

Transforming Hosting Arts Education through Pedagogical Innovation

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ABSTRACT

In the era of media convergence, hosting arts education faces both unprecedented challenges and opportunities. Traditionally focused on technical performance such as diction, posture, and script delivery, hosting instruction has often overlooked creativity, reflective practice, and social engagement. Drawing on constructivist and experiential learning theories, as well as expressive pedagogy, this study investigates how pedagogical innovation can transform hosting education from narrow vocational training into a holistic learning model. A mixed-methods research design was employed, including surveys with 120 undergraduates, interviews with 12 students and 5 instructors, and semester-long classroom observations. Findings indicate that expressive and experiential strategies—such as improvisational hosting drills, narrative reframing, and group simulations—significantly increased student engagement and communicative confidence. Teachers reported positive shifts in classroom culture when adopting facilitative roles and implementing dual-teacher instruction, which balanced professional expertise with pedagogical scaffolding. The results suggest that hosting can function as an educational practice that fosters adaptability, creativity, and civic responsibility, extending its relevance beyond broadcasting to interdisciplinary and intercultural contexts. Limitations include the single-institution sample and the lack of longitudinal tracking, pointing to future research on technology-enhanced hosting environments such as AI-based voice analysis and virtual reality. Overall, this study contributes to the growing discourse on curriculum transformation in arts education and provides actionable insights for educators and policymakers.

KEYWORDS

Hosting arts education; Pedagogical innovation; Experiential learning; Expressive pedagogy; Curriculum reform; Higher education

1 Introduction

Hosting arts education, once tightly associated with broadcasting institutions, is experiencing rapid transformation in the era of digital convergence. Historically, its pedagogy centered on training students in vocal clarity, physical presence, and strict adherence to prepared scripts. While these practices aligned with traditional broadcasting requirements, they are increasingly insufficient in preparing learners for the participatory, multimodal, and technology-mediated communication environments of today. Recent bibliometric analysis confirms that research on hosting education has remained fragmented, with limited exploration of interdisciplinary connections and pedagogical innovation, underscoring the necessity of reform ^[1].

Within the context of Chinese higher education, policy-driven reforms have begun to reshape the orientation of hosting curricula. One notable direction is the integration of ideological and political education, which seeks to align professional training with the cultivation of civic values, critical awareness, and social responsibility ^[2]. For hosting arts, this means instruction cannot be limited to technical drills; instead, it must embed value-oriented elements that link expressive practice with broader educational objectives.

Simultaneously, new challenges emerge from the shift toward an all-media environment. Hosting is no longer confined to radio or television studios; it increasingly intersects with online platforms, digital media, and interactive spaces. As scholars note, students today must not only master traditional speaking techniques but also develop digital literacy and the ability to communicate across platforms ^[3]. Without such integration, host training risks producing graduates who are technically sound but unable to adapt to fast-changing media ecosystems.

The rise of livestreaming culture adds further complexity. Hosting now extends into social platforms, user-generated media, and real-time broadcasting spaces, requiring immediacy, improvisation, and audience engagement. Traditional rigid training cannot adequately prepare students for this participatory environment ^[4]. Instead, adaptive, flexible pedagogy that accounts for unpredictability and audience dynamics is required.

These issues resonate with international scholarship that stresses the importance of participatory and student-centered education. Research shows that participatory learning approaches—emphasizing collaboration, dialogue, and shared meaning-making—can enhance student engagement, creativity, and ownership of learning ^[5]. When hosting education is reframed in this light, it emerges not only as professional skill training but also as an educational practice that cultivates adaptability, expressive authenticity, and critical reflection.

Taken together, these perspectives establish the basis of this study. By examining how hosting education can move beyond narrow technical training toward holistic, student-centered, and socially responsive approaches, this research highlights the broader pedagogical potential of hosting arts. Furthermore, it underscores how Chinese innovations—such

as ideological-political integration and practice-oriented teaching—contribute to global debates on curriculum reform and creative education.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Constructivism and experiential learning theories

Constructivist learning theory underscores that students do not passively absorb information but actively construct knowledge through social interaction and contextual engagement. Vygotsky's notion of the "zone of proximal development" highlights how guidance and collaboration enable learners to achieve outcomes beyond individual capacity^[6]. This principle directly applies to hosting education, where peer interaction, audience feedback, and instructor scaffolding encourage the gradual building of expressive competence. For instance, hosting students often progress from rehearsing scripted news readings to co-moderating live panel discussions, with teacher facilitation helping them cross developmental thresholds.

