

Film; Go to Classroom: Pedagogical Prospects of Integrating Film; in Teaching

الافلام السينمائية في الفصول الدراسية: الآفاق التربوية لدمج الأفلام في التدريس

✍ Belmekki Asma, Abbes Laghrour University, Khenchela,
belmekki.asma@univ-khenchela.dz

✍ Baghzou Sabrina, Abbes Laghrour University, Khenchela,
baghzou.sabrina@univ-khenchela.dz

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Abstract

Traditional teaching methods in EFL classrooms often struggle to effectively engage students, as they rely on lectures, textbooks, and repetitive exercises that can quickly become monotonous and fail to capture students' attention and enthusiasm. However, in the era of media globalization, where access to English-language films has significantly expanded, integrating films into the EFL classroom presents a powerful solution. By providing a visually stimulating and immersive experience, films appeal to students' emotions and imagination, offering a fresh and captivating approach to learning. Against this backdrop, this study aims to delve into the perceptions of Algerian university teachers regarding integrating English movies as a pedagogical tool. Employing a descriptive research method and a web-based questionnaire, the study unravels the remarkable potential of films as an invaluable asset for educators striving to create engaging and dynamic learning environments.

Keywords: *movies, EFL Teaching,*

ملخص

غالباً ما تواجه الأساليب التعليمية التقليدية في فصول تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية صعبة في جذب انتباه الطلاب وإشراكهم بشكل فعال، حيث تعتمد على المحاضرات والكتب المدرسية والتمارين المتكررة التي قد تصبح مملة بسرعة وتفشل في إثارة اهتمام وحماس الطلاب. ومع ذلك، في عصر العولمة الإعلامية، حيث ازدادت بشكل كبير فرص الوصول إلى أفلام باللغة الإنجليزية، يعد دمج الأفلام في فصول تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كحلاً قوياً. من خلال توفير تجربة بصرية محفزة وغامرة، تستهوي الأفلام عواطف الطلاب وخيالهم، وتقدم نهجاً جديداً ومثيراً للتعليم. على هذه الخلفية، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف آراء اساتذة الجامعات الجزائرية بشأن دمج أفلام باللغة الإنجليزية كأداة تربوية. باستخدام منهج البحث الوصفي واستبيان عبر الإنترنت، تكشف الدراسة الإمكانيات المدهشة للأفلام كأصل لا يقدر بثمن للاساتذة الذين يسعون لخلق بيئات تعليمية جذابة وديناميكية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أفلام، تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية، التحفيز، تصورات المعلمين، التحديات

1. Introduction

The realm of teaching English as a foreign language has evolved, presenting educators with new complexities and challenges. Educators must provide engaging and contemporary teaching resources that effectively conduit for learners' language acquisition. Extensive research has underscored the vital role of integrating films into EFL classrooms as an integral curriculum component to offer a unique window into authentic language usage, immersing learners in real-life contexts and cultural settings where the foreign language is spoken. By bridging the gap between the classroom and the real world, films enhance language learning experiences and foster a deeper understanding of linguistic nuances and cultural intricacies. Through the integration of films, educators can create dynamic and enriching learning environments that cultivate linguistic competencies and intercultural awareness among their students (Ismaili, 2013).

Films present a vital avenue for students to actively engage in authentic and diverse discourse while being exposed to different dialects. Within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, educators can

effectively harness the power of films as a pedagogical tool to initiate meaningful conversations revolving around selected topics. It is crucial to recognize that films, in their video format, should be kept from a secondary source of information in the context of listening classes; on the contrary, they should be deemed a primary source, serving as an integrated and indispensable curriculum element (Sommer, 2001). Listening exercises that lack authenticity are less valuable than authentic media resources in films and series. Consequently, university students, who often find the materials used in English lessons monotonous and uninspiring, can significantly benefit from the integration of films as a means to inject dynamism into the classroom, motivating and enriching their language learning experience.

