of revision and improvement: How can teachers keep track of the students' oral products? And how can they enable students to revise or rework their oral products?

As stated by several authors (Barry, 2012; Bobkina & Domíguez Romero, 2020; Cameron & Dickfos, 2014), video recordings can provide the opportunity for conservation and reworking of oral performances. Indeed, Day et al. (2022) suggested that having the opportunity to watch a video recording is necessary for effective peer feedback and self-evaluation. These studies encourage the use of use videos to teach oral communication skills, especially nowadays, when it is easy to film with technological tools such as tablets or cell phones. Video was already being used in the 1980s for this purpose, and digital/online video was being used in the 2000s, including allowing students to look at themselves and assess their performance (Bourhis & Allen, 1998; Ritchie & Ayalon, 2016). But while some research has shown that video recording can significantly improve participants' oral language skills (Miskam & Saidalvi, 2020), these studies have been done mainly with university students or adults. Hence, there is a lack of work geared toward elementary school students engaged in L1 learning (Herbein et al., 2018; Kaldahl et al., 2019). The contribution of our study is therefore threefold. First, we aimed to compare the effects of an instructional program either with or without the use of video recording. This instructional program incorporates effective practices for teaching oral language (Colognesi & Deschepper, 2022), including teacher interventions, student self-assessment and peer evaluation. Second, we focused on improvement of L1 oral communication skills. Third, we turned our attention to students in elementary school.

As a result, our main research question is: What is the impact of using videos in an elementary school L1 oral communication skills instructional program?

1.1. Developing students' oral communication skills

In the literature on teaching speech/communication skills, the goal of instruction (also termed *oracy*) is "the development of children's capacity to use speech to express their thoughts and communicate with others, in education and in life" (Alexander, 2012, p. 10).

Speaking is a complex task. It requires a combination of three language skills (Dolz et al., 1993): action skills (adapting one's speech to the communication situation), discourse skills (producing content while also organizing it) and linguistic-discourse skills (using a vocabulary adapted to the communication situation and implementing appropriate grammatical and syntactic rules). Speaking also includes verbal (voice) and non-verbal (body and space) dimensions (Gagnon & Dolz, 2016).

Because orality is intrinsically linked to a contextualized situation, one perspective for teaching oral communication is to turn to the notion of genre (Hyland, 2007). Oral genres address multiple communication contexts that can be focused on in learning activities (Dupont & Dolz, 2020). The aim is to enable students to better perform in a chosen genre, by allowing them to rework their performance several times. This is what we call *reoralization* (Colognesi & Dolz, 2017, p. 188). The idea is to select genres in which performances can be prepared and rehearsed before being delivered to audiences. For example, a television program, a presentation, or a scientific explanation of something are examples of genres that can be prepared and rehearsed. This allows working on teaching/learning oral language, as long as it is possible to go back to what has been said in order to analyze and improve it. Colognesi and Hanin (2020) followed 16 student teachers during genre-based oral language teaching activities. They were able to highlight three main principles supporting the use of reoralization: (1) provide students with scaffolding related to the difficulties inherent in the genre being worked on, (2) offer them self-evaluation times, and (3) allow peer evaluation. In this situation, the most effective type of peer evaluation is one in which peers negotiate their feedback in sub-groups and give it orally to the speaker (Colognesi, Vassart, et al., 2020), and specifically when using a teacher-imposed criterion-referenced rubric (Vassart et al., 2022; Wiertz et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, for students, as for teachers, assessing oral language skills with a view to improving a performance is not simple (Gagnon & Colognesi, 2021; Millard & Menzies, 2016; Simard et al., 2019). This is because the oral language is inseparable from the person the speaker represents, their body, their voice and their identity (Maurer, 2001). Mercer et al. (2017) showed that it is possible for teachers to evaluate oral language, but only if they have a framework for understanding the skills to be measured by the tasks used, and a scoring system that provides a valid and fairly reliable means of assessing each student's skill levels and progress over time. However, the variability of oral language can make its assessment subjective.

1.2. Using video in the classroom to teach oral communication skills

Several studies have been conducted to measure the impact of the use of video to support performance, and for presentations in particular. Most of the research has been done with university students or adults, and mainly with students learning a foreign language. Tschirner (2001) explained that digital video is primarily used to support situational learning. He believed that video allows students to focus on specific aspects of the language. This is because with video, "spoken language can be slowed down and listened to multiple times, unveiling ever more layers of signs and meaning" (p. 318). Wilhelm (2014) showed that being able to view and analyze their own videos allows individuals to produce more effective presentations. The author also mentioned that video-recording provides an opportunity to discover the image one projects to others, both verbally and physically, during a presentation.

Yamkate and Intratat (2012) followed 4th-year engineering students taking an oral communication course at a university in Thailand. Students were required to make an oral presentation in English. The study's results showed that students had a positive attitude towards video recordings of their presentations. They said that seeing themselves helped them to identify their weaknesses in the use of non-verbal language.

In a recent systematic literature review of using video technology to improve oral presentation skills conducted by Miskam and Saidalvi (2020), all included studies had undergraduate students as their participants. In the majority of cases, they were learning a foreign language. This systematic review of the literature showed that overall, oral communication skills improve with use of videos. Indeed, in Shih's study (2010), it was shown that when students were able to review and revise their videotaped presentations, they were able to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This occurred for all aspects of oral communication: communication intention, content, organization of the message, lexical and syntactic aspects, and verbal and non-verbal communication. Other studies have specifically shown that making videos frequently also improves the organizational aspects of speaking (Barry, 2012; Cameron & Dickfos, 2014; Sun & Yang, 2015). Voice-related aspects, especially pronunciation, have also been shown to improve when participants observe themselves on video (Sun & Yang, 2015; Tatzl, 2017).

