

Enhancing Grade Six Students' Speaking Skill through English Movies: An Action Research

Tshering Phuntsho^{1*} and Chencho Dorji²

¹Department of School Education, Ministry of Education and Skills Development, Bhutan

²Norbugang Primary School, Samtse, Bhutan

*Corresponding Author: Tshering Phuntsho, Department of School Education, Ministry of Education and Skills Development, Bhutan.

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Abstract

The present study investigated the impact of English movies on the improvement of speaking skills of grade six students. The research utilized quantitative research approach which involved the pre- test post-test design. A total of 22 students participated in the study, comprising 13 boys and 9 girls. English proficiency achievement test was applied before and after the intervention activities in order to gather the data. The data gathered were analyzed using paired sample t test which revealed a significant difference in the post-test ($\bar{x} = 64.6$) compared to the pre-test ($\bar{x} = 44.5$). The significance value of 0.00 ($P < 0.05$) indicated that the use of English movies significantly improved the speaking skills of the grade six students. Therefore, it can be concluded that English movies can improve students' speaking skills and enhance the teaching learning environment in the class.

Keywords: English Movies; Speaking Skills; Learning Satisfaction

Introduction

English has become an indispensable medium of communication in all parts of the world and has spread throughout the world as a global language. It plays pivotal role in the fields of medicine, engineering, education, business, technology, banking, tourism and many more due to its flexibility, resourcefulness and richness.

In Bhutan, English language was introduced as a Second Language (ESL) in 1960s during the reign of the third King of Bhutan. Ever since its inception, English has been taught as one of the major subjects in all the grades (Pre-Primary - XII) in the schools of Bhutan [1]. The English curriculum (PP-XII) for the schools in Bhutan focus on four modes of discourse: Reading and Literature, Listening and Speaking, Writing, and Language and Grammar (Royal Education Council [2]. Further, in Bhutan, English language is used not only as the language of instruction in schools

and universities, but also as the official language throughout the country and for everyday communication, both oral and written.

[3] asserts that mastering English, especially speaking skill, is importantly needed for the students to allow them to communicate with other people globally. However, [1] found out that speaking English is a challenge for the ESL students in the schools of Bhutan. To speak English confidently and fluently is still the challenge for the majority of the ESL Bhutanese students though English has been used as a language of instruction in Bhutan for more than 50 years. The result analysis of gradeten students of Bhutan on four skills shows that the students score 35.83% in writing, 35.72% in listening and 33.66% in speaking respectively which is the lowest comparing to other skills (Bhutan Council for School Examination and Assessment [4]. Moreover, [5] states that the ESL Bhutanese students face difficulty in engaging themselves in a simple English

conversation even after the completion of full cycle of secondary education. [6-7] mention that the speaking is one of the most important and difficult skills ESL students have to face.

There are lots of reasons for not being able to communicate in English: lack of opportunities, motivation, confidence, exposure and fear of committing mistakes. In the Bhutanese classrooms especially in the primary classes, students are not given ample time to practice oral communication skills, thus, they have very little knowledge of language education and cannot speak even a simple phrase. This shows that students are not motivated to use English in the classrooms. The lack of confidence and the low learning motivation affect the speaking ability of ESL students [8]. [9] explains that the fear of public failure, the fear of making mistakes and the lack of confidence are the factors that affect ESL students' participation in speaking activities. Further, difficulty of speaking in the class is the most probably the result of anxiety, this is because students fear to make mistakes with respect to all aspects like pronunciation, fluency and grammatical errors while speaking [10].

Moreover, the primary school teachers in Bhutan seemed to be using a limited range of strategies and materials, which did not attend to individual needs and interests [11]. It is vital to note that teaching at any level requires students' exposure to varieties of learning materials to retain their interest and cater to diverse learning needs. Speaking was found as the most challenging among the four language skills [5] and one main factor was the use of obsolete teaching method by the language teachers. New and varieties of teaching techniques must be adopted to develop the speaking skills of the Bhutanese students.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore and analyze the effectiveness of English movies on improving grade six students' speaking skills in particular.

Research objectives

- To improve the English speaking skills of grade six students with the use of English movies.
- To explore the learning satisfaction level of the grade six students after using English movies.

Reconnaissance

In order to execute this action research, the researchers adopted the steps proposed by [12], which involved situational analysis, competence and literature review. These three components provide an overview of the realities of the situations, competences of the people involved, and link it with the review of literature.

Background of the Study

The researchers' experience of teaching English for more than 20 years at various class levels in Bhutanese schools assisted in discovering that the majority of Bhutanese students struggle to learn English due to the nature and complexity of the subject, which necessitates mastery of the four strands that are essential in all aspects of curriculum. [1] found out that speaking English is a challenge for the ESL students in the schools of Bhutan.

