Incorporating CALL in the ESL classroom: Focusing on animation, movies, Netflix, TED, VOA, Arirang News, NPR, and YouTube

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Abstract

This study examines the application of CALL in English classes for university-level or EAP students. Multimedia is significant in the digital era and should be applied in the ESL classroom. However, few studies explore how to apply a variety of multimedia resources in the ESL classroom. This study explores students' opinions on the use of multimedia from a class conducted for one semester. The class dealt with one theme each week using various media. Over the semester, eight multimedia resources were used: animations, movies, Netflix, TED, VOA, NPR, Arirang News (a Korean English-language network), and YouTube. At the end of the semester, a student survey was conducted to examine students' motivation, preference, and improvement in English proficiency when using multimedia. The results of the survey, including comments, show that multimedia seems to generate high student interest. Students seemed to feel the approach was effective in improving their four English skills. This indicates the potential of multimedia resources, freely available through the Internet. A variety of multimedia can be applied in the ESL classroom, and listening to students' voices can assist in finding the appropriate way.

Keywords: CALL, multimedia, VOA, TED, NPR, Arirang News, YouTube, Netflix, animation, movies

Introduction

This study aims to examine the application of CALL (computer-assisted language learning) in English classes for university-level students. Multimedia is significant in the digital era. However, practical methods of using CALL have not been dealt with sufficiently, and not many English classes use proper multimedia materials for ESL. This study aims to provide direction for using English-language multimedia materials in university-level classes. It also examines students' motivation, preference, and improvement in English proficiency when using multimedia. In addition, the study explores the implications of incorporating CALL into the current English-teaching paradigm. Lastly, the study aims to explore what benefits CALL can offer. Therefore, the research questions of this study are the following:

1. Are multimedia resources interesting to students?

2. If so, why, in the students' opinion?

3. Do students like to learn English using these eight media?

4. Did students feel the resources helped with any of the four skills in English?

5. What difficulties did students encounter with using multimedia to study English?

Literature Review

There is some literature related to incorporating CALL in the classroom, especially movies and animations. Lee (2010) deals with English class activities focusing on the movie *Forrest Gump*. Lee's study gave examples of activities using the movie, discussed effective teaching methods, and presented the results of a student survey. Baik (2001) examined multimedia technology in English classrooms focusing on animations. Joe (2016) examined using movies and dramas to improve memorization of English. Jung (2014) examined the effects of animations on students' communicative competence and motivation in college. Lastly, Sung (2006) conducted a survey to examine the effectiveness of the film *Meet the Parents* as a tool to teach college English. The present study's survey is based on the Sung (2006) survey questions.

Research Method

Procedure

A teacher taught an English class for one semester (2018-8-27–2018-12-17). The class was Application of Business English for Computers, and multimedia resources (animations, movies, TED, VOA, NPR, Arirang News, Netflix, and YouTube) were used. The class was content-based, and each week dealt with a different

theme (positive thinking, friends, emotions, etc.). For animations, *Inside Out* was used; for Netflix, the American situation comedy *Friends* was used; and for YouTube, a speech by Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, was used. At the end of the semester, a student survey was conducted.

Participants

The participants were 26 computer science majors in their sophomore year at a private college in Seoul, Korea. The students' attendance rate was very high, and they showed an interest in learning English, as they chose this elective English class. Most of the students studied English with this teacher for one full year. Students' English proficiency scores on the mid-term ranged from 16 to 30 of a possible 30. Eighteen out of the 26 students reported their CSAT (College Scholastic Ability Test) grade. Their CSAT English grade averaged 3.72 (The best grade is 1 out of a possible 9.).

Measurement Tool

A mini-survey was conducted at the end of the first semester, asking students which English skills they wanted to learn and their preferences in multimedia resources. From the survey, students showed a preference for learning English through movies, animations, and pop songs. Also, most respondents preferred not to study from a textbook but using printouts from multimedia resources. Twenty-six participants answered a more detailed survey. The following table shows the questions in this second survey. Questions 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 ask about the eight multimedia resources. The resources are rated on a scale from 1 (of no value) to 5 (highest value).

Survey Questions
1. Is this resource interesting to you?
2. If so, why?
3. Will you use this resource after class?
4. Would you like to learn English using this resource?
5. Would you recommend this resource to your friend?
6. Did you find the level of difficulty appropriate?
7. Did the resource help with any of the four skills in English?
8. If so, which skill(s)?
9. In what ways do you find multimedia helpful in studying English?
10. In what ways did you find it difficult to study English using multimedia?

