

THE USE OF VIDEO AS AN AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, a great tendency towards the use of technology and its integration into the curriculum has gained a great importance. Particularly, the use of video as an audio-visual material in foreign language teaching classrooms has grown rapidly because of the increasing emphasis on communicative techniques, and it is obvious that the use of video is a great help for foreign language teachers in stimulating and facilitating the target language. Keeping all this in mind, the purpose of this article was to provide the required information for foreign language teachers (FLT) so that they can make use of video efficiently in the classroom. Reasons for video implication in FLT classroom and teacher's role in this process have been revealed along with some practical techniques for video implication.

Key Words: Video, activity, teaching foreign language, techniques

YABANCI DİL ÖĞRETİMİNDE GÖRSEL-İŞİTSEL DERS ARACI OLARAK VİDEONUN KULLANILMASI

ÖZET

Son yıllarda teknolojinin her alanda kullanılması ve bunun günlük hayatımızın ayrılmaz bir parçası olması yadsınmaz bir gerçektir. Ders araç ve gereçlerinin kullanımında teknolojiyi gözardı etmek olanaklı değildir. Bu yüzden ki teknolojinin kullanımı ders müfredatlarında yer bulmasına yönelik çalışmalar büyük önem kazanmıştır. Ayrıca, yabancı dil öğretiminde iletişimsel tekniklerin etkisinin artması hedef dili öğretmeyi kolaylaştırıcı ve hızlandırıcı görsel-ışitsel araç olarak videonun katkısı bilinmektedir. Bu makalede yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin videoyu hedef dili etkili bir şekilde öğretebilmesine yönelik öneriler, ve bu süreç içerisinde yabancı dil öğretmenlerinin rolü ve önemli teknikler ve etkinlikler sunulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Video, etkinlik, yabancı dil öğretimi, teknikler

I. INTRODUCTION

Language learning is a complex process: in this process, language teachers can't be far away from the technology, which is the application of scientific knowledge to practical tasks by organisations that involve people and machines. It is a fact that technology cannot be separated from society. Machines have social origins and they emerge from the needs of society. Therefore, teachers need technologies relevant to the teaching-learning situation. If the educationalists want children to be technologically equipped, all the changes and preparations ought to be done within the curriculum, school, architecture, teaching organisation and finance.

It is a well-known fact that audio-visual materials are a great help in stimulating and facilitating the learning of a foreign language. According to Wright (1976:1) many media and many styles of visual presentation are useful to the language learner. That is to say, all audio-visual materials have positive contributions to language learning as long as they are used at the right time, in the right place. In language learning and teaching process, learner use his eyes as well as his ears; but his eyes are basic in learning. River (1981:399) claims that it clearly contributes to the understanding of another culture by providing vicarious contact with speakers of the language, through both audio and visual means.

One of the most appreciated materials applied to language learning and teaching is, of course, video. A recent large-scale survey by Canning-Wilson (2000) reveals that the students like learning language through the use of video, which is often used to mean quite different things in language teaching. For some, it means no more than replaying television programmes on a video recorder for viewing in class or private study. For others, it implies the use of a video camera in class to record and play back to learners their activities and achievements in a foreign language teaching. But our concern here is to present the use of video in language teaching most effectively as a visual aid presenting the target language naturally. It is a fact that most students who have taken English courses formally remain insufficient in the ability to use the language and to understand its use, in normal communication, whether in the spoken or the written mode. The problem arises not from the methodology itself but from the misuse or incomplete use of it. That is to say, teachers still evaluate student performance according to the sentence structure and situational settings. In addition, teachers have to take into

consideration their performances in terms of communicative acts. But this not necessarily mean that teachers should pay full attention to only communicative acts in the preparation and presentation of language teaching materials.

