

## Oral Commentaries Using Movies In The Esl Classroom

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### ABSTRACT

Oral commentaries in the ESL classroom has be taught in many ways. Traditionally, students are asked to prepare interesting titles for their oral presentation, and many may find it difficult to decide on their presentation titles. Brown (2001) listed several principles that teachers can consider when designing speaking techniques in the ESL classroom among which are to make sure that the content used are fun, meaningful and authentic to the students. The use of movies in oral commentary in the ESL classroom can be advantageous to the students in many ways. Movies help learners to focus on the content as well as meaning, thus making the students intrinsically motivated. Besides being a good example of authentic material, movies motivate students towards learning. In addition to that, activities used to incorporate the use of movies allow constructivist learning to take place. This quantitative study reports the survey done on students who have undergone a semester of using movies in the ESL classroom to make oral commentaries in the course ELC 230-Intergrated language Skills: Writing. Results of the study will have interesting implications towards the use of movies for students' oral presentation.

**Key Words:**oral commentary, movies, authentic, motivation, constructivism

### INTRODUCTION

#### Oral Commentaries and Movies

According to Cohen and Jensen (2000, all jobs "out there" require the graduates to be equipped with oral presentation skills. The value of presentation is often over-looked. While some teachers see oral presentation as a skill students will acquire somehow on their own, many see oral presentation activities as a waste

of time and that time is better spent on other language skills like reading and writing. Nevertheless, speaking problems stem from the lack of opportunity to speak English. Sometimes students find it difficult to speak in the target language because of input-poor environment (Gan, 2012) while others use choose to use English only for certain occasions in the classroom (Guccione, 2012). They find no reason to use English. Even if they do-for instance they are asked to participate in oral presentation, they would encounter difficulty because they may not have any interesting topics. Movies have long “entered” the ESL classroom. There are many suggestions on how to incorporate movies in the language classroom activities. Lever (2010) adds that movies can be used as a means to improve language learning and for adding interest in lessons.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study is to find out how the students’ react towards the use of movies for their oral commentaries in their ELC 230 component.

### **Research Question**

The research questions for this research are:

- How does the use of movies influence oral presentation of students?
- In what ways have movies influenced motivation of students?
- In what ways are the use of movies authentic?
- In what ways are constructivism displayed through the use of movies?

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Oral Presentation**

Among some of the complaints ESL by teachers (and students) when it comes to oral presentation is that students are faced with two problems; they may not have the ideas nor language capacity to speak. Both Rajoo (2010) and Gan (2012) felt that students will find it difficult to choose topics for oral presentation. Sometimes, the topics chosen by the teacher may be too difficult for them, or they may not be interested in. When this happens, they end up presenting in front of an audience that may not be interested to hear them talk about something even they (the presenter) may not have much interest! Besides ideas, students may face problems in oral presentation because they lack the language skills. Rajoo (2010) felt that the problem with students’ oral presentation is that students are not confident to use the target language to present.

### **Movies in the ESL Classroom**

Bringing in movies into the ESL classroom has benefitted both the teachers and students in many ways. For instance, movies can be used as authentic material in a constructivist teaching environment and this helps to improve students’ motivation in the ESL classroom.

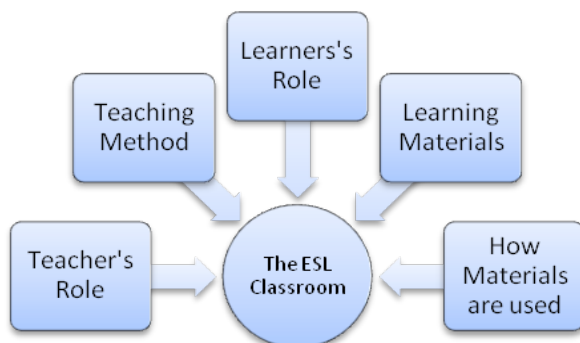
### Constructivism

Ornstein and Levine (2006), constructivism is a learning theory that emphasizes the ways in which learners actively create meaning by constructing and reconstructing ideas about reality. This activity-centred approach encourages students to interact with knowledge and each other to construct meaning and new knowledge for themselves. As opposed to the traditional teacher-talk activity, activities that encourage students' interaction, students interacting and reacting to the contents of the lesson will encourage students to construct their own ideas about the issues portrayed in the movies.

