

論文の英文要旨	
論文題目	The identification and evaluation of informal YouTube videos as optimal resources for teaching conversational English
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The goal of the thesis was to identify YouTube videos that could be used by learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to notice the features of conversational English. The need to do this is grounded in the literature reviewed in the first two chapters of the thesis. The acquisition of the first language begins with speech, and conversation is often considered to be the primary form of language. However, previous research has shown that in EFL contexts, the teaching and learning of spoken language is often based on the written form. Some previous studies have compared various types of TV shows and movies with conversation and shown that they could be a good model for learners of informal spoken English. However, despite the recent popularity and cultural significance of online video platforms such as YouTube, this line of research has yet to be extended to investigate the viability of YouTube videos as a model of spoken language for EFL learners. As the potential users of the videos are language learners, the matching of videos to proficiency level is also an important consideration. Previous listening research has mainly focused on the lexical coverage of texts to judge their suitability, which is based on the frequency of vocabulary items in a text that are generally taken from first language corpora. However, this does not account for the multifaceted nature of language and it is also not aligned with any language proficiency scale that is interpretable for teachers, such as the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

The current study aimed to address these gaps in the research by answering the following research questions:

RQ1: What kind of YouTube videos are suitable for the learning of everyday informal

English?

RQ2: What kind of YouTube videos are appropriate for learners at different CEFR levels?

RQ3: What are the similarities and differences between the language in informal YouTube videos and authentic English conversations?

RQ4: How can the language in informal YouTube videos be exploited for teaching conversational English?

To answer the first research question, a near-random sample of transcripts from YouTube videos that were uploaded in 2022 was compiled and a spoken reference corpus was used to identify videos that featured conversational language. The texts were tagged with 67 linguistic features using the multidimensional analysis tagger (Nini, 2019), which harnesses Biber's (1988) model of variation in speech and writing. Dimension scores were extracted for each text and used in a cluster analysis to see which YouTube texts were similar to the conversations in the spoken reference corpus. A two-cluster solution was selected using *k*-means clustering, and keyword analysis comparing the two clusters confirmed a clear tendency for vocabulary items associated with conversational language in the informal cluster. In addition, a recent topic modelling algorithm, Top2Vec, was used to describe general trends in the content of the corpus. To answer research question two, various machine learning methods were trialled using linguistic features, such as the percentage of B1 and B2 level words, and text embeddings from large language models. The machine learning models were trained using a CEFR Listening Corpus that was compiled from CEFR-aligned texts taken from an English learning website and English listening tests. The most accurate method used OpenAI embeddings with the support vector machines machine learning algorithm, classifying the

videos into either A1, A2, B1, or B2+ levels. To qualitatively evaluate the selection of texts, various conversation strategies were identified from previous literature and their usage was compared in the YouTube transcripts with the spoken reference corpus.

The results indicated that 69.7% of YouTube videos featured conversational language. This meant that the majority of topics also featured a higher proportion of informal videos than those from the other cluster. Topics that included an especially high proportion of conversational videos included gaming, hair and beauty and tarot card reading videos. There was a tendency for these videos to feature one YouTuber talking with the audience and it is likely that the use of conversational features in their speech allows them to build rapport with their audience. Examples of topics that did not feature a high proportion of conversational videos include news, and summaries of anime and movies. Videos in these topics are less likely to feature language that is useful for the acquisition of conversation. According to the results of the CEFR classification, most of the videos are suitable for L2 users at the B2 level and above (95.1%), which aligns with what learners are expected to be able to do at each CEFR level in the Council of Europe's (2020) descriptors. Just over 1,000 videos were identified at the B1 level (around 4.2%), with a very small proportion deemed to be suitable for the A1 and A2 levels. B1 was the level at which the range of topics began to increase, as A1 and A2 level videos were mainly aimed at children or for language learning. At the B1 level, there was also an increase in the number of topics that featured non-conversational videos. Finally, the use of conversational strategies in informal YouTube videos was shown to be largely similar to the spoken reference corpus. In some cases, monologic uses of the strategies were identified in YouTube videos. This is likely related to the parasocial relationship that YouTubers often have with their viewers. Monologic conversational strategies are probably used to make videos more interactive and make the viewer feel as if they are involved in a communicative act with

the YouTuber.

The thesis makes several academic contributions to the field. Methodologically, previous machine-learning based CEFR-classification research in reading research has been extended to listening, with promising results from a small dataset. In addition, a novel approach to multidimensional analysis was applied by first extracting dimension scores, then using them in a cluster analysis with a spoken reference corpus to identify suitable texts. Furthermore, a recent topic modelling algorithm was used to describe general trends in the corpus. Theoretically this version of topic modelling overcomes many of the criticisms of previous methods, such as the exclusion of stop words, treating language as a bag of words, and arbitrarily deciding upon a number of topics. Finally, the use of automatic speech recognition showed the potential to create larger spoken corpora than has previously been possible. YouTube spoken corpora specifically have the benefit of being able to refer to the audio-visual elements of the original text, as long as the video has not been deleted since the data was collected.

Pedagogically, the study also makes several important contributions. General descriptions about the types of video that can be exploited for conversational language learning have been made. In addition, salient examples have been provided that might enable learners to increase their awareness of conversational strategies. These texts could be used as a starting point to make L1 comparisons, notice features of conversational speech, and expand upon monologic examples to create dialogic conversational texts. The current study provides a starting point for the creation of YouTube-based learning materials that could be expanded upon in the future by the creation of an educational website.