

Role of Videos to Enhance Learning Skill in English Language Teaching

R. Selvarajan, Ph.D. Candidate
Dr. V. Thiyagarajan

=====

Abstract

Of a wide variety of tools and techniques available to teach or learn a foreign language, movie watching is one of the best ways to make an otherwise tedious task an enjoyable activity. Learning in general is supposed to be fun, and no other activity could possibly make learning a foreign language as interesting as movie watching as we could hardly come across someone for whom movies are not appealing. Who would say no to watch movies in English class, or in other words, who would have a second thought about switching from the boring conventional grammar classes to learning through one of their favorite pastimes? There are no better and comprehensive curriculum to learn a language than movies where almost everything is discussed, on different levels, in different contexts/situations, and by different characters/speakers. Helping students who learn English as a second language subconsciously absorb, as they follow the story, a wide range of vocabulary, present-day grammar, sentence varieties, formal and informal, and pronunciation along with intonation and accent, movies do not just help them pick up a language, but they speed up the learning process and create an unbelievable interest in the students to practice the learned language.

1. Introduction

Enough has been said and written about the importance of English language in this fast-shrinking world where a global language is need of the hour. This poses a challenge to non-English speaking countries to learn English as a second language. Language experts, both English speaking and non-English speaking, around the world have come up with many a technique, methodology, tool, etc. to help those who would like to learn English as a second language. While it is true that every technique and methodology to teach and learn English as a second language has its own advantages, it's to date not clear which one works best or is most

effective, as each has its own disadvantages too. Though there have been never-ending arguments for and against each methodology/technique, suggesting it would serve the purpose if applied correctly or if used to the right group of learners, a quite common understanding is that no methodology/technique has proved to be as effective as it is intended to be. In other words, each technique is of some help to the learner/teacher but not of the complete help. But it only makes clear the fact that when it comes to language teaching, it's not prudent to rely entirely on one single technique or method but to be adaptive and use different techniques for different aspects of the language for a different set of people. To learn if not master any language, the learner will have to acquire four key skills, which are reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Each of these can still be divided into more categories and maybe this explains why a single method/technique has not been effective so far.

Methods of Teaching

There have been number of methods of teaching or learning foreign languages so far. They are grammar-translation method (1890s-1930s), cognitive approach (1940s-1950s), audio-lingual method (1950s-1960s), the direct method (1970s), and the natural/communicative approach, total physical response, the silent way, suggestopedia, and community language learning (1960s-2000s)—the years mentioned in parentheses denote the period when they were in use. As discussed above, each replaced the other due to some reason or the other. The grammar-translation method teaches the language by rules not use, and hence it doesn't help the learner with pattern practice, and the direct method focuses more on the pattern practice, with no regard to the other aspects of language learning. A detailed study of advantages and disadvantages of these methods is beyond the scope of this paper.

To Make Learning Languages a Fun-filled Experience

Learning any new language would be difficult and not at all fun if the above methods are employed. One thing is that these methods are not effective as they are believed to be, and another reason is they make the whole learning experience serious, somber, and tedious, when it actually should be fun. Language learning is a long process and it certainly involves lots of observation and absorption for language generation. If any learning is supposed to be fun to hold

learner interest throughout the process, it's more so when it comes to language learning considering the amount of effort and time required from the learner as well as the teacher. As some of the methods recommend, the grammar should be taught inductively or implicitly, for which the technique of 'frequency' is used. The use of activities in language classrooms is another good idea but most of these activities seem to be very demanding and challenging, which, though successful with a small group of hardworking learners, makes this technique on the whole a failure. We need an activity that learners would love to do and will less likely to get bored of so that they can be fed on the teaching content aplenty. Movie watching will fit the bill, as it is something most of us do to unwind. If learners would use it to relax when they are tired of their daily activities, won't they jump at the idea of watching movies in the classroom not to relax but to learn what has been till now a strenuous task? This method teaches a language by use and not by rules.