Kolb's experiential learning theory complements constructivism by formalizing the cyclical process of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation^[7]. In hosting classes, this cycle unfolds naturally: students practice through simulated broadcasts (experience), reflect on recordings of their performance (observation), derive principles of tone or body language (conceptualization), and then apply them in a new scenario such as a podcast or livestream (experimentation). Recent open-access research shows that experiential methods in higher education improve learner adaptability and creative problem-solving, especially in performance-oriented fields^[8]. This aligns with hosting's demand for spontaneity, improvisation, and responsiveness in multimodal environments.

2.2 Expressive pedagogy and language-based instruction

Expressive pedagogy prioritizes authenticity, emotional presence, and improvisation rather than technical perfection. Originally developed in writing and performance education, it encourages learners to embrace vulnerability and cultivate a personal voice as a pathway to deeper communication. In hosting education, this orientation emphasizes rhetorical flexibility and embodied awareness—skills that allow students to speak not only with words but also with gesture, intonation, and emotional resonance^[9]. Research in higher education demonstrates that expressive practices such as free monologues, reflective writing, and improvisational dialogue exercises promote learner agency and communicative confidence^[10].

Language-based instruction in hosting must similarly expand beyond drills in pronunciation and script memorization. Activities like narrative reframing or dialogic improvisation allow students to "think through speech" and to connect with audiences at an affective level. Studies of supportive classroom environments show that when learners are encouraged to take expressive risks, they develop not only fluency but also resilience and creativity^[11]. For hosting education, embedding expressive pedagogy into daily classroom practice equips students with communicative agility that technical repetition alone cannot provide.

2.3 Educational transformation and pedagogical relevance

Educational transformation in the 21st century is characterized by interdisciplinarity, digitalization, and student-centered learning. Hosting education must align with these shifts, moving from narrowly defined vocational training to a holistic model that fosters creativity, reflection, and civic engagement. In China, the integration of ideological and political elements with expressive practice ensures that hosting instruction contributes not only to professional competence but also to the cultivation of civic responsibility^[12].

The dual-teacher model exemplifies this transformation, pairing industry practitioners with academic instructors to bridge technical expertise and pedagogical innovation. Case studies in Chinese universities suggest that this model enhances classroom vitality, enabling students to acquire both professional know-how and broader educational perspectives^[12]. Internationally, digital learning environments and blended pedagogies have also been shown to support learner engagement across disciplines^[13]. For hosting education, adopting such flexible and collaborative models underscores its relevance in preparing students for dynamic roles in media, education, and intercultural communication.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research design

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights into the transformation of hosting arts education. The rationale for this approach lies in the complexity of teaching practices, which cannot be fully understood through a single data source. A sequential explanatory design was employed, where quantitative survey data were first collected to establish general patterns of perception and engagement, followed by qualitative interviews and classroom observations to contextualize and deepen the findings^[14].

In addition, an embedded case study of a hosting program at a comprehensive university was integrated to provide an

in-depth view of how pedagogical innovation unfolds in practice. Case studies are particularly well-suited for educational research that seeks to analyze teaching strategies in real-life classroom contexts ^[15]. The combination of surveys, interviews, and case-based observation allows for triangulation, thereby improving validity and reliability of the findings.

3.2 Data collection

The quantitative phase involved a structured questionnaire distributed to 120 undergraduate students enrolled in hosting-related courses. The survey instrument measured three dimensions: (a) perceptions of current teaching methods, (b) levels of engagement in expressive and experiential activities, and (c) attitudes toward curriculum innovation. Items were adapted from validated instruments used in communication and pedagogy research ^[16]. Responses were collected on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The qualitative phase consisted of semi-structured interviews with 12 students and 5 instructors. Interviews explored themes such as classroom dynamics, emotional presence, and perceptions of dual-teacher instruction. Each interview lasted 45–60 minutes and was audio-recorded with participant consent. In addition, two semester-long classroom observations were conducted, focusing on expressive tasks such as live simulations, improvisational hosting drills, and group discussions. Field notes were triangulated with interview transcripts to provide thick descriptions of classroom processes ^[17].

