

Incorporating Movies as ELT Class Materials : Proposing a Lesson Plan

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Abstract : Recently, teaching and learning foreign or second language in the classroom have become more diversified concerning the use of technology based materials in the language curriculum. Movies are now the most instrumental tool to promote language teaching in class along with a considerable area to be incorporated in the sphere of English language Teaching (ELT) curriculum, as it tends to fulfill the needs of the young learners of this modern era. This study will explore the idea of the use of English movies as a course material in language class and its fruitfulness regarding the improvement of students' speaking and listening skills. In addition, in this paper, a well structured lesson plan will be added to show the authenticity and effectiveness of the material. Further, it will demonstrate how watching movie acts as an influencing factor among students to improve not only their speaking and listening skills but also to empower them being an autonomous learner by motivating, fostering critical thinking, flexibility and enjoyment which are the crying demands of language teaching methods needed for a student-centered classroom. ELT instructors in different EFL or ESL contexts who are concerned with students' engaging teaching materials may find the paper helpful to integrate in their concerned classrooms.

Introduction

Since the maiden voyage of language teaching and learning, language has been taught to human being either explicitly or implicitly. Linguistics and ELT practitioners have carried out their venture of

practising appropriate methodology with a view to teaching and learning a language pragmatically and properly. Even, their efforts for designing and incorporating plausible materials for pedagogy have been continuing for decades. In 21st century, language educators and practitioners are now looking forward to finding more flexible, authentic and entertaining materials in order to design language syllabus, as it imparts the opportunity to teach and learn any foreign language simultaneously with motivation and enthusiasm even than before. Besides, such tools may affect the learner's mind with ease instead of boredom of rigorous content and tasks.

Nunan (1989) and Harmer (1991) defined authentic materials in terms of their purposes of being produced. The former views it as a material not designed for any language teaching program while the later sees it as something which is produced by native speakers in real life scenario. In this regard, English movies where native speakers' interactions are projected regardless of being valued as an academic material could be the best source of authentic texts.

Therefore, English movies, so far, has been applied in the English language class and considered to be an essential teaching and learning tool to be added in pedagogy; not only for its diversity but also its positive effects based on real life oriented situations on the process of language learning and teaching in a classroom. Many scholars have opined that movies used in ELT classroom can become an important part of the curriculum. Kusumarasdyati (2004) and Luo (2004) both have supported this view by revealing that movies provide the exposure of "real life language" used in authentic setting and in the cultural context in which the foreign language is spoken. Further, they have agreed to the point that movies trigger the learner's interest and it can positively affect their motivation to learn.

The terminology 'student-centered approach' denotes the way of teaching which shifts the focus of instruction from teacher to student. Here, students adopt the role of an active agent in the class emphasizing the practice of learner autonomy and freedom in the learning process. Kumaravadivelu (1994) has asserted the value of practising student-centered approach which offers autonomy to students by being the owner of his/her own learning process and at the

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same time, the teacher can be benefitted by enjoying the opportunity to invent more micro strategies while teaching a language. With this regard, movies can “maximize the learning opportunity” in the classroom which facilitates freedom in the learning process empowering students with the role of an orchestrator and ensuring learning autonomy.

Movies are an enjoyable source of entertainment and language acquisition because an audio-visual source can be more entertaining and engaging to students. This study aims at discussing the effectiveness of using English movie in language class focusing how it facilitates the improvement of both speaking and listening skills. Furthermore, it will show that a lesson plan based on a movie could serve as authentic materials which may promote learner autonomy by giving enough space to apply student centered approach.

However, many ELT researchers are found talking about the use of movie in language pedagogy but their studies present movies with limited scope of implementing it in ELT class as shown in the literature review part of this study. Studies are not much available that propose movies being used directly to any ELT lesson as core materials. But, movies offer a huge potentially to be exploited best promising students’ exposure to authentic sources of language learning.

Hence, this paper takes the endeavor to propose English movies to be considered as mainstream ELT materials. With this aim, a well structured lesson plan based on an English movie has been presented with necessary details. To assess its effectiveness, the lesson plan had been implemented in a language class and the results are shared here as well.

