

The Effect of Multimodal Learning Approach on Students: An Example of YouTube Videos for Learning Spanish Grammar

Jingjing Jiang

University International College, Macau University of Science and Technology, Macau, China

Keywords: Multimodal Teaching, Spanish, Grammar, YouTube videos.

Abstract: The multimodal teaching approach is increasingly recognized as a vital method for learning and teaching. The variety of grammar videos on YouTube provides students with a wider perspective and a personalized approach to learning grammar. While some studies have explored students' perceptions of using YouTube for second language learning, there has been insufficient focus on the grammatical learning aspects of Spanish learners. This study aims to explore university students' perceptions of learning grammar using multimodal YouTube videos of Spanish language tutoring. The method used in this research was a descriptive quantitative technique. 108 Chinese students completed a questionnaire. The results of the study show that most of them have a more positive attitude towards YouTube Spanish teaching videos. Some students had a skeptical attitude towards the content of these individual creators and expressed concerns about self-discipline in using YouTube for learning.

1 INTRODUCTION

In digital learning environments, multimodal learning has become an important development trend in language teaching and learning. As the most widely used video platform in the world, YouTube provides language learners with a wealth of multimodal learning resources (Olivier, 2019). Students can conveniently and quickly access YouTube to gain a large amount of language learning content anytime and anywhere, which is the main advantage of learning through online video (Ahmad et al., 2023). Based on a wide demand for Spanish grammar learning, YouTube provides various videos with content related to it. It provides a more flexible and personalized learning experience than traditional learning methods through multiple formats such as video images, spoken narration and animation (Nasution, 2019).

Many studies have discussed students' perceptions of using YouTube for second language learning. The majority of English majors believe that YouTube lectures and videos from personal education creators play a positive role in enhancing foreign language learning, but that they need to be supervised by teachers and parents in order to avoid possible negative effects (Sadaf et al., 2024). Moreover, since the popularity of home-based

learning, YouTube videos for learning foreign languages have been widely used by students for self-study and in university classes, and students have shown positive attitudes towards this multimodal learning approach (Simanjuntak et al., 2021). Students find this multimodal approach to learning interesting and can improve the efficiency of foreign language learning, however, they still want to maintain direct interaction between the teacher and the student while watching the videos (Djamdjuri et al., 2021). In addition, this educational pathway not only develops students' knowledge and skills of language directly but also encourages students to broaden their perspectives on cultural diversity. In the case of international students, it guides them to integrate into the study abroad environment (Kim & Kim, 2021). In terms of negative impact, students often use YouTube for other content such as entertainment, which interferes with concentrating on their studies (Girón-García et al., 2020). Regarding research gaps, most of the studies in related fields have focused on examining students' motivation, literacy, and listening practice, and there is a lack of attention to the aspect of grammar learning (Rodríguez-Peñarroja, 2022; Girón-García et al., 2020; Chien et al., 2020). It is worth mentioning that there is more content on English language learning and less research on Spanish language learners.

The purpose of this study is to investigate students' perceptions, learning experiences, expectations, and shortcomings of this learning method regarding the use of multimodal YouTube videos of Spanish grammar learning. This study can be a reference for early Spanish learners who are at the beginning of their approach to grammar learning. For educators of Spanish, it can provide inspiration for improving teaching methods.

2 METHOD

This research employs a qualitative research design to explore data analysis. The data was collected by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from a study exploring students' effects on the use of YouTube for English language learning (Simanjuntak et al., 2021). The questionnaire uses a Likert scale. Participants could choose the following five options: 'Strongly Agree (SA)', 'Agree (A)', 'Neutral (N)', 'Disagree (D)' and "Strongly Disagree (SD)". The questionnaire consists of 12 questions and the content has been adapted in order to be more targeted to learners of Spanish grammar. The questions in the questionnaire are divided into five sections that explore students' perceptions of YouTube grammar instructional videos in five separate areas, with each section containing two to three questions. The five sections are: attractiveness, effectiveness, relevance, motivation, and concerns. The questionnaire content and data results will be presented in the third part of the findings. The questionnaire was posted on WeChat's Questionnaire Star platform and collection lasted one week. The

data collected was statistically analyzed using SPSSAU. The participants in the study were all Chinese university students majoring in Spanish who used YouTube to learn Spanish. The ages ranged from 18 to 22 years old. A total of 108 questionnaires were collected. These students aim to pass the DELE (Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera) exams at level B2 and above. DELE exams, organized by Spanish Instituto Cervantes, are designed to assess the learners' level of Spanish.

