The Importance of Using Movies in EFL Classrooms

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Abstract: The study explores the role of movies in the process of teaching English as a foreign language. The advantages of film-based English learning, the selection of videos and methods of working with them are strongly supported by FL teaching specialists and learners. Watching movies is not only entertainment, but it is also an effective method for teaching and learning a foreign language. Therefore it is possible to combine these two aspects---pleasure and useful teaching/learning activities. Integrating movies in Teaching/learning provides a unique opportunity to help learners immerse in a real language environment. While watching films EFL students can listen to the speech of native speakers, get familiar to different accents and intonation used across various regions where English is spoken, observe gestures and non-verbal expressions. Learners begin to understand better native speakers and eventually will be able to reproduce their speech in more accurate and natural way.Through movies it is possible to learn about the culture and customs of the countrywhere the target language is native, that promotes learners to enhance their languageskills and use them more successfully in oral and written communication.

Introduction

When we speak about teaching/learning English as a foreign language, for millions of children and adults it has become a task that should be completed successfully for being independent and realized members of the 21st century global village.

Quite a few years ago English already acquired the status of an international language meeting much more than just the language for only national use. Today the role and significance of English in all spheres of human activities (different branches of science, trade, sport, art, academic processes and international relations) are crystal clear and can't be underestimated.

Nowadays modern EFL teaching methodology calls for teachers to develop student-centered and highly effective teaching/learning atmosphere with clearly defined objectives and goals; And of course it goes without saying that the teaching/learning process should be pleasant, motivating and interesting to fully engage learners in it. We realize that for achieving the set academic goals by both teachers and learners, a well-balanced classroom

organization that encompasses a broad spectrum of modern methods and approaches are mandatory. Integrating movies of different genres (crime, drama, experimental, fantasy, historical, romance, science Fiction, thriller, western, musical, war) at different stages of studying/learning is considered as an integral and indisputable element for the whole academic process. The value and importance of the movie inclusion in FL education is unanimously recognized by the specialists of this field(Ying, W. & Zhang, H.F. (2012); Alberta, L. (2013). Patel, C. (2013); Champoux, J.E. (1999) Britta Viebrock (2016) et.al.) as one of the productive and attractive tools for engaging students with increased motivation in the process of EFL acquisition. Multiple studies show that the movie has gained popularity as an instructional instrument among teachers and learners and this approach serves as one, among many other effective instructional tools, not only for broadening students' minds but also for improving and further mastering their language skills.

Movie inclusion in English language teaching curriculum promotes creative activities which have positive impact on enhancing learners' language proficiency. As an example of such engaging and multifaceted drills, we list below movie related instructions suggested by "Using Film In Schools: a Practical Guide" (2010) as a stimulus for speaking and listening

- use short films to develop understanding of narrative and point of view
- use moving images as a stimulus for writing, e.g. letters, news items, film reviews
- view the opening scene from an adaptation before reading the book, and consider what it tells the viewer about genre, narrative and character
- translate a short film excerpt into a written story, poem, news report or letter
- make a film adaptation of a story or a scene from a book
- use filmmaking to explore the imagery in a poem
- Explore and compare the techniques used in print and moving image texts
- Explore how film language techniques are used for effect and persuasion in propaganda and documentary films
- Analyse or compare film versions of literary texts, considering features such as depiction of characters, narrative structure and the use of film language
- Write film scripts

Therefore it is crystal clear teaching/ learning English in a creative atmosphere must be very stimulating and motivating.

In the process of teaching/learning a foreign language movies play not only the entertaining role but they are also very productive for enhancing language skills.

Methodology

This study explores the impact of incorporating movies into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. The methodology adopted is both qualitative and quantitative, aiming to capture a comprehensive understanding of the benefits, challenges, and overall effectiveness of using movies as a pedagogical tool in EFL settings.

A mixed-method approach was employed to gain a well-rounded perspective on the topic. The quantitative component involved a survey to gather statistical data on the frequency and perceived effectiveness of movie use in EFL classrooms. The qualitative component focused on in-depth interviews and classroom observations to explore teachers' and students' experiences, attitudes, and challenges.

Survey

A structured questionnaire was developed to assess the teachers' and students' opinions on the use of movies in language learning. The survey included both closed and open-ended questions, allowing for both quantitative analysis and qualitative insights.

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 EFL teachers to explore their pedagogical strategies, motivations, and perceived advantages and disadvantages of using movies in their teaching practices. Additionally, 15 students from varying proficiency levels were interviewed to understand their attitudes toward learning English through movies.

Classroom Observations

Observations were carried out in 10 different EFL classrooms where movies were being used as part of the teaching process. The observations focused on classroom dynamics, student engagement, and the interaction between students and teachers during movie-based lessons. A checklist was used to ensure consistency in data collection during the observations.

Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends and patterns in teachers' and students' responses. A comparative analysis was also conducted between different proficiency levels to determine whether movie usage impacted students' learning experiences differently.

Qualitative data from the interviews and classroom observations were analyzed thematically. Key themes such as engagement, motivation, language acquisition, and cultural awareness were identified. Thematic analysis allowed for a deeper understanding of the perceptions and experiences of both teachers and students regarding the use of movies in the classroom.

Ethical guidelines were strictly followed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring their voluntary participation. Participants were

assured of confidentiality, and their responses were anonymized to maintain privacy. The study was approved by the ethical review board of the institution.

