

USING VIDEOS TO MOTIVATE RELUCTANT EFL STUDENTS TO TALK IN CLASSROOM

Nguyễn Hoàng Thanh Trang¹

TÓM TẮT

Sự rụt rè trong giao tiếp của người học là một vấn đề đối với nhiều giáo viên ngôn ngữ. Lý do phổ biến gây nên việc người học miễn cưỡng tham gia hoạt động nói trong các lớp học ESL / EFL là nỗi sợ nói sai. Nghiên cứu này gồm 10 đối tượng là người học đang học tại trường Đại học Yersin Đà Lạt ở trình độ trước trung cấp. Những đối tượng này cũng có lý do tương tự cho việc từ chối nói tiếng Anh trong lớp. Nhiều phương pháp đã được sử dụng để khuyến khích học viên tham gia nói tiếng Anh, nhưng không nhiều trong số đó đem lại hiệu quả. Do đó, mục đích của nghiên cứu này là để tìm hiểu một phương pháp giúp khuyến khích những người học nhút nhát có động lực nói tiếng Anh, đó là: Học tiếng Anh kết hợp sử dụng video. Dữ liệu nghiên cứu được thu thập thông qua bảng biểu, bảng câu hỏi và phỏng vấn. Sau hai tuần, phương pháp này cho thấy hiệu quả của nó trong việc tăng cường tham gia hoạt động nói tiếng Anh của người học.

Title: Using videos to motivate reluctant efl students to talk in classroom

Từ khóa: Động viên, người học nhút nhát, nói, video (tiếng việt)

Keywords: motivate, reluctant EFL students, speaking, videos

Lịch sử bài báo:

Ngày nhận bài: 15/4/2020;

Ngày nhận kết quả bình duyệt: 23/5/2020;

Ngày chấp nhận đăng bài: 12/6/2020.

Tác giả:

¹Trường ĐH Yersin Đà Lạt

Email:

thanhtrang23@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The timidity of the learners to communicate is an issue faced by many language teachers. The common reason for learners' reluctance to speak in ESL / EFL classrooms is the fear of making mistakes. Ten subjects of this study who are studying at Yersin University at the pre-intermediate level also offer the same reason for refusing to speak in class. Many methods have been used to urge English learners to engage in English speaking, but not many worked really well. The purpose of this study is to explore a motivating approach for silent and nervous learners: the use of videos. Data came from the checklist, the questionnaire, and the interview. After two weeks, this method has demonstrated its success in enhancing the participation of learners in English speaking.

1. Introduction

Encouraging the participation of students from Asian EFL is considered a challenge (Katchen, 1992; Belchamer, 2007; Clarke, 2011). In ELT speaking classes, Asian students tend to remain silent

and/or use their mother tongue instead of English (Shulman, 2013). I also see the same trend in my classes in Vietnam. The reason for the reluctance of students to speak English is their fear of making mistakes. Although this is an affective

variable arising from personal feeling, it does not mean that teachers should let it be because most students assess their English skills through their ability to speak (Juhana, 2012). However, as Belchamer said, it's not easy to engage students to talk. My students refuse to speak even when I use groupwork that is recommended as the successful way to increase the number of speakers of students (Hammer, 2007b).

Videos which have been commonly used in teaching and in the classroom are thought to "add variety and a welcome change" (Gower, Philips & Walters, 2005). Videos bring curiosity and genuine communication to students, according to Gower et al. (2005) and Hammer (2007b). Scrivener (2005) wrote that it was also possible to use videos to teach social practices. In addition, Shyamlee & Phil (2012) suggested that technology (including videos) could satisfy different learning styles. This work has therefore tried to take advantage of videos to inspire learners who are too shy to speak.

2. Literature review

The reluctance of learners to speak a foreign language (FL) occurs very frequently and many researchers have studied ways to help students gain their confidence. Scrivener (2005) clarified that when they practice FL in the classroom, learners are nervous and shy because they lack "experience of language use", so they keep their mouths closed to avoid embarrassment. He suggested putting learners in "healthy circumstances" to conquer their shyness and to activate the passive knowledge in their mind. In turn, teachers need to delegate pressure-free tasks to make learners less stressed and begin using the target language. According to Scrivener, Gower et al. (2005), Hammer (2007b), Nguyen (2010), one of the ways to

provide "safe situations" for learners is repetition work and guided activities.

