

# Original student created video compared with 3rd party created media

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## **Abstract**

Class participation levels and the effectiveness of classroom materials are hot topics in Japan's educational system, particularly in EFL. This research focused on the use of video materials in the classroom and their effectiveness in maintaining the students' attention and aiding the learning process. 3<sup>rd</sup> party created video material and student created video material (material created by an outside source and material created while involving the students themselves, respectively) were used and data, in terms of levels of attention displayed by the students, was recorded. The research subjects were junior college students with an average age of 19-20 years. The findings of this research were that using student created material was more successful in maintaining the students' concentration than professionally created 3<sup>rd</sup> party material. Additional benefits such as positive feedback and increased motivation were also evident.

## **Introduction:**

This paper aims to show how the creation and subsequent reuse of video in the classroom can benefit the students' learning process. The research was carried out over 2 semesters with 5 different classes in order to produce verifiable data. A total of 85 students participated in the study.

When a classroom is called a 'multimedia classroom', it usually means that material produced by a third party [movies, educational companies, etc] is used for education in that classroom. While the advantage of stimulating both the visual and audio senses has been lauded time and time again by teachers from many disciplines, how relevant is the information to the students? Murphy and Kenny (1998) state in their research that videos are best used for self-evaluation rather than for language acquisition.

In my own experience during my days as a secondary school student, we too were occasionally treated to 'a flick' [video]; usually an adaptation of the book we were studying in English literature. While we were grateful for such rare treats and also for

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the opportunity to better understand the many sticking points in the book, I wonder how much of the material we really paid attention to? How much just washed over us? Did ALL of the students in the classroom find it effective? How much of the information obtained was visual, how much was aural? Did it help us to improve our study techniques? If used correctly, video in the classroom can help students to become more self-critical and find in it a useful tool for their studies (Katchen, J.E. (1992)). With these thoughts in mind, how can we enable video to have greater relevance to Japanese students of English?

I decided to conduct my research based upon the use of self-created<sup>†</sup> video material in the classroom and how it establishes a positive feedback system for the students. In order to show the effectiveness or otherwise of the material, it was compared with research on the use of 3<sup>rd</sup> party created<sup>‡</sup> media. Another facet of this research investigates how students ‘tune-in’ to different multimedia content and assesses their respective effectiveness. The students weren’t informed that their actions would be of interest to and incorporated into my research until the end of their courses (and, even then, briefly). It was important not to skew any results by producing ‘false positives’, i.e. students showing interest in material which they would not in normal circumstances find of relevance to themselves, simply because they know they are part of a research study.

† : ‘self-created’ (or student created), in the context of this research, refers to material which was created by the teacher or students and in which the students were the main characters.

‡ : ‘3<sup>rd</sup> party created’ refers to material which was created by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, usually a commercial entity. Examples of such entities are the BBC, Hollywood, NHK, etc.

**Sample population:**

5 classes at [a 2 year] junior college level were included in the study. I include this chart to show the focus of each class, class level, students per class, and reference details.

YEAR	Class Name	Students per class	Reference
2005	1 <sup>st</sup> year, Speech Communication B	23	SC I B(05)
	[Semester 2]	15	SC II A(05)
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Speech Communication A	16	Rg II B(05)
	[Semester 2]		
2006	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Reading B [Semester 2]		
	1 <sup>st</sup> year, Speech Communication A	13	SC I A(06)
	[Semester 1]	5	Rg II B(06)
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Reading B [Semester 1]	13	Rg II A(06)
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year, Reading A [Semester 1]		
	Total	85	

Table 1: Sample population

**Result criteria:**

The data collected was the level of students’ interest, measured by candidly checking (visually) at frequent intervals, to see if they were paying attention and at what level. The sample populations were naturally divided by class into easily manageable groups, most classes consisting of 16 students or less. One of the classes totalled 23 students [see Sample Population table] and this was a challenge to mark, the difficulty offset only by the length of the video material.

