Changing hats

Reflections on an alternative approach to preparing students for presentations
Student presentations

- Are part of core communication modules in business
- Are used as assessments in other business courses
- Involve three elements
  - Physical
    - Voice: pitch, pace, pause, intonation, articulation
    - Gesture and expression
  - Intellectual
    - Content, audience analysis
  - Emotional
    - Confidence, engagement, passion!
BBS642: Oral Communication

- Second year business degree class
- 16 – 20 students
- Domestic students
  - confidence
- International students
  - speaking skills
  - confidence
Rhythm

- English is a stress-based language
- We learn through nursery rhymes and rhythm
- Good speakers use rhythm and intonation
  - Churchill
  - Martin Luther King
  - David Lange
    - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5A3tUkQeW0

The ability to use rhythm is the basis of effective speech delivery
Aim and rationale

- Building confidence and speech skills in an unthreatening and fun manner.

- Encouraging students to find their own voice within the parameters of ‘good’ delivery style by using texts that are familiar, easy to understand,
Techniques

- Breathing and voice exercises (bubbles)
- Clapping games
- Nursery rhymes
- Jabberwocky
- Children’s stories
- Poetry
Confidence and skills

- Clapping games
  - No language
  - Developing rhythm
  - Fun

- Nursery rhymes
  - Working in groups
  - Listening skills
  - Unthreatening
  - Body language – gestures and facial expression
  - Simple language
Confidence and skills

Jabberwocky
http://www.jabberwocky.com/carroll/jabber/jabberwocky.html

• Vocabulary
• Onomatopoeia
• Listening skills
• Articulation, pitch, pace and volume
• Communicating with an audience
Confidence and skills

- Children’s stories
  - Lynley Dodd
  - Dr Seuss

- Adult poetry
  - e e cummings – pace and pause
  - Dylan Thomas – rhythm and language
  - Robert Frost – language and narrative

  ◦ Simple, vivid language
  ◦ Clear imagery
  ◦ Articulation and fluency
  ◦ Natural rhythms and intonation
Results

- Increased class cohesion
- Improved listening skills
- Increased confidence – ’give it a go’
- Anecdotal improvement in assessment grades

But:
- Students must buy in
- Students still need formal practice
- International students value extra speech tutorials
The bigger picture

- Simple changes:
  - Encourage learning
  - Suit a diverse classroom
  - Engage tutor and students
  - Are a natural part of learning