

Investigation Into Using Supplementary Materials In Teaching English Speaking Skill at High Schools

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SUMMARY

Choosing materials for English lessons plays vital roles in teaching English. Suitable materials will bring more positive effects for students' learning as well as teaching process. The benefits of using supplementary materials have improved teaching and learning English. Since the beginning of language studies, Second & Foreign Language Acquisition (SLA & FLA) researchers have been searching for effective ways of improving learners' language skills. This study aimed at investigating the use of supplementary sources on teaching English. Results of the study demonstrate on the situation of supplementary materials in teaching speaking, the frequency use of these materials and the effectiveness of materials in organizing activities as well as suggest some solutions to enhance teaching outcomes.

Keywords: Supplementary materials, learners, teaching practice

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I. INTRODUCTION

For many years, teaching English as a foreign language has played important roles in the development of society. Teachers try their best to find effective approach of teaching English in different conditions. To achieve success within the teaching and learning process, teaching materials are an important part because teachers need rely on a diverse range of aids that can support student's learning and reach teaching objectives. One of these aids is the use of supplementary materials that becomes an advantage for teachers since if the materials are properly used, they will work effectively at the moment of imparting classes to the learners.

Using supplementary materials can create more interesting activities if the material is correctly selected at the moment of planning the lessons. When teachers choose what material to use in each class, it is very important to consider its pertinence and appropriateness in order to achieve the proposed goals. At the moment of planning classes, teachers can decide to choose a great variety of supplementary materials such as visual, audio, audiovisual, online and others; however, just some teachers are using them. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the situation of using supplementary materials in teaching English at high schools. The purpose of this study is to survey the application of supplementary materials in teaching process, the frequency use of these materials and the effectiveness of materials in organizing activities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According Gaj and Khate Sefid, the use of supplementary materials has many benefits for English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and students in improving vocabulary and language skills. By using the materials learners can develop vocabulary of EFL learners, EFL teachers have the benefit of teaching vocabulary through context. Researchers have studied the impact of visual and verbal clues on learning words in context. In this regard, Walters (2006) reported that improved reading comprehension resulted when 11 ESL students, ranging in age from 17 to 47, enrolled in an English language program were shown strategies of how to derive meanings of unfamiliar words from context clues [11].

Supplementary materials are considered as a promising tool for language learning purposes. Scholars in the field have proposed various advantages for the use of source in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) classes. Stern believes that supplementary materials offer potential benefits of a high order for ESL/EFL. Linguistically, they can help students master the vocabulary and grammar of the language as well as activate the four language skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Celce-Murcia, 1996) [2].

It is worth mentioning that supplementary materials can be used to improve many sub-skills in reading. Learners must be persuaded to predict what is going to occur by reading the title, the first paragraph and to

induce what the passage will be about. Then, learners should be able to defend their imaginations with proofs from the text (Goodman, 2007) and the possible impact it may have on the reading performance of the passages [4]. What we see at the end of Gaj and khate sefid series regarding the passages and the short stories for the sake of improving reading ability are all on the line of the same purpose and objective.

Results of some previous studies that have been done to demonstrate how the use of supplementary materials influences the teaching learning process. For example, the study of Kelsen (2009) which has as objective to explore the use of Youtube as supplementary material with EFL students in Taiwan, and its limitations were that the questionnaires were only written in English, the self-reported nature of the survey may have led to students overstating their answers as the course teacher administered the questionnaires, the relative small sample size, especially in terms of female students, and the fact that all of the participants came from the same department means that the results cannot be extrapolated to the general student population [5]. On the other hand, another study made by Peacock (1997) was to explore whether authentic materials increase the classroom motivation of learners, a claim often made, but rarely, if ever tested, which had as a limitation the generalizability of the results is limited by the small scale of the study and the level of the learners, who were all beginners. Finally, a Panjwani, Micallef, Fenech, Toyama (2009) study that it was done to examine the effects of treating learners in a classroom to digital visual materials on a shared display, while interleaving such materials with scanned copies of relevant textbook pages, with no limitations identified by the author [9].

III. METHODOLOGY

Research questions

1. How often do teachers apply supplementary materials in teaching speaking?
2. What are the effective materials that teachers want to use in speaking activities?
3. What are learners' opinions toward supplementary materials?

Participants

The first group of participant in this study consisted of 10 English teachers at 2 selected high schools in Thai Nguyen. The second group was students who studied at high schools in grade 10 and grade 11 (100 students).

Data collection instrument

The survey was used as the main data collection instrument for the study. It concentrates on the kinds of supplementary materials in teaching practice; the frequency of using supplementary materials; effective materials used in teaching English and learners' reflection about supplementary materials. The researcher sent the survey to all participants in the 1st month.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed both qualitative and quantitative. Some parts of the survey were converted into statics, numbers and percentage in the form of tables and charts for the purpose of comparison and analysis. The kinds of materials, the frequency of using materials and effectiveness of materials in teaching were calculated for comparison and contrast.