In particular, the researchers have observed that most of the students are reluctant to speak English in the classroom discussions and other settings. This issue has become more evident after teaching English to class VI children at Phensum Primary School in Samtse for the past 4 years and talking with colleagues who shared the same concern. The researchers came to the conclusion that this problem required immediate action as a result of all of these encounters. If this issue is not addressed at the earliest, it can lead to poor speaking culture and further deteriorate the standard of English.

Speaking skill is one of the most essential skills for efficient communication and interaction. Speaking is regarded as the most important of the four fundamental language abilities to master when studying a foreign or second language. According to [13], speaking is an ability which deserves just as much attention as literary skills, in both first and second language. To most people, mastering the speaking skill is the single most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry on conversation in the language. In order to become a well-rounded communicator, one needs to be proficient in each of the four language skills viz., listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, the ability to speak skillfully provides the speaker with several distinct benefits. [14] ascertained that the factors impacting students' performance in speaking skills are

shyness, peer pressure, anxiety, and fear of making mistakes. Other factors that hinder speaking performance could be due to lack of vocabulary and lack of exposure to the target language.

Thus, the researchers felt the need to identify students' English-speaking barriers in order to enhance English speaking ability and academic performances.

Competence

The teacher researchers have obtained M. Ed (Master's in leadership and management) from Paro College of Education. Both the researchers have taken educational research module during the training course and attended Action Research workshops during the teaching journey. Further, teacher researchers have also facilitated SBIP (School Based In-service program) on Action Research.

Literature Review

This section presents the concepts and literatures related to the study in order to provide the theoretical background of the study. The study shares the results of previous studies that are closely related to the present study.

Speaking Skill

Speaking is one of the four language skills through which learners can communicate with others to achieve certain goals or to express their opinions, intentions, hopes and viewpoints [15]. [16] states that speaking needs not only the learners' understanding about the way to produce the linguistic competence such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary but also comprehension about sociolinguistic competence such as when, why and how to speak.

According to Omari [17], there are many sub skills to speaking like accuracy, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and comprehensibility which helps the speaker in communicating with others and adds that the ability to make use of the above skills is called speaking skill of a person. The development of these skills is necessary to become a proficient English speaker. Students with good skills in reading, listening and writing are speculated to possess better speaking ability, however, it is found that students in general are hesitant to speak in English [18].

According to [19] states that the mastery of speaking skill in English is a priority for many second language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. It means that second language learning as the effective way to improve their speaking skill. They can increase the ability in spoken language.

Speaking is considered as a very important aspect of learning a foreign language. As stated by [20] that speaking in a second language or foreign language has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills. Thus, speaking has become an important factor that needs to be mastered in order to become fluent and achieve success in spoken communication.

English movies

According to [21], movie is a series of images that live and can be played. A movie can be played using technology tools, such as TV and also a big screen in the cinema. Movies can be used to teach in class. Movies have evolved as a new teaching and communication medium in recent years. They provide an exciting new means to communicate and exchange ideas with others. Students can utilize movies as a collaborative tool, and teachers can use films as a medium for spreading information, messages, and resources, as well as encouraging conversation [22].

Through English movies, students can receive information and be able to entertain themselves with the stories in the movies. Thus, a movie can be used to improve students' speaking skills. By watching English movies, students can see directly how the native speakers (the actors and actresses) are speaking using English as their mother tongue. In addition, the situation of learning with friends while watching movies will make them interested and can enjoy the learning process.

As a classroom or extracurricular activity, movies can help students stay motivated because of their liveliness and can be used to create an ideal learning atmosphere, stimulating involvement and interaction among students [23]. A creative approach can be fostered in the classroom by using movies in teaching. The usage of movies in teaching has been shown by many researchers to be an important part of the courses. Because movies show actual language in authentic circumstances and within the context of the culture in

which the language is spoken, this approach makes sense [24]. Additionally, researchers have come to realize that movies might help motivate students to learn. With its background material that stimulates first-hand knowledge, movies serve as a link between classroom exercises aimed at improving language abilities and the language objectives (output) that they serve in the real world [22].

Using movies as a teaching tool can help students enhance their speaking and listening abilities. Movies and their scripts are frequently used in classes as a teaching tool; nevertheless, merely practicing in the classroom is not enough. It takes time and plenty of effort to develop good listening and speaking abilities, as noted by [22]. The use of videos has the advantage of immediately stimulating students' sensibilities, whereas written words can indirectly do so. Reading is more of a verbal experience than a visual one; in addition to the written word, there is color, movement, and sound. Watching movies will help students improve their pronunciation of words. This is because when learners see a movie, they will hear the actors or actresses pronouncing words correctly [23].