For the convenience, the objectives of this study can be listed as below:

1. To explore the fruitfulness of using English movies in language class to improve students’ speaking and listening skills.
2. To discuss how the proposed lesson plan become an authentic tool to engage students in academic teaching and learning.
3. To find out how this lesson plan helps to ensure student autonomy in learning and teaching.

Literature review

In recent years, many scholars, language instructors, and material designers are involved in investigating the effectiveness of a variety of strategies and methods which can be implemented in the ELT classes to promote learner’s mastery over language skills and to mobilize the teaching and the learning process. Many of them are also talking about movies as ELT materials used in classroom.

A study on using movies in ELT classrooms conducted by Kabooha (2016) at Saudi Arabia has revealed that movies are powerful tool that can help in developing students’ language skills along with enhancing their motivation to learn the language. Another study on the effectiveness of using movies in EFL classroom orchestrated by Ismaili (2013) has concluded that teachers can employ movie-based instruction to improve students’ listening and speaking skills as well as activities derived from the films, such as diction, group discussion, and oral presentation can enhance students’ listening and speaking skills. In addition, teachers can increase students’ interests and learning motivation by incorporating movies in the lesson plan.

Luo (2004) in his study examined the influence of DVD movies on students’ listening comprehension and commented that students’ listening skill “did improve” through the instruction of using DVD in a motivating learning environment with “lower level of anxiety”. Weyers (1999) supervised a study with an authentic soap opera to measure whether it can increase student listening comprehension and enhance their oral production. The results of the study suggested that operas are a valuable source in increasing the students’ listening comprehension skills.

A study administered in Turkey by Seferoglu (2008) agreed that besides improving listening and speaking skills, watching movies in English provides a wealth of knowledge on slang, accents, and cross-cultural information. Knee (2001) also advocates that watching movies can be integrated into English lesson to promote not only linguistic competence but also interactional competence of the students. Both Kabooha (2016) and Florence (2009) in their studies have pointed out that films in English provided the participants with authentic context as well as motivation to learn the language.

King (2002) strongly argued that movie itself is a stimulus, in which learners can be motivated to communicate in contemporary colloquial English. He further asserted that it can be accomplished when students are provided with a meaningful and authentic context, in which language proficiency can be improved and students feel less stressed and inspired to use English as a tool for communication. Again, in Kabooha's (2016) study, it is indicated that through films students are able to learn how native speaker initiate and preserve a conversational exchange, negotiate meaning and nonverbal communication. Thus, students feel more confidence to speak in English by being exposed to the real English used by native speakers in the movies.

Hibbing & Ranking-Erickson (2003) suggested that movies provide a wonderful opportunity for students to acquire background understanding to combine with their own understanding about a concept and to adapt their new thoughts, images and feelings to the exiting one by making prediction, guessing and confirming, thus watching movie helps learners to enhance their critical ability. Long (2003) has reported that the 'visuality' of films makes it a valuable teaching tool, facilitating learners to learn better by interpreting the language in a complete visual context and providing a focus of attention.

Curtis (2007) has revealed that films offers English language teacher with a good opportunity to bring in local themes, natural discourse and cultural information. Since films are based upon a vast number of topics, themes and issues, the teacher could use them to initiate or stimulate discussion about a certain focus area. Thus, film as a motivator additionally renders the language learning process a lot more enjoyable and entertaining.

Khan (2015) has agreed to the fact that audiovisual technologies, such as films, generally are a great source for teaching spoken English and must be used in non-native English Language Teaching (ELT) contexts. Considering the above discussed issues, it can be stated that English movie not only acts as an essential tool of language teaching and learning but also it provides the learners with the opportunity of improving speaking and listening skill emphasizing learner autonomy and flexibility in the learning process.

