



An Effective Way of Teaching English through Mass Media: A Case Study of High School Students in Myanmar

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Abstract

The objectives of the research aim 1) to explore the role of mass media in developing English writing proficiency, and 2) to examine the effects of mass media exposure on the English writing proficiency of Grade 10 students at No (2), Central Workshop Service, Basic Education High School, Amarapura Township, Mandalay. This research employed a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative part, surveys were conducted with students to assess their engagement with mass media and its influence on their writing skills. For the qualitative part, interviews were conducted with both students and teachers to gain deeper insights. The findings revealed that while mass media is moderately used in English language learning, its direct impact on writing proficiency is limited. Students often engage with mass media platforms, but lack proper guidance on how to use them for educational purposes. Teachers also reported challenges in incorporating mass media into classroom instruction due to technical barriers and potential distractions. However, the study highlights the potential of mass media to enhance writing skills when used alongside traditional teaching methods. The study recommends targeted training for both teachers and students on effective media use and the development of customized educational content to support writing skill development. These results offer useful implications for integrating mass media into English language instruction in Myanmar.

Keywords: Mass media, English learning, writing skills, high school, Myanmar.

Introduction

Language plays a very important role as a catalyst in the progress of human civilization. Language has been the basic tool of human communication, which relates the individual to the social environment. In the 21st century, all student needs critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. These are basic skills and fundamental requirements for undergraduate students. In our country, academic performance is generally judged through a periodic examination system. The undergraduate level is four years altogether and covers all coursework works attendance, assignments, presentation of individual or groups, a mid-term exam and a final exam. The extracurricular activities have



assumed importance and preference in this field and are also being considered along with academic performance. Technology is becoming an integral part of any modern classroom. As a teacher, it is important that you can recognize and understand the usefulness of various types of technology you might find in your classroom. In the past, when a teacher wanted to show something to the whole class, probably, he or she probably had to draw or write on a blackboard or whiteboard to use on an overhead projector. Information technology contributes to a change in the learning environment to improve the functionality of the learning experience.

Therefore, L. William Rivers states in his work of ‘Mass media and Modern Society’, “The electronic media: movies, radio, television have histories differing sharply in some respects from those of the printed media. Products of the industrial and technological revolution, the electronic media first appeared when the democratic movement was full-blown and when urbanization had brought together multitudes whom they could address simultaneously. For those reasons, the electronic media were democratized from the start and have always appealed to popular rather than to class audiences. Unlike the printed media, they require that their viewers or listeners attend to them in a single body; indeed, one characteristic of either radio or television is instantaneous transmission. For instance, we can pick up a copy of a book that has lain undisturbed on a library shelf for the past ten years and read it in utter solitude. But if we switch on the television set too late, our favorite program is gone forever, and the millions who viewed it have become occupied with something else. Soon, however, the home video tape will change all this.” (L. William, Rivers., 1971)

“The term ‘mass communication’ has sometimes been defined in two ways: communication by the media and communication for the masses. Mass communication, however, does not mean communication for everyone. The media tend to select their audiences; audiences likewise select among and within the media”. (Voelker Francis and Ludmila, 1972)

New media technologies offer several opportunities to the young audience to build an electronic network that connects people and information via computers. The new media have brought about globalization, according to Fleur. (Fleur, 2003) Rice defined new media as communication technologies that enable or facilitate user-to-user interactivity and interaction between users and information. The Internet replaced the one-to-many web of communication.

According to Richards and Rodgers, (Richards, Jack C. and Rodgers, Theodore S. , 2014) language teaching approaches can be categorized into three main types: the structural

approach, the functional approach, and the communicative approach. The structural approach emphasizes the teaching of grammar rules and sentence patterns, while the functional approach focuses on teaching language in context, and the communicative approach emphasizes the development of communicative competence in learners. The communicative approach is particularly relevant to the use of mass communication media in language teaching, as it emphasizes the importance of authentic language input and the development of listening and speaking skills.

The new media networked information will continue to grow at a rapid pace in the future. The number of access points to the Internet is expanding in number, variety, and mobility.

