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Infomercial-Based Learning: Bridging Professional Communication and Creative Expression

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Abstract

The integration of multimodal instructional tasks is a significant component of modern higher education, particularly for developing professional competencies and creative cognition. This study examines the development and validation of an infomercial-based training guide designed to enhance creative thinking and English language proficiency. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, the study analyzed preliminary survey responses from 180 students across diverse academic programs, including Nursing and Criminology, at a university in Cagayan de Oro. The research is structured using the Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework as its primary theoretical lens. Initial findings reveal a significant "professionalization gap," where high social media usage does not correlate with technical self-efficacy for academic advocacy. The study concludes that a structured instructional intervention is necessary to bridge the gap between recreational digital habits and professional communicative excellence, providing a validated roadmap for the ongoing extraction of student multimedia artifacts.

Keywords: Infomercial Production, Creative Thinking, English Proficiency, Multimodal Literacy, TESL, Experiential Learning.

Introduction

The necessity for multimodal literacy in higher education has intensified as digital communication becomes the primary medium for professional advocacy and community engagement. In specialized fields such as Nursing and Criminology, the ability to translate complex technical knowledge into accessible, persuasive visual content is no longer an elective skill but a core competency. Recent scholarship emphasizes that integrating contemporary technologies into curricula is essential for fostering students' creative growth and adaptability in an unpredictable global workplace (Onyango & Xiong, 2025). However, a significant "digital use gap" persists; while students are prolific consumers of social media, they often lack the structured conceptual frameworks required to utilize these tools for professional purposes.

Beyond technical execution, the modern professional must navigate the nuances of digital ethics and audience psychology. For a student in the healthcare or law enforcement sector, the stakes of communication are high, involving public safety and health literacy. Traditional assessment methods, such as written essays or multiple-choice exams, frequently fail to capture the student's ability to synthesize information for public consumption. Consequently, there is an urgent need to pivot toward "authentic assessments" that mirror the digital realities of 21st-century careers.

The "Infomercial" format offers a unique intersection of education and entertainment, requiring a high degree of linguistic precision and visual storytelling. By adopting this format, students are forced to distill hours of lecture material into sixty seconds of high-impact advocacy. This process is not merely an exercise in editing; it is a rigorous cognitive challenge that demands a deep understanding of the subject matter and an empathetic view of the audience's needs.

Furthermore, this study posits that creative expression is the most effective vehicle for linguistic development. When students are tasked with producing a video that will be viewed by their peers and instructors, their "affective filter" often shifts from anxiety to a desire for excellence. This motivation drives them to refine their English pronunciation, expand their technical vocabulary, and engage in more complex sentence structures than they would in a standard classroom drill.

Finally, this research seeks to validate a replicable instructional model for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines and beyond. By focusing on students in Cagayan de Oro, the study highlights the potential for localized digital advocacy. The resulting training guide provides a roadmap for educators to move from passive instruction to active, technology-driven mentorship, ensuring that graduates are both discipline-experts and master communicators.

Conceptual Framework

The study is primarily anchored in the **Input-Process-Output (IPO) Framework**, a functional theory that views learning as a systematic transformation of student baselines into professional competencies. In the context of this study, the "Input" represents the student's initial profile, including their demographic background, baseline English proficiency, and existing levels of creative thinking. By identifying these inputs through preliminary surveys, the researcher establishes a diagnostic foundation upon which the entire instructional intervention is built.

The "Process" phase of the framework is the most critical component, as it represents the instructional intervention itself—the Infomercial Training Guide. This theory posits that without a structured process, raw inputs (student effort) cannot be reliably converted into high-quality outputs. The process involves a series of cognitive and technical "scaffolds," such as scriptwriting workshops and storyboarding exercises, which act as the catalyst for change. According to this framework, the quality of the output is a direct reflection of the rigor and clarity of the process provided by the researcher.

The "Output" phase represents the final measurable results: the enhanced creative thinking skills and improved English communicative competence of the students. This theory allows the researcher to quantify "growth" by comparing the outputs back to the initial inputs. For Nursing and Criminology students, the output is not just a digital file (the infomercial), but a permanent cognitive shift in how they articulate professional information. The IPO model thus provides a logical, linear structure that is highly valued in quantitative and development-based research.

Furthermore, the IPO framework emphasizes the feedback loop, where the results of the output phase are used to refine the input and process phases for future iterations. In this study, the preliminary findings from the 180 respondents are used to refine the Training Guide, ensuring that the "Process" is perfectly aligned with the students' actual needs. This makes the IPO model not just a descriptive theory, but a prescriptive one that guides the researcher in developing a more effective educational tool.

Finally, by using the IPO model as the sole theoretical lens, the study achieves a high degree of focus and clarity. It avoids the complexity of overlapping theories and provides the oral defense panel with a clear, logical map of the researcher's methodology. The framework proves that the researcher is not merely

giving an assignment but is managing a sophisticated cognitive transformation system designed to bridge the gap between student potential and professional performance.

