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Feedback on Student Engagement in Song Activity During Spanish Online Class

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Abstract

The worldwide advancement of digital technology has witnessed a change in the teaching and learning system supported with the use of internet. As the world is hit with the Covid-19 pandemic, instructors need to adapt to the new norm including in teaching and learning process, meaning from the use of white board to interactive and flexible technology. In this study the element of technology can be seen when this paper will discuss the use of song from the YouTube channel as a medium during an online class. The Self-Determination theory by Ryan and Deci (2000) is applied in the study. The research design of the study is qualitative by analysing the feedback from students on the activity they participated. A total of 22 respondents participated in the study requiring them to answer questions based on a song they had listened to. The objective of the study was to identify the engagement of students in the given activity. In general, it was found that listening to song as an activity can enhance the understanding of the students in learning Spanish.

Keywords: Technology, Online, YouTube, Song, Engagement, Spanish Class

Introduction

The advancement of technology today has witnessed a change in the education system with various tools being utilised during the teaching and learning process. This proves that the learning ecosystem is no longer purely limited to classroom and face-to-face learning. The use of the whiteboard in class can also be minimal as there are technological platforms that have been introduced such as Putrablast, blended learning, flipped classrooms, and others. Due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic worldwide, classes using face-to-face methods have to be online. This is seen as a revolution in the education system as students are able to virtually access the class wherever they may be.

The instructor has to be creative to enliven the online class as student engagement in virtual classes is more challenging than in physical classes. For example, two-way communication between the instructor and students is almost impossible due to impediments such as a weak internet connection making it difficult for students to join the class or to turn on their cameras when required. Hence, students had to look for alternatives in order to respond to their instructor. Even though learning takes place in an online learning environment, student engagement is still crucial to create learning satisfaction (Hwangji, 2020).

Many teaching methods are available such as learning applications, websites, blog, YouTube and WhatsApp that are used for interaction and performing exercises. The interaction between student and instructor is connected through technology as well as the environment created such as the place of study which influences the results of learning (Bower, 2019, Gonzalez et. al., 2020; Wang et. al., 2013). Holmes (2018) view student engagement in learning is connected to two important indicators, which are satisfaction as well as the quality of the student experience. Therefore, in the teaching and learning process in online mode, student satisfaction is heavily emphasised as the results of learning determine the success or otherwise the method practised. The readily available technology which is constantly being improved, enables learning materials to be delivered in various methods and the student will not be left out to obtain the materials. According to Bernard et. al (2009), there are three techniques to increase student engagement that are: student-course content, student-instructor and student-student.

Problem Statement

The Covid-19 problem that is affecting the world has its impact on the education system. All teaching and learning processes have to be online. As students are no longer physically present, the method of online delivery has to be varied with the aim of meaningful learning happening at the end of the class. Learning online requires students to be more independent and to do more research to understand a topic. The active engagement of students in a virtual class can also be a factor to motivate the student to consistently attend the class. However, Keramidias (2012) found that students face problems managing time and performing activities when learning virtually compared to physically. Therefore, this study is conducted with the objective of looking at the feedback on student engagement in Spanish language class activities using songs to enhance understanding in Spanish. Student engagement in this online class is very important as students are not tied to the university unlike when attending physically. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that the instructor creates various opportunities and ways so that the student can be engaged in the online class environment (Martin & Bolliger, 2018).

Research Design

This qualitative research involved 22 respondents who enrolled in the basic Spanish language course in Semester xxx, 2021-2022 academic year. The song titled 'Mi familia' (My Family) can be accessed via the YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJhRaIGVX-I>. The animation video as the content of the song is intended to assist the students to understand the lyrics of the song. The instructor wrote the song lyric; thus, there are no issues relating to copyright. Then, students answered the exercise questions distributed in google form as the class is conducted online. The questions were based on the song on the YouTube channel which the students listened to outside of class hours. This means that students have to understand the content of the song lyrics on their own without assistance from the instructor.

This method is created so that the student is able to turn the exercise into a revision exercise based on the topic learned. The results of the survey proved that listening to songs as a method and then answering related questions is able to further enhance student understanding. The students in this study did not feel pressure as the musical elements and animated pictures embedded in the songs make the answering questions activity more relaxed.

This research used the Self-Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2000) that emphasises competence, autonomy dan relatedness. This theory is used as a guide in creating a positive and motivating environment for the student to be engaged through online class activities.