Regarding students' opinions on the use of videos, Bobkina and Domínguez Romero (2020) surveyed 97 Spanish computer engineering undergraduate students, who were taking an English language course. They studied the students' perceptions of the effectiveness of self-recorded video performances for developing their digital oral skills, and compared them to these students' perception of the effectiveness of in-class presentations. The study found that a considerable number of students did not feel confident in their use of video presentations. They felt intimidated by the cameras. The authors suggested that more emphasis be placed on developing digital communication skills to prepare students for this communication reality.

Another recent study (Colognesi & Dumais, 2020) explored students' opinions regarding the impact of video when it is imposed, as has been the case during the COVID pandemic period, as a replacement for a live presentation that could not take place. Analysis of the data collected through a questionnaire found that the majority of students appreciated recorded video for several reasons. First, they said it decreases their stress, compared to a live presentation in front of everyone. Second, they explained that they can redo the presentation several times, improve it, and show the one they are satisfied with, which is not the case with live presentations. Third, having each other's videos allows them to watch them whenever they want, when they are most focused. Fourth, they explained that making the videos allows them to develop digital skills that will be useful in their teaching practice. These benefits were also reported by elementary school students in the context of recorded remote oral presentations (Stordeur & Colognesi, 2020).

However, it seems that reviewing each other's performances on video does not systematically have a positive effect on students' performance. This was shown by Quigley and Nyquist (1992) in their review of the literature. On this point, Ritchie and Ayalon (2016) was able to show that when students do not have specific intentions when viewing each other, the following performance does not necessarily improve. Thus, students need to have self-evaluative goals when they watch themselves or others on video.

2. This study

In the reality of an L1 classroom, students' oral performances usually take place in front of several students or the whole class, often only once. If they are asked to evaluate themselves or their peers, the students do so on the basis of the memory they have of the performance. Others can also give their opinions and advice on how to improve speaking, but also without seeing the performances again. This situation positions videos as a potential means of conserving and revising the oral language product, for reviewing the performance and adapting it to develop a final product. As we have shown, the use of videos has been widely documented for university students or adults, but not among elementary school students as part of their L1 learning. Thus, in this study, we wanted to investigate the impact of the use of videos in elementary school as part of a program of instruction in oral communication skills.

To achieve this goal, we implemented the use of videos in the previously constructed and tested instructional program "Itineraries" (Colognesi & Lucchini, 2018; Colognesi, Vassart, et al., 2020) that supports elementary school students in working on and improving their performance in a particular oral genre.[1] The program was used as a 3-week intervention lasting a total of 12 h. In this program, students give several oral performances. They are evaluated by their peers in a formative way. In six of the 12 participating classes, the oral performances were recorded using digital tablets. This was the "video" condition. In this condition, the speaker was filmed during their performance by another student and the recording could be used in the assessment phase. In the other six classes, the students gave their presentations in front of the others, in the traditional way. This was the "live" condition, in which there was no support for the assessment phase.

The same teacher taught the same oral genre to students of the same age in both conditions. We assessed the change in the level of students' oral language skills before and after the intervention using repeated measures analysis.

3. Method

3.1. Participants and conditions

Twelve classes from three primary schools in French-speaking Belgium participated in this study. These schools were selected because they volunteered to participate in the research, because they had at least two classes at the same grade level, and because teachers wanted to learn more about the possibilities for teaching oral communication skills. Schools had an intermediate socio-economic status. A total of 256 students participated (from the 3rd to the 6th years of elementary school, 8- to 12-year-olds). Two conditions were tested. In the "live" condition, the students performed in front of the class. In the "video" condition, the performances were recorded using digital tablets. This tool was chosen because researchers have highlighted the benefits that digital tablets bring: portability, connectivity, stimulation of creativity and customization (Herodotou, 2018). None of the classes was accustomed to using digital tablets before the experiment. This was therefore a first for all students in this condition.

Table 1 shows the demographics for the different classes for each year from each school and the different oral genres worked on. They are presented in pairs (live condition and video condition) because these conditions shared the same teaching content (the chosen oral genre) and the same teachers. The classes in each pair were randomly assigned to condition, resulting in a total of 125 students for the live condition and 131 for video condition.

The study was conducted in accordance with internationally recognized ethical guidelines. This sample size made it possible to

[1] Originally, the "Itineraries" program was designed without the use of videos.

detect relatively small effects ($\eta^2 \geq 0.03$) with a recommended statistical power of 80% (Cohen, 1992). Considering the conflicting results in the previous literature on using video to enhance oral skills learning (e.g., Miskam & Saidalvi, 2020; Ritchie & Ayalon, 2016; Wilhelm, 2014), it was necessary to have a sample size that could detect small effect sizes. Statistical power analyses were conducted using *G*power* software running MANOVA with within and between-subjects interactions (Faul et al., 2013).

3.2. Method of instruction

We used the *Itineraries* method of instruction for oral communications skills (Colognesi & Lucchini, 2018; Colognesi, Vassart, et al., 2020). In this method, effective practices for teaching oral language are implemented (Wurth et al., 2019). Moreover, students give several oral versions of a performance, reoralizations (Colognesi & Dolz, 2017), to improve their oral performance in a chosen discursive genre. Three types of activities are provided for the participants to help improve their products: (1) teacher-led scaffolding, (2) moments of self-evaluation and peer feedback, and (3) metacognitive questions (Colognesi, Piret, et al., 2020).

