EFL Learners' Views on English Idioms Learning through Netflix

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Abstract. When EFL learners have an internet connectivity, many opportunities of English learning are discovered. Netflix is one of many non- language- teaching apps/ websites which various EFL students used in developing their English proficiency. This research collected quantitative and qualitative data to examine Thai Netflix users' views of using Netflix in their learning English idioms. Two instruments were used in the research were a semi- structured interview and an attitude questionnaire. Six Netflix users from Faculty of Education, English major had been interviewed to obtain their opinions towards learning English through Netflix. Four themes of Hubbard's (2009) criteria were used in identifying the qualitative data including (1) learning effectiveness, (2) motivation, (3) access, and (4) convenience. The results from the interviews shows that Netflix really offers many benefits for Netflix users. For instance, subtitles in Netflix help them catch important idioms and vocabularies. Furthermore, watching Netflix also helps them become familiar with different accents of native speakers. In terms of quantitative data which were obtained from 20 students, it indicated that the participants agreed of the usefulness of using Netflix in learning English idioms. The implications of the study suggested that Thai English language practitioners should focus more on self- access learning of students, as well as educational institutions should invest more on digital or technological learning resources.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language, English Idiom, Netflix, Attitude

Introduction

Learning English through media and movies is considered as an influential tool of learning among EFL learners as they are easy to access and available online. Watching movies is a useful tool that the learners can reach their target English language to acquiring languages such as accent, idiom, vocabulary, or expression. Dinçay (2004) found that using this innovative technology of movies in learning could increase students' listening comprehension and enhancing their intercultural capability, and images in the video could be used as a vital tool to understand situations through the actions.

Moreover, Chiang (2006) stated that the use of caption in several languages in DVD movies leads to rising students' language skills and encouraging the students to learn. Likely, Gibbs (1980) indicated that a strong knowledge of idioms will help the students to be better speakers and negotiators. However, in learning idiom of Thai students, it is difficult for them to acquire the meanings because they lack of the opportunities in learning language within authentic situations and quite hard to understand figurative meaning. Thus, integration of watching movies in English might provide students' opportunities in their English learning as understanding idiomatic expressions used in movies could affect their successful communication including their skills of listening, speaking, writing, and reading.

Literature review

Several studies identified that positive attitude could offer successful learning in acquiring the target language. For example, Gardner (1985) and Benremouga (1995) revealed that the learners' attitudes influence their success in learning a foreign language. Wenden (1991) explains that the attitude concept can be divided into three elements: cognitive, affective and behavioral. The cognitive component involves a person's beliefs and knowledge about an attitude object. The affective component is a person's feelings and emotions regarding an attitude object and the behavioral component is the way the attitude influences how we act. The attitude would control the way we think and act. The significant factor influencing language learning is a positive attitude. Attitude is believed

to be essential factor and plays an important role in academic success. So, it cannot be denied that having a positive attitude would help language learners approach their target languages without forcing their mind. According to Gardner (1985) and Benremouga (1995), attitudes influence learners' success in learning a foreign language. A learner's attitude is an important factor in studying a foreign language. It can influence the behaviors of learners such as reading English books, watching foreign movies. Learners can success on particularly area if they have a positive attitude toward it. Similarly, Hammerly (1982); Hakuta (1985); and Mian (1998), assert that having a positive attitude towards language study is a major component influencing how successful a learner is in language learning. In addition, Brown (1987) also adds that negative attitudes can negatively influence language study. According to the research of Wlodkowski (1978), a positive attitude can lead learners to succeed in learning because motivation will stimulate behavior and lead to selection of behavior. So, it can be concluded that having a positive attitude can lead learners to succeed in learning a foreign language. Moreover, having a positive would affect learners' behaviors in acquiring foreign language such as reading English books, or watching foreign movies.

