

## TEACHING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE THROUGH AUTHENTIC VIDEO MATERIALS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

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**Abstract.** In contemporary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, intercultural communicative competence has become a key objective of language instruction. This article explores the role of authentic video materials in fostering intercultural awareness, pragmatic competence, and communicative effectiveness. Drawing on recent scholarly literature, the paper analyzes how audiovisual input provides learners with access to real-life language use and culturally embedded meanings. A structured instructional framework and practical classroom applications are proposed. The study argues that authentic video materials serve as an effective pedagogical tool for integrating linguistic and cultural learning, thereby enhancing learners' ability to communicate appropriately in intercultural contexts.

**Keywords:** Intercultural competence, authentic video materials, EFL teaching, pragmatic competence, intercultural communicative competence, audiovisual learning, sociocultural awareness.

**Аннотация.** В современной преподавании английского языка как иностранного (EFL) межкультурная коммуникативная компетенция стала ключевой целью обучения. В данной статье рассматривается роль аутентичных видеоматериалов в развитии межкультурной осведомлённости, прагматической компетенции и эффективности коммуникации. Основываясь на современных научных исследованиях, статья анализирует, как аудиовизуальные материалы предоставляют учащимся доступ к реальному использованию языка и культурно обусловленным значениям. Предлагается структурированная учебная схема и практические примеры использования в классе. Исследование показывает, что аутентичные видеоматериалы являются эффективным педагогическим инструментом для интеграции языкового и культурного обучения, тем самым повышая способность учащихся адекватно общаться в межкультурных контекстах.

**Ключевые слова:** межкультурная компетенция, аутентичные видеоматериалы, преподавание EFL, прагматическая компетенция, межкультурная коммуникативная компетенция, аудиовизуальное обучение, социокультурная осведомлённость.

**Annotatsiya.** Zamonaviy chet til sifatida ingliz tili (EFL) ta'limida madaniyatlararo kommunikativ kompetensiya tilni o'rgatishning asosiy maqsadiga aylangan. Ushbu maqola autentik video materiallarning madaniyatlararo ongni rivojlantirish, pragmatik kompetensiya va kommunikativ samaradorlikdagi rolini o'rganadi. So'nggi ilmiy adabiyotlarga tayanib, maqola audiovizual materiallar o'quvchilarga real til ishlatilishini va madaniy kontekstga bog'liq ma'nolarni qanday taqdim etishini tahlil qiladi. Tuzilgan o'quv ramkasi va amaliy darslarda qo'llaniladigan misollar taklif etilgan. Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, autentik video materiallar til va madaniyat o'rganishni birlashtirishda samarali pedagogik vosita bo'lib xizmat qiladi va shu orqali o'quvchilarning madaniyatlararo kontekstlarda mantiqan va samarali muloqot qilish qobiliyatini oshiradi.

**Kalit so'zlar:** madaniyatlararo kompetensiya, autentik video materiallar, EFL ta'limi, pragmatik kompetensiya, madaniyatlararo kommunikativ kompetensiya, audiovizual o'rganish, sotsiokultural ong.

In the context of globalization, English is widely used as a medium of intercultural communication among speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As a result, the goals of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education have shifted from a primary focus on grammatical competence toward the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC). ICC involves not only the ability to use language accurately but also the ability to interpret and produce language appropriately in different sociocultural contexts (Deardorff, 2006).

Contemporary research in language pedagogy emphasizes the integration of cultural elements into language teaching. Scholars argue that language cannot be separated from culture, as communication inherently reflects cultural values, norms, and practices (Kramersch, 2013). Within this framework, authentic materials particularly video materials have gained increasing attention due to their ability to present language in context.

Authentic video materials, including films, television programs, interviews, and online content, provide learners with exposure to natural language use, multimodal communication, and culturally situated interactions. Unlike traditional textbooks, which often simplify or idealize communication, videos offer a more realistic representation of how language functions in real-life situations (Vanderplank, 2016).

The concept of intercultural competence has been widely discussed in applied linguistics and language education. Deardorff (2006) conceptualizes ICC as a dynamic process that includes attitudes (openness and curiosity), knowledge (cultural awareness), and skills (interpretation, interaction, and critical reflection). This process-oriented view highlights that intercultural competence is not a static body of knowledge but an ongoing developmental process. Kramersch (2013) further emphasizes the

symbolic dimension of language, arguing that language learners must understand not only linguistic forms but also the cultural meanings and values embedded in communication. From this perspective, intercultural competence involves the ability to interpret meaning across cultural boundaries and to negotiate identities in communication.

In EFL contexts, developing ICC presents particular challenges due to limited exposure to authentic language use. As a result, researchers advocate the use of authentic materials to bridge this gap. Gilmore (2007) argues that authentic materials provide learners with access to genuine discourse, which is essential for developing communicative and intercultural competence. More recent studies have explored the role of digital and audiovisual resources in fostering ICC. Shadiey, Yu, and Sintawati (2021) highlight that technology-enhanced learning environments create opportunities for learners to engage with diverse cultural perspectives. Similarly, Susilo, Yang, and Qi (2023) emphasize the importance of critical intercultural awareness, which can be developed through reflective engagement with authentic content.

