

USING SHORT-FORM VIDEO CONTENT TO DEVELOP LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS OF EFL LEARNERS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20228573>

Abstract:

This article discusses the use of short-form video content in developing listening and speaking skills among EFL learners. In the digital age, students are regularly exposed to short videos on platforms such as YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels, TikTok, and educational video applications. These videos are usually brief, visually engaging, and easy to access, which makes them suitable for language learning when used with clear pedagogical aims. The article explores how short-form videos can help learners improve listening comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and confidence in speaking. It argues that short videos provide authentic language input and can motivate students to practise English through repetition, imitation, discussion, and creative response tasks. However, the article also emphasizes that teachers should select videos carefully and guide students with appropriate pre-viewing, while-viewing, and post-viewing activities. The article concludes that short-form video content can be an effective supplementary tool for developing communicative skills in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: *short-form videos, listening skills, speaking skills, EFL learners, digital learning, authentic materials, pronunciation, communicative competence.*

INTRODUCTION

English language learning has become closely connected with digital media. Many students today spend a considerable amount of time watching short videos on social media platforms and video-sharing applications. These videos are often short, visually attractive, easy to understand, and frequently repeated. Although students usually watch such content for entertainment, short-form videos can also be used as a useful resource in English language teaching.

Listening and speaking are two of the most important skills in foreign language learning. Learners need listening skills to understand spoken English, follow conversations, recognize pronunciation patterns, and respond appropriately. Speaking skills are equally important because students need to express ideas, ask questions, describe situations, and communicate with others. However, many EFL learners face difficulties in both areas. They may understand written English better than spoken English, or they may know grammar and vocabulary but still hesitate when they need to speak.

One reason for this difficulty is limited exposure to natural spoken English. In many EFL contexts, students hear English mainly in the classroom. Textbook audio materials can be useful, but they may not always reflect real speech patterns, different accents, informal expressions, or natural speed. Authentic video content can help reduce this gap by exposing learners to real-life language use. Gilmore (2007) states that authentic materials can make language learning more meaningful because they show how language is used in real communication.

Short-form videos are especially useful because they are not too long. Many learners lose concentration when they listen to long lectures or extended audio recordings. A short video of thirty seconds to three minutes can be easier to manage, especially for beginner and intermediate learners. Teachers can replay the video several times, focus on specific phrases, and use it for different tasks. This makes short-form videos practical for classroom use.

Another advantage of short videos is the combination of sound and visual support. Learners do not only hear the language; they also see gestures, facial expressions, actions, objects, and context. This helps them understand meaning even when they do not know every word. Mayer (2009) explains that multimedia learning can support understanding because learners process information through both verbal and visual channels. In language learning, this combination can make listening less stressful and more accessible.

Short-form videos can also improve pronunciation. Students can listen to how words are pronounced, how sentences are stressed, and how speakers use intonation. They can repeat short phrases after the speaker and imitate pronunciation patterns. This kind of imitation is useful because it gives learners a model of natural speech. Harmer (2015) notes that pronunciation practice should include not only individual sounds but also stress, rhythm, and intonation.

In addition, short videos can support vocabulary learning. Learners often remember words better when they hear them in context and see visual examples. For instance, a short video about ordering coffee may include words and phrases such as “menu,” “order,” “takeaway,” “receipt,” and “Can I have...?” A video about technology may include words such as “device,” “update,” “password,” “screen,” or “application.” When vocabulary appears in a realistic situation, students are more likely to understand and remember it. Nation (2001) emphasizes that repeated exposure to vocabulary in meaningful contexts is important for long-term learning.

Short-form videos also create opportunities for speaking practice. After watching a video, students can answer questions, summarize the content, discuss the topic, role-play a similar situation, or create their own short dialogue. For example, after watching a short video about a job interview, students can practise interview questions in pairs. After watching a video about online safety, students can explain three safety rules in English. In this way, listening input becomes a starting point for speaking output.

The use of short videos is also connected with learner motivation. Many students are already familiar with video-based content, so using it in English lessons can make learning feel more relevant and engaging. According to Dörnyei (2001), motivation plays a major role in successful language learning. If students find classroom materials interesting and connected with their lives, they are more likely to participate actively.

However, teachers should not use short-form videos randomly. Not every video is suitable for educational purposes. Some videos may contain inappropriate language, unclear pronunciation, distracting visuals, or content that does not match the lesson objective. Therefore, the teacher must carefully select videos according to students’ age, level, interests, cultural background, and learning needs. The video should be short, clear, relevant, and connected with the language aim of the lesson.