Bukhari's (Bukhari, A.Z., 2006) *Mass-Media and Methods of Education* is a seminal text that addresses the role of mass media in the evolving educational landscape. Bukhari asserts that in modern education systems, various forms of media, such as broadcast programs, films, and the press, have become integral parts of the educational process. The author emphasizes the enormous impact that mass media can have on education and highlights the need for educators to recognize and leverage the potential of mass media resources in teaching and learning.

Dhavan's *Technologies for Communications* provides a comprehensive overview of various technologies that have transformed the way we communicate in the modern world. The author delves into the intricacies of how these technologies work, their impact on society and culture, and their potential uses in education. (Dhavan, P. K., 2011)

"Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy" by H. Douglas Brown. (Dhavan, P. K., 2019) It is an excellent resource for high school teachers in Myanmar who are looking to improve their English language teaching skills. The book provides a comprehensive and interactive approach to language pedagogy that can be applied to any classroom setting.

Moreover, addressing the limitations of traditional English language teaching approaches and promoting communicative language teaching can improve students' speaking and listening skills. Future research should focus on exploring innovative strategies and technologies that can overcome the challenges of teaching English in Myanmar and promote effective language learning.

Objectives of the Research



This research paper has two objectives: 1) to study the role of mass media for the development of English writing proficiency among Grade 10 high school students, 2) to investigate the effects of mass media exposure on the English writing proficiency of Grade 10 high school students in No (2), Central Workshop Service, Basic Education High School, Amarapura Township, Mandalay.

Research Methods

This study employs a mixed-method research approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather data on the use of mass communication media for English language learning among high school students and teachers in Myanmar. Qualitative research methods will include interviews, while quantitative research methods will involve questionnaires.

Research Design

This design involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Sample Size

The sample size for this study will be 5 teachers and 20 students. No (2), Central Workshop Service, Basic Education High School, Amarapura Township, Mandalay.

Data Collection

Two methods will be used to collect data:

Survey: A survey questionnaire will be distributed to both teachers and students. The questions will focus on the frequency and types of mass media used (e.g., television, internet, social media), as well as participants' perceptions of the benefits and challenges associated with media-based learning.

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with selected teachers and students to obtain in-depth insights into their experiences with using mass media as a tool for improving English writing proficiency. The interviews will follow a flexible guide to ensure consistency while allowing for deeper exploration of relevant issues.

Data Analysis

Qualitative Data Analysis: The data collected through interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis. Key themes will be identified to understand participants' experiences and attitudes toward using mass media in English language teaching and learning.



Quantitative Data Analysis: The survey data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (such as frequencies, percentages, and means) to summarize the responses and identify trends in the use and impact of mass media on English writing proficiency.

Results of Data Analysis

Below is a consolidated table summarizing the overall results of all survey questions on the role of mass media in teaching and learning English:

The Role of Mass Media in Teaching English (20 Items)

Survey Questions	Frequency	Mean	SD	Level
Q1: What types of mass media tools do you use in your language teaching?	4, 1	3.2	0.45	Moderate
Q2: How often do you use mass media tools to support your language teaching?	3, 2	3.4	0.55	Moderate
Q3: What are some specific examples of how you use mass media tools to enhance your teaching?	2, 3	3.6	0.55	Moderate
Q4: How do you measure the effectiveness of mass media tools in your teaching?	4, 1	3.2	0.45	Moderate
Q5: Do you think mass media tools are more effective than traditional methods?	2, 3	3.6	0.55	Moderate
Q6: Have you seen improvement in student engagement when using mass media tools?	2, 3	3.6	0.55	Moderate
Q7: Do you use mass media tools to connect with teachers for professional development?	1, 4	3.8	0.45	Moderate
Q8: Have you received training on the effective use of mass media tools?	2, 1, 1, 1	3.2	1.30	Low
Q9: What challenges have you encountered when using mass media tools?	3, 2	2.8	1.10	Low
Q10: How do you ensure the use of mass media aligns with curriculum objectives?	1, 3, 1	4.0	0.71	Moderate

General Trends: Most responses indicate a moderate level of agreement on the usefulness and effectiveness of mass media in teaching English.



