

UTILIZATION OF TED TALKS VIDEOS IN FACILITATING THE LESSONS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE: ADULT LEARNERS IN FOCUS

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Abstract

With the advancement of technology, teachers are challenged on how they could cope with the academic needs of their students - understanding the lessons in class. This qualitative study focused on the adult learners' experiences on how TED Talks Videos enhanced their understanding of the lessons and gathered their views on how the utilization of the strategy be improved. Results revealed that the students generally like the speakers' professionalism and expertise. However, the length of the videos hindered students' interests and understanding. Moreover, the participants mentioned that the videos' factual information and contextual examples helped them understand the lesson well. They also found the subject teachers' additional explanation on the topic was beneficial. They suggested that background information may be given before the videos may be presented. Variant answers, conclusion, and implications were also presented.

Keywords: TED Talks Videos, social awareness, adult learners

Introduction

With the advancement of technology, teachers are challenged on how they could cope with the academic needs of their students. San Jose and Galang (2015) mentioned that teachers of today's classroom are pressured and placed into a dilemma on how they could effectively respond to the call of their duties – to become effective teachers. Several authors have found that, effective teaching depends on the frequency of use of a certain strategy (Bay, 2012); requires appropriate approaches that are congruent to students' learning (Knutson, 2014); applies theory into practice (Loughran, 2012); needs 'flexibility, creativity, monitoring, and adjustments' of teaching strategies (Mulligan, 2011); puts students' needs a priority (Rasmussen, 2015); and discovers the learners' preferred strategy (San Jose, Bahket, and Alsalhi, 2017).

The use of videos in the classroom has provided great responses from various fields. In nursing, clinical skills videos motivated students to learn (Forbes, Oprescu, Downer, Phillips, McTier, Lord, and Simbag (2016); however, it was not unanimously accepted by students (Kelly, Lying, McGrath, and Cannon (2009). In science teaching, videos encourage students to be engaged and focused (Herreid and Schiller, 2013); reinforces and blends with lectures (Stockwell, Stockwell, Cennamo, and Jiang, 2015). In other areas, videos allow students to connect into deeper level with the subject materials (Henderson, Selwyn, and Aston, 2017); thus, improves students' learning (Ljubojevic, Vaskovic, Stankovic, and Vaskovic, 2014); however, the essence of the use of videos lies how they are put to use in practical life teaching and learning conditions (Heitink, Voogt, Verplanken, van Braak, and Fisser, 2016; Karppinen, 2005). On the other hand, Huda, Mat Teh, Nor Muhamad, and Mohd Nasir (2018) averred, video materials need to increase and inculcate social awareness among students so that they would be led to solving real life issues and (Campbell, 2016; Kilgour, Reynaud, Northcote, and Shields, 2015) broadening their different perspectives. Therefore, in the teaching of social sciences, videos need to enhance students' understanding of social issues and it is only then teachers can claim that they are successful in their roles.

Admittedly, several investigations had been conducted regarding the use of videos in teaching several courses; however, only few of these studies had dwelled in social sciences. Moreover, those studies were made using the quantitative method. Thus, this action research is conducted to look into the qualitative aspects of students' experiences on the utilization on TED Talk videos; thus, improving the strategy.

Research Questions

The primary goal of this qualitative study is to look into the students' experiences in the use of TED Talks videos. More importantly, it sought answers to the following essential questions:

1. What are the experiences of the adult learners in the use of TED Talks videos in their social science class?
2. How the TED Talks videos help the participants in understanding their lessons in social science class?
3. What significant experiences the participants can share to other learners in the use of TED Talks videos in class?
4. What suggestions can the participants offer to improve the teaching of social science?

Theoretical Lens

To shed light on the gravity of this study, the researcher anchored this study on the *Normative Theory of Teaching* (Frankena, Raybeck, and Burbules, 2002). This theory views about how teaching ought to be conducted in the classroom, what topics should be promoted, why these topics need to be developed, how and who should make the enrichment, and what forms it should take. This theory is appropriate because in this study, the researcher wants to promote the concept of improving a method of teaching by way of an action research. The researcher believes that as an educator, she should be the one to enhance her teaching strategy by involving the students; thus, making the improvement student-centered.

