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ABSTRACT

This research examined the motivational effects of using variously captioned English language video materials in teaching university level language learners in Taiwan, focusing on the use of professionally produced video materials ("Always" and "Dead Poets Society") in the language laboratory as the central text. Designed to evaluate the hypothesis that the use of video materials as the central teaching materials is highly motivational and pedagogically feasible, this study investigated the viability of replacing printed textbooks designed for use in educational settings with videotapes designed for use in the entertainment industry. The study compared motivational differences exhibited by students instructed using each approach. Researchers compared the results of motivational surveys administered to students taught using only video materials and those taught using traditional textbook materials. Data analysis indicated strong support for the suggestion that video materials can be highly successful in building student motivation. However, there was also strong demonstration of motivational increases in those classes taught using only textbook materials. Student surveys are appended. (Contains 14 pages of references.) (SM)

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A Study of Motivational Effects and Related Student Perceptions of Skills Improvement Attained Through the Use of Variously Captioned Authentic Video Materials

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Abstract

This research examined the motivational effects of using variously captioned authentic English-language video materials in the teaching of university level language learners. This research, originally intended as the first of a proposed three-year study, has focused on the use of professionally produced video materials in the language laboratory classroom as the central text. Designed to evaluate the hypothesis that the use of video materials as the central teaching materials is highly motivational and pedagogically feasible, this study engages in a discussion on the viability of replacing the printed textbook designed for use in an educational setting, with the videotape designed for use in the entertainment industry. This study compares the motivational differences exhibited by students instructed under each approach. By comparing the results of motivational surveys administered to students taught using only video materials, and those taught using traditional textbook materials, the authors discovered strong support for the suggestion that video materials can be highly successful in building student motivation. However, the strong demonstration of motivational increases in those classes taught using only textbook materials serves to hinder a claim of full proof. Originally intended as the first step of a three-year study program aiming at the analysis of the academic advantages of using variously captioned or subtitled film material, this research is nevertheless successful in the original stated goal of demonstrating that professionally produced film materials for the entertainment industry can be successfully adapted for use as the central educational text in the classroom setting.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Development of the Hypothesis

Taiwan is one of the very few countries where the citizenry place an inordinately high value upon the learning of English as a foreign language. A recent survey of the adult population found that the learning of English was almost a national obsession, coming in second place to anxieties of political tensions between Taiwan and China. This naturally places a great emotional, psychological and professional demand upon language educators who must deal with high student expectations and the awareness that instructor performance is evaluated to some extent by student success.

It is not unusual, therefore, to find teachers pushing learners to their limits, only to run up against frustrations such as student boredom, exhaustion or disinterest. Regardless of how often students profess the importance of learning English for future commercial success and personal reward, it is still an all-too-common experience of instructors to face student resistance to the study of the foreign language. This may be especially true for college and university instructors, who must deal with the "four years play" mentality that survives as the cultural debris produced by the traditional exam-based system of education at the lower grade levels. Instructors at institutions of higher education must likewise deal with any damage that may have been done previously by well-meaning teachers who, through an excessive abuse of grammar-based instructional techniques, unintentionally pummeled out of their youthful wards all possibility of finding pleasure in learning English.

This is the environment that the authors of this study found themselves forced to deal with on a daily basis, as they struggled to overcome what they recognized as an increasing growth of student apathy and even hostility toward the required study of

English as a foreign language. For the authors this was an especially disturbing trend, possibly exacerbated to a large degree by national changes in university admissions policies and increased enrollment at their institution, Chinese Culture University in Taipei.

As school admission was opening up to larger numbers of students, so too was the university admitting larger numbers of individuals whose personal backgrounds and study habits were demonstrative of assumed low levels of *intrinsic motivation*. These were students who, under the older admissions policies of the previous decade, would not likely have been afforded an opportunity to achieve a university education. This new breed of freshmen entering the mountaintop university were not motivated toward the rigorous discipline of book-based studying, favoring instead the time spent engaged in the playful socializing experiences of youth.

Attempting to deal with this study body, the authors adopted two approaches. The first, which proved least successful, was an emphasis on "hard work" and serious study. This basically entailed a greater emphasis upon the textbook and text-related activities. The textbook was wielded as the most valuable source of input, with lesson plans built solely around the communication and grammar foci of each chapter. A typical lesson included the reading of the book's printed dialogues in unison, followed by readings done by pairs. Multiple playing of the audiotape dialogue was followed by comprehension checks and instructor explanations of various terms.

The student response to this use of the textbook was less-than enthusiastic. A sense of boredom and occasional rebellion was pervasive. Students failed to complete homework assignments, and only half-heartedly participated in dialogue practices and other text-connected activities. Some of the problem arose from their extremely heavy class schedules, with some students having class from early morning to late afternoon. It could not be expected that they could remain enthusiastic for a late-afternoon

laboratory class that was worth only a couple of credits. Nevertheless, heavy schedules and other responsibilities could not be held completely accountable for their disinterest, as students readily awakened to participate in occasional text-related word games, role plays or story telling activities. The problem was obviously either the authors' approach to the textbook, or the textbook itself.

Eventually, the overall poor atmosphere in the class affected the instructors, as well. In gestures that were part kindness, part laxity, both authors began bringing in various videotape materials. For instructor Lin, these were primarily feature-length films that she used in a "show-and-tell" format. Stopping the film at certain segments, Instructor Lin would lead students in bilingual discussions of aspects or themes related to the films, covering topics such as "suicide" or "romance" that students expressed an interest in. Gradually, according to Instructor Lin's experience, students came to eagerly expect the viewings and discussions, and were disappointed each time the teacher entered the room and turned the focus toward the textbook.

