

The Effectiveness of Video vs. Written Text in English Comprehension and Acquisition of ESL Students

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Abstract

This paper reports an experimental study conducted to compare intermediate-level, English as a Second Language (ESL) students' overall comprehension when using video vs. written text as a learning tool. The ultimate goal of this study is to compare which of the two learning tools (video and written text) can further enhance the ability to comprehend L2 input in ESL students. The use of a book-based movie and the original book was to provide as much similar content as possible for both groups, yet in two different modes. Six Saudi students participated in this experiment where they were divided into two equal-numbered groups. Two phases were conducted due to concern that some individual differences of the participants (e.g., age and memory capacity) might have had a greater impact on the results of either group rather than the actual learning tools. The result of the two different learning tools: video and written text indicated that the use of a video was more effective for language comprehension than the use of a written text. Based on the answers of the given questions, the experimental group members, who viewed the movie segment, demonstrated higher levels of attentiveness than the reading group members.

Keywords: Comprehensive Input, English as a Second Language (ESL), Second Language acquisition, video-based activities.