Now, in Bangladesh we see that due to having constraint of time and multimedia facilities, such attempt of adding more diversified and entertaining materials in the language syllabus has not been able to see the face of light in most of the institutions. Yet, few teachers especially in private universities have tried to include watching English movies to the curriculum as it not only ensures the availability of authentic materials but also it fosters autonomous learning engaging student actively to the learning and teaching process. Such concern is seen in a very recent study done by Chowdhury and Reza (2016) in Bangladesh that shows how movie-based task can be very stimulating activity for the students in class and at the same time may offer scopes for the teacher to design innovative way of teaching approach.

So, this study is an attempt to explore the prosperity of using movies in English language classroom by proposing a lesson plan which can be incorporated in the language curriculum.

Methodology

Reflective approach has been adopted in the study. The study is exploratory also analyzing qualitative data to meet the aforementioned objectives of this study.

Sampling

The participants in this study were 30 undergraduate level students studying English in a private university of Bangladesh. They were aged between 15 to 18 years. The study had employed convenient sampling method to select participants, as it attempted to ensure including both easily accessible and willing sample in the study.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

This study was conducted in an English class of 120 minutes. Two classes were needed to finish the lesson effectively. The researcher himself executed the lesson plan in the class and closely observed the implementation of the lesson plan throughout the way. Class activities along with students' responses had been recorded as a form of reflective journal. The administration of the lesson plan was divided in three stages, Pre-viewing the movie, while-viewing the movie and post-viewing the movie. A short but educative film was selected for the

lesson, which served the purpose of the lesson. To analyze the collected data, descriptive analysis method had been consulted for in-depth discussion of the observation results which is presented below.

Proposed Lesson Plan Based on Movie

Duration of each class: 120 Minutes

Number of class: 2 classes (if needed one more class may be extended)

Number of Students: Around 30

Medium of Instruction: English

Learner Background

Class: Under grade class

Age: 15-18 years

Language Proficiency level: Pre-intermediate-intermediate.

Cultural and Language Background: EFL/ESL learners

Activities: Watching a short film, speaking and listening tasks, group work and pair work.

Objectives

1. To improve students' real life speaking skill.
2. To teach vocabulary in context.
3. To develop student's real life listening ability.
4. To make them able to comprehend English expressions both verbal and non-verbal.
5. To develop students' critical thinking process.

Teaching aids and materials

1. Snap shots and trailer of the movie for Pre-viewing activities.
2. A DVD format of the Movie titled *Ice Age*.
3. Photocopies of worksheet for students.
4. Multimedia projector to show pictures and movie to students.

Evaluation Techniques

1. Peer checking and peer-feedback will be facilitated.
2. Teacher will provide them the correct answers and feedback on the overall performance after student shares their answers and will discuss how they reached their answers.

Rationale

Movie, an authentic material, gives real life exposure to English conversation, expressions and pronunciation. Moreover, for having entertaining values, it is quite easy to trigger students' interest into the lesson of the class. Thus, surely it gives an ease to the teacher to teach speaking and listening skills of English effectively.

Selection of suitable movie: It is very crucial to nominate a suitable movie as we have to ensure that the students can connect the movie content to the subject areas to be taught in the classroom and it should be well suited for the age level and culture of the target learners. Most importantly, students' proficiency level need to be considered while selecting the movie as it is directly linked to the learning process. Any mismatch between the selected movie and the level of students can create disharmony in the teaching and learning process.

Pre-viewing Stage

Here, some brainstorming or warm-up activities can be done to break the ice, in other words, to make sure that students can generate the schemata before watching the movie. This process will help the students to be involved to the lesson along with unearthing fun while watching the movie. The pre-viewing steps are stated below.

Step 1 : Write "Ice Age" on the board. Pair your students and ask them to come up with as many points on ice age as they can in 3 minutes.

Step 2 : Collect answers from the whole class and write the points on "Ice Age" on the board. Make the students practise the pronunciation of the reported phrases by them.

Step 3 : Project some pictures or snapshots from the movie and ask your student to guess what they are.

Step 4 : Now tell your students that they are going to watch the trailer of the movie. Watch the trailer with caption and answer the following questions written on the board:

- i. What this movie is about for?
- ii. What do you know about ice age?
- iii. Do you like the trailer or not? Why or why not?

