Paper title: **Research-Based Listening Tasks for Video Comprehension**

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Research-Based Listening Tasks for Video Comprehension

Abstract

       This study examines the effects of listening tasks performed by second-semester learners of Russian. Two video viewing conditions are investigated: traditional, 'exposure only' vs. an experimental, 'viewing guide' condition. In the control group, learners are watching video episodes from beginning to end; after that they answer comprehension questions. In the experimental group, students are using online Video Guides designed for the present investigation, which include research-based listening tasks performed by the learners *during* video viewing. The research examines which of the two treatments produces greater comprehension and retention of the videotext as measured by (1) Immediate Recall Protocols (IRPs) written in English and (2) recall, recognition, and application tasks performed in Russian. In addition to objective tests, the researcher investigates participants' opinions regarding the effectiveness of video viewing under each of these conditions as measured by an Exit Survey.

INTRODUCTION

Background

       In the last three decades, researchers and practitioners in the field have begun exploring broader contexts of L2 learning (Iskold 2002), including tasks and activities which aid in preparing students who can understand and be understood in L2 and are sensitive to the culture(s) where L2 is spoken. The move toward communicative instruction revived the concern for teaching the receptive skills of listening in L2 (Iskold, 2003). Lending support to listening skill development are studies showing that adults spend 40 to 50 percent of their time listening (Rivers, 1975). In our age of heavy media saturation the percentages for listening became even higher (Omaggio Hadley, 1993). Therefore, listening becomes an increasingly vital skill in L2 learning, which explains the professions' interest in authentic video materials. However, video-based language teaching lacks a significant data base (Bacon, 1992; Herron et al., 2006; Thompson & Rubin, 1996) and few research data are available concerning which tasks and activities make "video viewing experience more profitable for students" (Herron, 1994, p.196).

       How do students develop listening skills by using video materials? Do they learn best by mere "exposure" to "comprehensible input" advocated by Krashen (1985)? In contrast, cognitive models advocate L2 learning in which students are consciously involved (Harrington, 2002); a more recent, sociocultural approach, places L2 acquisition in a context of social practices (Warschauer, 1997; Savingnon & Sysoyev, 2002). While there is a recent improvement from passive, non-interrupted watching of long videotexts to brief, electronically delivered user- controlled video segments, the focus on pre- and post- listening activities still prevails. But what are learners doing *while* the video clip is playing? Should they be performing low-production tasks? Which tasks lead to higher levels of video comprehension? These questions, among others, have not yet been answered on the basis of empirical evidence. Lack of research regarding the listening tasks which best facilitate L2 comprehension (Herron et al., 2006; Iskold 2003), and the current focus on pre- and post-viewing activities recommended by authors (for example, Lubensky, S., Ervin, G., McLellan, L. & Jarvis, D., 2005; VanPatten, B., Marks, M. A.,

& Teschner, R. V., 2004) of video-driven commercial packages, leave instructors with no guidelines for designing listening tasks which may help students to stay focused *while* they are watching a video.

Purpose of the Study

The present study investigates two conditions of video viewing: 'exposure-only' (students watch a video episode in its entirety without any interruptions) and using online Video Guides specifically designed for the present experiment (participants perform low-production listening tasks *while* they watch a video episode). The purpose of the study is to determine whether or not the differences in video viewing conditions result in significantly different levels of comprehension of a videotext by second- semester learners of Russian.

Research Questions

The research addresses the following questions: (1) Which of the two video viewing conditions ('exposure-only' or using a Video Guide) appears to produce the greatest comprehension of a videotext as measured by IRPs written in L1? (2) Which of the two conditions appears to produce greater achievement on immediate recall, recognition, and application tasks conducted in L2? It is assumed in the study that (1) no participant has previously seen the video episodes chosen for the study; (2) ability to write a recall protocol is a valid measure of students' video comprehension, and (3) no participant has serious hearing impairment or visual problems.

Hypotheses.

The following null hypotheses are tested:
Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the effects of 'exposure-only' to the videotext condition, as compared to 'video guide' condition, on comprehension scores of second-semester college students of Russian as measured by IRPs written in L1.
Hypothesis 2: There is no significant effect attributable to 'video guide' condition on students' performance on recall, recognition, and application tasks, as measured by immediate quizzes conducted in L2.

REVIEW OF THE LITERAUTRE

Constructing Tasks for Listening Comprehension

The general purpose of listening is to comprehend a message. Richards (1983) suggested manipulation of variables as a means to develop listening micro-skills:
in teaching listening we can manipulate two variables, both of which serve to develop the ability in particular skill areas. We can either manipulate the input, that is the language which the learner hears, controlling for selected features such as grammatical complexity, topic, and rate of delivery, or we can manipulate the tasks we set for the learner. Manipulation of either (or both) is directed toward developing particular micro-skills.

$$\boxed{\text{INPUT}} \Rightarrow \boxed{\text{MICRO-SKILLS}} \Leftarrow \boxed{\text{TASKS}} \quad \text{(p.232)}$$

Rost, (1990) argued that the teaching of listening should concern a sequence of actions carried out *during* the listening process. Lund (1990) emphasized the instructor's function to "assist learners in some way to comprehend the message better" (p. 107). He also asserted that the question regarding the purpose of L 2 listening should be narrowed down to "what is the listener listening for?" (p. 106).

