



DEVELOPING TASKS THROUGH YOUTUBE VIDEOS : POINTS TO PONDER

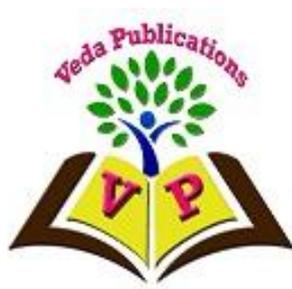
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ABSTRACT



Task Based Learning is one of the effective teaching methods followed thorough out the world by ELT practitioners. Developing and designing tasks for a language class room is a challenging one as it involves a number of factors to be considered. This includes learner input, goals, learner roles, teacher roles, task difficulty, task workability, task sequencing etc. However, once developed, it could be utilized in a variety of class rooms, depending on the level of the learners.

In an attempt to make CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) easier and enjoyable to the learners, this paper attempts to present and analyze a number of tasks to be taught at the language laboratory. Most of the tasks chosen are based on Youtube videos. It analyses some of the interesting Youtube videos selected and down loaded in the master console (after considering the possibility of utilizing the same inside the language class room, in terms of comprehensible language input). Then it discusses the effectiveness of these tasks developed through these videos. It also discusses advantages and disadvantages and implications.

Keywords: Task Based Learning, CALL, You Tube Videos, Master Console.



INTRODUCTION

Computer Assisted Language Learning is one of the emerging areas in English Language Teaching. In the present scenario, language laboratories have grown apace not only in urban schools and colleges but also in rural schools and colleges. However, the comprehensible input (as discussed by Krashen 1982) to be given, in order to facilitate L2 speaking, has always been a challenging task for the teacher. The biggest advantage of the laboratory is that it could provide both audio and video lessons with a variety of permutations and combinations. One could utilize the Internet, blogs, learning software, work sheets for a variety of purposes, (evaluation, learning in specific contexts etc...) and transfer lessons from the teacher console to the student console through LAN (Local Area Network). Again, if we consider the effectiveness of CALL, a number of questions loom large before an ELT Practitioner. They are as follows: What can be taught? How can the teaching be modelled? To what extent does it facilitate L2 speaking and listening? What are the tasks that could be given to the learners? How does a teacher design tasks for a particular group of L2 learners? Does the task designed for a particular level of learner (intermediate, advance etc...) contribute to the development of the L2 learner? These questions are very much significant in this context because significant changes involve alteration in terms of materials, teaching methods and underlying beliefs (as proposed by Fullan and Stiegelbauer 1991 : 29).

METHODOLOGY

This paper aims to present a classroom experiment, rather a Language Lab experiment conducted with the help of Youtube videos (downloaded from the Internet using the Youtube downloader) after having considered their potential for utilization in a language laboratory. The videos chosen are as follows

Wild gaur with... Paul Williams

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyVkvhTZBfA>)

Friction fire series with... Nick Spadaro

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0bEoVhxFJ8>)

At the outset, comprehension questions and worksheets based on these Youtube videos are developed. The scripts for the same are also prepared. As far as the students are concerned, they

are divided into two groups according to their proficiency. The first group consists of students who have studied in regional medium schools and the second group comprises students from the urban background; most of whom have studied in CBSE schools. Then the videos selected are played to the two groups of students.

Depending on the level of the students, worksheets and comprehension questions are given to each group. The performance is noted against their role numbers. At the next stage, the videos are played for the second and for the third time (if necessary). Afterwards, a mock presentation based on the videos seen is given by willing L2 learners. The students are supposed to reproduce the message(s) they have garnered from the video lesson. Here again their performance is noted and marks are awarded for the presenters.

DISCUSSION

After a careful analysis, it is observed that the performances of the presenters in the first group vary to a great level. Most of the students who scored very well in the presentation do not fair well in the worksheets and comprehension questions. The reason is that the worksheets and comprehension questions focused on the minute details of the videos which require careful attention on the part of the learners. On the other hand, when the same students make a presentation all that is required is the overall comprehension of the speaker's message. Therefore, they are able to communicate (if not precisely) what they have listened to and seen in the latter case. Their presentation is all right in terms of message transformation. This result is obviously in tune with Communicative Language Teaching, where the primary focus is on meaning rather than the form. As noted by Jack Richards and Theodore S Rodgers, "...the emphasis in CLT [is] on the processes of communication, rather than mastery of language forms".

As far as the second group is concerned, the scores for the worksheets and comprehension questions and the presentations do not greatly vary. That is to say, if a student scores 7 out of 10 then his/her marks on presentation hover between six and eight. This means they are able to notice minute details; at the same time they are able to follow the



message as a whole and it is obvious that this group of students are better than the first group of students.

Tasks developed through YouTube videos not only enhance communicative competence (as pointed out by Hymes 1972) but also constitute interesting learning material, as they sustain the interest of the learners throughout the task. They also provide good scaffolding as far as L2 speaking is concerned, especially to the first group of students. They also keep them talking at least for some time, as the video input forms an interesting piece of learning material (that helps the language learners to learn as discussed by Brain Tomlinson 1998).

The limitation of the study is that it was carried out with a small number of students. The experiment did not, for example, involve heterogeneous groups, or students from different backgrounds.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is obvious that Youtube videos from native speakers such as Paul Williams and Nick Spadaro form an amusing as well as an amazing piece of language lab material. It is also obvious that if tasks are properly designed to suit the proficiency of the learners, their communicative competence would improve to a considerable extent, especially when it is given with an interesting background, within a language laboratory.

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