A similar experience accompanied Instructor Fox's use of videotape materials. Culling materials from his personal collection of American television broadcasts, Instructor Fox relied heavily upon the use of sitcoms and advertisements as a basis for student role plays, story creations and writing assignments. Like his colleague, Instructor Fox witnessed with wonder the student willingness to dive into video-related activities that he believed were of much greater difficulty than any of the class exercises related to textbook subjects. Students demonstrated a greater eagerness to create completely new dialogues to accompany a silently running image on the screen than to write a simple dialogue patterned after the skeletal guidelines in the textbook. Instructor Fox also noted in his students various signs of distress, boredom and occasional hostility that accompanied the movement away from the use of video and toward the textbook. Textbooks soon became doodling pads, and smiles

became frowns as heads drooped downward to the printed dialogues.

It was quite by chance that the authors discovered their mutual observations of student dissatisfaction with the department-approved textbook, and their positive experiences of using cinematic materials to break the downward spiral toward boredom and disinterest. Having achieved a common bond, Instructors Lin and Fox soon found themselves sharing video materials and observing each other's use of the moving image in the language laboratory setting. Both realized that the moving image not only prevented boredom, but actually proved inspirational as well. Students of all skills levels were motivated to work harder in the production of the target language. It was later that this perception was validated by the research findings and observations of various educators and social researchers. These experts overwhelmingly focused on the motivational importance of video use.

Among the many arguments for the use of commercially produced cinematic productions is that film-viewing is an "experience" that goes beyond the killing of time through engagement in a mindless pleasantry. A high-quality film—and here the authors staunchly refuse involvement in the attempt at defining *quality*—is emotionally relevant to the life of the viewer, taking the viewing experience beyond the mindless sound and light diversion (Morley and Lawrence 118). Building upon the emotions and experiences, the use of quality films in a classroom environment also provide instructors with an opportunity to challenge their students' imaginations, arouse discussion and stimulate sharp subjective meanings (Morley and Lawrence 118; Kuhns 8).

This kind of video use is not satisfied with simple viewing as an end in itself, but rather approaches the in-class showing of as a beginning, especially when the opportunity arises to use dynamic films as catalysts of discussion about contemporary controversies at the international, national, social and personal level (Morley and

Lawrence 118). With proper handling, video use can lead to "highly motivated spoken and written exchanges of ideas and opinions" (Morley and Lawrence 118). Instructors can take advantage of carefully chosen films and well-prepared supplementary activities to encourage their students to look at different aspects of problems and solutions, issues and approaches. Films give students more opportunities to demonstrate greater concern about various social problems, and to take a closer look at those issues. Finally, commercial films offer a linguistic purpose, that is, to provide the chance for students to do live practice in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Commercially produced films also provide the dual benefits of a wide spread of challenging input, as well as the revelation of multicultural information. Students, if given adequate active involvement in the learning process, can experience tremendous improvements in their second language abilities (Yang).

Based upon the strengths of these arguments and the experiences of personal observation, Instructors Lin and Fox determined to investigate the possibility of actually replacing the professionally produced textbook with videotape materials. The assumption that the moving image is more motivational suggested that if the cinematic product could become the primary text, instructors would no longer be plagued with disinterested students and resistance to the study of English. But how could this be tested and validated? The obvious first step is the creation of a syllabus that centered on the use of videotape materials, rather than a central printed text. Justification for the implementation of such a radical curriculum could only arise from the supposition of a testable hypothesis: The use of videotape materials as the central text in the language learning classroom will automatically result in an increase of student motivation. The authors also argued that in order to test the validity of this assumption, it would be best to rely more heavily upon student-centered instructional techniques that would remove the focus upon instructor influence and allow a greater

emphasis upon the strengths and weaknesses of the video-based syllabus.

If the use of such a radical curriculum proved advantageous, the benefits could be harvested by instructors throughout Taiwan. Rather than relying on traditional authoritarian classroom methods and materials, teachers could motivate their students toward greater self-improvement through the creative use of video materials and ambitious curriculums. Instructors would finally have some positive guidance on how to properly attack the boredom and disinterest that the authors suspected was largely a result of textbook use and abuse. The replacement of the textbook with the videotape would be the key to increased levels of student motivation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Motivation Studies and Student-Centered Teaching

As an academic research subject, Motivational Studies has experienced various mutations and paradigmatic shifts. The roots of what we now know as Motivation Studies can be traced back to the beginnings of modern psychology, when Freudian theories determined the view of the human psyche. Traditional Freudianism identified human behavior as an external demonstration of internal subconscious conflicts arising from the conflicting needs for both compliance with social rules of conduct and natural innate drives for unchained satisfaction.

Despite the decades-long powerful influence of Freudian psychology, the behavorist school of psychology also achieved some prominence among theorists. Behavorist theories were different from traditional Freudian approaches in that they limited the power of the Freudian drive and instead endowed the external environment as the more-important element in human behavior. It was now the environment that shaped, indeed controlled, the individual's motivation and learning.

