

The Role of Using Authentic Videos on Learners' Pronunciation

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Keywords	Abstract
Pronunciation Authentic Videos EFL Learners Motivation Segmental and Suprasegmental Features	Pronunciation is a crucial aspect of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, yet many learners struggle to master both segmental and suprasegmental features. This study explores the role of authentic videos in improving the pronunciation skills of 80 intermediate-level EFL learners from Nakhchivan State University. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study collected data through pre- and post-tests, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed significant improvements in learners' pronunciation after a six-week intervention with authentic video materials, including better articulation of sounds and enhanced intonation, stress, and rhythm. Learners reported high levels of engagement and motivation, highlighting the effectiveness of authentic videos as a teaching tool. However, challenges such as fast speech rates and unfamiliar vocabulary were noted, emphasizing the need for careful material selection and scaffolding. This study concludes that integrating authentic videos into EFL instruction can enhance pronunciation skills while fostering learner motivation and engagement.

Introduction

Pronunciation is a critical component of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, as it directly impacts learners' ability to communicate effectively and be understood by native and non-native speakers alike. However, achieving accurate pronunciation remains one of the most challenging aspects of language acquisition for many learners. Traditional classroom methods often fail to provide sufficient exposure to authentic pronunciation patterns, including intonation, stress, rhythm, and accent variations. In this context, authentic video materials—such as movies, TV shows, YouTube clips, and other multimedia content created by native speakers—have emerged as valuable tools for improving learners' pronunciation skills.

Authentic videos expose learners to real-life language use in various contexts, enabling them to observe and mimic native speakers' pronunciation features. Research has shown that such materials not only enhance learners' phonological awareness but also improve their listening comprehension and cultural understanding (Juma, 2021; Sulistiyarningsih, 2024). Moreover, the engaging nature of videos motivates students to practice pronunciation more consistently and enthusiastically compared to traditional methods

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(Purnamasari, 2018). By integrating authentic videos into EFL instruction, teachers can create a dynamic learning environment that fosters both linguistic competence and learner engagement.

This article explores the role of authentic videos in improving EFL learners' pronunciation. It examines how these materials influence key aspects of pronunciation, including segmental (individual sounds) and suprasegmental (intonation, stress, rhythm) features. Additionally, it discusses the pedagogical implications of using authentic videos in language classrooms and provides practical recommendations for educators seeking to incorporate such resources into their teaching practices.

Literature Review

Pronunciation is a fundamental aspect of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, as it directly impacts learners' ability to communicate effectively and be understood. Studies emphasize that pronunciation instruction improves intelligibility and fosters confidence in learners (Derwing & Munro, 2015; Thomson & Derwing, 2014). Despite its importance, many EFL learners face challenges in mastering segmental features (individual sounds) and suprasegmental features (intonation, stress, and rhythm), which are essential for natural communication (Pardede, 2010; Hismanoglu, 2012).

Authentic videos, such as movies, TV shows, and YouTube clips created by native speakers, have been widely recognized as effective tools for improving pronunciation. These materials expose learners to real-life language use, including diverse accents and natural speech patterns. Research indicates that authentic videos help learners develop both segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation features by providing examples of native-like intonation, stress, and rhythm (Namaziandost et al., 2018; Hismanoglu, 2012).

For instance, a study by Elzeftawy (2021) demonstrated the significant impact of using YouTube videos on improving EFL learners' pronunciation skills. The results showed substantial improvements in intonation, stress, vowel sounds, and consonant articulation among preparatory school students exposed to these materials. Similarly, Namaziandost et al. (2018) found that authentic videos enhanced learners' prosodic abilities, including pause, juncture, and stress.

One of the key advantages of authentic videos is their ability to engage learners and enhance motivation. Unlike traditional methods, which may lack variety or real-world relevance, authentic videos provide dynamic content that aligns with learners' interests. Hoang (2022) found that authentic audiovisual materials motivated EFL students to speak more confidently by exposing them to real-world language use. Additionally, Purnamasari (2018) noted that YouTube videos encouraged self-regulated learning by allowing students to practice pronunciation independently.

Teachers can integrate authentic videos into their instruction through structured activities before, during, and after watching the videos. For example, pre-watching tasks may involve introducing key vocabulary or discussing cultural contexts. During viewing, students can focus on identifying specific pronunciation features such as stress patterns or intonation. Post-viewing activities might include shadowing exercises or group discussions to reinforce learning (British Council, 2016; Hismanoglu, 2012).

