

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS USING ENGLISH MOVIES TO ENHANCE THEIR ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT

The innovative, high-tech applications have been implemented thoroughly in educational settings in recent years. Blended learning and flipped model have applied in teaching and learning the 4 micro-skills of English, of which English speaking skills benefit much from the modern and updated educational technology. This study investigated the students' perceptions towards the practical use of watching English movies to develop their English speaking skills. The results of before-and-after tests were employed in the quasi-experiment to the class with an experimental group of 32 students compared with a 35-member control group of non-English major students during the second semester 2019-2020 at Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry. The experimental class received a positive result from watching English movies; they felt active and interested during the speaking sessions. Thus, the application of this pedagogical implementation yields a beneficial and effective tool for enhancing English-speaking skills. The findings of this research are served as a useful resource for the education policy makers to flare the initiatives in reforming and restructuring the policies of teaching and learning foreign languages. Moreover, this model could be applied in English language teaching.

Keywords: *students' perceptions; before-and-after research design; experimental group; control group; quasi-experiment.*

Received: 07/7/2020; Revised: 11/8/2020; Published: 12/8/2020

CẢM NHẬN CỦA SINH VIÊN ĐỐI VỚI VIỆC XEM CÁC ĐOẠN PHIM TIẾNG ANH ĐỂ NÂNG CAO KỸ NĂNG GIAO TIẾP TIẾNG ANH

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TÓM TẮT

Ứng dụng công nghệ hiện đại và đổi mới đã được thực hiện triệt để trong môi trường giáo dục trong những năm gần đây. Mô hình kết hợp và mô hình đảo ngược đã được áp dụng trong việc dạy và học 4 kỹ năng chính của tiếng Anh, trong đó công nghệ giảng dạy hiện đại và cập nhật mang lại lợi ích trong việc phát triển kỹ năng giao tiếp tiếng Anh. Nghiên cứu này điều tra sự cảm nhận của sinh viên đối với việc sử dụng xem các đoạn phim bằng tiếng Anh để phát triển kỹ năng giao tiếp tiếng Anh của các em. Mô hình bán thực nghiệm sử dụng kết quả bài thi nói đầu vào, đầu ra của lớp 32 sinh viên thực nghiệm được so sánh với lớp 35 sinh viên nhóm quan sát trong học kỳ 2 năm học 2019-2020 tại Trường Đại học Nông Lâm – Đại học Thái Nguyên. Lớp học thực nghiệm đạt được kết quả tích cực từ việc xem phim bằng tiếng Anh này. Sinh viên cảm thấy tích cực và thích thú trong các buổi học giao tiếp tiếng Anh. Như vậy, việc ứng dụng sự phạm này mang đến một công cụ hữu ích và hiệu quả trong việc nâng cao kỹ năng giao tiếp tiếng Anh. Kết quả của nghiên cứu này là nguồn tham khảo hữu ích đối với nhà hoạch định chính sách giáo dục để đưa ra những sáng kiến trong việc cải tổ và tái thiết việc giảng dạy ngôn ngữ nước ngoài. Hơn nữa, mô hình này có thể được áp dụng vào việc giảng dạy ngôn ngữ tiếng Anh.

Từ khóa: *cảm nhận của sinh viên; các đoạn phim tiếng Anh; nhóm thực nghiệm; nhóm quan sát; bán thực nghiệm.*

Ngày nhận bài: 07/7/2020; Ngày hoàn thiện: 11/8/2020; Ngày đăng: 12/8/2020

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34238/tnu-jst.3387>

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the revolutionization of the information technology (IT) has made a great influence on human beings. In terms of teaching English, it benefits much from the development of IT. There has been a number of researches relating to the use of watching English movies to enhance English speaking skills (ESSs) such as [1] – [7]. Actually, the traditional educational method encounters difficult activities for teaching speaking skills because textbooks do not allocate diverse speaking activities for learners to have thorough contexts to express themselves in the targeted languages. Whereas, social media especially movies clips can provide learners with supplementary knowledge to support students' speaking actions.

