

REVIEW OF *LANGUAGE LEARNING WITH DIGITAL VIDEO*

Language Learning with Digital Video

Ben Goldstein
Paul Driver

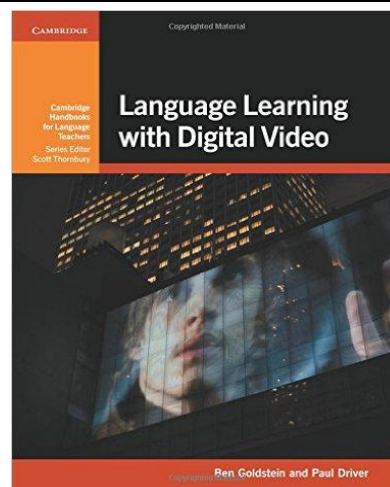
2015

ISBN: 978-1-107-63464-0

US \$38.20

206 pp.

Cambridge University Press
Cambridge, United Kingdom



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The Internet, coupled with recent advancements in digital media applications and the affordability of video production equipment, has dramatically influenced foreign language education (Hafner, 2015; Kern, 2014). Central to whether these technological advancements are properly realized for second language (L2) learning is the educator. As technology becomes more ubiquitous, especially within the realm of higher education, instructors are finding the need to integrate new teaching approaches for engaging students (Tiernan, 2015). Not every foreign language teacher has had opportunities to develop a strong methodological groundwork for utilization of Internet-age tools and resources appropriate to their particular teaching contexts. One such technological niche ripe for further classroom implementation is that of digital content. The new volume by Ben Goldstein and Paul Driver fills this gap by providing effective guidelines for teaching languages with the help of digital videos. *Language Learning with Digital Video* details how to incorporate digital videos into lesson plans, as well as imparts practical advice on a wide variety of issues concerning digital video creation and resourcing for language pedagogy. Their work is primarily targeted for L2 educators who possess access to digital video production and consumption technologies. Even so, instructors with dated or limited video resources may still find the activities and strategies helpful for complementing foreign language coursework.

In *Language Learning with Digital Video*, Goldstein and Driver expand upon the dynamic nature of digital media by infusing the pedagogical advantages of this popular medium into L2 curricula. While the intended audience of the book spans elementary to advanced English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, all suggested activities involving digital video could be adapted to support a variety of foreign language courses. One of the biggest strengths of the book is the plethora of outside resources provided by the text. These include a reference list of useful links to online digital media, as well as two companion websites providing up-to-date video resources, additional activities, and tips for creating original video content. The book is comprised of nine chapters grouped into two main sections: Part 1, Video Exploitation (the first five chapters) and Part 2, Video Creation (the last four chapters). Both sections begin with brief introductions that highlight main concepts and relevant topics, such as utilizing digital media and producing videos. These overviews may be especially useful for teachers who lack the digital literacy to integrate digital media in a second language classroom environment.

Part 1 focuses on how L2 instructors can develop language-related tasks from established digital media on the Internet. The authors convey a clear learning focus for each chapter and include helpful images and examples that reinforce activity structures. Even teachers with a cursory knowledge of online digital

media and video production should find the overall material straightforward. The section opens with helpful guidelines for properly integrating videos into the L2 classroom. Areas include how to (a) create activities with an emphasis on task sequencing (pre-viewing, while-viewing, and post-viewing), (b) exploit videos based on their different cinematic genres, (c) select the “right” video sequence to support course objectives, and (d) avoid copyright issues when using or editing online videos. A series of pre-made activities in each chapter is subsequently presented based upon specific language themes. An estimated time of activity completion, recommended proficiency level, preparation tips, and activity variations are also included. Goldstein and Driver remind readers that several of their activities are conducive to a *flipped classroom* (see Spino & Trego, 2015), in which videos can be watched at home to maximize in-class discussion.

