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YouTube as a Self-Directed Digital Learning Tool

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ABSTRACT

During the period of school closures at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, students were left without formal classroom instruction, and many shifted to informal methods to continue learning. While YouTube has been well-studied for its effectiveness in education, its use as a language learning tool by multilingual learners during this period remains largely unstudied. This study addresses the current gap in knowledge by investigating the implicit and explicit YouTube-based activities conducted by multilingual learners to practice English. Semistructured interviews were conducted with six students of various linguistic backgrounds enrolled in an ESL program in the United States to record the digital activities they engaged in during quarantine. While the interviews revealed several digital learning activities, YouTube was the most common and broadly used across language skills. These findings highlight the benefits of YouTube in language learning for its broad range of multimodal activities and increased learner engagement.

KEY WORDS:

Digital learning, self-directed learning, explicit learning, implicit learning, YouTube

RESUMEN

Durante el período de cierre de escuelas al comienzo de la pandemia de COVID-19, los estudiantes quedaron sin instrucción formal, y muchos recurrieron a métodos informales para continuar aprendiendo. Aunque YouTube ha sido estudiado por su efectividad en la educación, su uso como herramienta de aprendizaje de idiomas por parte de estudiantes multilingües sigue siendo inexplorado. Este estudio investiga las actividades implícitas y explícitas basadas en ver videos de YouTube realizadas por estudiantes multilingües para practicar inglés. Mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas a seis estudiantes de ESL en los Estados Unidos se registraron las actividades digitales en las que participaron durante la cuarentena. Entre las actividades varias de aprendizaje digital identificadas, YouTube fue la más común y ampliamente utilizada en todas las habilidades lingüísticas. Estos hallazgos resaltan los beneficios de YouTube en el aprendizaje de idiomas por su amplia gama de actividades multimodales y el aumento de la participación de los estudiantes.

Aprendizaje digital, aprendizaje autodirigido, aprendizaje explícito, aprendizaje implícito, YouTube

INTRODUCTION

The process of acquiring a second language occurs through a combination of different methods of learning. For many adult multilingual learners in the United States, two of these methods of learning are often achieved through 1) formal classroom instruction (explicit learning) and 2) natural exposure to language in realistic and meaningful contexts without conscious gathering of information, (implicit learning) (Ellis et al., 2009). The latter commonly occurs through socialization within the target language and culture. In the acquisition-learning hypothesis (Krashen, 1985), implicit *acquisition* is more vital than explicit *learning* in gaining functional language skills that the learner will use to communicate in real-world, everyday contexts. Conscious learning of explicit grammatical rules serves as a way to monitor and fine-tune implicitly acquired knowledge (Krashen, 1985). The distinction between implicit and explicit learning depends on the learner's awareness of the fact that they are consciously attempting to learn something *and* the nature of what they are attempting to learn (Reber, 1976). Although typically associated with formal education, explicit learning can also take place informally, typically when self-directed by the learner.

In-classroom and self-directed learning have both been considerably impacted by modern technology and the world's increasing digitalization. Hybridization of classrooms through computer-assisted language learning (CALL) allows for the use of mixed media in lessons to appeal to a wider range of learning styles, and programs such as Google Docs and Google Slides encourage collaboration among students even when working remotely (Drotner, 2009). Regarding self-directed learning, the advent of smartphones has also revolutionized the learning experience through mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) by making programs such as Duolingo and Babbel accessible almost anywhere at any time. Apps such as these promote learning "on-the-go" outside of a singular learning space. The prevalence of public wifi also frees these applications from reliance on a private internet connection (Hsu, 2013). Technology-based language learning has improved both classroom and independent learning experiences through the ease of introducing a variety of learning media and allowing ease of collaboration and access to learning materials.

In addition to augmenting the classroom experience and enabling learners to self-direct learning through independent activities, internet access and mobile devices have contributed to the globalization of language learning by allowing learners to practice communication skills with a wide variety of audiences. Social media applications have played an especially important role in globalization as they allow users to instantly communicate with others from around the world, providing the opportunity to practice language with speakers of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Combining the communicative aspects of social media with the multimedia potential of CALL and MALL, video sharing apps such as YouTube have proven to be an asset in both formal and informal language learning. For instance, in the classroom, lessons presented through YouTube have resulted in increased comprehension and collaboration amongst students, and the app also became an important avenue for remote teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic (Alwehaibi, 2015; Brook, 2011; Adisti, 2022). Among independent learners, YouTube has proven effective in establishing communities of practice through which learners can globally exchange information about language and culture (Benson & Chan, 2010). Thus, the present study will explore the various explicit and implicit language learning activities conducted

by adult multilingual learners in the US using YouTube as they attempted to replace both their formal classroom education and their access to the target language culture during the lockdown period of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. The purpose of the study is to document the role of technology in self-directed learning by multilingual students in quarantine and answer the following research questions:

1. How was YouTube used as a self-directed learning tool during the quarantine period of the pandemic?
2. In what ways did the learners' engagement with YouTube-based activities contribute to their explicit and implicit language practice during the pandemic?