Of the 4 micro-skills, speaking skills can be viewed as the most important as people who know other languages are referred to as "speakers" of that language. In fact, speaking skills comprise of all the other language skills, and most language learners show their interests in learning to communicate orally [8]. Classroom activities which improve students' ability to express themselves through speech would be the core component of a language curriculum. While some courses are intentionally tailored to enhance oral fluency, others are designed specifically for "conversation classes". However, teachers find it difficult to get students to participate in speaking activities [8], so teachers need to find diversified and innovative ways to create interesting learning environments for students to express themselves by using languages that is relevant and easily understandable.

The importance of teaching speaking skills is highlighted in the Communicative Language Teaching method (CLT) or sometimes referred as communicative approach. Speaking activities can be designed in many interesting ways [7], [9]. Thanks to the

development of the internet era, teachers could explore the possibilities of using English movies to enhance students' speaking skills. Many studies [3], [4], [6], [10] – [13] have been done on the application of using English movies to enhance speaking skills. However, a few quasi-experimental studies have been done to investigate the perceptions of students in the exploitation of watching English videos to enhance English speaking skills. Therefore, this study was carried out to answer the following issues:

1. How are students' perceptions towards watching English movies to develop speaking skills?

2. Watching English video clips wastes time and does not improve students' speaking skills.

The findings of this study would formulate the decision on whether watching English movies would be encouraged or not for the educational policy makers. Besides, the outcomes would be served as a pedagogical reference for other English teachers and future studies as such.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research design

This study employed a before-and-after research design using the results of the pre-test and post-test to check the efficiency of the watching English movies. To further comprehend the perceptions of the experimental group, the survey questionnaires were employed in addition to the pre-test and post-test. The findings would be supported for the implications of whether watching English movies was an effective way to enhance students' speaking skills.

2.2. The participants

The participants consisted of 67 non-major students in 2 classes during the 2nd term 2019-2020 at Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry (TUAF). Particularly, one 35-student class was chosen as the controlled group, they learned as the

preset program accordingly, and the results of their pre-test and post-test would be used for the purpose of comparison. The other 32-student class was assigned as the experimental group. They also did the pre-test and post-test the same as the controlled class, but they studied their 45-lesson programme watching English movies, equivalent to 2.025 hours of learning ESSs, and they participated in the survey questionnaires to reveal their perceptions afterwards.

2.3. Data collection tools

The research instruments were based on two sources - the pre-test and the post-test results, and the survey questionnaire for the experimental group. The pre-test format was adapted from A2 speaking test from Cambridge Assessment English (CAE) [14] with the 3 criteria such as grammar and vocabulary, pronunciation, and interactive communication. The students' performance would be scored from band 1 to band 5. The post-test exam was also based on B1 speaking test from CAE [15], too. The pre-test (A2) and post-test (B1) meet the requirement set by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) for the expected learning outcomes at the tertiary levels for general college students. The participants' speaking performance would be tested on 4 criteria, namely grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation and interactive communication. The scores were given as the same pre-test with 5 bands.

Another research instrument was the 16 researcher-made survey questionnaires, constructing basing on the mixture of factual, behavioral, and attitudinal questions [16]. The questionnaires were presented to 5 experts on educational assessment and accreditation for content validation. After that the questionnaires were fine-tuned with a group of 15 students in a pilot study to validate the strengths and weaknesses of the instrument. The 16 out of 25 raw questions met the Alpha values of 0.87 ($\alpha = 0.84-0.90$, reliable; [17]),

the researcher removed 9 questions which did not meet the standards. Finally, the questionnaires included 3 parts, the first one explored the demographic profiles of the participants, the second one investigated the benefits of watching English movies to students, and the last part found out the perceptions of the participants. The researcher masked these questions for the purpose of reliability. The questions 1, 2, 3 were about the advantages of watching English movies with 5 degrees: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutrally, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree, then the questions 4, 5 were about the problems students might encounter with the inverted levels. The rest questions were arranged 3 advantages of watching English movies, followed by 2 problems students had.