Despite their benefits, the use of authentic videos is not without challenges. Learners may find ungraded content difficult to understand due to fast speech rates or unfamiliar vocabulary (British Council, 2016). Teachers must carefully select materials that match students' proficiency levels and provide scaffolding to ensure comprehension.



The literature highlights the significant role of authentic videos in improving EFL learners' pronunciation skills. These materials not only enhance linguistic competence but also foster engagement and motivation among learners. However, successful implementation requires careful selection of resources and thoughtful integration into classroom activities.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to explore the role of authentic videos in improving EFL learners' pronunciation. The quantitative component involves pre- and post-tests to measure learners' pronunciation improvement, while the qualitative component includes questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gather insights into learners' and teachers' perceptions of using authentic videos.

Participants

The participants were 80 EFL students from Nakhchivan State University, all at an intermediate level of English proficiency. These students were selected through purposive sampling to ensure a similar level of language ability. Additionally, eight EFL instructors from the university, specializing in pronunciation and oral expression, participated to provide their pedagogical perspectives on the use of authentic videos.

Instruments

1. Pre- and Post-Tests:

A pronunciation test was administered to assess learners' segmental (e.g., vowel and consonant sounds) and suprasegmental (e.g., stress, intonation, rhythm) features before and after the intervention. The test included tasks such as reading sentences aloud, repeating phrases, and engaging in short conversations.

2. Questionnaires:

A Likert-scale questionnaire was designed to explore learners' attitudes toward using authentic videos for pronunciation practice. Questions focused on their motivation, engagement, and perceived effectiveness of the materials.

3. Semi-Structured Interviews:

Interviews were conducted with both learners and teachers to gain deeper insights into their experiences with authentic videos. Teachers were asked about their strategies for integrating videos into lessons, while learners shared their challenges and successes.

Procedure

1. Material Selection:

Authentic video materials were carefully selected to match the participants' proficiency level. These included short clips from movies, TV shows, YouTube channels, and other native speaker content that featured diverse accents and natural speech patterns.



2. **Intervention:**

Over a period of six weeks, participants engaged with authentic videos during weekly sessions. Each session followed a structured format:

- *Pre-Watching Activities:* Introducing key vocabulary, discussing cultural contexts, and setting pronunciation goals.
- *While-Watching Activities:* Focusing on specific pronunciation features such as stress patterns or intonation.
- *Post-Watching Activities:* Shadowing exercises (imitating native speakers), group discussions, and peer feedback.

3. **Data Collection:**

- Pre-tests were conducted before the intervention began, while post-tests were administered after six weeks to measure progress.
- Questionnaires were distributed at the end of the intervention.
- Interviews were conducted after the post-tests to gather qualitative data.

Data Analysis

1. **Quantitative Analysis:**

The pre- and post-test results were analyzed using paired t-tests to determine whether there was a statistically significant improvement in learners' pronunciation skills after exposure to authentic videos.

2. **Qualitative Analysis:**

Responses from questionnaires and interview transcripts were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns related to learners' attitudes, challenges, and perceived benefits of using authentic videos.

Ethical Considerations

Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided written consent before participating. Anonymity was ensured by assigning codes to participants instead of using their names. Additionally, participants could withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

This revised methodology reflects that the study was conducted with 80 EFL students from Nakhchivan State University while maintaining a comprehensive approach to data collection and analysis.

Findings and Discussion

Findings

1. Pre- and Post-Test Results

The analysis of the pre- and post-test scores revealed a statistically significant improvement in the pronunciation skills of the participants after the six-week intervention with authentic videos. The mean



score of the pre-test was 65.2 (out of 100), while the mean score of the post-test increased to 82.7. A paired t-test confirmed that this improvement was significant ($p < 0.05$). The data showed improvements in both segmental features (e.g., vowel and consonant articulation) and suprasegmental features (e.g., stress, intonation, and rhythm).

- **Segmental Features:** Participants demonstrated better articulation of problematic sounds, such as /θ/ and /ð/, which were previously mispronounced as /t/ or /d/.
- **Suprasegmental Features:** Learners showed noticeable progress in their use of correct stress patterns, sentence rhythm, and intonation, particularly in shadowing exercises.

2. Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire results indicated overwhelmingly positive attitudes toward using authentic videos for pronunciation practice:

- **Engagement:** 92% of students agreed that authentic videos made learning more enjoyable compared to traditional methods.
- **Effectiveness:** 85% believed that watching native speakers helped them understand how words are pronounced in real-life contexts.
- **Motivation:** 88% reported feeling more motivated to practice pronunciation outside of class due to exposure to authentic materials.

