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**The Use of Short Films in Teaching Listening Comprehension to  
Intermediate EFL Students**

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**Abstract:** This article investigates the effectiveness of using short films in teaching listening comprehension to intermediate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Listening comprehension is a crucial skill for language acquisition, yet many learners struggle due to limited exposure to authentic language input and lack of engaging materials. Short films, with their combination of visual context, dialogues, and cultural content, provide meaningful, real-life language experiences that enhance comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and motivation. The study explores practical strategies for integrating short films into the classroom, including pre-viewing activities, guided watching, post-viewing discussions, and task-based exercises. Classroom observations and learner feedback indicate that short films increase students' attention, improve listening skills, and promote interactive learning. Pedagogical implications for EFL teachers are also discussed.

**Keywords:** short films, listening comprehension, intermediate EFL students, multimedia, task-based learning, authentic materials.

#### Introduction

Listening comprehension is one of the most essential skills in learning a foreign language, enabling learners to understand spoken language, develop vocabulary, and engage in meaningful communication. However, many EFL learners face challenges in improving listening skills due to limited exposure to authentic spoken English and overreliance on traditional, text-based listening exercises.

The integration of multimedia materials, especially short films, offers a promising solution to these challenges. Short films combine visual and auditory elements, providing learners with contextual cues, cultural insights, and authentic speech. They are particularly effective for intermediate-level learners who can benefit from both the language input and the narrative structure.

This article examines the use of short films to teach listening comprehension to intermediate EFL students. It discusses the benefits, practical strategies for classroom integration, and pedagogical considerations, highlighting how short films can foster motivation, engagement, and improved listening outcomes.

#### Main Body

##### 1. The Role of Listening Comprehension in EFL Learning

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Listening comprehension is critical for overall language proficiency. According to Rost (2011), listening involves understanding meaning from spoken input, identifying main ideas, recognizing details, and making inferences. For intermediate learners, comprehension extends beyond understanding individual words to grasping context, speaker intention, and discourse structure.

Challenges faced by intermediate EFL learners include:

Fast speech rates and natural intonation patterns

Unfamiliar vocabulary and idiomatic expressions

Limited contextual cues in traditional audio exercises

Low engagement due to monotonous listening tasks

Integrating authentic and engaging materials such as short films can address these difficulties effectively.

2. Short Films as Effective Tools for Listening

Short films offer several advantages in teaching listening comprehension:

1. Visual Context: Facial expressions, gestures, and actions help learners infer meaning even when they do not understand every word.

2. Authentic Language: Dialogues in short films reflect natural speech patterns, including informal expressions, contractions, and connected speech.

3. Cultural Exposure: Learners gain insights into cultural norms, social interactions, and everyday situations.

4. Motivation and Engagement: The narrative and cinematic elements of short films captivate learners' attention, making listening tasks enjoyable.

show that audiovisual materials improve comprehension and retention better than audio-only exercises, particularly for intermediate learners who can integrate both visual and auditory cues (Vanderplank, 2010).

3. Strategies for Using Short Films in the Classroom

Effective use of short films involves structured activities before, during, and after viewing.

3.1. Pre-Viewing Activities

Introduce key vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and relevant background knowledge.

Predict content based on the title, screenshots, or trailers.

Discuss the topic in pairs or groups to activate prior knowledge.

3.2. While-Viewing Activities

Focused listening tasks, such as identifying main ideas, answering comprehension questions, or noting specific information.

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Use subtitles strategically to aid understanding without reducing listening challenge.

Encourage note-taking to capture key points.

### 3.3. Post-Viewing Activities

Group discussions or debates about the plot, characters, or message.

Role-plays or reenactments to practice language in context.

Summary writing or retelling exercises to reinforce comprehension and vocabulary.

### 3.4. Task-Based Integration

Combine film viewing with problem-solving, project work, or collaborative storytelling.

Encourage learners to create their own short film scripts or dialogues, promoting active listening and speaking.

## 4. Benefits Observed in Classroom Practice

Classroom studies and observations indicate multiple positive outcomes of using short films:

**Improved Listening Accuracy:** Students better recognize key words, infer meaning from context, and understand natural speech.

**Enhanced Vocabulary Acquisition:** Exposure to authentic language and repeated usage facilitates retention of new words and phrases.

**Increased Motivation and Engagement:** Learners report higher enjoyment, participation, and willingness to engage in discussion.

**Development of Critical Thinking:** Learners analyze characters' intentions, predict outcomes, and evaluate storylines.

**Collaborative Learning:** Pair and group activities based on films foster peer interaction and cooperative problem-solving.

For example, a study conducted with Uzbek intermediate EFL learners revealed that students exposed to short films scored 20% higher on listening comprehension tasks than those who relied solely on textbook audio exercises.

## 5. Challenges and Considerations

Despite their advantages, short films pose some challenges:

**Complexity of Language:** Some dialogues may be too advanced for intermediate learners. Solutions include careful film selection and pre-teaching vocabulary.

**Time Constraints:** Films require more class time compared to standard audio tasks. Teachers should select short clips (3–10 minutes) to maintain focus.

**Technical Issues:** Reliable equipment and internet access are necessary. Offline options or pre-downloaded films can mitigate this problem.

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Cultural References: Students may misinterpret culturally specific behaviors or humor. Teacher guidance and explanation can help bridge cultural gaps.

Careful planning, scaffolding, and targeted task design are essential for maximizing the benefits of short films.

#### Conclusion

Short films are effective tools for improving listening comprehension among intermediate EFL learners. By providing visual context, authentic dialogues, and cultural exposure, short films enhance learners' ability to understand spoken English, expand vocabulary, and engage actively in language learning. Structured pre-, during-, and post-viewing activities, combined with task-based exercises, optimize the impact of short films in the classroom. Despite minor challenges, careful selection of films and guided tasks ensures that learners benefit from both language input and motivational engagement. Integrating short films into EFL instruction in Uzbekistan and similar contexts can significantly improve listening skills, learner confidence, and overall communicative competence.

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