The following sections will first explore the existing body of knowledge on YouTube as a language learning tool in both formal and informal learning. This knowledge will be used to contextualize the findings of the present study on digital language learning during the 2020 Covid-19 quarantine period which yielded significant results concerning the use of YouTube as a medium for a variety of language learning activities. The article will conclude with a summary of the potential pedagogical advantages outlined by this data.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As technological adaptations to everyday life expand, their influence on education becomes more apparent. Tools that were traditionally used for leisure have been augmented for educational purposes, even as part of formal classroom curriculum. YouTube is one such example, as its various applications in language learning classrooms have been documented and analyzed for their pedagogical efficacy. The multimodality of the video streaming application has allowed it to be adapted by educators to teach various language skills and address different learning styles in the classroom whether it is used as a supplement to traditional lessons or as the primary mode of lesson delivery.

YouTube for Formal Language Learning

YouTube has the potential to provide several advantages over traditional lower-tech lesson formats within the formal learning environment. The website's broad range of topics and opportunities for socialization through commenting afford students increased opportunities to find authentic language practice as opposed to traditional classroom instruction. In studies investigating YouTube as a supplement to traditional classroom methods—meaning that it was used in a single activity among other methods rather than as the main modality of the class—researchers have been able to compare and contrast the benefits of both high- and low-tech modes (Alwehaibi, 2015; Hsu, 2014). For instance, a study conducted among two groups of second year university students in Saudi Arabia investigated the effectiveness of using YouTube as an instructional tool by using it to introduce the theoretical background of a lesson to one of the groups. Findings showed that students in the YouTube group demonstrated higher understanding of content in a post-test compared to their non-YouTube counterparts (Alwehaibi, 2015). According to the researchers, this is likely due to the higher levels of enjoyment and entertainment made possible through YouTube's broad inventory of topics and multimodal display. Another such example includes the audio-visual support made possible by YouTube with subtitles either in English or students' L1 to further support content comprehension. In a study involving four groups of students in a freshman composition class, Hsu (2014) found that audio-visual support showed improvement in students' productive vocabulary as it allowed students to gain meaning through both auditory-verbal and visual-pictorial channels. Interestingly, the study found that students benefited most from audio and visual support without the inclusion of

subtitles (as evidenced by both the post-test and student opinion surveys). This finding was likely due to a perceived competition in dividing attention between videos and text (viewing/listening and reading). However, subtitled YouTube videos have shown their own merits in other studies, to be discussed in the following section.

In addition to its efficacy as a supplement to other classroom models, certain YouTube-based methods have shown potential as replacements for traditional classroom methods as a remote teaching medium and in stand-alone activities. Adisti (2022) found this to be especially true during the Covid-19 pandemic during which time traditional classroom learning was inaccessible due to school closures. The study, which involved students in an English 1 course for at the State Islamic University in Indonesia, corroborated the findings mentioned above which recorded increased understanding and engagement over text-based instruction alone. Additionally, it found improvement in comprehension of collocations and idioms because of the availability of authentic speech and language contexts. YouTube-based activities also contributed to more student focus being placed on the content rather than the instructor, for a more functional method that differed from the classic lecture style. This was demonstrated in a study of tertiary-level English learners assigned YouTube videos to watch as a replacement or supplement to reading material. The results of the study indicated increased engagement and motivation when class material was presented through audio-visuals, in addition to students' heightened comprehension due to their ability to rewatch videos and learn at their own pace (especially when English speech was difficult to understand due to speed and accent). This resulted in students being better equipped to address their individual language challenges as opposed to classroom learning which involves limited time and attention from the instructor. These findings were corroborated by studies on supplementary YouTube-based activities, which found that the combination of audio and visual input increased student engagement and motivation (Hsu, 2014; Almurashi, 2016). These examples document the advantages of integrating Youtube-based activities in the classroom, including increased engagement and availability of different language contexts. The following section will detail further uses of the video streaming site through informal self-directed learning.

