

Empowerment in Rhetorical Speaking: Comparing the Effects of Delivery on Student Writing

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Abstract: Current teachings of rhetoric analysis have hit a point of stasis when considering the progression of education in the 21st century. The methods used in traditional English classes were based on the practices of one theorist, Kenneth Burke, and the lack of advancements to include technology or different methods of practicing rhetorical analysis. Because of this lack of progress, I implemented an intervention with the goal to discover the impact of rhetorical delivery on a student's understanding and application of rhetoric in their own writing. Rhetoric plays a part in everyday life as there is a sergeant to participate in political discourse in a time of constant political hype. The intervention was designed to act as a form of class instruction to continue students' understanding of rhetoric and practice of rhetorical analysis. As a result, students had the practice schools require in the curriculum while partaking in different exposures to rhetoric.

Introduction and Justification

In Advanced Placement language and comprehension courses, students learn how to read and analyze rhetorically significant texts to analyse for meaning and messages within. This is the practice of rhetorical analysis, an academic skill typically introduced in high school and developed over a lifetime as the process grows with the continual exposure of academic uses for the acquired skills. Contemporary practices of rhetorical analysis stem from the ideas from ancient Greek philosophers with the goal to communicate effectively using the five canons of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery (Crowley and Hawhee, 2004). Often, students are given nonfiction speech transcripts for the historical context of the situation and to help establish the author's position on the matter. However, giving students transcripts alone often fails to capture the intonation and, therefore, intention of the author. As a result, the students reading the speeches do not have a full understanding of what makes the speech rhetorically significant.

Ancient rhetoricians would likely consider contemporary methods of teaching rhetoric incomplete as the presentation of rhetoric impacts one of the five canons: delivery (Crowley & Hawhee, 2004). As Aristotle argued, rhetoric cannot be fully understood if one cannot infer speaking intonation (Crowley & Hawhee, 2004). Rhetoric is the practice and mastery of linguistic devices to communicate and persuade others on matters of

importance (Crowley & Hawhee, 2004). The lack of active practice in analysing different presentations of rhetoric creates a dissonance in what students should be able to understand from the speech and what they understand from the transcript.

Diercks-Gransee et al. (2009) argued that rhetoric instruction in the United States lags behind other countries because the implemented curriculum lacks coherence among many rhetorical practices and focuses. The practice of rhetorical analysis changed with more focus on specific parts of an argument and kinds of arguments instead of the broader idea of communication for the sake of understanding (Crowley & Hawhee, 2004). The shift in rhetorical focus marginalises certain examples used for student practice as only a few texts circulate in a curriculum. Although classic speeches from the likes of Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln prove to be timeless and examples of a kind of mastery, the idea that rhetoric must be old and politically colored what most consider habitual rhetorical practice.

The common belief that rhetoric is limited to political speeches dictates what is used in the classroom and what is defined as rhetorical practice. The current presentation of rhetoric creates a dissonance in the quality of practice as using a transcript takes away part of the rhetorical significance and delivery of a speech.

Even though students exposed only to written rhetoric may understand the ideas and general practice of rhetoric, they do not have exposure to rhetorical appeal, Pathos. Pathos, or emotional appeals, are more commonly seen among classic and contemporary rhetoricians (Crowley & Hawhee, 2004). Emotional appeals are best communicated when the speech is presented as intended; the emotion of the speaker's voice can create another layer of meaning. Thus, for students to be successful in the practice of rhetoric, they should be exposed to it in its intended format.

Literature review

Theories of rhetoric have developed through the years as culture shifts and education emphasizes change. Rhetoric evolved from focusing on being an educational practice to being explored in primarily political contexts (Rutten, 2015). Because of this shift in the rhetorical practice, many educators focused on improving analytical fluency and speed using rhetorical analysis rather than partaking in the active *practice* of traditional rhetorical. The current practice of rhetorical understanding lacks practical application as most students are exposed to rhetoric in only a few subjects and are exposed to a select pool of exemplary texts (Rutten 2012). Rhetoric is not confined to a particular subject area, as the practice of rhetoric is the use of language in daily or disputable conversation (Gerard, 2004). Classic rhetoricians would argue the contemporary teachings undermine the craft as most students do not practice examining rhetorical delivery. Recent studies challenged the contemporary curriculum as researchers gathered more understanding of possible ways to improve how rhetoric is studied in school.