Advantages of Using Movies as a Teaching Aid

Use of movies as a teaching aid is not new and has been in practice for some time and fast catching on as well. When its growing popularity itself is a testimony to its usefulness in the classroom, there are many advantages, which include but are not limited to the following. Movies "can be used to create both imaginative and skill-developing activities (and) to teach language function" (Voller & Widdows, 1993). Speaking skills are fast becoming the most important aspect of a language as most of the communication is done through this mode nowadays. Movies expose learners to language use in daily activities or rather different situations while at the same time developing a great interest in learners to practice what's learned. Dewing is of the view that "video can act as a catalyst for thinking, inspiring (students) to learn" 1992, Introduction section). Different people learn things in different ways. Some show a great interest in learning if it's visual mode. Those who are kinaesthetic learners who pick up concepts quickly when the content is presented through motion and action will feel comfortable with this method of learning.

Easy Access

Learners and teachers have easy access to learning materials (movies) and equipment required is not hard to get in today's classrooms as there is hardly any school, college, or any learning environment for that matter that does not have computers or overhead projectors. Stoller says "films and later videos bring authenticity, reality, variety, and flexibility into the second- language classroom" (1990) and Kritzer supports this idea saying "television can bring liveliness and immediacy to education that no other medium can provide". This method makes for an exciting learning atmosphere where learners are encouraged and motivated throughout the learning process. In a way to build on this idea, Finocchiaro says films "provide added incentive to learn and are interesting for the students" (Finocchiaro, 1968). The teaching content here is "a continuing source of listening material especially for countries where the opportunities to meet people who speak English may be rare" (Benda, 1982). Movies help learners "good listening and viewing habits," the order of learning a language is listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Good listeners will more likely become good speakers. According to Duke (1983) the aids and guidance provided by movies "are often most effective when transient and accompanied by spoken and pictorial explanation so that they supplant or support the learner's own mental imagery".

Movies/Video Clips as a Teaching Aid

If movies or video clips are one of the best teaching aids for teaching/learning in general, they are more apt in language classes than anywhere else as they, on the one hand, present language as spoken by the native speakers with visual clues and, on the other, support natural language generation. Making teaching/learning experiences fun and enjoyable, this aid will draw learners to the class room as against conventional methodologies where learners and, sometimes, trainers do not show much interest.

Movie as a teaching aid can be used in many ways depending on the instruction level of learners. Though there is no limit to how this aid can be put to use, it's very important that the instructor plans the whole session beforehand and goes to the classroom with all required materials. Learners' instruction level must be taken into consideration while planning the session

as it plays major part in how this aid can be used. The instruction level should decide the teaching plan as well as the teaching material to be used. Arthur (1999) claims that:

"Video can give students realistic models to imitate for role-play; can increase awareness of other cultures by teaching appropriateness and suitability; can strengthen audio/visual linguistic perceptions simultaneously; can widen the classroom repertoire and range of activities; can help utilize the latest technology to facilitate language learning; can teach direct observation of the paralinguistic features found in association with the target language; can be used to help when training students in ESP related scenarios and language; can offer a visual reinforcement of the target language and can lower anxiety when practicing the skill of listening."

For learners of English as a second language, movies have the added advantage of providing real language and cultural exposure (Bello, 1999; Stempleski, 1992). Movies allow learners to see actions, expressions, body language, and gestures while they hear the right pronunciation, stress, and intonation (Bello, 1999).

Elementary Level

If the learner is at the elementary level, the video clip should contain very short dialogs spoken at a slower pace with considerable space between dialogs, and it should provide more visual clues to the meaning. The whole clip should not run for more than say thirty minutes as a long clip may not hold the learner's interest and it's very likely the learner will lose track and find it difficult to recall during discussion that will follow clip viewing. If required, the hard to follow dialogs if any can be replayed two or three times as they may otherwise hamper the understanding of the whole clip. And sometimes a small discussion about the clip before seeing the clip will be of great help to understand the dialogs. The movie clip can be about the subject learners are generally interested in. The instructor can find out the class' general interest before picking clips.

The right content will be movie clips that will appeal to children where dialogs will be short, straightforward, and will be spoken relatively slow. Dialogs with hidden meaning or idiomatic expressions should be avoided at this level. Short films that would run for thirty to

forty-five minutes will be very apt. The movie can be slowed down and played over and over again where required for better understanding.

