

# Use of Films in EFL Classrooms in Odisha

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## **Abstract**

This article exhibits vivid information about the importance of films in teaching English, and delves scopes and challenges of using films as a tool in the EFL classrooms in Odisha. The learners of Odisha have a number of problems in learning English language and literature in the classrooms as well as in their work places. They suffer from getting sufficient exposure to the language in day-to-day real communication situation and they have no sufficient competence in English. Furthermore; they are found less potent. There are advantages of using different audio-visual aids in teaching and learning English in the EFL classrooms. Moreover, scopes are also available to screen some English films for making students understand in better ways and encourage them to be well concerned with different cultures reflected in literature. This method can make students acquaint with different English accents like British accents and American accents. Therefore, screening of English films should be made a part of the teaching of English Language and literature in Odisha.

**Keywords:** LCD, screening, war poems, edification, communication, accent, delves, Audio-Visual Aids, EFL

## **1.Introduction**

Films have become an important medium now a days. Conversations are no longer made attractive with quotes from great authors, motivators and philosophers, but are filled with colloquial quotes depicted in films. The importance of films is not limited within the sphere of amusement. They are wide spread through different films, and the short clips available on the Internet. This omnipresence makes students avail scopes to access the sphere of English language and literature easily .It also makes their learning easier and better than that of the works of Shakespeare, John Donne, John Dryden and Ben Johnson that are usually taught in classrooms. But rarely teachers of English express their interest to teach English using films in classrooms. The reservations about the use of feature films are very strong. At best, they find their way into classrooms as literary adaptations.

There will be certainly an agreement among the teachers of English in Odisha over the observation that the teaching of English has been at its odds from the school level to the postgraduate level in Odisha. It is necessary to make the teaching of English learner-centred and help the learners get acquainted with the culture reflected in English literature. This article aims at showing how films can be used in the teaching of English language as well as English literature.

## 2. Problems in Teaching and Learning English in Odisha

In Odisha, people learn English as their second language. Generally, here, English speaking is acknowledged as something which rich and highly educated people do. It also emerges a form of social classism.

This discrimination is deracinated that all the middle class people send their children to Anganawadi centres and Odia medium government schools, whereas; the rich and highly educated people prefer to send their children to the expensive English medium schools.

The census data reflects that the most spoken language in Odisha is Odia. Only 32% are able to speak English. When the learners of Odisha are taught English, the following difficulties are observed:

### i) Lost in Translation

A major problem that English speakers in Odisha face is lost in translation. They translate the expressions directly from Odia into English as they are taught English by using Grammar-Translation Method (GTM). This emerges a lot of grammatical errors and minimise their fluency.

### ii) English Speaking Environment

Generally, students learn through interaction, and this becomes a significant problem due to lack of a proper English speaking environment in classrooms.

### iii) Issue on Grammar

In Odisha, students are taught to learn the rules of grammar rather than making them understand. Even, sometimes they are encouraged to by heart the rules.

### iv) Peer Pressure

Students are made to learn the English language to go through the cut-throat competition. As they are taught in the traditional methods by using the structural approach, they don't love to learn the language. They learn by force. Learning cannot be fun if the purpose is not slated.

### v) Mother Tongue Influence

One of the major problems for English learners in Odisha is the Mother Tongue Influence (MTI). The pronunciation is influenced by their native language, Odia, as they are not given any scope to listen to the native speakers' English.

### vi) Neglecting the Aims of Teaching English

The teaching of English in Odisha does not match with the aims of teaching English mentioned globally. In most cases, neither the teacher nor the learner is well concerned with English. The teacher only wants that his or her students need secure pass marks in the examination. The main aims of learning and teaching English in this way, is neglected.

**vii) Less Use of Audio-visual Aids**

In the educational institutes of Odisha, audio-visual aids are rarely used. English can be taught and learnt interestingly by using audio-visual aids but they are neglected in most of the institutions.

**viii) Lack of Effective Teachers**

Teaching of English in schools are in the hands of teachers but most of them are least concerned with the advanced pedagogy of English.

**3. Need for Teaching Methods to Overcome problems**

There is a need for some innovative teaching methods that can help teachers and students of English to overcome the problems reflected above. The teaching methods should have the following features:

- i) Teachers need to give students varied exposure to English.
- ii) They should be more learner-centred.
- iii) They should not only guide the students for communication in written English but also enable them to speak English fluently.
- iv) They should help students get acquainted with correct and standard English pronunciation.
- v) They also need to make students get acquainted with different culture reflected in English literature.
- vi) The teaching methods should properly incorporate the use of audio-visual aids like films.

**4. Use of Films in EFL Classrooms**

Films can be used as a tool in EFL classrooms and can also be used as a medium of amusement. As mentioned above, it has comparatively become easier to use audio-visual aids in teaching. Equipment such as computer/laptop, TV set, LCD projector can be easily available in schools and colleges. Copies as well as links of English films are also easily available now a days. The followings are some of them.

**i) Films Based on Prescribed Texts**

Especially, in case of texts prescribed in the syllabi, screening films based on them can be very useful. For instance, films based on many of William Shakespeare's plays, such as Macbeth, Hamlet, The Merchant of Venice, and As You Like It are now available on YouTube and other apps. There are also some Hindi and Odia adoption of some literary texts like Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austin and Malgudi Days by R. K. Narayan are easily available in different sites. Whatever aspects of the text that students are unable to visualise, such as the geographical location, clothing, customs, and appearance of the characters, can be seen in the films. This can help students understand the texts better.

**b) Screening Films for Acquainting Students with Varieties of English**

It is necessary to acquaint students with English pronunciation in varieties of English, such as British English and American English. If films are to be used for this purpose, some popular British and American Films can be used to teach students. The film 'My Fair Lady', based on Shaw's play 'Pygmalion' can be screened to help learners learn the regional dialects of English.

### c) Films on Certain Themes

If a film on the prescribed text is available, it is very effective. Films on the theme of partition, and the world war or the massacre of Jews in Germany can be screened for teaching modern war poems interestingly.

### d) Decrease Anxiety and Tension

Students' anxiety and tension in English language learning can be minimized if they are taught by using films. Exploring films to teach English provides an enjoyable learning situation. Learning English language through films creates a stress-free and enjoyable environment for students.

## 5. For Other Purposes As Well

Films can also be used for some other purposes. When a film based on a prescribed text is screened, it becomes easier for students to get acquainted with the text to some extent. Teachers need to inspire students to discuss the limitations and scopes of the film that they are made to watch. They can also get the scope to discuss the interpretation of the text in the film. For example, in a film based on 'Hamlet', the Director has shown that Claudius and Polonius watch and eavesdrop on a conversation between Hamlet and Ophelia, which Shakespeare has not depicted in his play. This is the Director's interpretation, which can provide a possible line of thinking to students.

## 6. Conclusion

To sum up, the use of films in EFL classrooms in Odisha is one of the effective teaching methods. It can not only emerge the enthusiasm of students in learning English, but also lead a way to know different western cultures and polish their accents and minimise MTI. Simultaneously, it helps students obtain artistic edification. Teachers should play a pivotal role to design the teaching ideas scientifically and help students form good learning habits.

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