Classic to Contemporary Rhetoric

Rhetorical practices began in Ancient Greece as many practiced the art out of necessity to spread information through effective communication. A common application of rhetoric is an argumentative and persuasive essay. These types of work have prevailed, particularly in secondary schools, as a way to demonstrate rhetorical understanding. The elements of an argumentative essay include a thesis, supportive evidence of empirical or experiential nature, and a close connection between the thesis and the evidence (Campbell & Filimon, 2018). Using these essays and works allow students to understand specific situations, giving them a framework to understand how to apply written rhetoric. Most classes rely on nonfiction works to provide specific context of an author's situation and help determine the author's intention at that time (Stephen, 2016). Practicing rhetoric with nonfiction texts emphasizes continual active practice as rhetoric involves a lifelong practice of analytic application to understand a situation then determine a result in the form of an argument (Rutten 2012). Contemporary rhetoricians agreed to the push for active practice, as practicing rhetoric in the classroom allows students to be creative and exploratory with and among peers of similar capabilities, allowing them to challenge each other (Alvin, 1974). A main influencer of contemporary rhetoric is Kenneth Burke, who is typically cited when scholars discuss the idea of contemporary or "new" rhetoric (Rutten, 2015). Burke's principles became a leading source among academics for guided practices of rhetoric, stagnating the growth in developing rhetoric along with adapting technology.

Rhetoric in the Classroom

Whereas the Greeks were discovering new terminology to define rhetoric, students of the current education system have been relegated to a structured curriculum focused on continuously practicing rhetorical analysis. Recently, Common Core State Standards included rhetorical analysis in their requirements with many upper-level classes incorporating rhetorical practice in various activities. These standards are unavoidable as teachers are guided to follow and fulfil specific requirements to consider their students successful (Campbell & Filimon, 2016). Whereas the traditional argumentative essay is often used, some teachers have found moments to insert creative examples of rhetorical practice through multimedia platforms. The classroom is a place of experimental practices with current technology making its way into everyday use. Using TED talks helped students understand a topic as the visual aid provided additional context for them to comprehend with the words (Kedrowick & Taylor, 2016). The introduction of information via TED talks allowed teachers to guide rhetorical practices around specific topics while using an accessible median. Using problem-based scenarios helped improve students' critical

thinking by giving them more realistic situations instead of using obscure hypotheticals in the case of writing (Paula & Tim, 2012; Smart et al., 2013).

Some students start explicitly practicing rhetoric in high school, with many seeing an increase in complexity until college. Most students were exposed to explicit rhetorical practice starting when taking Advanced Placement language and comprehension and students start acclimating to collegiate level academia. Although students started rhetorical practice early, eleventh graders have proven to have better understanding and capabilities in academic writing as they began their pursuit of a higher education (Eileen, 1995). Theoretically, the practice of rhetoric is continuous and builds over time; however the capability to understand and apply techniques in an analytical and critical way does not start until the students become aware of the importance of context (Rutten, 2012). The current teaching curriculum shifted towards understanding and creating sound arguments in hopes to engage students and promote curiosity on ideas that go beyond the traditional hypothetical prompts given in school (Lesley et al. 2010). Schools that used Common Core were able to shift to including rhetorical analysis, allowing for the practice to continue and become required as a standard practice for students. However, narrowing focus on written communication ignored a leading principle of rhetoric: the oral presentation and delivery of a speech. In Cornell's rhetoric-focused school, the delivery of speech was a leading factor in how the material was presented and what was assessed (Edward, 1995). However, most classes that focus on written rhetorical analysis limit the delivery of a speech by only providing written texts, students are deprived of the intended understanding and meaning the speaker pursued when originally presenting the speech.

Problems with the Current Approach

An important factor from classic rhetoric that is often overlooked is using rhetoric to address the attitudes and relationships between people (Rutten, 2012). The delivery can also influence engagement as those exposed to speaker inflection gather different cues that cannot be caught in writing alone. Curriculum standards for writing usually require students to follow a prompt that poses hypothetical situations, restricting the practice of discourse into being formulaic and unnatural, in which the actual application of rhetoric should be brought into practical use (Eileen, 1995). Oral presentations are currently emphasized in the education curriculum already. However, academics are still adjusting to the integration of oral assignments as viable assessments of understanding (Brophy & Guerin, 2018). The structure and process of writing rhetorical speeches needs additional practice, as continual application of rhetoric strengthens understanding and proper use (Kedrowick & Taylor, 2016). Nationally, students' writing capabilities declined in comparison with other nations, and the rate of students who fall beneath grade level in writing quality increased in elementary classes (Ulla, 1990; Spencer & Peterson, 2018). The