On the other side, teachers are encouraged to use informative tools rather than just sticking to books and boards (Tips to Encourage ESL Students to Chat, 2012). Gower et al. (2005) claimed that videos captured the interest and attention of students and have since been used by many educators to teach English (Katchen, 1992; McKinnon, n.d.; Pinandhita, 2011). Nowadays, when the software is so advanced, video is even more accessible and always available from many websites for teachers to access easily. Nonetheless, teachers need to consider the level of learners when selecting videos for their teaching, as a large gap between the level of learners and the level of difficulty of the videos can make learners more nervous and frustrated (Hammer, 2007a).

While videos have been shown to be helpful in teaching English, there are also some problems. Katchen (2003) pointed out that using videos will discourage learners from creating language as teachers are likely to spend a lot of time listening to the videos. Language teachers are very popular in using videos as an aid in teaching listening, but there is almost no research of using videos to help teach speaking. Neither is there in Vietnam. This research answered the following question in particular:

Are videos motivating reluctant learners to talk effectively?

3. Methodology

3.1. Context

This research was carried out at Yersin University of Dalat. The allocated time is ninety minutes for each class of all levels. This two-week research was conducted in a pre-intermediate class in which students study three days a week.

3. 2. Participants

Ten pre-intermediate learners of general English program whose ages range from 18 to 22 participated in this research. There are eight students who are mostly quiet during the class while the other two are cooperative and involved. The eight quieter learners said they were prevented from speaking English in class by being afraid of making mistakes. The students, on the other hand, usually like to work with materials close to nature. Therefore, they are thought to be the best suited for this work.

3. 3. Procedures

Short videos were used in two weeks of studying to introduce learners to the requisite vocabulary and expressions. The videos that are English-language instructional visual aids taken from Youtube also play the role model for learners to imitate how native speakers conduct conversations.

In class, learners watched a video three times. The first time they watched and loaded with already-known missing words in the blanks of new phrases. Then they compared with partners and after that teacher showed the subtitle for the self-correction of the learners. The second time watching concentrated on the conversational situation and body language used in videos. The teacher then asked some questions to check the conversational situation in the videos and confirm the understanding of the learners. In the last watch, students were told to repeat after each sentence in the video because there is a common belief that repetition makes the trust of learners (Gower et al., 2005). Finally, they participated in the teacher's assigned freer-speaking activities.

4. Techniques of Using Video in EFL Classrooms

Hammer (2007a) notes that there are techniques that can be used in video-based lessons; techniques of viewing (Fast Forward, Silent Viewing, Freeze Framing, Partial Watching) and techniques of listening (and mixing) (Pictureless Listening, Image or Speech). The brief information about the techniques can be found in the summary below:

4. 1. Viewing Techniques

One of the main aims of viewing strategies is to awaken the interest of the students about what they will know by doing prediction. These techniques were implemented in several ways:

- Fast Forward:

The teacher showed the video to the students by running it for a couple of seconds and then moving it forward. After repeating those activities until the end of the video, the teacher asked students to share the information they had learned from the clip. The students could guess what the people were talking about in this case.

- Silent Viewing

The teachers will play the video with no voice at all in this phase. The video is presented with no detail, just silently. In this case, it takes the ability of the students to predict the details.

- Freeze Framing

This way teachers need to pause the video for several occasions. When the video is stopped, the students are encouraged to offer their idea. Guiding the students in interpreting the text would be more successful as they can foresee what will happen after seeing other parts of the video.

- Partial Viewing

This is also a way to reinforce the interest of the students, as this helps the students to see a portion of the video and encourage them to guess what kind of knowledge they are collecting.

4.2. Listening (and Mixed) Techniques

- Pictureless Listening

The learning process in this process starts by directing the students to listen to the information in the video. The students are not able to see the pictures in the video, however, they can speculate and share what details they have.

- Picture of speech

Teacher will run this way by splitting the students in the class into two teams. Throughout the teaching and learning activities, each team has different chances. The first team to watch and recognize a teacher-presented video is administered. Then, another team will guess what the video is all about based on the hints the first team has provided. This practice teaches students how to use expressions and how to speak fluently.