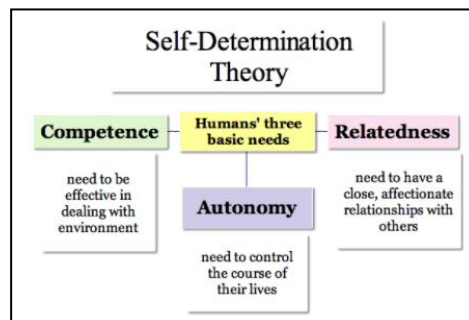


Figure 1: Self-Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2000)

In this research competence refers to the student ability to engage in online classes. As all students are at their own homes hence the environmental factor greatly influences the mood to study. Students have to find the best solution in an effort to maintain their focus in online classes. For example, the student has to communicate with the instructor by asking questions so that the learning environment is not solely focused on one-way communication. In increasing the level of competence, students have to be more affective so that their virtual classes do not become mundane and burdensome.

Students also should have autonomy that is their ability to control the progress of the online class. Here control refers to the ability of the student to manage time well, and to always be active during online class. To maintain the mood and positive thoughts, the student must inculcate the attitude of relatedness with course mates by engaging in group assignments whether in class or outside of online class hours. These three elements under the theory can instil confidence in the student so as to always be enthusiastic and engaging in all the online class activities.

Findings

The basic Spanish language course was the first exposure for all 22 respondents (100%). This means that all the respondents do not have basic knowledge of the Spanish language. All of the respondents (100%) strongly agreed that the Spanish language is an interesting language to learn.

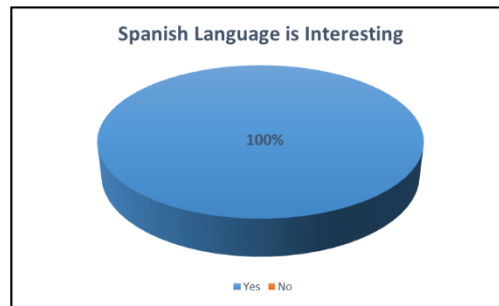


Figure 2. Percentage Spanish is Interesting to Learn

Section B consisted of nine items. For all of the items, the highest accurate answer is 100% and the minimum is 77.3%. This show that student engagement is very positive in the listening to song activity. Figure 3 shows the percentage of student engagement for nine questions based on the song they listened to.

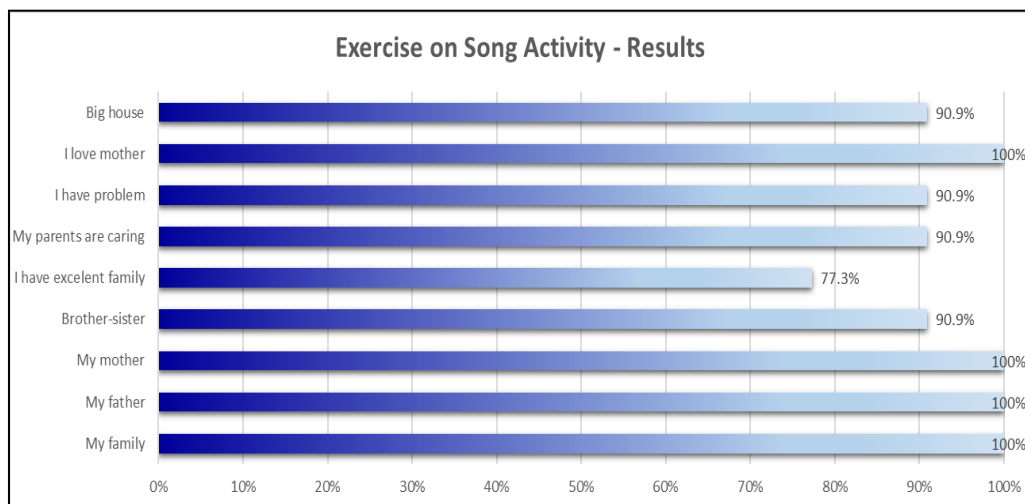


Figure 3: Engagement on Song Activity

The percentages presented in Figure 3 show the respondents are able to understand the exercise given. Four items recorded 100% (22 respondents), four questions recorded 90.9% (20 respondents) and one item recorded 77.3% (17 respondents). It is clear that students' engagement in online classes can be assessed based on the exercise or activity performed, and also enables them to evaluate their own ability to understand a certain topic. The attitude of completely relying on the instructor will only cause the students to feel stressed. Thus, the university can enhance students' engagement and increase students' success rates by assisting students to engage in impactful activities such as mentoring, guiding, community and other support services (Kuh et. al., 2008).

