An Investigation into English –Majored Sophomores' Perceptions of English Movies to Improve Vocabulary at HUIT

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Abstract

In the technological era, educators and second/ foreign language educators have paid close attention to the use of media in English teaching and learning including watching movies, listening to music, watching films, and using other sorts of entertainment-related learning materials. However, little progress has been made in understanding the English language perspectives of HUIT majored sophomores about the benefits and limitations of using English movies to improve language skills. This study was conducted with 110 English language sophomores (n=110) and used the quantitative approach in order to investigate learners' benefits and challenges regarding English movies with a focus on improving vocabulary. The instruments included the Likert-five scale questionnaire. The study's findings indicated that English movies contributed to students' increasing the number of vocabulary and then learning was improved. Besides, findings also revealed that students have positive perceptions about the use of English films in their learning. The study also gives recommendations to teachers and learners about how to use English movies effectively.

Keywords: *Perceptions, vocabulary, English movies, sophomores*

1. Introduction

It is true that language learning requires various factors to make it effective. As pointed out by Cameron (2001), one of the key elements in achieving the objective of teaching and learning English is to arouse student's interest. English movies are not only for entertainment but also are one of several strategies for keeping students engaged and inspired in language acquisition because they see visuals, stories, colors, characters, and so on, which helps them feel more at ease, and makes it simpler for them to develop their English vocabulary. Students can acquire stress and intonation, casual expressions, and imitate motions in a variety of situations by viewing movies. Furthermore, movies can assist learners in acquiring English in contexts comparable to real life and expose them to native speakers' speech (Atac & Köprülü, 2018). If the use of movies to teach vocabulary is successful, learners will increase and expand their vocabulary while also learning new things about cultures, linguistic styles, and so on. Additionally, it will make it simpler for

teachers to control the classroom and encourage students to be more impulsive and self-assured in their ability to study.

During my time at this university, I have experienced learning English with a lot of movies supplied by my teachers and also by myself. As a result, this learning method has both advantages and drawbacks. Various previous studies have been about movies in learning English, however, little research on how learners feel about using English movies to learn vocabulary at Ho Chi Minh University of Industry and Trade has been conducted.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to find out HUIT learners' benefits and challenges regarding English movies with a focus on improving vocabulary and seeking the answers to research questions that could make this aim clearer. Also, the research goal is to analyze the advantages of employing English movies in vocabulary teaching activities that students have encountered. Plus, by highlighting drawbacks students have in acquiring vocabulary, how teachers effectively apply movies in teaching will be given to overcome the problems. Besides, this paper also provides some recommendations for effective implementation.

The study was implemented at a university in Ho Chi Minh city, namely Ho Chi Minh University of Industry and Trade (HUIT) with 110 sophomores of English language. The limitation cannot be avoided due to the time limitation and the researcher's experience. The research organization consists of these parts: introduction, literature review, methodology, results, conclusion and recommendations.

Research questions:

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do HUIT sophomores believe that English movies are beneficial to improve vocabulary?

2. What challenges do these learners face toward using English movies to learn English?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Advantages of English movies in learning languages

Movies consist of a variety of types including cartoons, comedies, folk tales, fiction, dramas and so on. There have been a lot of previous studies concerning the advantages of using movies or films to learn and improve English vocabulary.

According to (Anh, 2010), movies engage learners' fascination, they provide not only sound but also vision. Therefore, learners may listen to the audio while viewing the moving images. Learners will be more fascinated if movies aid to catch their attention and intrigue their interest. There is no denying the value of using movies in education. Some of the advantages of using movies to teach vocabulary include the following: First, movies are motivators. They assist in motivating students and maintaining their interest

and attention throughout the lesson. Students will become bored and worn out in a classroom where the teacher constantly talks without doing anything to grab their attention. The textbooks show lifeless words and sentences to students. By using movies, the teacher may speak less and encourage the students to participate more in class discussions. The effectiveness of movies is also higher than that of conventional written textbooks. Students would be more eager to experience this new method of teaching and learning. They would be more willing to attempt to comprehend the new language and remember it for a very long period. Learning through movies, students who are taught and have the opportunity to become familiar with the native voice feel less cut off from reality and unconsciously pick up new words. While watching them, students would be unaware that they are learning, allowing them to feel liberated from the pressures and stresses of traditional language classes. They learn the language by accident, which helps them succeed. And they can easily comprehend why we use this word in these circumstances rather than others. Furthermore, video rewinding, pausing, and starting features can be particularly beneficial. For example, the teacher can pause and rewind any words that the students find challenging until they are understood. If required, teachers can provide further clarification. Thus, learners will find it significantly simpler to comprehend challenging and novel patterns or statements while also learning how to pronounce words. Comparing learners who read only narratives with learners who read both narratives and definitions, Gildea et al. (1990) found that learners who saw movie visuals were better able to construct acceptable sentences employing the most challenging target terms.