Informal Language Learning through YouTube

YouTube-based language learning can continue outside of the classroom and without the guidance of an instructor. Several trends in informal learning through YouTube have shown that students are willing to use it for self-directed learning (Adisti, 2022; Wang & Chen, 2020). Language learning can take place either through videos and pages directly intended for English instruction, or through leisurely engagement taking place in English (such as watching videos, reading subtitles, and commenting in English on videos related to subjects other than language learning). As for the former approach, a study conducted in a university in Taiwan on 20 EFL university students' self-directed viewership of English instructional videos on YouTube corroborated similar perceptions as those documented by Adisti (2022), with viewers reporting that YouTube-based instruction was "more flexible...and more interesting than classroom learning," (Wang & Chen, 2020, pg. 340). They cited the larger number of available resources, the attractiveness of learning English through differentiated instruction, and the possibility of gaining authentic information about the target language culture. Additionally, participants stated that they were more likely to share information through videos and comments with friends than when required to by an in-class activity, creating communities of practice centered around these instructional videos. These communities of practice can also be found in the comments section of non-educational videos that involve translanguaging between two or more languages/cultures. Benson (2015) stated that "the globalization strategies of YouTube create contexts in which commenters are

apt to comment on issues of language and culture raised by the video,” succinctly characterizing the defining feature of the popular video streaming platform concerning language learning. His study employed discourse analysis tools to investigate intercultural learning in comments on videos that featured combinations of English, Mandarin Chinese, and Cantonese translanguaging. The study found that various genres of intercultural exchange occur in the comments section of these videos, including evaluation of language skill and usage, debates on the content of the videos, and negotiation of meaning regarding both cultural and linguistic information. Thus, viewers demonstrated intercultural exchange through translanguaging that went beyond simply reacting to the content of the videos.

Regarding leisure language learning conducted through videos on topics other than English learning, substantial research has been conducted concerning the activities in which learners choose to engage and the specific language skills practiced. In a study involving four seniors enrolled in an EFL course at a private university in Indonesia, Nofrika (2019) divided independent language learning activity choices into three main categories which users chose based on their personal interests; arts and humanities (music videos, films, talk shows, etc), vlogs, and social sciences (“simulations and educational videos”). Despite the videos not being explicitly directed toward language learning, participants reported increased confidence in language practice while simultaneously gaining knowledge in areas of interest. In addition to the aforementioned exploration of interrelated languages and cultures, the study reported that independent YouTube learning also resulted in practice and improvement in language skills typically practiced in the formal classroom. Participants stated that they noticed improvements in listening, speaking, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary (Nofrika, 2019).

Although use of YouTube video streaming as a language learning approach in both formal and informal education has been well-documented, a gap in the research remains concerning the different uses of implicit and explicit language learning activities utilized by self-directed learners. The study presented here will seek to fill this gap by analyzing the implicit and explicit learning methods used by multilingual learners to practice all four language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Additionally, the study positions this analysis within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic isolation period in March 2020 wherein students did not have access to two of their main sources of language practice: formal classroom instruction and in-person authentic socialization within their target language culture.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study aims to understand what digital activities, if any, multilingual learners engaged in learning during the quarantine period in March 2020 during which time schools were closed and had not yet switched to online learning. Further inquiry into the type, purpose, and explicit or implicit nature of the activities was also recorded. This was established to determine the extent to which learners were able to replace their two primary modes of language acquisition: formal classroom instruction and socialization within the target language culture. The results of the larger study indicated that YouTube was the most widely used digital medium, and was present in both explicit and implicit activities involving listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The present article will further explore the value of YouTube as a language learning tool by addressing the following research questions:

1. How was YouTube used as a self-directed learning tool during the quarantine period of the pandemic?
2. In what ways did the learners’ engagement with YouTube-based activities contribute to their explicit and implicit language practice during the pandemic?

Participants

The six participants in this study were recruited on a voluntary basis from a non-profit adult ESL program run by a church in the southern United States. Participants were all adult women over the age of 40 who came from a variety of sociolinguistic backgrounds. Proficiency levels varied but all were able to read and understand the consent form and participate in the interview in English (high-intermediate and above as described by the ESL program). Table 1 displays their demographics including ages, countries of origin, primary languages, and occupations before quarantine. Aside from those who listed themselves as homemakers, none of the participants were actively employed during the period of study, either because they had retired or were unable to attend work during quarantine.