The study was carried during 3 months of the 2nd term 2019-2020 at TUAF. The pre-test results of both classes were taken from the placement test, equivalent to A2 speaking test [14]. At the end of the semester, students took the exit test, equivalent to B1 speaking test. These test scores would be taken for the purpose of the progress comparison.

After the experimental class had finished their B1 speaking task [15], the questionnaires were floated among these students to know their perceptions of the experiment with watching English video lessons. The participants were explained carefully about the questionnaires before being administered. Finally, the questionnaires ran through the data screen process for the best outcomes.

2.4. Data analysis

The screened data were treated with SPSS software for mean, t-test, and Chi-square for correlation. Descriptive statistics were used to find out the mean and standard derivation for the part 3 of the questionnaires. The values would be used Likert scale explanation such as 1.0-1.79 (very low); (1.8-2.59) low; 2.6-3.39 (neutral); 3.4-4.19 (high); 4.2-5.0 (very high).

Independent sample T Test was employed to check the relationships between the use of watching English films and their exit speaking grades. Besides, mastery test was also calculated the strengths and weaknesses that students would focus on to improve their speaking skills.

3. Results and discussion

When investigating the demographic profiles of the experimental groups, 25 male students (78.1%) participated in the study, in line with 7 female students (21.9%). This ratio reflects that the inequality in genders might affect the film genres or the study habit. On examining the academic years, the results show that 29 students, accounting for 90.6% were sophomores, only 3 students (9.4%) were juniors. These figures demote that most students have the same academic backgrounds. As glimpsed at the length of year learning English, 20 students, equivalent to 62.5% studied English for under 15 years, while 12 students (37.5%) learnt English for under 10 years. This means that the students have been learning English for a long time. For the frequency of watching English movies, a half of the students revealed that they often watched English movies, while 40.6% or 13 students confessed that they sometimes watched, and only 3 students (9.4%) confirmed to be always watching English movies. These data show the high frequency of students watching English movies. Regarding the film genres, 19 students accounting for 59.4% chose the action films, the nearly same numbers horror and romance with 7 students (21.9%) and 6 ones (18.8%), respectively followed the action films. Therefore, the inequality of the gender population could affect the choice of the film genres. When watching the English film genres, the majority of students (59.4%) preferred watching English movies with the English subtitles, whereas 9 students (28.1%) liked Vietnamese subtitles, and only 4

students or 12.5% of the participants watched English movies without any subtitles. Vocabulary and content comprehension shared nearly the similar choices with 11 students (34.4%) and 10 or 15.6 % of the participants, respectively. Following these things, pronunciation was interested in by 6 students (18.8%), and 5 students (15.6%) confessed that they watched English for fun. Thus, students somehow watch English movies to serve their purpose of improving their English competency.

Table 1 shows the student's benefits of watching English movies. The results indicate that positive outcomes were presented with the most focus on native accents and dialects ($M=4.50$; $SD=0.568$). The characters come from different parts of the world, so they use their own accents and dialects which could be found in other studies [3], [9], [10]. The 2nd highest result was the changing the participants' enthusiasm in speaking lessons with the mean of 4.24. When asked about the English subtitle and the improved pronunciation, they shared the same, high means (4.16). Students have different ways of learning styles, they might study on their own by listening to the radio, or reading books, but they also need to improve their ESSs through watching English videos [3], [11]. The edutainment helped students relaxed when trying to improve their ESSs, which got a high view on edutainment medium ($M = 4.12$; $SD = .070$). Accordingly, the characters' dialogues impressed their minds and they wanted to imitate or role-play the movie characters. One more aspect was about the exploration of the culture and society of English speaking countries through watching English movies. The finding revealed that together with improving their speaking skills, students also learnt more about the culture and society with the score of 4.00 or a high mean. This understanding could highly contribute to their background knowledge so that they felt at ease and confident to express