The following criteria were used, each student falling into one of these categories:

Attention level (AL):	Full Attention	Frequent Attention	Infrequent Attention	Not Paying Attention
Percentage of perceived attention: (PPA)	85%+	60-84%	30-59%	0-30%

Table 2: Result criteria

The above table has 4 levels to gauge the students’ level of attention. The teacher continually marked the class, looking at a student and marking “Paying Attention” or “Not Paying Attention” in a box next to their name, then continuing to the next student. When the whole class had been marked, the teacher starting at the beginning again and repeated the process. This continued until the video material had finished. Finally, the total for each student was calculated. The teacher did not instruct the students to ‘pay attention’ or did not admonish the students for sleeping, using phones, etc. during the collection of the data.

Example calculation:

Student A was checked 15 times.

8 of those checks result in a “Paying Attention” mark, with the other 7 checks resulting in a “Not Paying Attention” mark.

**Formula 1: PPA**

Formula:  $Percentage\ of\ perceived\ attention = (Paying\ Attention / Total) * 100$

$$\Rightarrow PPA = (8/15) * 100 = 53.33\%$$

This result of a 53.33% PPA correlates to an AL of ‘Infrequent Attention’ using the table above.

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**Data set 1: Using 3<sup>rd</sup> party material in the classroom****Selecting 3<sup>rd</sup> party material, and assessing its impact on the students**

In order to avoid biasing the result, the 3<sup>rd</sup> party created materials chosen were carefully selected to ensure they were relevant to the student and to their course.

Selected 3<sup>rd</sup> party video material was shown to each class. It was important that the material was relevant to the students as one of the focuses of this study was to investigate the relative effectiveness of using media with differing content in the classroom. The following chart shows the material selected and its relevance.

Class	3 <sup>rd</sup> party material used	Relevancy	Comments
SC I B(05)	Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory [1971] [96 mins]	This video has many examples of one-to-one language exchange. Among language items included are requests, demands and introductions. Much of the language used in the video was related to the language they had recently learned in class.	The video length was cut to 85 minutes to accommodate the class time of 90 minutes. Explanations and teachers preamble were given at the end of the previous day's class.
SC II A(05)	Fawlty Towers (A touch of class) [1975] [25 mins]	Includes higher level comic interactions. This class was very able and it was decided that they would perform a play, based on an English drama. They were informed that their play was to be closely based on this drama.	The students were aware that a final assignment was to perform a cut-down version of this play. The script was written by the teachers and the roles were decided by the students.
Rg II B(05)	Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory [1971] [96 mins]	This class was reading Roald Dahl's "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" . They were shown this video 3 and 2 weeks before their final test respectively.	The video length was cut to 2 sets of 40 minutes to accommodate the class time of 45 minutes. Explanations and teachers preamble were given at the end of the previous day's class.
SC I A(06)	Wallace and Grommit ? The Wrong Trousers (ELT adaptation) [2004] [30 mins]	Includes greetings, directions, physical descriptions, etc. Complemented their class textbook well.	Special ELT adaptation.
Rg II B(06)	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory [2005] [115 mins]	This class was reading Roald Dahl's "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" . They were shown this video in 2 parts, 3 and 2 weeks before their final test respectively.	The entire 115 minutes were shown, without editing. Explanations and teachers preamble were given at the end of the previous day's class.

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Class	3 <sup>rd</sup> party material used	Relevancy	Comments
Rg II A(06)	Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe [1988] [160 mins = 80 mins x2 sessions]	This class was reading C.S. Lewis's "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" . They were shown this video in 2 stages, one before the exam and the second after the exam.	I have included the results for the first stage only as more than half of the students went abroad as part of their studies as soon as they finished their final exams.