Authentic video materials provide contextualized input that reflects real-life communication. Audiovisual materials combine verbal and non-verbal elements, allowing learners to observe how meaning is constructed through language, gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice (Vanderplank, 2016). This multimodal nature of video materials supports comprehension and interpretation, particularly in intercultural contexts. Learners are able to see how cultural norms influence communication, such as levels of formality, politeness strategies, and interactional styles. By engaging with diverse cultural representations, learners are encouraged to reflect on their own cultural assumptions and to develop a more nuanced understanding of other cultures. Video-based tasks can promote critical intercultural awareness by encouraging learners to analyze cultural differences and question stereotypes (Susilo et al., 2023). This reflective process is essential for developing intercultural competence, as it fosters openness and empathy.

The use of authentic videos has been shown to increase learner engagement and motivation. The dynamic and visual nature of video content captures learners' attention and provides a more stimulating learning experience compared to traditional text-based materials. Although quantitative findings vary, studies consistently indicate that learners respond positively to video-based instruction. For example, Shadiey et al. (2021) report that students demonstrate higher levels of participation and interest when engaged in video-based intercultural tasks. The integration of authentic video materials into EFL instruction requires not only careful selection of content but also the implementation of pedagogically grounded activities that guide learners from observation to analysis and, ultimately, to production.

A foundational step in developing learners' intercultural competence involves guiding them to recognize how language functions in real communicative situations. In this activity, students are presented with carefully selected video clips that depict naturally occurring interactions, such as making requests, giving advice, apologizing, or expressing disagreement. Learners are first encouraged to identify the specific speech acts performed in the interaction. Subsequently, they analyze the linguistic forms used (e.g., modal verbs, hedging expressions, indirect structures) and examine how these forms are influenced by contextual variables such as social distance, power relations, and degree of formality. Special attention is also given to paralinguistic and non-verbal features, including intonation, facial expressions, and gestures, which contribute significantly to meaning-making. Through guided discussion and teacher scaffolding, students begin to understand that speech acts are not universal but are shaped by cultural norms and expectations. This analytical process enables learners to move beyond literal comprehension toward a deeper understanding of how meaning is constructed and interpreted in context.

Building on the analysis of speech acts, learners are then engaged in intercultural comparison tasks that require them to reflect on differences and similarities between the target culture and their own cultural background. After viewing a video segment, students are prompted to compare how a particular communicative act such as making a request or responding to criticism is performed in different cultural contexts. This stage encourages learners to articulate their observations and to critically evaluate cultural norms. For instance, students may discuss whether directness or indirectness is preferred in each culture, how politeness is expressed, or how social hierarchies influence communication. By engaging in such comparisons, learners develop the ability to interpret cultural practices from multiple perspectives. Importantly, this activity fosters not only awareness of cultural differences but also critical thinking, as students are guided to avoid stereotyping and to recognize the complexity and variability within cultures. The teacher's role is crucial in facilitating balanced discussions and encouraging respectful interpretation of cultural diversity.

Once learners have analyzed and compared communicative behaviors, they are provided with opportunities to apply their knowledge through role-play and simulation activities. In this stage, students reenact scenarios observed in the video or create similar situations that require the use of appropriate speech acts. These simulations may involve adapting the original scenario to a different cultural context or modifying it according to specific communicative goals. For example, students might perform the same interaction in both a formal and informal setting or adjust their language to reflect different social roles. Through active participation, learners practice selecting appropriate linguistic and pragmatic strategies in real time. This experiential learning process enhances communicative fluency and helps learners internalize culturally

appropriate patterns of interaction. Moreover, role-play activities create a safe environment in which students can experiment with language and receive constructive feedback.

To deepen intercultural learning, reflective practices are incorporated into the instructional process. After engaging with video materials and classroom activities, students are asked to write reflective journals in which they analyze their learning experiences. In these reflections, learners are encouraged to consider what they have learned about the target culture, how their perceptions may have changed, and what challenges they encountered in understanding or interpreting the communication. They may also reflect on differences between their own cultural norms and those observed in the video. This reflective process promotes the development of critical intercultural awareness, as learners become more conscious of their own cultural assumptions and more open to alternative perspectives. Over time, reflective journaling supports the formation of a more nuanced and flexible intercultural identity.

The final stage of this pedagogical sequence involves project-based learning, in which students synthesize their knowledge by creating their own video materials. Working individually or collaboratively, learners design and produce short videos that demonstrate intercultural communication in specific contexts. These projects may include role-play scenarios, interviews, or dramatizations that reflect appropriate use of language and cultural norms. The process of planning, scripting, and performing requires learners to actively apply their linguistic, pragmatic, and intercultural knowledge. In addition to reinforcing learning outcomes, project-based activities foster creativity, collaboration, and learner autonomy. By engaging in the production of authentic-like materials, students transition from passive recipients of knowledge to active participants in the learning process.

Overall, these interconnected activities form a coherent instructional sequence that moves from analysis to reflection and application. Such an approach ensures that authentic video materials are not merely used for comprehension practice but serve as a dynamic tool for developing intercultural communicative competence in EFL learners.

In conclusion, the development of intercultural communicative competence has become an essential objective in contemporary EFL education, reflecting the demands of global communication. By providing learners with access to real-life communication and culturally embedded interactions, videos enable a deeper understanding of how meaning is constructed and negotiated across contexts. The integration of reflective practices and collaborative tasks encourages learners to become active participants in the learning process, fostering autonomy and intercultural sensitivity. Ultimately, authentic video materials should not be viewed as supplementary tools but as central

components of EFL instruction, capable of transforming the classroom into a dynamic space for meaningful intercultural engagement and communicative development.

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