question shifts from *what* to focus on in rhetoric to *how* to present rhetoric for students to understand the practice in a meaningful way. English departments have implemented more rhetorical practice since the 1960s, though the focus on rhetoric lacks structure with generalizations and broad understanding taught in a traditional class (Edward, 1985). The expectations of rhetorical understanding and continual practice has made it mandatory for teachers to cater their lessons towards fulfilling standards mainly revolving analytical skills. The limitations, then, lie in how to provide effective practice that enhances understanding while continuing to follow the guidelines and standards required.

The Importance of Delivery

The challenge being faced is finding ways to present rhetoric that can engage students in active practice while following the requirements asked by schools to show mastery in analyzing texts. In recent years, teachers have explored different media platforms with many coming to similar conclusions that a diverse selection of resources can add depth to student understanding. Visual aids that compliment the information by adding a parallel with the information being shared can help students process the content as the visuals add a different form of stimulus for the students to process information from (Brophy & Guerin, 2018). Additionally, creating an immersive situation through problem-based learning allows students to explore writing possibilities as they try to solve the problem given through their means (Paula & Tim, 2012). The relation between audience and speaker should be dialogical as rhetoric situations involve the speaker's purpose and the audience's reaction. The importance of speaker delivery can define the meaning taken and the engagement of the audience. The delivery and presentation of information is practiced in the writing process, but needs explicit practice to improve understanding and development of speech development (Kedrowick & Taylor, 2016; Jers & Warnsby, 2018). In classical times, the practice of speaking was seen as a monologic practice with the speaker serving as the expert on the matter. In the transition from classic to contemporary rhetoric, the dialog has become dialogic as the speaker is being critiqued and considered in terms of a source's validity on the matters being spoken for (Jers & Warnsby, 2018). There is limited understanding of the relationship between oral presentation of information and written presentation of information with the main connection focusing on grammatical improvement (Spencer & Peterson, 2018).

Studies About Rhetorical Practices in Schools

Few scholars have directly investigated the connection between rhetorical delivery and student improvement. However, some have explored multiple writing processes and practices. For example, Campbell and Filimon (2018) introduced 40-minute sessions of writing, each week introducing a different writing strategy, for five days for 16 weeks. They

found that explicit and direct strategies improved students' writing skills and comprehension of the task. Kedrowick (2016) focused on the visual aspect of TED talks in relation to student retention of information with a key finding being that students have a better recall of the presentation based on the speaker's engagement with the audience through their visual aids. Kedrowick's study demonstrates the importance of teaching delivery, as the data she collected provides evidence that teachers need to implement lessons on delivering rhetoric along with the other canons as the methods of delivery change and expand with the addition of technology. Ludewig (2017) similarly examined the use of TED talks in a professional setting with an emphasis on how the TED format impacts the presentation style. Don (2002) reflected on revision practices with the additional step of providing feedback on a critical level enhances future drafts as immediate feedback allows students to further their ideas while they are still processing the information (Don, 2002). Diercks-Gransee et al. (2009) supported the importance of providing feedback with curriculum-based measurement systems to provide immediate responses to students and implement immediate changes in the lessons. McGill (2003) focused on the presentation of information, not the results of the exposure to different sources. McGill tested the impact of removing students from the traditional class and providing practical application of knowledge in a given situation and environment where students gathered information from the scenario created for them. Although all of these studies support the notion that rhetorical delivery is important in teaching and learning, none of this work has established a correlational or causal link between delivery of a speech and how that will impact a student's understanding and abilities to create rhetorical work. However, these findings provide a good framework of what to expect and how to approach different factors in the present study.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The Purpose of my study is to examine the impact of rhetorical delivery on students' use of the devices exemplified in the speeches provided. The art of teaching rhetoric has been a subject of recent debate as the importance of rhetorical understanding grows. Current high school classes, like Advanced Placement (AP) language and comprehension, have become centered on rhetoric. Students in these classes are taught the fundamentals of written rhetoric by using speeches and nonfiction texts as examples of impactful rhetoric. In theory, the use of speeches provides more context for students to consider when studying rhetoric. In practice, presenting a speech via written transcript takes away from the rhetorical delivery, therefore robbing the students of a rhetorical canon and diminishing their practice of the art. Therefore, the research questions guiding this investigation are:

