

Use of Cinema and Video Excerpts while Teaching a Foreign Language in the Post-Pandemic World

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Abstract

Cinema is the most popular and entertaining way to get in touch with a new language. Many students who start learning a language do not take private classes; instead, they use online material to study and take straightforward exams. Online tools of study have proven to be effective. Learning through various online websites, YouTube channels, and other videos is indeed effective. There is more than a language that a learner can learn through videos and cinema, which can be an exciting way to indulge in cinema and find an effective way of learning and teaching. Many video channels are making exciting videos to help students learn a language with different approaches, which are as amusing as effective. There are online tools like MOOC and Duolingo, as well as some fun ways to show how learning a new language can be fun, not complex or tedious. This is also responsible for making students lean towards learning a new language. Many times, people hesitate to learn a new language as they think it will be hard and not something that one can do after a certain age. Many other similar notions already exist in society that discourage people from learning a new language. But the thinking is now changing, thanks to the availability of cinema and online video teaching materials. This paper will try to find if it can be effective to link cinema as a learning tool for teaching a foreign language or help new students get in touch with a foreign language in the post-pandemic world where even at the end of 2021, the situation of offline world teaching is not fully normalised. So, can cinema be a vital element in teaching a foreign language to students through online mode as well?

Keywords: MOOC, Duolingo, Video Channels, Foreign Language

Introduction

In 2019, the world was hit by what is known as COVID-19. This was the turning point of the whole world's education system. The way that education is imparted has changed. Suddenly, the devices we use daily became essential ways of teaching and learning. There are improvements in the online servers and applications like Zoom, Google Meet, Cisco Webex, etc., in their overall connectivity and other enhancements. The growth of the online world and platforms is also causing many other known companies to launch and collaborate on their online platforms. (Li Cathy and Lalani Farah) The shift from an offline to an online world has been swift, and a new trend nowadays, called the "hybrid mode" of teaching, which includes the combination of online and offline education, is very common. Most universities and schools, whether private or government, use this teaching method. The teaching process is now different and unique in a way we never thought would come, and that too this soon. Also, institutions offer various programs and courses that are educative and free. In all these, video resources are essential in the online and hybrid worlds. As the momentum is shifting towards this new trend, there is also a rising need to accommodate this demand. People are now using online mode more than ever. As per many surveys, a student can acquire more resources in an online mode of study. Furthermore, learning a concept online takes a student less time than offline.¹ However, this new trend has yet to reach its full potential.² To understand what role video excerpts play in teaching a foreign language to an international student, we have divided this paper into **three parts**. Firstly, we will talk about how one can study language online; secondly, why we need video excerpts to be combined with this new trend; and thirdly, we will analyse its effectiveness.

1. Need for Video Excerpts

In this online world, without a board to write on, not having enough time, internet connectivity issues and other things considered, it can be said that there is never enough time to teach online. The video excerpts, exceptionally those available online for free, can be a perfect option for learning a new language at one's convenience. As it does not bind anyone to any schedule and does not ask them to devote a particular period, the learner is free to choose what they want to study, how much they want to study, and for how long.

¹ Li Cathy and Lalani Farah. "The COVID-19 Pandemic Has Changed Education Forever. This Is How." *World Economic Forum*. N.p., 2020. *World Economic Forum*. Web.

² Ibid.

As we all know, learning a new language is not cheap; it is usually costly. All the courses the experts provide have schedules and fees which are not affordable for everyone. With time, as the scope of learning a new language grows, it becomes costlier. After COVID-19, online learning has opened a world of possibilities for students. There are numerous websites and companies which are providing interesting courses free of cost. All these organisations use one crucial tool: videos. Now, videos are a combination of all types of audio-visual resources. One can use infinite valuable tricks to get in touch with a language.

An app called Language Reactor can be used as a good stepping stone to get in touch with a language for starters who need to get familiar with the sounds of the new language. It acts as a subtitle of a video, which can be in the case of Netflix, Amazon Prime, and tons of other streaming websites, and can come in real handy. Other such apps or extensions are eJOY and Mate Translator. Also, an extension known as Dualsub can create dual subtitles at the same time.

