



The Audiovisual: A Multimodal Aid For Developing Appreciation Of Literature In French As A Foreign Language Class

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Abstract: The teaching of literature plays an important role in both cognitive and affective domains, contributing to the development of students' personalities. However, its learning, solely based on the oral transmission of knowledge by the teacher followed by the reading of works and research by learners, shows discouraging signs of limitation. Thus, the communication situation within the literature class remains mediocre. In a world where new communication technologies are omnipresent and society is evolving, it becomes essential to renew our approaches and pedagogical materials to make our literature courses both more attractive and accessible. In the educational environment, audiovisuals are often considered a technology. From this perspective, we will try through this article to explore a possible correspondence between literary works and other audiovisual forms, particularly adapted films, which could contribute to the revitalization of literature learning.

Keywords: FLE, literature, ICT, audiovisual, adaptation

1. Introduction

Nowadays, contemporary society evolves through new technologies. We live in a world of progress where we all come into contact with new means of communication from a very young age. Consequently, new educational devices have emerged in recent years.

Teaching modern languages nowadays poses various problems because learning a foreign language itself is an eminently complex process. Teaching a language involves endowing the learner with a set of knowledge concerning vocabulary, syntax, phonetics, semantics, morphology... According to Mousa (2012), "The aim is to enable them to communicate and express themselves in various situations while referring to the cultural codes of the target language. For this communication to be effective, real, and interesting, it must arouse the learner's interest. Therefore, communicative challenges

should not be artificial, but rather authentic and reflective of society, as ensured by audiovisual and literary texts.

Furthermore, one of the main objectives of level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages concerns « the development of critical thinking and the learning of clear and detailed argumentation ». For this, audiovisual media constitute an excellent means of implementing activities consistent with this practice of critical argumentation, such as through debates. With this type of exercise, the student is obliged to express themselves and behave appropriately in front of their peers. This is not always easy, especially when it is not their native language.

No one can deny the catalyzing role that audiovisual media can play in language teaching/learning. "Only the nostalgics of the Stone Age will deny that 'audiovisual' was a pedagogical revolution," as Porcher (1978) asserts. Therefore, its integration into the FLE classroom becomes essential and even constitutes a veritable metamorphosis of pedagogical practice. This article will therefore attempt to answer the following questions: what is the contribution of audiovisual media, as a pedagogical support, in the teaching/learning of French? To what extent can it be exploited as a multimodal aid to develop the appreciation of literature in the FLE classroom?

2. Audiovisual and Pedagogy

According to Le Petit Robert, the word "audiovisual" refers to "adding to the elements of language the use of images in communication." It also encompasses all work related to sound and image concerning sources of information and entertainment used in all areas of our lives. How then can this source of distraction be turned into a pedagogical tool and a support for language teaching and learning?

The world is currently inundated with images and sounds. Audiovisual media has become an integral part of the society in which we live. Therefore, schools are also called upon to effectively utilize audiovisual resources and all that they can offer. Its exploitation within the classroom is a pedagogical approach based on the use of both sound and image to facilitate learning and enhance memorization, especially in the learning of a foreign language.

It is recognized that audiovisual media is an effective method of foreign language teaching. Its integration into the educational environment dates back to the implementation of the Structural-Global Audiovisual Method (SGAV), focused on communication learning. However, criticism of this method lies in viewing language primarily as a means of oral expression and communication, neglecting written communication, which only appears in the form of dictation and does not put learners in a text-production situation.

Despite the decline of this method, audiovisual media remains one of the best approaches to teaching/learning French because, in the majority of cases, teachers rely

on texts, as if the shortcomings are solely lexical. The pedagogical relationship between the teacher and the student is therefore vertical. To improve this aspect, it is necessary, even obligatory, to place the student at the center of learning and make them a decision-maker. In this regard, audiovisual media constitutes a good means for a more engaging pedagogy. It allows for stimulating communication in its overall aspect, as language mastery is not limited to speech but extends to facial expressions, voice tones, gaze, etc.