Chapter 1 opens the first section and provides ten activities that emphasize creating original text for video sequences. The authors recommend that students be allowed to produce their own texts in digital videos to spur motivation and written language development. For example, in (1.4) *Interior monologues*, the authors suggest that students can develop their own thought bubbles to describe the characters’ intense emotional reactions or facial expressions in a film scene. Chapter 2 presents ten activities focused on narrative genre and taps into learners’ creativity by encouraging alternative versions of media clips. In (2.3) *Mini Bollywood*, for example, students are prompted to dub and subtitle videos from Bombay TV. Chapter 3 focuses on the power of persuasion in video advertisements and movie trailers. In (3.7) *Trailers past and present*, one of eight prescribed activities, learners compare differences in style, culture, and historical perspective between older and more recent movie trailers. The fourth chapter incorporates music with video, detailing eight tasks that facilitate dialogue often beyond the song lyrics. The final chapter of this section, Chapter 5, highlights seven topics-based activities found on the Cambridge University Press English Language Teaching YouTube channel. Video tasks are based around various teaching aims, as in predicting video content from topical clues with (5.2) *Water* or analyzing language used in a video script in (5.5) *Memory*.

We believe that Part 1 provides instructors with multiple avenues for effectively utilizing pre-existing video clips in the L2 classroom. Many of the activities are short enough to supplement individual lesson objectives and are adaptable to any class size or proficiency level. Teachers looking for ways to develop L2 acquisition skills through original video content, however, may find the second half of the book to be a better fit.

Part 2 centers on the technical aspects of digital media (both hardware and software) and includes many hands-on tasks that acquaint both teachers and students with digital video production. Goldstein and Driver provide a variety of tips in this arena, which include using green screens, selecting the proper editing software, and sharing material online. Creativity and student collaboration are stressed with the primary goal defined as “situating language through practical engagement” (p. 117). As the chapters progress in this section, the complexity and sophistication of digital video techniques also increase. While the authors still highlight language foci in their recommended activities, L2 development is blended with an emphasis on video production and editing skills. Goldstein and Driver portend that such project-based learning approaches to second language acquisition facilitate 21st-century skill development (e.g. guided reflection and critical thinking) in learners.

Chapter 6 begins the second section and presents basic concepts of digital literacy for those seeking a broader familiarization in creating digital videos. Many activities stress video production methods to enhance shorter language-related assignments. Several of the chapter’s tasks, such as (6.1) *Limelight* and (6.4) *Good game?*, are simple enough to complete within one or two classroom sessions. In the final three chapters, the authors list activities that tap into progressively higher video creation skill sets. Chapter 7 focuses on developing projects that allow learners to synthesize information and present coherent arguments in the target language. For instance, (7.1) *Prove it!* has students responding to controversial subjects that are subsequently recorded and uploaded onto a class website for further commenting. The eighth chapter places a stronger emphasis on audio-editing skills as learners are charged with embedding

their own narration into video clips. In one example, (8.2) *News news*, students add original audio tracks to news reports, blending L2 writing, speaking, and, listening skills into one activity. The final chapter of Part 2, Chapter 9, presents activities that often span multiple class periods or demand work outside of the classroom. Goldstein and Driver recommend that these latter activities, such as recording video diaries in (9.1) *I, Object*, or re-creating scenes of famous Hollywood films from (9.7) *Half-baked remake*, be reserved for longer-term assignments.

Similar to Part 1, the variety of tasks in chapters 6 through 9 (often with multiple variations) are sure to keep L2 learning fresh and engaging for students. L2 instructors should also find the tiered approach to project intricacy, from medium-level (Chapter 7), to challenging (Chapter 8), to elaborate (Chapter 9), nicely layered to accommodate a variety of medium and long-term projects.

In summary, *Language Learning with Digital Video* delivers positive contributions to the growing technological space of foreign language pedagogy. Goldstein and Driver seamlessly synthesize fundamental L2 core competencies (e.g. speaking, listening, and writing) with multi-modal, video exploitation and production activities. Digital videos are now widely accessible from the Internet and are often easy to manipulate for educational purposes. As such, this volume provides targeted advice and strategies for instructors who want to effectively incorporate the digital video medium into online or classroom L2 instruction. We hope that the authors continue to update the recommended web links sprinkled throughout the text in future editions, as well as maintain their YouTube channel geared for English language teaching. Overall, we highly recommend Goldstein and Driver's new book for instructors interested in utilizing digital video, in its many forms, for language teaching. This reader-friendly guide provides practical and approachable information, along with a clear direction, for working with one of the most popular and dynamic mediums in the digital arena today.

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