Further, Normative Theory of Teacher involves four theories of teaching. First is *The Cognitive Theory of Teaching* which assumes that one theory of teaching cannot serve the purpose of education, hence, there should be more than one theory because teaching may be analyzed in several ways. Second is the *Theory of Teacher-behavior* which concerns the interaction between the teacher and students in the classroom. Third, *Psychological Theory of Teaching* which focuses on the contractual relationship between the teacher and learners and the fourth is the *General Theory of Teaching* which assumes that teaching is a process designed and performed to make change in the behavior of students.

Method

This part presents the research design, research instrument used; introduces the research participants; and shows the step-by-step procedures observed in gathering the essential information.

Research Design

This study used the qualitative method. Jackson, Drummond and Camara (2007) and San Jose, Bahket and Ali Alsalthi (2017) mentioned that the main focus of qualitative method is to recognize the importance of human experiences. Further, Ismail and Ibrahim (2018) said that it analysis transcribed factual information based on the participants' responses. Additionally, Hammersly (2018) averred that qualitative method is a popular approach in social science research which uses 'unstructured' forms in collecting information by interviewing and observing.

On the other hand, phenomenology is used when an investigator wanted to know deeper the participants' individuals experiences (Patton (1990); to learn the narratives of the persons daily encounters (Clandinin, and Connelly, 1994); to understand the essential meaning of the individual's experiences and on the intentionality of consciousness (Creswell, 1998; Rossman and Rallis, 2011); and to understand the value of the participant's experiences in a particular situation (San Jose, Bahket, and Ali Alsalthi, 2017).

This investigation uses the face-to-face interview as method in collecting the information from the participants. This method according to Young, Rose, Mumby, Benitez-Capistros, Derrick, Fitch and Parkinson (2018), is now widely used because we live in an interview society. On the other hand, the researcher believes that it is the best way of obtaining the essential information from the participants because there is outright revelation of facts and experiences. However, in the conduct of the interview, the researcher considers the number of participants to be involved. The participants are selected based on their ability to speak, to give comments, opinions and views, and personal experiences about the topic.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this study is the researcher-made interview guide questions. The questions are subjected to validation from expert researchers. This is done to make sure that the topic under investigation is addressed and answered. The guide questions are composed of four main questions which generally intended to determine the participants' experiences in the use of TED Talk videos in the teaching social science. Specifically, the questions dig into the participants' likes and dislikes about the TED's video; how the videos contribute to their understanding of the lessons; what essential experiences they obtain and worth sharing to others; and cater their suggestions they could give to improve the teaching of social science.

Research Participants

The participants of this study were adult students with age range 23-30 years old. The participants were enrolled in the Social Science course during the Fall Semester of school year 2018-2019. A total of 5 participants were involved in the study.

Procedures of the Study

Prior to the conduct of this study, the researcher has reflected on how she could improve the use of videos in her social science class. She noticed that although students are intellectually engaged during the video presentation, she wanted to know her students' personal experiences, opinions, and insights on how these presentations enhance their social awareness. Then, the researcher formulates the research questions. The questions are focused on the students' experiences; the things that they like and dislike; the benefits they gain and the suggestions they can offer to improve the use of video presentation. Before the conduct of the face-to-face interviews with the participants, five research-participants are purposely selected. The researcher presents to each participant the objectives of the research and the interview protocol of confidentiality. The participants are interviewed by the researcher in different occasions to maintain consistency of information. Moreover, confidentiality of the students' identity is secured. In the transcription, participants are given pseudonyms such as "Stage, Lapel, Cam, Audience, and Floor". Also, the transcriptions are given back to the participants for verifications, corrections and revisions. Lastly, the information obtained from each participant are not shared to anybody. After the information are transcribed, the researcher gives the transcriptions to a data analyst for thematic analysis.

Trustworthiness of the Study

In handling the trustworthiness of the study, Creswell (2007) offers four essential points to observe in handling the information gathered. These points include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) point out that credibility is obtained when there is a prolong encounter and continuous observation of the participants of the study. Polit and Beck (2014) also mention that this aspect deals with confidence in the truth of the findings. This aspect is not an issue on this study because the researcher is the mentor of the participants. Moreover, she knows very well the participants and the participants know her also. Thus, there is no more feeling of animosity between the researcher and the participants. Moreover, the procedures in obtaining the findings follow rigorous steps. The information obtain are subjected to independent data analysis.