Table 1
Participant Demographics

	Level in the Program	Country of Origin	Primary L1	Age	Occupation
"Michelle"	6	South Korea	Korean	40	Homemaker/part-time restaurant hostess
"Holly"	4	South Korea	Korean	46	Homemaker
"Hannah"	4	China	Mandarin	60-70	Retired teacher
"Zoey"	4	Iran	Persian (Farsi)	64	Unemployed
"Gloria"	4	China	Mandarin	41	Cancer researcher
"Klara"	6	Belarus	Russian	71	Retired psychiatrist

Interview Protocol

Six interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format according to Smith’s (2005) principles; although there was an area of interest upon which the interview was based, questions were designed to be open-ended to encourage discussion on the part of the participant, with follow-up questions being based on ideas introduced by the respondent (p. 12). Initial discussion questions and recommended follow-up questions are displayed in Appendix 1. The goal was to engage participants in discourse about their online habits conducted in English during the period of study, whether these activities were purposely conducted with the intention of learning English or for another purpose, and whether input alone or a combination of input and output were employed. For example, if a participant answered question 1 (“During the pandemic, how did you spend your time while quarantined?”) by stating that they often used YouTube during their time in quarantine, follow-up questions might pertain to whether they watched or created videos, what the topics of the videos were, and if they ever left comments on videos or engaged in conversation with other viewers through comments. Questions were worded with the intention of soliciting descriptive responses from participants rather than a simple list of the programs and activities they used.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study employed qualitative methods of data collection aimed at gaining an

understanding of what digital activities, if any, language learners used while in isolation that were either intentional or incidental. Following approval from the Institutional Review Board, participants were recruited from the Woodland Baptist Church ESL program and signed informed consent forms detailing the purpose of the study and measures put in place to protect participants' privacy. These included password-protected data storage and the redaction or changing of participants' names in data and in the final written work. Interviews took place via the video chatting app Zoom from November to December 2021 and were recorded using both Zoom's recording feature and a secondary audio recorder. Zoom's auto-transcription feature was used to create transcripts of the interviews which were then manually edited for accuracy using the secondary recordings.

Completed transcripts were analyzed using an implicit/explicit framework based on Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis, with explicit learning being defined as any activity conducted in English with conscious effort of the learner to acquire language skills. Implicit learning activities included any other activities conducted in English for purposes other than language learning but through which learning may have incidentally taken place. The implicit/explicit framework was chosen to investigate if and how participants were able to replace both formal classroom learning (explicit) and exposure to English through interaction with the target language culture (implicit) such as at work, in public spaces, and through leisure or non-language learning activities.

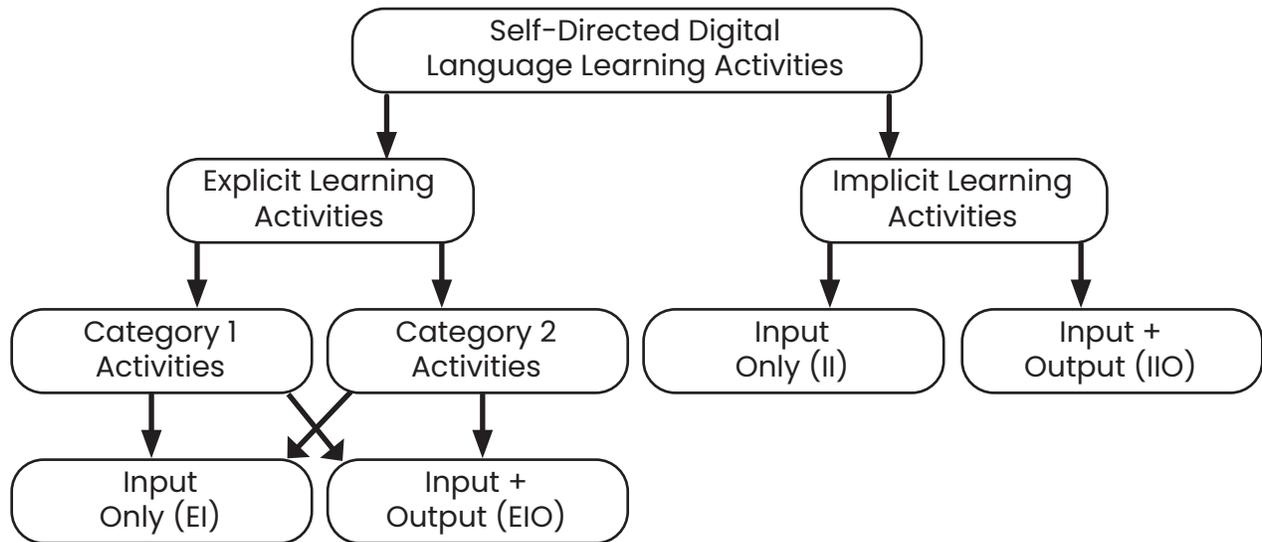
Several trends in data emerged through recursive coding of the data based on grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1999). An initial round of coding was done to identify all activities and color code them based on their qualification as either explicit or implicit. During a secondary round of coding, each group was sub-grouped based on the activities' use of a combination of receptive and productive skills (reading/writing and/or speaking/listening) or solely receptive skills (reading/listening only). Four coding categories emerged. These were as follows:

1. Explicit, Input-Only (EI): apps, programs, and activities specifically designed/ conducted for the purpose of learning English wherein the participant received input (reading/listening) exclusively,
2. Explicit, Input + Output (EIO): apps, programs, and activities specifically designed/ conducted for the purpose of learning English wherein the participant received input (reading/listening) in addition to producing output (speaking/writing),
3. Implicit, Input-Only (II): apps, programs, and activities conducted in English but designed for purposes other than language learning wherein the participant received input (reading/listening) exclusively, and
4. Implicit, Input + Output (IIO): apps, programs, and activities conducted in English but designed for purposes other than language learning wherein the participant received input (reading/listening) in addition to producing output (speaking/ writing).

A final third round of coding was done to further sub-categorize the explicit groups (EI and EIO) based on learners' intentions to explicitly engage in language learning. Category I explicit activities were those specifically designed for the purpose of language learning; for example, lessons by English teachers recorded and posted on YouTube. Category II explicit activities were those not directly designed for the purpose of language learning but which learners engaged in or augmented for the purpose of practicing English skills; for example, YouTube videos on a variety of topics unrelated to language learning but

supplemented with subtitles in the learner’s first language to directly compare translations. To ensure validity a second rater coded the data for clarity and accuracy of examples. Figure 1 illustrates the sequence of categories that emerged as a result of the grounded theory method employed in data analysis.

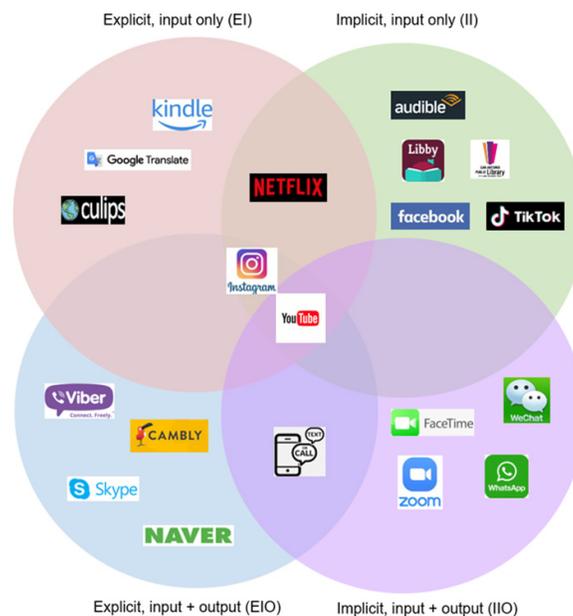
Figure 1
Sequence of Activity Categorization



FINDINGS/DISCUSSION

Based on the data that emerged from analysis during the initial study, three findings were noted concerning the efficacy of YouTube as a language learning tool. Firstly, of the numerous activities used by participants during the period of study, YouTube was the only platform through which activities in all four coding categories took place. Figure 2 illustrates each activity’s position within their respective coding categories based on the activities conducted through them, with YouTube falling in the center at the cross-section of all four.

Figure 2
Venn Diagram of Activities by Code



Based on this figure, it can be seen that participants engaged in both explicit and implicit learning with practice of receptive and productive skills within each category. This finding is significant as it allowed multilingual learners to replace (at least in part) their two primary methods of language acquisition that were compromised by the need to quarantine; formal classroom instruction (explicit) and engagement with the target language culture (implicit). For example, participants used videos posted by English teachers to replicate formal classroom instruction. One participant, Holly, cited several YouTube channels that she subscribes to such as Oliver Ssam, who creates content in both English and Korean with subtitles in both languages. The videos focus on various topics from Ssam's personal life to cultural and historical subjects. Another account that Holly frequents, Cake English, releases monthly videos featuring four common English expressions/idioms with explanations and pronunciation practice specifically intended for L1 Korean speakers. Holly reported sometimes taking notes independently in addition to leaving comments on videos to engage in discussion with other users, combining receptive and productive learning within the explicit category. She states, "So sometimes I write the whole sentence and...I try to memorize." When asked if she ever left comments on videos for other viewers to reply to, she answered, "I say 'very helpful' and sometimes I ask how to use more expressions." Klara also reported leaving her opinion on videos through comments. Implicit learning activities are exemplified by participants viewing videos in English for entertainment purposes. Michelle, Klara, and Hannah all report watching YouTube as a source of news, music, entertainment, and learning of other topics besides English (but still taught in English).