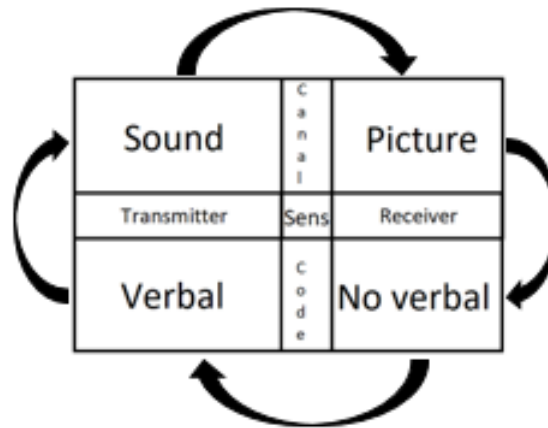


Fig. 1. Audiovisual communication model

In the educational environment, audiovisual media is often regarded as an information and communication technology (ICT). In this regard, and to benefit from this consideration, one can utilize the TPACK model. This model was developed based on Shulman's (1986) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PACK) model. Shulman is a philosopher and psychologist specializing in the field of education and teacher training. According to P. Mishra et al. (2006), "this model involves the impact of disciplinary content and pedagogical knowledge on pedagogical practices."

As for the TPACK model (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge), it "adds a third component, which is technology; this combination contains knowledge related to both disciplinary content (C), pedagogical knowledge (P), and technology (T)" (ibid). As illustrated in the figure below.

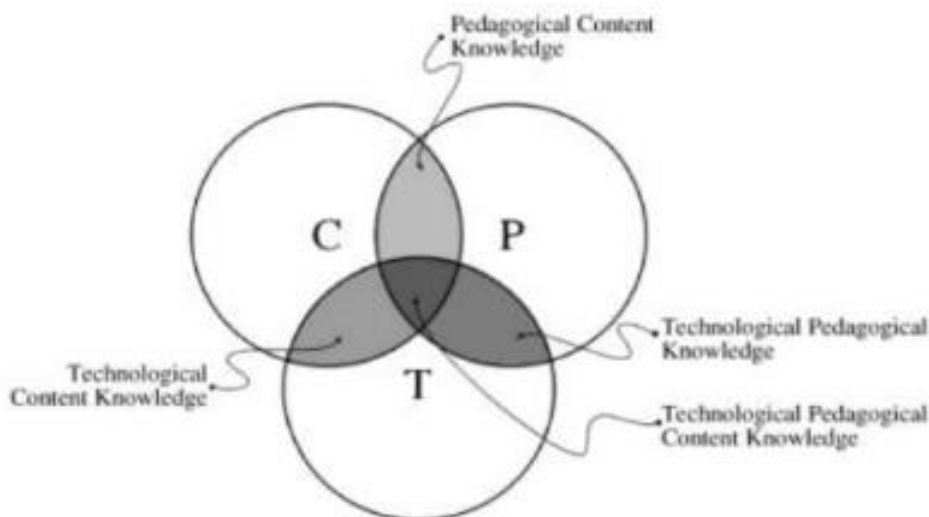


Fig. 2. TPACK model (ibid)

This diagram presents the widely adopted TPACK model, which has been "discussed by a large scientific community," as emphasized by Jordan et al. (2012), allowing for the adequate integration of technology, pedagogy, and content. The latter corresponds to what is taught, pedagogy corresponds to "how" it is taught, and technology corresponds to the tool "by which" it is taught.

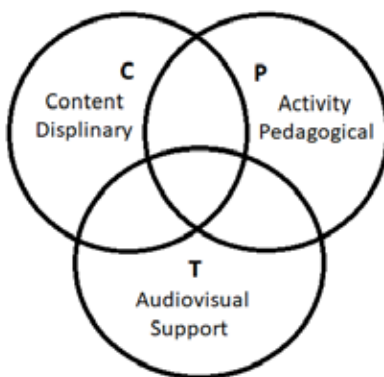


Fig. 3. Integrating audiovisual into the TPACK model

Technology has enabled audiovisual media to reach a larger audience more rapidly than books, making it more effective. This requires thorough work but does not neglect the traditional work dedicated to French classes; instead, it complements it and gives it meaning. Therefore, the integration of audiovisual media in this case is seen from a multidimensional perspective. It serves as a multimodal aid to acquire an appreciation for literary texts in French as a Foreign Language (FLE) classroom.