In Algerian EFL contexts, educators' traditional teaching methods have become all too familiar. Students are immersed in a learning environment where textbooks and instructor-led discussions dominate, leaving little room for innovation and engagement. As a result, the practical application of the English language often remains elusive, primarily when it is taught as a second or foreign language. Students yearn for more than just the exchange of information; they crave dynamic interactions and

authentic experiences. By integrating films into EFL instruction, however, a refreshing wave of variation sweeps through the classroom, igniting the passion and curiosity of students. Gone are the days of passive learning. Instead, students become active participants, inspired by the captivating visuals and compelling narratives unfolding. Through this cinematic journey, their language proficiency blossoms as they are immersed in real-life contexts and exposed to the natural rhythms and nuances of the target language. Therefore, this study delves into EFL teachers' perceptions regarding integrating movies into their teaching practices, shedding light on the challenges they face and exploring potential solutions to maximize the benefits derived from this integration.

2. Literature Review

In recent years, a growing body of research has shed light on the immense benefits of incorporating films as a powerful pedagogical tool in EFL classrooms. These studies have revealed the transformative impact of movies on language learning, backed by the works of Eken (2003), King (2002), Yu (2009), Gruba (2006), and Suvorov (2008). Films have emerged not only as a source of entertainment but also as a valuable resource for

acquiring language skills (Ismaili, 2013). Traditionally, feature films have enhanced listening and speaking comprehension by immersing learners in contextualized learning experiences through captivating audiovisual stimuli. However, the integration of films into Algerian EFL classrooms remains limited, primarily due to resource constraints, time limitations, and the entrenched influence of conventional teaching methods, resulting in only a handful of pioneering professors incorporating films into their instructional practices across universities.

Empirical evidence has consistently demonstrated the positive impact of incorporating videos on enhancing EFL students' listening comprehension. Herron and Seay's (1991) study revealed the superior performance of the experimental group, exposed to video-based listening materials, in both video and audio comprehension assessments compared to the control group. Similarly, Kabooha (2016) found that film segments significantly improved memory retention and information retrieval during reading and listening tasks. Weyers (1999) explored the potential of real soap operas in improving students' listening comprehension and oral output, yielding promising results. Additionally, Ling (2009) found that integrating movies in EFL classrooms enhanced students' motivation and

familiarized them with target cultural customs, creating engaging and captivating learning experiences.

While the benefits of incorporating films into language studies are abundant, there are certain obstacles to overcome. A significant challenge is the scarcity of English-language films with English subtitles, as noted by Tafani (2009). However, Tafani also suggests that subtitles in the learners' native language can aid comprehension and facilitate a more efficient understanding of the film. Sherman (2003) further supports this notion, highlighting that visual cues provided by subtitles enhance learners' recall and memorization of film scenes, as learners can simultaneously read the subtitles while listening to the actors' voices, offering a dual sensory experience.

The present study explores teachers' perceptions regarding integrating films into language classes at Algerian universities. By thoroughly examining both the benefits and challenges of using films in teaching and learning, this study seeks to provide valuable insights for maximizing the benefits of film integration in the EFL classroom.

3. Method

The current study used a descriptive research design and a web-based questionnaire as its primary data collection tool. The questionnaire was administered to a cohort of twenty university teachers representing various provinces in Algeria, namely Khenchela (4), OEB (4), Bejaia (3), Batna (3), Guelma (2), Msila (3), and Constantine (1). These participants exhibited a diverse range of teaching experience, spanning from one to ten years, as illustrated in Figure 1.

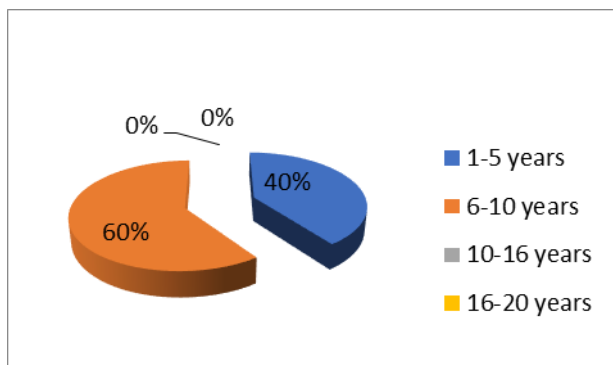


Figure1. Teachers' Number and Experience

The questionnaire consists of three distinct sections. The first section aims to examine the teachers' perspectives regarding the incorporation of movies in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes

within Algerian universities. The second section focuses on elucidating the benefits associated with utilizing films as instructional tools in teaching EFL to university learners. Finally, the last section delves into the potential drawbacks or challenges encountered when using films in the teaching process.

