New Marketing Strategies for Promoting Language Teaching Courses: The Case of Spanish and English Languages

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Abstract

This study aims to understand and analyze the most effective strategies to promote Spanish and English teaching courses and programs. These languages are widespread in the world and every day there are more learners and students interested in learning them, since they are the two most spoken languages worldwide and are very important in communication, commerce, culture, and education as well. To achieve this goal, we have reviewed and studied numerous previous studies and research papers that dealt with various new and traditional methods and strategies on language course advertisements, and we also explain the importance of each strategy and how it helps us promote Spanish and English courses in particular, and any language in general, and finally we reach several conclusions and results that serve as a complete strategy and as a guide for the promotion of courses of academies and institutes that teach Spanish and/or English as a second language.

Keywords: *Teaching, languages, learning, strategy, promotion, course and academy.*

Introduction

Language teaching courses and programs are very important for reinforcing intercultural communication. They also help those interested in learning a second or third language. Such courses always need new marketing strategies to promote them. In this analysis, we will focus on the methods of promoting Spanish and English teaching programs.

Our study begins by explaining previous studies that have dealt with strategies to promote language teaching (English, Spanish and other languages). Then, we explain the methodology we adopted throughout the study (analytics) and how this study is structured in detail. We will also give an explanation with various examples about the traditional methods of teaching and promoting language programs, and finally we will focus on the new digital strategies to disseminate and advertise Spanish and English courses with several examples as well.

After providing all the data we mentioned in this introduction, we will decide which are the most effective strategies and we will classify them from the most important to the least important with evidence based on our analysis and the previous studies we reviewed before carrying out this research.

The objectives of our research:

1- To know the previous studies on the latest techniques and ideas about how to promote language courses in the best possible way.

2- To know and analyze the marketing methods used today by academies and universities that teach Spanish and English.

3- To investigate to what extent the marketing strategies used in Jordan to promote the learning of Spanish and English are effective as well.

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4- To know new digital methods of promoting language teaching and classify them and know to what extent they are effective in the long term.

Theoretical Framework

Many previous studies have dealt with the issue of how to promote and advertise different language courses, as many academies and even universities try to attract the maximum number of students to earn money and expand their work.

First, we have reviewed the research study by Yalun (2019) who explains the process of promoting the Chinese language internationally and analyzes what are the most advanced methods to extend this language and make it reach more populations, especially in Europe and Russia.

Another study about language promotion is that of Shaw (2003) who deals with the case of English, which has recently spread in almost all countries of the world. The paper also shows that, although English is an international language, it should not stop promoting it continuously in order to maintain its position as the most taught language in the world.

Likewise, Grey (2012) conducted an in-depth study on promoting English culture and language with the use of digital techniques. This research indicates how technology helps to create applications and programs to teach English, Arabic, and Spanish languages. On the other hand, Martín Grecia and Rodríguez Jiménez (2015) carried out a research article on the promotion of English in the French and Spanish communities. In this study, the two authors have proven that in France and Spain, there are various methods to promote English, since they are countries close to England and take into account the importance of English in the third millennium in the different fields of knowledge.

Regarding other languages within Europe, Huang (2020) investigates the promotion of the French language and culture through the Alliance Française in Bangkok, Thailand. In this study, the author explains four different techniques that France is using to spread its language in Thailand, in addition, this thesis speaks deeply about the sociopolitical factors that usually influence language teaching.

It is also worth mentioning the book by Coulmas (2007) and the study by McNulty and Lazarevic (2012) that deal with the methods that language academies and centers in Japan and Germany use to advertise language courses. It also deals with digital forms of teaching these languages in poorer communities.

However, we have reviewed comparative studies that deal with the methods of promoting more than one language; the study by Noack (2011) and that of Clyne (2010). The first deals with the case of promoting English and Russian, and the second focuses on the comparison of promotion methods between German and English. Both studies show that English has fewer difficulties when advertising its courses and that English language courses always have lower prices.

As we have pointed out, many authors have dealt with the subject of promoting languages. In our analysis, we are going to focus on the most advanced and practical methods to spread the Spanish and English languages and their cultures.

Methodology

In this study, we will use an analytical methodology. We will analyze the methods of promoting Spanish in depth with practical steps to implement each method. In addition, we will compare each way of promotion in order to know which methods are the most effective and which are no longer important in 2024.

To analyze each method, we must review how it started and how successful it has been so far, because some ways only bring considerable results at the beginning, and then learners realize that this method is not effective or does not help them improve their level or increase their interest in the language and its culture.

So that we analyze each method individually and then we will make a comparison between each one, and thus the best methods are revealed as conclusions of this analysis.

