



## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING VIDEO IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

**Nazarova Dilshodakhon Ochildinovna**

*National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek. Tashkent.*

### ABSTRACT

*The current article aims at providing information about using video and its effective use and importance in foreign language classes. The article deals with different ways of using video, and suggestions by leading experts in this sphere and the advantages of their use as well as possible sources of them. The activities that can be done before, during or after when using video in foreign language classes have also been discussed in the article.*

**KEY WORDS:** *authentic materials, communication, cross-cultural comparison, entertainment, sequence, projector presentation, discussion method, facilitator;*

### DISCUSSION

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the English language has already become the most widespread and world standard language on Earth. Over 85% of the world's scientists read and use English. About 85% of the world's mail is written in English and 90% of all information in the world's electronic retrieval system is stored in English.[1] The number of people who speak English as a second foreign language will exceed the number of native speakers in the near future. In all fields of society, especially in the fields of international business and technology, English is also the language that most people are expected to handle. From technological targets to famous name brands, catch phrases to song lyrics, English has permeated every society in the world today to such extent that most of the world's population will probably come across words or names in English on a daily basis. This is one of many other reasons why to learn languages. This puts enormous tasks before foreign language teachers and it is important to draw students' attention to this fact, show them, how are foreign language classes important.

Nowadays, as it is known to everybody unusual communicative competences based classes are becoming more and more popular than traditional ones in teaching foreign languages. Different authentic materials, internet sources, video and radio programmes are being used to make foreign language classes more interesting and effective. Technology plays an increasingly important role in teaching foreign languages. One of the most common technologies is a video in which teachers offer a

variety of materials for use in foreign language classes to improve the perception of listeners. It is important to mention that video is the most effective forms of materials which can improve students' not only listening skills but also speaking and writing skills, grammar as well as vocabulary and pronunciation.

As the effectiveness of using video in foreign language classes is very high let's discuss and get the answers to the questions why, when and how to use video in foreign language classes.

Why to use video?

First of all, it is a big motivation. Students become interested faster when experiencing the language in a lively and amusing way, i. e. through pictures, in this case moving pictures (films, documents, broadcasting etc.). In combination with sounds, video interprets the language in a comprehensive and realistic way.

Secondly, video often makes students more communicative in target language.

Thirdly, non – verbal aspects of communication are presented, too. According to Robert Merabian, the American psychologist that 80% of human communication is non-verbal. Our expressions, gestures, posture and clothing is equal to what we say. We can see those aspects in motion on a video. Moreover, the teacher can freeze any moment he wants to and discuss it with the students.

Finally, cross-cultural comparison is an indivisible feature of authentic materials. Observing differences in culture is essential for understanding other nations. Awareness of cultural background is



important in learning a language. Therefore it is essential to highlight cultural habits, too.

When to use video? The two experts on using video at the foreign languages lessons, Stempleski and Tomalin say that video can be used at any level. It can be used as a supplementary material time to time, e. g. one a week, or it can be a part of every lesson if the course is based on it. Because video is a highly motivating device, it is useful for beginners and elementary levels as the good motivation at the beginning is crucial. Usage of video depends, of course, on sources, technical equipment and amount of time, which can be devoted to it. [2]

What to focus on while using video in foreign language classes. There are some aspects that we should take into consider, they are the following:

**Active viewing-** The students should be actively involved when watching. They should know in advance what they are going to watch before they get some tasks connected with watching. Active watching is especially important in watching recipes.

**Vocabulary** - Revision of vocabulary – students' vocabulary can be exercised and reviewed; Building vocabulary – new vocabulary or lexical units can be introduced and acquired from a certain sequence;

**Grammar-** Revision of grammar – grammar already known to students can be toughen up; Grammar presentation – certain grammatical structures are presented;

**Pronunciation-** Sounds, stress and intonation exercises;

**Listening / speaking skills** -Viewing understanding – comprehension of visual component; Listening – focus on spoken utterances; Oral retelling – saying the story orally; Speaking – spoken presentation to the topic of the sequence;

Discussion – discussing the topic in a group;

**Reading and writing-** Reading – reading activities connected with the video sequence; Taking notes – taking notes during watching; Writing – summary writing or creative writing;

**Cross – cultural matters** - Cultural apprehension – cultural concerns, effects;

Cross – cultural comparison – comparing learner's native culture with culture of the country of which the language they are learning; As we use video to make our classes more interesting we should have testing of video sequence. Examination based on video sequence:

There are two types of video material – educative video and authentic video. Educative materials are CDs and DVDs which come together with textbook or which had been created for educative purposes. Authentic video is material primarily intended for native speakers, e. g. TV programmes, broadcasting, news, advertisements or films.

When using video in foreign language classes, it is worth paying attention to the suggestions for lesson planning given by Tomalin and Stempleski. According to Tomalin and Stempleski, it is important to prepare the lesson plan and the material thoroughly. It might be time – consuming, but once it is done, it can be used again next year in other class and other teachers can use it, too. The teacher should consider the needs of his students.

When selecting a sequence, the teacher should choose a suitable part, which the students will be interested in. They usually do not consider a video to be an educational material. It is rather entertainment for them. If it were a boring sequence for them, they would not be willing to learn through it.

The length should be adequate to the length of the lesson, to the level of the students and their age. The shortest sequence may be about thirty seconds long.

It should be possible to use the sequence for more than one activity. Otherwise it may be waste of time. The teacher has to consider his pupils' skills carefully. The level of language in the sequence should be neither too low nor too high for them. However, it is not a crucial parameter when choosing a sequence. The teacher can still provide the script and the video will provide the context, which is a basic clue to understand it.