Result

Degree of Interest

The following table shows how much interest students felt in learning English through each medium: animations, movies, Netflix, TED, VOA, Arirang News, NPR, and YouTube.

Resource and Degree of Interest

CALL	Degree of Interest	Score (1-5)	N	Percent	M	SD
Animations	No interest	1	0	0	3.85	.95
	Slightly interesting	2	2	7.7		
	So-so	3	8	30.8		
	Interesting	4	8	30.8		
	Very interesting	5	8	30.8		
	Total		26			
Movies	No interest	1	0	0	4.27	.99
	Slightly interesting	2	2	7.7		
	So-so	3	2	7.7		
	Interesting	4	9	34.6		
	Very interesting	5	13	50		
	Total		26			
Netflix	No interest	1	0	0	4	.89
	Slightly interesting	2	1	3.8		
	So-so	3	7	26.9		
	Interesting	4	9	34.6		
	Very interesting	5	9	34.6		
	Total		26			
TED	No interest	1	1	3.8	3.5	1.07
	Slightly interesting	2	3	11.5		
	So-so	3	8	30.8		
	Interesting	4	10	38.5		
	Very interesting	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			
VOA	No interest	1	0	0	3.23	1.19
	Slightly interesting	2	7	26.9		
	So-so	3	10	38.5		
	Interesting	4	5	19.2		
	Very interesting	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			
Arirang News	No interest	1	1	3.8	3.27	1.21
	Slightly interesting	2	5	19.2		
	So-so	3	10	38.5		
	Interesting	4	6	23.1		
	Very interesting	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			

NPR	No interest	1	1	3.8	3.08	1.32
	Slightly interesting	2	7	26.9		
	So-so	3	11	42.3		
	Interesting	4	3	11.5		
	Very interesting	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			
YouTube	No interest	1	3	11.5	3	1.42
	Slightly interesting	2	5	19.2		
	So-so	3	10	38.5		
	Interesting	4	5	19.2		
	Very interesting	5	3	11.5		
	Total		26			

The participants showed the highest interest in movies, followed by Netflix, animations, TED, Arirang News, VOA, NPR, and YouTube. The following table shows the students' opinions about how and why the multimedia resources were interesting.

Responses to the Question "Is This Resource Interesting to You?"
• It was fun, and I got to know things I didn't know.
• The professor prepared a variety of material[s], making it interesting.
• The variety of approaches was useful. I like to learn in this way.
• It was easy to understand and comfortable to watch.
• Learned new things.
• Multimedia is valuable when the content is fun.
• It was interesting to study English through animation[s].
• Learning English through *Inside Out* was fun and useful.
• Watching movies kept me alert and interested.
• *Inside Out, Friends*.
• I enjoyed studying screen English together using scripts and video clips.
• Studying speeches and *Inside Out* were most interesting.
• Studying English by looking at video clips.
• I got to access information I would not have in daily life. Before I was not able to watch speeches, but I think they will be useful.
• I always want[ed] to watch American drama[s]; it is good to watch [them] in the classroom.

Usage after the class

The following table shows students' preferences for eight media: animation, movies, Netflix, TED, VOA, Arirang News, NPR, and YouTube.

Resource and Intent to Use after Class

CALL	Will you use it after [the] class?	Score (1-5)	N	Percent	M	SD
Animations	Strongly disagree	1	1	3.8	3.19	1.26
	Disagree	2	7	26.9		
	Neutral	3	7	26.9		
	Agree	4	8	30.8		
	Strongly agree	5	3	11.5		
	Total		26			
Movies	Strongly disagree	1	1	3.8	3.69	1.15
	Disagree	2	3	11.5		
	Neutral	3	7	26.9		
	Agree	4	7	26.9		
	Strongly agree	5	8	30.8		
	Total		26			
Netflix	Strongly disagree	1	3	11.5	3.65	1.25
	Disagree	2	1	3.8		
	Neutral	3	5	19.2		
	Agree	4	10	38.5		
	Strongly agree	5	7	26.9		
	Total		26			
TED	Strongly disagree	1	2	7.7	3.58	1.11
	Disagree	2	2	7.7		
	Neutral	3	5	19.2		
	Agree	4	13	50		
	Strongly agree	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			
VOA	Strongly disagree	1	2	7.7	3.19	1.23
	Disagree	2	3	11.5		
	Neutral	3	12	46.2		
	Agree	4	6	23.1		
	Strongly agree	5	3	11.5		
	Total		26			
Arirang News	Strongly disagree	1	3	11.5	2.88	1.4
	Disagree	2	5	19.2		
	Neutral	3	11	42.3		
	Agree	4	6	23.1		
	Strongly agree	5	1	3.8		
	Total		26			