3 FINDINGS

Descriptive methods analyze data results. The questionnaire comprises five aspects that examine students' perceptions of using YouTube grammar videos for learning: attractiveness, effectiveness, relevance, motivation, and concerns.

Table 1 reflects the attractiveness of YouTube grammar videos to students, with a neutral response of around 40%, followed by 25 students stating that online grammar videos are more engaging and more relaxing. 23 students do not tend to interact in the comments section, while 20 students prefer to share their grammar knowledge on the internet.

Table 2 suggests the majority of students believe that these Spanish grammar videos have helped them with their understanding of grammar, however, 15 students stated that the videos do not provide them with effective help. In terms of completing their homework, over 43% of students agreed that it is effective, however nine students still feel that it does not provide them with enough help.

Table 1: Attractiveness section.

No	Statements	Scales				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	YouTube Spanish grammar videos are more appealing to me than grammar lessons in school	12.04% (13)	23.15% (25)	41.67% (45)	12.96% (14)	10.19% (11)
2.	I feel more relaxed and comfortable using the YouTube Spanish grammar videos	15.74% (17)	24.07% (26)	37.96% (41)	14.81% (16)	7.41% (8)
3.	I feel interested discussing Spanish grammar with the creator and other viewers in the comments section	18.52% (20)	12.04% (13)	40.74% (44)	21.3% (23)	7.41% (8)

Table 2: Effectiveness section.

No	Statements	Scales				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
4.	YouTube Spanish grammar videos help me understand Spanish grammar better	32.41% (35)	29.63% (32)	12.04% (13)	13.89% (15)	12.04% (13)
5.	YouTube Spanish grammar videos help me with my grammar homework effectively	20.37% (22)	43.52% (47)	15.74% (17)	12.04% (13)	8.33% (9)

Table 3: Relevance section.

No	Statements	Scales				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
6.	YouTube Spanish grammar videos are relevant to my course content in university	24.07% (26)	36.11% (39)	17.59% (19)	13.89% (15)	8.33% (9)
7.	If there are grammar points I do not understand in class, I would like to go for the videos to figure them out	15.74% (17)	34.26% (37)	30.56% (33)	10.19% (11)	9.26% (10)

Table 4. Motivation section.

No	Statements	Scales				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
8.	Watching YouTube Spanish grammar videos inspires me to learn more about Spanish	29.63% (32)	41.67% (45)	10.19% (11)	11.11% (12)	7.41% (8)
9.	Watching YouTube Spanish grammar videos inspires me to use a multimodal learning approach more frequently	35.19% (38)	37.96% (41)	14.81% (16)	7.41% (8)	4.63% (5)

Table 5: Concerns section.

No	Statements	Scales				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
10.	The correctness of the individual creator's video content cannot be verified	12.96% (14)	35.19% (38)	31.48% (34)	12.04% (13)	8.33% (9)
11.	Learning with YouTube often distracts me (e.g. recommended videos on the side)	15.74% (17)	29.63% (32)	28.7% (31)	18.52% (20)	7.41% (8)
12.	Grammar that YouTube videos present is too personal and colloquial to correspond to what is written in books	12.04% (13)	14.81% (16)	39.81% (43)	25.93% (28)	7.41% (8)

Table 3 examines whether students believe that the grammar videos on YouTube correspond to the content of their college grammar classes. The majority of students agree that they matched, however, there is a small percentage of students who disagreed and completely disagreed that they correspond exactly to the class. Over 34% of students admitted to using YouTube to check for gaps after class, however, there were still over 20% of students who would not use this method.

As can be seen in Table 4 more than 41% of the students state that watching grammar videos gave them more motivation to learn Spanish. Moreover, more than 37% of the students said that by watching the videos they were more inclined to learn by using a multimodal approach.