One important component of successful language learning is the mastery of idiomatic forms of expressions including idioms, collocation, and sentence phrases, collectively referred to as formulaic sequence (Wray, 2000). By extension, learning idiom in a study of Trujo (1986) states that in a second language learning classroom all the learners must be prepared to meet the challenge of idioms occurring frequently in spoken and written English. Therefore, in acquiring idiom, learners have to find some useful ways that would encourage idiomatic learning. Secles, Herron and Tomasello (1922) explained that watching videos and movie clips could increase vocabulary and idiomatic structures learning as the contextualized presentation enabled students to expose some experiences. Furthermore, the communications in the movies possibly engage the students to understand the links of classroom environments and different social contexts. Movies or films also can help students to explore the cultural contexts, EFL teachers, therefore, might integrate into the course design and allow the flexibility of materials and teaching techniques in English classes (Wood, 1995).

Netflix is one of the most popular streaming services nowadays. It allows learners to watch movies, TV shows and documentaries on various devices, and it is available worldwide. Learning a language by using Netflix is worthy because watching can support the students to acquire a new language, and it can increase students' comprehension such as vocabulary, idiom, intonation or stress. In other words, authentic video in the form of TV programs, films, and online videos offer students numerous benefits including exposure to authentic input, improve speaking and listening skills, as well as contextualized vocabulary acquisition (Chapple & Curtis, 2000; King, 2002; Lin& Siyanova-Chanturia, 2014; Qiang et al., 2007).

In sum, movies or films are motivating for EFL/ESL teaching because embody the notion that allowed learners engage naturally without needs to be taught (Ward & Lepeintre, 1996). Moreover, films are such valuable and rich resources for teaching because they present colloquial English in real life contexts rather than artificial situation; an opportunity of being exposed to different native speaker voices, slangs, reduced speeches, stress, accents, and dialects, (Stempleski, 2000). Finally, we can assume that this innovative technology really plays an important role for language learners to reach target language, and having a good positive attitude leads the language learners to approach their success in learning as well.

Research objective
The main objective of this study is to examine the Thai Netflix users' attitudes/ perceptions towards using Netflix in learning English idioms.
Research question
This study aims to answer the research question that what are Thai Netflix users' views of using Netflix in learning English idioms?

Research Methodology

The study utilized the mixed method research which were qualitative and quantitative paradigms to examine Thai Netflix users' views of using Netflix in learning English idioms. The present study utilizes two instruments in collecting data which were a semi- structured interview and an attitude questionnaire.

Participants

There were six students willingly participated in the study. Five participants were second-year students and another one was a fourth-year student. They all were from department of English of Faculty of Education.

Moreover, there were twenty students participated in responding an attitudinal questionnaire. Ten students were in second-year from the Faculty of Education, and the other ten students were in second-year studying in Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Data collection and analysis

A. Semi-structured interviews

Six willingly Netflix users were filled in semi-structured interviews after announcing the interview. They were asked through semi-structured interviews where the following question was asked:

- What do you think are the advantages/disadvantages of using Netflix in learning English idioms?

The interview data were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed according to six criteria developed by Hubbard (2009) including (1) learner efficiency, (2) learning effectiveness, (3) motivation, (4) access, and (5) convenience, and (6) institutional efficiency. However, only the four themes were emerged from the findings by excluding convenience and institutional efficiency themes. The table below shows the description of each theme:

Table 1 Interview themes based on Hubbard's (2009) criteria

Theme	Description
Learning effectiveness	Learners retain language knowledge or skill longer, make deeper associations and/or learn more of what they need.
Motivation	Learners enjoy the language learning process more and thus engage more fully.
Access	Learners can get materials or experience interaction that would otherwise be difficult or impossible to get or do.
Convenience	Learners can study and practice with equal effectiveness across a wider range of times and places.

B. Attitudinal questionnaire

The attitudinal questionnaire used in the study was Gardner's (2005), Attitude/ Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) including 15 items. The questionnaire was designed to respond to the Likert scale which was divided into five categories. The scale of each item was coded as (Strongly Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree = 5). The questionnaire administration was conducted online and analyzed by using Microsoft Office Excel. The overall mean score was indicated the attitude levels regarding the views of using Netflix in learning English idioms following Wiersma's (1995) interpretation.