1. To what extent does exposure to written rhetoric improve students' written and oral use of rhetoric?

2. To what extent does exposure to oral rhetoric improve students' written and oral use of rhetoric?

Methods

Description of Sample/ Context

I worked with five AP language and comprehension classes with a total of 102 students dispersed among the five periods. These classes took place in a public high school, making the bell schedule start at 8 in the morning and end at 2.45 in the afternoon. Each class was composed of more female than male students, but male students were most prevalent in the first, second, and third period. Because of the nature of the Global Institutional Studies program, the fifth and seventh period students had been in classes together since freshman year, making them more acclimated to each other and more social.

This study took place at a high school in southern Maryland. The school held over 1500 students in a single academic year. This study focused in a room at the far end of a second floor hall. Students in this class are AP language and comprehension students, with a majority in their junior year of high school with one senior in one of the classes. These students were taught in a remote environment for a majority of the academic year 2021. For this study, the instructions were designed with the remote situation under consideration. I presented the information through Google Meet's screen share function to ensure everyone was at the same pace. I led conversations with prompted questions to ensure students participated evenly through the class period.

Intervention

Students in periods 1, 2, and 5 were exposed to the oral-condition first. Students in periods 4 and 7 were exposed to the written-condition first. Students in both conditions had the same amount of time with the material. Students in the oral-first condition watched a video of a rhetorical speech while those in the written-first condition will read the transcript. Students partook in a whole class viewing or independent reading of the speech. Students were given allotted class time to reflect and identify rhetorically significant elements of the speech or transcript. After the initial exposure and note taking, the students engaged in a whole class discussion of the rhetoric they noticed in the speech. Following discussions of the speech/transcript, students outlined an argument on an assigned topic and submitted a recording in a designated folder via an educational video sharing app called FlipGrid. Flipgrid is a website and phone application that allows students to upload videos ranging from 1 minute to 3 minutes as a digital discussion between their classmates and the teacher. The students of these classes have used flipgrid before and have a general understanding of the application, making it an easy addition into the class instruction. Additionally, the application requires each participant to make an account that then asks for

a passcode for their class' folder or a specific assignment, ensuring the security of student information.

Type of Methods

This was a mixed methods study with two forms of data collection. The students took surveys via a Google Form to reflect on peer submissions at the end of each week. The survey was collected at the end of the week, Sunday or the following Monday, and used for quantitative data. Students received a final reflection after the third week as an open-ended question. The open-ended question was submitted in a Google form as well and categorized as a personal reflection. This will serve as qualitative data to provide more detailed information about students' experience with the intervention.

Data Collection

This study was designed to measure students' use of rhetoric based on the delivery of rhetoric they were exposed to each week as an instructional demonstration. All students had background knowledge of rhetorical use and analysis in an academic setting. They had four prior months of exposure to the concepts of rhetoric with a stress of understanding the rhetorical situation, though not the practical practice of rhetorical delivery.

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The students evaluated their peers' use of written and oral rhetoric by completing a weekly Likert-type item. They were directed to evaluate five peers' work, focusing on the oral presentation of rhetoric presented in the FlipGrid videos. After completing the evaluations, the process repeated, but students who were initially exposed only to transcripts viewed speeches and vice-versa. As before, they created arguments of their own and evaluated their peers. Alignment of data collection to research questions can be found in Table 1.

Table 1:

Research Questions and Data Sources

	Data source 1	Data source 2	Data source 3
To what extent does exposure to written rhetoric influence students' written and oral use of rhetoric?	Likert-type peer-evaluation item: written use of rhetoric	Likert-type peer-evaluation item: oral use of rhetoric	Open-ended item (post)
To what extent does exposure to oral rhetoric influence students' written and oral use of rhetoric?	Likert-type peer-evaluation item: written use of rhetoric	Likert-type peer-evaluation item: oral use of rhetoric	Open-ended item (post)

Data Analysis

I used a likert-type item to collect quantitative data with students rating on a scale of 1-4 if they thought their peer's video submissions used effective rhetoric. The question, "the author created a strong argument using effective rhetorical appeals", was put on a 1-4 scale and measured with 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= agree, and 4= strongly agree. This survey was sent out at the end of each week with students responding to five of their peers in the same class. The group the students responded to stayed consistent through the weeks.