Theorists have proposed various approaches to the design of listening tasks. For example, Rivers (1975) claimed that each task should have an objective which relates to either skill-using or skill-getting. Drawing upon Rivers' assertion, Lund (1990) suggested that in the case of skill-using, the objectives should be stated as listeners' functions. In the case of skill-getting, the tasks could be based on Richards' (1983) taxonomy. Blandell and Stokes (1981) maintained that tasks vary as to whether they require global comprehension (understanding of the overall meaning) or partial comprehension (understanding of specific items). Richards (1983) asserted that tasks may require a *mechanical*, *meaningful*, or *communicative* response. He explained that a task requiring a *mechanical* response may ask the learner to distinguish between two words or sounds, and does not require any comprehension. A task requiring a *meaningful* response may ask the learner to comprehend the input, but does not require any creative ability. In contrast, a task requiring a *communicative* response asks the listener to create a suitable response on the basis of what he/she understood from the input, and thus requires interpretation, adaptation, and addition of new information.

Glisan (1988) and Dunkel (1991) proposed models for teaching L2 listening which integrate cognitive skills and guide the listener through sequential linguistic processing. While Glisan (1988) admitted that L1 listeners are doing skimming for the gist and scanning for details simultaneously, she suggested that teachers should provide practice in developing each L2 skill separately (pp. 13-15). Joiner (1990) recommended using *listening/viewing guides* which students complete *while* watching a video. Her tasks were intended not to test but to aid comprehension; the reading and writing load was kept to a minimum. Omaggio Hadley (1993) emphasized that listening tasks performed during video viewing "help students focus on relevant features of discourse as they are being heard rather than requiring them to retrieve a set of facts from memory" (p. 191).

Assessment of Listening Comprehension

In L1 research, the primary method of assessing comprehension in either reading or listening modality is the use of recall protocols (Lund, 1991). Usually, students report in writing the content of the text they have just processed. The resulting immediate recall protocols (IRPs) can be examined for both quantitative and qualitative aspects of comprehension by comparing them with the content analysis of the original text. Bernhardt & James (1987) used IRPs to assess L2 listening. Students wrote L1 IRPs after listening to a L2 text. The researchers concluded that when writing in L1, students were able to present the fullest possible report (p.78). To avoid disparities between comprehension and production abilities, they elicited L1 answers, thereby avoiding the

mixture of skills. While recognizing the advantages of IRPs, Johnston (1983) cautioned against using them as the only means to assess comprehension.

THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Pilot Studies

Within a one-year period prior to the present investigation, this researcher conducted a pilot study of the effectiveness of video viewing in a video-driven comprehension-based foreign language curriculum (for details see Iskold, 2004). The purpose of the pilot study was to examine (1) student behaviors during video viewing, (2) perceptions of and attitudes toward video materials, (3) reactions to specific types of video guides, and (4) ability to write IRPs. Based on the findings from the studies she concluded that: (1) multiple choice item format worked best for video guides; (2) *during* video viewing students were able to process approximately 20 items in the video guides without being distressed, and (3) students needed 15-20 minutes to complete an IRP. The results from classroom observations and student answers to interview questions were used for constructing listening tasks and the Video Guides for the present research. Student pilot IRPs aided in the design of the recall protocol scoring sheets for this experiment. What follows is the description of setting, participants, materials and procedures employed in the present investigation.

Setting

The participants in this study were drawn from an undergraduate, four-year college with a total population of 2,000 students. As a liberal arts institution, the college maintains a L2 requirement. Every student is required to enroll in one of the six languages currently offered by the college: French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Russian, Spanish, and Latin. Among other programs, the college offers an interdisciplinary major/minor in Russian Studies. Spanish dominates language instruction, accounting for 73% of all L2 enrollments. Elementary Language I & II courses are first and second-semester, Intermediate Language I & II are third and fourth- semester, respectively, of a L2 sequence offered by the college. Students' placement is dependent upon experience or a placement test. Students represent predominately white (91.5%) middle or upper-middle class backgrounds; the student body is mainly from the Middle Atlantic region (80% from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York); 70% of students come from public schools and 30% from private/parochial schools.

Participants

16 students enrolled in one section of Elementary Russian II participated in the study throughout one semester (15 weeks). These students were expected to be motivated beginner learners of Russian. Prior to the experiment, they filled out Participant Information Survey during regular classroom time. The data from the Survey were

tabulated and synthesized for subsequent analysis. The purpose of the Survey was to identify students with atypical backgrounds (e.g., native or heritage speakers of Russian; those who lived for more than three month in Russia; students with hearing or visual problems which could hinder the comprehension of a videotext).

As per college classification, 12 participants were freshman and 4 were sophomores; there were 7 men and 9 women. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 20 years. The majority of students were taking the course to fulfill the college's L2 requirement; 6 were planning to major or minor in Russian. All participants took Elementary Russian I at the college in the previous semester; none of the students had prior exposure to the target language in high school. All participants were native speakers of English. None of the students was excluded from the data analysis because of an atypical background.