3. Audiovisual: Contribution

For the past few years, we have observed that pedagogical strategies have been modified thanks to the arrival of new technologies in classrooms. Nowadays, things have completely changed. The traditional method is over, and whereas knowledge used to be transmitted solely through written texts, today, with new learning methods, it can be disseminated through audiovisual means. Indeed, just like written support, audiovisual support offers numerous advantages that are invaluable in French language acquisition. For example, it can motivate learners and make them more autonomous in learning French, thus making language classes more dynamic and lively compared to previous years.

The issue of motivation concerns all disciplines but is particularly present in language classes. It's important to remember that audiovisual material doesn't just present an image and sound; it's a perfect combination of the two that evokes various emotions in the viewer and encourages reflection while entertaining. As Bourrissoux et al. (1992) explain: "This emotional charge of the image constitutes, from a pedagogical point of view, a potential advantage: the weight of words is good, but the impact of photos (and even more so of film or video images) is better... At least to arouse interest and provoke a reaction. Students feel involved, and engaged by what they see and what touches them." Another benefit of audiovisual support in French as a foreign language class is the ability to become familiar with accents, intonations, and even non-verbal language typical of foreign cultures: "from a learning perspective and the representation that students have of it, the video document is for them one of the safest ways to approach a current, varied language in a real situation" (Lancien, 1989).

This pedagogical tool also develops student autonomy and sometimes requires the teacher to step back in the classroom, which is not always easy for a teacher accustomed to directing the class and imparting knowledge. Indeed, thanks to images, learners can deduce words, phrases, or expressions they don't understand by themselves without resorting to their native language, thus facilitating memorization. They can also practice pronunciation exercises independently or reinforce certain grammatical concepts. Just like words, images are experimented with, helping us understand their meaning. In reality, students more easily retain an idea or concept they have assimilated themselves rather than something taught to them.

Furthermore, this learning method enhances the concentration of adolescents who increasingly struggle to pay attention to the teacher. It's important to note that nowadays, the number of students facing difficulties continues to increase, which is why teachers are obliged to innovate by seeking new appropriate pedagogical approaches. The goal is to create a conducive atmosphere during French class and break away from the routine of explanatory lessons. In short, with audiovisual support, learners educate themselves in every sense, often without even realizing it, all while remaining relaxed.

4. Audiovisual: Teacher vs Learner

Students will pay particular attention to learning using media-based educational materials. Maghfiroh et al. (2012) define media as "anything that can be used to channel messages from the sender to the receiver to stimulate the ideas, feelings, attention, and interests of the student so that the learning process takes place." In traditional pedagogy, the teacher is the holder of knowledge. They are the message sender. This simple transmission of knowledge is mediated by speech. However, with audiovisual mediation, the transmission of knowledge requires a teacher capable of adapting it to the pedagogical act and considering what best suits the students. Consequently, the teacher's stance changes in this new context. They must be able to master audiovisual language, manipulate its tools, and know how to use them in the pedagogical context.

The use of technology in classrooms is very recent. Therefore, teachers are not trained in audiovisual techniques, which can pose a difficulty for the teacher when preparing their lessons. As a result, preparing audiovisual support requires additional work for them. They must watch videos, choose the most suitable ones for their lesson, adapt them according to the level, age, tastes, and needs of their students, and create appropriate activities. This is why they must undergo continuous training and adapt to any environment to use these revolutionary tools in French as a foreign language class.

As for the learner, teaching with audiovisuels envisions new pedagogical methods that involve students in action. According to KERRITA (2017), "the integration of images in a language class defines new, richer relationships between the teacher and the learner." Thus, the traditional classroom, which generally places the teacher facing the student, has given way to an active class where all students are motivated in front of a screen.

Today, active and modern pedagogy seeks to place the students at the center of the system and make them actors in their education, becoming more autonomous in their learning. The teacher is now a learning facilitator, an animator, and a guide. However, audiovisuels are by no means intended to replace the teacher. It is one means among others that facilitates pedagogical practices. In this sense, the teacher must define the objectives of their lesson as well as the means to ensure their achievement to optimize the effectiveness of their teaching. In this regard, Dudézert (1994) asserts that "audiovisual and multimedia supports will not replace teachers in their classrooms; more than ever, their presence is necessary. But their generalization implies new requirements that will make teaching a profession of very high qualitative level."

5. Using audiovisual media to teach literature

In summary of what has just been mentioned, audiovisual aids used in an educational context are directly linked to technology. This fact thus prompts us to examine the use of these tools in teaching French as a foreign language (FLE) to appreciate literature.