Çakir (2006) also discussed other ways of using video in a classroom; active watching, freezing framing and prediction, silent watching, sound-on and vision-off activity, repetition and role-playing, reproductive activity, dubbing and follow-up. In fact, some of the ways are similar to the previous ways Harmer (2007a) has mentioned. There are also several additional forms, such as repetition and role play, reproductive activity, dubbing activity, and follow-up behavior, to be introduced. The brief detail on the ways can be seen in the paragraph below:

- a. Repetition and role play

The video is played for several times in this activity before the students are acquainted with the knowledge they are listening to. Then, after repeating the teacher's commands to help teaching and learning activities in the classroom, they are directed to have role play.

- b. Reproduction activity

Let the students watch the video and inspire them to try speaking. It is intended to provide the students with a video experience to use the language.

- c. Dubbing activity

It is a fun practice that can be introduced in the classroom to consciously encourage the students to use the language by asking them to fill in the missing dialogs after hearing the video episode clip.

- d. Follow up activity

After watching the video, teachers must provide the students with follow-up activities to do more oral practice, including discussion. The students will be given the opportunity to develop sharing and cooperative skills.

In addition, Mohammed (2013) found new, efficient ways to use video. By using of videos with subtitle to teach grammar, he had successfully improved the grammatical accuracy of the students. Improving the past perfect type of video subtitles attracted the attention of the students to know it better from text and images, rather than just text. In general, the students' more positive response to using video grammar instruction is discussed. Gromik (2015) also refers to teachers being able to use the Mobile Video Camera as a platform for developing Visual Stories for English Learning. His study results showed that the students were able to create digital stories to convey their idea in the target language about some of the selected themes. Smeda, et.all (2014) also discussed the effectiveness of digital story-telling in the classrooms. In other words, video story telling focusing on smartphones is a very good activity for language learners to gain awareness and experience in learning the target language.

Then, Berk (2009) notes several procedures in which a video clip is commonly used in teaching:

a. Select a particular clip to reflect the video's main content. The instructor doesn't always need to make the students see the entire part of the video while using video, but they should pick some important sections and discuss them with the students.

b. Prepare instructions for the activities of students, and answer concerns about what they can see, hear, and search for. Usually, when video is shown in the classroom, there is no clear guidance about what the students need to know from the video and what they need to do after seeing the video. This matter should be well structured to assist the learners in achieving the learning goals.

c. Get the video released briefly. Giving the students information on what they need to learn is essential action to trigger the students' previous awareness and help them understand the content.

d. Play through the frame. The teachers have to encourage the students to concentrate on what they are doing while playing film.

e. Stop any part of the video to illustrate a question, or repeat it for exercises. Guiding the students to understand what they're learning will be successful.

f. Set a time to focus on what they have been doing. This activity is particularly useful for collecting knowledge that contributes to the comprehension of what the students have been watching. It can also make it easier for the students to practice their communicative skills, particularly in the oral delivery of knowledge.

g. Design an active learning activity

This last point is the most influential; if the teachers do not plan what the teachers

and students have to do during the class, the teaching and learning activities do not operate effectively. In this section, the ability of the teachers to run suitable techniques is required.

5. Data collection and analysis

Three instruments were used to collect data from this study: checklist, questionnaire and interview with the semi-structure.

5.1. Checklist (see Appendix A): Over the course of two weeks, the checklist was conducted on eight learners who are particularly shy in class to monitor their engagement with speech activities. There are three categories to determine the engagement of these learners: attentiveness (their enjoyment of learning through videos), repetition function (their involvement in repeating model conversations) and free communication (their involvement in creating their own model conversations).

5.2. Questionnaire (see Appendix B): On the fifth class meeting, the questionnaire was delivered to survey the perception and reaction of learners to the use of videos in teaching speech. There are eight scale questions and learners must choose one option ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The findings of the questionnaire is contained in Appendix C.

5.3. Semi-structure interview (see Appendix D): At the end of the second week, the semi-structure interview was conducted to gather detailed data on the students' perception of using videos in teaching speech. There are six questions almost similar to questions in the questionnaire. All the answers were transcribed for analysis.