Six oral genres were chosen and divided over the different classes: wanted notice (seeking a missing animal/object), home shopping TV show, news report, advertisement, slam, argument for an opinion. As there is no typical progression of genres mentioned in the literature or in the school curriculum, the genres were chosen in consultation with the teachers and with reference to the students' likely capacities. Oral presentation was excluded from the genres to be worked on. This is because it is one of the most common activities performed in the classroom (Colognesi & Deschepper, 2019), and the teachers wanted something new. Each genre was worked on by two same-year classes from the same school, at the same time during the school year (in April–May 2018) with the same teachers, who were two student teachers in their final year of training. These student teachers were enrolled in a 2-month training module for oral language instruction and classroom use of technology (for details on the training module, see Colognesi & Dolz, 2017). The students themselves received additional training in the use of digital tablets. All of the activities were developed by students together with the teachers and trainers. The Appendix provides an overview of the instructional program followed in all classes. It lasted 12 h, spread over 3 weeks. The steps in the training program are outlined in Table 2. To ensure fidelity of implementation (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Dusenbury et al., 2003), student teachers were pre-trained and observations of instructional activities were conducted live. Student teachers who observed were the implementers of the program for another genre in other classes.

The guidelines related to the product were given in accordance with the condition, to maintain an authentic situation. Thus, in the classes in the live condition, the students gave the oral performances in public. For example, the live TV show was performed in front of an audience present in the room. In the video condition classes, the students made a film of their product. For example, the television show was video-recorded, and the final product was watched on television by the audience.

Under both conditions, the oral performances were subject to self-assessment and received peer feedback (at times 5 and 9, after giving the second and fourth versions of their performance). At times 5 and 9 in the live condition, at the end of each student's oral performance, the speaker took a moment to note what they thought of their own communication. During this time, three peers discussed the feedback to be given to the speaker. The criteria were decided upon with the pupils, according to the genre addressed. Students were accustomed to peer assessment. They were already doing it for other activities, such as assessing each other's writing.

Afterwards, interaction between the speaker and the evaluators took place to discuss the speaker's strengths and aspects to be improved. Similarly, at times 5 and 9 in the video condition, the speaker was filmed during their performance by another student using a digital tablet. As in the other condition, the speaker, after their performance, self-assessed the performance. They could use the tablet to see themselves again. Meanwhile, three peers discussed the feedback. They did so by reviewing the oral performance on the digital tablet as many times as they wished. They then gave this feedback orally to the speaker, and were free to use the tablet, and thus what was filmed, in this exchange. This is the sense in which the potential of video recordings was used (Zahn et al., 2010): to review performances.

In short, the major differences between the two conditions were: (1) the parameters of the communication situation that are inherent in a live performance in front of a live audience or on video, and (2) the assessment events that, in the live condition, were based on a memory of what had just been done, whereas in the video condition, they were based on the videos on the tablet.

Table 1
Sample characteristics: by conditions, oral genres, and classes.

School year, school (type of school) and oral genre	Condition	*n* students	Girls	Boys	Classes
Year 3, School 1 (Rural)	Video	23	10	13	Class 1
Wanted: missing animal/object	Live	23	11	12	Class 2
Year 3, School 2 (Urban)	Video	11	6	5	Class 3
Home shopping TV show	Live	9	5	4	Class 4
Year 3, School 3 (Rural)	Video	25	10	15	Class 5
News report	Live	22	7	15	Class 6
Year 4 - School 2 (Urban) Advertisement	Video	25	12	13	Class 7
	Live	24	14	10	Class 8
Year 5, School 1 (Rural)	Video	24	13	11	Class 9
Slam[2]	Live	23	10	13	Class 10
Year 6, School 2 (Urban)	Video	23	13	10	Class 11
Argument for an opinion	Live	24	15	9	Class 12
TOTAL	Video	131	64	67	
	Live	125	62	63	

Note: Year 3 = 8- to 9-year-olds; Year 4 = 9- to 10-year-olds; Year 5 = 10- to 11-year-olds; Year 6 = 11- to 12-year-olds.

[2] A slam is a form of oral poetry. It is declaimed in a chanted rhythm.

Table 2
Steps in the training program and descriptions of scaffolding.

Steps	Descriptions
1) Speaking instructions	The teacher explains the speaking task. The product parameters are determined collectively: who is addressed, in what context, with what status of the speaker, for what purpose, etc.
2) First version	Each student performs a first oral version.
3) Scaffolding general organization of the oral genre to be produced	-The teacher shows the students several videos. The objective is to identify the characteristics of the genre of message to be produced.
4) Revision and second version	Students gather the information they need to do the performance. They prepare for their second oral version by writing down a few key words on paper. Each student gives a second version of his or her oral performance.
5) Self-evaluation and peer feedback	Each student writes a comment on their performance. In sub-groups, students negotiate feedback to give to the speaker. They are given an evaluation grid to assist them in this task. The feedback is given.
6) Revision and third version	Each student revises his oral performance. Each student gives a third version of their performance.
7) Specific scaffolding focused on the language	-The teacher provides two scaffoldings: one on the morpho-syntax aspect, the other on the verbal and/or non-verbal aspects (voice/body). They are planned according to the needs that the genre to be produced may generate. wanted notice | TV show | news report | advertisement | slam | Argument for opinion - adjectives - flow/ speed | - progress of ideas - posture | - sentence complements - intonation, pronunciation | - the slogan - combining gestures and voice | - rhymes - flow/tempo and intonation | - vocabulary - voice modulation
8) Revision and fourth version	Each student revises his oral performance, based on the support received. Each student gives a fourth version of their performance.
9) Self-evaluation and peer feedback	-Same as step 5.
10) Synthesis of quality criteria	Collectively, the students and the teacher summarize the quality criteria for the final product.
11) Fine-tuning before the final version	Students gather all the necessary resources for the final performance.
12) Realization of the final product	Each speaker gives the final performance.
13) Diffusion and evaluation	The product is shared with the public.