Arising from this approach were the various humanistic theories that viewed the individual as born with an innate goodness that could be brought out through education, natural development and the influence of the beloved. Refinements of this basic humanistic theory were part of the cognitive, social-cognitive and social-behaviorist schools of motivation, all of which built upon the work of previous psychologists. A reverse-shift of sorts took place in the later years of the Eighties with the Gestalt psychology movements that attempted to focus on the wholeness of the human psyche, turning the focus inward once again with talk about mental health.

The past decade saw a shift in theoretical trends, as theorists in Motivational Studies have shifted toward an emphasis upon cognition and belief. This has meant a

primacy in theories that see metacognitive levels of functioning as influential over both motivation and performance. These approaches emphasize a conscious self-awareness of *how* one thinks and what makes one tick as having some influence upon motivation and performance. This fits in well with the various theoretical approaches that place an emphasis upon cognitive *beliefs* as all-important in determining the direction of the human cognitive/motivational system (McCombs 9). Put simply, modern researchers are operating with the paradigm that sees the individual's beliefs as determining the direction of motivation and behavior. Taken together, these parallel lines of modern Motivation Studies give credence to the old adage: Know Thyself.

These theoretical approaches have given rise to a wide array of methodologies that emphasize the power of self-control over individual motivation, and which see an empowerment arising from within as the individual constructs a personal reality from the cues of an exterior environment (McCombs 9). Somewhat like masters of Zen Buddhism, motivational researchers and educators are increasingly focusing on the individual's active ability to focus on the function of *thought* as a means through which a personal reality is built, and the empowerment that is attained through the active and conscious control of thought processes. In these approaches, it is not the content of thought that is of importance, but the source and authority of thought itself. This suggests that if students are able to attain control over their thinking patterns, they can then regulate both emotions and behaviors.

Once the individual has an authority over the thinking process, dramatic changes can be achieved through the positive direction of thought content, or belief systems. This gives the subject an opportunity to "override" a negative belief and control the thought processes so that positive beliefs can be injected and eventually result in powerful life transformations (McCombs 10).

A common denominator of the various modern theoretical approaches and methodologies is the assumed focus on *extrinsic*, rather than *intrinsic* motivation (McCombs 11). It is taken as a given that students are generally not intrinsically motivated to learn, that there is nothing *within* the psyche that naturally drives them toward greater achievement. Instead, these theories assume that the source of motivation for most individuals lies in the outside environment, implying that solutions to motivational shortcomings can be found in a re-working of the external environment or a focus on an internal psychic shortcoming on the part of the individual (McCombs 11).

Even those who endorse the belief that students function through the principles of intrinsic motivation, or what Mills calls the "higher self," nevertheless cite the possible need for an outside influence of some sort to provide a spark that will light the flames of innate wisdom and motivation (79). This gives a great authority and agency to external factors such as education and interpersonal relationships. It is therefore no surprise to see much of the educational research on student motivation focusing quite heavily upon the role of the teacher and various teacher-initiated affinity behaviors.

However, it is almost impossible to make a clear separation between teacher affinity behaviors and classroom management techniques, both of which can be taken together as a blueprint for the pedagogical goal of achieving a *student-centered* classroom. This pedagogical approach, known most commonly as Learner-Centeredness but referred to in this writing as *the student-centered approach*, is built upon the assumption that student motivation as vital to academic and personal success. Much of the driving force behind student-centered instruction is the concept of empowerment. In its many guises and significations, empowerment suggests the enablement of students to think independently, free from the influence of peers or

power brokers. This is somewhat akin to the teachings of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, whose pioneering writings in the field of social studies and education have inspired instructors around the world to question the role of the traditional teacher as authority figure. Freire defined empowerment through a sociopolitical viewpoint, seeing one of the roles of the instructor as "encouraging people to question (to see their reality as a problem), to challenge and to change their reality" (Allman 149). This call for a change in reality, starting with an alteration of the perceptions of reality, can be applied to the classroom, as well. Where the teacher has traditionally been seen as the holder of knowledge and power, the call for student empowerment suggests a re-working of the student-teacher relationship. It is the student who, in the process of social growth, becomes a self-educator.

The spirit of Freire's work is an inspiration to modern approaches to student-centeredness, a methodology that traces its direct descendants in theorists of the "humanistic approach to language teaching" (Tudor 4). The various schools that find themselves grouped within the humanistic approach show a common belief in the need for the student to be more active in the learning process, and a resultant scaling back in the role of the instructor. This puts the onus on the student, demanding personal responsibility in the task of learning. The early thinkers in the humanistic approach focused largely upon emotional aspects of learning, with educators such as Charles Curran emphasizing the need for personal relevance in subject matter and the creation of a supportive, non-judgmental classroom atmosphere (Tudor 5).

Without abandoning the humanistic school's respect for the individual's emotional needs, modern practitioners of student-centered methodologies shift the focus toward the question of activity organization and student participation in decision-making processes that will ultimately determine the quality and amount of personally relevant input (Tudor 13). Student-centeredness builds upon a variety of

principles, as outlined in the following two paragraphs (Tudor 14-15):

The target language (English) should be used for the purpose of helping students express their ideas, opinions and observations. Instructors must therefore choose activities that appeal to the current needs of students, monitoring the students for deficiencies in their target language abilities. Since much of the emphasis is upon issues of importance to students, few professionally produced educational materials (textbooks) can sufficiently meet the needs of learners. It is therefore important that students participate actively in the creation of materials, and dictate to some degree the pacing and handling of those materials in the class.