6. Findings and Discussion

6.1. Checklist (see Appendix A): The result shows that learning from videos enjoyed all shy learners in the class. Thus, it

is probably acceptable to say that using videos was successful in renewing the learning environment. 100% of those learners took part in the repetition work because they felt it advantageous for their speaking. Nevertheless, only a few learners participated in the first two classes when it came to the free conversation in which learners could actually apply what they learned and create their own interaction (first class: 25% and second class: 37.5%). Those who had not spoken in the freer activities explained that they are still a little uncomfortable and anxious. More and more students joined the free conversations in the following classes (third to sixth class: 62.5%-87.5%). Those shy learners started to take off their nervousness as time passed and shared what they wanted to say. Although these learners still relied heavily on the conversation of the model to make their own, this could be seen as their big step in talking. Yet, there was still St7, who persisted in keeping silent for his nature of shyness. The outcome of the interaction of learners also suggested that video conversations modeled and influenced learners, allowing them to transfer their stored information to communicative language.

6.2. Questionnaire (see Appendix B): The findings of Question 1, 5 and 8 showed that all students like to learn to speak through videos. There is a strong consensus among 90% of learners that learning to talk to videos is important and 90% wanted to continue learning to talk to videos. 100 % decided that they had no difficulty in understanding the videos they were watching. That means that videos have not exceeded the level of learners. Once asked about the change of speaking brought by clips, 50% wasn't sure if after two weeks their speech got better or not. A possible reason for this is due to the short study time (only 2 weeks), so learners could not realize

if they had improved or not. Questions number 3 and 4 were intended to determine whether learners could benefit from watching videos. With question number 3, 80% admitted that in specific contexts they could learn the language, while 20% chose "no idea" as their answer. Again, with question number 4, 80% said videos helped them know how native speakers flow their conversations, while 20% had no idea whether or not they could learn this. The questionnaire's justification for "no idea" responses can be found in the result of the interview. Last but not least, most learners (70%) were less afraid to make speech mistakes because repetition after videos helped them to have accurate structures. This finding is the same as the suggestions made by Gower et al. (2005) to use repetition function.

6.3. Semi-structure interview (see Appendix D): Once again, all ten learners confirmed their interest in video study because videos were interesting and comprehensible. In Question 2, seven learners acknowledged that their speech anxiety was diminished because they were modeled by conversations in the videos and repeated after what they watched before they actually produced dialogues. One learner (St7) was reserved by nature, so even he appreciated the effort of the teacher to help him speak out, he was still unable to feel comfortable speaking English. The two learners who did not feel more comfortable, on the other hand, explained that they had never been afraid to speak, so they said through videos, what they increased was the knowledge of how to use verbal and nonverbal language naturally. Question number 3 in fact correlated with question number 2 in the questionnaire which 5 learners answered that they were uncertain if their speech had improved. Similarly, 50 percent in the interview said they had

improved their speech while the other half were unsure about their progress in speaking. One is St7, who had hardly opened his mouth, so he felt that he was still in the same place. Four others said they were able to express their ideas; but, as they imitated the images, they understood whether it was just a replication or a development. What these four students said is not surprising because the impact of repetition research was rejected by many theorists (Hammer, 2007b). All the interviewees, however, expressed that two weeks is too short to calculate the actual improvement, so they said they wanted to learn on a long-term basis through videos in order to make more significant progress. Only one person said he had no idea about this because it was the decision of the instructor. He feels all right with the decision of teachers as long as it allows him to communicate in English. Only two learners who are active in the class proposed that they need more challenging tasks when asked about further suggestions for the teacher.

7. Conclusion

Briefly, although this ambitious study did not encourage all shy students in the target participants to speak English by using videos in the classroom, it still gained great success because 90 percent of the students enjoyed themselves and showed some improvement in two weeks of study. With the exception of a very shy learner who might need another encouraging process, preponderance of learners began to feel more confident and engage in speaking activities. Although many researchers rejected repetition, especially those who are at the early stages of learning a language with shy learners, it proved its importance. Repetition, as argued by Gower et al. (2005), provides a precise form that leads to confidence. Although this experiment has been positive, careful consideration is still needed because the length of the study is limited and the number of participants is small. Therefore, to boost their performance, more research studies on the same topic will overcome these limitations.