In recent years, the use of video in English classes has grown rapidly as a result of the increasing emphasis on communicative techniques. Being a rich and valuable resource, video is well-liked by both students and teachers (Hemei, 1997:45). Students like it because video presentations are interesting, challenging, and stimulating to watch. Video shows them how people behave in the culture whose language they are learning by bringing into the classroom a wide range of communicative situations. Another important factor for teachers that makes it more interesting and enjoyable is that it helps to promote comprehension. We know that deficiencies in vocabulary can make even a simple task very difficult for our students. Video makes meaning clearer by illustrating relationships in a way that is not possible with words, which proves a well-known saying that a picture is worth thousand words. Two minutes of video can provide an hour of classroom work, or it can be used to introduce a range of activity for five minutes. A ten-minute programme can be useful for more advanced students. Less advanced students may wish something much shorter because their limited command of the language also limits their attention span.

It is obvious that non-native speakers of a language rely more heavily on visual clues to support their understanding and there is no doubt that video is an obvious medium for helping learners to interpret the visual clues effectively. According to a research, language teachers like video because it motivates learners, brings the real world into the classroom, contextualizes language naturally and enables learners to experience authentic language in a controlled environment. Moreover, in this issue Arthur (1999) claims that video can give students realistic models to imitate for role-play; can increase awareness of other cultures by teaching appropriateness and suitability.

II. REASONS FOR VIDEO IMPLICATION IN FLT CLASSROOM.

A great advantage of video is that it provides authentic language input. Movies and TV programmes are made for native speakers, so in that sense video provides authentic language input (Katchen,2002). That is to say, it is obvious that the practical implications of video in the classroom in any classroom environment it can easily be used; teacher can step in the process whenever he wishes; he can stop, start and rewind to repeat it for several times where necessary. Any selected short sequence from the programme can be utilized for intensive study. To pay special attention to a particular point in the programme it is possible to run in slow motion or at half speed or without sound.

Besides, the learner can concentrate on the language in detail and interpret what has been said, repeat it, predict the reply and so on. The learner can also concentrate in detail on visual clues to meaning such as facial expression, dress, gesture, posture and on details of the environment. Even without hearing the language spoken clues to meaning can be picked up from the vision alone. Using visual clues to meaning in order to enhance learning is an important part of video methodology.

The other point that should be focused is that in foreign language to interpret attitude is very difficult owing to the fact that the listener concentrates himself on the verbal message, not the visual clues to meaning. Video gives the students practice in concluding attitudes. The rhythmic hand and arm movements, head nods, head gestures are related to the structure of the message. Moreover, the students have a general idea of the culture of the target language. It may be enjoyable for the learners to have something different for language learning apart from the course books and cassettes for listening.

On the other hand, besides advantages, the disadvantages of video should also be taken into account. The main disadvantages are cost, inconvenience, maintenance and some cases, fear of technology. Additionally, the sound and vision, quality of the copies or home-produced materials may not be ideal. Another important issue in this case is that the teacher should be well-trained on using and exploiting the video. Otherwise, it becomes boring and purposeless for students.

III. TEACHER'S ROLE

Just as in many English teaching situations, the teacher plays a key role in using the video as an aid for language teaching for s/he has the prime responsibility for creating a successful language learning environment. The teacher should get use of the power of video films. At his point, video should never be considered as a medium which rivals or overshadows the teacher, but it is a useful aid for him. That is, it can not replace the teacher because it can only teach things which are recorded on, and this makes the learning foreign language attractive. It is certain that the teacher is as effective as the video film in teaching through video, because he is the only

person who enables the learners to comprehend what they watch and hear by using some of the communicative techniques. The teacher can be a controller, an assessor on organiser, a prompter and a participant as well.

The teacher is a controller because he or she is the only person who controls not only what the learners do but when they speak as well while they are watching the video film. The teacher is also an assessor because he or she assesses the learner’s work in order to see how well they are performing. The teacher should wait until the end of the activity and then he must evaluate the learner’s outputs. Furthermore, the teacher is an organiser because he needs to be so. He should be a good organiser in teaching the foreign language through video, and should know exactly what to lead to success. He should not give useless information or confusing instructions to the learners in order not to waste a lot of time. He should clearly explain what they are going to watch and what their task is.