General Classroom Procedures

At the college, all beginner L2 classes meet four times a week in periods of fifty minutes. The Russian language curriculum incorporates "Nachalo" («Начало»), a video-based instructional package; through the study of thematically organized materials, students develop listening comprehension, speaking, reading, writing, and cultural knowledge about Russia. Usually, the syllabi follow a standard sequence of instruction. Day One: students perform pre-listening activities, after which they watch a new video in class. At home they study textbook and workbook materials related to the video. Day Two: learners discuss the episode in class and do exercises. Day Three: students review class notes, role-play, practice vocabulary and grammar. Day For: learners take oral and/or written quizzes, and then move on to a subsequent episode. A sample Elementary Russian II syllabus may be obtained from this researcher.

Variables and Treatments

An intact class of sixteen students enrolled in Elementary Russian II taught by one instructor participated in the study. For this empirical investigation, the class was divided into two groups. The data from the Participant Information Survey were used to establish the equivalency in group composition. First, participants were ranked by prior achievement in Elementary Russian I and then randomly assigned to Group 1 (G1, n = 8) and Group 2 (G2, n = 8). It was observed that the groups exhibited homogeneity with regard to characteristics self-reported in the Participant Information Survey, including gender, age, and GPA. On the first day of class, prior to any treatments, all participants took a Baseline Test on listening comprehension. A two-sample t-test of group scores indicated that the differences between the group means G1 (n=8) and G2 (n=8) were not significant, $\underline{t}$ (14) = 1.52, p > .05. The researcher, therefore, judged the two groups to be comparable prior to the study. Because the groups were in the same class, they followed the same syllabus, thus received the same instruction, completed the same assignments, took the same quizzes on the same dates, and in the same setting. Throughout the experiment, the participants watched four «Начало» video episodes (episodes 4, 5, 6a, 6b) on CD-ROM at the Language Learning Center, under two different conditions: (1) students in a control group (CT-control treatment) received 'exposure-only' to the

videotext in the commercially available format; (2) those in an experimental group (ET-experimental treatment) viewed the same videos in conjunction with the interactive online Video Guides designed for the present investigation. One group served as control (CTG1) and the other as experimental (ETG2) for video episodes 4 and 6a; then the groups switched for episodes 5 and 6b (CTG2 and ETG1). The allocation of groups to control and experimental treatments by video episode appears in Table 1.

Table 1
Allocation of Groups by Video Episode

	Episode 4	Episode 5	Episode 6a	Episode 6b
Group I	CTG1	ETG1	CTG1	ETG1
Group II	ETG2	CTG2	ETG2	CTG2

As shown in Table 1, all participants were exposed to both treatments (CT and ET). If this measure were not taken, a particularly interesting or funny episode plot might solicit high scores simply because it maintained student interest. Because the two groups were randomly assigned to treatments, the findings of the study are not confounded by the episode and can be attributed to differences in treatments.

The controlled variables in the study were Groups (control and experimental) and Treatments, conditions for video viewing. The dependent variables in the study were (1) comprehension scores on each videotext as measured by four L1 IRPs; (2) scores in listening comprehension achievement, as measured by four sets of immediate and delayed L 2 quizzes, and (3) participants' opinions regarding the effectiveness of experimental treatments, as measured by the Exit Survey. The experiment employed twelve objective tests and an Exit survey.

Materials

Videotexts

The videotexts employed in the study were from *Nachalo* («Начало»), a video-driven commercial package for beginner students of Russian (for the list of episodes used in the study see Appendix B). Connected by a storyline, the 2.5-3.5- minute video episodes are offering a way to see and hear the story in a variety of authentic settings. Based on the classification suggested by Geddes and White (1978), this videotext falls into the category of a "simulated authentic discourse." In addition to the textbook, the instructional package contains a workbook, a video guide, and a CD-ROM. The paper-and-pencil video guide in the commercially available package provides pre- and post-viewing exercises. Neither the video guide nor the CD-ROM incorporates listening tasks to be performed by learners *during* video viewing.

Online Video Guides Designed for this Experiment

Four interactive online Video Guides designed by this researcher were used by participants in experimental groups. The Video Guides were developed with Dream

Weaver MX and optimized for play via Internet Explorer. The Video Guides were not intended to assess how much students understood from each videotext. Instead, they were used to facilitate video comprehension by providing students with a focus for viewing/ listening (Joiner, 1991; Thompson and Rubin, 1996). After clicking on the "Instructions" button, students received online instructions prior to using each of the online Video Guides. Figure 1 represents a sample "Instructions" screen from a Video Guide.

