

The Effectiveness of Learning Pills in Higher Education: Students' Response to Audio-Visual Content Consolidation at the Complutense University of Madrid

This paper reports on work carried out as the result of a UCM (Complutense University of Madrid) Research Project on Innovative Teaching in Higher Education carried out during the academic year 2015-2016. The aim of the project was to develop, implement and assess the quality of a series of 3 Learning Pills initially conceived to be used as valuable audio-visual teaching tools with a specific group of students from the UCM Master's Degree in EFL/ESL Teacher Training Education. To this latter end, our Master's students were asked to assess the pills following the COdA rubric that we had previously developed and tested for the quality assessment of Learning Objects in earlier UCM innovative projects.

It is widely assumed that Learning pills are Learning Objects consisting of short, effective videos aimed at the students' effective acquisition of the most complex content information. Short videos have been proved to be a highly efficient teaching material since video material facilitates the students' familiarization with meaningful, *realia*-based situational contexts. In the words of Gruber (2011): "the use of video in class facilitates the construction of significant knowledge given the communicative potential of images, sounds and words to convey a series of experiences that stimulate the senses and the different learning styles the students. This allows students to conceive a more realistic image of a concept".

KEY WORDS: Learning Pills, Learning Objects, Higher Education