NPR	Strongly disagree	1	2	7.7	2.96	1.26
	Disagree	2	4	15.4		
	Neutral	3	14	53.8		
	Agree	4	5	19.2		
	Strongly agree	5	1	3.8		
	Total		26			
YouTube	Strongly disagree	1	1	3.8	3.38	1.11
	Disagree	2	5	19.2		
	Neutral	3	5	19.2		
	Agree	4	13	50		
	Strongly agree	5	2	7.7		
	Total		26			

Movies generated the most interest in usage after the class followed by Netflix, TED, YouTube, VOA and animations, NPR, and Arirang News. It appears that these students overall preferred fictional stories to news as content. Interestingly, the students rated YouTube for viewing speeches more highly for usage after the class than for degree of interest. Presumably, although less interesting, they found the speeches useful.

The following table shows the participants' opinions about usage after the class. Again, speeches seem to be singled out as useful.

Responses to the Question "Will You Use This Resource after Class?"
• It seems to me I can study VOA or speeches on YouTube on my own.
• It is very accessible, so I can study anywhere.
• I can access the materials easily.
• By taking this English course, I got to watch speeches by famous people around the world. There were many useful things, and above all it was fun.
• It was convenient for review. Listening and watching were good for study. Parts we didn't cover in class, I could study on my own.
• It was fun to watch video clips; and the speeches taught life lessons.
• Compared to written words, multimedia generated interest and enthusiasm.
• During vacation I will continue to study English through TED and VOA.

To sum up, the students found multimedia resources accessible since they are on the Internet. Also, many participants said it was more interesting using multimedia than textbooks. If students can have pleasant memories and better experiences studying English, this can increase their motivation in learning English throughout their life. Multimedia resources can assist lifelong learning.

Degree of recommendation

The following table shows students' inclination to recommend learning English through the eight media.

Resource and Intent to Recommend

CALL	Would you recommend this medium to a friend?	Score (1-5)	N	Percent	M	SD
Animations	Strongly disinclined	1	1	3.8	3.46	1.22
	Disinclined	2	4	15.4		
	Neutral	3	10	38.5		
	Inclined	4	4	15.4		
	Strongly inclined	5	7	26.9		
	Total		26			
Movies	Strongly disinclined	1	0	0	4.08	1.06
	Disinclined	2	3	11.5		
	Neutral	3	4	15.4		
	Inclined	4	7	26.9		
	Strongly inclined	5	12	46.2		
	Total		26			
Netflix	Strongly disinclined	1	2	7.7	3.92	1.24
	Disinclined	2	1	3.8		
	Neutral	3	6	23.1		
	Inclined	4	5	19.2		
	Strongly inclined	5	12	46.2		
	Total		26			
TED	Strongly disinclined	1	2	7.7	3.54	1.13
	Disinclined	2	2	7.7		
	Neutral	3	6	23.1		
	Inclined	4	12	46.2		
	Strongly inclined	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			
VOA	Strongly disinclined	1	2	7.7	3.08	1.23
	Disinclined	2	4	15.4		
	Neutral	3	11	42.3		
	Inclined	4	8	30.8		
	Strongly inclined	5	1	3.8		
	Total		26			
Arirang News	Strongly disinclined	1	3	11.5	3	1.4
	Disinclined	2	5	19.2		
	Neutral	3	9	34.6		
	Inclined	4	7	26.9		
	Strongly inclined	5	2	7.7		
	Total		26			

NPR	Strongly disinclined	1	3	11.5	2.88	1.45
	Disinclined	2	6	23.1	
	Neutral	3	10	38.5	
	Inclined	4	5	19.2	
	Strongly inclined	5	2	7.7	
	Total		26		
YouTube	Strongly disinclined	1	0	0	3.27	1.11
	Disinclined	2	7	26.9	
	Neutral	3	7	26.9	
	Inclined	4	10	38.5	
	Strongly inclined	5	2	7.7	
	Total		26		

The students were most inclined to recommend movies followed by Netflix, TED, animations, YouTube, VOA, Arirang News, and NPR. Once again, the students seemed to prefer fictional content to news.