Ask them to discuss the answers in pair.

Step 5 : Ask students about their understanding of the trailer. You may have to play the trailer twice especially for the low proficiency learners.

While-viewing Stage

In this stage, the whole movie can be played with significant pauses or a short sequence approach (recommended by Kabooha, 2016) can be followed. But if the movie takes limited time then the whole movie can be played at a stretch.

Step 1 : Hold a plenary discussion on what your students know about Ice age and its flora and fauna based on the questions from the previous stage.

Step 2 : Tell your students, they are going to watch a short film titled *Ice Age*, based on the life of animals and human who lived in the Ice age before 20,000 years ago. As they watch the film, they should check if any of the facts about ice age they discussed are shown in the film, and try to remember as much of the story as they can.

Show the film.

Step 3 : Pair your students and ask them to retell the story or the ending of Ice age.

Step 4 : Get the whole class to restructure the dialogue in as much detail as possible. For that, teacher can ask students to identify a specific character by their used dialogues (even by quotes or phrases) during a particular scene.

Post-viewing stage

After watching the movie, students can be asked to write a summary of the movie or a review of it. Or they can take part in an overall discussion session. Besides, a debate can be arranged by making two groups, one group in favour of and the other against the general ideas covered in the film.

Step 1 : Here, from the three given activities, the teachers may choose either according to their convenience.

To elicit critical answer from the students, teacher may prepare some open-ended questions such as asking "why Manny, the mammoth, saved the little human boy, and he commented, "That's what you do as a herd." Discuss in pairs and share the answer with the class in the form of presentation. While students are working in pair, the teacher should monitor them for necessary help. The teacher will provide positive feedback to students on their presentation.

OR

Ask your students to find out the answers of the following questions in pair.

- i. Who are the main characters of the movie?
- ii. What do you know about its setting?
- iii. What is the main plot of the movie?
- iv. How did they (Mammoth, Sloth and Saber tooth) become friend?
- v. Does it preach the Darwinian orthodoxy? If not, why?
- vi. Why animation movie is more engaging to audience?
- vii. What do you learn from the movie?

OR

Ask students to prepare a role play on a selected scene from the movie. A group can be consisted of 5 members. In the role-play, the teacher should ensure each student's equal participation in the concerned group. The instructor may demonstrate the role play taking one character from the movie to model the activity.

Homework

Give your students the link to the film; ask them to watch it for homework and write a movie review. Teacher will motivate them to engage in further study and finish the class by thanking them.

Analysis of Observation Results

Students' responses revealed that they had regarded the integration of English movies in classroom as effective. The instructor finds willingness and motivation from the part of students while conducting the class. At the beginning, students felt utter surprise when the instructor informed them about the lesson containing watching an

English movie. To point out, it marked the difference between starting a class with academic materials and entertaining materials like movies. It seemed their anxiety level was eased automatically and thus became intrinsically motivated. For that, implementation of the lesson was smooth and successful to teach the speaking and listening skills.

Next, in the pre-viewing stage, the activities such as guessing, making prediction, recognizing from pictures etc. fostered to increase students' critical thinking ability. Surprisingly, the students who usually remain passive in lecture based class were seen actively participating and commenting in this stage. As a warm-up stage, it carries high value to the instructor in order to engage the learners to the lesson wholeheartedly. Even, the activity of presenting the trailer of the movie with caption aroused students' interest to keep up it till the end of the class. They critically and willingly answered the given questions in that step. Though, the trailer had been played twice but it was noticed that it offered students with proper understanding about the main theme of the movie, which was watched later.

Then, they were asked to engage themselves actively while watching the movie focusing on new vocabularies and phrases to write on their notebooks. Thus, learning vocabulary with context was prioritized from the beginning of the lesson. Before enjoying the whole movie, a plenary discussion session was facilitated to elicit their ideas about the movie *Ice age*. This activity not only activated their schemata about the theme of the movie but also it promoted students autonomy as they had taken the charge of their own learning by thinking about the topic, analyzing answer, discussing with peer, arguing and defending their own points. The activity had involved them in class participation ensuring encouragement and freedom in the learning process.