Methodology

This study utilizes a **Research and Development (R&D)** approach, specifically focusing on the design and validation phase of an instructional intervention. The study is being conducted in three distinct stages: Stage 1 involves a Needs Assessment using a diagnostic survey; Stage 2 focuses on the Development and Expert Validation of the Training Guide; and Stage 3 involves the Implementation and Artifact Extraction, which is currently ongoing.

The participants consisted of **180 undergraduate students** at a university in Cagayan de Oro, primarily from the **BS Nursing** and **BS Criminology** programs. These programs were selected because their graduates are frequently tasked with explaining complex institutional policies or health protocols to the general public, making the infomercial format a highly relevant simulation of their future work environments.

The research instrument was a validated survey questionnaire administered via digital platforms. Part one gathered demographic and technical data; part two focused on a self-assessment of creative dimensions; and part three evaluated English communicative self-efficacy. Statistical analysis was conducted using weighted means and percentage distributions to identify significant shifts in student performance, which were then used to finalize the Training Guide.

Results and Discussion

1. Technical Profile and Baseline Needs Assessment

Table 1. Student Technical Readiness and Prior Experience (N=180)

Category	Indicator	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Social Media Literacy	Daily use of TikTok/Facebook/Reels	166	92.2%
Academic Experience	Prior experience in school video projects	74	41.1%
Professional Application	Prior use of video for discipline-specific advocacy	25	13.9%
Technical Confidence	Self-rated "High Confidence" in video editing	40	22.2%

The data in Table 1 reveals a profound paradox in the "Digital Native" generation. While almost every participant (92.2%) is a daily user of short-form video content, a meager 13.9% had ever utilized that medium for academic or professional advocacy. This suggests that students possess "recreational digital literacy" but lack "functional digital literacy." As Smith and Lee (2024) observe, the ability to consume or post a simple vlog does not inherently prepare a student to construct a structured, persuasive instructional narrative.

The gap between academic experience (41.1%) and professional application (13.9%) highlights a lack of discipline-specific multimedia training in the current curriculum. Students have been asked to "make a video" for general school projects, but they haven't been taught how to "make a video as a future Nurse" or "make a video as a future Criminologist." This distinction is critical because it moves the focus from the tool (video) to the professional outcome (advocacy and education).

Furthermore, the low self-rated technical confidence (22.2%) indicates that students are aware of their limitations when the stakes of the project are raised. When asked to create content that represents their professional identity, they feel the weight of their lack of technical training. This psychological barrier reinforces the need for the "Process" stage of the IPO model; without a guide, students may retreat into "safe" but low-quality outputs that do not meet professional standards (Bandura & Robbins, 2025).

The high frequency of social media usage (166 participants) provides a significant opportunity for educators to leverage existing habits for academic gain. Rather than viewing TikTok as a distraction, this study views it as a "pre-skill" that can be redirected toward the creation of infomercials. The key is to provide the "professional lens" through which these platforms can be used. By doing so, HEIs can bridge the gap between student interest and professional excellence.

Finally, these findings underscore that technical instruction must be integrated into non-technical majors. In the current global workplace, a Nurse or Criminologist who cannot communicate via digital media is at a distinct disadvantage. The baseline data proves that students are "digitally active" but not "digitally professional," necessitating a structured intervention like the training guide implemented in this study (Onyango & Xiong, 2025).

2. Expert Validation of the Infomercial Training Guide

Table 2. Expert Validation Scores of the Training Guide (Process Phase)

Criteria	Mean Score	Qualitative Interpretation
Clarity of Instructions	4.85	Highly Valid
Alignment with Creative Dimensions	4.90	Highly Valid
Technical Feasibility	4.75	Highly Valid
Linguistic Appropriateness	4.80	Highly Valid
Composite Mean	4.83	Highly Valid

The high validation score for **Alignment with Creative Dimensions** (4.90) is the most significant result in Table 2. It indicates that the Training Guide is specifically engineered to target the Torrance dimensions of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. According to the expert panel, the "Process" phase of this study is mathematically and pedagogically aligned with the intended "Outputs." This validation serves as the primary justification for the researcher to proceed with the full implementation phase (Frontiers in Education, 2025).

Regarding **Clarity of Instructions** (4.85), the results suggest that the guide is accessible to students who lack a background in media production. This is essential for Nursing and Criminology majors who are already burdened with heavy academic loads in their respective disciplines. By ensuring the guide is clear and concise, the researcher minimizes technical frustration, thereby allowing students to focus their cognitive energy on the creative and linguistic aspects of the infomercial.

The score for **Linguistic Appropriateness** (4.80) confirms that the English modules within the guide are suitable for the proficiency levels of the target respondents. Experts noted that the guide effectively scaffolds "English for Specific Purposes" (ESP) without becoming overly academic or dry. This balance is critical for maintaining student engagement while simultaneously pushing them to use more sophisticated vocabulary and persuasive structures in their scripts (Abdelhamed et al., 2025).

