

Enhancing learner experience in the classroom using Viral Videos

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Abstract

Videos are being recognised by educators world over as a powerful communication medium which in, combination with other learning resources and instructional strategies, can play a vital role in educational growth. Videos give teachers the opportunity to engage students and enable them to develop deeper understanding of the topic under discussion, promote discussion and reflection. Today's communication systems are bombarded with videos that can be produced with any mobile phone or tablet. Videos have taken pole position and are here to stay. The importance of videos in the classroom are outlined in this paper. The researcher has used different methods like viral videos to generate discussion. This enabled tertiary learners to converse better and improve their conversational skills. Videos that motivate and instruct were also used in classrooms to teach concepts. The method was found to be very productive and can be used as an aid to enhance speaking skills.

Keywords: Videos, English Classroom, Viral videos, Educational, classroom

Full paper

Videos are recognized by educators as a powerful communication medium which in, combination with other learning resources and instructional strategies, can play a vital role in

enhancing educational growth. Videos allow teachers to tell students what they need to learn from a specific lesson, by elucidating with examples, children develop understanding. Video serves as an important media for motivation and can help to promote discussion and reflection about the topics under consideration. Videos can present visual information that is difficult to convey in other ways and provide a sense of 'being there'. Events of the past or great works of literature can be brought to life when characters, costumes and customs of time and events are portrayed on the screen. Videos can also provide visually-compelling access to information for many learners with reading difficulties who might miss learning opportunities provided solely by print-based materials. Videos also provide important learning opportunities to students working in a second language.

Nowadays, students and the younger generation are prone to sending each other pictures of cuddly animals or videos that elicit stifled giggles. New research suggests that people use these types of so-called distractions to subconsciously boost their moods, which can lead to increased creativity and better problem solving in the workplace.

Wright & Huston (1995) studied 250 low-income families and found that a positive correlation existed between children's viewing of educational television and "time spent reading or being read to and time in educational activities," while "viewing of non-educational cartoons and adult entertainment programs was consistently negatively related to time spent reading and also negatively, but less strongly, to time spent in educational activities." Rockman et al. (1996) on the academic impact of home and school mentioned that students who watched videos were able to provide more complete and complex explanations of scientific concepts after viewing. Barnes, (1997) stated that students in the classes which included television and video programs outperformed the control groups in test scores, writing assignments, in variety and creativity of problem-solving skills, and in their engagement in class discussion. Linebarger (2001), in a study of second-graders, found increased word recognition, comprehension, and identification of critical story elements when television with captions were used as a supplement to print-based reading instruction.

Teachers too are positive about video – A survey by the EDC's Center for Children and Technology, 2004 found that teachers are overwhelmingly positive about the use of videos in classroom because it:

- Stimulates classroom discussion
- Reinforces lectures and reading
- Provides a common base of knowledge among students and
- Helps them teach more effectively.

Fisch, 2003 too remarked that viewers outperformed non-viewers in solving problems and produced more sophisticated solutions. Research also shows that students who are exposed to regular integration of media into instruction:

- Outperform non-exposed peers on tests
- Score higher on writing assignments
- Are more active in class assignments

Apply more varied and creative approaches to problem solving

- Use more figurative language.

Videos can be used in a variety of ways to enhance any lesson plan or subject. Some of the best practices include:

- Preview video in advance
- Connect the video to lesson objectives
- Show short clips or introduce or reinforce discussion
- Give students active assignments to encourage attention and post discussion

Advantages of using video:

- Video can be utilised to illustrate how something works
- Video provides information in detail that text and graphic cannot
- Video can grab students' attention
- Video can show real-life examples
- Video stimulates discussions
- Video can appeal to the learning style of visual learners
- Video could enhance problem-based learning

Tertiary level students at Malabar Christian College were subjected to viral videos. Viral videos were chosen primarily because the viewership was more and students related it to their generation at a much faster rate. Lead-ins were used by the teacher such as:

- Listen for this term
- Think of similar examples
- Watch for
- Listen the things in the video that,,,
- After the video is played:
- Check for understanding
- Reinforce a point

A number of viral videos were used to enhance speaking skills. Prominent among them were Rebecca Black's Friday which had a viewership rate of more than 178 million. See - (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfVsfOSbJY0>). It was found that students became more responsive and tried to speak out with their peers. Even slow learners were found to be responsive. The teacher was able to generate more enthusiasm in the classroom by providing various lead-ins.

As newer media is gradually phasing out older technologies, it will soon be possible for every viewer to watch videos using their own portable devices such as smartphones and tablets. Evidence indicates that video, far from being phased out is becoming an integral part of the classroom experience. The role of visual media in education has been found to be positive as evidenced by a long history of research. In all

probability, the format, delivery channels and options for storage might change but video is now and will continue to be an effective, engaging and essential tool in the classroom. It is hoped that viral videos too will be used as a supplementary tool to foster the love of English and aid in assisting students gain a greater control of the English language and thereby learn to use it more effectively.

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