MOVIES IMPACT ON CULTURE UNDERSTANDING THROUGH INSTAGRAM

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Article Info

Abstract

Most higher education students use social media, especially Instagram, in their social lives, and they like watching movies in their leisure time. The lecturer takes advantage of these two things, playing social media and watching movies, to teach English. The lecturer asked the students to watch movies and analyze Western cultures from the movies. This study aimed to know how the students analyzed the movie and how they got to know Western cultures from the movie. This study used a descriptive qualitative research design. Class observation, students' captions in their Instagram posts, and questionnaires were used in this study. The result showed that most of the students could not analyze the culture in the movie because they focused on the subtitles, so they did not pay attention too much to the cultures. They thought that everything that occurred in the movie was something that usually happened.

INTRODUCTION

English in higher education is important for students not only in the English department but also in other departments, like the engineering department. Therefore, most universities in Indonesia provide English subjects at least 1 or 2 semesters for non-English department students. It can be said that students need to study English for academic purpose and their future careers.

From the observation of students in the Engineering department in an engineering institution in Surabaya, it was found that students have less interest in learning English. It could be because English is a foreign language in Indonesia, so the students are challenged to understand the meaning of English. Another reason that makes the students have less interest in English is the students come from different regions in which the culture is different from Western countries. It is indeed a challenging task for a lecturer to teach students from non-English departments since sometimes they do not realize the importance of learning English.

Writers' observation found that most students in the Engineering department mentioned previously enjoy watching movies and using social media. It could be used to promote English. According to Murshidi (2020), using English movies is one technique that can help students develop their competencies in linguistics. Roslim et al. (2021) also mention some benefits of using movies in the classroom, namely (a) improving language skills, (b) improving students' vocabulary acquisition, (c) increasing interests and motivation, and (d) decreasing anxiety and tension. Moreover, a study by Beveren et al. (2018) showed that fictional narratives could provide an opportunity to discuss complex and

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sensitive aspects of teaching. Besides, a previous study conducted by Nuñez (2019) shows that media like movies could allow viewers to see the representation of real life. In summary, the benefits of using movies in English language teaching are unquestionable.

Besides watching movies, students nowadays are fond of social media. They open their social media frequently in a day. One of the social media widely used is Instagram. However, this platform has limited attention from education researchers (Richter et al. 2022). The use of social media is widespread among students. Nearly all pupils use social media. Social media is a suitable medium for engineering students to use to study English as a foreign language as a result. Sharing images on social media that are relevant to a student's field of study will improve their enthusiasm for learning English (Wardhani 2019). A previous study conducted by Carpenter et al. (2020) discussed how and why educators use Instagram, and the results showed that educators mostly used Instagram as a portal to exchange ideas and affirmations. It could lead to another study in which students use Instagram to exchange ideas as well in English.

Knowing the fact that students are not enthusiastic about learning English in the classroom, they are still expected to know and understand at least basic English. Consequently, using something interesting to motivate students to learn English could be an effort that educators can make. Therefore, this study tried to use movies and Instagram as media to bring cultural differences in the classroom as well as engage students in learning English. From the statements mentioned above, this study aimed to know (1) how the students analyzed Western cultures in the movies they watched and (2) how the students' responses about the movies were analyzed.

METHOD

From the problem that emerged, it could be stated that this study focuses on the way the students analyze the movies. Besides, this study was conducted to know the students' responses about the movies they analyzed. Therefore, this study applied descriptive qualitative to explain the result (Creswell 2012). This study was taken at an engineering institution in Surabaya, East Java. There were several study programs at this institution, such as mining engineering, informatic systems, electrical engineering, naval architecture, mechanical engineering, and chemical engineering. The total number of participants was 114 students.

