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Facultad Regional Multidisciplinaria, FAREM–Estelí

Essay: The effectiveness of using YouTube videos as a didactic resource

Autor

Mario José Zamora Vindell

Tutor

Msc.Erwing Alexander Moncada

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Abstract

This essay examines the effectiveness of using YouTube videos as a teaching resource to improve listening comprehension of seventh grade secondary school students. Technology is used everywhere and in education it has become a great opportunity to learn in an interactive and dynamic way. Therefore, this study was carried out with the aim to determine the use that technology has, in education nowadays. Technology as an application tool in secondary education can develop listening comprehension of the students through the use of cell phones, computers, tablets, speakers, projectors, and so on; in which it can be integrative resource online-offline, such as YouTube videos, and linking them with listening tests. Also, it was found that using videos can help with listening skills in English class. In conclusion, technology resources such as videos could be used by secondary school students. For that reason, it is recommended that we as future English teachers have an idea of the benefits provided by the use of technological resources such as videos in the language learning process.

Key words: Language acquisition, listening comprehension, Comprehensible input, YouTube video.

Introduction

Listening comprehension is one of the basic language skills, in which students of secondary education face a serious problem in EFL. Such an issue is related to the lack of vocabulary, due to the lack of exposure to the target language or listening strategies in the classroom. However, new educational trends have incorporated the use of communication and information technologies (CITs) to boost the teaching learning process in EFL in an interactive and a meaningful way. The aims of this essay is to analyze different concepts and theories of some authors that explain how to acquire a foreign language and the effectiveness of using YouTube videos as a didactic resource to improve listening comprehension in EFL students. So from here, has come the next question:

What is the effectiveness of using YouTube videos to improve listening comprehension of seventh grade secondary school students?

Development

Nowadays, a great tendency towards the use of technology and its integration into the educational program, has increased a great importance. Particularly, the use of video as a didactic resource in foreign language teaching has grown rapidly (Chien et al., 2020). Chien defined video “As the selection and sequence of messages in an audio-visual context”. Abduh, (2016), and Solano et al.,(2022) argues that “YouTube has an enormous potential in teaching EFL to students of all ages and levels”. The author adds that language teachers prefer videos because it motivates students, brings the real world into the classroom, contextualizes language naturally and enabled learners experience authentic language in a controlled environment. In a such a way the role of

the teacher is crucial by using YouTube videos as a didactic resource; on the contrary if a suitable methodological treatment is not carried out this resource would become an element of distraction only for the student (MacWilliam, 1986).

Many research around the world have found that one of the main advantages of YouTube videos for listening comprehension in language teaching is the exposure to various accents, speed of speech, vocabulary, expressions and phrases while watching and listening. Qomariyah et al., (2021) explain that “the exposure helps improve learners listening abilities”. Another advantage of YouTube video is that students can learn English language in and out the classroom. According to Medina Palencia (2020), "Didactic videos in the classrooms provide students motivation; since, rather than transmitting exhaustive and systematized information, they aim to awaken the interest of students for the language". This means that video as a didactic resource is useful to engage students in the target language and provide comprehensible input. Krashen, (Krashen, 2004) point out that “Language acquisition is a subconscious process; while it is happening we are not aware that it is happening, and the competence developed this way is stored in the brain subconsciously”; children, for example are not necessarily aware that they are acquiring language, they are only aware that they are communicating. The author adds that language acquisition can only take place when input is comprehensible to the learner by following the sequencing of the mother tongue because the child in the first place: hears, listens, understands but does not speak; little by little begins to speak; later to read; and then to write. In summary Krashen, S., & Terrell,(1998), and Hamouda, (2013) acquisition happens when learners have sufficient comprehensible input. According to Hilton,(2021) “comprehensible input is one of the five language acquisitions hypothesis” defined by Stephen Krashen. The Input Hypothesis

attempts to answer the most important question in the field of language acquisition. How do we acquire language? The Author states that we acquire language when we understand what people tell us or when we understand what we read, this process is called “comprehensible input”. In this study, one of the reasons for using YouTube videos is to engage students in the language acquisition, since these videos contain rich audio-visual aids to input.

In a study by (Rizkan et al., 2019) investigated the effect of using YouTube as a didactic media on the students` listening skill for students of English education program in Indonesia. Using post-test, they found that YouTube is more effective than using audio to teach listening comprehension. Similarly, (Qomariyah et al., 2021) investigate the effect of YouTube video on students listening comprehension performance. By using pre-test and post-test, they found that “Learning English through applying YouTube with relevant videos is a great alternative or main source of learning within the improvement of English students` listening comprehension performance, since YouTube videos provide visual and audio aids. Londe, (2009) at the University of the Southern of California carried out on study titled “The Effects of Video Media in English as a Second Language Listening Comprehension Tests”. She found that students feel more comfortable using video than only audio format, after the application of the post-test the students score better than in the pre-test.