The second finding is that YouTube enabled participants to be exposed to and engage with authentic language similar to what would naturally be encountered in their target language culture had they not been in quarantine due to the pandemic. Holly stated her preference for specifically seeking explicit instruction of idioms and expressions that multilingual learners may struggle with because of their non-literal meaning. The YouTuber Teacher Oliver presented these terms within skits simulating the realistic context within which they would typically be used in an English conversation; Holly describes his lessons style and format as "action life, real life...vlog [about] his lifetime, real lifetime... and then a short word and how to express in English." Implicit YouTube-based activities—such as watching the news in English for updates on the pandemic or watching English videos for entertainment purposes—allowed for even more authentic language input as they contextualized the previously mentioned idioms and expressions in authentic communicative use. These activities also allowed for exposure to American sociopolitical and popular culture topics conveyed through natural tones and rates of speech similar to what participants would encounter through socialization within the public community. Participants Michelle and Klara cited their alignments with different American political parties; Michelle mentioned a preference for left-wing news sources such as CNN, stating that "For awhile they just talk about vaccines all whole years but when you go to FOX, it's not..." Conversely, Klara mentioned watching YouTube videos from former Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson. These findings corroborate Adisti's (2022) findings on the ability of video-based learning improving comprehension of idioms and expressions through the use of authentic context, and Wang & Chen's (2020) speculation into the possibility of gaining cultural knowledge through the wide variety of resources available through video platforms. Participants' communications with other English speakers through YouTube's comment feature further corroborate the findings of Benson & Chan (2010) and Benson (2015) on the usefulness of comments on video platforms to elicit

global exchanges of language and culture. Based on these examples, it is clear that YouTube not only enables self-directed learning but can provide realistic exchanges and contexts that may be limited in a traditional classroom setting.

The third benefit of YouTube-based self-directed language learning is the increased reported engagement with which learners acquire English through videos on topics of personal interest, especially those watched for entertainment and leisure learning purposes. As opposed to the previously mentioned explicit learning videos, of which only two examples were given by participants, a plethora of examples were given regarding videos that participants watched for entertainment or non-English learning purposes. Michelle stated "I watch YouTube a lot...through that I also watch news." She also took an interest in comedy and variety shows such as Jimmy Kimmel and Inside Edition, stating "I watch Inside Edition a lot because it's short clips." Music was also a point of interest, with both Klara and Gloria stating that their English musical tastes were influenced by the ease with which they could comprehend the slow rate and enunciated lyrics. In a discussion of Frank Sinatra's music, Klara stated, "It's so clear English, you can understand all, it's wonderful." Holly, Hannah, and Klara each mentioned using instructional videos to supplement hobbies and/or to replace learning opportunities no longer available during the quarantine period. For example, Holly viewed painting tutorials that "... teach technique and drawing and how to mix the color, it's very helpful to me." Hannah supplemented Zoom piano lessons with an instructor with YouTube instructional videos based on the songs in her study book, in addition to cooking instructional videos. Klara, who also viewed piano instructional videos, watched yoga and exercise videos as well. The findings of the present study regarding viewers' choices based on personal interest fit into Nofrika's (2019) three main categories of videos: arts and humanities (music videos, films, talk shows, etc), vlogs, and social sciences ("simulations and educational videos"). Additionally, participants' increased engagement in commenting on videos pertaining to personal interest corroborates Brook's (2011) study which found decreased levels of anxiety among students commenting on videos they were interested in. Klara presents the most relevant example in her comments on psychology videos which likely included higher level and content-specific vocabulary because of her professional background in the subject. These examples provide evidence of how YouTube-based activities conducted for leisure or for the purpose of learning subjects other than English can result in language practice enhanced by the learner's interest in the topic of the video.