Likewise, Creswell (2007) mention that transferability is obtained when the results of the study is utilized by other researchers in their search for clarifications; and degree in which the research can be transferred to other contexts. This current study is by nature an action research because it seeks to know the suggestions of the participants to improve the utilization of the Ted Talk; thus, the current study is not the end in itself rather a beginning of the series of researches. Results of this study become the basis for another research.

The idea of dependability is anchored on the stability of the information over time (Polit and Beck, 2014). The researcher believes that even if the study will be conducted in different locations, participants, and courses (English, Philosophy, etc.) similar findings will come out because Ted Talk videos are teaching materials which remain to be constant. Moreover, the findings are audit trailed to address the correctness and unbiased of the information. Additionally, the transcriptions of the interviews were given back to the participants for verification and authentication.

Lastly, confirmability refers to the truthfulness of the findings which could be verified by other individuals (Trochim, 2006) and reviewed by colleagues (Polit and Beck, 2014). Confirmability is established in this research through the coding applied in the thematic analysis. Further, recordings and transcripts are kept and only available upon the request of the readers.

Results and Discussions

This section presents the findings of the study based on the gathered information from the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The frequency was considered as *General* if responses obtained 50% and above; *Typical* if responses garnered 21% and above but not more than 49%; while *Variant* if responses obtained less than 20% and below.

Themes and Core Idea on the Use of Ted Talk Videos

Theme	Frequency of Responses	Core Ideas
Professionalism and expertise of the speakers	General	- having good speakers - talks clearly, nicely and with organization
Assist in understanding the topic	General	- experts on the topic - makes the lesson easy - helps understand and reflect on the topic
Interesting topics	Variant	- stimulating issues
Duration of videos	General	- lasting more than 10 minutes
Concentration of students	General	- losing attention - becoming boring
Complication on vocabulary used	Variant	- challenging to understand the vocabulary used
Accurate information and examples	General	- providing contextual cases - including research and statistics
Function of the teacher	General	- explaining the points presented in the video
Explanation may be done	General	- giving background and explain the meaning
Role of other learners	Variant	- discussing with other learners
Types of example	Variant	- giving real-life examples

Generally, the students believed that it was the TED Talk speakers' professionalism and expertise on the topic made them like the videos. All speakers were communicatively competent, and their presentations and organization skills were superb. This implies that the speakers are well prepared and have clear goals on what they want their audiences to learn. Thus, students unanimously agreed that all speakers were experts and knowledgeable on the topic assigned on them. The speakers' skills were radiantly evident on how they deliver their talk for the audience to understand easily and to reflect on the salient points of the talk. However, not all students found the topics interesting. This might be because of their different orientations. It implies that although students attentively watch the talk, few found some topics were not remarkable, noteworthy, thought-provoking or not within their interests.

Several authors made it clear that individuals with professionalism are admired by many (Aguilar, Stupans, Scutter, and King, 2012) because they possess sensitivity and responsiveness to the clients (Sethuraman, 2006); have competence (Lively, 2001); have unparalleled quality of teaching (Clow, 2001); follow standards (Kalbers and Fogarty, 1995); are client-centered and address learners' needs (Beege, Nebel, Schneiderr, and Rey, 2019; Oseni, Robinson, and Fong, 2018); and have clear goals (Toll, 2018). It goes to show that mature learners find expert and professional speakers to be likeable because they knew they will learn from them.

On the other hand, even though the students found the speakers to be skillful and proficient, they generally found the videos to be exhausting because the videos were more than 10 minutes long. It implies that most students only like videos which are brief and condense. Because the videos were time-taxing, generally the students felt bored, uninterested, and confused. It shows that the students have short attention span and don't favor lengthy talks. Moreover, few students found the vocabulary used by the speakers to be challenging and difficult to comprehend. It implies that not all students were proficient in listening to spoken English.