This also invites an element of surprise, as students do not always know what to expect in terms of either the materials used or the direction that any given lesson will take. In such an environment, it is necessary that students band together in a community. It is necessary that students learn how to work together, combining their talents, encouraging and teaching each other, and learning from each other.

Various motivational theorists have confirmed, in their separate examinations of how classroom environments and teacher-student interactions affect learner motivation, many of the principles of student-centered pedagogy. One example is Orbe's research on the importance of "community" in the classroom. A variation of Curran's emphasis upon a *supportive* class environment, Orbe notes that motivation is enhanced in a classroom where *conflict* can take place without negative results, where students feel comfortable with disagreement and vulnerability, knowing they "can feel safe in taking personal risks" (Orbe 6). The ultimate success of a class "hinges on the ability to achieve a sense of community" (Orbe 1).

Bernazza Haase likewise cites a corresponding link between intrinsic motivation and student empowerment within a community of peers, a community that includes the instructor: "When a student knows he is accepted, respected, and that his presence

has impact, he goes about the business of learning with zeal" (38). Morganette sees the idea of *cooperation* as essential to the germination of student motivation, as she advises: "Instead of having students compete with each other for grades, recognition, and/or success, have students work together cooperatively to carry out some task or project" (28).

Some motivational researchers note that with the proper set of circumstances, such as those encouraged by a student-centered pedagogical approach, a cyclical effect may take over as increased levels of intrinsic motivation resulting from empowerment lead to even greater strides toward personal empowerment. Like a typhoon that winds itself up for an enhanced punch, the motivated student eagerly grabs for greater degrees of empowerment. Such students are engaged in a process that Ridley calls "self-regulation," which he defines as the student being "an active agent in his or her own learning process metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally" (32). Such students can attain greater levels of empowerment through self-reflection, and are not prone to mere memorization or unquestioning acceptance of spoon-fed truths. Self-reflective learners are more likely to explore seriously their own attitudes, emotions, abilities and goals "in a way that would promote legitimate growth and learning" (Ridley 36). Moreover, reflectively intentional students are more open to experiencing emotional challenges that accompany real learning and exploration. (Ridley 37).

The supportive bridges between researchers in Motivational Studies and advocates of student-centered methodologies have been demonstrated through the examination of what is needed in order to ensure maximum language acquisition and learning. The assumed factor in this equation, the single element that advocates of student-centeredness leave unsaid, is the undeniable role of the instructor. It is perhaps ironic that student-centered classroom approaches necessarily demand a fair degree of

teacher control. It is also important not to neglect the importance of teacher-student affinity. As noted by Scheck, teachers have "a direct positive effect on student attitudes," suggesting that instructors themselves "play a primary role in modifying students' interests and drive in a classroom setting" (109-110). This, of course, makes sense as it is the instructor who is responsible for policing the student-centered classroom. It is the instructor who acts as a counselor, guide and therapist. And it is ironically the instructor who ultimately wields the final authority, even as she attempts to foster a learning environment in which much of the authority is in the hands of the students.

One of the most important factors in the creation of a student-centered classroom is the development of a curriculum. This includes the establishment of a goal based upon a needs analysis, and the selection or creation of materials and methods that will ultimately result in the attainment of this academic objective. In this, the student-centered approach is typical of all educational models. The major difference, according to Nunan, is that the student-centered curriculum "is a collaborative effort between teachers and learners, since learners are closely involved in the decision-making process regarding the content of the curriculum and how it is taught" (2).

This research, as noted in the previous chapter, is aimed at examining the possible potentials inherent in the substitution of videotape materials for the traditional textbook as the primary source of input in the university level language laboratory setting. The argument for the use of cinematic productions has likewise been stated in the previous chapter. It should again be noted here, however, that the demands of research prohibited the authors from the full implementation of a student-centered approach. The goal of this research, which was carried out in an authentic classroom setting, demanded the use of videotape materials—a decision

carried out by the authors without prior consultation of the students. Likewise, the development of syllabi and the creation of in-class materials was also largely a result of the instructors' unilateral decision-making processes. For the purpose of maintaining an unalterable focus on the impact of video materials, student participation in both the development and progress of the course was relatively minimal.

Interestingly, the ability of the instructors to maintain this authority was challenged approximately halfway through the semester. How and why this happened will be explained in more detail in the third chapter. Preceding that, however, will be an introduction to the various class activities and curricula prepared for use in these classes.

CHAPTER III

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The ultimately pragmatic goal of this research project was the development of a university language laboratory curriculum built upon videotape materials rather than professionally produced printed texts. The first step in this project was the creation of a working hypothesis, and an evaluative approach to demonstrate the validity of this theoretical presumption. What follows is a description of the reasoning and methods incorporated for the dual task of creating a radical curriculum that would serve as the testing ground for the hypothesis.

The Hypothesis: Development and Evaluation

As noted in the opening chapter of this report, the authors—Instructors Lin and Fox—pondered the problem of what they perceived as a textbook-induced disinterest in the classroom study of English, and saw as a motivational alternative the use of more-stimulating videotape materials. The accompanying hypothesis, which proved simple in statement but difficult in demonstration, revealed the sheer practicality of this research project: *The use of videotape materials as the central text in the language learning classroom will automatically result in an increase of student motivation.*

Demonstration of this hypothesis would require a two-fold approach. First, the authors would be required to actually create a syllabus centered solely on videotape materials, and carefully avoiding materials that appeared to have been gleaned from professionally produced language education textbooks.