Based on the research`s experience, an interest predominates in the use of YouTube videos to improve listening skill, but there is still a need for a research process that determines the effectiveness that the use of YouTube video has in listening comprehension of seventh grade students of secondary education in the municipality of San Juan de Limay, department of Estelí;

today that the Ministry of Education demand the incorporation of technology as a new way of teaching a learning.

The use of YouTube videos is a challenge for educators and learners nowadays into the classroom. One reason is due to many teachers refuse of using technological tool for the lack of training on it, and for it the teaching English in secondary education is limited to the use of the textbook. In this new era of the technology the way of teaching and learning a foreign language have changed. Second, if “a teacher uses YouTube without taking into account the age and level of the students” (Chien et al., 2020); it would become in a medium without pedagogical foundation. Then, it is recommendable take into account the elements mentioned above; without avoid the purpose of the program, and the ability that we want to improve; in this case listening comprehension what is consider the language skill in which students face the greatest difficulty. To determine the effectiveness of using YouTube videos; it was carried out the implementation of listening test by using three instruments such as: diagnostic, progress and achievement test with seventh grade secondary school students at the Ruben Dario Institute in San Juan de Limay. The population of this study corresponds to 30 students (14 girls; 16 boys). I chose one grade out of two grades; seventh grade “A”, morning shifts of secondary school at the Ruben Dario Institute in San Juan de Limay. The sample of this research is considered intentional.

The quantitative data analysis showed that the students taken as a sample improved significantly, in relation to the findings in the diagnostic test. For this, the theory of language acquisition proposed by the author Krashen was taken as a basis, which establishes: “Language acquisition occurs through understanding messages or, in the other words, through receiving “comprehensible input” (Krashen, 1998). In other words, the experiment certifies what the author

adds that language acquisition can only take place when input is comprehensible to the learner by following the sequencing of the mother tongue because *the child in the first place: hears, listens, understands* but does not speak; little by little begins to speak; later to read; and then to write. Krashen, S., & Terrell, (1998), and Hamouda, (2013) acquisition happens when learners have sufficient comprehensible input, and this is what I took into account during the pedagogical intervention.

The findings on the achievement test, which is considered a post-listening test, was a clear indication of the effect of YouTube videos on seventh grade students' listening performance. As has been pointed out, in the diagnostic test the same group of students taken as a sample obtained a poor grade (eight out of ten students), while in the performance test the students obtained an excellent grade (eight out of ten students).

Consequently, the findings of this research are in harmony with the study findings of (Rizkan et al., 2019) whose results determine the effectiveness of using YouTube videos to improve listening comprehension in EFL students. Learning English through applying YouTube with relevant videos is a great alternative or main source of learning within the improvement of English students' listening comprehension performance, since YouTube videos provide visual and audio aids. I could identify that the students feel motivated when the videos were presented to them. It is important to highlight that the students always received a brief introduction on the topic of the video and a positive response. In the same way, the steps that gave good results in a study carried out by me and another colleague for the year 2020 were resumed regarding the improvement of the listening comprehension of the eighth grade students of a rural secondary school were resumed.

The use of YouTube videos in the classroom are more interesting, stimulating, and challenging than the traditional way of teaching where the teacher is the center of the teaching-learning process. By using YouTube videos students are engaged in the in the target language or language acquisition, as a consequence this research process had found that videos contain rich audio-visual aids to input. A video is an audiovisual resource that integrates different learning styles, e.g., auditory, visual and kinesthetic, useful to catch the attention of the listener and, in such a way, receives the message. The students sample in this study considered YouTube videos as a more enjoyable to learn EFL listening comprehension, they found them more motivational, beneficial and interesting. In addition, YouTube videos provide an opportunity for the students to learn English language as it is used by native speakers, since YouTube is considered as an important authentic resource; BUT without ignore that the role of the teacher or pedagogical mediation into the classroom, is crucial.

Conclusion

It is well known that technology resources, such as: cell phones, tablets and computers are the most electronic devices used by people in Nicaragua nowadays. Most people use the cell phone to interact with each other in whatever place, i.e.; as rural as urban area. This could mean that many people in Nicaragua have a cell phone. As a result, these technological devices have come to change the way people interact today; also, the way in which people learn. On the other hand, almost all secondary schools in our country have provided technological devices, such as: speaker, computer, tablet, data show, as well as Internet connection. Therefore, teachers should

use these devices incorporating resources of videos, “online and offline¹” (Bader Al Bataineh et al., 2019,p.325) to share information; in such a way that students have the opportunity to develop communicative skills in English, from its use. Rico Sirvent (2017) argues that “ use of technology resources is a great option to improve comprehension of the students” (p.22). In addition, the findings in this essay indicate that YouTube videos in the classroom promote the interest of the students for the language, since this resource catches the attention and enhances their understanding in the spoken language. For me as a future English teacher, this research process has been crucial to know that educators currently have a challenge, since the way of teaching and learning English as a foreign language have changed, due to technological advance, and the context demands it, so we need to be trained about it. This paper, proved that an easy, fun and interesting way to teach and learn EFL students in secondary education is by using YouTube videos.

¹ Online: It means with internet connection; while Offline means no internet connection. This is what Blended Learning is based on.

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