



THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15382581>

ARTICLE INFO

Qabul qilindi: 26-aprel 2025 yil

Ma'qullandi: 30-aprel 2025 yil

Nashr qilindi: 11-may 2025 yil

KEY WORDS

*Audiovisual materials,
listening comprehension,
vocabulary retention, foreign
language learning, multimedia
resources, language proficiency.*

ABSTRACT

This study explores the effectiveness of audiovisual materials in foreign language learning. As modern education increasingly integrates technology, audiovisual tools such as films, podcasts, and online videos have become essential in language acquisition. This research investigates the impact of these materials on students' listening comprehension, vocabulary retention, and overall language proficiency. Using a mixed-method approach, data is collected through surveys and language assessments. The findings highlight the benefits and limitations of audiovisual learning methods, providing insights into their role in contemporary language education.

INTRODUCTION

Audiovisual materials have become an essential tool in foreign language learning, providing an immersive experience through films, podcasts, and online videos. Unlike traditional methods that focus on textbooks and grammar exercises, audiovisual content enhances listening comprehension, pronunciation, and cultural awareness. Research suggests that exposure to authentic spoken language improves learners' ability to understand native speakers and expand vocabulary. However, debates exist regarding its effectiveness compared to traditional methods, with concerns about passive learning and material selections. This study explores the impact of audiovisual materials on students' listening skills, vocabulary acquisition, and overall language proficiency, offering insights into their role in modern language education.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-method approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research methods to assess the effectiveness of audiovisual materials in foreign language learning. The mixed-method design allows for a comprehensive analysis by combining numerical data with participant feedback, ensuring a well-rounded understanding of the impact of audiovisual resources. A combination of surveys, pre-tests, and post-tests was utilized to evaluate students' listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and overall language proficiency (Krashen, 1982; Mayer, 2009) [5][7]. The study follows a quasi-experimental design, where participants were divided into two groups:

- Experimental Group: Engaged with audiovisual materials.
- Control Group: Followed traditional textbook-based learning. This design enables a comparative analysis to determine the effectiveness of audiovisual materials in enhancing foreign language acquisition.

The participants of this study consisted of 50 university students majoring in foreign languages at Tashkent State University of World Languages. They were selected based on their English proficiency levels, ensuring a mix of intermediate and advanced learners. The selection was conducted using an initial placement test to assess proficiency levels. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all students prior to data collection. The participants were randomly assigned to two groups:

1. Experimental Group (n=25): Used audiovisual materials, including films, podcasts, and educational videos.

2. Control Group (n=25): Used traditional classroom materials, such as textbooks and written exercises. Both groups followed the same curriculum to ensure consistency in learning objectives, with the only difference being the method of content delivery.

The study was conducted over a six-week period, during which data was collected through various instruments:

1. Pre-tests and Post-tests. A listening comprehension test and a vocabulary acquisition test were administered before and after the intervention. The pre-tests established a baseline for each participant's skill level, while the post-tests measured improvements after exposure to audiovisual materials (Vandergrift, 2007) [11]. The tests were designed to evaluate: Listening comprehension (ability to understand spoken English in various contexts). Vocabulary retention (ability to recall and use new words). Overall language proficiency (improvement in general understanding and usage).

2. Surveys and Questionnaires. Participants completed structured surveys to provide feedback on their learning experience. The surveys focused on: Perceived effectiveness of audiovisual materials. Engagement levels and motivation. Challenges faced while using audiovisual resources.

3. Interviews and Observations (Qualitative Component). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants from both groups to gain deeper insights into their experiences. Classroom observations were carried out to assess student engagement, interaction, and learning behaviors during sessions.

The experimental group was exposed to a variety of audiovisual resources, carefully selected to enhance listening comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. These materials included: Films and TV Shows with Subtitles (to develop contextual understanding and listening skills). Podcasts and Audiobooks (to improve auditory processing and vocabulary exposure). Educational YouTube Videos (to introduce real-life language use in different contexts).