In while-viewing stage, the instructor faced a challenge to keep students focused to the narrative of the movie as the movie contains natural English conversations which are exchanged by native speaker of English with native accent. Displaying English subtitle or caption acted as a useful tool to manage the situation. Sometimes the Instructor paused the movie after different segments to take prompt quiz to hold up their concentration till the end.

To note, the most important thing happened when they were asked to retell the ending of the story using their own imaginary power. Many of them presented their versions projecting their creativity and amazing narrative skills. Thus, it paves the way to initiate learner oriented teaching and learning. Students' spontaneous engagements in the task were observed when they were asked to quote a few dialogues from any character and most of them have quoted 'Sid the Sloth'. When the instructor asked the reason, they said that the character was very interesting. It shows that the students had really enjoyed the movie with full motivation and attention.

In post-viewing stage, students were involved in explaining their position either to support or oppose with the message of the movie. Here, the instructor finds more active students who not only desired to reply to any question but also to take the leadership position in order to establish their point of view regarding the movie. Besides, their intelligent answers on the comment of "Mummy" surprised the instructor as they had portrayed this movie not as an animated one but a picturesque portrayal of characters who used to follow the rules of Nature not the Darwinian orthodoxy. The instructor appreciated the students with positive remarks and urged the necessity to watch more English movies.

After that, the time came to test their speaking fluency through role-play. The instructor knew very well that public speaking has always been a nightmare for students. So, at the beginning, he motivated them through scaffolding while practising the session. The instructor demonstrated a segment first to model this activity. Then, students presented the segment separately in groups. Here, the instructor noticed some interesting aspects such as students enjoying flexibility and encouragement while speaking in English. Previously, the instructor advised the students not to be worried about the native accent rather they should practise intelligible pronunciation of English, which ensures their comprehensiveness to all.

Finally, the instructor called off the class by giving home tasks on the projected movie and thanked students to join the class. After finishing the class, based on the Instructor's reflection and observation several points are found to be noted as significant. Those are enlisted below.

- i. Students' response shows that movies are a useful resource for oral language teaching and learning. It is supported by their enthusiasm and motivation while completing different activities and taking part in the class discussion actively.
- ii. Their spontaneous performance proved that audio visual aids help them to understand any concept clearly and critically involving panel discussion and debate.
- iii. Further, their anxiety level was lowered since they had taken the charge of their own learning by being analytical and communicative with their peers. They were not anxious for their grammar errors but they were more focused with their interactional competence.
- iv. Again, they had been able to remove their problems in listening English especially pronunciation and native accent and have tried to produce more understandable pronunciation of English. Thus, both listening and speaking skills were effectively practiced and improved in this lesson.
- v. Students feel more flexibility and freedom to learn by authentic materials such as movie in their class lesson as movies cater for more engaging and pragmatic activities (like guessing from picture, retelling the story based on imagination, debating, role-playing etc.) in class .
- vi. The Instructor may also feel relaxed as this lesson not only ensures a congenial classroom environment but also student centered teaching and learning approach.

From the above mentioned statements, one can easily perceive that learner oriented teachers may effectively use movies in their lesson for different purposes, though the movies have never been a part of the curriculum.

Probable Solution for Anticipated Difficulties

Using movies in the classroom is new and very pleasant experience for the students. However, its implication may cause some difficulties both from the path of teachers and students. By the means of reflection and experience from the execution of the lesson plan, the instructor

attempts to offer some probable solutions for the anticipated difficulties as presented below.