Q10 (Ensuring curriculum alignment) received the highest mean score (4.0), indicating its critical importance to teachers.

Challenges and Training: Teachers expressed lower levels of satisfaction and confidence in areas such as training received (Q8, Mean = 3.2, SD = 1.30) and challenges faced when using mass media tools (Q9, Mean = 2.8, SD = 1.10).

Here is the consolidated table for the survey questions on the role of mass media in teaching and learning English:

Survey Questions	Frequency	Mean	SD	Overall Level
Q11: Do you feel that mass media tools have helped you reach students who may have been disengaged in traditional classroom settings?	5	4.0	0.71	Moderate
Q12: How do you ensure that the use of mass media tools is accessible to all students, regardless of their access to technology?	5	3.4	0.55	Moderate
Q13: Have you ever encountered any negative consequences when using mass media tools for language teaching?	5	2.8	0.84	Moderate
Q14: How do you balance the use of mass media tools with other teaching methods?	5	3.2	0.84	Moderate
Q15: What advice would you give to other language teachers who are considering using mass media tools in their teaching?	5	3.0	1.00	Low
Q16: How do you involve students in the selection and use of mass media tools in your language teaching?	5	3.4	1.14	Low
Q17: How do you incorporate feedback from students when using mass media tools in your language teaching?	5	2.8	0.45	Moderate
Q18: What ethical considerations do you take into account when using mass media tools in your language teaching?	5	3.6	0.55	Moderate
Q19: How do you stay up to date on new mass media tools and their potential applications in language teaching?	5	3.6	0.90	Low



Survey Questions	Frequency	Mean	SD	Overall Level
Q20: How do you see the role of mass media tools evolving in language teaching in the future?	5	3.8	1.10	Low

High Engagement and Potential: Q11 ("Do you feel that mass media tools have helped you reach disengaged students?") showed a high mean score (4.0, SD = 0.71), indicating that teachers perceive these tools as effective in reaching traditionally disengaged students.

Accessibility and Balancing Methods: Questions on accessibility (Q12, Mean = 3.4) and balancing with traditional methods (Q14, Mean = 3.2) also reflected moderate agreement. However, ensuring equitable access remains a critical challenge, as indicated by the relatively lower means.

Challenges and Negative Consequences: Participants reported moderate levels of agreement regarding the presence of challenges and negative consequences when using mass media tools (Q13, Mean = 2.8, SD = 0.84).

Ethical and Evolving Practices: Teachers recognized the importance of ethical considerations (Q18, Mean = 3.6) and staying updated on new tools (Q19, Mean = 3.6).

Areas for Improvement: Responses related to incorporating student feedback (Q17, Mean = 2.8, SD = 0.45) and involving students in the selection process (Q16, Mean = 3.4, SD = 1.14) were comparatively lower.

Future Outlook: Q20 ("How do you see the role of mass media tools evolving in the future?") received a moderately positive score (Mean = 3.8, SD = 1.10), showing optimism about their growing impact in language teaching.

While mass media tools are valued for their role in improving engagement and reaching diverse learners, challenges such as training, accessibility, and balancing teaching methods require further attention to maximize their effectiveness.

Interview with Teachers About the Role of Mass Media in Teaching English

The interview responses indicate that mass media play a significant role in making English teaching more interactive and effective. Despite facing challenges and lacking formal training, teachers recognized the value of integrating mass media tools with traditional methods to improve the teaching-learning process. Looking forward, they emphasized the importance of training and shared optimistic views about the potential of mass media in the future of language education.

The Impact of Mass Media in Learning English (Students' Survey)



