

Movies in the english classroom

Video is a valuable and possibly underused classroom tool. So, introducing movies into the English classroom is a challenge most language teachers must face.

Before the students are exposed the movie, there are some things teachers should consider: language level and social maturity of the students, focus on the language first and culture second, or the opposite.

As for techniques, there is also a limited number of those: sound off/vision on (silent viewing), sound on/vision off, pause/freeze-frame control, sound on/vision on.

Well developed, planned and graded video lessons should consist of three stages, which are: pre-watching (tune in), watching and post-watching.

Pre-watching stage means that students are gradually guided and involved in the plot, the characters and the setting of the film. They can be led at this stage by prediction based activities, brainstorming speculation patterns with the aid of visual aids such as pictures, vocabulary with words and expressions from the story or just through questions related to the main topic.

At the watching stage, there is more thorough work on the plot and the characters. Students are exposed to a variety of activities such as problem solving, filling blanks, multiple matching, ordering events, true and false, or comprehension questions. The main aim at this stage is to exploit the film at its best profiting from the wide variety of idiomatic expressions, collocations and slang that the students will encounter in real life.

The post-watching stage is considered to be the follow up one where the film plot is used together with the lexical terms by making students either role-play the best parts or by organizing group debates based on the moral of the plot. Furthermore, a written homework assignment may be set asking students to describe their favorite character at lower levels or writing a film review at higher ones.

To conclude, variety, dynamics and creativity are the essential elements needed to create profitable video lessons while bringing movies into today's classrooms.