The other role that the teacher carries is being a prompter because he acts as a prompter. When there is a silence viewing or what the learners are confused about what to do next, he is expected to encourage learners participate. The teacher is a participant because he participates in the activities while teaching a foreign language through video. He knows the materials and all the details about them, which help the learners feel comfort and facilitates learning. Considering these factors in mind, the teacher should prepare to promote active viewing and facilitate successful language learning. This requires being familiar with the video materials before they are used in class. The teacher should develop a plan for each video unit and encourage active viewing. To aid comprehension, he should prepare viewing guides which are easy and related to the language level of the students.

IV. SOME PRACTICAL TECHNIQUES FOR VIDEO IMPLICATION

It is easy for a group of imaginative teachers experienced in using video in ELT to sit down and draw up a list of different ways of using video in the classroom. There are many accounts where interesting video lessons are reported in the literature. Canning-Wilson (2000) suggests that as F/SL educators we must not loose sight of the educational purpose it has in the language classroom although it may be a popular tool to use with students. To get a successful result in language teaching using the video as an aid there are some techniques that should be benefited by both teacher and learner.

Table1. Some practical techniques for video implication in classroom

TECHNIQUE	CLASSROOM IMPLICATION
ACTIVE VIEWING	Active viewing increases the students’ enjoyment and satisfaction and focuses their attention on the main idea of the video presentation. So, it is necessary for students to take an active part in video teaching presentations. Before starting the presentation the teacher writes some key questions on the board about the presentation so that the students get an overview of the content of it. After viewing the questions the students answer the questions orally, or the students may take notes while viewing. For more detailed comprehension students are provided a cue sheet or viewing guides and let them watch and listen for specific details or specific features of language. However, it should be kept in mind that the level of the students should be taken into account and adapt the technique according to their levels.
FREEZE FRAMING AND PREDICTION	Freeze framing means stopping the picture on the screen by pressing the still or pause button. Video gives us an additional dimension of information about the characters’ body language, facial expressions, emotions, reactions, and responses. Teacher freezes the picture when he or she wants to teach words and expressions regarding mood and emotions, to ask questions about a particular scene, or to call students’ attention to some points. By freezing the scene the students can be asked what is going to happen next. So they speculate on what will happen in the next act. Freeze framing is excellent for speculation. This activity also fires the imagination of the students by leading them predicting and deducing further information about the characters.

SILENT VIEWING	As video is an audiovisual medium, the sound and the vision are separate components. Silent viewing arouses student interests, stimulates thought, and develops skills of anticipation. In silent viewing, the video segment is played with the sound off using only the picture. This activity can also be a prediction technique when students are watching video for the first time. One way of doing this is to play the video segment without the sound and tell students to observe the behaviour of the characters and to use their power of deduction. Then press the pause button at intervals to stop the picture on the screen and get students to guess what is happening and what the characters might be saying or ask students what has happened up to that point. Finally, video segment is replayed with the sound on so that learners can compare their impressions with what actually happens in the video.
SOUND ON AND VISION OFF ACTIVITY	This activity can be interesting and useful to play a section of a video unit and remove the visual element from the presentation by obscuring the picture so that students can hear only the dialogue but unable to see the action. Through this activity the students predict or reconstruct what has happened visually depending only what they hear.
REPETITION AND ROLE-PLAY	When there are some difficult language points in the video unit, closely repetition can be a necessary step to communicative production exercises. A scene on video is replayed with certain pauses for repetition either individually or in chorus. When students have a clear understanding of the presentation, they are asked to act out the scene using as much of the original version as they can remember. When students become confident with role playing and are sure of vocabulary and language structures, more creative activity can be introduced in which they are asked to improvise the scene to fit their views of the situation and the characters they are playing. Role-play involves students as active participants. As each student plays the assigned role, s/he becomes more and more involved. This activity also helps students to better understanding their own behaviour and to be more able to respond in a positive way to various human relationships. In other words, role playing is a good communicative activity and true preparation for real-life situations. It gives a chance to students to apply what they are learning.
REPRODUCTION ACTIVITY	After students have seen a section, students are asked to reproduce either what is being said, to describe what is happening, or to write or retell what has happened. This activity encourages students to try out their knowledge. Students will benefit from experimenting in English, even though it is challenging and mistakes are made. As it seems a bit difficult to perform, guidance, help and reassurance may be needed.
DUBBING ACTIVITY	This activity can be done when students have the necessary language competence. In this activity, students are asked to fill in the missing dialogues after watching a sound-off video episode. It is interesting and enjoyable for the students to complete a scene from the video by dubbing.
FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY	It is important that a video presentation should lead to follow-up activity as the basis for further extended oral practice. Discussion stimulates communication among students, and it helps to achieve communicative practice. With this activity students have an opportunity to develop sharing and co-operative skills.