It is important to note an interesting trend regarding implicit learning noted in the data, combining comprehension of input with performance of a task that was impacted by the level of comprehension, which I refer to as task-based input. This was taken from the aforementioned discussion of participant's use of YouTube to supplement instruction of hobbies. This type of activity occurred through participants' watching a YouTube instructional video in English and following along with the instructions to perform an action or create a product. The examples of task-based input given were based on participants' hobbies and supplemented/replaced Zoom lessons or in-person classes they had participated in prior to the beginning of the pandemic. Hannah, for example, supplemented Zoom piano classes with piano instructional YouTube videos, as well as cooking instruction videos. Klara also stated that she practiced piano with YouTube video lessons and adds, "Sometimes I see the videos with yoga exercises or home exercises and try to do [the] exercises too." Holly stated, "I watched the YouTube to learn painting....They teach technique and drawing and how to mix the color, it's very helpful to me." Because

participants were following along with the instruction of the video while performing the task being taught, a certain level of comprehension was required to achieve the desired result. Unlike teacher-centered learning, task-based input cannot provide immediate differentiated feedback based on the learner's individual performance; however, visual demonstrations aided in the acquisition of new or incomprehensible input and learners had the opportunity to progress at their own pace and rewind/review instructions to ensure optimal comprehension.

MAIN LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the evidence of the present study strongly suggests the utility of YouTube in self-directed learning and learners' willingness to engage with the application, these findings are limited by the study's institutional context, sample size, and the lack of male participants. These findings could be strengthened by replicating the study across numerous institutions with learners from multiple proficiency levels and more varied demographics. Further research could also investigate the effectiveness of acquiring language as a result of learners' self-directed practice.

MAIN APPLICATIONS AND IMPACT

Although this study focused on self-directed learning outside of the formal classroom, several pedagogical implications can be drawn from these observations. Participants' willingness to engage more with culturally and personally relevant material highlights the necessity of incorporating culturally responsive materials in the classroom. Corroborating the findings of Brook (2011), participants also exhibited more willingness to communicate in the comments section when discussing topics of personal interest. Additionally, the multimodality of YouTube and the various receptive and expressive activities that participants engaged in provide demonstrate the potential for classroom implementation. YouTube can be used as a formal learning tool to present full or partial lesson components that combine audio and visual support. Assignments involving posting and watching and communicating through comments allow practice of all four language skills while building students' technological literacy as well. Based on these findings, YouTube is no longer a video platform for leisure or passive learning but can be augmented to contribute to students' formal education and greatly enhance comprehension.

CONCLUSION

The study from which this data was drawn aimed to investigate how adult multilingual learners self-directed learning through explicit and implicit digital learning activities. Participants were interviewed about the online activities they engaged in during the mandatory quarantine period of March 2020 when all learning institutions were closed and had not yet made the switch to online learning. Among their responses, YouTube was mentioned most frequently and was the only application relevant to all four coding categories, including examples of both receptive and productive language practice. Participants used YouTube both as a way to replace their formal education—through videos created by instructors and aimed at teaching specific language features—and socialization within their target language culture through interactions in the comments section.

A closer examination of the benefits of YouTube as a learning resource adds to the current body of research concerning its effectiveness in providing a wider range of topics to learn from than would be available in a traditional low-tech classroom, including the potential to learn from authentic language sources as opposed to those artificially designed for the sole purpose of language instruction. During the quarantine period when students had access to neither their formal classroom instruction nor direct socialization in English within a broader social context, learners demonstrated motivation to replace these learning avenues with YouTube-based activities. Even in activities conducted for leisure or studying subjects other than English, students were able to familiarize themselves with authentic contextualized speech (such as idioms and expressions) and political and popular culture elements of their target language culture. Participants demonstrated a willingness to take their video-watching a step further by demonstrating comprehension through the performance of tasks based on input.

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This call is addressed to: Professors – Researchers, graduate students from any Bachelor of Arts in English Letters and Masters in Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics programs, and any researchers and scholars who wish to publish research articles, research essays, or thesis results, all related to topics of the Journal: Language Teaching and Learning, Applied Linguistics, Values, and Culture.

The sections of the Journal are:

- a) Research Papers: Graduates' & teachers' voices – National and international research articles.
- b) Updating Language Teaching Professionals: CIEX Symposiums Proceedings.
- c) Personal Development and Growth: Moral Values and Culture Essays.