Attitude level according to mean interpretation by Wiersma (1995)

Mean Range	Attitude Level
1.00-2.33	Weak
2.34-3.67	Moderate
3.68 to 5.00	High

To access level of attitude, this study was conducted using the mean interests by Wiersma (1995) where values 1.00-2.33 represent weak level, 2.34-3.67 are moderate while 3.68 to 5.00 are high.

Results

Qualitative results

The learners' views of using Netflix in learning English idioms were categorized into four themes according Hubbard (2009) as followed:

A. **Learning effectiveness**

In terms of the learning effectiveness, the learners identified the influences of subtitles, quality, and barriers of films in their English language learning.

Subtitle: subtitles help to associate with language. For instance, they can read or see subtitles while watching so that they can associate language with subtitles.

-Sam said that I can read subtitles while watching.

-Sue told us that subtitles help me catch important information.

-Jim stated that subtitles in Netflix help me clearly to understand.

Quality: the high quality of sound would help to clearly catch important information. Furthermore, clearly image can retain what movies are presenting.

-Ken indicated that sound and image in Netflix are clearly to listen and watch in term of high quality.

Barrier: without advertisements, they really associate with content and can learn language without barrier. So, they can watch Netflix smoothly without interrupting while watching.

-Tom said that there is no obstacle to interrupt me in learning idioms like advertisements.

B. **Motivation**

The learners indicated that feelings and interactions in the films or movies affected them as followed:

Feelings: positive feeling encourages students to engage language learning more fully. It encourages to learn without knowing that they are learning. So, watching Netflix is really enjoyable because there are many programs for language learners to watch as well as containing interesting programs.

-Ken said that watching Netflix is fun and enjoyable.

-Sue stated that it's a fun way for practicing.

-Sam said watching Netflix contains interesting movies.

Interaction: how we engage and interact with learning process without forcing ourselves to react. If someone watches Netflix alone, I bet they are many interactions that they react to themselves.

-Sara told that I interact with those characters as well if I am watching alone.

-Tom said that I like to repeat words after characters saying.

C. **Learning access**

The learners commented that learning through films in Netflix were beneficial in terms of acquiring idioms as well as other aspects.

Acquiring idioms: many respondents told what they have got from Netflix in case of idioms. Watching Netflix provide opportunities to learn idioms in various situation, and idioms in Netflix are useful to apply in daily life.

-Jim said that I get a lot of idioms from Netflix and use it with friends.

-Sue indicated that I got many newly idioms that the teenagers currently use at that time.

-Ken told that I learned idioms from various situation.

Other acquiring: It looks like Netflix really offers other benefits except for idioms. The students can expose themselves to different language and culture as well as familiar with varieties of accents.
-Tom said I get to know other cultures and languages.
-Sam stated that I am familiar with various native accents.

D. Students comments related to learning convenience.
Expense: costs are restrictions for convenience to access Netflix. Without spending money on Netflix, surely, they cannot access to movies, series, cartoon, TV shows.
-Jim told us that I have to spend money on Netflix.
-Sara stated that there is expense for each month.
Access: if there are many ways to access, it is truly convenient, especially for Netflix users.
-Tom said it's comfortable to learn idioms both laptop and smartphone.

Quantitative results
The responses of attitudinal questionnaire were analyzed by using a program software of Microsoft Office Excel by considering the values of means and S.D. to indicate the attitude level of Thai EFL Netflix users following Wiersma (1995).