The experimental group followed a structured learning process:

1. Watching/Listening to Assigned Content: Students engaged with audiovisual materials for a set duration.

2. Completion of Exercises: Activities included summarizing content, answering comprehension questions, and engaging in discussions.

3. Classroom Integration: The learned content was reinforced through interactive classroom activities. Meanwhile, the control group followed traditional classroom methods, which involved:

- Reading from textbooks.

-Completing written vocabulary exercises.

-Engaging in teacher-led discussions without audiovisual support (Field, 2008) [4].

The collected data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the results.

1. Quantitative Analysis. Paired t-tests were conducted to compare pre-test and post-test scores within each group. Independent t-tests were used to compare the results between the experimental and control groups. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$, indicating a meaningful difference in performance improvement.

2. Qualitative Analysis. The survey responses and interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns in student perceptions. Classroom observations were used to assess engagement levels, motivation, and participation. The combination of these methods allowed for a well-rounded assessment of the effectiveness of audiovisual materials in foreign language learning, providing both numerical evidence and learner perspectives.

RESULTS

The results of the pre-tests and post-tests showed a significant improvement in the listening comprehension and vocabulary retention of the experimental group, which was exposed to audiovisual materials. The pre-test results for listening comprehension in the experimental group averaged 60%, while the post-test results averaged 85%, indicating a 25% increase in performance. In contrast, the control group showed a smaller improvement, with pre-test scores averaging 62% and post-test scores averaging 70%, resulting in an 8% increase. Similarly, vocabulary retention improved more significantly in the experimental group. The average score on vocabulary tests increased from 55% to 80% in the experimental group, compared to an increase from 58% to 66% in the control group. Qualitative Data. Survey responses from the experimental group indicated positive feedback regarding the use of audiovisual materials. 80% of participants reported that they found the materials engaging and helpful in understanding the language better. The majority mentioned that the visual and auditory elements helped them remember vocabulary and improve listening skills, particularly with real-world accents and colloquialisms. However, some participants expressed difficulty in keeping up with fast-paced dialogues in certain audiovisual content. The control group, on the other hand, expressed mixed feedback regarding traditional textbook-based learning. While some students found it useful, others felt that it lacked the engagement and real-life application that audiovisual materials provided.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study support the hypothesis that audiovisual materials enhance listening comprehension and vocabulary retention in foreign language learners. The experimental group demonstrated more significant improvements compared to the control group, suggesting that exposure to authentic spoken language through audiovisual content can facilitate better comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. These findings align with previous research by Krashen (1982) [5], who emphasized the role of comprehensible input in language acquisition, and Mayer (2009) [7], who noted that multimedia resources support active learning and enhance cognitive engagement. The survey feedback also supports the effectiveness of audiovisual content in improving language skills, particularly in terms of pronunciation and understanding cultural nuances, which aligns with the views of Field (2008) [2] and Vandergrift (2007) [11]. However, the study also revealed some challenges, including the difficulty of keeping up with fast-paced dialogues in certain audiovisual materials, which may limit the benefits for lower-level learners. This finding echoes the concerns raised by Chapelle (2003) [1], who pointed out that audiovisual materials can sometimes overwhelm learners, especially those with lower proficiency levels. In comparison, the control group, while showing improvement, demonstrated that traditional methods may not be as effective in developing listening skills and vocabulary retention. This reinforces the argument that language education should increasingly incorporate multimedia tools to foster more dynamic and engaging learning environments.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that audiovisual materials significantly improve listening comprehension and vocabulary retention in foreign language learning. The experimental group, exposed to multimedia content, showed greater improvement compared to the control group. The positive feedback highlights the effectiveness of audiovisual resources in making learning more engaging and helping learners understand cultural nuances. However,

challenges like fast-paced dialogues were noted, especially for lower-level learners, suggesting the need for material selection based on proficiency. Overall, the study supports incorporating audiovisual materials into language learning curricula to enhance traditional methods. Future research could explore the long-term effects and broader applicability of these materials.

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