Lesson plan

Learning with YouTube videos: Internet censorship

Vicky Papageorgiou, English instructor, Metropolitan College, Thessaloniki, Greece

Key words: YouTube videos, debate, internet censorship, blended learning

Target learners: Young adults or adults, C1+ level

Learning outcomes:

- By the end of this course, the learners will learn to search for a small variety of videos and to critically synthesize information/arguments to use in their debate,
- they will be able to enrich their knowledge about a current and controversial matter which they have experienced in some ways,
- they will learn to work together to reach an agreement on a controversial problem, solve a problem,
- they will learn to use online platforms to upload their written work and to hold a debate, like http://www.pearltrees.com, and http://www.collaborizeclassroom.com, and finally
- they will have to reflect on the debate by summarizing the important points of it.

Short description

In this blended learning activity, students will have to work on a controversial matter. While divided in teams, they will have to find youtube videos relevant to the side they have to present and defend, record their arguments to support their position and finally, make evaluations and judgments about this controversial matter. In the end, the two teams will have to hold a debate and reach a consensus.

Preparation

The T spends some time choosing videos that present opposing arguments or depict opposing sides. 2-4 videos for each side should be enough but the T should make sure their duration is not over 15' each. (In this activity, Ss are asked to search for the videos they should use, on their own. Yet, because this is time-consuming and/or difficult for some students, it is advisable that the T has already prepared a selection for them, at least for the weaker ones).

Some example videos the T could show them or post on the platform are the following:

An informative video about internet censorship

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPAvg6CU6sI

The Past, Present and Future of Internet Censorship
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spapXznZf4I

Internet Censorship Is the Wrong Answer to Online Piracy
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ngRPuXpCIw

Procedure (approximately 3 hours)

1. Tell your students that you have noticed that people of their age are very dependent on the internet and they spend a lot of time surfing the net. It is also true that there are a lot of voices currently calling out for online censorship because the internet is far too open. So, since this is a situation that they are familiar with, you thought it was time they discussed internet censorship because this is an issue in discussion lately. (5')

2. Tell them that to be able to form a well-rounded opinion about the topic, they have to find videos on YouTube that support or condemn this kind of censorship. (5')

3. Explain to them that they are going to be divided in 2 teams . (10-15')

4. Allow them time to search for these videos online. Explain to them that you are going to be present and offer any help needed but you expect them to be independent in their search.

5. Tell them that in the next lesson, both teams are going to watch their videos about internet censorship in class. The first team are going to watch videos that support it and team number two will view videos against this censorship. (1 h)

6. Tell the students they should focus on three questions, which you have already posted on http://www.pearltrees.com/: These are the following:

   • Is internet a public or a private sphere?
   • Should there be more censorship?
   • Should freedom of speech be absolute or should it be limited?

7. They should note down all of the arguments used. Then, they have to upload the relevant videos as well as their arguments on http://www.pearltrees.com/   so that both teams can prepare their counterarguments. No analysis or reflection of the arguments will be posted there, though. (30')

8. You should set up the day the discussion will take place (online class).

9. On the day the online debate takes place, ask them to share the videos online on a specific platform http://www.collaborizeclassroom.com/ and tell them they can also add

the arguments they have come up with. Each member of every team starts a brief discussion by posting their comment/argument and their video. Other members are asked to post their responses to this (this procedure can be done synchronously as well as asynchronously). (1h)

10. You should moderate the discussion.
11. Once each team has decided about their arguments, they should also rank them in terms of validity. (10')
12. At the end of the debate, the Ss can vote and then see the results. Remind everybody that they should reach an agreement in the end and perhaps even specify a solution. Remember, you are there to moderate and not intervene in any other way. (5')
13. At the end of the class, the students will present their decision, again in the forum. (5')

Follow up

Ask each team to write a summary of the debate as well as the decision on the matter and how the whole discussion has changed their perspective (if it has). They can post it later on http://www.pearltrees.com/.

Software/web 2.0 tools

http://www.youtube.com

http://www.pearltrees.com/

http://www.collaborizeclassroom.com

Materials

The learners need access to PCs with internet connection, possibly 1 PC for every 2 students.

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Vicky Papageorgiou is a foreign language teacher (English, Italian, Greek) with approximately 20 years of experience with mainly adult learners. For over 15 years she has been preparing students for English language exams of various exam boards. She holds an MA in Education (Open Univ. of Cyprus) and an MA in Art History (Goldsmiths College, UK) and she has just completed her PGCE in Technology Enhanced Learning at University of Wales Trinity Saint David. She studied in Greece, Italy and the UK but also participated in an international project for the McLuhan program in Culture and Technology for the University of Toronto, Canada. Her fields of interest are ESL and Art, Educational technology, critical thinking, use of video. She is currently based in Thessaloniki

(Greece) working as an English instructor at AMC College for the past 5 years, preparing students for IELTS, teaching ESP and General English.