The problem of the study

We have realized that we do not know which the most effective methods are to promote Spanish and English in Jordan and the different countries of the Middle East. We see various methods used for English and Spanish, but we need to know how efficient each method is, and thus we will better promote these languages and achieve better results when teaching them.

Analysis of the best marketing methods to promote English and Spanish

After reaching the 20th century, new modern and digital methods began to appear to spread Spanish and English. Before explaining the most advanced methods, we have to go through the traditional ones that serve as the path to the most modern and digital ones.

Language teaching has always existed in schools through teachers who know the language and schoolbooks prepared by the cultural centers of the language community. Through this method, the student learns to speak, write and read in the language throughout primary and secondary school with the aim of reaching an advanced level that helps them use this language in social and work life.

But this method and its marketing encounter several difficulties: choosing the second language of instruction is often based on political and historical factors of the country, in addition, it is difficult to include any language in schoolbooks since the materials for students are numerous and it is not always possible to include more than one language. Finally, the teacher´s qualification plays an important role in teaching the second language in school, since in many countries there are teachers who are not well qualified to teach Spanish or English, which causes the student will finish high school with a low level of the language.

Another traditional method is to rely on the radio to promote the language; Spanish and English were considered the most existing languages in educational programs on the radio and in newspapers. And during any program, we always listen to advertisements about language courses. This method (learning using the radio) is based on introducing language teaching programs on some radio channels and some parts of newspapers. In addition, when the learner reaches an advanced level in Spanish or English, he or she could follow channels entirely in the target language, such as news and newspapers that are entirely in English or Spanish.

The problem that this method of teaching always encounters is that it usually requires an advanced-level learner to be able to follow the fast speech of native Spanish and English speakers.

Language exchange programs are an effective traditional way of teaching Spanish and English. For example, meetings that include two people, each teaching their language to the other, as well as group meetings that include a language teacher with a group of learners of different levels and they discuss a social or political topic and learn their vocabulary.

This method is still in use today at the Instituto Cervantes and The British Council, and they currently have the help of digital platforms and social networks to send material that improves the language throughout the week, not just during the meeting.

Promoting this method of teaching is traditionally based on advertisements in newspapers and later on the official website of the academy or the institute.

Likewise, the governments of many countries have always provided scholarships for language teaching, thus the learner travels to the country of the language and learns it in a more effective way. These scholarships can be for language courses, and they can also be for undergraduate and graduate programs. This method is the most efficient of all, without a doubt, but it is extremely difficult to provide the

scholarship to a large number of people due to its high cost, so only a few people with a fairly high academic level obtain it.

Other traditional methods are those related to literature, such as book reading programs, which involve a group of learners with a supervisor reading a book and then discussing it among themselves and could improve the writing of the student by writing summaries of a book they have already read. This method also requires learners with an advanced level of the language and people with enough free time to be able to read entire books in a limited period.

The promotion of this method is based on where these persons met usually; it could be in the language institute, university or academia, and normally is a voluntary work of the professor to help his students improve their writing and reading skills.

It should not be forgotten that, in some communities, the language is very useful for teaching the rituals of religion. However, this method is limited to some specific languages and normally these programs are for students who study in religious schools and institutes belonging to the church or the mosque, and they do not apply to the teaching of English or Spanish in many countries.

There were and still are Spanish teaching programs based on placing the learner in a native family during the holidays or for a whole year to learn the language among its speakers. This method is certainly efficient, especially for language learning, but it is very expensive, and most families cannot afford the cost.

As we have seen, there are traditional methods that are quite effective for language teaching, but they encounter various difficulties that limit the target group, which was a great challenge in teaching Spanish and English in the past.

Now, we will discuss some of the modern and digital methods for teaching and promoting Spanish and English. First of all, there are applications and platforms for continuous language teaching such as Duolingo, which has a large number of vocabulary and grammatical expressions in many languages, including Spanish and English. In addition, we have the Memrise and Babbel applications available, among many other language teaching programs, which are widely used and very efficient for language teaching.

These applications have many advantages: you can learn at any time of the day, they are virtual (online), so that you don't have to go anywhere to use them, they are free or almost free because they have no ads or a low price for the user. The disadvantages of these applications are the following: they only help to reach a level between elementary and beginner, they are not for mastering a language, and they do not help much to improve writing.

There are other applications based on conversation such as (Hello talk) that allow you to communicate with native speakers of any language. But it also encounters the problems that the previously mentioned applications have.

Youtube channels are now considered a very common method for learning a language. The videos uploaded by Spanish and English specialists help the learner to improve grammar, have a clear explanation of verb tenses, and avoid common mistakes. However, they do not improve writing or speaking very much, they are mainly for theoretical material.

Youtubers who have linguistic content are constantly trying to improve their content by opening new communication channels with subscribers, such as live streaming, which allows direct contact between the Youtuber (teacher) and the subscriber (student), but this method is usually not very effective since there are a large number of users who follow each channel, but it does allow the Youtuber to directly answer the questions of their subscribers.