3.3. Instruments and procedure

In each class, a pre- and post-test were administered. The pre-test consisted of an oral performance related to the genre worked on in the instructional program. Each student performed spontaneously outside the classroom, in front of a researcher. For the post-test, each student produced an oral performance on a different theme, but of the same genre as the one worked on in the curriculum. This also took place outside the classroom. All performances were filmed. We collected and evaluated 512 oral products corresponding to the two performances of the 256 students in the sample.

The evaluation matrix included five elements of oral communication related to language capacities (Dolz et al., 1993; Gagnon & Dolz, 2016): communication intention, idea development, message organization, grammatical and lexical aspects, and verbal and non-verbal communication[3]. Table 3 shows the details of the criteria used for each of the evaluated aspects and the weighting used. The two trainee teachers who delivered the instructional program evaluated the performance in collaboration with the observers. To assure the reliability of the evaluation, they first conducted separate evaluations and then combined their evaluations to reach a consensus. They had been trained beforehand on oral evaluation.

Each aspect was weighted on 1 to avoid over-representation of any one component in the results. Thus, we divided the score for idea development by the maximum reached in the sample; we divided the score for organization and coherence of the message by 6, 5 or 4 according to the oral genre; we divided the score for grammatical and lexical aspects by the maximum reached in the sample and we divided the mean score for verbal and non-verbal communication by 4.

To evaluate the impact of digital technology in the classroom, we first looked at whether the instructional program did indeed result in learning, and then we observed whether there was a difference in this by condition. To analyze the effect of condition, we conducted various repeated measures ANOVAs, using SPSS 26 software. All of the dependent variables met the assumption of data normality ($|skewness| \leq 2$; $|kurtosis| \leq 7$; Hair et al., 2010). We preferred ANOVA with within- and between-subjects interactions to multilevel analysis with classrooms at level 2. Indeed, our research design means that oral genres differed across classrooms. As such, introducing oral genres as an independent variable makes the variance related to the classroom level inoperative (i.e., $ICC = 0$). In other words, by the design of our experiment, using a multilevel structure would imply that the nesting of data in classrooms (i.e., a level-2 unit) corresponds to the level-2 variable “genres of text”. Since the variable “genres of text” is treated as an independent variable, the level-2 variance would have been nonexistent in a multilevel model.

First, we performed a repeated measures ANOVA, entering condition as the independent variable and overall oral score as the dependent variable (mean of the weighted scores of the 5 components). Next, we performed a MANOVA, again using condition as the independent variable, but with the oral component scores as dependent variables. Finally, the presence of a significant interaction effect between condition and time for one of the oral components led us to run a repeated measures ANOVA specifically with the score on this component as dependent variable, and entering both condition and oral genres as independent variables. In these analyses, partial η^2 effect sizes were interpreted according to the cut-offs presented by Green and Salkind (2017), with values larger than 0.01, 0.06 and 0.14 being interpreted as small, moderate and large, respectively.

4. Results

Table 4 presents an overview of students' pre-test and post-test results by genre and condition.

[3] Verbal and non-verbal communication were grouped together following De Grez et al. (2009), as they represent the delivery dynamic of the oral communication.

First, it is noteworthy that students improved in both conditions. Indeed, the repeated measures ANOVA for overall mean oral language skills score showed a significant effect of time, with a large effect size [F (1, 244) = 1781.333; $p < .001$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.88$]. The analyses showed no significant effect of condition [F (1, 244) = 0.607; $p = .436$]. This indicates that the 'Itineraries" instructional program resulted in significant improvement in the average oral language skill score from pre-test to post-test, and that this change did not appear to be greater under either condition. Fig. 1 illustrates this. It explicitly shows that the average improvement was very similar in both conditions.

This general trend of similar improvement in average score for oral communication skills across the two conditions suggests that the use of video did not have any major added value. However, when the results for the different aspects of oral communication were analyzed, the video condition stood out in one respect. The results of the repeated measures MANOVA performed regarding the aspects of oral communication are presented in Table 5.

First, these results showed that the instructional program was successful. Indeed, the difference between the pre-test and post-test score was significant for each of the aspects of oral communication, and with very large effect sizes. These differences represent an increase of 0.68 for intention, 0.17 for ideas, 0.55 for message organization, 0.15 for the grammatical and lexical aspects, and 0.22 for verbal and non-verbal communication. As a reminder, these changes are out of 1 and therefore represent increases ranging from 15% to 68%.