Literary appreciation is the ability to understand literary trends and techniques that allow one to view the text as a work of art. Without this appreciation, students may encounter difficulties in understanding texts and exploring literature, which could compromise their development as proficient readers. This work suggests the use of audiovisual aids in the FLE classroom as a multimodal tool to help students develop their literary appreciation.

Learning a foreign language is necessary, particularly through authentic materials. In this regard, audiovisual aids and literary texts, the focus of our study, are part of it. According to Séoud (1994), "an authentic document, transposed into the classroom, loses its authenticity; the literary document, on the other hand, is self-sufficient and, thanks to its polysemy, its universal dimension, can speak to everyone, beyond time and space." This intrinsic strength possessed by literary texts legitimizes their fundamental role as essential vectors in the field of language teaching/learning, and even encourages their expansion through the judicious use of other complementary authentic materials, conducive to enhanced appreciation within the FLE classroom. In this sense, audiovisual aids are by no means intended to replace the text but rather can serve as a stepping stone towards the lesser-known, considering them as one means among others that facilitate pedagogical practices.

Audiovisual aids, in general, are a means that elicits reactions from learners. In a language class, they can be used in a pedagogical sequence either to support an objective (grammatical, language act) or to set up a project with learners, so that they can reinvest what has been understood, analyzed, and interpreted. There are many types of support from which the teacher can choose: a documentary, a news report, a recorded newspaper segment, an excerpt from a television program, a television series or selected excerpts, a short film, an interview with a public figure, brief news items (breaking news, news in brief), excerpts from films or films shown in their entirety, video clips, cartoons, advertisements... and the list could go on.

In the context of our research, and for our case, we will focus on films as proposed audiovisual aids. But it's not just any film; it's specifically cinematic adaptations and theatrical representations derived from literary works. Generally, new media like television, radio, films, etc., are based on old media such as books, paintings, music, etc. Over time, new and old media mutually influence each other and continue to interact with each other. They have been filtered before being fully embraced. Certainly, the difference in approach between literary texts and films is considerable, but there are nevertheless strong correspondences between the two. For example, there is almost always a written narration, whether in the form of a storyboard or a simple synopsis; there is also a grammar that can be taught and reception questions that need to be addressed.

Every teacher knows that at the foundation of any activity, whether in school or outside of it, motivation is both a guarantee and a condition for success. The challenge is therefore to foster motivation among learners where it is lacking or to skillfully

maintain it because it is an indispensable ingredient for progress in learning a foreign language. The film, it seems to us, is a trigger support to motivate students. Moreover, the act of learning is not limited to the intellectual process; it also relies on the emotional process where motivation plays a significant role in skills development. Learners will be interested in what they are taught if it is interesting. In this regard, GUILBERT (1990) asserts: "When a student is truly motivated, their performance is much closer to the maximum of their abilities than when motivation is lacking." This authentic support revitalizes teaching. According to Sylvand (2014), "a film becomes educational from the moment it teaches, in the sense that the viewer makes an effort to learn what the film motivates them to learn."

The issue of motivation affects all disciplines, but it is particularly fundamental in language teaching. It is therefore demonstrated that learners need to find meaning in their learning to truly engage. The adapted film is a particularly interesting and motivating support in the learning of foreign languages on cultural and linguistic levels because it allows for exposure to spoken language in context, as Robbe-Grillet (1963) said, "Reality fades away on the horizon of writing. Written signs, developed from other iconic signs, paradoxically unite the arbitrariness of language and the unconscious motivation of images through which a society presents itself to itself."

In addition to being captivating, films adapted from narrative works are scrutinized to meet the requirements of contemporary literary teaching. Literary works no longer rely as much on writing and books as they did in the past. The symbolic code of the global experience extends beyond mere reading, and the appreciation of art is now accessible to a wider audience thanks to modern technology. These multimodal teaching strategies can produce innovative and creative learning outcomes. Today, thanks to technological advances, films can reach a broader audience than books and are therefore more effective.

In the context of literature teaching, watching a cinematic adaptation cannot completely replace the activity of reading literary works, as both constitute distinct cultural outcomes. Thus, the analysis of a literary work can be complemented by the practice of viewing an adapted film in perfect harmony and of course with considerable planning. The adapted film is a unique means of communication compared to other media due to its free and fixed nature, its direct translation through visual images and authentic sounds, and its ability to address an infinite range of subjects.

