

**The impact of using video as an Audio-visual Material  
on ELLS' ability to Communicate by using English**

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**ABSTRACT**

Recently, there has been a great tendency towards the use of technology such as the use of video as an audio-visual material in the foreign language teaching classroom. It has been a fact that audio-visual materials are a great help in stimulating and facilitating the learning of a foreign language. According to Wright (1976:1) many media and many styles of visual presentation are useful for the language learners. All audio-visual materials have positive contributions to langue learning as long as they are used at the right time and the right situation. In language learning and teaching process, learners use their eyes as well as their ears. In this study, the researcher introduces several ways of using video materials in the process of teaching English as a foreign language to improve the ability of the learners to communicate with their classmates and with their teacher in the classroom.

تأثير استخدام الفيديو كوسيلة ايضاح بصرية -سمعية على قابلية لمتعلمي اللغة الانكليزية

للباحثة فاطمة الشريدة

المستخلص

يوجد ميل كبير في الوقت الحالي لاستخدام التكنولوجيا كجهاز الفيديو كوسيلة ايضاح بصرية-سمعية لمتعلمي اللغة الاجنبية وذلك بعرض حوارات لغوية لمتكلمي تلك اللغة الغرض منها تمكين الدارسين من استخدام المفردات الصحيحة والتلفظ الصحيح وكذلك يمكن للدارسين من التعرف على بعض العبارات التركيبية التي يصعب فهمها الا عن طريق الاستخدام.

## **1-Introduction**

**As a teacher of English in one of the Iraqi Universities, I can say that our students are facing difficulties in communication using English, although they can write good English and that is due to several reasons. First, the learners don't have the chance to use English in everyday communication. Second, even in the classroom, the learners are usually receptive i.e., they listen to the teacher and write notes. The teachers themselves are not native speakers of the target language. The learners lack the opportunity of the target language exposure as spoken by its native speakers. Iraqi learners of English, especially in the high level of their study encounter a serious problem in understanding and speaking to the native speakers of the target language. Another significant issue related to the problems encountered by Iraqi learners of English is the attitude of teachers as well as students towards using Arabic in their classrooms. AL-Nofaie (2010:77) states that "the use of Arabic is an unavoidable phenomenon. The teachers and the students' use of Arabic appeared to be systematic, though there were a few cases in which they did not make the best use of it." Nation (2003) adds more reasons that justify learners' use L1, because of their shyness, lack of proficiency, or being unmotivated to communicate in L2. Motivation is mostly needed in learning a foreign language as well as in learning any other subject. Yet, most mainstream classroom teachers have had little or no preparation for providing the types of assistance that such learners need to successfully learn academic content and skills through English while developing proficiency in English.**

**The aim of this study is to find out the impact of using the target language video programs which show the way the native speakers of that language communicate using language functions in everyday situations on the FLLs comprehension. That will help the learners choose the right expressions, the suitable structures and the right pronunciation which lead to a high level of**

comprehension. Accordingly, this will help them understand the instructions given by the teacher in the classroom and enable them communicate with their classmates as well as with the teacher

The current study introduces a technique which is rarely used by the Iraqi teachers of English as a foreign language which motivates the learners more than the traditional way of teaching. This technique enables the learners to listen to the native speakers and helps them improve their understanding as well as their pronunciation which later leads to improve their ability to communicate via the foreign language. It is the use of video programs (which can be set up for the level of the teaching stage by English native specialists). These programs introduce dialogues which show the way the native speakers of English communicate in their everyday life. Those dialogues can help the learners comprehend better, by hearing and seeing the situation, especially when teaching conversation or listening comprehension. Those videos are used as Audio-visual aids in teaching English as a foreign language.

The current study will focus on one of the effective technology to improve learning English as a foreign language in the departments of English in colleges in Iraq, where students are facing difficulties in speaking English properly and fluently, though they are doing well in writing it. The proposed study will focus on using video programs in teaching English as one of the effective tools and as an audio visual device that can be used in a variety of ways to facilitate the comprehension and make easy for the learners to communicate via the target language. These programs show the native speakers of English using their language in everyday conversations which reflect the language functions. This study will try to find out the answers to the following questions:

1-What is the impact of using video programs on every day conversations of the English native speakers reflecting language functions on the Iraqi first-year students of the English departments in Iraqi Universities?

**2-How do those video programs improve the performance of the students in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and therefore, improve their ability to communicate via using English?**

## **2-Literature Review**

**Mukattash (i983: 196) points out that Arab EFL learners encounter two types of problems. The first problem is that students keep committing errors in syntax, morphology and pronunciation. The second problem is that students are unable to express themselves comfortably and efficiently when dealing with ‘academic topics’ or ‘everyday topics’. The main reason that lies behind these problems is the students ‘ inability to use English appropriately and correctly inside and outside the classroom. Mourtaga (2004:10) states that Arab EFL Students ‘ lack of the linguistic competence due to the differences between English and Arabic, and English spelling-pronunciation irregularities.**

**In her study that was conducted with 36 freshmen students at the college of Languages and Translation, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia, Al-Jarf (2007 :11) concludes that “The fact that English spelling is more complex than that of Arabic, this is expected to pose several spelling difficulties for Arab students particularly in the early stages of spelling development”. The reasons for such a problem, as AL-Jarf argues, are “communication breakdown, inadequate knowledge of the English spelling system, students’ mispronunciation, interference between English words, and unfamiliarity with the American pronunciation” (Ibid: 11).**

**Most of the Arab EFL learners are unable to fully comprehend natural spoken English delivered at normal speed.Hasan (2000) conducted a study about listening problems encountered by EFL learners at Damascus University, Syria.Besides hearing problems, Hasan investigates the learners’ strategies, characteristics of the speaker, features of the listening text, attitudes of the**

listener, etc. The study concludes that EFL learners at Damascus University experience a range of listening problems.

Flood (1995) has found that video can enhance the learning because its portrayal of “dramatized cultural context” and authentic materials can illustrate the intertwining of language and culture deemed essential to the mastery of another language.

Clovis (1997) writes of her experience in using video with her ESL students. Her successful strategies include:

- 1-pausing the video so students could copy down visual information;
- 2-eliminating the sound track so students could practice their oral and written English skills by supplying the missing dialogue;
- 3-using closed captioned programs to reinforce vocabulary and reading skills;
- 4- providing copies of video tapes to parents so that they, too, can improve their English and become “active partners” with their children in learning English. The results of the study indicate that children learned in an enjoyable way.

Integrating video into lessons creates enticing visual and a special interactive environment in the EFL/ESL Classroom. Teaching English through videos also allows teachers to be creative when designing language lessons. Cundell (2008, 17) notes, “One of the most powerful ways that video can be integrated into courses is for the visual representation they provide for learners on otherwise abstract concepts.” Harmer (2007, 310) suggests a variety of viewing techniques when using films and videos in listening activities including:

- 1-Silent viewing (playing the video without sound)

**2- Freezing framing (freezing the picture and asking the students what they think will happen next)**

**3-Partial viewing (covering most of the screen with a piece of paper)**

**4-Picture or speech (half the class watches the video while the other half faces away)**

**5-Subtitled films (students see and hear the English language)**

**6-Picture –less listening (listening to the audio before watching the video)**

#### **4-Conclusion**

The above- mentioned studies proved that using video as a device which can introduce many teaching programs to help ELLs master the foreign language pronunciation as well as sentence structures. At the same time those programs help the learners to understand the idiomatic expressions of the foreign language. As a result, they can improve their ability to communicate using the foreign language.

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