REFERENCES

- Belchamer, R. (2007). *Overcoming Asian Stereotypes: Opportunities for Enhancing Student Participation in Chinese ELT Classes*. *RELT*, 6(2), 59-63. Retrieved October 6th, 2019, from <http://www.nus.edu.sg/celc/research/books/relt/vol6/no2/59-63belchamber.pdf>
- Berk, R. A. (2009). Multimedia teaching with video clips: TV, movies, YouTube, and mtvU in the college classroom. *International Journal of Technology in Teaching and Learning*, 5(1), 1-21.
- Çakir, Ismail. (2006). The Use of Video as an Audio-Visual Material in Foreign Language Teaching Classroom. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology – TOJET* October 2006 ISSN: 1303-6521 volume 5 Issue 4 Article 9.
- Clarke, D. (2011, Feb 7th). *TEFL Teachers and Shy ESL Students*. Retrieved October 7th, 2019, from <https://suite.io/daniel-clarke/51rk2sc>
- Gower, R., Philips, D., & Walters, S. (2005). *Teaching Practice*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.

- Gromik, Nicolas A. (2015). The Effect of Smartphone Video Camera as a Tool to Create Digital Stories for English Learning Purposes. *Journal of Education and Learning; Vol.4, No.4;2015*. ISSN 1927-5250 E-ISSN 1927-5269, Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education 64.
- Hammer, J. (2007a). *How to Teach English*. Pearson Longman.
- Hammer, J. (2007b). *The Practice of English Language Teaching (4th edition)*. Pearson Longman.
- Juhana. (2012). Psychological Factors That Hinder Students from Speaking in English Class (A Case Study in a Senior High School in South Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia). *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(12), 100-110.
- Katchen, J. E. (1992). Using the Video Camera to Improve Speaking and Performance Skills. In M. C. Yang, *Papers from the eighth conference on English language teaching and learning in the Republic of China* (pp. 531-540). Taipei: Crane Publishing Co., Ltd. Retrieved October 10th, 2019, from <http://mx.nthu.edu.tw/~katchen/professional/Using%20the%20video%20camera.htm>
- Katchen, J. E. (2003). *Teaching a Listening and Speaking Course with DVD Films: Can It Be Done?* In H. C. Liou, J. E. Katchen, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Lingua Tsing Hua* (pp. 221-236). Taipei: Crane.
- McKinnon, M. (n.d.). *Teaching Technologies: Teaching English Using Video*. Retrieved October 10th, 2019, from One Stop English: <http://www.onestopenglish.com/support/methodology/teaching-technologies/teaching-technologies-teaching-english-using-video/146527.article>
- Mohammed, Rania. (2013). *The effectiveness of using subtitled video to teach grammar (Dissertation)*. Ann Arbor: Proquest LLC.
- Nguyen, M. H. (2010). Encouraging Reluctant ESL/EFL Learners to Speak in the Classroom. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 16(3). Retrieved October 2019, from <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Nguyen-ReluctantSpeakers.html>
- Pinandhita, F. (2011). Improving Students' Speaking Skills by Retelling Technique Using Video. Retrieved 2019, from http://ikippggrimadiun.ac.id/ejournal/sites/default/files/Fitra_0.pdf
- Scrivener, J. (2005). *Learning Teaching*. Oxford: Macmillan Education.
- Shulman, M. (2013). I'm Shy : Including Quieter Students in University EFL Speaking Classes. *The Bulletin of the Institute of Human Sciences, Toyo University*(15), 161-170. Retrieved October 4th, 2019, from <https://www.toyo.ac.jp/uploaded/attachment/10081.pdf>
- Shyamlee, S. D., & Phil, M. (2012). Use of Technology in English Language Teaching and Learning: An Analysis. *IPEDR. 2012 International Conference on Language, Media and Culture*, 33, 150-156. Retrieved October 4th, 2019, from www.ipedr.com/vol33/030-ICLMC2012-L10042.pdf
- Smeda, et.al. (2014). The Effectiveness of Digital Story Telling in the Classrooms: A Comprehensive Study. *A SpringerOpen Journal*. DOI 10.1186/s40561-014-0006-3
- Tips for Encouraging ESL Students to Talk*. (2012, June 16th). Retrieved October 10th, 2019, from VIA Training Center: <http://www.canadatesl.com/tips-for-encouraging-esl-students-to-talk/>