

VIDEO CLIPS MADE BY THIRD-YEAR STUDENTS TO ENHANCE SPEAKING AND LISTENING SKILLS OUTSIDE CLASSROOM

Thai Hong Phuc, M.A.

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the English for General Purposes curriculum (called English for Business Communication) was applied for mainstream students at the University of Economics Ho Chi Minh city (UEH) in 2007, the teaching and learning time has significantly been reduced (from 390 to 270, then to 180 periods divided into 4 modules) (Võ Đình Phước, 2014, p. 7). During one semester, within 45 periods (50 minutes per period) students learn 4 units in Market Leader (Elementary and Pre-intermediate Business English) as well as 4 units in the Practice Book series. Therefore, all teachers and students have been facing constraints of time. When my third-year students of Course 39 were asked to role-play situations (the last tasks in Skills, Case study and sometimes in Language Review sections in Market Leader Pre-intermediate, 3rd Edition, 2012), it took them much time preparing their conversations during learning time in the classrooms. When I set time limit for the speaking tasks, my students, especially the weak ones, found it difficult to think of what they had to say and could not carry out their roles. My solution was to get students into small groups, assign role-play activities to those groups. The students had one week to prepare for the tasks. At the same time, some groups volunteered to make their own video clips with subtitles, and send the products to the teacher via email (using Google Drive to share files). Another way for the teacher to view students' conversations was that students posted their clips on YouTube, and sent the teacher the web addresses.

In this study, students' ideas of making their own video clips by using mobile devices in order to practice speaking and listening skills were investigated.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance given to foreign language with the development of information and communication technologies has led innovations in teaching activities. New modern ways have been sought for the use of mobile devices and information technologies in foreign language courses and how these technologies to be transferred in more effective and engaging way. Agca, R. K., & Özdemir, S. (2013) concluded that mobile assisted learning environment has increased students' level of vocabulary for the target words. Jeng, Wu, Huang, Tan and Yang (2010) suggested that mobile technology can offer students multimedia interaction with their peers, like listening to each other and recording their spoken production. Furthermore, mobile technology makes it more convenient for students to conduct a wide range of activities, particularly those that can make students interact with each other and share what they have learned.

Developing listening and speaking skills with the assistance of mobile technology was extensively discussed by Hwang and Chen (2013), Liu and Chu (2010). According to results of Hwang and Chen's study, students could repeatedly record their own voices and listen to themselves and others' recordings using personal digital assistant, thus obtaining more opportunities to practice and improve their language proficiency. Hwang and Chen (2013) showed that use of mobile devices in collaborative EFL activities reduces students' stress and facilitates collaboration in English learning. Liu and Chu's study (2010) introduced games into an English listening and speaking course and then investigated how games influence English learning achievement and motivation in a mobile learning environment. Results of the experiment revealed that incorporating learning games supported by the mobile technology into the English learning process could achieve better learning outcomes and motivation.

III. GROUP PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The study was carried out in three classes of Course 39: Planning and Investment 1 (DT1), Accounting 1 (KN1) and Real Estate 1 (BS1). There were six volunteer groups in each class. There are several role-plays which students have to act out when learning English Module 3 (Units 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Pre-intermediate Market Leader Business English Course Book).

1. Preparation

In the first class meeting, each class was asked to create one email account (called “shared email box”), of which everyone in that class as well as the teacher know the address and the password to send documents, share files, contact with one another during the semester.

An email was sent by the teacher to give some guidelines on how students made, submitted the video clips to the teacher, and the deadline for the group projects. The ways that the clips were going to be evaluated were also explained in that email.

2. Group project assignment

In this paper, the role-play activity F, page 11, Course Book (**Appendix 1**) is used to describe the procedures of the group project. In the classroom, students went through the activities from A to E as normal: Listen to the telephone calls in order to answer the questions, complete the expressions, the extract and choose the phrases the speakers used. Then students watched a sample video clip “Answering the phone and transferring a call”, taken from the VCD and the book: Tiếng Anh trong công sở (English in the office). After that, students were required to prepare to role-play the phone-calls (both roles of Student A and Student B) for the next class meeting. At the same time, one or two groups (four students per group) volunteered to make the video clips. Each group had to record two clips with subtitles. The four members of each groups might work together to write their scripts so what were said in the two clips might be the same. Two students performed in one clips and the other two members acted as a cameraman and a studio assistant. Then the members of that group changed their roles in the second clip.