The research instruments used in this study were observation, questionnaire, and interview. The observation was conducted when the lecturer gave an explanation about the material and assignment in the classroom. The activities that occurred were noted. It was an unstructured observation, so it could develop based on what happened in the classroom. As the assignment, the students were asked to choose one long Western movie or two short Western movies to be analyzed. After that, the students were given a questionnaire related to how they analyzed the culture in the movies. Besides, the questionnaire was used to know their responses about the movies. There were several questions in the questionnaire, and the questionnaire was designed using Google Forms. It would make it easy for the participants to fill in the questionnaire. The interview was conducted randomly with the students as a sample. It was used to crosscheck the answers to the questionnaire. After the students have watched the movies, they must post the posters of the movies on their Instagram and write captions about the cultures in the movies. The researchers would analyze students' writing on their Instagram to know their understanding of the cultures of the movies.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The students watched the movies which they chose by themselves. Each student watched one long movie or two short Western movies or films. Then, the students wrote a short synopsis of the films. Besides, the students analyzed Western cultures from the movies. According to Brewer and Yoon (2021), students must be engaged with global literacies so it could help them for their future success. The students then must post the poster of the films and write the synopsis and the Western culture as captions on their Instagram. The students' posts were then analyzed, and the result would be written as follows.

How the Students Analyzed the Movies

Many people who have a low level of English proficiency do not know Western cultures or the cultures from the language they learn. Western cultures need to be known by people who use English; moreover, general Western cultures like how they call someone Mz, miss, madam, Mrs, etc. One of the ways is by using movies to show Western cultures. Watching movies is one of the exciting activities that can be applied in the teaching-learning process. The teacher could involve social media, Instagram, to make the students interested in learning English. The students would find it easier to learn English because social media are often accessed by students in higher education, like chatting with their friends, updating their status on their social media, sharing their pictures, and writing the caption below their photos (Wardhani 2019). Following this statement, the lecturer asked the students to watch movies. Each student could watch two Western short films or a Western movie. Then, the students took note of the synopsis of the movies/films. The students also analyzed Western cultures from the movies. They must take notes to make them remember and write them on Instagram.

The lecturer did not give an example to the students about Western cultures. It made the students confused to analyze Western cultures. Sometimes, being wrong is a part of learning and motivation (McMillan and Moore 2020). The students thought that everything that happened in the film was something usual. The teacher gave a week for students to finish their jobs, but the students could not submit their assignments because they still did not understand what the lecturer meant. The students were still confused about what kind of steps they should take to do their assignments. In the first week, many students have just finished deciding and watching the films. So, the students could not submit their tasks on time.

In the second week, the lecturer gave more explanations and examples about the task. The explanation was given in written and oral. The lecturer repeated the instructions several times to make sure that the students understood what they must do and that they could submit their assignments on time. The lecturer gave more time to the students to finish their tasks. The students could finish their tasks in the third week. The students posted the poster on Instagram. They wrote the synopsis of the films and Western cultures for the caption of the poster they had posted.

From the data of the questionnaire, it can be stated that more than 90% of the students said they felt it difficult to decide and find Western cultures in the film. There were several reasons obtained why the students had difficulties in knowing Western cultures from the films. The reasons are 1) they were excited about watching movies, and it made them forget their target to watch movies; 2) The students only knew a few Western cultures, so it made it difficult to decide the cultures; 3) The students were confused about Western people activities, whether these could be categorized as cultures or not; and 4) The students focused on the subtitle, and they forgot to observe Western cultures. There were several reasons why the students found it challenging to find Western cultures, which have been written in the questionnaire.

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Most students stated that the most difficulty in finding Western cultures was because they did not know about Western cultures. It was 90% of 114 respondents did not know about Western cultures, 6% of respondents just knew a little bit about Western cultures, and it was too general like the international students do not wear uniforms when they go to school because they often pay attention to the movies. Only 4% of respondents knew about Western cultures. There were several ways for the respondents to know Western cultures. They knew from their friends who lived abroad, and they knew from Indonesian people's social media who lived on board. Many Indonesian people who live abroad make *Vlogs* about their life there, and it can expand one's knowledge of Western cultures.