After the third week of data collection, I distributed an open ended question at the end of class and gave them the opportunity to complete it in class or after class. There were a total of 74 responses to the question "Explain which method of delivery was most helpful in your understanding of rhetoric: the transcripts of the speeches, the speeches themselves, or both". The instructions were to finish the question and write 1-2 sentences explaining their choice. These short responses were then collected digitally and analysed for key words or phrases that repeated within all the responses to better understand the defining traits or reasoning behind the students' preferences in rhetorical delivery.

Validity Concerns

Students received access to the surveys for their peers every Thursday with the expectation to submit their answers by Sunday. This expectation allows for the students to

plan their responses in line with their other work. This submission acted as a process grade to encourage students to submit their answers on time. I also gave weekly timelines of when to turn in Flipgrid videos and when to respond to their peers to give the students a guide of how long each part should take them.

To keep some consistency on how serious the topics discussed were, I provided weekly prompts and a few examples of severity that the students should consider when choosing a topic. The students were able to choose the examples too, allowing for many to expand on the examples instead of creating their own topics. The prompts would frame the severity with hypotheticals such as:

“You and your friend are having a friendly debate about a non serious topic: does pineapple belong on pizza, is Avatar the best cartoon ever made, what is the worst soda, jeans are not appropriate work wear, Cats the movie isn’t bad, etc. Using effective rhetorical choices, create an argument for your chosen topic and submit.”

Adding these prompts and guidelines helped set parameters of what they made their Flipgrid videos about. Many students chose topics that were suggested, making a majority of their topics consistent. Those who chose their own topic fell into the parameters set, allowing for their peers to assess their use of rhetoric on the same level. Giving these guidelines and suggestions helped prevent an uncomfortable dissonance between students’ topics. The gradual growth of seriousness allowed for students to build credibility and sincerity among their peers to prevent students from judging each other’s values on polarizing topics and focus on the use of rhetoric specifically.

Results

After collecting three weeks of data, I imported the information gained from the Google form into a Google Sheets. There were six columns of information with the quantitative data falling in the last column being the likert item. I separated the classes into one of two sections -- majority exposed to oral rhetoric or majority exposed to written rhetoric-- and calculated the Mean and Standard deviation for each grouping.

Through the implementation of my instructional plan, I was able to answer the following research questions: To what extent does exposure to written rhetoric influence students’ written and oral use of rhetoric and To what extent does exposure to oral rhetoric influence students’ written and oral use of rhetoric. The table below displays the results gathered from the likert-type survey students took at the end of each week in reaction to their peers’ Flipgrid submission. The first column identifies the delivery of rhetoric that was presented to those students for the majority of the study with the mean being their average scores on the 1-4 scale likert type survey. The standard deviation reveals the range of answers and if the spread of results is close together or spread out. The final column is

the result of an unpaired t-test, a calculation comparing the students through all the classes exposed to the same rhetorical delivery strategy, to determine the significant difference between the the comparable impact of each form of rhetoric. Table A represents the collection of data after finding the average of both groups, calculating the standard deviation between the two, and solidifying the importance of the study by using an unpaired t-test to compare the groups to find the statistical significance:

Table A:

<i>Quantitative Data</i>			
Delivery Method			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Unpaired t test
Written	3.389	0.791	
Oral	3.297	0.847	p=0.163

When looking at the means, both groups had similar understandings of rhetorical analysis when watching each other's video submissions. Because the scale was 1-4, this supports the idea that students understand rhetoric regardless of presentation with written presentation averaging 3.389 and oral presentation averaging 3.297. The difference, .092, shows little difference in the groups and allows for both methods to be valid in class. The standard deviation supports the idea of students effectively learning from both methods as the students had similar results after the calculation. When considering the p value, running an unpaired t-test gave me the result of .163. To be considered statistically significant, the p value would come out to be less than .05, leading me to understand the students had an understanding and ability to effectively use rhetoric no matter the delivery method they were given. Even with a lack of significant improvement or difference between the students' performance and the delivery method they were given, students commented how they had preference in the different methods in the short responses with many listing or explaining which method they believed was more effective for their understanding of rhetorical analysis in the classroom.

