THE ROLE OF AUDIO-VISUAL MEDIA IN DEVELOPING LANGUAGE SKILLS AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

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Annotation: This article explores the role of audio-visual media in developing learners' language skills and cultural awareness. Audio-visual materials, including videos, films, documentaries, animations, songs, podcasts, and online educational resources, provide learners with authentic language input and create opportunities for meaningful communication. The use of such materials can improve students' listening comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, speaking, and overall communicative competence. At the same time, audio-visual media introduce learners to different cultures, traditions, lifestyles, social values, and patterns of communication. This helps students develop intercultural competence and a deeper understanding of cultural diversity. The article also highlights the importance of selecting age-appropriate and educationally relevant materials and using them with effective classroom activities. Overall, the integration of audio-visual media into language teaching can make the learning process more engaging, interactive, and effective while simultaneously developing both linguistic competence and cultural awareness.

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada audio-vizual vositalarning o‘quvchilarning til ko‘nikmalarini va madaniy xabardorligini rivojlantirishdagi o‘rni yoritiladi. Video, film, hujjatli filmlar, animatsiyalar, qo‘shiqlar, podkastlar va onlayn ta’lim resurslari kabi audio-vizual materiallar o‘quvchilarga autentik til namunalarini taqdim etib, mazmunli muloqot qilish imkoniyatlarini yaratadi. Bunday materiallardan foydalanish o‘quvchilarning tinglab tushunish, talaffuz, lug‘at boyligi, gapirish hamda umumiy

kommunikativ kompetensiyasini rivojlantirishga yordam beradi. Shu bilan birga, audio-vizual vositalar o‘quvchilarni turli xalqlarning madaniyati, an’analari, turmush tarzi, ijtimoiy qadriyatlari va muloqot usullari bilan tanishtiradi. Bu esa o‘quvchilarda madaniyatlararo kompetensiyani shakllantirish va madaniy xilma-xillikni chuqurroq anglashga yordam beradi. Maqolada, shuningdek, o‘quvchilarning yoshi va ta’limiy ehtiyojlariga mos materiallarni tanlash hamda ulardan samarali dars faoliyatlari bilan birgalikda foydalanish muhimligi ta’kidlanadi. Umuman olganda, audio-vizual vositalarni chet tilini o‘qitish jarayoniga integratsiya qilish ta’lim jarayonini yanada qiziqarli, interaktiv va samarali qilish bilan birga, o‘quvchilarning ham lingvistik kompetensiyasini, ham madaniy xabardorligini rivojlantirishga xizmat qiladi.

Keywords: Audio-visual media, language skills, cultural awareness, intercultural competence, language learning, authentic materials, communicative competence, visual learning, foreign language teaching.

Kalit so‘zlar: Audio-vizual vositalar, til ko‘nikmalari, madaniy xabardorlik, madaniyatlararo kompetensiya, til o‘rganish, kommunikativ kompetensiya, vizual ta’lim, chet tilini o‘qitish.

The development of modern educational technologies has significantly changed the way foreign languages are taught and learned. In contemporary classrooms, language learners are no longer dependent only on textbooks, printed exercises and teacher explanations. They can encounter the target language through films, television programmes, online videos, podcasts, advertisements, songs, documentaries and other forms of digital media. This expansion of learning resources creates new opportunities for teachers to provide authentic language input and meaningful cultural contexts.

Audio-visual media are particularly valuable because they combine sound and visual information. Unlike isolated audio recordings, videos allow learners to observe facial expressions, gestures, body language, social relationships and physical settings while listening to language. Donaghy emphasizes that film can provide authentic and

varied language and can help learners understand spoken interaction through a visual context. Therefore, audio-visual materials can bridge the gap between classroom English and the language learners may encounter in real communication.

The importance of such materials is not limited to linguistic development. Language and culture are closely connected, and successful communication requires learners to understand not only words and grammatical structures but also the cultural meanings behind communication. Tomlinson argues that films and other visual media can encourage learners to reflect on cultures as they are represented in action, thereby supporting intercultural awareness.

Audio-Visual Media and Language Skill Development

One of the main advantages of audio-visual media is their ability to expose learners to authentic language. In traditional classroom materials, language is often carefully graded and simplified. Although this is useful for beginners, learners also need opportunities to hear natural speech, different accents, conversational expressions and language used for genuine purposes. Films and online videos can provide this type of exposure. Donaghy notes that films present examples of English used in real-life situations and expose students to natural expressions and the natural flow of speech.

Listening comprehension can benefit greatly from audio-visual input. Learners are able to use visual clues to interpret meaning when they do not understand every word. For example, a speaker's facial expression, gesture, location or interaction with another person may help learners infer the meaning of an unfamiliar expression. Lansford explains that images can make difficult audio more comprehensible because visual information supports the meaning of spoken language. This is especially useful for learners who may initially find authentic speech too fast or unfamiliar.

Audio-visual materials can also contribute to vocabulary development. New words are easier to remember when they are presented in meaningful contexts rather than as isolated items. A learner who hears a new word while watching an action,

object or situation can associate the vocabulary item with several forms of information simultaneously. Teachers can pause a video, ask learners to predict meaning from context, and then check their interpretations. Such activities transform passive viewing into active vocabulary learning.

Speaking skills can also be developed through video-based tasks. After watching a short scene, students can describe what happened, retell the story, imitate a dialogue, role-play the characters or discuss the problem presented in the video. Donaghy points out that film sequences can serve as models for speaking and can provide a starting point for discussions, debates, role plays and dialogue reconstruction. Consequently, one audio-visual text can be used to develop several language skills within one lesson.