Referring to the results of previous studies, three of the most common problems encountered in using YouTube for learning among college students are selected in Table 5. More than 35% of students agree that videos from individual creators may contain errors, and around 31% cannot confirm. Nearly 30% of students acknowledge that cannot be able to fully discipline themselves while using YouTube. Nearly 40% of students could not confirm the view that the

grammar in the videos was too personal, and nearly 26% disagreed.

4 CONCLUSION

Based on the data collected from the questionnaire, the following conclusions can be drawn: YouTube grammar videos appealed to them, but not much. Most students were neutral and slightly supportive. Those videos help most of them in their grammar learning which corresponds with classes. The videos help them to expand their other related studies in Spanish, as well as having a positive attitude towards using a multimodal approach. On the other hand, students were skeptical about the accuracy, and some self-discipline problems are also mentioned. However, students tended to be unable to confirm or disagree with the video creators on the issue of overly personal use of creators. Compared to other studies on the use of YouTube for second language learning, results show that students do not have a very strong positive attitude towards using YouTube for learning grammar aspects. The percent of negative category choices in the first three aspects of the question is still

more than 20%, but in general, there is a tendency for students to use a multimodal approach for learning grammar. For this result, initial Spanish learners can use this as a reference for grammar learning, but they need to learn the video content critically, which might be difficult for beginners. For educators of Spanish, it can inspire them to improve teaching methods and selectively introduce multimodal learning styles into the classroom after a correctness review. Otherwise, the teacher may select the videos on the website and share the better ones with the students as supplementary materials to be watched after class. In terms of the creators of educational videos for second language learning, they can further improve their video content based on the results of the study. There are also some limitations of this study that need to be noted. The research focused exclusively on YouTube videos of Spanish grammar explanations made by Spanish speakers. However, grammar videos made by Chinese people on video sites within China (e.g., Bilibili) were not used as materials for the experiment. Regarding the discussion of multimodal learning approaches to language, it may also be necessary to consider the different languages used for the multimodal learning materials. This may have implications for the five student dimensions mentioned above (attentiveness, effectiveness, relevance, motivation, and concerns), which may allow the study to produce different results.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, A., Rao, I. S., & Rao, M. S. 2023. ESL Students Anxiety in English as a Second Language Learning from The Perspective of Linguistic Skills. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(4):3943-3951.
- Chien, C. C., Huang, Y., & Huang, P. 2020. YouTube Videos on EFL College Students' Listening Comprehension. *English Language Teaching*, 13(6): 96-103.
- Djandjuri, D. S., Suseno, M., Tajuddin, S., Lustyantje, N., & Chaeruman, U. A. 2021. Multimodal Approach in Online EFL Class Using Islamic Learning Materials: Students' Perspective. *International Journal of Language Education*, 5(4): 337-355.
- Girón-García, C., & Gargallo-Camarillas, N. 2020. Multimodal and perceptual learning styles: Their effect on students' motivation in a digital environment. *The EuroCALL Review*, 28(2): 23-38.
- Kim, S., & Kim, H. C. 2021. The benefits of YouTube in learning English as a second language: a qualitative investigation of Korean freshman students' experiences and perspectives in the US. *Sustainability*, 13(13): 7365.
- Nasution, A. K. R. 2019. YouTube as a media in English language teaching (ELT) context: Teaching procedure text. Utamax: *Journal of Ultimate Research and Trends in Education*, 1(1): 29-33.
- Olivier, J. 2019. Short instructional videos as multimodal open educational resources in a language classroom. *Journal of Educational Multimedia and Hypermedia*, 28(4): 381-409.
- Rodríguez-Peñarroja, M. 2022. Integrating Project-based Learning, Task-based Language Teaching Approach and YouTube in the ESP Class: a Study on Students' Motivation. *Teaching English with Technology*, 22(1): 62-81.
- Sadaf, H., Rasheed, B., & Ahmad, A. 2024. Integrating project-based learning, task-based language teaching approach and youtube in the esp class: a study on students' motivation. *Teaching English with Technology*, 13(2): 657-670.
- Simanjuntak, U. S., Silalahi, D. E., Sihombing, P. S., & Purba, L. 2021. Students' perceptions o using YouTube as English online learning media during Covid-19 pandemic. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 9(2): 150-159.