3. Submission of the video clips

Students sent their products to the teacher via email (shared on Google Drive or posted on Youtube) before the day of the next class meeting (within the next week).

4. Teacher’s assessment of students’ video clips

The assessment criteria are shown in the table below.

Criteria	Student’s name	Lecturer’s comments
Content		
Vocabulary, structures		
Fluency and confidence		
Pronunciation		
Techniques of making video clips		
Marks		

The teacher downloaded, watched, evaluated the clips and forwarded the clips to the “shared email box” with the evaluations so that every student in that class could learn from the products of their friends. The whole class could learn from the strong points as well as the mistakes made in the clips and then used them as a learning resource.

At the beginning of the next-week class meeting, the students who were not assigned to record the clips were invited to act out the roles they had prepared during the previous week. The teacher commented on the conversations which were made in the classroom. As the rest of the class could view their friends’ video clips and teacher’s remarks outside the classroom via Internet, during school time the teacher only corrected the most common (or most serious) mistakes made in the clips.

5. Students’ feedback collection

The questionnaire (**Appendix 2**) was designed to investigate students’ ideas about their making video clips. It was written in Vietnamese so that students could understand the questions and what they were supposed to do. Each group answered one questionnaire before the final English class meeting.

IV. STUDENTS’ FEEDBACK

1. The advantages that the students had during the preparation and the recording of their video clips:

-There were recording equipment / devices, and places for recording the clips (classrooms, offices, coffee shops, ...).

-It was rather easy for students to prepare the scripts as they had enough preparation time and teacher’s detailed instructions.

-Good video making and editing software programs are available in laptops / computers.

2. The disadvantages the students had during the preparation and the recording of their video clips:

-Students made grammatical and spelling mistakes in scripts (shown in subtitles) as well as pronunciation mistakes.

-It was difficult for them to find quiet places to record the clips. Therefore, some groups had to dub their clips, which resulted in large-sized video files.

-Students faced the problems of finding suitably formal clothes.

3. The difficulty that students had to face when sending the clips to the teacher for evaluation:

-It was hard for students to email AVI video clips, taken with their digital cameras because the file sizes were too large. It took time to upload files to Google Drive or Youtube and share with the teacher. Besides, some video clips did not play smoothly (the clips played slowly while the sound continued as normal).

4. Benefits of this learning method:

-There were good chances for students to practice speaking and listening skills, especially practice pronunciation, and prepare for real life conversations. Moreover, students could learn from their own and their friends’ mistakes when they watched the clips again and read the teacher’s comments.

-Students found it was an interesting new method of learning English outside the classroom. They had opportunities to practice speaking English as they had to record parts of the clips several times to get the better ones.

-Students became more confident, learnt the ways to record images, sounds and make subtitles. In addition, they became closer to and could learn from the other members of their groups.

-When having been asked whether they liked to make their own clips in the next semester, seventeen out of eighteen groups replied that they would like to continue this learning method.

V. SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVEMENT

Students' making their own video clips of role-play activities generally receives their approval, so we should make the use of it more effective:

-Let all students record their clips (not just the volunteers).

-Give students chances to develop their own video clips with freer topics. Teacher may let students choose their own topics, and help them to develop the outlines of the conversations.

-Teacher should find more suitable sample video files for students to watch and learn.

