

Forms of Media Affecting Tertiary Students' Language Proficiency: Towards A Guide

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Abstract: The influence of mass media has grown exponentially with the advancement of technology. And everyone, particularly the students nowadays depends on information and communication to keep their lives moving.

However, many of the tertiary level students do not maximize their opportunities to learn English language despite their access to media and the opportunities given by these forms of technology.

This study aimed to determine the different types of media the students are exposed and to what extent these forms of media affect their proficiency of the English language. The descriptive method was used in this study utilizing questionnaire supplemented by focused group discussion conducted to 100 college students of a sampled college in Quezon City. Findings revealed that the respondents were exposed to different forms of media like the print media, electronic media and "new age media"; as such these media affected the proficiency of the students in the English language in various ways. Consequently, this exposure posed problems. Hence, possible solutions to address the problems were given.

Keywords: influence, media, English language, technology, proficiency.

1. INTRODUCTION

English is without a doubt the actual universal language. While English is not an official language in most countries, it is the language most often taught as a second language. English is most widely used in communicating around the world. Language is now considered a skill, in fact, big companies, both here and abroad, are now looking for good English communication skills among potential employees, sadly, and these companies are disappointed. Sad to say that even the students nowadays are not practicing effective communication; some really don't want to practice it and some are practicing it in the most improper way in the form of the so-called "taglish", a combination of Filipino and English words in one sentence (Banaag, 2002).

The influence of mass media has grown exponentially with the advancement of technology. First there were books, then newspapers, magazines, photography, sound recordings, films, radio, television, the so-called New Media of the Internet, and now social media.

Today, just about everyone depends on information and communication to keep their lives moving through daily activities like work, education, health care, leisure activities, entertainment, traveling, personal relationships, and the other stuff with which college students are involved (Lozada, 2010).

It is not unusual for them to wake up, check their cell phones for messages and notifications, look at the TV or newspaper for news, commute to school, read emails, facebook, take meetings and makes phone calls, eat meals with friends and family, and make decisions based on the information that they gather from those mass media and interpersonal media sources. They trust mass media as an authority for news, information, education and entertainment.

The researcher became interested with the English communication proficiency of the tertiary students who would apply for a job to make a living. Seemingly, the problem is that available jobs require good communication skills, and

unfortunately, as the researchers have noticed, most college students are not prepared for this kind of challenge. Some of the students are good in written communication but not that good when it comes to oral because some are shy to let others hear their English, or afraid to execute a wrong grammar or bad sentence.

It is also observed that many of the tertiary level students do not maximize their opportunities to acquire and learn English language. A majority of them for example prefer to listen to and watch radio and television programs that do not necessarily increase their learning of English. Several of them prefer programs in their native language to those in English. Also many of the students scarcely read novels or literature books written in English once it is not included in their curriculum.

Premised along the aforementioned, the researcher, an English teacher, came up with this study on forms of media exposure affecting tertiary students' proficiency in English language, towards a guide.

2. PARADIGM OF THE STUDY

The foregoing concept is illustrated by the paradigm that follows using the **CONCEPT – INPUT – PROCESS – PRODUCT** (CIPP) model.

The **CONCEPT** holds the concerns of the study which is the forms of mass media exposure affecting tertiary students' proficiency in English language towards a guide to improve English language skills.

The **INPUT** lists all the variables that are considered as contributors to the study: description of the respondents' profile; their attitude, motivation, mass media exposure and relationship of these concerns on students' English communication proficiency; and the problems met by the respondents related to the aforementioned concerns and the ways these are addressed.

The **PROCESS** presents the methods and procedures employed to draw meaningful and reliable results. It shows the Research design utilized in pursuing the research, the instruments used in gathering such; and the statistical tools employed to treat the data.

The **PRODUCT** is the desired output of the whole undertaking. The findings were utilized in designing a guide to enhance students' proficiency in utilizing the English language.