Figure 1.
Sample "Instructions" Screen. Lesson 4: "We have Terrible Problems."
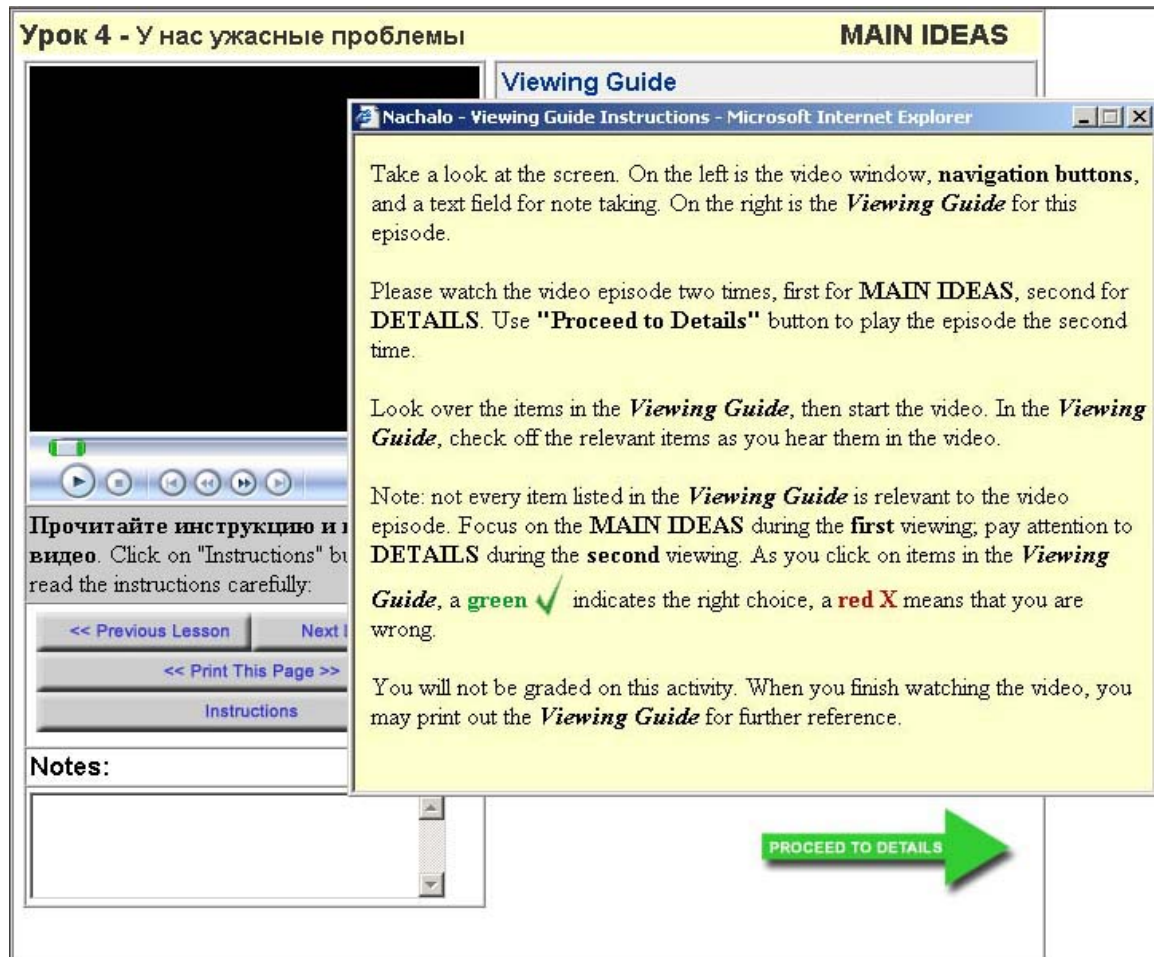
First, students were asked to read through the items included in the Video Guide; next, they were instructed to watch the video twice, focusing on specific elements of the videotext, and check off the relevant items as they heard them spoken in the video episode. Students also learned from the "Instructions" screen that they were not graded for this activity and could print out and keep the Video Guides for further reference. Each of the Video Guides consisted of two parts (screens): Main Ideas (e.g., places, characters, events, and cultural similarities/differences) and Details (vocabulary, phrases, cognates, and idioms). In addition, each Video Guide included an area for note-taking (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.
Sample "Main Ideas" Screen. Lesson 4: "We have Terrible Problems."

Урок 4 - У нас ужасные проблемы		**MAIN IDEAS**

Viewing Guide

Люди	События	Культура
Click on the characters that participate in the episode:	Click on events that are discussed in the episode:	Decide whether similar events usually occur in the U.S.:
Профессор	Соседи разговаривают	Дом новый, а есть проблемы. да нет
Александра Николаевна	Новые квартиры- это Кошмар. Ужас!	Есть душ, но нет воды. да нет
Саша	Есть проблемы	
Вова	Двери невозможно закрыть	
Сергей Петрович	Новый дом - это прекрасно	
Джим	Ужасные окна	
Татьяна Дмитриевна		

Прочитайте инструкцию и посмотрите видео. Click on "Instructions" button and read the instructions carefully:

<< Previous Lesson   Next Lesson >>
<< Print This Page >>
Instructions

Notes:

PROCEED TO DETAILS →

In Figure 2, items in the first column pertain to characters; in the second column, to events, and in the third column, to cultural similarities/differences. In order to reduce the cognitive load and to avoid learner distraction from videotext, all items in the Video Guides were presented in a true/false format; the total number of items per screen did not exceed twenty (see pilot studies, Iskold, 2004). Prior to the experiment, the items in the Video Guides were discussed and validated by a panel of experts. Figure 3 represents a sample "Details" screen.

Figure 3.
Sample "Details" Screen. Lesson 4:"We have Terrible Problems."