Through adapted films, students delve into the literary work and, through comparative analysis, establish similarities and differences between a literary work and its adaptation. Thus, according to Đorđić (2016), "students can become aware of how a literary work and its cinematic adaptation use different techniques and how a work of art can enrich the reception of the other." In this regard, intertextuality is mobilized insofar as every text and discourse has a relationship with another.

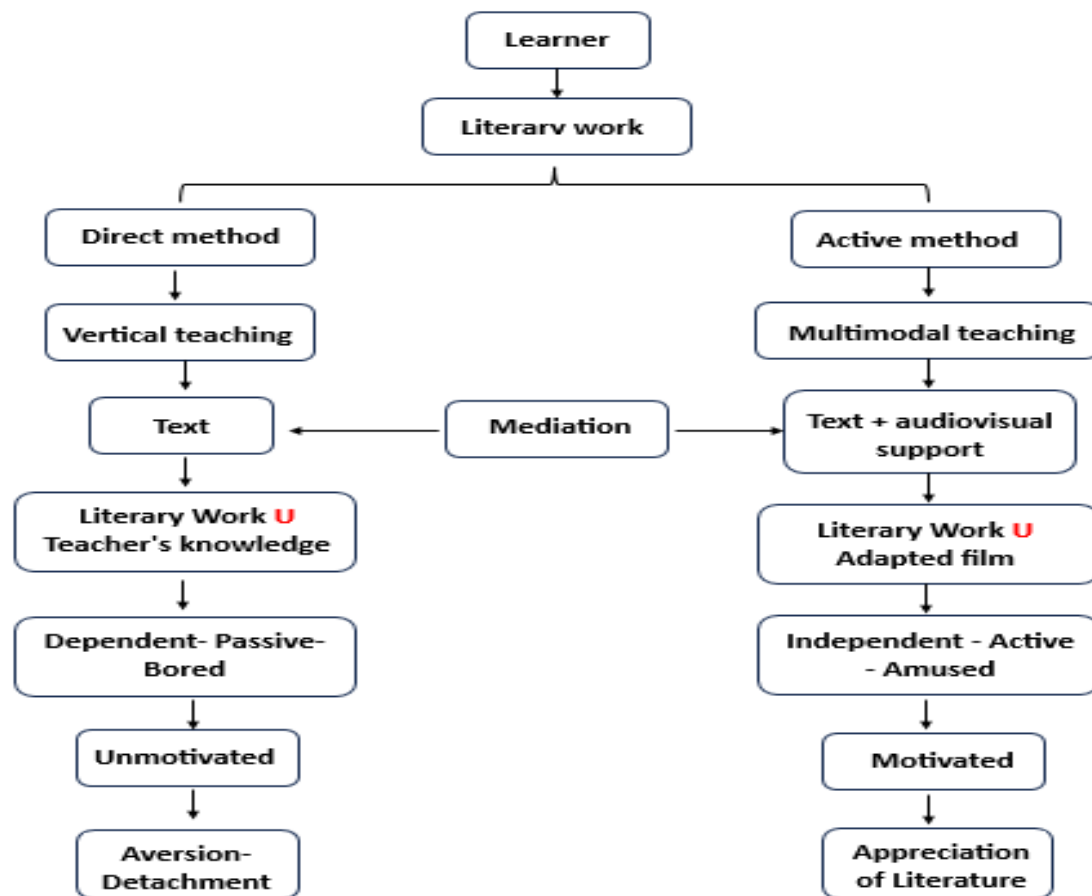


Fig. 4. Teaching literature in the FLE classroom

6. Conclusion

The argument put forth in this article states that the use of multimodal tools, particularly films adapted from literary works, can offer students a valuable opportunity to develop a more refined appreciation of literature and a subtler understanding of its nuances. These films should not be perceived as being in opposition to literary works. On the contrary, they have the potential to collaborate harmoniously to provide readers with an enriched experience, leveraging the strengths of each medium and compensating for the weaknesses of the other. Thus, students are also engaged in the practical application of multiple sets of skills, such as analytical, listening, and reading skills, which can contribute to the overall language learning development of students.

However, as films are increasingly integrated into language courses and multimodal teaching becomes more prevalent, the question of how to teach cinema becomes crucial.

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