The table below depicts the traits students correlated with either form of rhetorical delivery in their short answer response. I counted how many times each word, phrase, or words of similar meaning in the context of rhetorical analysis appeared in the short responses, as represented by the number next to the words and phrases listed:

Table B:

<i>Qualitative Data</i>	
Oral delivery	Written Delivery
Tone (19)	Annotate (5)
Gesture and body language (5)	Looking back in the text (17)
Emotions (6)	Reference parts (8)

When analysing the open ended question with 30 saying the transcript of the speech, 12 saying the speeches themselves, and 32 saying both methods of delivery. The majority of students who wrote their preference of written rhetoric alluded to the benefit of being able to go back and refer to the text as a visual reference to follow and analyse while reading. Students who included this in their responses specifically noted the ease of annotating and using the text as a reference when completing an activity to understand a rhetorical situation. Other students who preferred the oral presentation of rhetoric had a better understanding or took away the additional visual and audible cues with many noting they were able to interpret the speaker's tone better when listening and could feel the emotions of the speaker through their gesticulation. These features of the oral presentation support the ideas of benefits, but these benefits do not outway the benefits of the written delivery. Instead, the inclusion of these traits point out the places to improve on rhetorical analysis lessons in the classroom.

Discussion of Results

The results recorded from this study expands on the previous research regarding rhetorical analysis in the class, though in ways that went against my initial hypothesis and directs future instructors to consider when designing activities revolving around rhetorical analysis. Existing studies and theories surrounding rhetorical analysis practice in the class have not been challenged since Burke's changes and theories were accepted as a central understanding of rhetoric; however, there is room for improvement as technology advances and education becomes more accepting of inclusive practices.

Many of the past theories who wrote about rhetorical analysis in the classroom discusses focuses on the materials and the different factors to consider when creating rhetorical activities: fiction versus nonfiction works, giving class time or having it as an independent activity, having younger students exposed to rhetoric without knowing it or directly addressing the theory of rhetoric as college students, and more. While the listed factors are important to consider, many theorists do not express the different activities they use when presenting rhetoric and the ones that do focus on the presentation of written rhetoric unless explicitly trying to address the matter of oral rhetoric, a rare factor many do not address. The details from this study outline a potential presentation that exposes students to both sets of rhetoric and provides an outline of a lesson plan that spans over weeks of instruction. Instructors have the freedom to choose which parts of the implemented instruction they add into their class with the knowledge that there are options and ways to present rhetoric that go beyond just giving students a transcript.

While there is a lack of significance in the quantitative data, my findings can contribute to the resurrection of old theories back into contemporary lessons and implementation of rhetorical analysis in the classroom. The fact that presentation did not affect students' understanding or use of effective rhetoric supports the use of transcripts being read in a class activity. The students' recognition of specific traits in both delivery

methods pushes the idea of students understanding the importance of both methods with the ability to differentiate how each method of delivery contributes to their understanding of rhetoric. Having a majority of students respond that a mix of oral and written delivery methods, or a showing of both methods at the same time, would add to their education and understanding speaks volumes as their reasoning validates the use of both methods to provide different stimulus for students to be exposed to which adds to the experience of rhetorical analysis in the classroom and diverse with the kinds of activities teachers can conduct in the class to better accommodate to students of all ability levels. The continual research of rhetorical analysis in the classroom will allow for future scholars to better understand what makes for effective activities and instruction implementations. The reality of the matter being there are a vast amount of factors and variables future scholars can test to try understanding and creating the most effective implementation of rhetorical analysis lessons, letting there be an endless amount of combinations and studies that could be done to better understand rhetorical analysis in the classroom.

Conclusions and implications

Typical lessons that involve rhetorical analysis are usually limited with students only reading transcripts of speeches and ignoring the benefits of presenting rhetorically significant speeches as a video. I created lessons specific to rhetorical delivery to understand the potential difference of student understanding and if it changed based on the presentation of rhetoric. While the results disagree with my initial hypothesis that oral rhetoric improves student understanding, I was able to discover that there was student preference in using both methods of rhetorical delivery instead of a singular method for the benefits of both collectively helping the understanding of rhetoric.

The collected data allows me to understand there is a lack of importance in the delivery as a single form and how the addition of both delivery methods create a rounded understanding of how to effectively analyze rhetoric in class with students finding different benefits to the delivery strategies.