Though short dialogs rich in visual clues can be absorbed without any help from the instructor, the scenes where the story is developed through dialogs may pose a little bit of challenge to the learner and the teacher should help therein. If the whole clip is played at a stretch the first time not to hamper the interest of following the story, later on during discussion the clip should be played again but this time in segments and not on the whole. Each scene or dialogue can be discussed separately, which will help the learner grasp many expressions. It is important learners are provided with easy imaginary situations where they can practice whatever they just learned from the clip viewing and the subsequent discussion.

Intermediate Level

As discussed above, the instruction level decides the content, technique, length of the video clip, post-viewing tasks, etc. At the intermediate level of instruction, learners will have some knowledge of the language though cannot be expected to speak and understand the language well. The materials as with the other levels should be interesting to the audience and can be of the length of forty-five minutes to one hour; it is important that they be suitable to split into different segments for post-viewing discussions and tasks. They could either be children stuff or family dramas with the pace of the video being in between the elementary and the advanced level. It would be better if the video has scenes where sisters and brothers talk about their daily life situations or friends at school or neighborhood talk about their daily events and experiences. Learners can easily relate to this kind of scene; this will keep them interested in the video throughout and will help them learn the differences and similarities between their own language and the target language. They will also feel thrilled to practice the target language in the daily situations where they have only been using their mother tongue till now.

Unlike the elementary level, phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions can be used at this level but not to the same extent as the advanced level. Intermediate level is the best stage to introduce learners of a second language to such special expressions. Many tasks can be tried with

learners of this level, such as scene discussions, role-play, vocabulary game, recalling dialogs, etc., but replacing the video dialogs with their own can be saved for the next level. It is very important the instructor keep learners motivated with the help of post-viewing tasks that should give sense of achievement and the fun of learning. At the same time the instructor should ensure after-watch tasks are challenging but at the same time level appropriate lest learners will lose interest in the whole learning process.

Advanced Level

If the learner is at the advanced level, a full movie running for two hours can be used as a tool. Of course, it's important the movie deals with the subject that is of great interest to the age group of the audience. The best genre for advanced level learners will be suspense/thriller, which will keep the audience hooked to the movie throughout. If learners find particular scene or dialog difficult to follow, the same can be played over and over again till they understand before continuing with the movie. The instructor's help is of foremost importance when it comes to some language aspects where no visual clues will prove any help. Some of such aspects are phrasal verbs, idiomatical expression, slang, and cultural-related terms. Such term and expressions in the movie should be picked out beforehand and listed on a sheet along with their meanings in simple words. The movie can be stopped at such scenes and these terms can be explained with some examples before continuing the movie. Though learners at this level may already know some of these, the list is ever-growing, and words and expressions can be added to it.

Post-Viewing Activities

As part of post-viewing activities, learners can be asked to play some interesting scenes from the movie they just saw. Of all possible activities, the technique of role-playing will promote natural language generation a great deal. The instructor can pick the most important/interesting scene from the movie, of course the one that involves many characters and a long conversation, and have learners act out the scene in front of the class. Instead of the actual dialogs, they can use their own words for the situation provided. This will mean a lot of fun and a great deal of learning. Of course, the instructor can help along when learners enact the scene.

This kind of activity will increase the learner's confidence level and the learner will feel motivated to use the language in real situations too. Depending on learners' interest and creativity, the dialogs can be changed, and the learner can say what he or she wanted the real character to say. Any extent of deviation from the actual scene is all right so long as learning is happening. After all our aim is understanding of the language as spoken and language generation.

Three Stages of Viewing

As may have been clear from the above discussion, the teacher plays a very important in this method of teaching and it takes a lot of time, effort, and planning on the part of the teacher. Using videos in the classroom can be divided into three major stages. They are (1) pre-viewing, when the teacher prepares learners for the lesson, introducing the video to be used in the class, discussing the parts of elements that learners need to watch out for, etc., (2) viewing, when the teacher should be around throughout, navigating the video, which includes slowing down, pausing, forwarding, rewinding, or stopping as required, and observing learners as they watch the video, and (3) post-viewing, when the teacher, after a couple of questions or a short discussion about the video, will administer the post-viewing tasks he would have already planned.

