

VIDEO MATERIALS AS LANGUAGE SOURCES IN TEACHING SPEAKING SKILLS



<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10198670>

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***Abstract:** This article explores the usage of video materials as effective language sources in teaching speaking skills. In language education, the development of speaking proficiency is often a challenging aspect for learners, as it requires not only a solid grasp of grammar and vocabulary but also the ability to communicate fluently, and confidently. Traditional teaching methods often fall short in providing learners with authentic and engaging speaking opportunities.*

***Keywords:** video materials, language sources, teaching, speaking skills, language education, authentic communication, language proficiency, learner-centered approach, interactive tasks, comprehension.*

In today's digital age, video materials have become increasingly accessible and popular resources for language learning. With the advancement of technology, educators now have a wide range of video materials at their disposal to support various aspects of language acquisition. One area where video materials have proven to be particularly effective is in teaching speaking skills. This article explores the benefits of using video materials as language sources in teaching speaking skills and provides practical strategies for integrating videos into speaking-focused language lessons.

Enhancing Listening Comprehension and Pronunciation

Video materials offer learners the opportunity to develop their listening comprehension skills in an authentic and engaging manner. By exposing learners to a variety of native speakers, accents, and speech patterns, videos help improve their ability to understand spoken language in real-world contexts. Students can watch and listen to dialogues, interviews, speeches, and conversations, thereby gaining exposure to different registers and styles of communication.

Moreover, videos provide visual cues that aid in understanding and interpreting non-verbal communication, such as facial expressions, gestures, and body language. These visual cues help learners decipher meaning, infer intentions, and develop their overall communicative competence.

Furthermore, video materials serve as valuable tools for improving pronunciation. Learners can observe and imitate the intonation, stress patterns, and rhythm of native speakers, allowing them to develop more accurate pronunciation skills. Videos also enable students to compare their own pronunciation with that of native speakers, facilitating self-assessment and self-correction.

Cultural Understanding and Contextualization

Language learning is closely intertwined with the culture in which it is embedded. Video materials provide a rich source of cultural content, allowing learners to gain insights into different customs, traditions, and ways of life. Through exposure to authentic videos, students can develop cultural awareness and sensitivity, which are crucial components of effective communication in a diverse world.

Videos also help contextualize language use. By presenting language in its natural setting, learners can observe how cultural norms influence communication styles and language choices. This contextualization fosters a deeper understanding of language as a dynamic and socially situated phenomenon, enabling students to use language more appropriately and effectively in real-life situations.

Promoting Speaking Fluency and Confidence

Video materials play a vital role in promoting speaking fluency and building learners' confidence in using the target language. Videos provide models of fluent speech, exposing learners to natural, authentic conversations and discourse patterns. By observing and imitating the linguistic features displayed in videos, students can internalize these patterns and apply them to their own speaking.

Videos also serve as prompts for speaking activities. Educators can design speaking tasks that require students to discuss, summarize, debate, or role-play based on video content. Such activities encourage learners to express their opinions, engage in meaningful conversations, and practice various speaking skills, such as turn-taking, negotiation, and expressing ideas clearly.

Additionally, videos create a low-risk environment for language practice. Students can rehearse and repeat their speaking tasks as many times as necessary until they feel comfortable and confident. This repetitive practice, combined with the visual and auditory support provided by videos, reduces anxiety and fear of making mistakes, thereby boosting learners' speaking fluency and self-assurance.

Integrating Video Materials: Practical Strategies

Here are some practical strategies for integrating video materials into language lessons focused on improving speaking skills:

Pre-viewing activities: Engage students in pre-viewing tasks such as predicting the content of the video, brainstorming related vocabulary, or discussing their prior

knowledge of the topic. This activates their background knowledge and prepares them for the upcoming viewing experience.

Interactive viewing: Encourage active engagement during video viewing by asking comprehension questions, pausing at strategic points to elicit predictions or opinions, or assigning specific tasks like identifying key information or taking notes. This helps students focus their attention and extract relevant linguistic and cultural information.

Post-viewing activities: Design speaking tasks that require students to reflect on the video content, share their thoughts and reactions, or engage in discussions related to the topic. These activities provide opportunities for students to practice their speaking skills, express their own ideas, and engage in meaningful communication.

Video creation: Encourage students to create their own videos as a speaking project. This allows them to apply what they have learned, demonstrate their speaking skills, and foster creativity in language use. Students can work in groups or individually to script, film, and edit their videos, thereby enhancing their speaking fluency and technological literacy.

Video materials offer a wealth of benefits for teaching speaking skills in language classrooms. By enhancing listening comprehension, promoting cultural understanding, and providing models for speaking fluency, videos empower learners to develop their spoken language proficiency in an engaging and authentic manner. Educators should harness the power of video resources and employ effective strategies to maximize their impact on students' speaking skills. By integrating video materials into language lessons, teachers can create dynamic and interactive learning environments that foster communicative competence and empower learners to become confident speakers of the target language.

The role of the teacher's use of videos in the ESP classroom

The teacher's role has changed and continues to change from being a boss teacher, authoritarian and dictator into becoming a leader teacher, facilitator, and inventor of learning processes. According to Susan Stempleski incorporating videos in teaching English may become mystifying for many learners; since it includes visual element, audio experience, and spoken language. Teachers, of course, occupy a great role in determining whether video's use in the classroom has affected positively or negatively students' enhancement in the language classroom [Stempleski & Arcario, 1992]. Teachers should take into their consideration that the selection of the video would be done with specific conditions, in order to maximize the chances of realizing the main aim of motivating students. They have to select the video

according to their objectives, their students' level, and their needs (for example, the teacher cannot use a video with difficult pronunciation plus no subtitles).