Next a teacher should consider whether there are the relevant language items that he intends to present to the students. If his intention is a revision of vocabulary, it is necessary the sequence to contain it.

The teacher is recommended by the authors to use scripts with the video itself as well. He should use it not only in the lesson, but also during the preparation, because it will show him what language is used. The video itself will show behaviour and context. The video and the script complement each other.

Once the teacher has chosen a sequence, he may need to prepare some worksheets. He may need and overhead projector presentation, extra activities, transcripts of dialogues, commentaries etc. He should leave himself a lot of time, because it may be extremely time-consuming. [2]

There are some basic techniques for using video in the foreign language classes and we can suggest the following techniques:

### **1. Sound off / vision on (silent viewing)**

This technique can be used to imitate the language activity about happening on the screen or to concentrate on language production through guessing or prediction tasks.

### **2. Sound on / vision off**

The pupils can guess the characters, setting, conditions etc.



### 3. Pause / freeze – frame control

- With sound on, the teacher can pause the starting point of every exchange and ask the students to predict words or utterances.

- With sound on, the teacher can pause important moments in the plot and ask the students questions about the situation. They can comment on previous actions and predict following ones, too.

- The teacher can pause shots of characters' faces and the students can comment on their facial expressions, their feelings, thoughts etc.

### 4. Sound and vision on (listening and viewing comprehension)

- The students get worksheets beforehand and have to fill it in during viewing.

- The students get worksheet after the viewing and have to fill in the correct answers or answer questions etc.

- The students are looking for rhymes / something in a certain colour / something beginning with a certain letter in the sequence.

- The students are said what are they going to watch and are asked to guess what will they see / hear. After viewing, they can compare their guesses.

- The students are given the script and are asked to mark the direct speech.

### 5. Jumbling sequences

The students watch pieces of a sequence in jumbled order and should decide what is the correct order of the video.

### 6. Split viewing

One half of the students see the sequence without sound, the other half can only hear the sound without pictures. Various activities can follow. [2]

When using video in the classes how to read and use of film and TV:

In teacher's resource material *Penguin Readers Teacher's Guide to Using Film and TV* (1999) by Carolyn Walker, there are useful information about reading, using video in teaching and combining those two methods. The learners can experience the spoken language in action through watching video. They can see the settings as well as the movements, body language and the characters' appearances. They can watch the importance of gestures, facial expressions and eye contact in communication. It can be a good background to cross-cultural comparison, too. In comparison with pictures, that are very often use in language teaching, video has the main advantage in extensity of movement and time.

TV and films are not intended as teaching materials. It means that it is a good source of authentic material. However, it is important to remember that there might appear language difficulties. [3]

Students should be aware of active watching, i. e. they are not supposed to relax during watching, but

actively respond. There are a lot of activities that can be done before, during or after.

Video, in particular, is an invaluable educational tool that teachers often neglect to use or misuse. It is not uncommon for teachers to simply play a movie in class without challenging students or getting them involved. The most important thing is that you make your video lessons meaningful, fun, and interesting for your students. If possible, your lessons should integrate listening, speaking, reading and writing. I would also like to add culture as a fifth skill. Making your own videos about your country, family or friends is a good way to introduce your students to authentic English and your culture. Video helps to raise a learner's pragmatic awareness, that is, the importance of context in deciding the speaker's intention. Pragmatics also includes gestures, facial expressions and other non-verbal forms of communication that are culturally bound. Users prefer material that is especially beneficial for visual learners. The use of video with text is particularly efficient in enhancing levels of comprehension and, consequently, supersedes the power of text alone.

Video can increase input through arousing student interest in English. Images may help aid understanding and learning of concepts that are difficult to explain verbally. This is especially true for lower level learners. [4]

Actually most students are not so eager to learn grammar, because some of them think that it's a waste of time. Thus they try to learn more geographical terms, terms on their speciality and different expressions. But in my opinion it is good to learn English according to four main skills like reading, listening, writing and speaking.

Using different videos through discussion method is a pure CLT activity. The use of this method gives teacher an opportunity to see all students communicating with each other. Students are interacting with each other the task is authentic, it gives students reasons to talk to each other as it happens in real life. The task for students is to discuss what they have watched and make sure that everybody understands the purpose of the video. In order to do it students have to watch the video and discuss together, either by asking questions from each other or explaining to each other what they have understood from the video. Another principle of CLT which exists in the activity is no controlled practice of language. Students are free to communicate, there is a friendly atmosphere, and the trust is established for students so that they are not afraid of speaking and making mistakes. The role of a teacher is a facilitator and supporter for students, a teacher is motivating them to speak in any way, if there are questions, a teacher is an advisor. Besides a teacher support there is a peer support too. When students explain their piece of information, other students



listen and if there are some misunderstandings they ask for clarifications. Or if some words are not clear or a student lacks some vocabulary to speak, a peer is there to help and together they explain their information to the new group.

Another important thing that teachers should take into consider while using video is technical equipment. They should remember the following:

- The teacher should familiarize himself with the equipment. He should know how to use the controls.
- Before the class, the teacher should have enough time to set the equipment. He has to check whether everything is switched on and working correctly.
- He should play the cassette / DVD to check the sound and picture.
- Check whether the sound is audible at the back of the room.
- The teacher should ensure that everybody will be able to see the screen and that there are no lights reflecting on the screen.
- He should find a good place for himself – where he will be during watching so that he can control both video and students.

In conclusion, it is again important to mention that organizing classes by using modern pedagogical technologies as well as video can really help students to be motivated and to better their languages skills such as speaking, listening, writing, their vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. So teachers should try to make their lessons more efficient and interesting by using video and other authentic materials, in such cases they can get objectives and learning outcomes that they have put before themselves when preparing lesson plans.

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