Survey Questions	Frequency	Mean	S.D.	Overall Level
Q1: Which mass media do you frequently use for learning English?	2, 18	2.9	0.31	Moderate
Q2: How often do you engage with mass media in English for language learning?	4, 8, 8	3.2	0.77	Moderate
Q3: What specific types of content or programs do you find most beneficial for improving English skills?	2, 12, 6	3.2	0.62	Moderate
Q4: Do you think mass media are more effective than traditional materials for learning English?	2, 8, 6, 4	3.6	0.94	Low
Q5: Have you experienced an increase in English proficiency using mass media?	6, 8, 2, 4	3.2	1.11	Low
Q6: Do you use mass media to connect with other English learners for language exchange or practice?	5, 15	3.5	0.89	Low
Q7: Have you received guidance on utilizing mass media effectively for learning English?	2, 18	3.8	0.62	Moderate
Q8: What challenges have you encountered when using mass media for learning English?	3, 11, 6	3.2	0.67	Moderate
Q9: How do you ensure that your use of mass media aligns with your learning goals?	5, 11, 4	3.0	0.69	Moderate
Q10: Have you faced any negative consequences or distractions when using mass media for learning English?	5, 7, 8	3.2	0.81	Moderate

The table summarizes the findings from ten survey questions regarding the impact of mass media on teaching and learning English. The data highlights the respondents' perspectives on the effectiveness, usage patterns, and challenges associated with mass media in this context. Below is a detailed explanation.

Interview with Students About the Impact of Mass Media on Learning English

1. Respondents mostly held a *neutral* opinion (90%) regarding the mass media they frequently use. The mean score of 2.9 with a standard deviation of 0.31 indicates a *moderate level* of opinion. This suggests that respondents are not strongly inclined towards using any particular medium for learning English.

2. A significant portion of respondents reported engaging with mass media *sometimes* (40%) or *often* (40%). With a mean of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 0.77, the engagement level is also rated as *moderate*.



3. While most respondents remained *neutral* (60%), some expressed agreement (10%) or disagreement (30%). The mean score of 3.2 with a standard deviation of 0.62 reflects a *moderate level* of usefulness for specific content types, emphasizing varied preferences among users.

4. Opinions were distributed, with a notable percentage expressing *disagreement* (30%) or *strong disagreement* (20%). A mean score of 3.6 and a standard deviation of 0.94 categorized this as a *low level* of agreement, indicating skepticism about the superiority of mass media over traditional methods.

5. Responses showed a mix of *not important* (30%) and *somewhat important* (40%), resulting in a mean score of 3.2 and a higher standard deviation of 1.11. This suggests a *low level* of perceived impact on proficiency improvement.

6. Most respondents reported *disagreement* (75%) on using mass media for language exchange, with a mean of 3.5 and a standard deviation of 0.89. The results reflect a *low level* of practice in this area, indicating potential underutilization of collaborative tools.

7. The majority disagreed (90%) with receiving adequate guidance. With a mean score of 3.8 and a standard deviation of 0.62, this is categorized as a *moderate level*. The findings indicate a need for more structured support and recommendations for effective use.

8. Challenges were rated as *somewhat challenging* (15%), *challenging* (55%), or *very challenging* (30%). The mean score of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 0.67 reflect a *moderate level*, emphasizing the need to address these difficulties.

9. Respondents mostly rated this as *somewhat important* (55%), leading to a mean score of 3.0 with a standard deviation of 0.69. This is a *moderate level*, suggesting room for improvement in aligning media use with learning objectives.

10. Negative consequences were rated as *neutral* (35%) or *disagree* (40%). The mean score of 3.2 and a standard deviation of 0.81 suggest a *moderate level* of challenges, indicating the need for strategies to minimize distractions.

The findings reveal that while mass media play a significant role in supporting English language learning, their full potential is not being realized due to challenges like a lack of guidance, skepticism about their effectiveness compared to traditional methods, and limited use for collaborative purposes. Addressing these issues could enhance the impact of mass media on learning outcomes.

Conclusion

This study concludes that mass media have the potential to significantly enhance English language learning for high school students in Myanmar, especially in improving engagement and supporting interactive instruction. However, its current impact remains at a

moderate level due to several key challenges, including limited access to resources, insufficient teacher training, and technical difficulties. While students and teachers recognize the value of mass media, particularly in developing listening and speaking skills, its integration into writing instruction is still limited. To fully realize the benefits of mass media, there is a need for strategic efforts such as providing targeted training for teachers, developing media-based learning materials, and addressing infrastructure gaps. Moreover, promoting ethical and collaborative use of media can further strengthen its role in education. With proper implementation, mass media can become an effective tool for transforming English teaching and learning in Myanmar's high schools.

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