

**Определение наиболее эффективного способа применения фильмов в обучении иностранным языкам**

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**Аннотация.** Целью данного проекта является исследование в области преподавания иностранных языков с помощью видеоматериалов: выявление всех аспектов и преимуществ данного метода, разработка алгоритма выбора видеоматериалов в учебных целях. Результаты исследования могут быть применены преподавателями в школах и ВУЗах при разработке собственной методики преподавания иностранных языков.

**Ключевые слова:** иностранные языки, кинематограф, видеоматериалы, обучение иностранным языкам

**Estimation Of The Most Effective Way Of Using Films In Foreign Language Teaching**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of the project is to study the field of foreign language teaching with the help of video materials: to identify all possible aspects and advantages of this method, to develop the algorithm for selecting video materials for educational purposes. The results of the project may be applied by teachers and professors in designing unique methods of foreign language teaching.

**Keywords:** foreign languages, cinema, video material, foreign language teaching

## **Introduction**

There are many ways to learn a new language without cramming and make the process gratifying. One such way is learning through films, therefore the issue of the assessment of a more beneficial method of using films in foreign language teaching sphere is important.

There are billions of people in the world who are learning foreign languages. Practice is highly important in language learning, no matter what level of language a person possesses. Ways to find that necessary practice may not be obvious if a person is not living in a country where their target language is spoken.

Modern technology provides people with numerous convenient methods of foreign language learning. On the internet there are plenty of resources that contain useful materials such as clarification of grammar rules and lists of words required for any level of language. There are also many opportunities to practice everything you have learned, e.g., tests, communicating with native speakers, games, and more.

The Internet also provides a huge number of films on almost every taste and preference, and all of these films may assist in language learning. First of all, they provide a context for almost every rule and word, a learner should know in what situations a linguistic unit may be used. Secondly, every foreign language learner needs to constantly revise everything that has been learned previously. Knowledge is gradually forgotten if it is not repeated. Watching films might help in this situation as well, they can help to activate words that have been learned a long time ago and have become almost forgotten.

The main purpose of the project is to estimate and establish the most effective way of using films in foreign language teaching.

The research questions of our study are:

1. to outline different types of films and make their classification;
2. to assess what aspects should be considered while choosing a film for educational purposes;
3. to establish an efficient method of foreign language learning with the help of watching various types of films.

### **Films and Knowledge**

From the moment it was invented by the Lumiere brothers, cinema has always been providing various opportunities for viewers: it lets people experience something that they would not face with in real life, and it helps those interested in gaining additional knowledge to do it when it comes to documentary films. Eventually, a discussion on how films can be used in terms of education appears. Although films are one of the types of resources that contain a great deal of practical knowledge on how grammatical and syntactical structures are used in real-life speech, there is no method of using films for foreign language teaching.

Firstly, the definition of “film” should be considered. Film is a series of still photographs on film, projected in rapid succession onto a screen by means of light [1]. Speaking less technically, it is a work of visual art that simulates experiences and otherwise communicates ideas, stories, perceptions, feelings, beauty, or atmosphere through the use of moving images.

It is common knowledge that all films are divided in a particular number of genres. All of them can be used as a tool for grabbing attention during lessons and for detailed learning of the specific vocabulary.

### **Films in teaching of foreign languages**

Containing a number of exclusive aspects (e.g., psychological, socio-cultural, pedagogical, linguistic and paralingual [2, p. 58-60]), films are a great way to diversify monotonous grammar classes. Also, it is a unique opportunity to watch new films without waiting for translation for several months [3, p. 1144]. Moreover, the demonstration of videos in English lessons creates conditions for the intensive development of self-motivation and educational motivation (thanks to it, the student begins to realise that he is able to understand the language he is studying, appreciate humour, wordplay, nuances of intonation, cultural allusions) [4, p. 41].

In addition, films are one of the important forms of teaching a foreign language also because the video series contains such important non-verbal information as facial expressions, articulation, gestures, etc., which contributes to a better understanding of speech [5, p. 91].

Vocabulary is the most important aspect in learning any language. A useful vocabulary building technique when viewing films is to include subtitles in the material, as they help the student to place the new word in their context despite various audio barriers [6, p. 289].

As a rule, the majority of Russian-speaking viewers prefer using subtitles while watching a film in a foreign language. According to the linguistic classification, subtitles are divided into intralinguistic (in the original language, transcript), interlinguistic (translated) and bilingual. Watching films with each of the above types of subtitles has its own peculiarities and virtues [7, p. 82].

