

Examination of Social Presence in Online Learning: Use of VoiceThread in Asynchronous Courses

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Review of Literature:



Social Presence

- ❖ **Students’ ability to learn, whether in a classroom face-to-face or through online delivery, is dependent in part on a concept is called “social presence” (Zhan & Mei, 2013).**
- ❖ **The isolated learning nature of online learning places a higher importance on social presence for this type of educational delivery.**



Review of Literature



- ❖ **In the case of online learning, establishing a strong social presence is critical to the online student's success and satisfaction with a course** (Richardson & Swan, 2003).
- ❖ **Social presence with the instructor is also required for quality online learning to occur** (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005).
- ❖ **Social media, video cameras, blogs and Facebook are rapidly enhancing the social presence of online students** (Seo, 2016).



Social Presence Theory



- ❖ **Social presence “... is the degree of salience of the other person in the interaction and the consequent salience of the interpersonal relationship”** (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976).
- ❖ **As social presence increases, so does the student’s level of satisfaction with the course and his/her academic accomplishments** (Zhan & Mei, 2013).
- ❖ **The isolated learning nature of online learning places a higher importance on social presence for this type of educational delivery** (Richardson & Swan, 2003).



Review of Literature



VoiceThread

- ❖ **Interactive, cloud-based, multimedia slideshow tool designed to stimulate student-learning engagement.**
- ❖ **The user (i.e., student, instructor) can communicate across the web, present documents (e.g., PowerPoint files) and demonstrate learning outcomes via the **VoiceThread tool** (e.g., Brunvand & Byrd 2011; Koricich, 2013).**



Review of Literature



- ❖ **The student records the initial thread using a microphone and/or web camera.**
- ❖ **Once the student records the thread, the VoiceThread system uploads the video and provides a link.**
- ❖ **VoiceThread is an excellent tool for enabling students to know one another as a community (Koricich, 2013).**



Review of Literature



- ❖ **Viewing one another’s video helps learners and the instructor better understand students beyond a name. Recognition of a face and hearing the student’s story helps build friendships among group members.**
- ❖ **VoiceThread meets the needs of different learning styles while building global communities.**
- ❖ **They are able to say “this is who I am.” A humanistic blending of teaching, technology and online learning is presented** (e.g., Koricich, 2013; Panettieri, 2013).



Purpose of the Study



- ❖ The purposes of this study are to (a) examine students' perceptions of online learning and (b) identify attributes that contributes to a sense of a community as they work in groups.



Research Questions



- ❖ **RQ1: Are students satisfied with a feeling of community within their group?**
- ❖ **RQ2: Do students perceive the learning in the course to be of the highest quality?**
- ❖ **RQ3: What course attributes contribute to students' satisfaction in an online learning course?**



Methods



- ❖ Semester weeks 1-7 students complete group assignments via written format.
 - ❖ E-mail
 - ❖ Discussion board
 - ❖ Text message
- ❖ Semester weeks 8-14 students complete group assignments via VoiceThread.
 - ❖ Ability to see group members' faces for the first time.
 - ❖ Ability to hear group members' voices for the first time.



Methods



- ❖ **This strategy mimics face-to-face courses requirements whereby students are required to demonstrate (a) written, (b) oral and (c) group interaction skills.**
- ❖ **Social presence encourages an active student-to-student and student-to-instructor learning environment.**



Methods



❖ Demonstration of VoiceThread goes here



Sample



- ❖ **Retailing majors and minors at UofSC.**
- ❖ **100 though 500 level courses.**
- ❖ **Students placed in random groups.**
- ❖ **3-4 students per group.**



Sample Population

Gender			
Female		Male	
N=198 (88.8%)		N=11 (11.1%)	
Age			
18-19	N=32 (15%)	24-25	N=10 (5%)
20-21	N=125 (57%)	26-older	N=8 (3.6%)
22-23	N=46 (21%)		
Ethnicity			
African-American	N=20 (9%)	Caucasian	N=178 (79.8%)
Hispanic	N=6 (2.7%)	Native American	N=3 (1.3%)
Multi-Racial	N=4 (1.8%)	Other	N=12 (5.4%)



Sample Population

Grade Level of This Course		
100 level (freshman level)	N=35	35%
200 level (sophomore level)	N=29	29%
300 level (junior level)	N=20	20%
400 level (senior level)	N=8	9%
500 level (graduate level)	N=7	7%
Reasons to Enroll in the Course		
Satisfy a RETL requirement	N=176	78.9%
Satisfy a general elective	N=35	15.7%
Keep my scholarship	N=12	5.4%



Sample Population

Location Taking This Course			
Columbia SC	N=216 (94.7%)	Out of State	N=4 (1%)
SC, Not Columbia	N=11 (4.8%)		
Number of Online Courses Taken			
This is my first course	N=57		25.6%
Two courses (including this course)	N=48		21.5%
More than two courses (including this course)	N=118		52.9%