In addition, she argued that: The teacher is there to choose appropriate sequences, prepare the students for the viewing experience, focus the students' attention on the content, play and replay the video as needed, design or select viewing tasks, and follow up with suitable post viewing activities. Teachers should guide and stimulate their students' attention to be focused on the video content to be more comprehensible. This will excite students to become active -not passive- learners (through increasing their level of participation) and reduce the number of reluctant students, and then teachers should not forget to use the video as a key tool in addition to the others tools as an integrative part of the language curriculum. To select a video material teachers have to be certain of its content that should be apposite to the learners' interest, needs, and of course their level. Moreover, the teacher has to choose the video that can be used fittingly and assist their students for successful achievement in the duration of practicing the given tasks, since majority of videos are stuffed with lots of cultural aspects.

Video activities in class The teacher uses and integrates the video to introduce different activities in order to improve his/her students' communicative skills. As it was mentioned by Jim Scrivener videos playback activities that teachers rely on are divided into three general types. They are: preview, viewing, and follow up activities. Each lesson working with the video incorporates those activities [Scrivener, 2005].

Preview activities They concern what the students do before watching the video. The primary purpose of previewing activities is to prepare students to see the video by means of activating schema-that is, tapping students' background knowledge or tying newly introduced information to materials previously introduced in a thematic unit. In all cases previewing activities are meant to aid comprehension of the video in addition to enhancing the thematic unit. Teachers should select and adapt activities that evolve naturally out of the video and meet the needs of the students as well as fit the goals of the class [Stempleski & Arcario, 1992]. There are four distinctive preview activities: - Students take a look at the worksheets that they will use during watching the video. - Students have to guess what will come from the given information or images. - Students will discuss the topic dealt with in the video. - The language focuses on vocabulary, function, and grammar that is mentioned in the video content. Here are some examples of pre-viewing activities:

Brainstorming. Students working in groups, consider a problem or issue related to the video, and let loose a hail of possible solutions or suggestions, in random order

as they occur to them. A rapid activity like this one activates background information, preparing the students for the video screening.

Video title discussion. Students examine the title of the video and speculate on the content of the video. This quick activity can be completed in small groups or as a class, the former allowing for more discussion and participation.

Vocabulary Matching. In this activity students match the words to the pictures that they will come across while viewing. They should give their own definitions and predict how they can be connected with the film they are going to watch.

Viewing activities It concerns what students do while watching a video. They are activities practiced during viewing the recording. Viewing activities help students focus on important features of the video or on character or plot development at crucial junctures in the video [Stempleski & Arcario, 1992]. They have many forms:

- Activities can be listening, looking or interpreting.
- The instruction of the activities might be oral or in a worksheet.
- Activities may focus specifically on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation or functions that can be observed through focusing on gestures, facial expressions, and body language of the native speakers.

Vision on/ Sound off Students view a scene with the sound turned off. They then predict the content of the scene, write their own script and perform it while standing next to the television. After the performances students watch the scene with the sound on and decide which group was the funniest or the nearest to the original. This is a good fun exercise. It is very graphic with plenty of gestures to stimulate the imagination. Good for intermediate levels.

Post viewing activities They deal with what the students do after watching the video. The teacher has plenty choices of activities that can be done after viewing activities. For example: - Ask the students to write a letter from one character -from the video- to another (they develop their writing skill). - Play a scene of a video or even its continuation. Students become creators through their imagination and they are responsible for their learning. In addition, they develop their speaking skill. - Through discussion and interpretation, the teacher makes a connection between the video's content and students' real life and experiences. - Study the new language introduced in the video. - Both teacher and students discuss and decide of what should be do in the next session.

Order the events. After watching the clip, give students a set of event cards (no more than ten), in pairs or individually. Each card should contain one or two sentences of events from the movie clip. These can be as significant or insignificant as you want, depending on the length of the clip and what the focus of the lesson is. Students have to rearrange the events into the correct order.

Observe and write Students view a scene (this always works better if there is a lot happening) then write a newspaper article on what they have witnessed. This lesson is based on the fight scene from Bridget Jones’s Diary, students work for a local newspaper and have to write an article on a fight between two men over a beautiful, young girl. Pre-viewing and while-viewing tasks allow them to work on new vocabulary, while the post-viewing task gives them plenty of practice on past tenses. Good for intermediate levels.

Agree/disagree activity. Students react individually to a series of statements related to the video. After comparing responses in small groups, students comment on a statement with which they either agree or disagree.

Alternative ending In this activity, students are encouraged to practice story-writing techniques, in the present or future tense, depending on what suits your lesson. Don’t worry if some students have seen the movie already—knowing how the story really unfolds will only enhance their creative prospects. Remember to be clear that they cannot simply write the real ending of the movie! Play part of a movie—as short or long as you want—which can be from any point in the movie. Afterwards, put students in small groups to create a new ending. They can write it out, or present it in a graphic novel style with pictures and words. The presentation part of the class involves the groups reading their alternative ending to the group. Top marks for the wildest, wackiest ideas! Whatever the kind of activity, the teacher has to work harder not to let their students mentally switched off, make them think and increase their desire to challenge. Then, let them work together either in pairs, groups, or whole class through communicative activities. With those types of activities, teachers can motivate their students and improve their communicative skills, especially speaking. The activities can vary from one teacher to another depending on his/her teaching method, objectives, and students' needs and abilities.

Adopting communicative methods and techniques in teaching speaking empowers learners to become confident and proficient speakers of the target language. By incorporating task-based learning, role-plays, information gap activities, discussions, authentic materials, and effective error correction, teachers can create an interactive and engaging learning environment that promotes meaningful communication. Speaking-focused language lessons that prioritize authentic and purposeful language use enable learners to develop their fluency, accuracy, and confidence, preparing them for effective communication in real-life situations.

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