Having reviewed the literatures, the researchers did not find any national study that investigated the impact of English movies to improve speaking skill of students. Therefore, this study attempted to fill this gap in related literature by identifying the impact of using English movies to enhance speaking skill of grade six students.

Significance of the study

This study will be of immense significance as it is the first of its kind in the Bhutanese context that intended to examine the effect of English movies in enhancing students' speaking skills. As school teachers and school managers, with the teaching experience of more than 20 years, the researchers experienced that speaking ability as the common problem amongst the Bhutanese students starting from Pre-primary till graduate level. Speaking with correct pronunciation and fluency is one of the effective forms of communication. Therefore, this study intended to explore the impact of English movies in improving speaking skills of grade six students and provide insights into ways and means to support them with speaking difficulties. The findings of this study added a new body of literature that will be invaluable to research scholars who are interested in exploring speaking skills and their relationship with the movies. Additionally, the study will help teachers with useful pedagogical techniques which they can effectively use to

improve the speaking skills of the learners. Besides that, the study's findings will be useful to the students who are learning a second language since it will enable them to acquire vital techniques that are required for improving the speaking skills. Addressing such an important component of language would go a long way in improving the standard of English and hence the quality of education in Bhutan.

Research questions

- Will the use of English movies enhance grade six students speaking skills?
- What is the learning satisfaction level of grade six students with use of English movies?

Research methodology

The researchers employed a quantitative research approach involving quasi-experimental research design to examine the effect of English movies in enhancing students' speaking skills and to study the learning satisfaction level of the grade six students. Quasi-experimental study aims to evaluate interventions and reveal causality between an intervention and an outcome [25].

Sample

The study used a convenience sampling method to select participants, which entails "drawing samples that are both easily accessible and willing to participate in a study" [26]. The total sample size consist of 22 students comprising 13 boys and 9 girls of Phensum Primary School, Samtse, Bhutan. Since there was only one section of grade six students, all of them participated in the study.

Research instrument

This study adopted two main instruments namely speaking proficiency test and questionnaires with Likert scale to find out the learning satisfaction level of students. The speaking proficiency test was administered twice to the sample group to compare the enhancement of the students' speaking skills. The pre-test was administered at the beginning of the study and the post-test after the intervention. The students were rated based on four components of speaking; fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Speaking rubrics developed by REC, Bhutan in 2014 was used to evaluate the speaking test. Further, the researchers used survey questionnaires by applying the Likert scale containing

five of statements to examine the learning satisfaction level of grade six students after using English movies as intervention strategy.

Interventions phase

Interventions are the activities that researchers implement on an on-going basis in order to meet the objectives. To overcome the above-mentioned challenges of speaking skills of grade six students, intervention approaches were designed. Students in the present study devoted 40 minutes of their four-hour English class to conduct the movie activity over a period of five weeks. They watched four movies throughout that period. The integration of movies in the classrooms was conducted following the steps suggested by [27] for using feature films in language classes

- **Previewing activities:** At the beginning of the activity, students engaged in some warm-up previewing activities such as guessing the topic of the movie from its title and some pictures, some questions to activate their background knowledge. Students were also provided with some key vocabularies and potentially difficult expressions to facilitate their understanding of the movie scenes.
- **Viewing movie segments:** In the current study, the short sequence approach was adopted instead of viewing the whole movie. The students watched the movie clips in their classroom.
- **Viewing worksheets:** Students were provided with worksheets that drew their attention to particular details in the movie and required them to answer very short questions.
- **Vocabulary and pronunciation notebooks:** Throughout the five weeks, students were required to keep a vocabulary and pronunciation notebook in which they noted down all the new vocabularies and phrases learned.
- **Movie summaries:** The students were asked to write one short review for any of the movies they watched throughout the module. They were provided with a set of guidelines that helped them in the process of writing the review. Their reviews included a short summary of the movie, their reactions to the theme, the characters and the audio and visual imagery in the film, and how they were emotionally touched by the movie.

- **Group work and a role-play:** Students were responsible for preparing a movie role-play in a group of four to five members; they selected and memorised a scene of the movie to role-play in class. In the role-play, group members were required to work in collaboration and that each had an equal share. The instructors demonstrated one movie segment to the class in order to model the activity, and then the students worked in groups where they prepared and acted out the movie scenes throughout the five weeks.

Result Interpretations

Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of the sample group

The scores of the pre-test and the post-test of the sample group were presented below in table 1. It was evident that the performances of the students were remarkably higher in the post-test scores. The scores of the pre-test ranged from 33.6 to 58.4 whereas the post-test scores ranged from 42.8 to 82.5 showing a remarkable improvement in the post-test scores.