REFERENCES

1. Agca, R. K., & Özdemir, S. (2013). Foreign language vocabulary learning with mobile technologies. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 83, pp.781-785.
2. Cotton, D., Falvey, D. & Kent, S. (2012). *Market Leader Pre-intermediate Business English Course Book* (3rd ed.). Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
3. Hwang, W. Y., & Chen, H. S. L. (2013). Users' familiar situational contexts facilitate the practice of EFL in elementary schools with mobile devices. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 26(2), pp.101-125.
4. Jeng, Y. L., Wu, T. T., Huang, Y. M., Tan, Q., & Yang, S. J. H. (2010). The add-on impact of mobile applications in learning strategies: a review study. *Educational Technology & Society*, 13(3), pp.3-11.
5. Liu, T. Y., & Chu, Y. L. (2010). Using ubiquitous games in an English listening and speaking course: Impact on learning outcomes and motivation. *Computers & Education*, 55(2), pp.630-643.
6. Nguyễn Thành Yên (2005). *Tiếng Anh trong công sở*. Ho Chi Minh City: Ho Chi Minh City Publishing House.
7. Võ Đình Phước (2014), 'Định hướng xây dựng chương trình Tiếng Anh không chuyên phục vụ các chương trình đào tạo tiên tiến tại UEH', presented at *Chương trình tiếng Anh tại UEH: Đánh giá và đề xuất cải tiến*, UEH, December 2014

APPENDIX 1

SKILLS

Telephoning: making contact (page 11, *Pre-intermediate Market Leader Business English Course Book*, 3rd Edition)

Activity F. Study the Useful language box below. Then role-play the phone calls.

USEFUL LANGUAGE

MAKING CALL

Could I speak to Carmela Cantani, please?

Yes, this is Erika Mueller from KMV.

Is this the sales/finance/marketing department?

I'm calling about ...

Could you transfer me to the IT department, please?

Could you tell him/her that I called?

Could you ask him/her to call me back?

Can I leave a message, please?

RECEIVING CALLS

Who's calling, please?

Could you tell me what it's about?

I'll put you through.

Can you hold?

He seems to be with someone right now. Can I get him to call you?

I'm afraid there's no answer. Can I take a message?

I'm sorry, there's no answer. I can transfer you to his/her voice mail.

ROLE PLAY 1

Student A	Student B
<p>1. You work at Lochlin plc. You receive a call for your colleague, Jamie Vincent. Jamie is not in the office at the moment. Take the caller's details and say that Jamie will call them back.</p> <p>2. You are Jamie Vincent. Telephone the person who called about the job advertisement. Offer to send an application form. The closing date for applications is in two weeks' time.</p>	<p>1. You want to apply for the job in the advertisement below. Call Lochlin plc and ask for Jamie Vincent.</p> <p>2. Some time later, Jamie Vincent calls you back. Ask about how you can apply for the job. You also want to know when the closing date for applications is.</p>

Lochlin plc
Sales representatives

Exciting new career opportunities for the right people. Have you got the qualities we need?

Call Jamie Vincent on
020 7946 4021 for more information.

ROLE PLAY 2

Student A	Student B
<p>1. You want to attend the computer training course which you saw in the advertisement below. Call and ask for Alex Frantzen.</p> <p>2. Some time later, Alex Frantzen calls you back. You want to know more about the course and when the next one starts. Also ask about when you need to register for the course.</p>	<p>1. You work for Career Ladder plc. You receive a call for your colleague, Alex Frantzen. Alex is not available at the moment. Take the caller's details and say Alex will call them back.</p> <p>2. You are Alex Frantzen. Telephone the person who called about the training courses. Offer to send an information pack. The next course begins at the start of next month (the 2nd). Participants need to register at the latest one week before the start of the course.</p>

Career Ladder plc
The training specialists

NEW FOR THIS YEAR:

- Language training courses
- IT training courses
- Sales training courses

Need to improve your skills
to get the right job?
Call Alex Frantzen on

0845 32124 3886

APPENDIX 2
QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear students,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate your ideas of making video clips to practice speaking and listening skills. Please take some time to fill out every single item in the questionnaire.

Thank you for your answers.

1. During the preparation and the recording of your video clips,

a) what advantages did you have?

.....
.....
.....

b) what disadvantages did you have?

.....
.....
.....

c) did you ask for the help from the people who did not belong to your group? (If there was assistance from the outsiders, what did they help your group?)

.....
.....
.....

2. Which recording equipment / devices did your group use?

.....

3. Which difficulties did you have when sending the clips to the lecturer ?

.....

4. What did you like when role-playing and making your own video clips? What did you learn from this method of studying English language?

.....
.....
.....

5. Do you like going on making your own video clips in the next semester (English class - Module 4)? (What should the lecturer help you in order to improve this learning method in the next semester?)

.....
.....