The guidelines for writing and presenting the proposals are described below:

1. Title: in English and in Spanish.

2. Summary (in English and Spanish, 150 words), containing the following aspects:

- a) Introduction:** This section describes the context where the research was carried out, the reason why the research was carried out, and the importance of the study.
- b) Purpose:** Here the writer states and explains the research objectives, intentions, questions, or hypothesis.
- c) Research method:** In this part, the author mentions and justifies the research approach and method that were selected, briefly describes the subjects, the context, and the research procedures, as well as the instruments that were used for the data collection.
- d) Results:** Here, the writer presents the main findings, the degree to which the research objectives were reached, and the answers to the research questions.
- e) Conclusion:** This section presents the main conclusions, the importance of the findings, considering the contribution to the theory, the research area, or professional practice, and suggesting practical uses of the results, as well as possible applications for further research.

3. Body of the article:

- a) Key words.** Five, in English and Spanish.
- b) Introduction:** It presents the research topic area, and the research topic, mentioning if it is descriptive, explanatory, evaluative, correlational, interpretative, etc. Also, it emphasizes the research problem.
- c) Literature review:** It presents the main terms, concepts, theoretical claims or principles, models, etc. analyzing and discussing the ideas presented by the main authors who have studied the topics related to the research or study presented. The references should not be more than 10 years after their publication, except from those classical research works.
- d) Research methodology:** It describes the research approach: qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods.
- e) Describe the research method:** case study, phenomenology, action-research, classroom research, longitudinal research, transversal research, experimental research, cause-experimental research, etc.
 - Describe the **data type** (describe and justify the data base, universe, or sample, etc.)
 - Characterize the **subjects** (describe the participants in the research).
 - **Context** (describe the geographic and institutional context where the research was carried out).
 - **Instruments** (describe the research instruments used to collect information and data).
 - **Data analysis** (explain the way the data was systematized and analyzed).
- f) Main findings.** Synthesize, present, interpret, and argue the most significant results found and the proposal, if the case of developing one.

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- g) Conclusions.** Describe the main conclusions generated from the answers to the research questions.
- h) Main limitations of the study** (related to the geographical or institutional context, or knowledge area and the research process).
- i) Main implications and impact of the research.** Describe the main benefits of the research and the possible applications of the proposal.

Topics for the articles:

Topics of the articles should be recent and relevant for the academic community and should address one of the following research lines.

1. Language learning and teaching theories
2. Language professional competencies
3. Language teaching approaches and methods
4. Alternative language learning and teaching theories
5. Curriculum design: design of language programs
6. Design, selection, and adaptation of language teaching materials and activities
7. Language learning evaluation
8. Language and culture
9. Human values in language teaching
10. Personal development and growth in language professionals
11. Research and professional development
12. Educational technology in languages

Format:

- Title using Arial font, size 14
- Text using Arial font, size 12
- Margins: top 2.5, bottom 2.5, left 2.5, right 2.5.
- Spaces: 1.5
- No indented paragraphs

Length of the articles:

- 8 to 15 pages containing text (from 3000 to 5000 words approximately)
- Containing 20 to 40 references (using the American Psychological Association APA format)

Languages: The articles can be written in English or Spanish.

The editorial process includes a review by a strict pair of “blind” reviewers and using **Plagius software** to verify that ethical standards are respected and that there is no plagiarism in any of the documents. Then, authors are advised to verify the submissions including the call elements and format in advance.

The evaluation of submissions starts in the editorial process, which may end in declining submissions if they do not match the call and format requirements. When the editorial board accepts a submission, it continues to the double-blind peer review process as the final evaluation with the following results:

- A. Accept Submission or Accept Submission with Modifications
- B. Revisions Required or Resubmit for Review
- C. Decline Submission

It is important to mention that if a blind reviewer declines the article or essay it will not be accepted.

Please upload the articles on the CIEX JOURNAL WEBSITE: <http://journal.ciex.edu.mx>

Deadline to send the proposals: January 31st, 2025.

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LICENCIATURA EN INGLÉS

MAESTRÍA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL IDIOMA
INGLÉS Y LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA



El Centro de Idiomas Extranjeros "Ignacio Manuel Altamirano"

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A los aspirantes interesados en cursar la **Licenciatura en Letras Inglesas** (Modalidades: Presencial y/o en línea) o la **Maestría en la Enseñanza del Idioma Inglés y Lingüística Aplicada** a participar en el Concurso de Selección para el ingreso al Ciclo Escolar 2025-2026, presentando el examen de admisión que se realizará mediante previa cita hasta el 29 de agosto de 2025, conforme a los siguientes:

REQUISITOS

Los interesados en participar deben realizar todos los trámites y procedimientos institucionales, además de cumplir con los requisitos descritos en el cronograma y el instructivo correspondiente a esta Convocatoria, los cuales son:

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- » Pagar el derecho de examen de selección.
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