For purposes of evaluation, a seven-point survey examining alterations of student motivation as a direct result of exposure to or participation in this relatively radical video-based curriculum was devised. As a source of comparison, the same survey was

to be administered to a textbook-based class in which the use of videotape materials was carefully avoided. To further the benefits of the comparison, a number of common curricular contents were set up and taught in both the video materials and textbook classes. This would provide as much of a similarity in content as possible, while the central texts would differ. The seven questions are examined in greater detail in the following chapter.

Following NSC preliminary suggestions, a second avenue of investigation was also carried out during this experiment, namely the examination of the advantages of differently subtitled materials upon student language acquisition. However, the decision to employ two very separate research goals within the context of a single project may have proven irrevocably damaging to the testing and evaluation of both experiments. The methods used to evaluate the academic advantages of variously subtitled videotape materials are included as some of the classroom methods used in the primary research for the teaching of listening comprehension. It can be noted here, however, that the necessary "testing" approach for purposes of evaluation was detrimental to this project. While the majority of the curricular activities were student-centered, this activity of multiple before-and-after quizzes—couched as it was under the categorization of "listening skills practice" and justified as a "practice opportunity"—proved disheartening to students, shocking in its difference from the majority of other empowering student approaches. Laudably, students rebelled against the use of multiple quizzes, and noted with conviction that this activity alone had taken much of the fun from the use of the textbook. Students pointed out that this activity served to turn the video material into a textbook, leading to higher elevations in dissatisfaction and disinterest in the central film.

Materials: Justification, Creation and Utilization

A primary difference between the authors needed to be settled. Instructor Lin

favored the use of feature-length films produced professionally for the entertainment industry. Instructor Fox favored the use of shorter television productions such as situation comedies (typically a 20-minute format) or dramas (typically a 45-minute format) produced for the North American entertainment industry. Instructor Fox justified the use of these materials according to their brevity of viewing time in comparison to the much-longer feature-length films. Shorter viewing times could enable the use of a program in its entirety within the parameters of a full 100-minute class session. The brevity of most televised dramas likewise demanded an encapsulation, simplification and condensation of dramatic action and relevant themes, making more obvious the topics and arguments that could serve as a focus for class activities.

Pragmatic as always, Instructor Lin argued the impracticality of using television materials that were difficult to obtain in Taiwan. The use of Hollywood features, on the other hand, would enable the authors to make use of a wide library of video materials as well as accompanying playback and editing technologies. It was this very sound argument from an instructor long accustomed to using these cinematic offerings in a variety of class settings that achieved supremacy in the initial decision-making process of materials selection.

As intensive editing would be necessary to create appropriate teaching materials (as will be described in the following analysis of classroom activities), the authors investigated what was for them an unknown world of home consumer electronics. Their discovery of the necessary equipment was nothing short of enlightening. The primary source of original film releases became the Laser Disc (LD), with playback provided by the Laser Disc Player. The choice of this already dated technology was based upon its already established operating features. The use of LD playback technology enabled the creation of videotapes in variously subtitled formats. In other

words, the LD allowed the authors to make videotapes of films with only Chinese subtitles, only English closed captions, both Chinese subtitles and English closed captions, or no wording at all. The LD also enabled the use of a software program and cable hardware that provided instant downloading of film subtitles and closed captions to a computer databank. Meanwhile, the editing features of the LD player proved simple, providing a clear image in the pause mode and a swift cessation of signal with the stop command. It should be noted that Digital Video Disc (DVD) technology, the newest generation in laser disc technology, provides many of the same features with the added benefit of having the full film on a single disc, thereby avoiding the necessary physical manipulation involved in changing discs halfway through a film. Unfortunately, the current list of film offerings in DVD format is still somewhat limited to some classic films and the newest releases, while LD inventories in video rental shops across Taipei enabled the authors to make use of most cinematic releases they considered of greater relevance to classroom use.

The two films that were ultimately chosen for use in the first semester of this study were director Peter Wier's *Dead Poets Society* (1989) and Stephen Spielberg's *Always* (1989). The first film was selected on its thematic basis, as the melodramatic screenplay highlights at least two levels of conflict taking place at a boys preparatory school. At one level, a son's struggle against his father's dominance results in the youth's suicide. At another level, a handful of students rebel against the canonical curriculum imposed upon them by structuralist-minded school administrators. Other dramatic elements include the crisis of an introverted, unnoticed boy forced to fill the shoes of his outgoing, popular brother, and another youth's ambitious attempts to woo a girl who would by all accounts appear to be far outside of his league. Many of these issues, most notably the student-teacher and child-parent conflicts, were demonstrated in earlier classes taught by Instructor Lin to have great appeal to modern students. The

film spoke to the experiences of their youth.

Different in many ways is the film *Always*, selected as an alternative to the authors' initial-but-unavailable selection, *Titanic*. The film deals with the subject of romance, as the plot follows the experiences of a forest firefighter who dies only to return as the invisible inspiration for the man destined to woo his grieving girlfriend. Intertwined with this major theme are examinations of loyalty, determination and destiny, all of which can be connected to some degree with identical thematic expression in *Dead Poets Society*. Pragmatically, this film also boasted the advantages of relatively clear pronunciation on the part of most of the lead players, Richard Dreyfuss, John Goodman, Brad Johnson and Audrey Hepburn.