A useful lesson based on short-form video content can include three stages: pre-viewing, while-viewing, and post-viewing. In the pre-viewing stage, the teacher prepares students for

the topic. This may include introducing key vocabulary, asking prediction questions, or showing a picture from the video. This stage helps activate students' background knowledge and makes listening easier.

In the while-viewing stage, students watch the video with a clear task. For the first viewing, they may identify the main idea. For the second viewing, they may listen for specific words, phrases, or details. For the third viewing, they may focus on pronunciation, intonation, or useful expressions. Field (2008) argues that listening activities should help learners develop strategies for understanding spoken language, not simply test whether they understood everything.

In the post-viewing stage, students use the language from the video in speaking activities. They may discuss the topic, retell the video, perform a role-play, make a short presentation, or create their own version of the video script. This stage is important because it transforms passive watching into active communication. Nunan (2004) emphasizes that language tasks should encourage learners to use the target language meaningfully.

Short-form videos can also be useful for microlearning. Microlearning refers to learning in small, focused units. Instead of studying a large amount of material at once, learners study short pieces of content regularly. This approach fits well with vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening practice. A teacher may assign one short video per week and ask students to note five useful expressions, practise pronunciation, and prepare a short spoken response.

For EFL learners at lower levels, subtitles can be helpful. Subtitles may support comprehension and help students connect spoken and written forms of words. However, teachers should use subtitles carefully. If students rely only on reading subtitles, they may not improve listening effectively. One useful method is to watch the video first without subtitles, then with subtitles, and finally again without subtitles. This helps students gradually build listening confidence.

Another practical activity is shadowing. In shadowing, students listen to a short sentence or phrase and repeat it immediately after the speaker. Short videos are ideal for this because they contain brief and manageable language chunks. Shadowing can improve pronunciation, rhythm, fluency, and confidence. Students can practise individually on their phones and then perform selected phrases in class.

Students can also create their own short videos as a speaking task. For example, they can record a one-minute explanation, a short dialogue, a mini-presentation, or a vocabulary demonstration. This activity encourages creativity and gives learners a real reason to speak English. It also helps students become more aware of pronunciation, clarity, and organization. According to Richards (2008), speaking activities should provide learners with opportunities to use language for meaningful communication.

For students at Cyber University, short-form videos can be connected with modern and professional topics. English instructors can use videos about technology, artificial intelligence, cyber security, digital habits, online safety, study skills, or university life. These topics are relevant to students' interests and future careers. For example, a short video about phishing can be used to teach vocabulary related to cyber security and then lead to a speaking task where students explain how to avoid suspicious links.

Nevertheless, there are some challenges. Students may treat videos only as entertainment and not as learning materials. They may become distracted by social media platforms or focus

more on visuals than language. Some videos may contain fast speech, slang, or unclear audio. To avoid these problems, the teacher should provide clear instructions and learning tasks. The purpose of watching should always be connected with language development.

Another challenge is unequal access to devices or internet. Although many students have smartphones, not all students may have stable internet connection or enough mobile data. Teachers should consider this when assigning video tasks outside class. Videos should be short and easy to access, and alternative classroom options should be available when necessary.

Short-form video content should be seen as a supplementary tool, not a complete replacement for structured language teaching. Students still need teacher explanation, vocabulary support, grammar practice, feedback, and classroom interaction. However, videos can make lessons more dynamic and can provide authentic input that textbooks alone may not offer.

Overall, short-form videos can help develop listening and speaking skills when they are used purposefully. They expose learners to real English, provide visual context, support pronunciation practice, and create opportunities for communication. With careful selection and teacher guidance, short-form video content can become a valuable part of modern EFL instruction.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, short-form video content can be an effective tool for developing listening and speaking skills among EFL learners. Short videos provide authentic language input, visual support, natural pronunciation, and engaging topics. Because they are brief and accessible, they are suitable for classroom activities and independent practice.

The use of short videos can improve listening comprehension, vocabulary learning, pronunciation, speaking fluency, and learner motivation. Activities such as prediction, repeated viewing, shadowing, discussion, role-play, summarizing, and student-created videos can help transform video watching into active language learning.

However, short-form videos should be selected carefully and used with clear pedagogical aims. Teachers should guide learners through pre-viewing, while-viewing, and post-viewing tasks, and connect video content with classroom objectives. When used responsibly, short-form video content can make EFL lessons more modern, communicative, and engaging.

The article concludes that English instructors should consider integrating short-form video content into EFL classrooms as a supplementary method for improving listening and speaking skills. This approach reflects students' digital habits while supporting meaningful language development.

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