their viewpoints in English speaking ($M = 3.97$). The conventional method of learning English speaking via textbooks or handouts was compared with watching English movies. Almost students recognized that they were inspired to practice better daily conversation by the motion pictures in the movies ($M=3.81$). In reality, the contexts and language choice on the classrooms are carefully checked so that these settings usually involve in formality. On the other hand, idioms, proverbs, and slang are commonly used in everyday conversations, that is why the respondents highly preferred watching English movies ($M = 3.84$). One surprising finding was that students did not feel that they wasted a lot of time watching English movies to enhance their ESSs. Compared with the Likert scale, this figure belonged to a low level. Thus, students felt interested in learning English through watching English movies.

Table 2 presents the problems of watching English movies. Clearly, idioms, proverbs, and slangs might be frequently used in the movies. New vocabulary or dialects used by the characters make it difficult for students to catch up with the movie plots. Students confessed that they did not understand fully English movies because of their poor

vocabulary ($M = 3.56$, $SD = .716$; high). It is advisable for teachers to either choose the English movies equivalent to the students' knowledge or pre-teach some difficult terms or jargons. Another problem was related to the differences in cultures. The participants reported that they sometimes had difficulty in comparing two different cultures with the high mean of 3.87. As mentioned in the item 6, students showed high preference for exploring English speaking culture, so teachers should introduce the movie background before asking them to watch. Although the respondents reported neutrally about the confusion between the mixture of watching scenes, listening to dialogues, and reading subtitles at the same time with the mean 3.22, the standard derivation 1.039 was high, which denoted that the participants did not have the similar views. For the catching new words due to unfamiliar characters' accents, the participants had low choices ($M = 2.06$). The same situation with fast speech of the characters and visual aspects of the movies, the students did not care much with the means of 1.79 and 2.81, respectively. Generally, problems with watching English movies got a neutral weighted mean, which denotes that these problems might happen to the students but they have not clearly affected them.

Table 1. *Advantages of watching English movies in improving speaking skill*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. With English movies, I can learn and be entertained at the same time.	4.12	.707
2. Watching movies takes me a lot of time.	2.31	.859
3. Viewing the movie with English subtitle makes me remember the language and scene easily.	4.16	.723
6. English movies offer me the exploration of the culture and society of English speaking countries.	4.00	.880
7. Movie dialogue imitation improves my pronunciation.	4.16	.884
8. I can enrich more idioms, proverbs, and slang in practice through movie dialogues.	3.84	.767
11. Motion pictures in the movies inspire me in practicing better daily conversations.	3.81	.644
12. The use of English movies raises my confidence when I speak.	3.97	.782
13. English movies raise my enthusiasm towards speaking lessons.	4.25	.880
16. I am familiarized with native accents and dialects better through English movies.	4.50	.568
Weighted mean	3.91	

Table 2. *Problems with watching English movies*

	Mean	Std. Deviation
4. My lack of vocabulary does not allow me to catch up with the movie plot.	3.56	.716
5. Sometimes I cannot understand the differences in our culture compared with those in the movies.	3.78	.751
9. I'm overwhelmed by watching scenes, listening to dialogues and reading subtitles at the same time.	3.22	1.039
10. Characters speak too fast.	1.97	.782
14. Visual aspects of the movie appeal to me, and disable me to focus on movie dialogues.	1.81	.592
15. I cannot catch new words due to unfamiliar accents of actors.	2.06	.669
Weighted mean	2.73	

Table 3 presents the differences between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group. As glimpsed from the mean, the application of watching English movies helped the students improve in their learning outcomes with a high mean of the post-test (8.27) compared with that of the pretest score ($M = 6.75$). Perhaps the knowledge students had gained during the experimental period improved their speaking performance during the test.