Having selected the two films upon which the curriculum would be developed, it remained for the instructors to establish the guidelines or foci of the classroom learning experience. The natural place to start would be to deal with the dominant themes expressed in the films, as these could be the avenues toward establishing a connection with students' emotional lives. Following this, it would be important to devise various exercises that would appear "traditional" but which would in reality have arisen from what the instructors perceived through experience as the daily linguistic and social needs of modern youths in the cosmopolitan environment of Taipei.

Pedagogical Approach

One of the major advantages of using cinematic materials is the emotional impact that films can have upon viewers. It was therefore assumed that the use of films would fit well with the adapted form of student-centered instruction and the emphasis upon the emotional aspects of learning and the personal relevance of the subject matter. The decision to use film materials enhanced the desire to use an adapted form of student-centeredness, which in turn served to encourage the authors

in their commitment to the centrality of videotape teaching aids. The technology and the methodology seem to fit hand-in-glove.

The themes of the selected films for the first semester centered on questions of Conflict with Authority Figures and Relationships. Both of these were assumed as important factors in the lives of many students, who come to college with the sophomoric expectations of having finally attained full adulthood. Once ensconced in university life, they find themselves dealing with different kinds of instructors, teaching styles and class demands, ranging from the liberal to conservative, simple to complicated. Meanwhile, there are issues of parental control to be dealt with, and the challenges resulting from first-time independence from the sheltering wings of familial love. All this takes place in an environment of uncertainty, as young adults learn how to relate with each other and steer their way through the gauntlet of friendships, romances, separations and sexualities.

Meanwhile, the authors also strove to offer materials of a more structured nature. Without falling back upon grammar-teaching classroom methodologies, they nevertheless strove to find grammatical structures and sentence patterns that could prove useful for the needs of students. These structures were suggested by the films, and were not gleaned from traditional textbooks. Also of note, these structures were applied because of a perceived need on the part of students, according to observations made by Instructor Lin over her many years of teaching experience at the university. These grammar points and sentence patterns will be introduced at a later point in this chapter.

Course and Subjects

Given the difficulties inherent in conducting authentic-classroom research, the authors were able to select only three ideal classes for use in this study. It was especially challenging as the teaching schedule had been set beforehand, and making

alterations was almost impossible. One of the primary difficulties was the unusual event of Instructor Lin receiving almost all freshman lab classes, while Instructor Fox was assigned all sophomore lab classes. Tradeoffs were made, and Instructor Lin was able to procure a sophomore lab class that could be applied to this research project, and it was deemed that this would be a video materials class. But the lack of another sophomore class that could serve as a textbook class for Instructor Lin proved a serious setback in the final analysis. Nevertheless, the authors determined to continue their focus upon the cinema-centered syllabus, working at the sophomore level rather than the freshmen level, as had been initially planned in their proposal submission.

The approximate size of the student body in the average language laboratory class is 62, a limit that is determined by the availability of fixed seating. The academic focus of the language laboratory class is the acquisition and practice of both speaking and listening skills in the target language. The laboratory course is actually supplementary to what has become known at Chinese Culture University as the Freshman English Course (FEC), a course with greater credit hours that has a more serious focus on the teaching and practice of reading and writing skills. It is not mandatory for students to take an English-language class (such as the FEC or accompanying lab offerings), although all students must study at least two years' of a foreign language. As it happens, even with the freedom to choose, a majority of incoming students flock toward the study of English, the foreign tongue they've been forced to work with since high school.

The language laboratory classrooms differ in some important aspects. In all language lab classrooms, the desks are fixed in position, typically with two students seated next to each other as a pre-established "pair" of partners. Unlike some lab setups, the desks have no glass panels or walls to separate the student from the rest of the room, a feature that fosters a greater sense of belonging to a traditional community

oriented class. This encourages group work and larger networks of communication, an unusual situation in comparison to the usual language lab setting in which the desk itself serves to purposely isolate the individual from her classmates.

Instructor Lin had the privilege of using a recently renovated classroom, equipped with a new audio-sound system and overhead projector, a greatly needed improvement over the original malfunctioning audio-sound system and the barely visible television sets that this renovation replaced. This enabled her to make use of the audiovisual equipment, such as audiotape playback and individual headphone sets that provided clear audio reception.

Instructor Fox was assigned an older classroom with sturdier wooden desks but barely functioning equipment. Audio-tape playback could only be accomplished through the use of two well-worn speakers mounted to the wall at the front of the classroom. Audio-tape player machines were often rebellious in minor ways, such as playing the audio at a slightly advanced speed or simply refusing to stop when put into a rewind mode. The equipment could best be described as ornery. That having been said, however, the lab classroom was equipped with a relatively new overhead projector, projection screen and videocassette recorder.

Sophomore lab classes are typically dominated by students from one or two outside departments, with a large number of other majors thrown in for variety. It is unusual to find English Department majors in these classes, as they enjoy their own segregated lab classes. The large numbers of students from various departments congregating in certain lab classes is perhaps a result of their department schedules, as required classes and other course demands leave the members of various departments with limited options on how and when to attend the required lab classes. This heavy concentration is not the purposeful goal of the Language Center, which sees greater opportunities for communication among students of different academic backgrounds

and personal experiences. Nevertheless, the Language Center is the one sure place in the entire university where diversity can be largely assured.