Discussions

All the respondents had to answer nine questions relating to the lyrics of the song listened to regarding the topic 'Mi Familia'. Respondents had to choose the correct answer for the translation of the song title *Mi Familia* which is 'My Family'. Vocabulary relating to The Family (La Familia) is available in the course content for Spanish language Level One. 100% (22 respondents) responded correctly. Therefore, listening to a song activity while answering this question is an exercise in the form of enhancement.

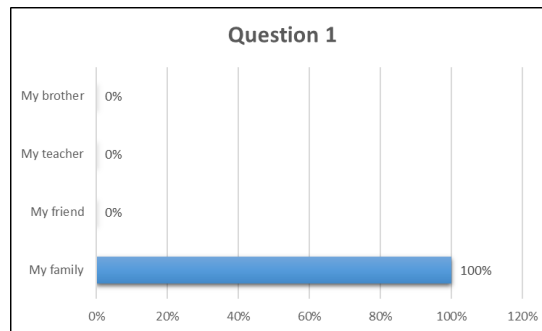


Figure 4: The meaning of *mi familia*.

In the question on the meaning of 'mi familia', the respondents competence can be seen by the feedback answer given as they understood the meaning of the word *Mi familia* because they had studied the vocabulary relating to family.

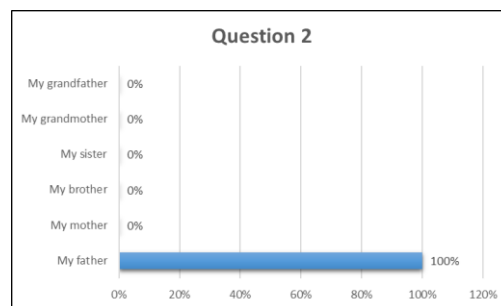


Figure 5: The meaning of *mi padre*

The second question was on the meaning of *mi padre*. The percentage of those who chose the correct answer can be seen in Figure 5. 100% (22 respondents) answered correctly. The answer was 'My father'. The options for 'My grandfather', 'My grandmother', 'My sister', 'My brother' and 'My mother' all recorded 0%. This proves that the respondent's ability to perform the enhancing exercise succeeded as they were able to answer correctly.

Students' engagement can next be seen in the question on the meaning of *mi madre*. Figure 6 shows 100% (22 respondents) chose the correct answer, 'My mother'. This means that the respondents were unanimous in choosing the correct answer. This feedback explains the students' ability in understanding the question asked is at the highest level.

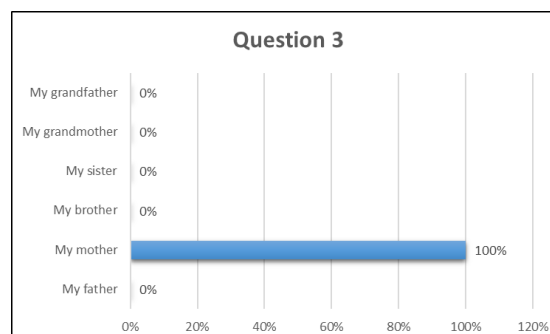


Figure 6: The meaning of *mi madre*

The next question showed that 9% (2 respondents) chose the wrong answer. Although 20 other students answered correctly, 90.9% chose the answer 'Brother-Sister'. Figure 7 shows

that the answer for the translation of *hermano-hermana* in Spanish is 'Brother-Sister'. 4.5% (1 student) chose the answer 'Brother-Brother', and another 4.5% (1 student) chose 'Grandfather-Grandmother'.