Table 3. *The differences of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group*

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pre-test experimental group	6.75	.813	.144
post-test experimental group	8.27	.523	.093

Table 4 shows the comparison of the post-test results between the control group and the experimental one. The differences were easily recognized between the mean of control group and experimental one; 6.50 and 8.27, respectively. Thus, watching English movies yielded a positive result on the experimental group, which had the similar findings in other studies [3], [5], [13].

Table 4. *The differences in the post-test results of the control group and experimental one*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control group's post-test	35	6.50	.475	.084
Experimental group's post-test	32	8.27	.523	.093

Table 5 tests the hypothesis that the application of watching English movies did not enhance the ESSs. As seen from the table 5, the results rejected the hypothesis as the *Sig.* (2-tailed) showed that the value 0.749 was higher than the confidence level (95%). Therefore, it concluded that the application of watching English movies had a positive on the students' English speaking skills.

Table 5. *The comparison of the post-test result of the experimental group*

		post-test result	watching English video clips
Post-test result	Pearson Correlation	1	.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.749
	N	32	32
Application of watching English video clips	Pearson Correlation	.059	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.749	
	N	32	32

Table 6 analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the results of the post-test to comprehend which aspects of the speaking factors would have to drill to improve the ESSs. The 16 questionnaire items were constructed basing on the 4 criteria, namely grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication.

Table 6. *The strengths and weaknesses of the post-test for the experimental group*

	Number of items	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Mean	Std. Deviation	Index of Mastery	Rank
Grammar and Vocabulary	5	2.0	2.5	2.406	.1983	48.11	1
Discourse Management	5	1.5	2.0	1.766	.2535	35.32	4
Pronunciation	5	2.0	2.5	2.156	.2355	43.12	2
Interactive Communication	5	1.5	2.5	1.922	.2239	38.44	3

As seen from table 6, students got the highest score on the grammar and vocabulary, following the pronunciation, which shared the same similarities in the questionnaire items 8 and 16 with the high mean of 3.84 (SD = 0.767) and 4.50 (SD = 0.568), respectively. The third rank was the interactive communication, which could be in line with the problem in the item 4 about the lack of vocabulary (M = 3.56; SD = 0.716), and item 15 for unfamiliar accents of actors (M = 2.06; SD = 0.669) in Table 2. The lowest rank was about discourse management. The reason might come from the fact that students had a high misunderstanding about the different cultures so they could not deal with the questions relating the discourse. Therefore, the necessity to pre-teach keywords and provide the background of English movies is essential for students to get the main ideas of what they are going to watch so that they have a good understanding of what they see and apply into the speaking skills. The lower and the lowest ranks mentioned in the table 6 had the same findings in the other researches [1], [4], [5], [11].

4. Conclusion and implications

4.1. Conclusion

IT has developed so quickly that it can meet the demands of human beings in every walk of life. The application of innovative and modern teaching facilities is necessary for teachers and students to put it in practice. This study investigated the perceptions and the influence of watching English movies on enhancing students' speaking skills. The findings clearly revealed that despite some

problems appeared when students studied with the use of watching English movies, students felt highly active and interested in this pedagogical tool. After 3 months of the quasi-experiment, the results of the experimental class' post-test basing on the B1 English speaking test format [15] yielded higher than that of the control one although they had gotten a nearly starting point – A2 speaking results [14]. Some studies [2] – [5], [12] have also concluded that the application of watching English movies has a good impact on enhancing students' speaking skills.

Analyzing the post-test based B1 speaking test format [15], the findings revealed that students had lower results in interactive communication and got the lowest rank in discourse management whereas grammar got the first rank and vocabulary was the second position. These facts prove that the positive influence of watching English movies somehow improve students' speaking skills to a certain extent.

4.2. Implications

To get the best exploitation of watching English movies, teachers should spend time and efforts surveying the students' favorite film genres before applying this pedagogical tool. Before the implementation of the lesson, pre-teaching keywords, and scene explanation are necessary. Basing on native accents and dialects or speed of the characters, subtitle on English movies should be on or off. In addition, blended learning model should be applied as it has a positive impact on enhancing student's English speaking performance [12].

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