



## THE USE OF FILMS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

Umurova Khushvakht Khakimovna

*Docent of English Linguistics Department at  
Bukhara State University  
x.h.umurova@buxdu.uz*

Bobojonova Durdon Khusniddin qizi

*2nd year Student of Bukhara State University  
dbobojonova40@gmail.com*

**Abstract:** *This article explores the use of films in teaching English as a foreign language. Films provide authentic language input, cultural exposure, and increased learner motivation. The paper discusses how films can be integrated into English classrooms through pre-viewing, while-viewing, and post-viewing activities. It also highlights the benefits of films in developing listening, speaking, and vocabulary skills. The study concludes that films, when selected appropriately and supported by structured activities, are an effective and engaging tool for English language teaching.*

**Keywords:** *Film-based instruction; English language teaching (ELT); authentic materials; learner motivation; listening comprehension; cultural awareness; practical classroom strategies.*

### INTRODUCTION

With the advancements in technology teaching English as a foreign language has changed significantly. Unlike in the past, where teachers rely heavily on traditional textbooks, today educators gained the opportunity to use various tools to teach. Among all these tools, films have emerged as one of the most effective resources, bringing visual, contextual and auditory elements in one place. They offer authentic language exposure and visual support which help learners comprehend meaning, pronunciation, and cultural context simultaneously.

While watching films, language learners are exposed to natural speech patterns, idioms and accents which cannot be provided in traditional textbooks. This, in turn, helps students to understand how English is used outside the classroom. Moreover, films make vocabulary and grammar learning easier for students by appearing within real-life scenarios, which means learners no longer have to read tons of grammar books or dictionaries in order to use it actively in either writing or speaking. Stephen Krashen (Input Hypothesis 1985) also states that learners acquire language best through meaningful and comprehensible input – and films deliver exactly that. For instance, the meaning of the phrasal verb give up becomes clear through its frequent use in the main character's struggles and perseverance in the film *The Pursuit of Happiness*.

Watching different types of films gives learners the opportunity to listen to wide ranges of accents and speech patterns, which helps improve overall listening comprehension. In addition to this, films expose learners to real-life communication contexts, allowing them to observe authentic examples of intonation, stress, and rhythm, which are often considered among the most challenging aspects of spoken English. Moreover, the varying speech rates of characters help learners adapt to natural spoken language and gradually improve their oral competence.

It is widely recognized that the use of films in language learning increases learner motivation, especially among young learners. Films make the learning process more enjoyable and reduces fatigue during language learning process. One of main challenges faced by most teachers is maintain learning engagement during ELT sessions and interesting and film-based activities encourage students to become more active and curious about learning a foreign language. Furthermore, Mark Peterson (2010) emphasizes that learners benefit from authentic and engaging multimedia materials, as such resources increase motivation, confidence, and interaction in the language classroom. Although his research primarily focuses on digital learning environments, the same principles apply to film-based instruction. Films provide meaningful input, visual context, and shared experiences, which help learners feel more confident and willing to participate in classroom activities. Therefore, Mark Peterson's theoretical framework supports the use of films as an effective tool in English language teaching.

Language and culture are inseparable, as effective communication depends not only on linguistic accuracy but also on cultural appropriateness. Without cultural knowledge, learners may speak grammatically correct English, but still sound inappropriate or unnatural. Films can be solution for this problem, as they show culture in action, not in theory. Observing real-life interactions in films allows learners to develop a deeper understanding of how language is used in different social contexts. This cultural awareness enhances learners' communicative competence by enabling them to select appropriate expressions, tone, and behavior. As a result, learners gain greater confidence and are better prepared to participate in real-world communication.

There are several activities that can be effectively used with in the classroom.

1. Pre-viewing activities. In order to implement this kind of activities, before watching a film teachers should teach key vocabulary, introduce main characters, and predict what will happen. These activities help learners boost their comprehension and reduce anxiety.
2. While-viewing activities. During film viewing, learners can take notes on specific features, and listen for particular grammatical structures or vocabulary items, which can later be used naturally in speaking and writing tasks.
3. Post-viewing activities. After watching a film, students can discuss characters, themes, plot, and write summaries or reviews. These activities promote not only speaking and writing skills, but also enhance learners' critical thinking, and analytical abilities.
4. Using subtitles. English subtitles help students establish connection between spoken and written forms of the language. Teachers are recommended to start with subtitles according to learners' proficiency levels and gradually reduce their use as students' listening skills starts to improve.

Conclusion. Using films in teaching English is a dynamic, engaging, and highly effective approach that supports authentic language input, cultural understanding, and skill integration (listening, speaking, reading, writing). When carefully selected and paired with purposeful activities, films transform the classroom into a vibrant learning environment where students develop real communicative competence and maintain sustained motivation for language learning.



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