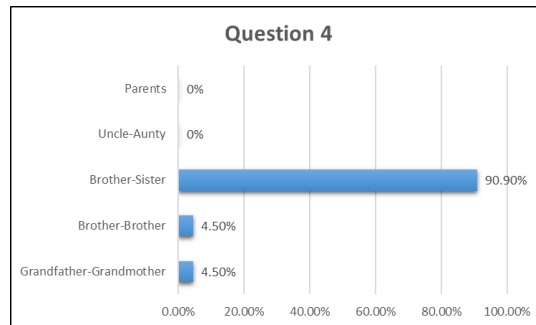


Figure 7: The meaning of *hermano-hermana*

The fifth question is relating to the meaning of the sentence *Tengo una familia excelente* in the English language. There were some differences in percentages for this question compared to the previous question. There were 77.3% (17 respondents) who chose the correct matching sentence which is *Tengo una familia excelente* meaning 'I have an excellent family'. However, the other five students chose the wrong answer which is 9.10% (2 students) chose the answer 'I have a perfect family' and 13.60% (3 students) chose the answer 'My family is the best'. Whereas the sentence 'My family is family' recorded 0%. This percentage of student feedback can be seen in Figure 8.

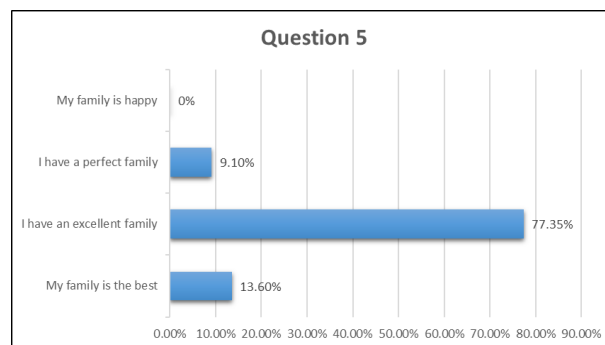


Figure 8: Meaning of *Tengo una familia excelente*

The students then had to answer the sentence *Mis padres son cariños*. Figure 9 clearly shows that 90.90% (20 respondents) chose the correct answer which is 'My parents'. Whereas 4.50% (1 respondent) each chose the answer 'My parents are the best', and 'My parents are attractive'.

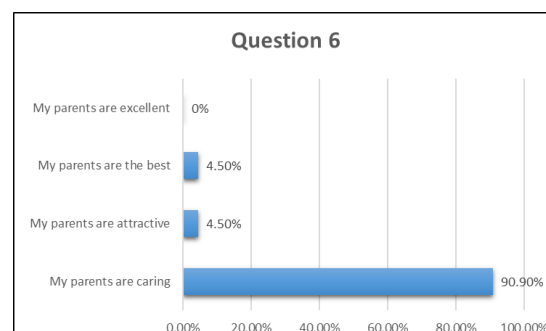


Figure 9: Meaning of *Mis padres son cariños*.

The following discussion looks at the student engagement in answering the question relating to the sentence *Tengo problema*. Figure 10 shows the percentage of students who chose the answer 'I have a problem' (90.90%), 'I don't have a problem' (4.50%) and 'Who is in trouble?' at 4.50%. The correct answer for the sentence *Tengo problema* is 'I have a problem'.

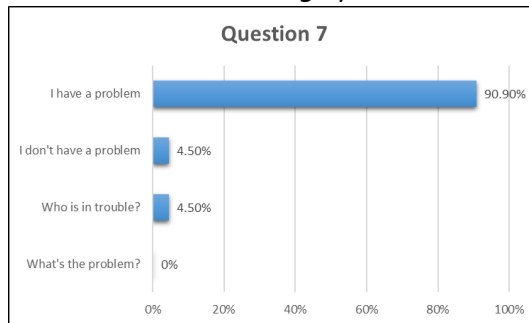


Figure 10: Meaning of *Tengo problema*

The next question requires the students to find the correct meaning for the sentence *Te quiero mama* which was found in the song lyrics. Figure 11 shows the percentage of the feedback with 100 % chose the answer 'I love mother' for question eight.

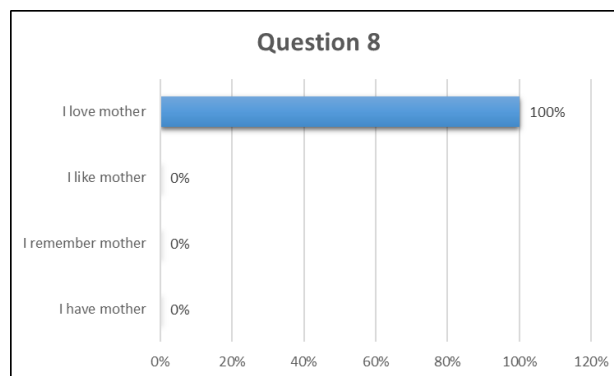


Figure 11: Meaning of *Te quiero mama*

Whereas for the last question, that is *Casa grande*, 90.90% (xx respondents) chose the answer 'Big house' and the remaining 9.10% (xx respondents) chose the meaning 'Beautiful house'. The percentage of the feedback answers can be seen in Figure 12 below.