Today, influencers have a very similar job to Youtubers: they create an account on Instagram or Titktok (for example) and make videos with linguistic content and answer the questions of their followers. They

also have the characteristic of live streaming, although it has the same problems that we mentioned when dealing with Youtube channels.

There are also virtual language communities today that allow communication between community members to resolve language doubts. These allow users to find quick answers to questions that arise, find language-related jobs, and access language courses offered by some members of the community. The problem of these platforms is that anyone can answer questions without having the required experience, and sometimes these communities include fun content unrelated to the objective of the community.

Another modern form of teaching is following the Podcasts that have fixed content in Spanish, English, or any other language. In recent years, the number of followers of language podcasts has increased and an improvement in the level of users has been demonstrated. Podcasts considerably improve the learner's listening skills, but largely ignore writing and speaking.

Another modern method is online video games in which players form a team and communicate with each other throughout the game. The strategy for improving language in this method is based on joining teams whose mother tongue is the one we need to learn, and so the player spends hours and hours playing and speaking the language he wants to improve. In recent years, we have observed that these players have a high level of conversation and are able to hold a conversation with natives without any problem. The challenge that these gamers encounter is that this teaching process does not improve writing and in many cases they use grammatical expressions that they do not know how to construct, which implies that they also have problems with grammar.

We must not forget today's social networks and their influence and tools to help us learn every day. There are a large number of pages on Facebook and Twitter that publish linguistic content, but as we mentioned before, this method is limited to getting us to an elementary or beginner level and sometimes those who have these pages and accounts use them to promote the virtual and in-person courses that they teach.

Finally, in recent years a method has appeared that also helps to improve the language level depending on how we use this method. These are the platforms of Artificial Intelligence (AI), we have today numerous programs such as Chatgpt, Copilot, Gemini among many others. Some users maintain a conversation with this program and practice the language for hours a day. Other learners use it to find out their mistakes and get language advice. However, others use it to have the solution to their homework or to have work ready without any input from the learner, in this case it becomes a negative method that in no way improves the student's level. So the benefit that can be obtained from these programs depends entirely on how we use them.

Now, let's mention the most effective marketing strategies to promote language programs. Before, it was more common to promote through newspapers, radio and television channels, but today there are more efficient methods to spread the news that a course or event will be held soon.

After the social media revolution, the option of having sponsored ads that direct our offer or news to the most interested people is available. In this case, our advertisement for a Spanish or English language course will reach language learners and young people whose interests include languages. It is one of the best ways to promote our courses.

We also see ads inside video games because there are people there who are interested in language learning. We have also pointed out before that many Youtubers and Instagram accounts advertise their online language courses by posting short videos on their accounts that show how they teach and which learners they are targeting.

On the other hand, there are ways to attract more users to language courses, for example, many academies have offers that force the learner to pay the price of many levels at the same time. Another way is to lower the price a lot, which should not be exaggerated because it gives the impression that these courses are of low quality and the teachers are not very professional. On the other hand, other academies set a medium

to high price for courses that are going to be taught by a famous teacher or a university professor, thus sending a message to the learner that our courses are of the best possible quality and that with us you will learn quickly and appropriately.

There are many marketing strategies to promote language courses, sometimes, they depend on other factors, such as the social one: since an academy is located in a poor area, they should not advertise its courses at a high price. Another important factor is the course schedule, which should be suitable for workers and students. Normally, academies choose to start their classes in the afternoon or evening, not in the morning.

Conclusions

As can be observed in the analysis, there are many new and digital methods to promote language courses. We have explained all these methods with examples applied to Spanish and English.

We have revealed that promoting language courses through sponsored ads on social networks is the most effective strategy, because they are directed to the most interested people and language learners. In addition, almost all young people have accounts on one or more of the social networks, so it is considered a place where most of the potential clients of language academies meet.

On the other hand, we discuss the strategy of learning languages through applications such as Duolingo or Babbel. These applications have ads that appear during the use of video games or different mobile applications, in addition to the ads that appear during YouTube videos to promote these courses.

We have also mentioned the virtual language courses that are very widespread on the Internet today. Normally, language teachers promote these courses through their Instagram and Facebook accounts, they publish short videos on their accounts to show their followers what teaching method they use and to what extent they are professional teachers of the Spanish and English languages.

Then, we mentioned the other methods that do not require prior promotion, such as artificial intelligence programs which are a double-edged sword. Many students use them well and they help the learners improve their level, but others use them in a negative way and thus do not improve the level of the learners.

In conclusion, we recommend the use of digital methods to promote language courses, especially sponsored ads on social networks and also the ads that appear during the use of different mobile applications.

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