Unfortunately, there is also in the typical lab class a diversity of an undesired sort: student skills abilities. There is at present no placement test or established categories of classes for learners of different skills abilities. This means that a single class of 62 students may well have 30 percent of students at a beginning skills level, 30 percent at an advanced skills level, and 40 percent falling somewhere in-between the two extremes. Because instructors have no way of immediately determining these different-ability students, and considering the needs of handling personalities and physical handicaps (friends and farsightedness, for example), the seating arrangement established in the first weeks of the semester usually becomes cemented into position, possibly leaving a low-level learner seated with a high-level partner. This is not always conducive to good communications within the class or among classmates.

Activities and Exercises

The activities of the first semester were built upon the seemingly contradictory goal of using teacher-inspired leadership to encourage students toward greater self-control over their learning processes. It was the teacher who wielded the ultimate decision-making authority regarding materials and application, but it was assumed that students would benefit from gradually increasing levels of freedom in the micro-management of various activities and the free expression of individual beliefs. The following activities represent a large number of the activities undertaken in the first semester of this research project. It is noted at the end of each introductory statement whether or not this activity was used in the video materials class, the textbook class, or both.

Exercise: Statements of Preference

Following small group discussions, individual students were asked to stand and

state their preferences on various subjects, such as naming their favorite film genres, most beloved teachers, or the kind of gifts that would normally be given to different individuals. The focus of this activity is to connect the language with an emotional statement of personal expression. Both video materials and textbook classes used this activity.

Exercise: Categorizations

Working as small groups, students were asked to create ranked listings on various subjects, such as: "Name the top 10 characteristics of a good teacher" and it's opposite, "Name the top 10 characteristics of a bad teacher." Other lists included: "Five reasons why I want a university education." The focus of this activity is to connect the language with an emotional statement of personal expression, and to provide practice in group discussion, compromise and attainment of consensus. Both video materials and textbook classes used this activity.

Exercise: Sharing Opinions through Writing

Individual students were asked, for extra credit, to turn in a short essay on the subjects such as: "What is your opinion of Keating's teaching methods? Would they work for students in Taiwan?" or "Which film says more about True Love: *Titanic* or *Always*?" The focus of this activity is the private expression in English of an opinionated response in written form, and the practice of argumentation supported by reason and reference. Only the first semester video materials class used this activity.

Exercise: Personal Reflections

Individual students were asked to volunteer statements on the subject: "My Father and I." Volunteers compared their relationships with their fathers to that viewed in the film *Dead Poets Society*. The focus of this activity is to connect the language with a highly emotional statement of personal expression, and to encourage reasoning skills through a highly personal "reading" of the film. Only the video

materials class used this activity.

Exercise: Controlled Debate

Working with a pseudo-debate format, students were selected for two camps on either side of the issue: "Should teachers be allowed to physically punish students?" The debate was structured by a pattern format (see the following) and controlled insofar as students were allowed to cooperate in the delivery of pre-written statements and work in groups for the selection of appropriate statements to serve as responses. The focus of this activity is to engage students in an emotionally charged communicative activity, and to build a sense of community among group members. Both the video materials and textbook classes took part in this activity. The sentence pattern handout provided a number of variations on: I (don't) think hitting students is (im)proper for the goals of education.

Exercise: Song-Based Role-Play

After studying the lyrics to the folk song *Flowers are Red* by Harry Chapin, student groups created role-plays similar to but not completely identical to the plot of the song. The focus of this activity was the acquisition of new vocabulary words and the emotional and motivational benefits derived from the experience of group cooperation toward the goal of a public performance. Both the video materials and textbook classes took part in this activity.

Exercise: Singing

Students were taught the song *You're the One that I Love* from the musical *Grease*, and afterwards were asked to join in a sing-along with the song as excerpted from the film. This activity, which was built upon viewing the video, listening to the tape and studying the printed lyrics, was highly popular with students. The focus of this activity was partly a pleasant diversion, but also the use of a holistic approach that builds upon left-brain and right-brain functions through the use of visual, auditory and

oral functions as well as the simultaneous use of reading and musical singing. Only the video materials class took part in this activity. This activity was also undertaken using the song *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* as presented in the film *Always*.

Exercise: Passive Viewing

With little comment from the instructor aside from simple background information on the UK government's initial ban of the Pink Floyd song *Another Brick in the Wall Part II*, students were provided a showing of the cinematic recreation of this and *The Happiest Days of Our Lives* from the film, *The Wall*. Prior to the viewing, a Taiwanese-language translation of the lyrics was read to the class by a student. The purpose of this was to provide exposure to cinematic symbolism, combined with music, designed to present a political opinion. The benefit of this may be in the enhancement of rational thinking necessary for the recognition of the messages conveyed by imagery. Only the video materials class took part in this activity.

Exercise: Take-home Translation

Students randomly selected words and phrases from a list of 45 vocabulary words/phrases excerpted from the film *Dead Poets Society*, for translation at home. The following week, each student stood and offered her classmates the translation for their selected words, while other students feverishly wrote down the results. The focus of this activity is simple translation practice and a reduced-anxiety experience of public performance. Only the video materials class took part in this activity.

Exercise: Scene Re-enactment

Volunteers, working in groups of four or more, memorized a short excerpt from the film *Dead Poets Society* and performed this in an acting contest. The focus of this activity is the public production of English spoken in an emotional context yet with reduced likelihood of anxiety as students mask themselves with the identities of the cinematic characters. The selected scene offered a re-enactment of an initial

father-son conflict. Only the video materials class took part in this activity.