Thus, using films in the process of teaching foreign languages has its own undeniable advantages, they are:

1. Increase of attention of students to the language studied;
2. Increase of students' motivation to learn;

3. Teachers' access to a significant amount of study material considering phonetics, grammar and pronunciation;

4. Learners' access to information focused on the cultural specificities of the country where the studied language is spoken;

5. Immersion in the language environment, including the culture, history and everyday life of native speakers [8, p. 197-198].

Choosing a film for educational purposes depends on a person's goals. If the learner's goal is to master their British accent, such classical films as "Harry Potter" (a film series, 2001-2011), "Pride & Prejudice" (a film, 2005), "The Imitation Game" (2014), "Atonement" (2007), "Love, Actually" (2003) and other should be taken in consideration. In cases when the learner is not interested in romance-themed plots, the teacher may pay attention to BBC documentaries (e.g. "Diana, 7 days" (2017)).

A particular number of the English language learners finds American accent, culture and history more appealing. If this is the case, there is a vast variety of American films to choose from. The study material chosen may be a comedy (e.g. "Legally Blonde" (2001), "Home Alone" (1990), "The Mask" (1995)), a melodrama (e.g. "Titanic" (1997), "Pretty Woman" (1990), "The Holiday" (2006)), a thriller (e.g. "Fight Club" (1999), "Shutter Island" (2009), "Se7en" ("Seven") (1995)), a fantasy film (e.g. "The Mummy" (1999), "Jumanji" (1995), "Night at the Museum" (2006)), an action film or a blockbuster (e.g. "Pulp Fiction" (1994), "Spider-Man" (a trilogy, 2002-2007)), and others.

It should be noted that teaching other foreign languages besides English is an actual topic as well. For example, we can suggest Jean-Luc Godard's ("À bout de souffle" (1960), "Passion" (1982)), François Roland Truffaut's ("Les quatre cents coups" (1959), "Jules et Jim" (1962)), François Ozon's ("Tout s'est bien passé" (2020), "8 femmes" (2001)) filmography for those who are involved in learning the French language and immersing themselves into French culture. In the same way there are films that may be used for the purpose of learning German: for example, "Honig im Kopf" (2014), "Im Westen nichts Neues" (2022) or "Der Goldene Handschuh" (2019). Certainly, there are films for almost every language's easier teaching and learning.

Kuraev in his work suggests dividing the use of films on two main strategies according to the purpose [9, p. 24]:

1. Using films as a language resource, i.e. to show a use of grammar and vocabulary and to give student examples of speech;
2. Films as a stimulation of language usage. In this case, film serves as a subject of discussion.

Both strategies may be employed to a learning process together, thus, contribute to more effective assimilation of material. Despite that, criteria for choosing films for both purposes may be the same.

However, the effectiveness of using a video also depends on how rationally the employment is organised. There are four stages in the structure of a video session for teaching oral speech:

1. Preparatory – the stage of preliminary removal of linguistic and cultural difficulties;
2. Video perception – development of information perception skills;
3. Monitoring the understanding of the main content;
4. Development of language skills and oral speech skills (this stage may be preceded by repeated viewing of the fragment) [5, p. 93].

After choosing a film in accordance with the aforesaid aspects, certain tasks based on the selected movie may be prepared for a learner.

To recapitulate, here is the list of all the important aspects of selecting a film for the purpose of language teaching:

1. The level of language used in the film and its correspondence with the learner's amount of knowledge;
2. The level of interest: students are more likely to have for the film (depends on personal preferences, the choice of culture for exploring, etc.);
3. The clarity of speech (accents);
4. Language content (grammar rules, set phrases, vocabulary, pronunciation etc.);
5. The use of subtitles (when it is necessary, when not);
6. Length (how long the video should be);

7. The age of the students.

It should be noted that the most effective way of using film with educational purposes is perceiving them as a basis for other learning activities.

### **Teachers' and students' opinion on using films in foreign language teaching**

We decided to survey teachers and students on this topic to see whether it is relevant for them to use films in foreign language teaching and learning respectively. The survey was conducted online on the Google Forms platform. 15 teachers that teach foreign languages and 63 students that study foreign languages at university were surveyed. There were different questions for each group. The questions and the answers were in Russian and then translated into English for the following use.

#### **The results of the survey of teachers**

As shown in Table 1, 15 (100%) teachers think that films and other video materials could be used effectively with the aim of foreign language teaching.

**Table 1.** Do you think that films and other video materials could be used effectively with the aim of foreign language teaching?