Second, the analysis showed that there was no significant difference between the two conditions for four of the five aspects of oral communication: intention, ideas, general organization, and grammar/lexicon. On the other hand, the aspect relating to verbal and non-verbal communication showed a significant difference in level of improvement for the two conditions. The increase in student scores for this component was .24 for those in the video condition, and only 0.20 for those in the live condition. This represents a 20% greater change for the video condition compared to the live condition. The graphs presented in Fig. 2 illustrate these improvements. It should be noted that the effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.019$) is below the detectable effect cut-off with a statistical power of 80%, given our sample size. We discuss this in the discussion section.

To better understand these results, a repeated measures ANOVA was carried out for the verbal and non-verbal communication aspect, considering the change in scores according to the condition and the genres worked on [time*genre*condition]. Significant differences were found, with a moderate mean effect size [F (5, 244) = 3.38; $p < .01$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.065$].

This tends to show that for this aspect of oral communication, the condition seems to have a different influence depending on the genre students worked on. The analyses did not show significant differences between the conditions for four of the genres: Slam [F (1, 45) = 0.37; $p = .55$]; News report [F (1, 44) = 0.52; $p = .48$]; Opinion [F (1, 45) = 0.675; $p = .42$]; Wanted notice [F (1, 45) = 0.37; $p = .55$]. However, significant differences with large effect sizes were observed for two of the genres: Advertisement [F (1, 47) = 13.3; $p < .01$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.22$] and Home shopping TV show [F (1, 18) = 4.42; $p = .05$; partial $\eta^2 = 0.20$]. Changes in students' scores for verbal and non-verbal communication by genre and condition are shown in the graphs in Fig. 3.

In the end, although students' average score for the verbal and non-verbal communication aspect improved significantly in the video condition, this was only the case for two of the six genres worked on. Thus, the verbal and non-verbal communication in students' oral performances for the advertising and home shopping TV show genres benefited more from an instructional program supported by the videos made with the digital tablets. This was not the case for the other aspects of oral communication.

5. Discussion and conclusion

In this study, we wanted to see if the use of videos would help students improve their oral communication skills. We chose to focus our study on first language instruction for elementary students. This was because there was little research on this topic for this age group. We found that videos do bring added benefits for the teaching of oral communication skills, but only for one component of these oral skills (the verbal and non-verbal dimension), and only for the televisual genres. For the non-televisual genres, using videos to view themselves and give feedback to others did not result in significant improvements in oral communication skills.

Research has shown that video recording offers the possibility of seeing each other's oral performances again (e.g., Bourhis & Allen,

Table 3
Evaluation matrix.

Aspects of oral communication	Criteria and evaluation
Verbal and non-verbal communication (/1)	- taking into account articulation, flow, rhythm, fluidity, posture, gestures to accompany speech, looking at the audience/camera by using a grid developed for each genre, according to its specifics (rating of each criterion, from 0 to 4)[4]
Adapt one's speech according to the communication situation (/1)	- compliance with the instructions (0 or 1)
Idea development (/1)	- number of ideas in the message (count) - number of relevant ideas (count)
Organization and coherence of the message (/1)	- calculated on the basis of a grid of specific criteria determined according to the characteristics of the type of product to be produced (one point for each characteristic present)[5]
Grammatical and lexical aspects (/1)	- good usage shown of the grammatical and lexical aspects worked on for each genre (report and wanted notice: adjectives; home shopping TV show, advertisement and argument for an opinion: terms of argumentative speech; slam: the lexicon related to the theme)

[4] Intonation, pronunciation and flow were evaluated for all genres. In addition, we looked at voice positioning, rhythm, and use of body to accompany the voice for the slam; tone of voice for the wanted notice, and posture for advertising, TV show and opinion.

[5] News report (/4): introduction, use of several categories of information, organization of this information by themes, conclusion. Home shopping TV program (/5): introduction, descriptive passage about the object, presence of at least two arguments, conclusion. Wanted notice (/4): introduction that expresses the purpose of the notice, description of the animal/object sought, information on how to find them, conclusion. Advertisement (/6): catchphrase, presentation of the subject, slogan, at least two arguments, conclusion. Slam (/6): presence of several sentences, rhymes, respect for the creative constraint (the theme). Opinion (/5): introduction, presence of at least two arguments, organization of this information by themes, conclusion.

Table 4
Pre-test (T1) and post-test (T2) mean scores and standard deviations (in parentheses) for the various items assessed (each item/1, N = 256).