Урок 4 - У нас ужасные проблемы			DETAILS

Viewing Guide

Легкие слова	Грамматика	Трудные слова и фразы
Click on cognates, as you hear them in the video:	Click on the phrases as you hear them in the video:	Decide whether similar events usually occur in the U.S.:
директор	Я директор	Это ужас!
проблемы	Есть ванна, но нет воды	Это кошмар
квартира	У меня нет душа	Прекрасно
окна	Нет денег	Невозможно
двери	У неё нет ванны	А зачем ванна
пол	Это прекрасно	Автобусная остановка
стены		Это конечно плохо

Прочитайте инструкцию и посмотрите видео. Click on "Instructions" button to start the lesson. Please read the instructions carefully:

<< Previous Lesson   Next Lesson >>
<< Print This Page >>
Instructions

Notes:

In Figure 3, items in the first column represent familiar vocabulary (background knowledge); in the second column, grammatical structures, and in the third column, difficult new words and phrases.

Testing and Scoring Procedures

In order to assess participants' comprehension of a videotext by group prior to the experiment, on the first day of class the researcher administered a pre-treatment baseline listening comprehension test. All participants watched a video episode from an instructional package comparable to the one used in the formal study. Immediately following video viewing, students answered in English twelve open-ended WH-questions. The participants were able to answer the questions correctly only based on information found in the videotext. Discrete-point items (which have only one correct answer) were used to assess comprehension. Each test item was worth 0 or 1 point (0 was given for an incorrect answer, and 1 was given for the correct answer). An independent evaluator blindly scored the tests.

The researcher used a multidimensional approach to the assessment of video comprehension. L1 IRPs were used to assess full comprehension of each of the four videotexts. Students were given 15 minutes to complete their IRPs. In addition, the participants took four sets of paper-and-pencil immediate and delayed quizzes. The quiz items were constructed in Russian, thus learners were required to complete the quizzes in L2. Students took immediate quizzes right away after they completed the IRPs; they were given 20 minutes to work on a quiz. The quizzes consisted of discrete-point items. Each item was worth 0 or 1 point (0 was given for an incorrect answer, and 1 was given for the correct answer). The quizzes reflected the content of the Video Guides used by students in experimental groups *during* video viewing. As shown in Appendix A, each quiz was composed of three sections that measure (1) recall, (2) recognition, and (3) application of the main ideas (characters, places, and events) and details (vocabulary, grammatical structures, and idioms) from a «Начало» episode; the items also addressed cultural information presented in the Video Guides. A total of 24 items were targeted in each quiz:' multiple choice' for recall; 'true/false' for recognition, and 'complete the statement' for application tasks, respectively. Delayed measures of (1) recall, (2) recognition, and (3) application were gauged by delayed quizzes which students took four days after they watched the episodes.

Participants' IRPs were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively using elements suggested by several researchers (Bernhardt & James, 1987; Johnston, 1983; Rader, 1990), as well as the findings from the pilot studies conducted prior to the experiment (Iskold, 2004). Based on the content analysis of the videotexts, this researcher designed IRP scoring sheets (Appendix B). The instrument was validated by a panel of experts. For each video episode, the idea units were ranked in importance (from 4 points to 1 point). Based on this scale, the researcher assessed the number of (1) most important ideas, (2) least important ideas, (3) total number of sentences, (4) propositions/idea units recalled from visual clues, (5) propositions/idea units understood from discourse, and (6) total points scored. For further analysis, the values were scaled to 100 points.

Collection and Analysis of the Data

The present investigation continued for 15 weeks and involved the second half of an elementary-level Russian curriculum. Students watched four "Nachalo" videos (episodes 4, 5, 6a, 6b). Throughout the study, participants in control (CT) and experimental groups (ET) followed the same syllabus; there were no differences between the groups either in instruction, or testing procedures other than listening tasks in the Video Guides performed by participants in ET *during* video viewing. To enhance the reliability of the study, the researcher used parallel forms of tests. There were four sets of immediate and delayed quizzes and four IRPs; a *test-retest* format was used for immediate and delayed quizzes. In this procedure, a test with a slightly different format was administered to the same individuals on two occasions: immediately following video viewing and four days later; a positive correlation between the scores served as a measure of reliability in the study. Both immediate and delayed quizzes targeted the same content, had the same number of items, and employed the same item format. Although equivalent in terms of complexity, the items on delayed quizzes were slightly reworded. This measure was necessary to avoid student learning from the previous quiz. The internal

validity was addressed through content-validation of the quiz items. An independent evaluator blindly scored the quizzes. Student IRPs were blindly scored by two independent evaluators who were trained to use the system developed for this study. The interrater reliability between the scores ranged form .985 to .990.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The five dependent variables of interest were student scores from (1) recall, (2) recognition, (3) application, (4) total quiz scores, and (5) IRP scores. The researcher computed mean test scores for control and experimental groups on each dependent variable. Further, a nested factorial analysis of variance was applied for the analysis of variance in participants' mean scores. The controlled variable, video episode was considered to be a fixed factor with four levels (episodes 4, 5, 6a, 6b). The controlled variable, treatment, was considered to be a fixed factor nested within a video episode. Statistically significant differences were found between CT and ET groups on L1 IRPs. Table 2 summarizes the means and standard deviations of participant total IRPs scores.

