

Chapter 86

The Effects of Video Projects on EFL Learners' Language Learning and Motivation: An Evaluative Study

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the language learning and motivational and effects of a video project, including students' perceptions of the processes, and the impact of peer evaluations. Forty-three intermediate EFL learners in Taiwan communicated their thoughts in multimodal formats by producing a video that involved searching online materials and integrating music and pictures to illustrate their ideas. Results from a one-way ANOVA showed that the language learning effects were more obvious in the low proficiency group than in the high proficiency one. Results from t-test analyses of pre- and post- motivation questionnaires showed that students increased their learning motivation, and interview data showed that students felt that making videos boosted their confidence and improved their technological capability. An examination of peer assessments of videos showed that they promoted peer learning and encouraged self-reflection. This study's findings support the adoption of video projects with lower proficiency students in order to stimulate language production.

INTRODUCTION

Recent developments in video technology have created new opportunities for education and revolutionized how young people express ideas and communicate with peers (Egbert, Akasha, Huff, & Lee, 2011; Hafner & Miller, 2011). Student video projects, in particular, are used to support teaching pedagogy and learning outcomes (Butler-Pascoe, 2011; Schuck & Kearney, 2006). Integrating video projects into language classrooms helps meet the need to equip young adults with media literacy in a digital age, which Aufderheide (1993) has defined as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages in

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different digital forms. Livingstone (2004) further defines media literacy as the ability to access digital information; analyze and evaluate it; and create content that expresses ideas in multimodal forms (e.g. photos, audio/video clips, and *PowerPoint* presentations). By creating videos, students can learn how to actively participate in the world in which they live and communicate effectively about what they have absorbed through a variety of media. In addition to media literacy, studies have also shown that student video projects create opportunities for speaking (Hung, 2011; Sun & Yang, 2013), enhance inquiry-based learning (Nikitina, 2011), promote constructivist learning (Chuang & Rosenbusch, 2005), create authentic learning opportunities (Kearney & Schuck, 2006) and increase students' motivation (Shrosbree, 2008).

Previous studies have focused primarily on the language learning effects of video projects. Relatively few have used multiple perspectives to evaluate student video projects in terms of their impact on language learning among students with different proficiency levels, gender and motivation. Likewise, few have included the role of peer comments. This study designed several online learning activities leading up to a final video project that enabled students to integrate information and express themselves through multimodal presentations. It incorporated video projects into an EFL class and investigated the impact of these on the language learning of students of differing proficiency and gender. The study also looked at motivational changes, student feedback, and the results of peer evaluations. It posed three research questions:

1. What are the effects of video projects on students' language proficiency and motivation to learn?
2. What were students' perceptions of this video project?
3. What were the results of peer evaluations?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The easy accessibility of video editing software and affordable video production equipment has solved previous problems associated with using digital videos in language classrooms (Godwin-Jones, 2012). In addition, video projects reflect a more mature use of ICT in higher education (Lin, Wang, & Lin 2012; Wang, 2008). Lin et al. (2012) propose four dimensions for measuring teachers' integration of ICT in higher education: direct teaching, as in lectures; cognitively active learning, when students organize information on their own; constructive learning, when learners link new knowledge to the real world; and social learning, when students work collaboratively. Wang (2008) suggests that when teachers integrate ICT into teaching and learning, they need to make content relevant to learners and involve learners in authentic tasks or project-based learning in order to increase peer interaction. The pedagogical value of video projects is that they create opportunities for learners to interact with authentic materials in the real world by searching for relevant information, developing their own interpretation, and producing a multimedia video.

Student video projects are excellent examples of the value of learning by doing. Such project-based learning is a useful educational tool that involves appropriate learning goals, self-assessment and revision, and the taking of responsibility through participation (Barron, Schwartz, Vye, Moore, Petrosino, Zech, & Bransford, 1998). Instead of focusing only on learning itself, project-based learning shares the same philosophy as constructivism which emphasizes "what" should be learned and "how" to learn it (Ruey, 2010). With the easy availability of online resources and video production software, technology-enhanced projects provide a constructivist learning environment that can boost language learning, foster

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