Likewise, Wells (1982) noted that letting students watch an English movie helps them to expand their vocabulary. They pick up word usage and sentence construction skills by watching them and from the context in which they are used. In his study, movements may be as much of a language as communication, which in this circumstance permits students to focus on the context in the movie and quickly infer the meaning of a new word they hear, along with gaining a concept of the whole sentence. He emphasized that viewing English movies might supply students with the chance to strengthen both their active and passive memory. Plus, subtitles can be used as another strategy to help students expand their vocabulary. According to Sze (2006), it is an excellent approach for building relationships in the classroom with students of differing English skills. Students who struggle to grasp English can still participate in discussions by using their home tongue as a subtitle, which enables them to talk about what they did and did not understand. Moreover, a view by Lestiyanawati (2011) mentioned that learning English through movies can encourage English language critical thinking. After spending a long time exposed to English movies, learners gradually can give ideas, criticize or compare things, and their understanding in cross-cultural communication is also improved.

2.2. Disadvantages of English movies in learning languages

Despite of some benefits, the implementation of English movies in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to students also has some disadvantages. First, finding movie content suitable to the syllabus or to the focus points sometimes can be costly and time-consuming because they are not available or free on the internet. Second, while watching the movie, learners try to understand every word instead of the main point, hence, they can be confused and distracted (Kusumaningrum, 2016). Moreover, they can get bored if the film takes too much time to play or they have no idea about the film. As a result, the use of movies to teach and learn EFL fails. The genres of movies are reasons for the ineffectiveness of adopting films in learning and teaching. Sometimes, students do not enjoy certain genres of movies and will become bored while viewing them. For instance, if the sole dialogue in the movie is one that students don't particularly enjoy. Next, according to Arsyad (2011), when the movie is being shown, the images will continuously change, making it difficult for students to understand the information provided by the movie. It's also possible that students would rather watch actors or actresses than the movie's core message, which would cause them to lose concentration on the main lesson objective. Lastly, watching movies might inspire students to mimic bad scenes by actors or actresses. This point cannot be refuted since the movie is from a Western or foreign culture that is quite unlike Vietnamese culture. This situation is similar to the last one in that teachers must first choose a movie that is appropriate for learning.

Although there are several weaknesses to teaching and learning through movies, these weaknesses may be overcome with the teacher's assistance, which encourages the students to take things apart, such as by repeating words spoken in the movies and imitating conversations based on the movies. This drawback does not force educational institutions to cease employing movies in their teaching-learning activities since there are several strategies to facilitate interaction between students, teachers, and movies used in teaching.

3. Methodology

3.1. Pedagogical Setting & Participants

This study was conducted at the Faculty of Foreign Languages of the Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade. After being told the purpose of this study, 110 (n=110) English-majored sophomores of mixed genders volunteered to participate. These students were exposed to some EFL teaching and learning methods, including using movies; thus, they have a more objective perspective. In order to investigate benefits and downsides that they have experienced when acquiring vocabulary through movies, they were required to fill in the questionnaire.

3.2. Design of the Study

A quantitative research method was used to collect and analyze data. This method allows researchers to explore the participants' perceptions and opinions regarding the use of English language movies to improve vocabulary. The researchers developed a questionnaire to investigate the advantages and

disadvantages of using English movies. The questionnaire was designed on a Likert-type scale with five options ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The questionnaire based on the Likert scale consists of 15 questions that are broken up into four parts. Background information is discussed in questions one to five.

This part will specify participants' information to ensure that the objects fulfill the study's demands. The second part covers questions six through ten, which will help identify the advantages of using movies in teaching vocabulary. The next part comprises questions eleven to fourteen that will point out the disadvantages of using movies in teaching vocabulary. The last part of the survey questions provides information concerning suggestions when learning vocabulary by using English movies.

3.3. Data collection & analysis

The survey questionnaire was created by Google Forms. This format has been sent directly to students and through the Zalo group. After collecting the survey questionnaires, the data analysis underwent descriptive statistics to analyze mean values, and Cronbach's Alpha to measure the reliability of items.

Table 3.1. Reliability of questionnaire and constructs

Constructs of using English movies to improve vocabulary	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Advantages	.764	.771	7
Disadvantages	.731	.737	7

The result showed that the reliability of the constructs was from 0.7 to 0.8, meaning that it was acceptable, so the questionnaires could be used to survey.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

4.1.1. Advantages of using English movies to improve vocabulary

The first research question "To what extent do HUIT sophomores believe that English movies are beneficial to improve vocabulary?" was addressed using descriptive analysis. The results in the mean scores are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics on the advantages of using English movies to improve vocabulary.