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of the Students' Attitudes of using Netflix in learning English idioms
(N = 20)

Items	Mean	S.D.	Attitude level
#1 Watching movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms can be important to the students to raise their awareness of idioms.	3.85	1.18	High
#2 Using movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms is highly important to the students because the students can use idioms better when keeping in touch with foreign friends and acquaintances.	4.10	0.97	High
#3 Applying movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms can be important to the students because it will make the students understand and become more knowledgeable.	4.05	1.05	High
#4 Learning the idioms using movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix can be important to the students because it leads to long retention of idioms.	4.25	0.91	High
#5 Watching movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms can be important to the students for comprehension of idiomatic meaning.	4.15	0.93	High
#6 Learning the idioms via movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix is important to the students because it helps a well-educated person to use the idioms more efficiently.	4.10	0.85	High
#7 Learning the idioms through movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix is not a waste of time.	4.05	0.83	High
#8 Learning the idioms used in movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix is important to a person because he can understand English-speaking films, videos, including the idioms better.	4.05	0.76	High

Items	Mean	S.D.	Attitude level
#9 Watching movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms can stimulate the students to figure out the meaning of newly encountered idioms by drawing from movie information.	4.05	0.76	High
#10 Watching movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms is important to the students so they can understand more English texts and books, including the idioms.	3.90	0.79	High
#11 It doesn't bother the students to use the idioms used in movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix when speaking.	3.70	0.98	High
#12 Watching movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms make the students infer the meaning of unfamiliar idioms from the new situation.	3.85	0.93	High
#13 Watching movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms can be important because the students can interpret the figurative meaning of the idioms by using visualizers.	3.90	0.79	High
#14 The students can use movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix including the idioms as a channel for their comprehension of the informal nature of certain idioms.	3.75	0.79	High
#15 Learning the idioms using movies, series, cartoons, TV shows from Netflix is important to the students because without learning them masterly, the students feel something is missed.	3.70	0.98	High

Overall Mean Score/ Standard Deviation: 3.90/0.90

The overall mean score showed that the students' attitude level is at the high level in using Netflix in learning English idioms (mean=3.90). It was found that the highest mean score fell in no.4 (mean=4.25). The lowest mean score were no.11 and no.15 (mean=3.70). However, all of the items no.1-no.15 was at high level.

Discussion
The main purpose of this study was to explore Thai Netflix users' views of using Netflix in learning English idioms. The study found that the learners viewed Netflix in positive ways which was at a high level. The four themes as followed are identified student's views in details.

1. Learning effectiveness - L2 video might be difficult for students to understand, but subtitle is truly help effectively in learning. The data showed that most of students agreed that subtitles in Netflix play an important role for them in learning idioms, vocabulary because they can catch important content in story whether L1/L2 subtitles. The findings were corresponding with Sydorenko (2010) that L1/L2 subtitles can ease this burden and make unfamiliar vocabulary more understandable for learners.

2. Learning motivation - Most students stated that watching Netflix was fun and interesting for practicing English. This finding supported Ward and Lepeintre (1996) and Sylvia (2008) that a film is entertaining and could increase interests in the topic, as well as enhancing learner's motivation in achieving their language learning goals.

3. Learning access – The learners get to know a lot of cultures of different nations as well as enable them to get familiar with different accents of native speakers as well as to response in real situation with foreigners. Wood (1995) mentioned that film communication offers link between classroom, society, and films can help explore cultural context, and they can also allow flexibility of materials and teaching techniques.

4. Learning convenience - The major restriction for learners to learn English through watching films in Netflix is that the cost. However, the learners still emphasized its convenience in accessing using alternative devices.

Conclusion

This study presented the quantitative and qualitative results which were corresponding to each other. The interview data was analyzed into themes according to Hubbard (2009), and they showed that Netflix offered many benefits for Netflix users. Nevertheless, the convenience may be restricted due to the expense for each month. The quantitative data indicated that the participants agreed of the usefulness of using Netflix in learning English idioms. The result showed the overall mean score was at high level (mean=3.90). This study suggested that Thai English language practitioners should focus more on self- access learning of students, as well as educational institutions should invest more on digital or technological learning resources.

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for further research.

1. For more reliable results, future research should be extended to various groups of participants.

2. Due to the limited time, the data collecting from interview should be collected more than once so that the findings can reveal various insights.

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