Student No	Pre-test (100)	Post-test (100)	Score Difference
1	42.8	62.7	19.9
2	39.6	56.5	16.9
3	46.5	63	16.5
4	50.5	82.5	32
5	44	59	15
6	56.6	78.4	21.8
7	46.8	59	12.2
8	38.4	62.5	24.1
9	40.6	66	25.4
10	42.8	69	26.2
11	33.6	42.8	9.2
12	36.4	59.5	23.1
13	58.4	79.5	21.1
14	45.5	72.5	27
15	36	48.5	12.5
16	58.3	82.5	24.2
17	41.6	56.5	14.9
18	40.4	64.3	23.9
19	47.2	62.8	15.6
Mean	44.5	64.6	20.1

Table 1: Individual scores of the pre-test and post-test.

Group	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean difference	P value
Sample Group	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	20.1	.000
	44.5	8.1	64.6	10.8		

Table 2: Comparison of pre-test and post-test of the sample group.

The mean of the pre-test of the sample group was 44.5 and the standard deviation was 8.1. In the post-test, the mean score was 64.6 and standard deviation was 10.8. The mean difference between the pre-test and the post-test was 20.1 showing an increase in the

mean of the post-test. The significant value being .000, lower than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) indicated statistically significant rise in the post-test scores compared to the pre-test scores of the sample group.

Sl. No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Watching movies in English has helped mein improving English speaking skills.	85%	10%	5%		
2	I am interested in learning English and participate in classroom discussions when the teacher uses movies as teaching material	92%	8%			
3	Watching movies motivates me to learn English	78%	14%	8%		
4	English movies helped me to boost vocabulary acquisition.	78%	13%	5%	4%	
5	Watching movies in the classroom made easier for me to learn English.	77%	21%	2%		

Table 3: Satisfaction level of students with regard to use of English movies as an intervention.

The above table revealed the satisfaction level and perceptions of grade six students towards English movies which was used as an intervention strategy. A descriptive statistical analysis of the answers given by the students disclosed that on a general level, students considered the integration of movies in the classroom as an effective strategy that can be used in the language classes. The majority of the participants found movies to be useful in developing their speaking skills as well as keep them motivated. More than 90% of participants agreed that they were more motivated and interested in learning English when their teachers use films in the classrooms. 91% of them also agreed that movies can help them improve their vocabulary acquisition. Further, 98% of students agreed that watching English movies made easier for them to learn English.

Discussion

The study findings indicated that the majority of the students agreed that the incorporation of English movies in the English

language classes assisted to improve their speaking skills. The result aligned with the study conducted in Turkey [27] in which the participants acknowledged that besides improving listening and speaking skills, watching movies in English provided them a wealth of knowledge on slang, accents and cross-cultural information.

Moreover, the current study established that integration of movies in the language classes had significantly increased students' motivation to learn the English language. This finding agrees with a study conducted by [28] which found that films in English provided the students with authentic contexts as well as motivation to learn the language. The results of the study also support [29] argument that movies in itself is a stimulus, in which learners can be motivated" to communicate in contemporary colloquial English" (King, 2002, p. 33).

The majority of the students (91%) consented that movies are highly effective in developing their vocabulary acquisition. This

finding is in line with a number of studies [30-32] which argued that the integration of movies in the language classroom significantly enhance and improve the students' vocabulary acquisition, retention, and recognition. [33] also confirmed that the integration of movies in the EFL classrooms is one of the most effective methods in teaching vocabulary as it provides learners with a rich context that includes a variety of interesting methods to recognize and learn vocabulary.

Further, the study findings revealed that students exhibited a high level of learning satisfaction after the implementation of interventions. Participants demonstrated an increased confidence level and there were more interactions among themselves. The result align with [34] which asserted that media (videos) materials with colourful characters like cartoon motivate the ESL students, make the ESL learning atmosphere realistic and develop the positive attitudes in ESL learners to communicate with friends and teacher.

To conclude, the results of the study indicated that movies can be effective pedagogical tools that can be utilized to bring meaningful learning.

Conclusion

The results of the current study determined that movies are influential instructional tools that can be used in teaching language classes so as to develop students' speaking skills. The participants in the study have positive attitudes towards the incorporation of movies in their classrooms to improve their English. The study also indicates that using movies in the foreign language classroom can enhance the students' motivation to learn the language skills.

The students also believed that movies helped in improving their vocabulary acquisition as they provide them with a wealth of information about a variety of vocabulary, phrases, and colloquial expressions. Further, the findings established that use of English movies in the language classes assisted to generate excitement, build confidence, and encourage the ESL learners to speak the target language.

Therefore, English movies should be adopted to teach speaking skills in various grade levels in the Bhutanese schools. The technique may be used to teach other subjects to examine if the technique bring similar outcomes.

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