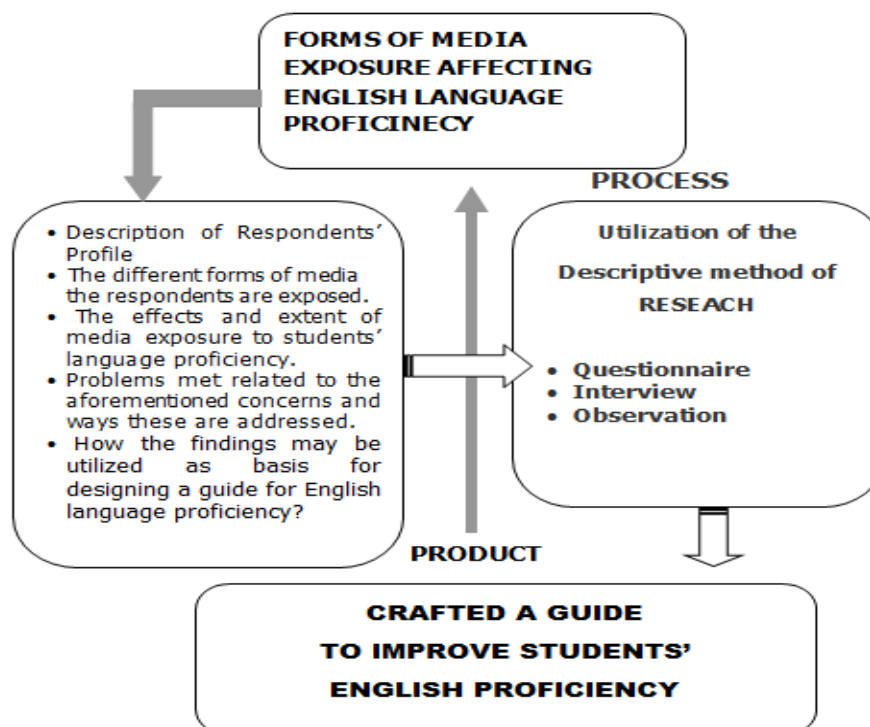


Figure 1: Paradigm of the Study

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher made use of the Descriptive Method of research. This design involves the description, recording, analysis and interpretation of conditions that now exist. This study revolves around the relationship of selected concerns on students English language proficiency.

Ardales (2000), said that Descriptive Method of research describes and interprets what is. It is concerned with condition of relationship that exists; practices that prevail; beliefs, processes that are going on; effects that are being felt, or trends that are developing.

Respondents:

The study is conducted to one hundred (100) students from a sampled collegiate institution in Quezon City, during the Academic Year, 2015-2016.

Sampling Technique:

The Random Sampling technique, the purest form of probability sampling, is used in choosing the respondents of the study. Scheaffer (2006), said that in Random Sampling, each member of the population has an equal and known chance of being selected. When there are very large populations, it is often difficult or impossible to identify every member of the population, so the pool of available subjects becomes biased.

The researcher used the lottery technique in choosing the respondents. He drew twenty (20) names from each of the five boxes, and upon getting the total of 100, he stopped.

Statement of the Problem:

This study aims to determine the forms of mass media affecting the tertiary students' proficiency in the English language towards a guide during the Academic Year 2014-2015.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How may the respondents be described in terms of:
 - 1.1. Gender,
 - 1.2. Age,
 - 1.3. Parents' highest educational attainment,
 - 1.4. Parents' occupation, and
 - 1.5. Mass media used at home?
2. What forms of mass media are the respondents exposed?
3. How does mass media exposure affect the English proficiency of the respondents in the language and to what extent?
4. What problems are encountered by the respondents related to the different forms of mass media exposure and how are these addressed?
5. How may the findings be utilized in crafting a guide to improve further students' English proficiency?

4. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on the gathered data, the researcher came up with the following findings:

1. On the Description of the Respondents:

- 1.1 Seventy-two percent are male,
- 1.2 Sixty-two percent are within the 25 years old and below,

1.3 thirty percent of their parents are high school graduates,

1.4 thirty percent of their parents are involved in business (buy and sell, sari-sari store, agent/dealer) as their source of income.

1.5 Ninety-five percent has watched television at home.

2. *on the Forms of Media Exposure Experienced by the Students*

The first three in rank are:

a. print media, “books” with 93 percent; “newspapers, periodicals, newsletters,” with 85 percent; and “magazines”, with 82 percent.

b. electronic media (broadcast media), “television”, with 100 percent; “electronic gadgets”, with 95 percent, and “movies” with 90 percent.

c. new age media, “mobile phones” with 98 percent; “internet (facebook, email, twitter, you tube, etc.”, with 95 percent; and “computers”, with 93 percent.