Appropriateness to participants' English level

The following table shows how appropriate each of eight media are to participants' English level: animation, movies, Netflix, TED, VOA, Arirang News, NPR, and YouTube.

Resource and Perceived Difficulty Level

CALL	Did you find the level of difficulty appropriate?	Score (1-5)	N	Percent	M	SD
Animations	Not at all appropriate	1	0	0	3.73	.82
	Inappropriate	2	1	3.8		
	Neutral	3	10	38.5		
	Appropriate	4	10	38.5		
	Highly appropriate	5	5	19.2		
	Total		26			
Movies	Not at all appropriate	1	0	0	4.04	.83
	Inappropriate	2	0	0		
	Neutral	3	8	30.8		
	Appropriate	4	9	34.6		
	Highly appropriate	5	9	34.6		
	Total		26			

Netflix	Not at all appropriate	1	0	0	4.08	.76
	Inappropriate	2	0	0		
	Neutral	3	6	23.1		
	Appropriate	4	12	46.2		
	Highly appropriate	5	8	30.8		
	Total		26			
TED	Not at all appropriate	1	0	0	3.81	.83
	Inappropriate	2	1	3.8		
	Neutral	3	9	34.6		
	Appropriate	4	10	38.5		
	Highly appropriate	5	6	23.1		
	Total		26			
VOA	Not at all appropriate	1	0	0	3.73	.82
	Inappropriate	2	2	7.7		
	Neutral	3	7	26.9		
	Appropriate	4	13	50		
	Highly appropriate	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			
Arirang News	Not at all appropriate	1	0	0	3.69	.84
	Inappropriate	2	1	3.8		
	Neutral	3	11	42.3		
	Appropriate	4	9	34.6		
	Highly appropriate	5	5	19.2		
	Total		26			
NPR	Not at all appropriate	1	0	0	3.46	.97
	Inappropriate	2	4	15.4		
	Neutral	3	9	34.6		
	Appropriate	4	10	38.5		
	Highly appropriate	5	3	11.5		
	Total		26			
YouTube	Not at all appropriate	1	0	0	3.54	.98
	Inappropriate	2	4	15.4		
	Neutral	3	8	30.8		
	Appropriate	4	10	38.5		
	Highly appropriate	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			

Netflix rated the highest for appropriateness to participants' English level, followed by movies, TED, animations, VOA, Arirang News, YouTube and NPR. The following table displays the participants' thoughts about the difficulty of using multimedia for learning English in class.

Responses to the Question "Did You Find the Level of Difficulty Appropriate?"
• It was fine; it was not hard.
• Speaking.
• No problem.
• No problems with the level.
• The new American words were hard to understand.
• Writing and speaking were a little bit hard.
• There were a lot of sentences that I could not understand.
• Some content was hard, and hard to understand.
• There was a lot of vocabulary I didn't know.
• Not fun material.
• The material was not difficult, but when there were no subtitles, it was sometimes hard to translate.
• Without subtitles, there were some sentences I could not understand.
• In the speech, the speaking was too fast, and the pronunciation was hard to understand.
• It was accessible. Sometimes I was too interested in the movie to study much, but it was very good.
• The speech was uninteresting and too long.
• For TED, filling in the blanks [was difficult?] because of the speed of the talk.
• Some content was hard, boring, and not sympathetic (for example, NPR).
• The speech was boring, but everything else was good.

The results show that adjusting for the students' level is significant in using multimedia resources. From the perspective of the teacher, it was difficult to find resources at an appropriate level because most were made for native speakers and the English level is high. However, CALL enhances students' motivation in learning English and is easily accessible. Therefore, level-appropriate multimedia resources (especially basic and intermediate) have high potential in English instruction.

Improvement in the four English skills

The following table show students' thoughts concerning their improvement in the four English skills (reading, listening, speaking, and writing) through multimedia-based instruction.