Though it may look like the second stage, viewing, is the main activity, as it is when the teaching aid is being used, actually speaking this is the least important as far as the teacher is concerned and as important as the other two stages as far as learners are important. If learners are to be completely attentive while viewing the video, the next stage requires equal amount of effort and attention on the part of learners as they are to apply what they just learned. From the teacher's point of view, stages one and two are very important. If the teacher sets the stage for the session during the first stage, the third stage is the time when the teacher has to exploit all language elements in the video to the fullest possible extent.

Challenges and Way to Overcome Them

As interesting as it may seem to use videos to teach or learn English as a second language, it, like other methodologies, has its own disadvantages or rather challenges. The first and foremost challenge is for the teacher to select videos that have scope for learning. Selecting a video for a specific topic, be it vocabulary or sentence structures, is especially a difficult and time-consuming task. Videos for entertaining purposes are easy to select as all one needs to do is check the genre, read the synopsis, and find out cast and crew.

But selecting videos for learning purposes is not as easy as selecting them for entertainment. Benda (1982) has written that “native... professional tapes are (not) available all the time. And available tapes do not always contain subjects appropriate to the needs and objectives of a particular group of learners.” In addition, “authentic videos may contain language, content, or themes that are controversial, or even inappropriate to the adult ESL classroom” (Burt, 1999). The teacher may need to look out for many aspects of the video such as its content, its appropriateness for the level, and its scope for learning. Movies meant for native speakers may discuss controversial themes and may have inappropriate content, which should be watched out for and avoided. The more specific the focus of the session, the more tedious the process of selecting the clip. Burt (1999) has said that “it takes time for the teacher to preview and select authentic videos and then to prepare activities for learners.”

There is a way out for this otherwise surmountable problem too. There are instructional videos available ready-made, which are meant for classroom use and learning purposes. As these would have already been checked for language, content, length, and appropriateness, the teacher’s job is made easy. All he or she needs to do is pick the right video clip for the session planned. Some videos may come with a short-description, which will make video selection simpler. To top it all, sometimes they come with worksheets, teacher guides, transcripts, etc., which can be used for preparation and post-viewing exercises/tasks (Stempleski, 1992). With the idea of using videos at the classroom is catching on fast, easier to choose from, customizable, packaged learning materials are very likely to be available aplenty on the market in near future.

Movies can be edited to our requirement. The editing, as Salah El-Araby has suggested, may be done “to suit the proficiency level and varied interests of the learners” (1974). You may copy films, movies, series...etc. from one tape to another taking out inappropriate scenes and events in the process.

Finally, the choice of the movie is very important. Pick a genre that interests the learner and pick a movie that can be watched over and over. Repeat watches bring more focus on the language.

Selection of Movies

The instruction level and the audience decide the content and length of the video/movie to be selected for the session. There are also many other factors that the teacher/facilitator should take into consideration while selecting teaching materials. First and foremost is that any video should appeal to the audience, the learners.

A large-scale survey by Canning-Wilson (2000) suggests that the students like learning language using videos. One of the results of her survey shows that learners prefer action/entertainment films to language films or documentaries in the classroom. She states that although these films may seem to hold student interest, she believes it could be inferred that student comprehension of the video may be due to the visual clues instead of the auditory components.

Movies should be inspiring, motivating, and interesting. Will the video appeal to the learners? As far as content or subject matter is concerned, the teacher should see if the content matches the instructional level and is culturally appropriate to the learners. Clarity is another important criterion. The teacher should check if the instructional message will be clear to the learners. This is important because if the video is boring or unclear, the learner will feel frustrated and the whole session will be a waste of time. The learners may even lose interest in this method. Different movies have characters speak at different rates of speed. It's important the

rate of the language in the video is appropriate to the learners' comprehension level. When the pace is too fast for the learner to follow, the learners will again lose interest and feel frustrated. Finally, the instructor should check if the scenes in a movie are too dependent on each other that when watched at random they are difficult to follow. This doesn't allow the instructor to discuss a few minutes of video, but rather he or she has to wait for the whole video to get over. From teaching point of view, it would be better if the video is independent of sequence. Movies that can be watched over and over again should be preferred as learners may need to watch them repeatedly during after-watch discussions. Also repeat watches bring better focus on the language.