- i. First of all, students may face hardship in comprehending the movie due to encounter unknown vocabularies and phrases used in the narrative of the movie. In order to solve the issue, before watching the movie key words presenting activity can be conducted or eliciting information from the students can be done by writing the title of the movie on the board and asking students to discuss and share their answers what they know about the topic.
- ii. The second and most important difficulty is the native accented pronunciation which often acts to lose students' enthusiasm to watch the movie. The instructor may play the subtitle of the movie or go for pause-start technique conducting to minimize the discomfort of the pronunciation or by starting a discussion on any particular segment of the movie.
- iii. Some Students, who are introverts and accustomed to lecture based classes, they may feel shy or discomfort to join in this class because lesson based on English movie demands active participation to complete different variety of activities. So, the instructor has huge responsibility to make those reluctant students to be engaged positively in the group activity. The instructor may motivate and encourage the students to the class with motivational speech and advantages of group and pair works.
- iv. The teacher may find the issue of selecting suitable movie difficult for the target task. This is often a practical challenge to choose an educative movie and at the same time short-length movie which will not consume much time of the lesson plan. Here, the instructor may apply prudent knowledge to know the students' preferences on movies and thus, he/she becomes successful to solve the problem of selecting suitable movie. Though it is a time consuming task to prepare a lesson plan on movies but teacher may do it if they are interested and eager to ensure a learner oriented teaching and learning class.
- v. The most challenging aspect of the lesson plan is managing class timing which often matters to implement any lesson plan. In this

regard, the instructors are suggested to execute the lesson plan by dividing it into pre, while and post stages which certainly helps him/her to complete the lesson successfully. If any lesson is not completed within one class then two classes can be arranged if needed.

Therefore, it can be said that movies can be integrated to the lesson plan effectively if the teacher ensures his/her positive attitude toward movies as an entertaining learning tool and the teacher wishes to create student centered learning environment in the class.

Pedagogical Implications

This study is an attempt to demonstrate the benefit of integrating movies in the lesson plan of English language classes. An effective lesson plan has been proposed, that can be taken into consideration by the ELT Practitioners. Though the projected lesson plan fosters student centered learning atmosphere, but still it depends much on the shoulder of the instructor especially to select pedagogically appropriate movie and to design learning activities which ensures learners active participation with full enthusiasm.

Some points definitely can be noted down, which have pedagogical importance to promote learners' autonomy. First, movies based lesson plan facilitates language learning by arising students' interest and motivation to the learning process. Second, movies promote teacher student interaction at a greater extent as it contains authentic real life conversational exchanges and sensory perception of the text. Last but not the least, activities developed from movies such as group discussion, role play, picture guessing etc. promote spontaneity in the learning process which brings the improvement of speaking and listening skills effectively.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. Firstly, the sample size is meager 30 undergraduate students, which could be more in number. Moreover, the proposed lesson plan is administered to a particular disciplined students (here English students especially) while applying it to the

other disciplined students may have given other insights. Again, data is collected from the Instructor's reflective observation of his/her own class but more qualitative tools such as interview or focused group discussion with students can be employed to collect more reliable data. In addition, quantitative dimension could be added to show more statistical results of the target task. Addressing the aforementioned aspects, further researches could be carried out in order to reveal more findings on movies based lesson plan for English language class.

Conclusion

This study concludes saying that movies based lesson plan acts as an instrumental tool for ensuring learner oriented learning. The responses from the students show that it makes the learning process more interesting and entertaining keeping them motivated to the class. In addition, various activities such as group work, peer work, debating, role playing etc. guarantee autonomy and freedom to students to be engaged actively in the learning session. Besides, the visual effects of movie helps learner to understand the movie context with their sensory perceptions. Thus, their anxiety and discomfort in learning process are pacified observing the theories of sociolinguistics which say language learning becomes easy when it takes place in natural environment. Simultaneously, they have practiced and improved their speaking and listening skills in a good extent by actively participating in doing the given activities. Considering students growing interests, the ELT practitioners should think about the integration of movies in the syllabus. However, in order to fulfill its pedagogical purpose, they have to face the challenge of selecting pedagogically suitable movies keeping mind the proficiency level of learners, learner's interest and contents of the syllabus. While designing the tasks for movie based lesson, they have to ensure fulfilling the objective of using authentic materials and also the aims of the lesson of the class. Since, the fundamental aim of the lesson plan is to provide the students an experience of explicit learning through enjoyment; it heavily relies on the instructors' patience, creativity and enthusiasm for sake of the effective execution of the proposed lesson plan.

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