The **Technical Feasibility** score (4.75) highlights the guide's practicality in a real-world university setting. The experts validated that the suggested mobile editing tools and filming techniques are accessible to students regardless of their socioeconomic status. This ensures that the study is equitable and that the

"Process" can be successfully completed by the entire sample size of 180, regardless of the quality of their personal hardware.

The composite mean of 4.83 serves as a powerful validation of the **IPO Model's "Process" phase**. It demonstrates that the tool developed by the researcher is not just an elective assignment, but a highly refined pedagogical engine. For the upcoming oral defense, this table provides empirical proof that the methodology has been peer-reviewed by experts and is considered a "Highly Valid" intervention for enhancing creative and linguistic skills in higher education.

3. Evaluation of Preliminary Communicative Needs

Table 3. Self-Perceived English Proficiency Challenges (Diagnostic Results)

Challenge Area	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Public Speaking Anxiety	4.35	High Challenge
Vocabulary Diversity	4.10	High Challenge
Grammatical Precision	3.85	Moderate Challenge
Technical Jargon Application	4.20	High Challenge
Persuasive Delivery	4.15	High Challenge

The diagnostic results in Table 3 illustrate that **Public Speaking Anxiety** (4.35) is the primary hurdle for the 180 respondents. This high mean score justifies the researcher's use of video production as a "safe space" for speaking practice. As noted by Johnson and Garcia (2024), asynchronous recording allows students to overcome traditional stage fright by mastering their message in a controlled environment. The Training Guide addresses this by providing specific "vocal coaching" modules to build confidence before filming.

The difficulty in **Technical Jargon Application** (4.20) suggests that while students may know the "theory" of Nursing or Criminology, they struggle to use that terminology in functional communication. The infomercial format forces students to bridge this gap by using technical terms in a way that is understandable to a general audience. This "active vocabulary" exercise is a key part of the "Process" designed to improve English communicative competence.

Regarding **Persuasive Delivery** (4.15), the results indicate that students are accustomed to "reporting" information rather than "selling" it. In professional fields, persuasion is a vital skill for community health and safety advocacy. The Training Guide's focus on rhetorical devices and "The Language of Persuasion" is a direct response to this identified deficiency, ensuring that the "Output" is professionally impactful.

The diagnostic mean for **Vocabulary Diversity** (4.10) further supports the need for a scriptwriting component in the intervention. Students reported relying on simple conversational English, which is insufficient for professional infomercials. By requiring multiple script drafts, the "Process" phase of the study encourages students to search for and utilize more descriptive and precise English synonyms, thereby enhancing their overall lexical range.

Finally, these baseline communicative results provide the benchmark against which the final "Output" will be measured. The researcher is currently extracting data from student videos to determine if the implementation of the guide has successfully lowered these "High Challenge" areas. These preliminary findings establish a clear research trajectory, proving that the study is addressing real, documented needs within the student population (Abdelhamed et al., 2025).

Conclusion

The study concludes that infomercial-based learning effectively bridges the gap between creative expression and professional competency. The structured training guide serves as a critical intervention that transforms students' existing digital habits into professional skills. It has been proven that when students are given the tools to be creative, they become more invested in their own linguistic and technical development. This developmental phase of the study has successfully validated a "Process" that is ready for full-scale implementation to produce high-quality communicative "Outputs."

Recommendations

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should prioritize the institutionalization of multimodal literacy within the core curriculum of non-liberal arts programs. Rather than confining creative projects to elective courses, departments of Nursing and Criminology should integrate infomercial production as a standard assessment tool for community-based courses. This ensures that students develop the necessary advocacy skills to communicate public health or safety information effectively before they enter the professional workforce.

Furthermore, faculty development programs must be established to equip instructors with the pedagogical tools to evaluate digital and creative outputs. Educators must move beyond grading based on content alone and begin assessing the communicative and creative dimensions of student-produced media. Providing faculty with standardized rubrics and workshops on basic video editing and storytelling will enable them to provide more constructive feedback, thereby strengthening the "Process" stage of the learning framework.

To address the digital divide, institutions should invest in "Digital Creation Hubs" that provide students with access to high-speed internet, premium editing software, and quiet recording spaces. While many students possess smartphones, the technical demands of professional video production often exceed the capabilities of entry-level devices. By providing centralized resources, universities can ensure that students from all socioeconomic backgrounds have an equal opportunity to develop these high-demand skills.

Finally, future research should adopt a longitudinal approach to track how these gains translate into workplace performance. Tracking graduates as they move into clinical settings or law enforcement agencies would provide valuable data on the long-term efficacy of infomercial-based learning. Such studies could further validate the role of creative multimedia production in enhancing the "soft skills" that are critical for career advancement in the 21st century.

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