Survey

- ❖ Quantitative survey using Qualtrics
- ❖ Two main sections measure
 - ❖ Experience using VoiceThread
 - ❖ Demographic information
- ❖ Likert-Scale
 - ❖ 1=Strongly disagree
 - ❖ 2=Disagree
 - ❖ 3=Neutral
 - ❖ 4=Agree
 - ❖ 5=Strongly agree
 - ❖ 6=Do not know



Analyses: *RQ1*



- ❖ **Regression analysis**
- ❖ **Dependent variable**
 - ❖ **Students' satisfaction with the feeling of community with the group**
- ❖ **Predictor variables**
 - ❖ **The introductions enabled me to form a sense of online community**
 - ❖ **I am able to form distinct individual impressions of some students in the course**
 - ❖ **I am comfortable conversing through this medium**



Analyses: RQ1

Dependent: Students' satisfaction with the feeling of community with the group



Model	R2	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F
Regression	.49	148.63	1	148.63	206.16***
Residual		155.00	215	.72	
Total		303.64	216		
Regression	.53	162.69	2	71.34	123.51***
Residual		140.94	214	.65	
Total		303.64	216		
Regression	.55	168.94	3	56.31	89.05***
Residual		134.69	213	.63	
Total		303.64	216		

❖ Predictor variables

***p<.001

- ❖ The introductions enabled me to form a sense of online community
- ❖ I am able to form distinct individual impressions of some students in the course
- ❖ I am comfortable conversing through this medium



Analyses: *RQ2*



❖ Regression analysis

❖ Dependent variable

- ❖ Students' perception of learning in the course is of the highest quality

❖ Predictor variables

- ❖ There is a feeling of community within the group
- ❖ The quality of information provided by the instructor



Analyses: RQ2



Dependent: Students' perception of learning in the course is of the highest quality

Model	R ²	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F
Regression	.34	97.65	1	97.65	111.96***
Residual		189.25	217	.87	
Total		286.91	218		
Regression	.37	108.23	2	54.11	65.42***
Residual		178.67	216	.82	
Total		286.91	218		

❖ **Predictor variables**

***p<.001

- ❖ There is a feeling of community within the group
- ❖ The quality of information provided by the instructor



Analyses: *RQ3*



❖ Regression analysis

❖ Dependent variable

- ❖ Students' overall level of satisfaction with this course

❖ Predictor variables

- ❖ I feel that my view on a topic is presented in the written assignments

- ❖ I have a feeling of community with the group

- ❖ As a result of announcements I am able to form distinct individual impressions of some students in the course



Analyses: RQ3



Dependent: Students' overall level of satisfaction with this course

Model	R ²	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F
Regression	.55	142.83	1	142.83	269.25***
Residual		115.11	217	.53	
Total		257.94	218		
Regression	.67	172.95	2	86.47	219.78***
Residual		84.99	216	.39	
Total		257.94	218		
Regression	.68	175.86	3	58.62	153.55***
Residual		82.08	215	.38	
Total		257.94	218		

❖ Predictor variables ***p<.001

- ❖ I feel that my view on a topic is presented in the written assignments
- ❖ I have a feeling of community with the group
- ❖ As a result of announcements I am able to form distinct individual impressions of some students in the course



Discussion



- ❖ **Continual communication with the instructor, a predetermined method of connecting students with one another and students' ability to express their opinions regarding course topics in a variety of venues all contributed to a quality education.**
- ❖ **These variables required an enhanced level of student-to-student and student-to-instructor accessibility** (Solomon & Schrum, 2007).



Discussion



- ❖ **Student-to-student interaction within online courses played a significant role in the student learning process.**
- ❖ **This finding supported prior research regarding the flexibility of online learning without sacrificing the communication ability of residential instruction** (e.g., Koricich, 2013; Seo, 2016).
- ❖ **Despite being asynchronous courses, students achieved a sense of social presence by using VoiceThread.**



Discussion



- ❖ **Tools once considered solely for communication, brought students and the instructor together as a community, like that experienced in a residential instruction setting** (Panettieri, 2013).
- ❖ **These experiences provided students with a more humanistic classroom experience as compared to simply watching a computer monitor** (e.g., Koricich, 2013).



Conclusion



- ❖ **Quality online education provides students with an avenue to earn a higher education degree while continuing to work, care for family members and/or reside at home.**
- ❖ **The visual and auditory connection gained through the video provides learners with a social presence that is not traditionally available through email or the Internet.**
- ❖ **The visual and auditory connection gained through the video provides learners with a social presence that is not traditionally available through email or the Internet.**



Recommendations



- ❖ **Expand the breadth of students enrolled in courses throughout the university (i.e., not just retailing courses).**
- ❖ **Further research on a male population is warranted.**
- ❖ **Future research will examine social presence based on the number of online learning courses taken and requirement for taking online learning.**



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Thank you!

Questions?