Many students said that they had never thought about Western cultures, and this is a new thing for the students to explore cultures. Actually, many respondents said that they did not realize Indonesian culture. They thought that what people did here was something usual. In one of the districts in East Java, people would visit a sick neighbor in the hospital, and they would go together in a car filled with many people. Therefore, it made the students analyze other cultures. Then, people in Indonesia sometimes act like Western people, for example, the way people dress up. It was exciting material to teach. The students know nothing about Western cultures, and it made them students explore ways to find or to know other cultures besides their own cultures.

The lecturer asked the students to find five Western cultures in the film which they watched. This request spurred the students to explore Western cultures in the film, so the students not only paid attention to the exciting story but also focused on the cultures they needed to look for. The students had some ways to look at the cultures in the film. Students' ways to analyze the cultures in the movies are: 1) reading the subtitle in detail, 2) paying attention to people's habits in the films, 3) noticing the activities which they repeatedly do, 4) observing the same things that most people do in the films, 5) paying attention to the weather because it can help the students to analyze the cultures, and 6) looking carefully to the people race and skin colors. Based on the questionnaire and interview, Western cultures could be analyzed using these six ways. The questionnaire was given to the students after the students submitted their assignments, and the interview was conducted with the random students after they filled out the questionnaire.

The students, as the respondents, explained that in the films, there were no motorcycles, and most people just took a walk and used public transportation. If they did not walk or use public transportation, they drove their car. These activities they conducted repeatedly. Then, the respondents saw a fireplace in the house in the movie, and Western people used it when winter came. This condition does not exist in Indonesia. In Indonesia, many people in the village use the fireplace for cooking, and Javanese people call it "*pawon*". The students also highlighted what Western people ate in the movies. Western people did not eat rice like Indonesians. They eat bread, sandwiches, and cereal. It is pretty different from Indonesian cultures, which eat rice as the primary food. The students have just learned that in Western cultures, people say the name without affixes, like Mr and Mrs, in addressing someone. In fact, many teachers in Indonesia do not understand the correct way to call somebody. The teachers in Indonesia tend to mix the culture between Western and Eastern cultures. For example, the teachers asked the students to call them Mr. / Sir or Mrs. / Mam, followed by their first name. Therefore, by watching Western movies, the students finally understand the correct way to address someone in English and can apply it in real life.

Students' Responses to the Movies Analyzed

Knowing the students' responses could make the lecturer understand them better. According to Shen and Byfield (2019), the more lecturers learn about their students, the more effective the way they teach. The teachers must know what makes the students appreciate to the teaching learning process.

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One of their favourites is watching movies. The students can learn many things from the movies. The students learn not only culture but also other aspects such as storyline, socio-economics, quips, and many other things. To explore films, the lecturer must give stimulus to the students. Brainstorming is also needed to make the students increase their ideas. Before the lecturer asked the students to watch the films they chose, the lecturer had the students watch a short movie and analyze the movie together. The lecturer interacted with the students, and they discussed what kind of aspects were available in the film. This way will make it easier for the students to understand what the lecturer asks. After that, the students were permitted to choose the films which they would watch. There are several reasons for students to choose movies or films. The reasons were: (1) the movie was adapted from a novel, (2) the criteria of the movie were the same as what the lecturer asked, (3) the movie was related to life, (4) the movies are inspiring and exciting, (5) the storyline is appealing, and (6) the student's favorite actors played in the movie.

In this study, the students wrote the synopsis or storyline of the film after they watched the film. The lecturer did not permit them to browse on Google. The students must write based on their sight. Then, the students analyzed several aspects: socioeconomic, political, setting, and effect used in the movie. The students wrote the aspects in the Instagram caption. They wrote several sentences before they explained Western cultures. The students could write the storyline of the film well. They could describe the main details of the storyline and give various responses to the film. IT was in accordance with the result of a previous study conducted by Senolinggi, Damayanti, and Asmin (2020), stating that using Instagram could motivate students to learn vocabulary.