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Helping students' self-confidence.	110	4.18	.756
Students can broaden their vocabulary.	110	4.03	.795
Memorizing how to write new words rapidly.	110	3.85	.727
Having a better memory for word meanings.	110	4.11	.794
Understanding how to use words appropriately.	110	4.16	.761
Pronouncing new words more accurately.	110	2.93	1.578
Using movies to learn vocabulary makes studying more enjoyable.	110	2.80	.876
Valid N (listwise)	110		

The results showed that most of the items recorded high mean values, for example, items with high M values around 4.0 were Item 1, 2, 4, and 5 (M=4.18, 4.03, 4.11 and 4.16). These values indicated that there was a high rate of students agreeing on the advantages of English movies in learning vocabulary. The rest of items have the mean values around 3.0 (from M= 2.80 to M= 3.85), demonstrating that responses were neutral.

Therefore, it could be referred from the data above that learners believe that their vocabulary was improved and enhanced through English movies.
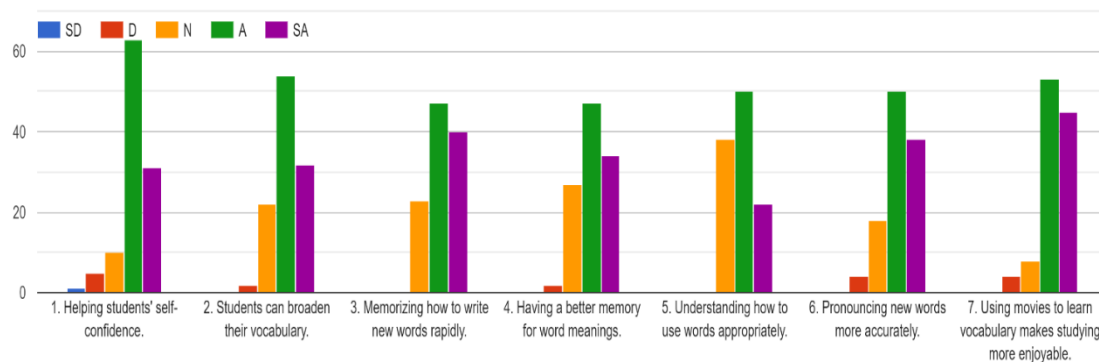

Chart 4.2: Benefits of using movies in learning vocabulary

The bar chart illustrates the advantages of applying movies to learn and teach vocabulary. With a quick look, we can recognize that the highest rate of student agreement is item 1. That means most learners agree that confidence is developed through using movies. In item 1, 63 respondents agree that they can be more confident by watching movies. About 31 people strongly agree, and 10 people in between do not agree or disagree. The number of respondents supposed to help them become more confident includes 5 people who disagree and only 1 person who strongly disagrees.

In addition, the number of respondents who agree that applying movies to teaching new words can help students broaden their vocabulary is 54 while 32 respondents strongly agree, and 22 of them feel neutral. Responses that disagree with this method are only 2.

Another point worth noting is that 47 respondents agree that they memorize how to write new words rapidly by applying movies to teach vocabulary. Meanwhile, 40 respondents strongly agree, and 23 people are neutral with this teaching. Moreover, 47 respondents agree with this teaching method, and they find it helps them have a better memory for word meanings. 27 responses are neutral, while 34 answers strongly agree when applying movies to teaching. Responses that disagree with this method are only 2.

Another factor to consider is that 50 replies evaluate whether they understand how to use words appropriately. 22 survey participants strongly agree with this teaching method, and 38 respondents are neutral.

Besides, survey respondents who agree and strongly agree that watching movies while studying helps them pronounce new words with more accuracy stand at 50 and 38. 18 responses are neutral with this method, and the number of respondents who disagree is 4.

Lastly, students who agree that using movies to learn vocabulary makes studying more enjoyable account for 53 respondents, while those who strongly agree stand at 45 answers. 8 replies are neutral, and 4 survey respondents do not agree with this teaching method.

4.1.2. Disadvantages of teaching and learning English through movies

The second research question " What challenges do these learners face toward using English movies to learn English?" was addressed using descriptive analysis. The results in
the mean scores are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Descriptive Statistics on disadvantages of teaching and learning English through movies