Writing activities can follow the same materials. Students may write a summary, describe a character, create an alternative ending, write a review or respond to a cultural issue presented in a video. Thus, audio-visual media should not be viewed simply as entertainment. When integrated with appropriate tasks, they become a flexible pedagogical resource that supports the development of integrated language skills.

Audio-Visual Media and Cultural Awareness

Learning a foreign language involves entering a new cultural and communicative environment. Learners need to understand how people use language in particular social situations and why communication may differ across cultures. Audio-visual media can make these differences visible. Films and documentaries show people interacting in homes, schools, workplaces, public spaces and social events. Learners can therefore observe not only what people say but also how they behave.

Tomlinson emphasizes the value of reflecting on films and other visual media that portray cultures in action. Reflection is important because simply watching a cultural scene does not automatically lead to intercultural competence. Students should be encouraged to ask questions, compare what they see with their own experiences and

consider why people behave in particular ways. Such activities can help learners move beyond stereotypes and develop a more balanced understanding of cultural diversity.

Tomalin also highlights the importance of treating cultural awareness as an important component of language education. He argues that cultural material can be integrated into language lessons through audio, text and visual resources and that cultural learning should not necessarily be restricted to a separate 'culture corner'. This perspective is particularly relevant to audio-visual teaching because almost every video contains cultural information, whether it presents everyday communication, food, clothing, education, family life, celebrations or social behaviour.

An effective example is the British Council's 'Britain is GREAT' video series. The materials introduce learners to British life and culture through topics such as art, history, sport, literature and music, while simultaneously providing listening and vocabulary practice. The series is designed for upper-intermediate and advanced learners and includes transcripts and interactive exercises. Such resources demonstrate how language and culture can be taught together rather than as separate subjects.

Cultural awareness can also be developed by comparing the target culture with learners' own culture. For instance, after watching a video about British school life, students may discuss similarities and differences between British and Uzbek schools. They can compare school routines, teacher-student relationships, uniforms, extracurricular activities and classroom communication. This comparative approach encourages learners to recognize both cultural differences and common human experiences.

Effective Classroom Use of Audio-Visual Materials

The educational value of a video depends largely on how the teacher uses it. Simply playing a film from beginning to end may provide exposure, but it does not guarantee active learning. Teachers should select materials according to learners' age,

proficiency level, interests and learning objectives. The material should also be culturally appropriate and sufficiently clear to support comprehension.

A useful procedure consists of three stages: pre-viewing, while-viewing and post-viewing. During the pre-viewing stage, the teacher can introduce key vocabulary, show a screenshot, ask prediction questions or discuss the topic. These activities activate learners' background knowledge and prepare them for the language they will encounter.

During the while-viewing stage, teachers can divide a video into short sections and give learners focused tasks. Students might identify the main idea, choose correct answers, complete missing information, identify speakers, take notes or infer the meaning of unfamiliar expressions. Lansford recommends using the task to control the difficulty of authentic material rather than assuming that a difficult video is automatically unsuitable for lower-level learners. Teachers can also mute the audio temporarily and ask students to interpret the images before listening to the original dialogue.

The post-viewing stage provides opportunities for deeper language and cultural work. Students can summarize the video, discuss characters' behaviour, role-play a scene, debate an issue or compare the culture presented with their own culture. Tomlinson's approach is particularly useful here because reflection transforms viewing into intercultural learning. Students should be encouraged to consider their initial assumptions and whether the video confirmed or challenged them.

Teachers should also avoid presenting one video as a complete representation of an entire country or culture. Cultural diversity exists within every society, and audio-visual materials may contain stereotypes or selective representations. Teachers can therefore use several sources and invite students to question what they see. This critical approach helps learners understand that culture is complex and constantly changing.

Another important consideration is accessibility. Authentic videos may contain fast speech, idioms, regional accents and unfamiliar vocabulary. Teachers can support learners through subtitles, transcripts, repeated viewing and shorter extracts. The British Council's video resources, for example, combine videos with transcripts and interactive exercises, demonstrating how visual and textual support can be integrated into language practice.

Benefits, Challenges and Pedagogical Implications

The integration of audio-visual media offers several important benefits. First, it can increase learners' motivation because videos and films are familiar forms of communication outside the classroom. Donaghy argues that film can make language learning more enjoyable and motivating. Second, audio-visual resources provide rich and authentic input. Third, they can integrate listening, speaking, vocabulary, reading and writing in a single sequence of activities. Finally, they create opportunities for cultural learning and intercultural reflection.

However, the use of audio-visual media also presents challenges. Technical problems, limited internet access, unsuitable content, excessive video length and learners' passive viewing can reduce effectiveness. Another challenge is cognitive overload: learners may concentrate so much on understanding the story or images that they pay insufficient attention to language. Teachers therefore need to select short, purposeful extracts and provide clear tasks.

The literature also suggests that the teacher remains central even when technology is used extensively. Audio-visual media should support teaching rather than replace it. Teachers need to establish learning objectives, choose appropriate resources, guide learners' attention and encourage reflection. Lansford stresses that carefully designed tasks can make authentic video manageable and useful for language learners.

Conclusion

In conclusion, audio-visual media have significant potential for developing both language skills and cultural awareness. Films, short videos, documentaries, songs and online educational resources can provide authentic language, visual context and opportunities for meaningful communication. They can improve listening comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation, speaking and writing while also exposing learners to cultural practices, values and patterns of interaction.

The most effective use of audio-visual media involves active learning rather than passive watching. Pre-viewing preparation, focused while-viewing tasks and reflective post-viewing activities can transform a video into a powerful language-learning resource. Cultural comparison and critical discussion are especially important because they help learners develop intercultural competence rather than simply memorize facts about another country. As the literature reviewed in this article demonstrates, audio-visual media can connect linguistic development with cultural understanding and make foreign language learning more authentic, engaging and meaningful.

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