Although this study provides valuable insights into the use of movies in EFL classrooms, it is limited by the sample size and geographic scope. The participants were primarily from urban areas, and the findings may not be fully representative of rural or less developed regions. Additionally, the study focused on movies as a tool for teaching language skills but did not address other factors such as cultural sensitivity or accessibility issues that may affect the use of films in diverse classroom settings.

This methodology section outlines a balanced approach to studying the use of movies in EFL classrooms and sets the foundation for analyzing how movies can enhance the language learning process.

Result and Discussion

Pronunciation

Perhaps the most important thing that develops watching movies in English is, of course, listening and adjusting the learner's ear to native speakers' manners, speed and styles' of conversation and pronunciation. While watching movies with different accents, students feel the difference between the ways of pronunciation in different parts of English-speaking countries. In order to make steady progress in the effective formation and further perfection of students' auding skills it is very important to motivate them to listen to the correct pronunciation systematically.

At the initial stages of the teaching/learning cycle students may face difficulties in understanding certain words, as movies, presenting authentic, true to life communicative situations and episodes can cause some embarrassment among learners to comprehend, so of course teachers should follow the didactic principle--- from simple to complex, from easy to difficult. it is necessary to match the chosen movies with the level of learners' language proficiency, avoiding films with too complex vocabulary among the students with limited vocabulary knowledge. In the beginning it seems reasonable to include subtitles as such approach makes it easier not only to comprehend the authentic speech but also helps remember how to spell new words and develop fast reading skills. As to learn from subtitles you need to read fast in order to process them. Though we should stress that using L2 subtitles as a 'back-up' must be acceptable in the beginning of the teaching/learning process but further avoiding to rely on them systematically not to hinder the mastery of listening skills.

Vocabulary

The second most important advantage of using movies in teaching English is that it enriches EFL students' vocabulary. There are a lot of movies and TV series on a wide

variety of life spheres, such as medicine, history, law, Geography, and more. They use broad spectrum of vocabulary. Consequently learners are introduced to different terms and lexis (medical, historic, law, geographic, etc.). Taking into consideration the interests and goals of learners , movies with suitable genres and plots can be selected in the teaching/learning process. In order to build rich and eloquent vocabulary it is very important to master new words, phrases, language structures used in films consistently. Effective vocabulary activities include :

- While watching be active: take notes of new words, phrases, terms
- Use movie lexicon in conversations
- Repeat words, phrases, sentences and terms after hearing them
- Discuss the movie, its plot, characters with groupmates
- Role-play the main characters of the movie
- Make up dialogues and monologues using movie vocabulary

Grammar

Grammar is more difficult aspect to teach through movies and TV series than vocabulary, as the focus in this process is mainly is on words, but it can be still possible to find some grammatical constructions and then use them in the lesson material as examples. Through watching movies it can be possible to develop a better understanding of the grammar structures used in dialogues or monologues. It is advisable to focus on one separate grammar phenomenon at a time instead of all grammar issues. For example, to concentrate attention on tenses in active voice in one movie and then on passive voice in another. Such approach to teaching/learning grammar provides better understanding of grammatical structure and their use in authentic communicative situations, that sometimes can't be fully acquired with the help of grammar rules and theory (Retrieved from https://talkpal.ai/how-to-learn-grammar-through-movies-and-tv-shows/).

Culture

Another positive factor of watching movies while learning English is the highlighting of the cultural aspect. To get familiar with the history and cultural issues of the country besides the language acquisition, it is recommended to choose TV series or films of the appropriate genre. Films can increase learners' awareness, interest, curiosity towards diverse cultures, traditions, customs and beliefs. As Roll states (2018) "Films can therefore help learners to see the world from another's point of view and to put themselves in the shoes of people with whom they have little or no personal contact, such as refugees or ethnic minorities in their own country or abroad. Films are cultural documents and allow students to explore different elements of another culture, such as its products, e.g. literature, folklore, art, music and artefacts; patterns of behaviour, e.g. customs, habits, dress, food and leisure activities; and ideas, e.g. beliefs, values, institutions" (Roll, 2010).

Hobbs (2001) recommends showing specific movie scenes in the language arts classroom to compel students to make close observation of details. This activity serves a dual purpose: first, it provides a model for the importance of including interesting detail in the writing process; second, it teaches students to look closely at the amount of detail that goes into character development, which improves their analytical skills in reading .The process of noting details in short movie clips could also be applied to other areas of literary analysis such as setting, point of view, and tone. "From there, students can employ the same comprehension strategies using literary forms" **(**Hobbs, 2001).

Pre- and post-movie assignments

It is important to include assignments not only after the presentation, but also before, as it is necessary to prepare students for the discussion of a new Learners are presented new vocabulary before they watch a movie and to ask them what they think the words mean or showing them a poster and to ask them to guess the plot of the movie. After viewing, vocabulary tasks can be such as: linking words to their definitions (this way students will check how correct their assumptions were at the beginning of the lesson). The teacher can also ask them to discuss a specific topic using new vocabulary so that it is retained in students' memory.

If it's a grammar test, it might be a good idea to use the classic opening of brackets in sentences or text that fits the plot of the film. To test how well a student has read a passage, it is helpful to ask specific questions that show that the student has understood what has been said.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the use of films in English language teaching is an effective and fun way to make lessons more interesting, productive and engaging. To improve EFL learners' language skills, it is approved to integrate movies in the teaching/learning, systematically using words, phrases and different speech patterns learned from movies in communicative situations . All the techniques for working with movies and TV shows are fun and effective. However, while such training is enjoyable, it takes time, patience, effort and reasonable approaches.

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