Table 3: Selection of 3<sup>rd</sup> party material

### Resulting student attention levels using 3<sup>rd</sup> party video material

The levels of attention were checked as per the previously mentioned result criteria. The calculated results were as follows:

Class	Attention level:	Full Attention	Frequent Attention	Infrequent Attention	Not Paying Attention
SC I B(05)		43.48%	21.74%	17.39%	17.39%
SC II A(05)		53.33%	26.67%	13.33%	6.67%
Rg II B(05)		37.50%	12.50%	25.00%	25.00%
SC I A(06)		46.15%	23.08%	23.08%	7.69%
Rg II B(06)		60.00%	20.00%	0.00%	20.00%
Rg II A(06)		53.85%	23.08%	15.38%	7.69%
Total Average		49.05%	21.18%	15.70%	14.07%

Table 4: Student attention levels (3<sup>rd</sup> party material)

Surprisingly, it was found that the length of the video (90 minutes or 30 minutes) made little difference to the deviation of the average score. It is interesting to note that, no matter what the class level is (A or B), their year (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup>) or their subject of study (communication or reading), they all show total "Infrequent Attention" and "Not Paying Attention" levels of over 20%. One class gave a total "Infrequent Attention" and "Not Paying Attention" level score of 50% but the usage of 6 different classes in this research enabled us to go some way in dealing with such variations from the norm.

### Data significance

It can be seen from the above data that, on average, about 70% of the students were part of the "Full Attention" or "Frequent Attention" groups, while almost 30% of students were in the lower two groups. These results may be higher than other general studies as the video material shown was specifically chosen to be of interest to the students' chosen course of study and to be of specific 'value' to the students in some cases (e.g. the content of the video had relevance in that it helped the student to understand their book / play on which they were to be tested). Despite this, however, still 30% gave scant or no

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participation in the video class. It can be inferred that this 30% would remember very little of that day's class and that this type of video is ineffectual as a learning tool for those students.

Students' oral comments, although initially not planned to be a part of the data, were found to be interesting. Due to the oral nature of the data, no formal recording was made but comments included "It was fun", "I liked it" and "It was interesting". Note that none of these comments are very specific. Please contrast these with the comments made in the analysis of student created video materials in the next section.

### **Data set 2: Using student created material in the classroom**

#### **Producing relevant material, and assessing its impact on the students**

The material produced should involve the students principally as actors. The students each were given a similar amount of time in front of the camera in an interactive setting. As always, the material was relevant to the students' course of study as the main purpose of the class, to teach the student the course syllabus, should always be a priority. Due to this requirement, the reading classes were not involved in this phase, thus data for those groups is not available. This is because a large amount of communication (through English) was to take place in front of the camera, and the main focus of a reading class is not oral communication.

The students were assigned their roles well in advance. For the play (see table below), the students were given scripts with the target language and this was given as a home assignment. Practice time and advice were also given in class. For the oral tests (also, see table below), the students had previous experience of similar tests in the class so they were familiar with what was expected of them. Once again, no more emphasis was put on this assignment than on any other of their assignments.

Finally, this student created video material was shown to the respective classes at a later date and their reactions recorded. The results should provide data to make a conclusion on whether the student created video material proves much more stimulating to the student than professionally created 3<sup>rd</sup> party material or otherwise.

The following chart shows the material created and subsequently used in the class.

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Class	Student created material used	Relevancy	Comments
SC I B(05)	Oral Test Contents: Chapters 3 and 4 from their course book English Firsthand 1 (Helgesen, Brown, Mandeville)[Longman]	Includes language covering talking about future plans and language to express certainty. (These students were tested when they finished every 1 chapter of their book).	The class was divided into groups of 3 students, one week prior to the test. They were given the assignment of creating and performing a conversation (3 mins+) among themselves, the result being recorded on video camera.
SC II A(05)	Fawlty Towers – A touch of class (Edited version, 16 mins) [BBC 1975]	Has a highly interactive script and follows a storyline which was adapted to match their course content.	The students acted out the story and this was captured on video camera by the teacher. Students were allowed multiple takes until they deemed they had performed satisfactorily. The final version was put together and shown in the class.
Rg II B(05)	N/A	N/A	Reading class does not have a speaking component in its curriculum, thus time could not be devoted to this research.
SC I A(06)	Oral Test Contents: Chapters 3 and 4 from their course book English Firsthand 1 (Helgesen, Brown, Mandeville)[Longman]	Includes language covering preposition of location and adverbs of frequency. (These students were tested when they finished every 2 chapters of their book)	The class was divided into groups of 3 students, one week prior to the test. They were given the assignment of creating and performing a conversation (3 mins+) among themselves while being recorded on video camera.
Rg II B(06)	N/A	N/A	Reading class does not have a speaking component in its curriculum, thus time could not be devoted to this research.
Rg II A(06)	N/A	N/A	Reading class does not have a speaking component in its curriculum, thus time could not be devoted to this research.