Movies as a Comprehensive Tool

If you think that movies may create some interest or at most introduce the target language to the learner and nothing beyond, think again. Some are of the opinion that movies can only give a few glimpses of the language and they don't provide a formula or grammar to help the learner with any new situations. This is far from true as no other method can provide the teacher and the student with as comprehensive teaching content as movies. Any life situation can be taught through movies as movie genres are aplenty and movies replete with dialogs of different sorts can easily cover all possible language patterns. Yes, it's language patterns, which should be highlighted and completely exploited during the after-watch exercises/sessions by the teacher, that help the learner handle any new situations.

There are innumerable genres of movies where the viewer gets to see a wide range of subjects, situations, scenes, emotions, and personalities. While watching movies, learners get exposed to dialogs spoken in different contexts such as domestic life, political coupe, childhood problems, adult life, old age struggles, friendship, love, revenge, gratitude, children with single parents, overburdened parents, misunderstanding between friends, couple, colleagues, etc. This kind of variety cannot be found in any other teaching content.

Soap Operas

Teaching content need not necessarily be movies. Soap operas are another source of teaching materials, which tell stories in a long-winded yet interesting way with many twists and turns. What happens in a, say, one hundred twenty minutes of a movie will be converted into many hours of video for a soap opera. There is no time constraint for soap operas because it's not how long a series is but how interesting a story can be made with twists and turns. Soap operas lend themselves for long scenes with lengthy dialogs.

Unlike in movies, the same events are discussed on various levels, from different points of view, by different characters, sometimes elaborately and sometimes shortly, in soap operas. This makes them great teaching content as the learner will get exposed to variety of the language, be it sentence structures, vocabulary, or grammar. Also, every time the event is discussed the learner better comprehends the content.

It is in soap operas that one will most likely come across event summaries. A long scene involving many characters discussing complicated issues will be summed up in a few words by one of the characters in the next scene when he or she shares what just happened with someone who was not there in the previous scene. Such scenes/dialogs are will help learners know varieties of the language. We all do this in our daily lives—filling in someone or other on what happened before.

Movies are a Better Option

That said, movies are a better option when it comes to short, to-the-point dialogs like the following one from the movie A Perfect Murder:

Person 1: I couldn't help noticing your footsteps around the body. May I know what you were doing?

Person 2: Ensuring he was dead.

Person 1: Was he?

Person 2: Appeared to be.

Vocabulary

There is no language without words. Of all the challenges learners face while learning a second language, the most difficult challenge is that of vocabulary. It does not just know the words but ability to use them in the right place/context in the right way is what seems to be more important in terms of learning. And reading the words and remembering them will not serve any purpose unless the learner knows where to use and how to use the learned words. So many methods and strategies have been recommended and tried for acquiring vocabulary skills. Some help the learner learn the words, but not how to use them. Some focus more on usage and fail to cover all basic vocabulary. There are few strategies for learners of foreign languages to learn the required vocabulary with usage with ease. Schmitt grouped the strategies into two groups: (1) discovery strategies and (2) consolidation strategies, sub-classifying them into five, determination strategies, social strategies, memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and metacognitive strategies.

Of about 500, 000 words in English, only 5,000 words are used even by a native speaker. And is there any way to find out which ones are those? It's a Herculean task by itself. There are many words learners do not need at all. But when movies are used as a tool to learn the language, only these often-used words are part of the teaching content. Also when we learn a new word, it's not enough if we just know the meaning of the word. What's more important is to know what other words this new vocabulary word is usually associated with, whether it has any grammatical characteristic, and how it is pronounced in isolation and in phrases. This is why it's important we learn phrases and not words, which will take care of the usage aspect of vocabulary learning too. Words are learned best when learned along with their usage.

When words are learned with visual clues, we can remember and recall for long with ease. Movies are of great help in this regard, where words or phrases are learned in context. When students thus learn phrases, it's easy for them to apply them when they come upon the similar context in their daily life.