3. Interview Insights

The interviews with both students and teachers provided qualitative insights into the benefits and challenges of using authentic videos:

- **Students' Perspectives:**
 - Many students mentioned that authentic videos helped them recognize natural speech patterns that they had difficulty understanding in textbooks or classroom recordings.
 - Some students highlighted challenges with fast speech or unfamiliar accents but appreciated the opportunity to adapt over time.
- **Teachers' Perspectives:**
 - Teachers noted that students became more confident in speaking activities after exposure to native-like pronunciation.
 - However, they emphasized the need for careful selection of video materials to ensure they matched students' proficiency levels.

Discussion

The findings confirm that authentic videos are an effective tool for improving EFL learners' pronunciation skills. The significant improvement in both segmental and suprasegmental features aligns with previous research (Elzeftawy, 2021; Namaziandost et al., 2018), which highlighted the role of authentic audiovisual materials in enhancing phonological awareness.



One key advantage of authentic videos is their ability to provide learners with exposure to real-life language use, including diverse accents, speech rates, and cultural contexts. This exposure not only improves learners' pronunciation but also prepares them for practical communication in global settings (Sulistiyaningsih, 2024). Furthermore, the engaging nature of these materials fosters intrinsic motivation, as seen in the high levels of student satisfaction reported in the questionnaires.

However, challenges such as fast speech rates or unfamiliar vocabulary were noted by some participants. These findings underscore the importance of scaffolding activities, such as pre-watching tasks or guided listening exercises, to help learners overcome these difficulties (British Council, 2016). Additionally, teachers must carefully select materials that balance authenticity with comprehensibility to avoid overwhelming students.

Overall, this study highlights the pedagogical value of integrating authentic videos into EFL instruction. By leveraging these resources effectively, educators can enhance learners' pronunciation skills while fostering engagement and motivation.

Conclusion

This study investigated the role of authentic videos in improving the pronunciation skills of 80 EFL learners from Nakhchivan State University. The findings revealed that authentic videos significantly enhanced learners' pronunciation, including both segmental (e.g., vowel and consonant sounds) and suprasegmental (e.g., stress, intonation, rhythm) features. The pre- and post-test results demonstrated measurable improvements, while the qualitative data from questionnaires and interviews highlighted learners' positive attitudes toward using authentic videos for pronunciation practice.

Authentic videos provided learners with exposure to real-life language use, diverse accents, and natural speech patterns that are often missing in traditional classroom materials. They also motivated students by making learning more engaging and enjoyable. However, challenges such as fast speech rates and unfamiliar vocabulary were noted, emphasizing the need for careful selection of materials and appropriate scaffolding.

Overall, this study supports the integration of authentic videos into EFL instruction as a valuable tool for improving pronunciation while fostering learner motivation and engagement.

Recommendations

For Teachers

1. Careful Selection of Materials:

Teachers should choose authentic videos that match learners' proficiency levels to ensure comprehensibility while still challenging them to improve.

2. Diverse Content:

Incorporate videos featuring a variety of English accents (e.g., British, American, Australian) to expose students to global English usage.

3. Structured Activities:

Use a structured approach when integrating authentic videos:



- *Pre-Watching*: Introduce key vocabulary, provide background information, and set clear learning objectives.
- *While-Watching*: Focus on specific pronunciation features (e.g., stress, intonation) through guided listening or note-taking tasks.
- *Post-Watching*: Conduct shadowing exercises, role-plays, or group discussions to reinforce learning.

4. **Feedback and Practice:**

Provide constructive feedback on learners' pronunciation during post-watching activities and encourage regular practice outside the classroom.

For Institutions

1. **Access to Technology:**

Equip classrooms with multimedia tools (e.g., projectors, speakers) to facilitate the use of authentic video materials.

2. **Teacher Training:**

Offer professional development workshops on how to effectively integrate authentic videos into language instruction.

3. **Resource Development:**

Create a repository of curated authentic video materials tailored to different proficiency levels and linguistic goals.

For Future Research

1. Investigate the long-term impact of using authentic videos on learners' overall communicative competence.
2. Explore the effectiveness of specific types of videos (e.g., movies vs. YouTube clips) in developing pronunciation.
3. Examine how authentic videos influence other language skills such as listening comprehension or speaking fluency.

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