V. CONCLUSION

Languages are not fixed but constantly changing, so is the media; television, radio and newspaper which are an extraordinarily rich source of language in use. In order to expose foreign language learners to the target language the use of technology need to be exploited in the classroom as much as possible. For that reason a great tendency towards the use of technology and its integration into the curriculum developed by the foreign language teachers has gained a great importance. Particularly the use of video has received increasing attention in recent studies on technology integration into teacher education curricula (Özkan, 2002:1)

It is an undeniable fact that video is one of the best materials that enables students to practice what they have learned through various techniques. As Canning-Wilson (2000) describes video, at the most basic level of instruction, is a form of communication and it can be achieved without the help of language, since we often interact by gesture, eye contact and facial expression to convey meaning. Thus it is clearly true such kind of

materials present complete communicative situations by means of the dynamic, immediate and accessible combination of sound and vision. The students contextualize the language they have learnt. In other words, they can see and hear the speakers in dialogues; their ages, their sex, perhaps their relationship one to another, their way of dressing, social status, what they are doing and perhaps their feelings. Moreover, as previously slightly mentioned, paralinguistic features such as facial expressions or hand gestures provide aural clues of intonation. The learners can also see the setting of the communication on the screen, so they can clarify whether the situation is formal or informal.

Methodologically speaking, watching video films should be different from passive television viewing. So, the teacher should encourage the learners to watch the films actively, by using the supplementary materials, such as worksheets prepared by him or supplied with the films. The learners should participate in the activities, if possible, they themselves set up some projects in the target language, by recording their own activities such as speaking, interviewing, reporting etc. Shortly, the role of the learner is not to be a passive viewer but an active member in the triangle of the video, the teacher and the learner.

To reach successful and effective results with teaching language through video, the learners and the teachers should perform their tasks perfectly. Moreover they should be informed of the new methods and techniques in FLT. To do this, seminars can be organised. A group of teachers and experts should prepare video cassettes, which will enable the schools to obtain them easily. These cassettes should be modern, interesting and in parallel with the syllabus. In a word, it can be concluded that the use of technology is nowadays inevitable in the classroom. When used appropriately, video is quite beneficial for learners and teachers as long as they are considered only as mere entertainment, but carefully chosen films can be a useful and extremely motivational teaching tool for both practicing listening skills and stimulating speaking and writing (Katchen, 2002).

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APPENDIX 1.

Video Materials Designed for Language Teaching

FUNCTION	AIM	VIDEO MATERIALS
Presenting Language	To present examples of language in use in an appropriate context and facilitate learning the target language as a supplementary material.	Follow Me, A Weekend Away, A Week by the Sea, The Story of English, American Tongues, Talking Proper...etc.
Presenting the Country and its Culture	To present examples of culture and way of life of the target language.	Focus on Britain, Welcome to Britain...etc.
Telling Stories	To present language with the help of the specially designed video materials including stories, tales etc, which attract attention and start discussion in the classroom.	Sherlock Holmes, Adventures of Charlie McBride, ...etc.
Using the sources of Non-ELT materials	To present the language without having any teaching purpose using the authentic sources of non-elt materials produced for the native speakers such as cartoons, feature films, documentaries, news, current affairs programmes etc.	Tom and Jerry, Disneyworld Cartoons, World Report, Lary King Live (CNN) ...etc.