### Authenticity

Lessons become authentic when both the approach used and materials chosen relates to the students' real life. The figure 1 shows the Components in a Writing Classroom.

**Figure 1: Components in the ESL Classroom, (Noor Hanim ;2011, p16)**



According to Noor Hanim (2011), several factors are responsible for the success of any lessons in the ESL classroom and they are; the teacher's role, the teaching method, the learners' role, the learning materials and how the materials are used. Movies allow the teachers to take a less active role in the ESL classroom. No direct teaching needs to be done for the students to discuss issues in the movies for the oral commentary. This Constructivist approach allows students to be active participants of the knowledge. Movies are used as authentic materials in the classroom as students are allowed to choose movies that they are familiar with and discuss issues they have some social background of. In addition to that, Whatley (2012) feels that authentic materials allow students to stay in touch real life issues in the classroom. They get to present social issues they are familiar with.

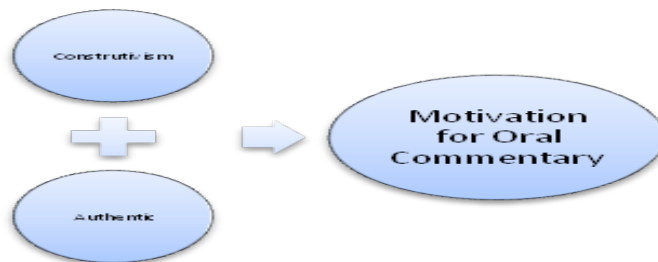
## Motivation

The combination of teaching approach and materials chosen in the ESL classroom will in turn improve the motivation of students towards learning. According to Whatley (2012), using movies can develop motivation, and thus make students achieve goals beyond their linguistic capacity. The dialogues of the movies may be used as models of native speakers' speech and the issues presented may encourage some class discussions to take place.

## Theoretical Framework of the Study

Figure 2 shows the theoretical framework of the research. The research is rooted from the Constructivism teaching method where students choose movies as Authentic material in the ESL classroom to improve their Motivation towards the oral commentary.

Figure 2: Theoretical Framework of the Study



## Past Research

### Approach and Materials

The research by Myles (2009) looked at what type of English is used by engineering students when they are doing their “practical training”. Many could use English formally but some have difficulty when it comes to socializing using English. Oral commentaries in the ESL classroom help students practice presentation skills they will need when they go out into the working world. In addition to that, another study by Ramirez (2010) reminded ESL teachers of the importance of setting and context in oral activities. He added that the choice materials chosen and how the teachers chose to use the material is considered important in the ESL class setting. Finally, the research by Rajoo (2010) discussed the problems and solutions for the teaching and learning activities in the oral presentation lesson. It was discovered that some common problems and difficulties that students faced in oral presentations are lack of language (grammar/vocabulary) and ideas. It is believed that students are often at a loss when it comes to choosing topics for their oral presentation. Nevertheless, the students' personality traits and some external factors could also be contributing factors. Among some solutions are; students are encouraged to jot down the main ideas and key points prior to the oral presentation.

## **Research Design**

The present study adopted quantitative design as the researcher uses descriptive approach to achieve the objectives of the research. The process of conducting the research involved one major phase which is survey questionnaire where a set of questionnaire is distributed to the particular sample selected in this study. The sampling technique that is used is purposive sampling. A group of diploma students representing 30 students were selected to answer the questions regarding the intended area of the study.