Table 2

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on Immediate Recall Protocols.

Video Episode	Group/Treatment	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
4	CTG1	83.67	18.82	7
	ETG2	88.69	20.98	8
5	CTG2	82.74	21.84	7
	ETG1	98.62	2.88	8
6a	CTG1	78.29	20.51	7
	ETG2	96.57	4.86	7
6b	CTG2	52.75	10.35	7
	ETG1	71.98	20.32	7

The data summarized in Table 2 reveal that students in experimental groups (ET) consistently performed better than did participants in control groups (CT) on all four L1 IRPs. Further analysis of the data indicated that participants in ET recalled more idea units from discourse, fewer idea units which could be understood from visual clues, and reported fewer least important ideas than did students in CT. These data strongly suggest that the Video Guides used by participants in ET groups were effective. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

The nested factorial analysis of variance of participant mean scores on recall, recognition, application, and total quiz scores on immediate L2 quizzes revealed no statistically insignificant differences between control and experimental groups. For the factor 'Group,' all the p-values were >0.05 [recall p=0.37; recognition p=0.59; application p=0.44, and total scores p=0.35]. Thus, there were no statistically significant differences in scores that may be attributed to the ET (Video Guide) treatment.

Participant scores on immediate and delayed quizzes demonstrated similar characteristics; no statistically significant differences were found between scores on either measure. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was confirmed.

At the conclusion of the experiment, all participants completed an Exit Survey. The purpose of the survey was to explore student perceptions of and attitudes toward the Video Guides. All participants completed the survey during regular classroom time; they responded to 10 selected-response survey items by checking a point on a five-point Likert scale from either (1- strongly agree to 5- strongly disagree). Table 3 provides the means and standard deviations associated with questions from the Exit Survey relevant for discussion.

Table 3

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on the Exit Survey

Question	Mean	Standard Deviation
Using Video Guides helped me to stay focused during video viewing.	2.05	0.42
Using Video Guides helped me to remember the video episodes better.	2.00	0.61
In my opinion, using an interactive Video Guide may help me learn more from the video episodes.	2.00	0.50
I would like to continue using a Viewing Guide *while* watching «Начало» episodes next year.	1.82	0.52
I liked the design of the current Video Guide.	2.17	0.80
The Video Guide distracted me from watching the video.	3.82	0.95

As shown in Table 3, the participants self-reported a noticeably positive attitude toward the Video Guides; they (1) stayed better focused, (2) learned more, (3) remembered video episodes better, (4) liked the design of the Video Guides, and (5) were interested in using Video Guides in the future.

Discussion

As all participants indicated in their Exit Survey responses, they have never used video guides *during* video viewing in any of the previous L2 classes. Thus, the experimental treatment was new in their learning repertoires. While no statistically significant differences in group performance were found on the baseline test administered on the first day of class, participants in ET performed better than did those in CT group the very first time they used a Video Guide designed for this study. This finding suggests that video guides may have an immediate positive effect on student comprehension of a videotext. It was also noted that the effectiveness of the ET slightly increased over time, as students became accustomed to completing listening tasks *during* video viewing. This finding implies that learners benefit from practice with video guides.

For research purposes, the number of times students watched each video episode was limited to two. This measure was necessary to assure that learners in CT and ET

groups spent the same amount time on task. Further, because students knew their completed Video Guides were not assessed by their instructor, those not interested may have skipped over certain listening tasks in the Video Guides. These factors may provide a plausible explanation for the absence of clearly observable benefits of the Video Guides as measured by student achievement on immediate and delayed quizzes.

However, participants in ET groups performed significantly better than did students in CT groups as measured by IRPs. The positive effect of Video Guides was evidenced by significantly higher scores on the most important ideas recalled and total recall points scored. It was observed that participants in CT groups relied more on visual clues in their attempt to understand the video and, perhaps, to compensate for the lack of comprehension of discourse. Although current theoretical views do not advocate understanding of every word or phrase in a video (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993) they do suggest that focusing students' attention on important features of a videotext increases their levels of comprehension (Thompson & Rubin, 1996). In addition, as evidenced by the Exit Survey, participants were strikingly enthusiastic regarding the effectiveness of the Video Guides. These findings suggest that the experimental treatment was effective.

Consequently, the study supports theoretical assumption of others (e.g., Joiner, 1990; Omaggio Hadley, 1993) that viewing guides may improve comprehension of a videotext. Similarly, it corroborates the findings from a chain of research by Herron and colleagues (1992-2006) and supports Herron's (1994) conclusion that "simply providing video material is not enough" (1994).

According to Glisan (11988), when listeners are provided with specific listening tasks, they are able to scan or extract particular information from an aural text. She argued that native speakers utilize two strategies in everyday listening: skimming for the gist and scanning for details; non-native listeners tend to experience difficulties in performing both tasks simultaneously. In our case, the Video Guides pointed out main events, culture, places, and characters in a video; further, they focused participants' attention on vocabulary, idioms and grammar targeted in each episode. In this sense, the Video Guides provided a strategy for parallel processing of main ideas and linguistic features of a videotext. It appears that guiding students through parallel processing is beneficial for their comprehension of a video message. This finding is consistent with cognitive interpretations of learning (O'Malley & Chamot, 1993).

