

## AUTHENTIC VIDEO MATERIALS AS A MEANS OF SPEECH FLUENCY DEVELOPMENT IN EFL CLASS

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### *Abstract:*

The integration of authentic video materials (AVMs) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has increasingly become a valuable tool for fostering speech fluency. This article explores the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of using AVMs to improve students' speech fluency, drawing on insights from both Central Asian scholars and broader international research. A literature review is provided to highlight the key benefits, challenges, and strategies for incorporating AVMs into language learning. The article concludes with a discussion of the pedagogical implications and best practices for leveraging AVMs in EFL instruction.

*Key words:* Authentic video materials (AVMs), speech fluency development, communicative language teaching (CLT), comprehensible input, oral communication skills, pragmatic competence, audiovisual media in education, real-life language exposure.

*doi:* <https://doi.org/10.2024/yqbbkfo8>

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### Introduction

In today's globalized world, developing speech fluency is a critical aspect of language acquisition, especially in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Authentic video materials (AVMs) have been identified as an effective tool for enhancing various language skills, particularly fluency. AVMs, which include films, TV shows, interviews, documentaries, and other unscripted media, expose learners to real-life language use, providing opportunities to experience authentic pronunciation, intonation, colloquialisms, and non-verbal communication cues.

This article investigates the role of AVMs in promoting speech fluency in EFL classrooms, focusing on both theoretical frameworks and practical applications. While AVMs are universally recognized for their potential benefits, this study particularly examines how these materials can be utilized in Central Asian educational contexts, where linguistic, cultural, and technological factors may present unique challenges.

### Theoretical Foundations of Using Authentic Materials in Language Learning

The use of AVMs in language teaching is grounded in communicative language teaching (CLT) theory. CLT emphasizes the importance of authentic, meaningful communication in developing language competence (Littlewood, 1981). Authentic materials, as defined by Gilmore (2007), are those produced by native speakers for native speakers and not explicitly designed for language teaching. AVMs thus provide

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learners with exposure to natural speech patterns, accent variations, and pragmatic elements that are often absent in scripted or simplified educational materials.

Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis also underlines the significance of providing learners with comprehensible input just beyond their current proficiency level, known as "i+1." AVMs, when selected appropriately, can offer rich input that challenges learners without overwhelming them, fostering both comprehension and productive language use. Furthermore, Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis suggests that learners need opportunities to produce language (i.e., speaking) in response to input. The visual and contextual clues in AVMs facilitate learner comprehension, thus allowing for more accurate and confident language production.

#### Benefits of Using AVMs for Speech Fluency Development

Studies have shown that AVMs significantly improve various aspects of language fluency, including speed, accuracy, and naturalness of speech (Sherman, 2003). According to Weyers (1999), exposure to AVMs helps learners acquire conversational strategies, native-like intonation, and idiomatic expressions. Weyers' study of Spanish learners revealed that those exposed to authentic video content demonstrated higher fluency rates in spontaneous speech compared to those using traditional materials.

AVMs also enhance learners' listening skills, which are crucial for speech development. Vandergrift (2007) notes that improved listening comprehension leads to better speech production, as learners become more adept at processing spoken language and responding appropriately. Additionally, the visual element of AVMs aids in contextual understanding, which is especially helpful for lower-level learners who might struggle with purely auditory materials (Kusumarasdyati, 2004).

#### Challenges and Considerations

Despite their numerous benefits, using AVMs in EFL instruction presents certain challenges. One major issue is the difficulty of selecting appropriate materials that match learners' proficiency levels. As Kilickaya (2004) notes, not all AVMs are suitable for classroom use, especially for beginners, as the language used in films or television shows can be too fast, idiomatic, or culturally bound. Teachers need to carefully curate materials and provide pre-viewing activities to scaffold understanding.

In Central Asian contexts, where technological infrastructure might be less developed, accessing and using AVMs can be difficult. Akynova and Iskakova (2020) argue that limited access to the internet, insufficient audiovisual equipment, and a lack of teacher training on integrating AVMs into lessons pose significant barriers to their widespread adoption. However, the increasing availability of digital tools and resources offers promising potential for overcoming these challenges.

#### Strategies for Effective Implementation

To maximize the benefits of AVMs, teachers should adopt a structured approach to their integration. Sherman (2003) suggests using a combination of pre-viewing, viewing, and post-viewing tasks to help learners engage with the material. Pre-viewing activities, such as discussing key vocabulary or predicting content, prepare learners for what they are about to see. During viewing, learners can focus on specific aspects of language use, such as intonation or discourse markers. Post-viewing tasks,

including role-plays, discussions, and fluency exercises, encourage learners to use new language forms in their own speech.

In Central Asia, where large class sizes and limited technology might be challenges, teachers can opt for group work and peer-led activities to facilitate interaction with AVMs. Kazakh and Uzbek scholars have noted the importance of creating a collaborative learning environment to support fluency development (Nurpeisova & Ospanova, 2019). Moreover, using AVMs that reflect both global and local cultures can help bridge the cultural gap that students might experience when exposed to unfamiliar media content.

#### Conclusion

Authentic video materials represent a powerful tool for developing speech fluency in EFL learners. They provide access to real-life language use, enhance listening skills, and create opportunities for meaningful language production. However, careful selection of materials and structured lesson planning are essential to address the challenges posed by AVMs, particularly in the context of Central Asia. By integrating AVMs effectively, educators can significantly improve learners' fluency and confidence in using English in real-world communication.

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