## **Instrument**

The instrument used in this study is a set of questionnaire which contains six sections;

Section A- Demographic profile of Subjects

Section B-Five Items on Oral presentation

Section C-Five Items on the use of Movies

Section D-Five Items on Motivation

Section E-Five Items on Authentic Materials, and

Section F-Four Items on Constructivism

All the items are managed in a table with the three scales; Never, Sometimes and Always. In collecting the required data, some procedures have been performed in order to have a trouble-free process. Firstly, the documented questionnaires were distributed to the participants after they had oral commentaries assessment using the movies. All respondents were asked over to answer the questionnaire in their class during their English Language class. The answering session takes approximately 30minutes for all to be completed. All the gathered data are then analyzed using SPSS 20.0.

## **FINDINGS**

Firstly, findings of the demographic profile shows that out of the 30 respondents, 19(63%) are male students and 11(37%) are female students. From these students, one student is from the Civil Engineering course (3%) and 29 students are from the Chemical Engineering course (97%). The remainder of the discussion will be based on the four research questions.

### **How Does the Use of Movies Influence Oral Presentation of Students?**

The students' responses on oral presentation are shown in Figure 3. Findings revealed that students are most confident when they have the points (50%), and when they have had experience or background knowledge (43.3%) of the

content. This finding is in accordance with the findings by Rajoo (2010) and Gan (2012) who felt that students are often discouraged when they do not have topics to choose for their presentation. So, movies help provide the content and background knowledge students need to present.

**Figure 3 Findings for Influence of Movies on Oral Presentation**

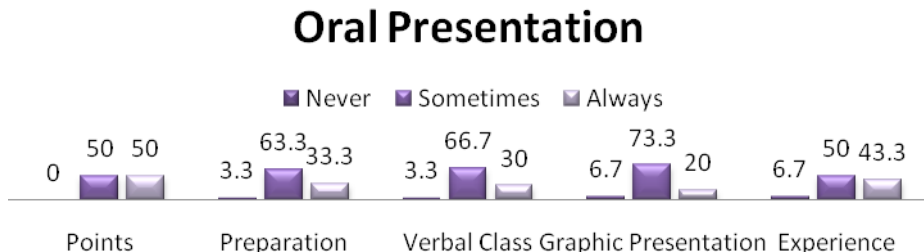
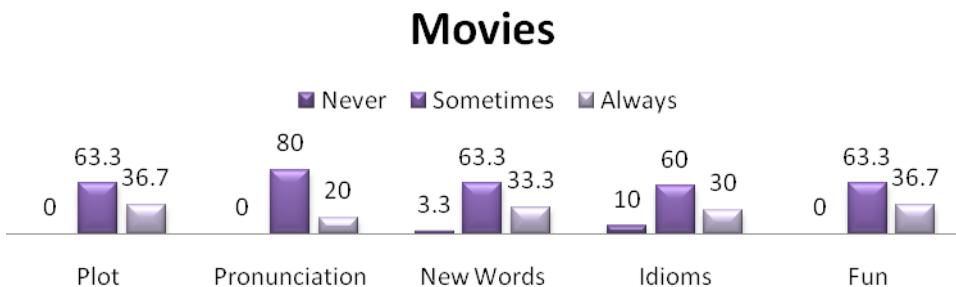


Figure 4 reveals how movies influence oral presentation..The students felt they had fun(36.7%) when they were allowed to use movies for oral commentaries and this helped them understand the plot (36.7%) better. In addition to that, 33.3% agreed that they learnt new words from the movies. This is also agreed by Lever (2010)and Wheatley (2012) who found that movies helped to improve the students’ language skills.

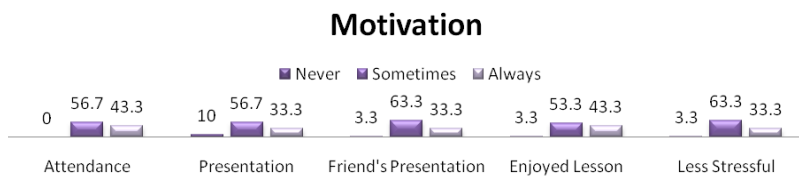
**Figure 4 Findings for How Movies Influence the Oral Presentation**



**In What Ways Have Movies Influence Motivation of Students?**

Students’ responses on motivation are illustrated in Figure 5. Findings reveal that the students looked forward to attending the class (43.3%) because they had fun during the lessons (43.3%). Lever’s (2010) and Wheatley’s (2012) study also revealed that movies made helped increase students’ motivation in the ESL class.