It's better to learn 'royal family' and 'poor family' than learning 'royal', 'family', and 'poor' separately in terms of vocabulary building. After all, we only learn words to use them in real situations and not to add to our knowledge bank. Similarly, phrases like 'in contact with', a train set, shades of opinion, at high level, thanks to somebody's help, etc. cannot be learned if a word by word method is followed for vocabulary learning.

Grammar

Of late conversational grammar, which is totally different from grammar taught in school and most important for daily-life conversations, has gained a great deal of attention due to the awareness among general public and empirical studies by many authors. It is believed that those who are adept at written English grammar struggle to a great extent when it comes to day-to-day conversations, which is, according to Carter and McCarthy, due to the fact that "most grammars of English have had a bias towards the written language". These authors in their book *The Cambridge Grammar of English* claim that basic structures of conversational English have not been described in detail till recently. Biber, et al. (1999) have said conversation is "a variety of language deserving particular attention in its own right".

To describe these aspects of conversational grammar, Ruhlemann (2007) suggests a situational framework for conversation, which relies heavily on the learner's ability to adapt "(...) a situation-based description of conversation can show how conversational language is adapted to certain needs arising from specific types of constraints on speakers in conversational situations" (2007).

The authenticity of movie language has lately been stressed more than ever by authors who in their works bring to light the advantages of movies as a tool to teach conversational grammar. Many empirical studies support the authenticity of movie language comparing screen dialogs with real life conversations. These studies show that a wide range of conversational strategies are employed in movies, which thus help students learn conversational processes. (Rodríguez Martín and Moreno Jaén, 2009; Rodríguez Martín, 2010 in press; Rodríguez Martín, forthcoming)

In another book Ruhlemann emphasizes the importance of conversational grammar as “the underlying model in teaching speech”. Also Moreno Jaen and Perez Basanta (2009) claim “teachers cannot teach conversation, which is by nature multimodal, with monomodal materials”. Thibault (2000) says that multimodal texts “combine and integrate the meaning-making resources of more than one semiotic modality—for example, language, gesture, movement, visual images, sound, and so on – in order to produce a text-specific meaning”. Movies provide best multimodal texts that enable us to learn conversational grammar through dialogs in different situations. It’s however important to examine the relationship between screen dialogues and conversational grammar to make this technique a success, where the teacher plays a significant role.

Make Learners Aware of Key Conversational Processes

The teacher should aim to make learners aware of key conversational processes, make them encounter features of conversational grammar in context to help them develop an aware how important it is to be familiar with the conversational grammar to improve their spoken skills.

Pronunciation, Intonation, and Accent

Unclear pronunciation of a speaker is like an illegible handwriting of a writer. However good the writing may be, if it’s not legible it cannot be read. Similarly, even if one speaks a flawless language, unless he or she speaks with right pronunciation, intonation, and accent, he or she cannot be understood. Every language has its own unique sounds and this makes it difficult for second language learners to learn them. The trouble second language learners have learning/imitating the sounds of the target language can be put down to the interference of the mother tongue as well as inadequate importance attached to its importance, poor teachers/instructors, and transliteration, to name a few.

A detailed discussion on this topic is beyond the scope of this paper. The importance of pronunciation, challenges it poses to the second language learners, and how movies can be used to overcome these challenges are alone discussed in this section.

The word *pronunciation* is generally understood as individual sounds of words, which leads to most of the problems second language learners have in learning correct pronunciation. As one ESL instructor said, “Pronouncing separate words in a sentence correctly lead to poor pronunciation!” That is why pronunciation should be approached in a comprehensive way, which should include stress patterns of phrases, word linking, rhythm, and intonation. Words when used in a sentence are jammed together. For example, 'What are you going to do?' becomes 'Whaddaya gonna do?'

First, the misconception that stressing each word will make the speech clearer should be removed from the learner and instructor’s mind. Even if individual words are pronounced clearly, the right communication can be achieved. Slowing down on purpose may be allowed if the intention is to get the message across or to emphasis. Speech should be meaning based. It’s important that we learn to listen and speak for meaning, where the key is stress, intonation, and rhythm.