Data collection procedure

Initially, the survey was delivered to students in 1st month to see the situation of using supplementary materials in teaching English. The second survey was sent to learners in 3rd month in order to collect information about learners' reflection. All the data was collected in the final month to synthesis and analysis.

IV. FINDING & DISCUSSION

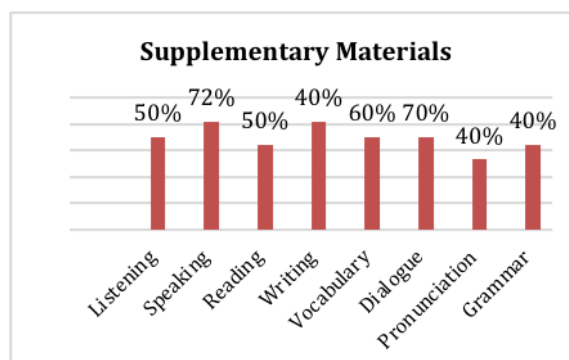


Chart 1. Kind of materials used in teaching

As can be seen from the chart 1, when teaching speaking in seven weeks, teachers used variety kinds of supplementary materials for speaking activities and dialogue with 72%, 70% respectively of supplementary

materials in the total 17 used in class and at home. The second popular materials including pictures, images, flashcards, posters, music, video are used for teaching listening, vocabulary and dialogues. Grammar, writing and pronunciation activities utilized 40% kinds of supplementary materials. For pronunciation tasks teachers used some kinds of supplementary materials to help students practice pronunciation.

No	Materials	Oft en	Usually	Someti mes	Rare y
1.	Images/Pictures	90	10		
2.	Flashcards	10	80	10	
3.	Posters	10	70	20	
4.	Things & Objects	10	10	80	
5.	Power Point	90	10	10	
6.	Blackboard	90	10	10	
7.	Cloze Activities	10	80	5	5
8.	Language Games /Games	85	10	5	
9.	Maps and Graphs	10	10	80	
10.	Cartoons	5	5	10	90
11.	Comics	5	5	10	90
12.	Music and songs	10	20	70	
13.	Videos	10	10		80
14.	Movies	10	10		80
15.	Story telling / Stories	10	70	10	10
16.	Language Quiz	10	70	10	10
17.	Dramas		10	20	70

Table 1. Frequency of using the materials for speaking

Table 1 shows that pictures, images, power point, games and blackboard were used frequently in all speaking activities in class. The second popular materials were chosen by teachers were flashcards, posters, cloze activities, language quiz which teachers usually used when designing lesson plans and teaching. In addition, teachers sometimes chose things & objects, maps, pictograms & graphs and music & songs in teaching speaking. It is noticeable to see that teachers rarely used cartoons, comics, videos, movies and dramas as supplementary materials.

No	Materials	Effect ive	Less effecti ve	Not effectiv e
1.	Images/Pictures	100		
2.	Flashcards	100		
3.	Posters	100		
4.	Things & Objects	100		
5.	PowerPoint	100		
6.	Blackboard	100		
7.	Cloze Activities	100		
8.	Language Games /Games	100		
9.	Maps and Graphs		10	90
10.	Cartoons		90	10
11.	Comics			100
12.	Music and songs	100		
13.	Videos	100		

14.	Movies		90	10
15.	Story telling / Stories	100		
16.	Language Quiz	100		
17.	Dramas			100

Table 2. Teachers' perspective about the effectiveness of materials

As can be seen from table 2, teachers pointed out their perspective about the effectiveness of supplementary materials. 12 kinds of materials were highly appreciated in teaching because they could bring effectiveness for learners. There were two materials belong to less effective group. During the time of teaching, teachers found that maps and graphs; comics and dramas were not effective in organize activities.

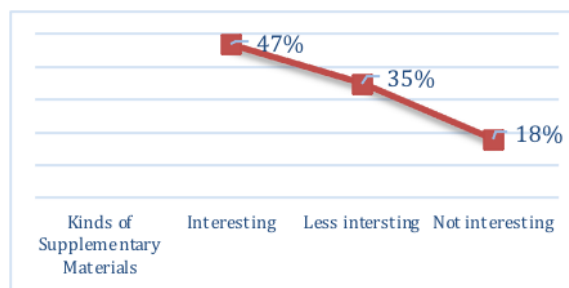


Chart 2. Learners' reflection about supplementary materials

It can be seen that students felt delighted and motivated when learning with pictures, languages games, music, song ... which belong to interesting groups accounted for 47%. The less interesting group accounted 35% including six kinds of materials that students found they could not attract them in learning. The rest of the materials including blackboard, maps and graphs and dramas were chosen to not effective materials.