		Intention		Ideas		Organization and coherence of the message		Grammatical and lexical aspects		Verbal and non-verbal communication	
Genre (School year)	Modality	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2	T1	T2
Wanted notice (Year 3)	Video	.05 (.21)	.81 (.40)	.25 (.19)	.49 (.11)	.08 (.14)	.64 (.37)	.14 (.12)	.28 (.19)	.25 (.13)	.50 (.13)
	Live	.12 (.33)	.84 (.37)	.20 (.15)	.37 (.14)	.07 (.19)	.76 (.26)	.04 (.08)	.41 (.25)	.33 (.14)	.54 (.17)
TV show (Year 3)	Video	.09 (.30)	.46 (.52)	.21 (.21)	.45 (.19)	.00 (.00)	.82 (.41)	.08 (.10)	.34 (.16)	.08 (.14)	.61 (.19)
	Live	.22 (.44)	.67 (.50)	.24 (.14)	.42 (.18)	.00 (.00)	.83 (.20)	.09 (.05)	.25 (.14)	.08 (.09)	.36 (.20)
News report (Year 3)	Video	.57 (.51)	.91 (.29)	.15 (.16)	.39 (.20)	.06 (.15)	.59 (.38)	.18 (.08)	.32 (.11)	.35 (.14)	.60 (.12)
	Live	.61 (.50)	.91 (.29)	.27 (.23)	.40 (.17)	.06 (.14)	.37 (.41)	.17 (.04)	.29 (.11)	.31 (.12)	.60 (.10)
Ad (Year 4)	Video	.00 (.00)	.96 (.20)	.02 (.04)	.07 (.06)	.00 (.00)	.78 (.26)	.08 (.06)	.21 (.07)	.62 (.12)	.82 (.06)
	Live	.00 (.00)	.92 (.28)	.01 (.03)	.15 (.08)	.01 (.05)	.84 (.13)	.15 (.10)	.28 (.08)	.30 (.18)	.35 (.22)
Slam (Year 5)	Video	.00 (.00)	.96 (.20)	.02 (.04)	.07 (.06)	.00 (.00)	.78 (.26)	.08 (.06)	.21 (.07)	.62 (.12)	.82 (.06)
	Live	.00 (.00)	.92 (.28)	.01 (.03)	.15 (.08)	.01 (.05)	.84 (.13)	.15 (.10)	.28 (.08)	.30 (.18)	.35 (.22)
Opinion (Year 6)	Video	.13 (.34)	.83 (.39)	.00 (.02)	.22 (.09)	.09 (.25)	.59 (.33)	.01 (.05)	.12 (.07)	.36 (.10)	.49 (.10)
	Live	.17 (.38)	.83 (.38)	.02 (.04)	.19 (.10)	.13 (.27)	.58 (.35)	.01 (.04)	.14 (.08)	.31 (.15)	.47 (.14)

Note: Year 3 = 8- to 9-year-olds; Year 4 = 9- to 10-year-olds; Year 5 = 10- to 11-year-olds; Year 6 = 11- to 12-year-olds.

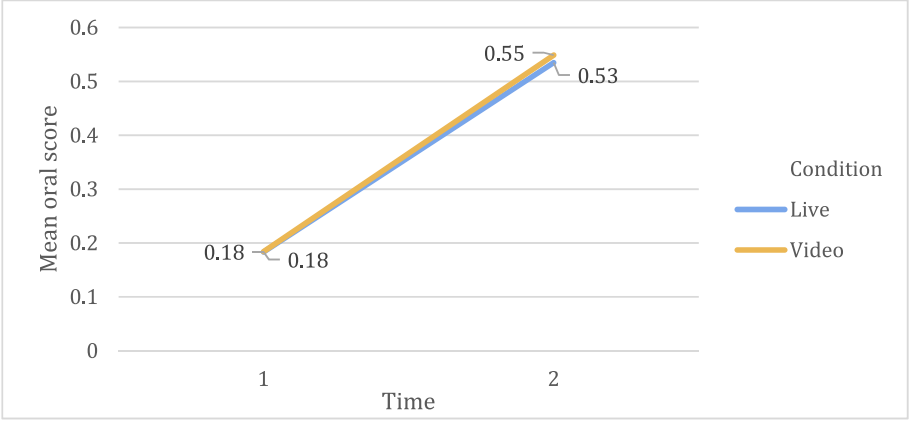


Fig. 1. Change in students' average score from time 1 to time 2.

Table 5
Repeated measures MANOVA results (N = 255).

Source	Measure	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Time	Verbal/non-verbal	6.487	1	6.487	394.984	.000	.619
	Intention	48.922	1	48.922	502.213	.000	.674
	Ideas	3.597	1	3.597	214.858	.000	.469
	Organization/coherence	37.511	1	37.511	643.368	.000	.726
	Grammatical/lexical aspects	2.645	1	2.645	341.019	.000	.584
Time * Condition	Verbal/non-verbal	.079	1	.079	4.808	.029	.019
	Intention	.005	1	.005	.051	.821	.000
	Ideas	.000	1	.000	.022	.882	.000
	Organization/coherence	.020	1	.020	.335	.563	.001
	Grammatical/lexical aspects	.018	1	.018	2.267	.133	.009

1998; Ritchie & Ayalon, 2016; Wilhelm, 2014), and in turn, stabilizes the fleeting aspect of oral language (Garcia-Debanc, 1999). Consequently, it was hypothesized that video recording would permit more significant improvement in oral communication skills. This did not hold true. Indeed, students in both conditions, live and video, had the same average progress curves. The only difference appeared to be a greater improvement in the verbal and non-verbal communication aspect for two of the six genres worked on in the video condition (advertisement and TV show). These results are at odds with what has been found in studies where students could watch each other's performance on video. In those studies, conducted among university students or with adults learning a second language, significant improvement was seen for some of the oral components (Barry, 2012; Cameron & Dickfos, 2014; Sun & Yang, 2015; Tatzl, 2017) or all of the oral components (Shih, 2010), but without considering the communication situation (e.g., whether it involves a televisual production that uses images or not).

