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Jane Dunlap

Isobel Pfeiffer

Frederick Schultz

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**An article which reveals the verbi/vocal responses of students who participated in a recent video review doctoral study.**

# The games people play; the names people say—part of today's educational scenario

by Jane Dunlap, Isobel Pfeiffer  
and Frederick Schultz

From September, 1977, till December, 1978, approximately 200 students of The University of Akron were involved in a doctoral study which investigated learning styles. Twenty-eight students were part of a preliminary Pilot Study; 129 other students ultimately provided data for the study by taking pretests, treatments and posttests. Research focused on a comparison of review techniques in Business English classes with registration primarily of two-year technical students. Traditional re-reading of assigned printed material was contrasted with students' attention to televised re-runs of their previous classroom instructional periods. Results show that review by watching videotaped re-runs was "equal to or better than reading and re-reading" assigned printed material.

Several statistical consequences of the study may capture the attention of alert educators on the lookout for effective new modes of classroom instruction. The ages of students who learn well from videotaped review appear to be inconsequential. Sex, however, does make a difference. That is, women's scores were higher! But basic learning ability as evidenced by ACT scores is not an influential element in video review effect. The time of the

year, the presence or absence of color TV for replay purposes—all were nonsignificant factors when the data was processed and analyzed.

Then what is the most conspicuous response of students who participated in the protracted study? Answer: **enthusiasm**. Or "affirmative effective response," as educators would be wont to describe it. The result is not surprising, considering experimental studies conducted earlier which indicated that students "enjoy learning when in the presence of media they understand" (Mager, 1975). And by myriad surveys, television is "a familiar tool of instruction to more than 15 million students" (*Today's Education*, 1978).

Documentation of their approval of the experimental process was gained by the administering of a four-question posttest at the close of the study. Students who completed all phases provided answers to the questions; most of them also took advantage of the opportunity to fill in a blank reserved for Comments About the Experiment. Some samples of their anonymously provided observations about video review, authentic and uncorrected, are as follows:

"It made English a game. I'm surprized I really learned."

"It was alright. At least better than reading."

"What I think is that it's a nice change from the everyday type of studying."

"I thought I probably learned more than if I would of used the paper because I used more senses in picking up the information."

"I think we have more 'participatience' in watching ourselves on the television."

"What I say is the audial-vidial result for memory purposes is fantastic!"

Not all statements were glowingly affirmative, but results showed a majority of **yes** answers to the following questions:

- 1) In reviewing material . . . did you find the (video) means of review to be helpful? (95% said **yes**)
- 2) Did you find the method of studying to be pleasant? (85% said **yes**)
- 3) Did you derive enjoyment from being televised? (57% said **yes**)
- 4) Do you enjoy your English classes? (63% said **yes**)

Making deductions about student reaction to the review technique, one notices that the highest percentage of approval was related to the actual review process. Can this deduction be extended to mean that students put valuable learning techniques ahead of ego trips which watching themselves might provide? Can it also be concluded that the participants in the study appear to be grateful that they could learn faster by turning to their old friend, "the tube"?

The video process which "made English a game" was in two sub-processes—one, with the TV camera's focus primarily on the instructor (called Teleteaching) and the other, with the TV camera's focus primarily on the students (called Telelearning). It appeared, after analysis of the study, that no matter which way the cameras were aimed, the Tele-additives provided an acceptable, useful form of enlightenment for Business English students. It should be pointed out here that most of the participants, with their strong technical orientation, were somewhat "language limited." They were enroute to careers in data processing,

food handling, middle management in transportation and industry or to supervision roles in a myriad of office systems. Very few showed signs of being either readers or writers, by preference. If there was a surprising (and pleasing) result, it was that they appeared to accept cognitive material presented on the screen with the same willingness that they'd have agreed to watch "The Dating Game" or "The Gong Show."

What impact does the study have on today's education, or, for that matter, on today's educator? First, it should increase the respect which administrators and teachers show to the "in" thing for kids. In other words, since American young people already have their ears and eyes tuned to television, don't fight it. Take advantage of it. And if they are attracted to watching themselves and their friends—either "live" or on the TV screen—move something worthwhile into the picture. Almost all teachers would have a substantial amount of material which they would immediately classify as "worthwhile."

Second, when a student is honest enough to write that "there is more participience in watching ourselves on the screen," an alert instructor would get the double meaning of "participience." The misspelling may have been a deeply significant Freudian slip. Can't we deduce that there might **not** be a gratifying feeling in students when they are force-fed too many classroom performances which star only the teacher? In essence, what the student comment substantiates is the lesson taught in the Erickson & Curl textbook which describes three "important factors of learning" (1973) as being: 1) repetition, 2) egocentricity gratification and 3) participation.

Third, and last, a perceptive observer should not overlook the statement submitted by the student who implied "audial-vidial" impact was a strongly affirmative force on memory. His/her opinions seem to concur with Gagne's observations that "high recallability of learning could best be achieved by orderly manipulation of repetition" (1977), and with Allen's equally relevant comment:

The feedback dimensions (of television and videotape) are particularly helpful to students in helping them find a suitable style and language level ... They are activated to discover their own pacing and appropriate vocabulary. (Allen & Ryan, 1969, pp. 29, 63)

The study which dealt with the investigation of learning styles—particularly those which dealt with two methods of video replay—was conducted in 1978. By almost any standard of measurement, the study could be described as an honest reflection of today's life and learning. Additional validation of the underlying authenticity of the experiment could be gained from the words of Ralph Tyler, who said:

Limitations in learning ... are not limitations in the students' intelligence, but are limitations in the inventiveness of those who devise learning experiences which stimulate and challenge. (**Change**, 1978)

## References

Most of the data and quotations of this paper were extracted from the doctoral work by Jane Dunlap which carries the following title:

"A Comparative Study of Cognitive and Affective Changes in Business English Students in Associate Degree Programs Using Printed or Videotaped Review Materials."

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