Intonation patterns too vary from language to language. Speaking a foreign language with the intonation pattern of the mother tongue will lead to entirely unintentional effects. It’s said when one speaks English with Russian intonation, he or she will sound rude. And on the contrary when one speaks Russian language with English intonation, he or she will sound affected or hypocritical.

Movies are a great learning tool to avoid all this and achieve effective communication. No teaching material can be more authentic than movies where learners listen to the native speakers. However, the instructor/teacher has a huge role to play here because the learners will struggle when they try what they listened to, due to the factors mentioned above. Students should be made to mimic/imitate what they hear, which can be done during post-viewing discussions/activities. But intensive training may be required to master intonation and word linking.

Conclusion

Replete with nonverbal clues that can help learners with comprehension, movie as a form of input for teaching/learning a foreign language is a valuable teaching aid. The greatest advantage of movies is its ability to be used for language generation. This paper has discussed movies as a teaching aid in relation to other language tools and techniques. Though it was revealed in the introduction that no one technique can be a panacea for learning a foreign language, the paper has discussed in detail how movies can teach different aspects of the language, each explained in a different section. It doesn't just teach spoken language as it's generally believed, but it can be a complete teaching tool covering vocabulary, conversational grammar, listening skills, language patterns, pronunciation and accent, etc. How movies can be a comprehensive teaching curriculum is also discussed with examples in a section.

Since it's a content-oriented method, the quality and appropriateness of the content are of great significance. The appropriateness depends on the instruction level and different teaching materials for different instruction levels are broadly explained in a separate section. Pros and cons of movies as a teaching aid and the things to be watched out for before and during the movie watching session are also discussed above.

Regardless of the advantages and appropriateness attached to it, movies as a teaching aid has got its own disadvantages too but not without ways to overcome the same. The first and foremost will be that this method demands learners to possess good listening skills and if the learner doesn't have any familiarity of the target language, he or she may not be comfortable with movies with native speakers as characters. This may be true if the method involves just audio. On the contrary, movies provide lots of nonverbal aids such as sequence, visuals, gestures, body language, etc. I have seen my grandmother watch Hindi movies on *Doordharshan* on Saturday afternoons though she knew nothing of the language. It was these nonverbal aids and, of course, the quality of the story that made her develop a strong interest in movies in a language she didn't know. She could follow the story though she didn't understand the language in the beginning. Maybe as she watched more and more movies, she started picking up the language, which helped her understand them better in later days. If a person without any help from an

instructor could learn a new language, it goes without saying that movies will prove to be an effective tool in the language classroom with a teacher to help along before, during, and after viewing the movie.

Maybe for the beginner or those who struggle even after watching a few movies, Indian English movies can be used as teaching content. This way accent or native pronunciation won't be a problem and movies are presented in neutral accent or in the accent they can follow. This however should not continue for long and a switch to movies with native speakers should soon be made, that is, once the learner picks up the basics of the target language. A foreign language is best learned using movies with native speakers to avoid a great deal of unlearning in the later stage. After all pronunciation is equally important as any other aspect of the language for the learner to be understandable to everyone he or she speaks to. There are plenty of online and off-line materials available for this method. I would especially recommend movies like *My Fair Lady* and TV shows like *My Language*. Both beautifully and comically present the struggles the second language learners undergo in the learning process. Videos of this type will help the teacher/instructor a great deal to understand the difficulties learners face and to adopt the approach accordingly. I would suggest teachers watch this kind of video first before handling a class of second language learners.

R. Selvarajan, Ph.D. Candidate
Assistant Professor of English
Vivekananda College of Engineering for Women
Tiruchengode 637211
Tamilnadu
India
myenglishelci@gmail.com

Dr. V. Thiyagarajan
Professor
Department of English
Bannari Amman Institute of Technology
Sathyamangalam 638401
Tamilnadu
India
thiagu_jmv@rediffmail.com

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:1 January 2018

R. Selvarajan, Ph.D. Candidate and Dr. V. Thiyagarajan

Role of Videos to Enhance Learning Skill in English Language Teaching