3. *Extent of Effect of Mass Media Exposure on Students’ English Language Proficiency*

a. “provided guidance to adopt the way native speakers of English deliver the language”, with WM of 4.25 or High Extent.

b. “developed my language proficiency in general and speaking competency in particular as there are key features of TV and radio news”, with WM of 4.0 or High Extent.

c. “led me to a global exchange of views and information and knowledge as I learned to surf the internet and social media discussions”, with WM of 3.65 or High Extent.

4. *On the Problems Encountered Related to Media Exposure:*

a. “blind imitation, trying to imitate role models from the glamour industry, not giving a thought to whether right or wrong”, and “information overload, as media bombards one with content, news, information, gossip, rumors affecting every aspect of life”, both with 95 percent.

b. “unhealthy lifestyle, as media exposes the masses to fast food products, canned food, fad diets, and energy drinks, and junk food advertisement”, and “health problems due to negative effects on the physical and psychological well-being of society like eye and obesity problems”, both with 90 percent.

c. “negativism, as media is responsible for generating negative feelings among those exposed to it like exposure to bold or violent films, books publishing adult content and news portraying ugly social practices”, with 85 percent.

5. *On the Solutions on the Problems Encountered Related to Media Exposure:*

a. “watch movies in English and listen to English spoken media which are effective ways of improving English communication skills”, with 94 percent.

b. “exercise control on the media exposure that kids and teenagers get by responsible adult (parent or teacher) and “use good judgment before allowing or falling for anything. Put things in perspective, don’t allow media to influence in doing the wrong things”, both with 90 percent each.

c. “limit media exposure and choose what to watch as news sources often bombard students with the same negative stories over and over again, in order to increase the impact”, with 76 percent.

6. The findings were utilized in crafting a guide to further improve students’ English proficiency.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing summary of findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The respondents were described in terms of their profile as gender, age, parents' highest educational attainment, parents' occupation, and mass media used at home;
2. The students as respondents are exposed to different kinds of media like print, electronics or broadcast, and new age media.
3. Mass media exposure affects the English language proficiency of the respondents to a high extent.
4. The problems encountered by the respondents related to the different forms of mass media exposure were addressed.
5. A guide to further improve students' English proficiency was crafted.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

For the teachers, they need to:

1. Be more resourceful, creative, and up-dated with modern techniques in teaching. They must give opportunities to the students to improve their language competencies through utilization of mass media.
2. Develop/train their students by exploiting opportunities for language learning through the mass media. They should help their students to improve as public speakers, to be good conversationalist, to talk to people and to become leaders in the future.
3. Employ communicative approaches, methods and techniques to ensure the competent use of the English language among Teacher Education students.

For the school administrators, they need to:

4. Seriously consider the importance of hiring qualified teachers who could extraordinarily teach grammar and articulation of sounds since learning a language is acquired through the years of schooling.
5. Assign the best teachers for Grade I and First Year High School so that the learners would acquire a better foundation for the collegiate level and could easily adapt to the challenges that they will face in multicultural settings.
6. Set standards for students who wish to teach English or take courses, related to English. They should excel in the use of the language, both oral and written communication before they are given teaching load in English.
7. Sponsor more campus enhancing activities like debate, symposium, fora, dramatization, speaking engagement, research, to upgrade teachers' communication competencies.
8. Lessen teachers' load to give them time to improve their paperwork. Limit the number of students in a class to give them more time and guidance in correct and effective writings.

For the students, they need to:

9. Read newspapers, informative and educative magazines and journals in English. Some of these could later be discussed in the class from the perspective of information, entertainment and education. Emphasis could be placed on grammar, style and semantics of English language use.
10. Utilize mass media in their researches, studies, and for intelligent discussions. This will further enhance their English language competencies.

For curriculum writers/innovators to:

11. Review and revise the language curriculum of the college to conform with relevant theories exposed in communicative competence.

12. Ensure that contents of English subjects are relevant to the needs of the students, including utilization of different forms of media.

For future researchers, they need to:

13. Conduct further study on developing competencies of teachers in teaching English.

14. Further study on Barriers / Factors that deteriorate fluency in speaking English among teachers be conducted by future researchers.

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