Resource and Perceived Improvement

CALL	Did the resource help with any of the four skills?	Score (1-5)	N	Percent	M	SD
Animations	Not at all	1	0	0	3.65	.76
	Virtually none	2	0	0		
	Moderate	3	13	50		
	Improved	4	9	34.6		
	Much improved	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			
Movies	Not at all	1	1	3.8	3.77	1.01
	Virtually none	2	1	3.8		
	Moderate	3	8	30.8		
	Improved	4	9	34.6		
	Much improved	5	7	26.9		
	Total		26			
Netflix	Not at all	1	1	3.8	4.04	1
	Virtually none	2	0	0		
	Moderate	3	6	23.1		
	Improved	4	9	34.6		
	Much improved	5	10	38.5		
	Total		26			
TED	Not at all	1	0	0	3.85	.72
	Virtually none	2	0	0		
	Moderate	3	9	34.6		
	Improved	4	12	46.2		
	Much improved	5	5	19.2		
	Total		26			
VOA	Not at all	1	0	0	3.69	.88
	Virtually none	2	2	7.7		
	Moderate	3	9	34.6		
	Improved	4	10	38.5		
	Much improved	5	5	19.2		
	Total		26			
Arirang News	Not at all	1	1	3.8	3.38	1.07
	Virtually none	2	2	7.7		
	Moderate	3	13	50		
	Improved	4	6	23.1		
	Much improved	5	4	15.4		
	Total		26			
NPR	Not at all	1	0	0	3.23	1.08
	Virtually none	2	5	19.2		
	Moderate	3	13	50		
	Improved	4	5	19.2		
	Much improved	5	3	11.5		
	Total		26			

	Not at all	1	0	0	3.69	.88
	Virtually none	2	2	7.7		
	Moderate	3	9	34.6		
YouTube	Improved	4	10	38.5		
	Much improved	5	5	19.2		
	Total		26			

Netflix rated highest for helping students improve in the four skills, followed by TED, movies, YouTube and VOA, animation, Arirang News, and NPR. TED scored better here than for student interest. The following table shows the participants' opinions about improvement in the four English skills.

Responses to the Question "Did the Resource Help with Any of the Four Skills?"
• My listening skills improved quickly. It helped to listen to real native speakers.
• Listening and speaking daily helped a lot.
• I normally never read English, but I read it in class.
• It was fun to speak a little English each week.
• Since CSAT I have not been studying English; but this class got me studying English.
• I got to know new vocabulary, so my English improved.
• American situation comedy presented ordinary daily conversations, so I found it useful.
• The speech and American situation comedy helped with listening.
• It was good to listen to the speech and to [the] news.
• Listening has improved.
• Listening, vocabulary—I learned the meaning of vocabulary.
• In daily life I do English reading, but there is less opportunity to do English listening. Listening together helped improve my English skill.
• My speaking improved.
• The memorized sentences helped me to speak more fluently.
• When speaking with my friends, I now use lines from Inside Out.
• Through Friends, I learned colloquial language.
• Listening and expression [have improved?]
• Listening really helped; I tried to speak freely.
• Reading with translating helped.
• Speaking, listening and reading helped the most.
• Doing speaking, writing, and reading around a theme helped to understand the content.

Many of the students showed improvement in listening, followed by speaking, reading, idiomatic expressions, and vocabulary. No doubt the students benefitted from listening to English speakers who spoke with a native accent, at a native speed, and using native expressions. Also, the four English skills improved as students put in more time and effort because of the class; practice is important for enhancing English
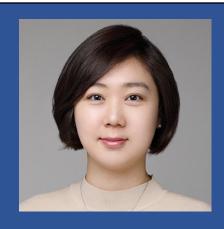
skills. CALL can increase input and output and help to improve listening, speaking, reading, and idiomatic expressions. Speaking, shadowing, and reading out loud can be efficient methods for using multimedia resources when studying after class.

Conclusion

Based on this study, using multimedia in the ESL classroom seems to generate high student interest. The study introduced a variety of multimedia resources to university-level students over one semester, and, through a survey, elicited their impressions of the potential of CALL. As indicated in the survey and comments, students seemed to believe the approach was effective in improving their four English skills. This indicates the potential of multimedia, now easily accessible through the Internet. One limitation of the study was that results can be influenced by content rather than medium. However, this was inevitable as the class under observation was content based. Further studies might better isolate the influence of the medium. For example, the same content might be presented through different media.

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