Limitations

The study in itself was well thought out, and the design in instruction allowed for smooth implementation with the curriculum. However, because of certain factors there were some limitations that reflect in the end findings. The classes I worked with were AP language and composition, meaning they already had exposure to what rhetoric is and how to effectively use it. This meant their actual use of rhetoric was already at a level of proficient if not great. They also had a steady understanding of how to analyse rhetoric effectively. This study might have been more impactful (shown influence of rhetorical delivery) on students' understanding if I were to retry this with students with no previous exposure to rhetoric.

Another factor to consider was the lack of consistency in the weeks. January was a month that presents time constraints as we were trying to integrate students back into school after winter break. As a result, a week was taken to bring students back into the academic mindset. Additionally, each week presented some deviation from the typical 4 days a week, A day B day format we were appointed due to the atypical school year. As a result, students were given the same assignments and there was consistency in

expectations, but due dates moved around and the initial exposure to the speech was moved around to fit what was possible for that week, limiting how much time students had to process the information before going into the Flipgrid assignment. This inconsistency pushed me to change when Flipgrid videos were due and when the responses needed to be finished.

The last notable limitation that proved to impact my study was the year itself. The 2020-2021 academic year has been inconsistent overall with a global pandemic impacting the quality of lessons we can teach and the capability of what we can ask of the students work wise and effort wise. The whole education system has seen this hit and we have all felt this limitation. As a result, I was not able to ensure the students were reading or watching the video if I could not share my screen to show the video and I was not able to assign another activity to check for completion while already giving them the Flipgrid videos to limit the amount of at home work we give the students. This year provided many challenges in general, but the biggest hit would be the lack of certainty if students understood what was happening as we could not get some of them to respond while others refused to respond.

Implications

My findings could contribute to expanding the approaches of teaching rhetoric. The general framework of the study acts as a guided lesson teachers of all grades could use to introduce rhetorical analysis. The active practice of using transcripts and videos would help students understand the general terms of rhetoric with questions like “what was the speaker’s argument? How did they move? How do you think they felt when speaking?” These leading questions would add a level of guidance to those who are new to rhetorical analysis in thinking about how to think about rhetoric. The lack of significance regarding rhetorical delivery found in this study helps support teachers to continue using the transcripts for class instruction and implies the value of using videos of the speech as additional stimulus during rhetorical analysis activities. Future researchers could take away the lack of statistical significance seen in the quantitative data; however, the feedback collected from the qualitative data allows for others to see the actual factors students consider when being exposed to one kind of rhetoric versus the other.

While there was no “better” method of delivery, students expressed interest in using both methods simultaneously to allow for a fuller understanding of rhetorical strategies. Because each method has benefits, students understand how their exposure allows them to take away different features of rhetoric. Many who responded to the open ended question acknowledged this idea of using both and went into short detail of why both had benefits even without having that as a personal option or a given option when doing the planned activity.

To conclude, the contemporary study of rhetoric, while developed long ago and lacking in the visual stimulus, appears to be effective with many students within AP language and composition benefiting from the use of transcripts to actively analyse rhetorical strategies in class. The process of using just the transcripts, though, impedes their rounded experience with rhetoric as students who are given videos of the speech originally being given voice the benefits of having the visual component in understanding the speaker and the speech itself. Providing students with a mixed method of giving the

transcript and showing the video in class, then, would round their understanding of rhetoric and train them to think critically about rhetorical strategies in different formats, therefore broadening their understanding of rhetoric to stretch beyond a single delivery style. This exposure allows students to consider rhetoric and proves the importance of rhetorical analysis outside of the traditional and common belief that it only applies in the English class, making the act of rhetorical analysis applicable to everyday situations.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Research Instruments:

Peer Evaluation of Rhetoric

Likert-type item:

Statement 1: The author created a strong argument using effective rhetorical appeals:

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Open-ended item:

Post reflection; Which did you think was most helpful in your understanding of rhetoric: the transcripts of the speeches, the speeches themselves, or both? Explain

Appendix B

Table A:

Quantitative Data

Delivery Method	Mean	Standard Deviation	Unpaired t test
Written	3.389	0.791	
Oral	3.297	0.847	p=0.163

Appendix C

Table B:

Qualitative Data

Oral delivery	Written Delivery
Tone (19)	Annotate (5)
Gesture and body language (5)	Looking back in the text (17)

Emotions (6)

Reference parts (8)