Answers	Value	
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%

Table 2 presents a list of advantages that teachers find in the language teaching methodology, which include the use of films in original language. Most of the teachers found it beneficial for expansion of vocabulary and listening practice - 14 (92.3%). 12 (80%) of them answered “gaining new knowledge of the culture and history of the nation of the target language”. 10 (66.7%) teachers agreed that films help with improving pronunciation with a practical example. One (6.7%) respondent added that films in the teaching process promote cognitive activity and motivation for students.

**Table 2.** How the use of films could be beneficial in the process of foreign language teaching?

Answers	Value	
Expansion of vocabulary	14	93.3%

Improve pronunciation with a practical example	10	66.7%
Gaining new knowledge of the culture and history of the nation of target language	12	80%
Listening practice	14	93.3%
Other answers	1	6.7%

All the surveyed teachers (15- 100%) use films as educational materials.

**Table 3.** Do you use films as educational materials?

Answers	Value	
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%

### **The result of the survey of students**

Most of the students, 61 (96.8%), agreed with the statement that films could be used effectively in the process of foreign language learning. Although some of the respondents disagreed - 2 (3.2%)

**Table 4.** Do you think that films could be used effectively in the process of foreign language learning?

Answers	Value	
Yes	61	96.8%
No	2	3.2%

Table 5 reveals that 53 (84.1%) of the students asked had an experience of watching films in the original language during lessons at school/university classes. Only 10 (15.9%) of the students never watched a film in the original during their courses.

**Table 5.** Have you had an experience of watching films in the original language during lessons at school/university classes?

Answers	Value	
Yes	53	84.1%



No	10	15.9%
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As shown in Table 6, 46 (73%) students spend their spare time enjoying video materials in the original language. Less than one third of respondents - 17 (27%) do not watch movies in the original language much, which does not mean that they would not enjoy learning a language with the help of it.

**Table 6.** Do you watch films/series in the original language in your leisure time?

Answers	Value	
Yes	46	73%
No	17	27%

Table 7 reveals the barriers that stop people from watching films/series in the original language. 11 (64.7%) students find it difficult because of the speech recognition difficulties; 9 (52.9%) students have a barrier of natural pace of speech as they find it too fast. 8 students (47.1%) possess a lower level of vocabulary than necessary to enjoy videos without difficulties. Other responses 4 (23.5%) include not having enough time and simply lack of desire.

**Table 7.** If not, what is the barrier to watching films/series in the original language?

Answers	Value	
Too high a level of vocabulary used in video material	8	47.1%
Too fast a pace of speech	9	52.9%
Speech recognition difficulties (for example, if the character whispers or speaks indistinctly)	11	64.7%
Other responses	4	23.5%

Table 8 provides information on the students opinion of benefits of the process of watching video in the original language. It is important to emphasise that all students are convinced that this process is beneficial in the first place. 56 (88.9%) students answered with “Expansion of vocabulary”, 47 (74.6%) agreed that it helps with improving pronunciation with a practical example. “Gaining new knowledge of the culture and history of the nation of target language” was chosen by 32 (50.8%)

students. Listening practice as an advantage of watching films was the most preferred answer - 58 (92.1%) think so. One respondent (1.6%) answered that films motivate them to continue the learning process.

**Table 8.** What is the benefit of this process?

Answers	Value	
Expansion of vocabulary	56	88.9%
Improving pronunciation with a practical example	47	74.6%
Gaining new knowledge of the culture and history of the of the nation of target language	32	50.8%
Listening practice	58	92.1%
There is no benefit	0	0%
Other responses	1	1.6%

The study shows that teachers and students believe that films can be effectively used as a tool for learning a language (Table 1 and table 4). But teachers should consider some barriers when choosing a video material appropriate for teaching purposes.

In the course of the article, we revealed the dependence of the choice of a film on many individual characteristics of the student, presented the classification of films and highlighted some important aspects of the chosen learning way. Furthermore, for teachers we have compiled a movie selection algorithm that will help to choose the most effective option, taking into account the preferences of the student. Our work indicates that language teaching is possible not only in the classical form with the help of textbooks and other textual materials, but also in a pleasant and entertaining way, which is closer to the perception of modern students. To sum up, the most effective way of using films in the process of teaching foreign languages is to assess the main goals that the learner has set for themselves, and use them as a basis for building a study programme, since the most important virtue of the discussed method is agility, i.e. the possibility of finding an appropriate video material due to the wide range of films and series available.

Due to the depth of the discussed topic, the research may be continued.

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