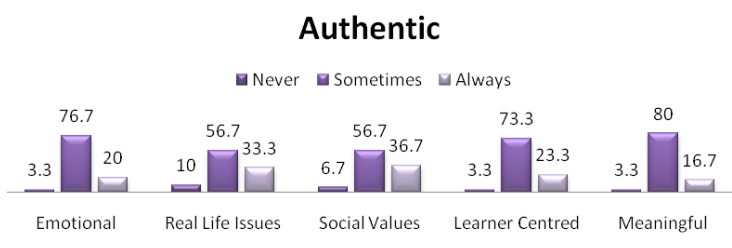
**Figure 5 Motivation and Movies**



**In What Ways Are the Use of Movies Authentic**

The findings on authenticity in the use of movies are revealed in Figure 6. Students agreed that using movies allow them to discuss about social values (36.7%) and real life issues (33.3%). This result is in accordance with the study by Whatley (2012) who also feel that authentic materials allow students to stay in touch real life issues in the classroom.

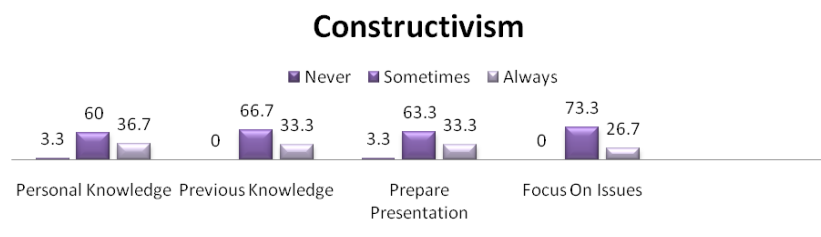
**Figure 6 Authenticity and Movies**



**In What Ways Are Constructivism Displayed Through The Use Of Movies?**

From Figure 7, students find themselves creating personal knowledge (35.7%) from the movies they watch . This is in accordance of the theory of constructivism by Ornstein. and Levine (2006) where students learn actively by creating their own meaning and reconstruct their own reality.

**Figure 7 Constructivism and Use of Movies**

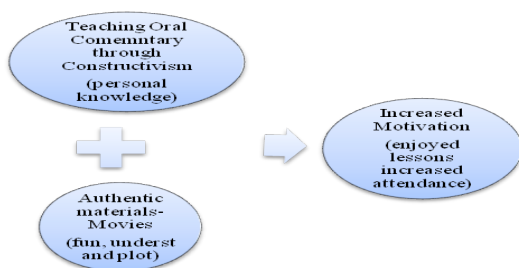


# CONCLUSION

## Summary of Findings

Figure 8 shows the summary of findings for this research. Teaching oral commentaries using movies in the ESL classroom can be done using the Constructivism approach to allow students to create their own personal knowledge into the lessons. The use of movies as Authentic material helps create fun in the class and make the students understand the plot of the movies better. As a result, students' Motivation towards the lesson increased as they enjoyed the lessons.

**Figure 8 Summary of Findings**



## Pedagogical Implications

When “Oral commentaries using Movies” was first introduced as part of the assessment plan, many were not very confident it was (a) academic enough to be assessed and (b) time consuming. However, after teaching this component for one semester, I discovered that (a) this assignment was based on several theoretical foundations that was suitable for current teaching environment. In addition to that, making students watch movies, and then preparing for the oral commentaries were no more time consuming as any other assignments the students are expected to do.

## Suggestions for Future Research

This research can be considered as a pilot study as it is new to the syllabus and needed to be explored further as this course is being taught over the years. Perhaps the use of movies in ELC 230 specifically and in ESL classrooms in general can be explored further.



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