

THE EFFECT OF MOVIE VIEWING ON LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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Summary: *This article aims to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of movie viewing on learning English as a second language. The main purpose of this paper is to make some suggestions to deal with existing disadvantages and therefore to facilitate language learning. It is hoped that the result of this paper will help learners to improve their English learning and to some extent it will guide Vietnamese educational system.*

Key words: *movie viewing, advantages, disadvantages, learning English.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last 10 years, thanks to the development of the media and technology, learning a second language has been considered being an easy and interesting task for learners to pursue. The learners can now absorb the foreign language that they are studying by attending online courses, listening to music or audio books, and especially by watching movies. It is undeniable that movie viewing is an immensely convenient way for learners to learn English and also an innovative idea for teachers to consider applying to their lessons.

Using this ‘edutainment’ method has brought English learners a lot of improvements in not only their listening skills but also communication skill. In Vietnam, although applying the movie viewing to teaching and studying has been widely spread in the English centers, unfortunately it is rarely used in many universities, including HUBT, due to some

disadvantages that it carries. Because of the drawbacks of this method, the HUBT English teachers are only able to give us a number of movie recommendations to watch at home but not in the class.

As an English major student that has brought about this method, I have received a great deal of helpful knowledge as well as satisfied and enjoyable moments when studying English. Nevertheless, I also experienced some drawbacks while carrying it out: the lack of formal written rules instruction, the learners’ reliance on Vietnamese subtitle, etc...

For all the reasons above, I have the desire to do research into *The effect of movie viewing on learning English as a second language*, I do hope the research can point out the pros and cons existing while doing this method, so that English learners can have an objective view about it and decide whether they should carry it out. Moreover, it is expected to help the educators to make better improvements in the future.

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II. DEVELOPMENT

1. About movie viewing

Since movie viewing was considered as a way to learn English, there have been many researchers agreeing that this method is not only effective but also attractive for learners and they have also given numerous compliments on this method through their studies.

Dr. Rao (2019), an English lecturer in King Faisal University, did a research on how movie viewing developed EFL students' communication as well as giving them a visual context to naturally use the sentences in movies. He also pointed out the positive changes of the learners and teachers after using the method in EFL classroom.

Hsieh and his friends (2010) used a qualitative research method to explore the perceptions of adult language learners toward the use of movies to learn English. According to his study: "Language learners perceive movies to be an effective and beneficial way of learning English. Furthermore, the interviews revealed that movies can be used to develop not only language skills but also learners' autonomy and cultural awareness. Movies are fun, authentic, and enjoyable, and that makes the learning process more appealing to the language learners."

Alberta. L (2013) also recommended some kind of narrative English movies to put in the teaching-learning process such as action, drama, comedy, romantic, science fiction, suspense or thriller, commentary, nonfiction, etc...

2. The advantages of movie viewing on learning English

Movie viewing improves learners' English skills.

For listening skill: Watching English

movies of different countries gives the learners the opportunity to get acquaintance to the accent of people in different places. For example: the accent of Australian English, American English or British English... Learners will get familiar with the sounds of the words and as a result, after a long time, the more movies they watch, the better they are at listening. Yang and Chang (2013) conducted a study on the contribution of three modes of English captions (full, keyword-only, and annotated keyword captions) towards learning English reduced forms and the overall listening comprehension. The results showed that all three groups demonstrated improvement.



For speaking skill: Movies not only provide a diversity of vocabulary, slangs, idioms... for learners but also give learners the visual context to the dialogue, thus they help the learners develop communication skill. As watching dialogues between the characters as well as the way they act in those situations, the learners have the experience of understanding the facial expressions and gestures whenever they are put in the same situation. Therefore, they know how to say as well as react in different circumstances in real life. Moreover, movie viewing helps learners improve their pronunciation. Sari and Sugandi (2015) stated that listening to

native English speakers talking to each other can help students to hear how words are pronounced. Students can know where to put intonation on certain words and sentences.

For reading skill:

Most of the learners use English subtitle as a way to catch up with the movies' storyline. As they get used to reading the subtitle which only appear in 2-3 seconds, it is easier for them to recognize the words in future. Thus, it is understandable that they become faster at reading English after watching movies.

Movie viewing gives learners' a cultural awareness.

The viewers can achieve knowledge about the culture of many countries through movie viewing as movie is always a good way for the director to transfer and advertise the culture of one country. Learners can learn it from the way characters react and communicate in specific situations, the characters' daily life, and the architecture in characters' country... Serliah Nur (2016) analyzed three way movies can increase students' cultural awareness: "Students get information from the movie; They can compare their culture and others; It can prevent them from culture shock if they study CCU". According to his research, students have positive attitude toward the use of film in the Cross Cultural Understanding class.

Movie viewing increases learners' interest in learning English.

The most important reason that makes movie viewing as an incredible way to learn English is that it keeps learners feel enjoyable and entertaining. Additionally, the fact that they know they are watching – learning at the same time will give them

a sense of achievement. Thus, it will enhance the frequency they apply this method in their daily life. Kusumarasdyati (2004) pointed out that movie viewing can motivate both students and teacher in the teaching-learning process, because they have fun and comfortable atmosphere in the classroom.

3. The disadvantages of movie viewing on learning English

Despite of numerous benefits, movie viewing still holds several limitations. This is also the reason why teachers meet difficulties when they try to apply this method in the official education at schools and universities.

Learners won't learn formal written rules or grammar from movie viewing.