4. Findings, Discussion and Analysis

4.1. Teachers' Perceptions towards the Use of Movies in EFL Classes

The findings presented in Table 1 demonstrate the effectiveness of integrating films into EFL classrooms as a pedagogical technique to enhance students' proficiency in the four language skills and interactional abilities. The unanimous consensus among the informants is that films facilitate language teaching by introducing diversity and flexibility to the instructional strategies and resources employed in the language classroom. Consequently, this integration assists students in developing their overall communicative competence.

Moreover, most participants perceive films as a valuable source of language learning for students. Films expose learners to authentic language usage in real-life contexts, extending beyond mere entertainment value.

Notably, 80% of the surveyed teachers recognize the cultural education aspect of watching movies, as it enhances learners' language comprehension. Additionally, films expose students to a more natural form of the language, incorporating real-life vocabulary and colloquial expressions while promoting word association with corresponding body language cues. Teachers confirm that learners frequently incorporate words and phrases acquired from movies into their everyday conversations, showcasing the practicality and relevance of film-based language learning. Furthermore, watching movies enables learners to imitate native speakers, thereby fostering the development of their speaking skills. By observing and emulating the pronunciation of words in the English language, learners refine their articulation and intonation patterns, ultimately enhancing their oral proficiency. Therefore, integrating films in EFL classrooms enriches language learning experiences and cultivates students' linguistic competence across various language skills.

Table1. Teachers' perceptions towards Students' class oral participation

Item (N= 20)	Yes	No
Utilizing English films in a language class can effectively enhance learners' proficiency in the target language.	100% (20)	00%
Incorporating movies into a language class streamlines the teaching process, making it more manageable and efficient.	100% (20)	00%
The inclusion of movies in language instruction contributes to the formation and reinforcement of cultural values and perspectives.	95% (19)	5% (1)
Movies provide learners with exposure to a genuine representation of the language, encompassing authentic vocabulary and colloquial expressions.	80% (16)	20 % (4)
By emulating the speech patterns of native speakers portrayed in movies, learners can	90% (18)	10% (2)

refine their speaking skills and strive for greater fluency.		
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4.2. Benefits of using movies in a Language Class

Based on the teachers' responses, as depicted in Figure 2, it is evident that films play a significant role in motivating language learners, as emphasized by half of the participants. Motivation is a crucial factor that strongly influences the success of second/foreign language acquisition. Given the inherent importance of films and television shows in students' lives, their integration into the language classroom enhances the learning process's entertainment and enjoyment. Consequently, films are a powerful motivator, contributing to a more engaging and pleasurable language learning experience. Furthermore, teachers recognize the efficacy of films as a highly effective tool for language instruction, primarily due to their visual nature. Films facilitate the development of conversational skills by providing learners with opportunities to observe language exchanges accompanied by visual cues such as facial expressions and gestures. These visual cues reinforce the spoken content and direct the viewers' attention

to specific aspects, enabling them to engage better with the material by imitating the characters' discussions and responses.

Another group of teachers highlights the immense benefits of using films as teaching aids, particularly in subjects like history, civilizations, and culture. Films serve as invaluable resources that eliminate the imaginative component often associated with conceptual learning of historical events. By visually presenting the unfolding events, films enable students to readily comprehend and recall the subject matter, surpassing the limitations of theoretical learning.

Moreover, a small percentage of participants assert that teachers can bring the world into the classroom through films, thus imbuing the English language with vitality extending beyond textbooks' confines. So, the participants concur that exposure to films provides students with an authentic English language experience, encompassing a diverse range of speakers, voices, accents, styles, and registers. This exposure contributes to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the language, allowing students to broaden their linguistic horizons and develop a nuanced proficiency.

