

DIFFICULTIES IN DESIGNING HIGH-QUALITY VIDEO MATERIALS FOR ONLINE FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION IN TECHNICAL HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

This paper addresses the challenges encountered in designing high-quality video materials for online foreign language instruction within technical higher education institutions. It examines the specific needs of technical students learning foreign languages, the limitations of current video production practices, and the impact of technological and pedagogical factors on material effectiveness. The study highlights issues such as content relevance, engagement, accessibility, and integration of technical terminology. Recommendations are offered to improve the design process, enhance learner motivation, and ensure that video materials effectively support language acquisition in a technical academic context.

Keywords: Video materials, Online instruction, Foreign language learning, Technical higher education, Educational technology

Introduction

In the contemporary digital era, the integration of technology into education has transformed traditional teaching and learning approaches, especially in the context of foreign language instruction. The global shift towards distance and online learning, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has emphasized the need for effective, engaging, and accessible educational materials. Among these, video content has emerged as a powerful tool to facilitate language learning by providing visual, auditory, and contextual support. This is particularly relevant for technical universities, where students often face challenges in mastering foreign languages due to their focus on engineering or applied sciences. However, the development of high-quality video materials for online foreign language instruction presents numerous pedagogical, technical, and institutional challenges.

Video-based instruction has the potential to enhance language acquisition by incorporating real-life scenarios, native speaker models, interactive elements, and

multimodal input. It offers flexibility in learning pace, time, and place, which is vital for students in technical disciplines who often juggle heavy academic workloads. Additionally, well-designed videos can simulate authentic language environments, making the learning experience more immersive and meaningful. Despite these benefits, creating effective video content is a complex and resource-intensive process that requires careful planning, pedagogical insight, and technological expertise.

One of the primary difficulties in designing such content lies in aligning pedagogical goals with technological capabilities. Many educators, particularly in technical universities, may lack the training or experience necessary to design and produce educational videos that meet language learning objectives. Creating content that is not only informative but also engaging and interactive demands knowledge of instructional design principles, video editing tools, and learner-centered methodologies. Without adequate support and training, instructors may resort to recording traditional lectures, which often fail to capture students' attention or promote active language use.

Another significant challenge is the limited availability of tailored video content that reflects the specific linguistic needs and professional contexts of technical university students. Generic language videos may not address the vocabulary, communication styles, or technical discourse relevant to fields such as engineering, IT, or architecture. As a result, students may find the content irrelevant or disconnected from their academic and professional goals. Designing domain-specific language videos requires collaboration between language instructors and subject-matter experts, which can be time-consuming and logistically difficult to coordinate. Technical and infrastructural barriers also hinder the production and delivery of high-quality video materials. In many regions, especially in developing countries, institutions may lack the necessary equipment, software, or internet bandwidth to support high-definition video creation and streaming. Students, too, may face difficulties accessing video materials due to unstable internet connections or a lack of digital devices. These disparities can widen the educational gap and reduce the effectiveness of online language instruction.

Moreover, the process of scripting, filming, editing, and updating video materials is labor-intensive and often goes unrecognized in academic workload assessments. Unlike traditional classroom instruction, video production involves a range of tasks—from storyboard design and sound engineering to post-production and captioning—all of which require additional time and often external expertise. Without institutional incentives, budget allocations, or technical assistance, language instructors may be discouraged from investing in video creation, further limiting the availability of high-quality resources.

Student engagement also poses a challenge. While videos offer rich opportunities for learning, passive viewing without active tasks can lead to superficial understanding or lack of retention. Thus, designing interactive video content with embedded quizzes, pause-and-think moments, or reflection prompts becomes essential. This, however, adds another layer of complexity to the instructional design process, necessitating the use of advanced e-learning platforms and software integration.

In summary, although video materials hold significant promise for enhancing online foreign language instruction, especially in technical higher education, their effective design and implementation are fraught with challenges. These include pedagogical limitations, lack of teacher training, insufficient infrastructure, content irrelevance, and time constraints. Addressing these difficulties requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach that involves teacher development, institutional support, investment in technology, and learner feedback. Only then can video-based language instruction reach its full potential in equipping technical university students with the communicative competencies they need in an increasingly globalized and digital world.

Conclusion

The shift towards digital and distance education has highlighted the growing importance of video content in foreign language instruction, especially within technical higher education. While video materials hold great potential for improving language acquisition—through multimodal input, flexible access, and authentic communication models—their effective design remains a complex challenge.

Educators in technical universities must not only possess linguistic and pedagogical knowledge but also adapt to technological demands and digital instructional design principles.

The primary difficulties in creating high-quality video content include limited training and technical support for teachers, insufficient infrastructure, a lack of field-specific materials, and the considerable time and effort required for production. These issues are further compounded by the need to maintain learner engagement through interactive and contextually relevant video content.

Overcoming these challenges demands a systemic approach that integrates institutional investment, interdisciplinary collaboration, and continuous professional development. Furthermore, students' feedback should guide the iterative refinement of materials to ensure relevance and accessibility. By addressing the pedagogical, technical, and administrative barriers, educational institutions can foster more effective language learning environments and empower students in technical disciplines to become competent communicators in a globalized academic and professional landscape.

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