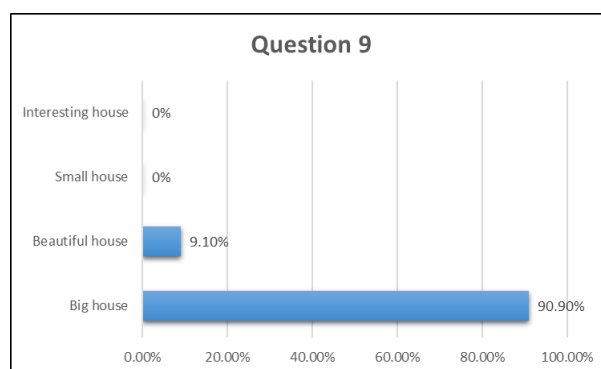


Figure 12: Meaning of *Casa grande*

In summary, it can be seen that students had showed good engagement in completing the activity assignment on listening to this song. Although unable to meet physically in class and the implementation changed to online the activity could still be performed. The feedback received on this listening to song activity was very positive and all the respondents showed good commitment. All the respondents agreed that the activity could help them increase their understanding of the lexical they learnt in the Spanish language class. Furthermore, the animation video in the song has further enhanced the students to understand the lyrics of the song.

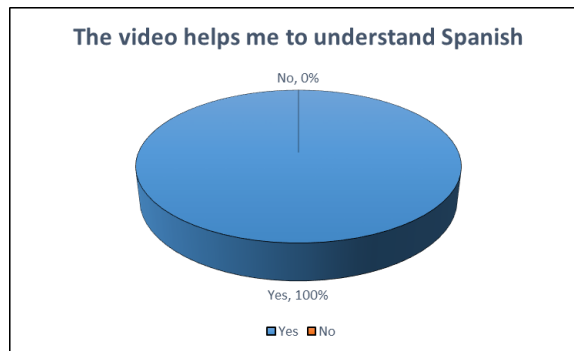


Figure 13. The video helps me to understand Spanish

Based on the discussion, it can be explained that the students had no problems in understanding the topic learnt as the online activity was meaningful. Students are still able to follow the learning well despite attending the class online. Figure 14 clearly explains that the online activity using song through the YouTube platform greatly assists students, and the Covid-19 pandemic is not an obstacle for them to access various applications and exercises using the internet.

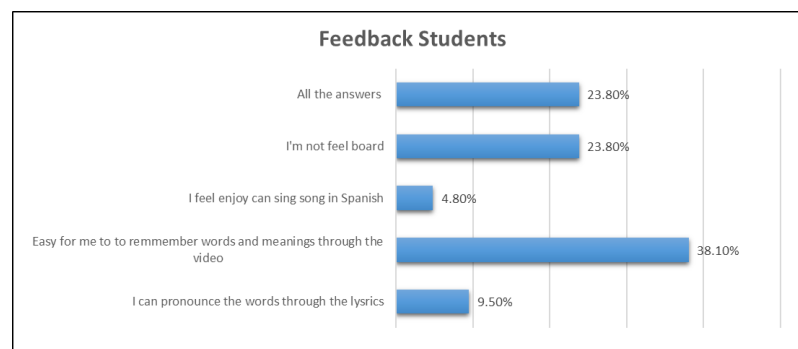


Figure 14: Feedback Students

Students feel happy and motivated to take part in the song activities because they can improve their pronunciation. The elements of song used are able to inspire students to learn in a relaxed situation. Students will indirectly be able to master grammar through the lyrics of the song. The song activity has successfully stimulated writing and pronunciation skills of the students because their emotions are at a positive level and they are not under pressure (Husain et. al., 2021).

Conclusion

Student engagement in online activities plays a very important role in the effort to enhance student knowledge and be positive in order to actively engage in all the learning activities.

This is because learning environments that support student engagement can influence the learning process (Kahu, 2013). This study has shown that listening to song as an activity can increase students' understanding in learning the Spanish language. Furthermore, using YouTube as one of the learning resources is seen as positive to assist students in learning. The contents in YouTube are not only limited to songs, but students can also seek for learning materials in form of video dramas, films, documentaries and others.

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