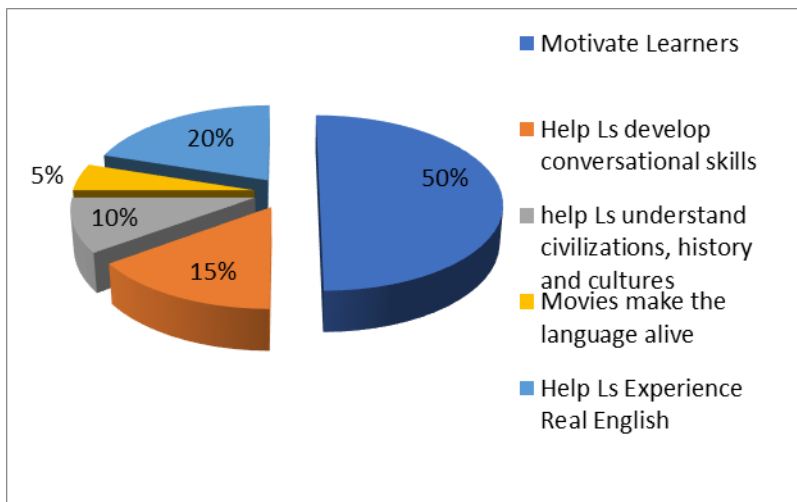


Figure 2. Advantages of Using Films in Teaching

4.3. Challenges of Using Movies in EFL Classes

Integrating movies into the EFL classroom presents various challenges for teachers, as revealed by the survey results in **Figure 3**. One major challenge is the selection of appropriate materials, which accounted for 38% of the responses. Teachers must carefully evaluate films to ensure they align with language learning objectives and curriculum requirements and consider content, language level, cultural relevance, and potential themes.

The time commitment required for screening films was identified as another significant challenge, with 21% of teachers expressing concerns. Full-length movies can consume a substantial amount of class time, potentially disrupting the regular flow of lessons and limiting coverage of other essential topics. Teachers must balance film viewing and addressing other aspects of language instruction.

Furthermore, logistical issues were mentioned by 18% of teachers. These issues include the availability of appropriate screening equipment

and access to high-quality films with educational value. Not all classrooms have the necessary technology, and obtaining suitable films may require additional resources or permissions.

Classroom management was also highlighted as a challenge by 15% of teachers. Engaging students and maintaining discipline and focus throughout the film screening can be demanding, as students may have varying levels of engagement and attention spans. Strategies such as pre- and post-viewing activities, discussions or comprehension tasks can actively engage students during the screening.

Finally, assessment, while less prominent at 8%, was also identified as a challenge. Traditional assessment methods may not directly apply to evaluating language skills developed through film viewing. Teachers need to develop assessment tools that effectively capture language proficiency and comprehension acquired through this unique instructional approach.

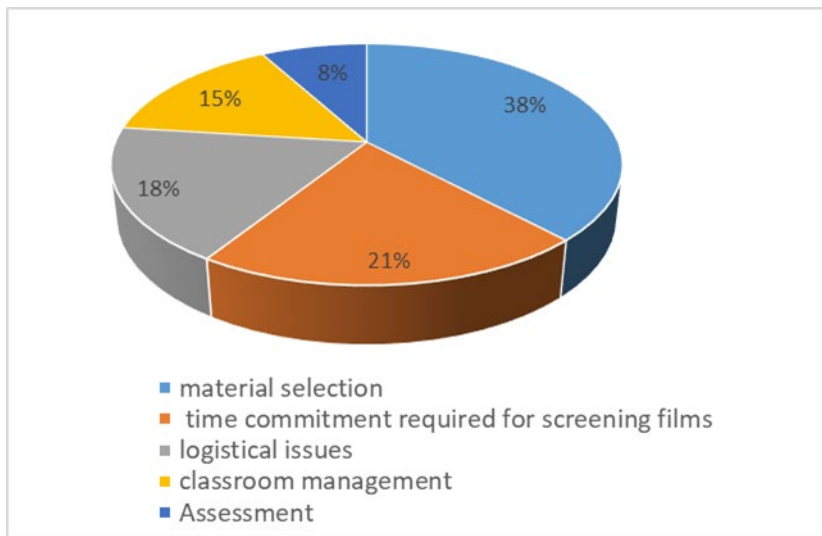


Figure 3. Challenges of Using Films in Teaching

5. CONCLUSION

This study's findings shed light on the remarkable effectiveness of utilizing films as dynamic teaching resources to enhance students' language abilities. The participants wholeheartedly embraced the integration of films into their language courses, recognizing the significant impact on English language improvement. Teachers enthusiastically highlighted the immense potential of films to support foreign language development, offering an immersive experience rich in contextual knowledge.

Moreover, the study underscores the significance of thoughtful consideration and deliberate implementation when integrating films into teaching practices. It highlights the need for educators to reflect on the specific educational goals, tailor film selections to meet learning objectives and employ effective instructional strategies to maximize the benefits of this innovative approach. By doing so, teachers can unlock the full potential of films as transformative educational tools, enriching students' language learning experiences and empowering them to achieve higher proficiency levels.

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