3.3 Data analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency distributions and mean scores were calculated to map student perceptions of traditional versus innovative pedagogical strategies. Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to examine differences between male and female students, while one-way ANOVA tested differences across year levels. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 27.0 software ^[18].

Qualitative data analysis followed a thematic approach. Transcripts from interviews and observation notes were coded inductively to generate themes related to expressive pedagogy, constructivist practices, and educational transformation. NVivo software was used to organize and analyze qualitative data, enabling visualization of recurring themes and their interconnections ^[19]. Triangulation across data sources enhanced credibility, while member-checking with participants ensured trustworthiness of the interpretations.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Student engagement

Survey results indicated a marked increase in student participation when expressive and experiential strategies were adopted. Over 70% of respondents agreed that improvisational hosting drills and group-based simulations enhanced their willingness to speak in class. Classroom observations confirmed this trend, showing more spontaneous contributions during discussions and higher levels of energy in peer-led activities. These findings echo research demonstrating that student-centered learning environments foster active participation and motivation ^[10].

4.2 Learning outcomes

Beyond participation, the intervention produced improvements in communicative competence. Students reported higher confidence in handling unscripted scenarios and demonstrated stronger rhetorical agility in simulated broadcasts. Teachers observed better modulation of voice, increased use of expressive gestures, and more coherent narrative structuring. These outcomes align with studies highlighting the effectiveness of experiential and problem-based learning in enhancing complex performance skills [8]. Importantly, reflection journals revealed that students began to view hosting not just as technical performance but as an educational practice that integrates creativity, critical awareness, and social engagement.

4.3 Teacher perspectives

Instructors noted that shifting from evaluator to facilitator roles reshaped classroom culture. By co-creating tasks with students and modeling vulnerability in expressive exercises, teachers fostered a safer and more collaborative environment. Several teachers emphasized that the dual-teacher model enriched instructional quality, as industry professionals contributed practical insights while academic staff provided pedagogical scaffolding. This aligns with broader literature showing that collaborative teaching models enhance both teacher adaptability and student learning ^[20]. However, instructors also pointed to challenges, including the need for additional training in expressive pedagogy and the difficulty of balancing innovation with curricular requirements.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Summary of findings

This study explored the pedagogical transformation of hosting arts education through the integration of constructivist, experiential, and expressive approaches. Findings from surveys, interviews, and classroom observations

revealed that students engaged more actively and developed stronger communicative competence when exposed to improvisational drills, narrative reframing, and collaborative hosting simulations. Teachers reported that shifting toward facilitative roles and employing the dual-teacher model enhanced classroom culture and broadened instructional impact. These results confirm that hosting can evolve from narrow technical training into a holistic educational practice that fosters adaptability, authenticity, and creativity ^[21].

5.2 Educational implications

The findings have several implications for higher education. First, curriculum designers should embed expressive and experiential tasks as core components rather than supplementary activities. Second, faculty development programs must equip instructors with skills in facilitation, reflective feedback, and improvisational techniques. Third, partnerships between academic and industry professionals should be institutionalized to sustain the dual-teacher model. As research in digital and blended learning shows, integrating flexible and collaborative approaches prepares students not only for professional broadcasting roles but also for interdisciplinary applications in education and cultural communication [13].

5.3 Limitations and future directions

Despite its contributions, this study has limitations. The sample was restricted to one institution, which limits generalizability. Moreover, the study relied primarily on self-reported data and classroom observation without longitudinal tracking. Future research should employ larger, multi-site samples and adopt longitudinal designs to assess sustained impacts of expressive pedagogy. Additionally, emerging technologies such as AI-based voice analysis and virtual reality hosting environments warrant exploration for their pedagogical potential ^[22]. These directions will not only strengthen the evidence base but also extend the role of hosting education in global higher education reform.

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