Research has shown that spending around one hour watching foreign language content will be enough to improve the knowledge of the new language among the aspirants. These extensions and applications are an excellent way to get in touch with the new language. Taking advantage of this new online platform, if a person watches a foreign language web series or movies for a month, there can be substantial changes in his level of learning a new language. However, shows are more effective ways of learning than movies because movies are shorter than web series, and the vocabulary used may not always be easy. Watching web series can help a person get familiar with the essential and basic vocabulary, pronunciation, accents, and other important things without studying them. This can serve as an excellent basis to build the knowledge of a new language and develop an interest in learning it.³ However, the same research shows that when an advanced learner uses these tools to study a language, it is far more effective, as he is already accustomed to many essential things a beginner can struggle to get.

We also see many applications that teach languages for almost free of cost. One prominent example is Duolingo. So, in today's world, people have immense resources to learn a new language, and videos are integral to all of them.

³ Agarwal, Shubham. "The Browser Apps That Teach You Languages While You Watch TV." *Vulture*, 1 Dec. 2021, <https://www.vulture.com/article/browser-apps-for-learning-foreign-languages.html>.

2. Need for Video Excerpts in Online Teaching

As we have learnt the importance of videos in the online world and how they invoke and improve the teaching and learning of foreign languages, one must ask: do we really need video excerpts in online teaching? The answer is yes, we do. In a report published in April 2020, almost 1.2 billion students from 186 countries were taking online classes. Nearly 65% of universities are offering online courses.⁴ Videos as lectures make it easier for them to view the lecture. Almost all classes today use video materials to teach students online. The videos are very engaging, and students are more interested in learning when an audio-visual aspect is included in the studies. In addition to this, video lectures are also practical, and they tend to invoke critical thinking and enable students to analyse situations further.⁵

Furthermore, videos are an excellent source to add knowledge of the country, the language, and all the concepts that may be outside the scope of books. Books are there to teach the language theoretically, but videos can easily teach practical aspects of language and many video topics, which books alone cannot provide. Hence, they can be used to bolster and build on the knowledge that the student has on his subject, especially language. In other words, it also helps teachers to explore the world and choose the right tool to use in the class.

Also, a teacher can use videos in the classroom in many ways. An unending depth of online resources can be exploited in the way a person wants it to be. There are cultural aspects that a teacher can show to students, such as “Easy French,”⁶ and for teaching students from the very beginning to the advanced level, we have a channel like “FrenchPod101”⁷ and many others. Many different exercises and grammatical concepts are made accessible to French natives who have been teaching the language and its concepts online for a long time, for example, “Français avec Pierre”^{and} “Learn French with Alexa”⁸. These are only a few examples practical for a new teacher, such as online resources and use in the class.

3. Effectiveness of Videos in Teaching

⁴ Online Education Statistics – How COVID-19 Changed the Way We Learn? *Admissionly*, 12 Apr. 2021, https://admissionsly.com/online-education-statistics/#top_ankor.

⁵ Hanzic, Lucija Vita. “5 Top Benefits Of Using Video In Education.” *Covideo*, 24 Jan. 2019, <https://www.covideo.com/using-video-in-education-benefits/>.

⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/c/EasyFrench>.

⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/c/frenchpod101>.

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/c/learnfrenchwithalexa>.

As we know from the above description, the videos are effective in teaching students, as they feel more connected to cinema than books. Videos also focus on digital literacy, which helps teachers become the facilitators rather than the tools in the class. A better solution for engaging students is not to show full movies online but some short video excerpts for them to analyse. Also, videos are a perfect marketing tool. Short videos are compelling as they take less time and impart more knowledge.⁹ While students watch a video of an exercise, they watch and learn more than they can with the book. In addition to this, videos can effectively teach a student a variety of domains, for example, race, caste, class, gender, and so much more. In a way that it can touch the aspects of society that a book cannot touch. (King)

With these confirmations, we can safely assume that videos give the edge in imparting practical knowledge to students, which is impossible by any other means. Learning about culture is an important aspect; for instance, we can think of cinema being used by sociology teachers to teach about marriage, culture, and other things, so not only teachers of foreign languages use this media, but different fields also benefit from videos.

Conclusion

To sum up, videos are an excellent source of teaching a foreign language, as they enable us to dive into the limitless possibilities of the world of knowledge that is available at our fingertips. To use it more wisely in the teaching field is the discretion of a teacher, and there are infinite ways that videos can benefit teaching. As we have seen, it can improve student's cultural knowledge and solidify the other aspects for which a person learning a language will be necessitated to visit the country. The native speakers are making things to help the learners across the world to get a better hold of knowledge, a world of limitless possibilities. Furthermore, one can also learn the things that are most talked about and the things that are significantly less talked about. It's all there on the internet and in the form of audio-visual documents.

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