The data was obtained from the questionnaire and supported by students' tasks. From the data, it can be seen that the students knew the theme of the movies. Some of them could find the symbol of the films. One example is when the students explained that there was a tomb in the cave. Hawaiians put statues in front of the cave as a sign that the place was not an ordinary cave. Another symbol was the *Terabithia Bridge,* illustrating the relationship between reality and fantasy. Finding symbols in the films was not really easy because of 114 respondents; there were only two students who were able to find symbols in detail from the films. It was different from the theme. Most of the students could find the theme of the films. Several students could explain the movie theme clearly. 74% of respondents were able to explain the movie theme clearly. They wrote the details of the movies. There were 23% of respondents who wrote the theme shortly. They did not explain the details of the theme. Finally, there were only 3% of respondents who could not explain or are confused about the theme of the movies.

There were some movies showing socioeconomic and diplomatic issues as moral values. Many students could write the detail of socioeconomic and political issues which was shown in the films. However, some students said that there were no socioeconomic and political issues in the film. The students who said that there were socioeconomic and political issues wrote that social life influenced students in the university. They paid attention to their appearance and fashion. It made them to be overthinking and anxious if they had a sinister appearance. Then another student stated that the film which they watched was taken from an economic background. Besides, the weather also influences the socioeconomic status of a country. The students also wrote that people with low income are often looked down upon, and they have bad behavior. However, on the other side, there was a rich man in the movie who helped the poor men. There were some symbols to show socioeconomic in the films. A rich man drove a supercar, and he had luxurious houses. He drove his car to the campus while the dominance of students used public transportation. The students also explained a poor man who found it challenging to find a ride to sleep because his friends refused to help him.

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Most students could mention the names of the countries of the films. Only a few could mention the detailed places of the films, such as a boxing ring, school, house, and quite a large field. They also described the view in the films. One of the students explained the place in detail.

"Moscow: dangerous because there is a Russian presidential palace in the Kremlin; Dubai: beautiful because there is the tallest building, namely the Burj Khalifa; Mumbai: rural location; Seattle: the location of the city in general in America; Havana: terrible prison; Vienna: nice opera house; Casablanca: a beautiful little town; London: exclusive city."

Several students describe that the place in the movie was quiet and the people were individualistic; they did not care about other people, were not friendly, and there were still a lot of racism issues there. The students could describe the setting of the film well. The students enjoyed doing the assignments given by the lecturer. Some students said that they were confident to write the caption in English because it was challenging. They could share the information with their followers. They wanted to get more tasks involving social media. However, some students felt less confident to do it because they were afraid to make any mistakes when their followers read their captions.

CONCLUSION

The lecturer, as an educator, needs to give examples of how to do the assignment given to the students. Moreover, the assignment is something new for the students. The lecturer needs to give not only examples but also the way to do the task. It took time for the students to submit their tasks because they did not understand the instructions. If the lecturer insisted the students submit before the students understood, they would get a lousy score, would not do the assignment satisfactorily, or would have many revisions. Besides, there are five reasons why students find it difficult to find Western cultures. The reasons were (1) the students were interested in the movies, and they forgot to look for the cultures, (2) the students only knew a few Western cultures, (3) Indonesians' habits are almost the same as abroad, (4) the students could not decide between activities and cultures, and the last (5) the students only focused on the subtitle. Besides the difficulties mentioned above, the students found six ways to analyze the movies, namely: (1) reading the subtitle in detail, (2) paying attention to people's habits in the films, (3) noticing the activities which the people did repeatedly, (4) noticing that most people in the movie did the same things, (5) realizing that weather can help to analyze the cultures, and the last (6) observing the variety of people race and skin colors.

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