Table 5: Selection of student created video material

**Resulting student attention levels using student created video material**

The students were shown their efforts in class. The play (SC II A (05)) involved the whole class so could be shown to the class as a whole. The oral tests (SC I B (05)) and

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SC I A (06)), although each individual part only featured 3 of the students at a time, was also shown to the whole class. The levels of attention were checked as per the same result criteria as before. The calculated results were as follows:

Class \ Attention level:	Full Attention	Frequent Attention	Infrequent Attention	Not Paying Attention
SC I B(05)	86.96%	8.70%	0.00%	4.35%
SC II A(05)	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Rg II B(05)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SC I A(06)	69.23%	23.08%	7.69%	0.00%
Rg II B(06)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Rg II A(06)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Average	85.40%	10.59%	2.56%	1.45%

Table 6: Student attention levels (student created video materials)

We can see clearly that the percentage of “Full Attention” has gone up significantly while all the results for the other lower levels of attention have reduced.

#### Data significance

Looking at the data above, we can see that on average about 96% of the students were part of the “Full Attention” or “Frequent Attention” groups, while only around 4% of students were in the lower two groups. Therefore, from these results it can be concluded that using student created video material in the classroom gave a participation rate of over 96%, the educational “loss” being only 4 percent. This can be contrasted with a loss of 30% using 3<sup>rd</sup> party created video material.

Students’ oral comments were very interesting at his stage. They were much more specific than the comments made by the same students when they watched regular video material. The comments included “I need to improve my pronunciation” , “I need to spend more time preparing with my team members before class” and more positive comments such as “I think Miss XX prepared well” and “May we have a copy of this to watch at home” . [Note: The last comment’s request was, of course, granted].

#### Conclusions

This study shows clearly that students ‘tune into’ and pay attention to material which they have created themselves. Even when students have reasons to find it necessary to pay attention to 3<sup>rd</sup> party created video material (reasons include forthcoming exams on that material), some 30% of students fail to be able to concentrate on the material. However,

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when the screen material features themselves or their classmates, the same students find it to be much easier to concentrate on, thus increasing the effectiveness of the multimedia class.

Important data from this report was the feelings of students themselves. The students' comments are particularly interesting [see 'Data significance' section in both the 3<sup>rd</sup> party and student created materials sections] in that they show how using the student created material gives students feedback from their performance and allows them to self-assess what needs to be improved along with what they are doing correctly. I found that it increased motivation in the classroom and that students were, for a number of weeks following the experiment, more attentive and willing to ask questions. In particular, students became quite interested in improving their pronunciation. One student from the second year class even wrote in a general class survey "At first, I didn't like Speech Communication class, but now I enjoy it" . While one cannot be sure if this was a result produced from carrying out this study, it certainly is a good result.

It must be remembered that if this method were to be incorporated into a communication focused class's teaching methods, it would add to the amount of preparation time for the teacher. However, with the advancement of technology, making good quality material quickly has become a reality. Some new types of video cameras even have 'one touch DVD burn' functions which allow one to create a DVD in minutes. The material from the students' oral quizzes is just a matter of turning on the camera at the start of class. The play, however, was a real investment in terms of time – it included making the script, instructing the students, recording the movie and then editing it so it appeared smooth and was easy to follow. In my opinion, the benefits of learning and motivation to the students far outweigh the time needed for preparation and production and I plan to continue using this method in the classroom.

### Acknowledgements

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