Finally, viewing guides appear to facilitate new learning by helping learners identify what they already know and link the new knowledge to the existing schema (Anderson, 1983). More specifically, through the examination of the items listed in a Video Guide, students could identify the names of the characters or places which they knew prior to watching an upcoming episode. Similarly, cognates in the vocabulary section of a Video Guide may provide a way for linking new information to that existing in a learner's memory. In this sense, a viewing guide may function as an advance organizer which has been proven effective by Herron and colleagues (1994-2006).

Limitations

The following limitations should be considering when examining the results of the study: (1) this research was conducted at a small liberal arts institution; the nature of the population may present questions about the role of attitude, interest, and motivation in

L2 video viewing; (3) the sample size was limited to 16 students; broadening the sample size might enhance the validity of the study; (4) the findings are based on a particular kind of videotext, simulated authentic discourse, hence are not applicable to other types of videotexts (e.g., news broadcasts or interviews); (5) the number of times students watched each video episode was limited to two; more or unlimited number of videotext replays could produce different results; (6) the results may not generalize to studies employing different assessment instruments; (7) incentives for students may decrease the number of missing observations; (8) this researcher was involved with the study both as an investigator and a teacher; (9) a longitudinal study over several semesters may be better suited for the purpose.

CONCLUSIONS

Whereas Doughty (1991) demonstrated that learners' attention can be directed to linguistic features of a text *while* reading, the present study suggests that similarly, listening tasks performed *during* video viewing may assist in directing viewers' attention to and subsequent recall of a videotext.

Although prior to this experiment the participants never wrote IRPs of video episodes, the analyses of those protocols revealed that on average, albeit to a different extent, all students were able to summarize main ideas of a video episode in an essay format; no participant performance received a 0 score. This finding contradicts the results reported by Rader (1990) who examined comprehension of audio messages in French and found a significant number of participants who received a 0 score on IRPs. In the present study, the minimum score received by a participant on either of the IRPs was 10 and the maximum 68 points, respectively. A perusal of IRPs indicates that participants in all groups have not reported ideas not found in the videotext. This finding is at odds with the results from Lund's (1991) study of comprehension of an audio text by students of intermediate German. Therefore, the data indicate that a complex cognitive task of listening is facilitated by the visual nature of video to an extent which precludes complete lack of comprehension. Thus, video comprehension should be examined as a distinct modality within the framework of comprehension research. Moreover, there is a need to examine factors that influence comprehension depending on the medium of presentation, as well as the mode of presentation (e.g., controlled lab setting vs. online learning).

Pedagogical implications.

Several pedagogical recommendations emerge from this study. Even though a video-based curriculum tends to enhance listening comprehension, the teacher plays an essential role in preparing ancillary materials to facilitate listening. Teachers may view the ET examined in the study as a variation of empirically validated pedagogical aid for student comprehension of L2 videotext; they may consider incorporating video guides into their teaching repertoires in order to maximize the listening practice afforded by video. The present research suggests further classroom research. Teachers can make observations that serve as the basis for testable hypotheses about video input processing (see also Hoven, 2006). Interviews, surveys of student opinions, and action research all can shed light on the process of and aids to comprehension of a videotext.

Certainly, one cannot presume to recommend that Video Guides, IRPs, and test items developed by this researcher be used with all L2 video-based curricula, however, the findings may enable teachers to make decisions concerning what types of listening tasks performed *during* video viewing best serve their students.

For the reason that instructors have limited time to prepare ancillary materials, the final recommendation concerns material developers. The findings of this study yield information for the design of comprehension aids and assessment instruments which might be included into commercial video-based instructional packages.

Recommendations for Further Research

Despite the growing acceptance of the importance of L2, many questions concerning the listening tasks which facilitate student comprehension of a videotext need empirical examination. Thus, replications of this study are called for in order to further examine the unique domain of L2 video comprehension. Because this study deals with *Nachalo,* which is frequently used for learning Russian, this research may be replicated and expanded at other institutions and with other populations of learners; similar investigations might be based on video-driven curricula in Russian which employ videotexts other than *Nachalo*. It would be most interesting to examine whether the findings of the present study hold true for comprehension-based curricula for L2 other than Russian. While the listening tasks developed for the present study are research-based and appear to facilitate comprehension of a videotext by focusing students' attention on key points in the video input, other types and formats of video guides may be examined using assessment procedures comparable to the ones employed by this researcher. Although the Video Guides were intended "not to test but to aid comprehension" (Joiner, 1990, p. 64), for research purposes it might be useful to examine the viewing guides completed by viewers. Such an examination may provide insight regarding which among the low-production tasks learners perform best. Findings from such research may contribute to the on-going discussion about directionality of input processing.