| Items	N	Mean
Students feel the usage of movies to be boring.	110	2.57
Students easily mimic bad scenes by actors or actresses.	110	3.15
I require more time to read and comprehend English subtitles.	110	3.77
I only concentrate on the scene and the actors or actresses.	110	3.21
I become depressed when I learn vocabulary through movies.	110	3.27
The unbalance of knowledge among students	110	3.25
The Internet connection is unstable.	110	3.68
Valid N (listwise)	110	
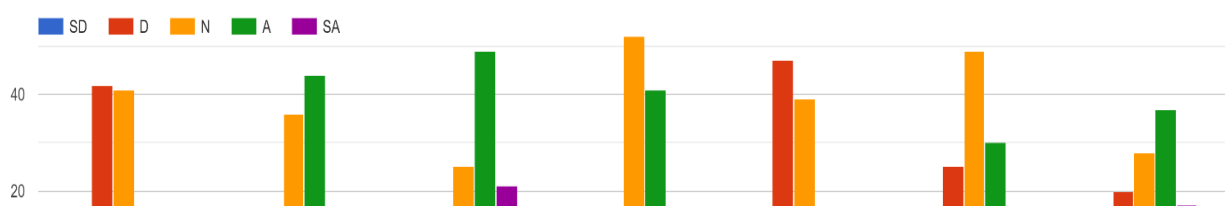
Chart 4.4: Drawbacks of using movies in teaching and learning vocabulary

Through the bar chart, the negative effects of applying movies to teach vocabulary are illustrated. To begin with, the number of survey respondents who strongly agree and strongly disagree that students feel the usage of movies to be boring is 2 and 12, respectively. 13 respondents agree with this view, and 42 disagree. The remaining respondents are 41 neutral people.

Besides, there are 11 strongly agree and 7 strongly disagree responses from survey respondents, indicating that students easily mimic bad scenes by actors or actresses. 44 answers say they agree, and 12 answers disagree after surveying. 36 respondents are neutral about this viewpoint.

Moreover, the 21 answers show that students strongly agree that they require more time to read and comprehend English subtitles, and 5 responses strongly disagree with this viewpoint. 49 respondents agree that students take more time to read and comprehend English subtitles, and 10 respondents show they disagree. 25 people feel neutral.

Next, 5 surveyed respondents strongly agree that they only concentrate on the scene and the actors or actresses, and 3 respondents strongly disagree. 41 replies agree that students concentrate on the scene and the actors or actresses, and 9 responses disagree. 52 people responded that they felt neutral about this idea. In addition, students who become depressed when they learn vocabulary through movies received 8 responses from those who strongly disagree. The number of survey participants who agree is 16, while 47 people disagree. 39 respondents are neutral about this idea.

Finally, 17 survey respondents strongly agree that the internet connection is unstable, while 8 respondents strongly disagree. 37 answers indicate they agree, and 20 answers disagree. 28 responses are neutral to this view.

4.2. Discussion

This result demonstrates that most students concur that English movies boost their self-assurance because they will know how to use words appropriate to the context after viewing. In particular, the words in the film that are basic, amusing, and repeated have left an impression on students, helping them remember

words faster and longer. In addition, the researcher discovered that students feel happy and interested in English movies, so students may want teachers to apply films to teach more vocabulary. Along with these findings, survey data reveals that viewing English movies can help boost students' enthusiasm for studying vocabulary and enhance their knowledge of pronouncing words correctly as native speakers.

Besides the benefits that film brings, it also has some drawbacks. As can be seen, students readily lose focus when studying because they only care about watching and can imitate bad scenes by actors or actresses. Also, although watching subtitles can help students improve their vocabulary, it takes time to read and comprehend. Moreover, the unbalanced quality between bad students and good students can make it difficult for teachers to select suitable movies for students, and external factors such as unstable networks also affect watching while studying.

However, the researcher discovered some new points in the study that were not there before. A movie will become boring if watched over and over again. Therefore, teachers should choose to update trending films and add a bit of challenge to attract students' attention. Another, the movies should be used at the appropriate times, such as at the beginning or end of a period. Then, the movie's lessons must be tailored to the learner's goals, skills and levels. Furthermore, before viewing movies at the beginning or end of class, teachers should give clear instructions and briefly explain new words so that students can understand. In short, watching English language movies to learn and improve vocabualry is one of the efficient strategies.

5. Conclusion

According to the findings, the researcher concluded that using English movies can improve students' vocabulary although there were still both advantages and disadvantages.

Most students felt delighted and highly valued learning words through movies. Therefore, it can be stated that studying words by watching movies is an effective way that does not induce boredom and may excite and inspire students to study English.

With this study, the writer would like to provide some recommendations, particularly for teachers, students, and readers. The writer expects that these recommendations will help everyone.

For Teachers:

The ability to be creative is essential for English teachers who must impart their understanding of the language to their students so that they may more readily acquire and comprehend the information provided. Through this study, teachers may provide students with a fascinating learning environment by showing them English-language films. Additionally, teachers may design engaging exercises and provide enjoyable activities by using English movies to inspire students.

For Students:

+ Students should pay more attention to the teacher during lessons.

+ Via watching English movies and practicing more words in their free time, students can improve their vocabulary skills. They will even become accustomed to hearing English pronunciation, which can pique their intense interest in English.

+ When there is an explanation or unknown information, students should confidently ask questions to the teacher.

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