We see several possible explanations to account for or nuance

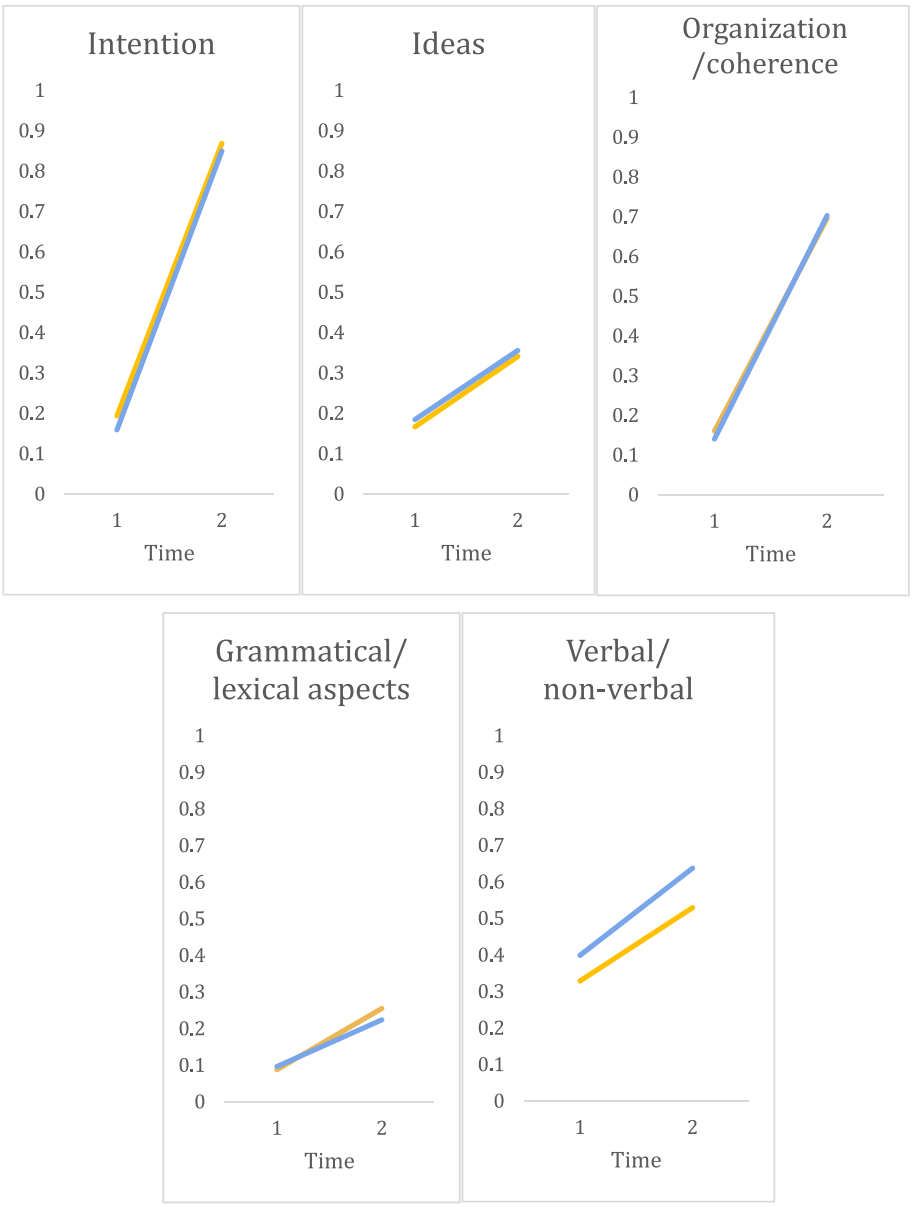


Fig. 2. Improvement of aspects of oral communication between T1 and T2, by condition (Yellow: live condition, blue: video condition). (For interpretation of the references to colour in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the Web version of this article.)

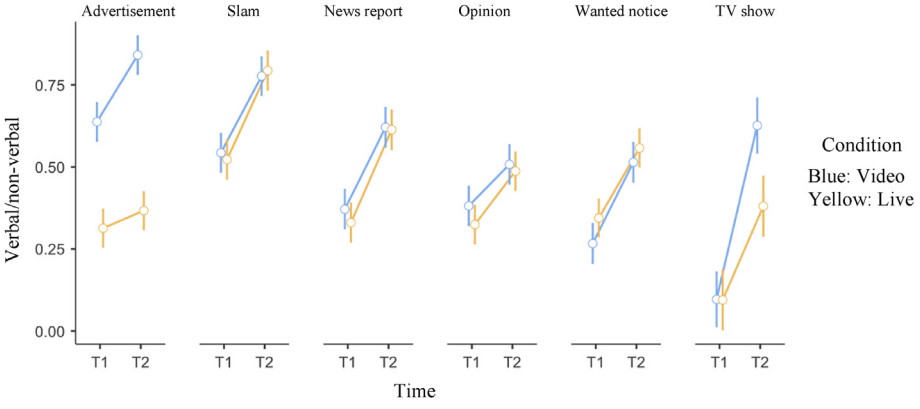


Fig. 3. Improvement in the verbal and non-verbal communication aspect between T1 and T2, for each oral genre.

these results. First, our results here showed significant effects in all 12 classes for the different aspects of oral communication. Therefore, it seems that the instructional program itself supported overall improvement. Indeed, in our case, the instructional program appears to be enough to improve elementary students' oral communication skills. We had previously shown this for students of the same age, but with smaller samples (Colognesi, Piret, et al., 2020; Colognesi & Hanin, 2020). Therefore, these effects can be attributed to the process of reoralization (Colognesi & Dolz, 2017), provided that it is supported by scaffolding, personal critical distance and peer feedback (Chang et al., 2021) with criteria (Ritchie & Ayalon, 2016; Wiertz et al., 2022). This was shown by the large effect sizes under both conditions. However, it is harder to see an additional benefit for the use of video, over and above the improvement realized just from the effective instructional program itself. It could be that the multiple viewpoints of the teacher, the peers, and also the speaker themself, substitute for the recorded image.