V. Discussion:

The purpose of this study was to explore the real situation in using supplementary materials during the time of teaching speaking and the effectiveness of using supplementary materials on learning English. Teachers applied many kinds of supplementary materials in each English period. Findings indicated that using variety kinds of supplementary materials is effective in improving learning outcome Learners felt excited and were motivated in taking part in speaking tasks. Both students and teachers reflected that using visual aids, games, music, power point were effective in teaching.

Activities attracted learners and created motivation in learning English therefore they would not feel bored with the environment. This would lead to greater concentration on learning materials.

With the chosen materials the teacher was not the sole presenter of materials, learners would take an cooperative attitude towards him/her and so the classroom would be a friendly atmosphere where optimal learning occurs. This positive social atmosphere is assumed to increase learning much more than where learners receive instruction through traditional approaches and focusing just on form and grammar. With regard to this, the teacher puts the burden of learning vocabulary, structure, and class interactions on the learners' shoulders by assigning them some portion of the materials of the supplementary text books.

Deployment of supplementary materials has the potential not only to involve EFL students in an enjoyable learning in general but also to develop their linguistic ability and cultural awareness.

Advantages and disadvantages in using supplementary materials

Advantages:

- Teachers have knowledge of teaching methodology so they understand the theories of language teaching as well as how to use materials in teaching.
- Besides, teachers have experiences in using and designing supplementary materials for teaching English. As a result, teachers can design their own materials which can help teaching process more effectively.
- Teachers work in a good condition at high schools and have regular support from other colleagues and school.

Disadvantages:

- Teachers do not remember and understand well the theories of teaching methodology therefore it is difficult for them to apply supplementary materials in teaching practice.
- Some teachers do not use supplementary materials because of it is not necessary and less effective.
- Some naughty students often make noise and do not concentrate on learning tasks.

- Because schools lack of teaching facilities such as speaker, projectors, interns face problems in teaching process.
- Lacking of motivation in using supplementary materials during the time of teaching.

Suggested solutions

- Teachers should investigate more time to study the use of supplementary materials such as comics, movies, blackboard or storytelling in terms of designing activities inside classroom as well as outside classroom.
- When designing English activities, teachers should collect learners' need for each topic and know their knowledge in order to organize activities effectively.
- Teachers should ask students give feedbacks for using of supplementary materials; therefore, they can change the kinds of materials for the following tasks because there was difference between interns' perspective and learners' feedback about the effectiveness of supplementary materials.
- When finish planning and designing materials in each lesson, interns should discuss with colleagues or instructors to receive useful feedbacks before teaching.
- Since the technology is in progress every day, it is necessary for teachers to update in the use of online materials. Consequently, students will have more chance to use these tools at school and home. For achieving this goal, the institutions should implement courses or seminars about the new sources that exists on websites to use in the classroom.
- Realia should be used with more frequency in classes because it was observed that in the only class it was applied, it caused a lot of interest and curiosity of the students, making the class interesting and motivating.

VI. Conclusion

As mentioned, this study aimed to survey the situation of applying supplementary materials including kinds of materials, frequency usage of materials in English periods, perspective of teachers and learners about effectiveness of these materials in teaching and learning English speaking skill. The results of the study can illustrate that applying and designing supplementary materials in language teaching

can benefit teaching practice at high school. Deployment of such supplementary sources promote students' motivation and this makes them more interested in classroom and outside classroom participation.

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Bai báo Hoài -Chuyên

1. What types of communicative activities are used in speaking lessons?
2. What are the attitudes of both Teachers and Students toward communicative activities?
3. What are difficulties in applying communicative activities?

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No	Materials	Often	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely
18.	Images/Pictures	✓			
19.	Flashcards		✓		
20.	Posters	✓			
21.	Things & Objects			✓	
22.	Power Point	✓			
23.	Blackboard	✓			
24.	Cloze Activities		✓		
25.	Language Games /Games	✓			
26.	Maps, Pictograms and Graphs			✓	
27.	Cartoons				✓
28.	Comics				✓
29.	Music and songs			✓	
30.	Videos				✓
31.	Movies				✓
32.	Story telling / Stories		✓		
33.	Language Quiz		✓		
34.	Dramas				✓

Always

Old

No	Materials	Always	Usually	Some-times	Rarely	Never
1.	Images/Pictures	✓				
2.	Flashcards		✓			
3.	Posters			✓		
4.	Things & Objects			✓		

5.	Power Point	✓				
6.	Blackboard	✓				
7.	Cloze Activities		✓			
8.	Language Games /Games		✓			
9.	Maps, Pictograms and Graphs			✓		
10.	Cartoons				✓	
11.	Comics					✓
12.	Music and songs		✓			
13.	Videos				✓	
14.	Movies					✓
15.	Story telling / Stories				✓	
16.	Language Quiz		✓			
17.	Dramas					✓

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