In this study, a combination of two assessment measures, L1 IRPs and L2 recall, recognition, and application tasks (ability to confirm verbatim text-based input), allowed for a multi-dimensional evaluation of video comprehension. An investigation of best-suited multi-dimensional formats for follow-up tests, (including, but not limited to recall, recognition, and application) is needed. To confirm the effectiveness of IRPs as an assessment measure for comprehension of a videotext, further examination and refinement of the scoring system suggested by this researcher is necessary. Research on assessment of video comprehension may serve a two-fold purpose: (1) valid assessment tools may evolve, and (2) it may provide an insight regarding a possible impact of various assessment formats on L2 retention of videotexts. Finally, a long-range study of tasks systematically performed by learners *during* video viewing may allow for conclusions with regard to benefits of student active engagement in video viewing for overall improvement of listening comprehension.

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DEFINISION OF KEY TERMS

'Exposure-only' condition: non-interrupted viewing of a video episode. "Exposure to massive amounts of comprehensible input" is the primary method of L2 teaching in comprehension-based approaches postulated by Krashen (1985).

Foreign language: the terms "foreign language," "second language," "target language," and "language" are used interchangeably to refer to languages other than English taught as an academic subject.

Immediate Recall Protocol (IRP): a listening comprehension measure in which listeners write down, from memory, what they recall after hearing a text (Lund, 1991).

Simulated Authentic Discourse: according to Geddes and White (1978), two types of authentic discourse may be used in L2 learning: (1) unmodified, which occurs as a genuine act of communication, and (2) simulated, which is produced for pedagogical purposes and exhibits features that have a high probability of occurrence in genuine acts of communication (p. 137). "*Nachalo*" episodes are treated by this researcher as *simulated authentic discourse* for the following reasons: actors and actresses are native-speakers, and events take place in Russia.

Video-driven course: an organization of instructional materials in which "most of the content of the print materials is related to the content of the video episodes (Van Patten et al., 2004, p. 17).

Videotext: a term coined by Joiner (1990) and currently used in L2 research; it implies that "television and video should be treated by researchers and practitioners as texts which are no less complex than a written text" (p. 54).

Appendix A

Sample Quiz 2 (immediate)

Начало: Бизнес по-московски

I. Circle the correct answer:

В подъезде разговаривают соседи:
- А.   Илья Ильич
- Б.   Татьяна Дмитриевна
- В.   Вова

2. У них есть _____
- А.   почта
- Б.   асфальт
- В.   проблема

3. Дом новый, а _____ нет.
- А.   телефона
- Б.   душа
- В.   асфальта

4. Лена нигде не может купить резиновые сапоги. _____ её размера.
- А.   есть
- Б.   нет
- В.   один

5. _____ очень хорошо понимает и даже может помочь.
- А.   Джим
- Б.   дуг
- В.   Виктор

6. Мой бизнес _____ так:
- А.   работаю
- Б.   работает
- В.   работаем

7. Каждое утро я _____ вас здесь.
- А.   жду
- Б.   ждёте
- В.   ждём

8. И красивые девушки _____ сапоги бесплатно.
- А.   получают
- Б.   продают
- В.   отдают

II.   Decide if a statement is true or false by circling either T or F:

1.   Виктор: У меня есть резиновые сапоги.   T   F

2.   Виктор: Я продаю резиновые сапоги   T   F

3.   На автобусной остановке ждёт друг Виктора.   T   F

4.   Вы отдаёте ему сапоги и платите сто рублей.   T   F

5.   Пятьсот рублей это дорого!   T   F

6.   Пятьсот рублей и у вас грязные туфли   T   F

7.   Красивые мальчики получают сапоги бесплатно.   T   F

8.   Вы действительно очень красивая девушка.   T   F

III.   Complete the statements:

У соседей есть _____

У них новый дом, но нет _____

У Виктора есть _____

Он даёт сапоги, но он их не _____

У _____ есть друг.

Вы платите пятьсот _____.

Это не дорого. И у вас чистые туфли и хорошее _____.

Это не дискриминация. Это _____.

Task types, item formats, and point allocations are summarized below:

Section	Task	Format	Points Possible	Points Earned
I	Recall	Multiple Choice	8	
II	Recognition	True/False	8	
III	Application	Complete	8	
			Total: 24	Total:

Appendix B

Sample Recall Protocol Scoring sheet

Начало: Бизнес по-московски (Moscow Style Business)

4 --   Most important event
1 --   Least important event
Idea Units: 15
Total Points: 48

Points Possible	Idea Units	Points Scored
2	What a nightmare! How terrible!	
4	The house is new, but there is no asphalt.	
4	Lena cannot find rubber boots. They don't have her size.	
4	All neighbors have a big problem.	
4	Viktor understands their problem and is ready to help.	
4	Viktor has a business. He has rubber boots of all sizes, but he does not sell them.	
3	Every morning he waits for the neighbors in the hallway and hands out rubber boots to them.	
3	Viktor's friend is at the bus stop. He waits for the neighbors and takes the boots.	
3	The neighbors pay 500 rubles.	
3	They think it's expensive.	
4	Viktor says that 500 is not expensive. For this money they get clean boots and good mood.	
2	Viktor says that pretty girls get the boots for free.	
2	Sasha thinks, its discrimination.	
2	Victor says it's a joke.	
4	Viktor thinks that Lena is a very pretty girl.	

Most important: _____   From Visual Clues   _____
Least important: _____   From Discourse   _____
Number of Sentences   _____
Total: _____

22

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