Nevertheless, it seems that for televisual genres, such as advertising and a TV show, there is an advantage to doing the oral performance on video. This advantage concerns the verbal and non-verbal aspects of oral communication (Gagnon & Dolz, 2016). It can be argued that genres that involve images from the outset, because of the communication situation, lead the student to focus on the aspects of oral communication that are linked to them. Thus, if there is no perceived need to work specifically on the verbal and non-verbal aspects in the assigned performance, the students do not seem to focus on this, and the fact of reviewing themselves on video does not bring any benefit.

Second, we worked with a young audience of 8- to 12-year-olds, for whom the use of digital tablets was a first. In this sense, it could simply be an additional burden (or extrinsic load), which could explain why it was not so effective (Zahn et al., 2010). In addition, it was also the first time the students could see themselves in a recorded oral performance and be confronted with their image (Wilhelm, 2014). So, one could imagine that using digital tools was an additional learning experience for the students in itself. Recent literature has also shown that being able to recognize what can be improved require being trained to do so. As such, students' watching themselves on video could not yield possible improvements that could be made, because noticing them also requires a learning process (Jacobs et al., 2010; Rotem, 2023). It could also be hypothesized that compared to university students, elementary school students are less able to seize the benefit of video recording as a peer and self-evaluation tool. In addition, they had to manage their image, which was an extra effort as well, due to intimidation and possible lack of confidence in front of the camera (Bobkina & Domínguez Romero, 2020), although students may have a positive attitude toward videos (Yamkate & Intratat, 2012). One could therefore claim, but obviously without being certain, that a related form of learning took place: the management of technologies for learning, and the management of one's image. Nevertheless, we must remain very cautious about these hypotheses. One avenue to explore could be to replicate the study using participants who are familiar with tablet use and video-based performance in the classroom.

This study has certain limitations. The most important one, which invites future research to tackle it, is that we progressively refined our results, starting with the overall oral scores and ending with an analysis of one aspect in particular (verbal/non-verbal) and the genre in which it was worked on, leaving our analysis with a limited number of classes. Although this allowed us to highlight the usefulness of the use of videos, in particular, for this component of orality and in particular genres, we can only offer hypotheses about the reasons for this. It is therefore necessary to deepen these conclusions through research that focuses specifically on this component to understand this phenomenon. In addition, due to the marginal effect size for the verbal/non-verbal aspect, which was just below the cut-off used in this study ($\eta^2 \geq 0.03$), we need to be cautious about generalizing these results. This is an additional argument in favor of future research that specifically focuses on this oral component. Second, as a consequence of our research design, oral genres and classrooms were mostly overlapping, with each oral genre practiced in two classes, so that six genres were represented in the 12 classes). Therefore, we could not perform multilevel mixed analysis with classroom at level 2 while also focusing on the genre as a variable of interest.

Finally, this study allows us to formulate some practical implications. First, in light of the results of this study, we think important to highlight that it is not mandatory to use video recording to work on improving L1 oral communication skills. Our results provide information to teachers about when the use of videos captured through technology can have benefits in the classroom for oral instruction. Thus, from the perspective of developing L1 oral language instructional programs, it seems relevant to use videos for those genres that require it; that is to say, those where the authentic situation is also usually done on video. This is an encouraging result for teachers who have difficulty setting up lesson sequences for teaching oral language (Dumais et al., 2017). In this way, using video recording could be useful in certain specific situations. It should be kept for working specifically on televisual genres such as a video tutorial, television interview, and the like, which by their nature require recording anyway, and for working on competencies related to the image (e.g., verbal and non-verbal communication).

Second, and consequently, it is not appropriate to invest time and financial resources in using video recording at all times and for all students to develop L1 oral communication in the primary grades. A strong instructional program, such as presented in this study, that combines repeated oral performances and feedback from the teacher and peers can be effective on its own.

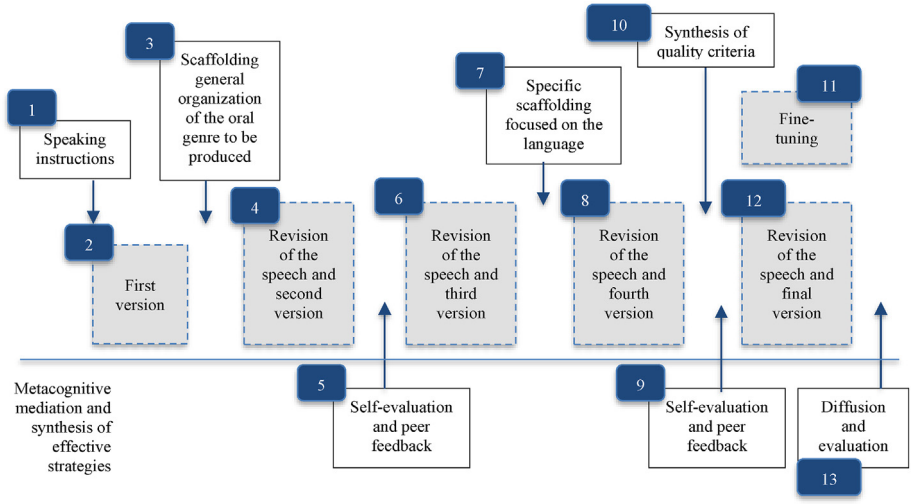
Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

Appendix



Steps in the Itineraries training program, adapted to the teaching / learning of an oral genre (Colognesi & Deschepper, 2022).

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