As the dialogues in the movies are usually daily conversation, it seems that the learners don't acquire much knowledge about writing from this learning method. Sari and Bugandi (2015) also stated that using English movies in the EFL classroom will reduce student's time to do classroom activities such as writing or having discussion. For the beginners, it is also hard to follow the storyline due to their slow reading speed and unfamiliarity with the English sounds.



Learners might be distracted from the main goal while implementing this method.

Generally, learners will get the best result when learning English through combining reading the subtitle and listening to the sounds in the movie. However, some students are using this method in the wrong way. For example, some learners turn off the sound of the movie to focus only on the subtitle or some turn on the sound but choosing to read their native language subtitle.

Watching movies is always an entertaining activity and somehow it makes the learners forget to pay attention to the sounds, pronunciation, new words, or the culture background...at the same time. Moreover, according to Yang and Zhang (2013) when watching a movie that has the learner's favorite actor or actress, learners will just focus on them and forget the whole purpose they want to achieve before watching. This led to the failure in enhancing the learners' level.

Some movies are not suitable for the educational purpose.

Besides the meaningful and educational movies, there are some movies that are not appropriate for English learners to develop their skills. Watching those movies might be pleasurable; however, the improvement in English of learners is hardly seen. For instance: Movies like Harry Potter, Forrest Gump, Click, The pursuit of happiness,... are very inspirational and meaningful, they also have creative dialogues for the learners to memorize; However, learners perhaps learn nothing from movies like Bird box, The quiet place, The silence, All is lost,... because those movies have little or no dialogue.

4. Some recommendations for modification

Although movie viewing carries some drawbacks, we cannot deny the huge benefits that movie viewing brings to English learners. Since it has such a great value, I personally want to suggest some of my recommendations to modify and make this method suit the official educational system.

English subtitle should be prioritized when movie viewing is used for learning.

For beginners, their native language subtitle can be used in the early days of learning English through movies. However, for Intermediate and Advanced level learners, using English subtitle perhaps should be a must!

Using English subtitle instead of one's native language subtitle will give the learners a connection between the sounds and the spelling of the words. This will fill the gap between listening and reading. Moreover, with subtitle, learners can follow the story line as well as understanding the humor (the jokes), slangs, idioms... of the characters using in the movies in an easier way (Lonergan, 1989).

Both teacher and learners should choose the kind of movies that are beneficial for studying.

As the examples I gave above, many kinds of movie are not suitable for the English learning process because of its impracticality and lack of applicability. Most of the movies that have little or no subtitle was in the horror genre, therefore, English teachers and learners should avoid using this kind of movie for learning.

Not only should the teacher choose inspirational movies for the learners to

remember well, but he/she also needs to choose the ones that have new words or content related to the lesson of that day. Sari and Sugandi (2015) also claimed that “Since a good movie is a movie that contains good moral value, teachers need to preview the movies first before playing the movies in front of students”. ***Learners should always remember the main goal of learning English while watching movies and Teacher should remind students of it as well.***

Watching movies for the learning purpose requires learners to focus on the sounds, the spelling of the words and slangs, idioms,... However, watching movies may be distracting sometimes. To keep the students concentrating, after the movie viewing time, teacher can give students some exercises asking them about the plot, new words in the movies, and also let them do the role-play game to remember the story in an interesting way.



While watching movies, learners should be aware that they are studying, and they have to take it seriously to get the best result. Listening to the characters' dialogues, imitating it a couple of times will fasten the learners' learning process.

They can themselves summarize the storyline of the movies after watching it so that they can memorize it deeply.

Teachers should choose short movies.

In order to save the class time, teachers can use short movies or divide the movie into short cuts and spend the first 15 minutes of the lesson to show the movie. This will warm up the class atmosphere, give the students a chance to get used to this method and also have the instruction on how to accomplish this method at home.

III. CONCLUSION

The development of the media has given us a huge opportunity to approach and enhance our English in many different ways. Over a decade, movie viewing has been considered as the most useful and convenient way to bring about when people learn English as a second language. Movie viewing is not only the solution for the learners' financial problems and the fear towards English, but also a very creative way for the teachers to apply to their teaching methods. However, due to some disadvantages that it carries, in Vietnam, this method has not had a chance to enter the English official educational system. In my humble opinion, if this method is applied to the English classes in the right way, it will give countless benefits that will change our future as the students will not feel afraid or hate English anymore, and they will absorb and use it naturally. After doing my research into the effect of movie viewing on learning English as a second language, and also giving some recommendations to modify and apply it into the English teaching-learning, I really hope this method will be approached to every English learners in Vietnam in general and in HUBT in particular./.

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TÁC DỤNG CỦA VIỆC XEM PHIM ĐỐI VỚI VIỆC HỌC TIẾNG ANH NHƯ NGÔN NGỮ THỨ HAI

Lê Minh Phương

Tóm Tắt: Bài báo chỉ ra các thuận lợi và bất lợi của việc xem phim đối với việc học tiếng Anh. Mục đích chính của bài viết là đưa ra một vài gợi ý nhằm giải quyết những mặt hạn chế và qua đó giúp cho việc học dễ dàng hơn. Hi vọng rằng kết quả của bài viết sẽ giúp cho người học có thể cải thiện việc học tiếng Anh và trên một khía cạnh nào đó giúp cho cả hệ thống giáo dục Việt Nam.

Từ khóa: xem phim, thuận lợi, khó khăn, học tiếng Anh