Positively, the use of video reinforces the roles of teachers from being gatekeepers of knowledge (Tan and Peace, 2012). Video clips allow students to have deeper learning and connection (Henderson, Selwyn, and Aston, 2017). However, contrary to the results of this study where participants mentioned that the 10-15 minutes Ted Talk

videos were long, Yue-Hei Ng, Hausknecht, Vijayanarasimhan, Vinyals, Monga, and Toderici, G. (2015) point out that learners benefit more thoroughly from the videos' content if videos are longer as compared to shorter ones. However, Venkatagiri, Chan, Ooi, and Chiam (2015) find shorter videos to increase flexibility. Consequently, Hodulik and Taylor argue that the length of the video varies on activity. Although Mok, Li, and Chang (2016) opine that shorter videos are very popular in today's internet. Now, who should define the duration of the videos to be presented in the classroom? The researcher believes that it should be the teacher; however, deciding how long or how the videos are, the teacher needs to know first who her learners are: their communication skills, their vocabulary skills, and attention span.

A few participants complaint regarding the choice of words or the vocabulary use by the speakers. It should be noted that the participants are second language learners; therefore, as mentioned by Schneider, Avivi-Reich, and Daneman (2016) some linguistic factors such as vocabulary knowledge affect participants' listening comprehension; word related factors (Peters and Webb, 2017); and inferencing abilities (Brunfaut and Révész, 2015; van den Brook, Kendeou, Lousberg, and Visser (2017).

Interestingly, all students conveyed that the videos helped them grasp the points presented because of the factual and intelligent information given by the speakers. Moreover, the speakers provided contextual examples which made the ideas reliable. It implies that the students comprehend maturely on what were presented to them. According to Klatt and Johnson (2017) individuals who offer accurate and precise information are those who follow a strict standard of reliability. The researcher believes that those invited speakers to present a talk on Ted Talk videos are definitely chosen by the producers according to their strict guidelines. Only those individuals whom the producer believes to have good ethics are given a chance to share their ideas. As Goel and Thakor (2015) mention that having precise information permits efficiency; motivation and credibility (Solstad, van Hove, and Ommundsen, 2015). While the use of contextual instances promotes learning progress and meaningful understanding (Strogilos and Stefanidis, 2015).

Generally, the explanation of the subject teacher was found significant by all students. The students appreciated their teacher's effort in elucidating and clarifying the ideas presented. It signifies that even though the students were already adults they still need someone whom they believe more knowledgeable to concur with. It further indicates that the students believe in the knowledge and authority of the teacher. On the other hand, although variant, few students essentially found sharing and imparting to other the information they obtain from the Ted Talk videos was a good action. This implies that these students didn't like to conceal information which they found worth sharing with others.

Lastly, despite the favorable results of the use of the videos, the students generally suggested that background information may be given to the students before the videos are presented. This allows them to set their minds. Variantly, the students suggested that the topic could be discussed with other colleagues in the classroom. This implies that the students were interested in knowing what other students ideas and thoughts. Moreover, few students suggested that real-life instances may be provided so that they could contextualize the topics presented. This shows that students wanted to feel and relate with the issues.

Conclusions

It is always a challenge for classroom teachers on what teaching strategies they could utilise for the students to grasp the points in the lessons. Moreover, experimenting a teaching strategy or teaching approach may not be dangerous for as long as the goals are clear: deliver the lessons and make the students learn. In teaching, there is no master key rather several keys to deal with various types of learners. The use of Ted Talk videos may not be effective but comparable with other teaching strategy or approach. The essence lies on the experiences obtain by the learners; on the insights they gain from the videos; and on the suggestions they offer to improve the use of Ted Talk videos. They experience that watching with other learners and discussing with them is a worthwhile experience; that teacher may not at all time give lectures; that listening to videos with expert and professional speakers is interesting. They are informed that having good communication and presentation skills, stage presence and good preparation are requirements so that audience understands the ideas presented. Lastly, they learn that no matter how good they think the materials are, there is still room for improvement and their suggestions are essential in the development of the strategy.

Implications for practice

As a mentor, the researcher realizes students' participation in the choice of teaching classroom strategies should be sought through a conduct of research. Students should be given enough voice on the process of their

learning by listening to their suggestions and comments. The involvement of students can be considered as essential element of teaching improvement and development. Thus, the next time the researcher use Ted Talk videos, suggestions offered by the students should be incorporated. San Jose (2019) mentions that classroom becomes a venue for friendly and welcoming inter-actions if students are valued.

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