Exercise: Story Re-telling

After dual viewings of brief action clips excerpted from the film *Dead Poets Society*, students worked in groups to write mini-plot outlines that were presented to the class for grammatical correction. The focus of this activity is the practice of cooperation within a group and a publicly assisted grammatical correction, as well as exposure to the preliminary steps of proper compositional writing. Only the video materials class took part in this activity.

Exercise: Vocabulary Teaching

When appropriate as an introductory activity to the lesson, the instructor would volunteer a list of vocabulary words related to the primary topic of the lesson. For example, prior to having volunteer students publicly reveal their personal experiences of teacher-initiated punishment, the instructors taught a list of other "violent" words such as: to hit, punch, slap, pinch, kneel, squat, semi-squat, kick, pull, stand in a corner and stay after school. The focus of this activity is linguistic input combined with, when appropriate, the affinity techniques of relating the words to the individual instructors' experiences as pupils. Both the video materials and textbook classes took part in this activity.

Exercise: Games and Party Pleasures

Students were asked to engage in various seemingly unrelated game activities, with these sometimes serving as class openers. One such activity is the "Movie Star Name Game," in which students must compete to remember the Chinese names, or conversely the English names, of a long list of Hollywood and Hong Kong celebrities. Students also engaged in a Christmas Party, during which various games were played such as "Bingo" using vocabulary words gleaned from the films or "The Dating Game" in which a blindfolded student queries a secret panel of classmates in order to

determine which will accompany her or him to a cup of coffee after class. Other party activities included a Christmas gift exchange, the singing of carols, and a passive viewing (a week earlier) of a Christmas-theme action comedy, *Jingle All the Way*. The focus of this activity, aside from the obvious advantages of memory challenging games, is the reduction of stress and the sheer pleasure of friendly competition. Except for the film-viewing and the "Name Game" exercise, both the video materials and textbook classes took part in the Christmas party and related holiday game activities

Exercise: Listening Comprehension Drills, Queries and Quizzes

A brief multiple-choice quiz was administered to students immediately prior to viewing a brief excerpt from either *Dead Poets Society* or *Always*, shown to the class in various formats (see explanation below). Students were then provided with handouts for immediate reference or home study, and a similar quiz was again administered. Students understood that both quizzes were preparatory in nature, and that a third quiz administered a week later (and identical to the second practice quiz, although all three were designed to gauge student acquisition of target words or phrases from the excerpts) would be the actual for-credit evaluation. Prior to the third quiz in a week's time, students had the opportunity to query the instructors about various word meanings. They also had the chance to listen to an audiotape recording of the same video dialogue, and a final viewing of the excerpt. The focus of this activity was exposure to various degrees of language input through the film format, with further attention and study placing emphasis upon selected words. Only the video materials class took part in this activity.

Note: This exercise was designed to be a research activity recommended by NSC advisors. Thus, the format of quiz-viewing-quiz-viewing-quiz. Students were told that the multiple quizzes were for the purpose of practice, and indeed a large number of

learners found this comforting. The video showings were offered in various subtitle/caption formats to study the effects of the written word accompanying the moving/speaking image. The analytical results of this examination, carried out under poorly controlled conditions, are as of this writing unavailable.

Of tremendous importance is that Instructor Lin reported experiencing a tremendous amount of resistance to the use of video materials in such a blatantly traditional teacher-centered method. This was influential, to some degree, in the authors' decision to vary their instructional methods for the second semester, including the abandonment of this listening comprehension activity. The handful of student responses in Instructor Lin's class suggested that the simple replacement of the textbook with the videotape, without the adoption of a student-centered approach, leaves many students with the same lack of motivation that initially was reserved for textbook use.

Exercise: Audiotape Dialogues Comprehension

The use of a textbook entailed the study of two dialogues per chapter. The first semester of the textbook class was only able to focus upon the first three chapters of the textbook. An audiotape performance of the dialogues accompanied each chapter. These materials were approached in a variety of directions. A typical example of how Instructor Fox covered a single dialogue: Play the audiotape dialogue once, books closed; read the dialogue silently; play the audiotape with open books; play the dialogue with closed books; answer student questions, offer explanations and extra words; perform various class readings of the dialogue (unison, in response to teacher, pairs, etc.); use audiotape and books to do individual comprehension checks; play audiotape with books closed. The focus of this activity is to offer increased exposure to spoken English other than the instructor's vocal patterns, the learning of new words, and the opportunity to improve aural recognition through repetition. Of course, only

the textbook class took advantage of this activity.

Exercise: A Dramatic Performance

Using words culled from both the textbook and the film *Dead Poets Society*, Instructor Fox wrote a short dialogue for four people. Students were required to memorize the dialogue, translate it into Mandarin and perform it in their native language. The focus of this activity was to provide translation practice and to familiarize students with the words (from the film) and the emotional power behind those utterances. Two weeks later, students performed this dialogue on the stage for a mid-term grade. Prior to this, the class covered the pronunciation and intonation necessary for the proper handling of the script. Of course, only the textbook class took advantage of this activity.

Note: This activity was designed as a secondary test of the validity of a video material curriculum. It was assumed that the more inspirational use of video materials would lead to greater language acquisition and word recall. The test of this assumption would be equal exposure to the same words under different curricula, and the analysis of student performance vis a vis word recall. To this end, the textbook class drama activity and the video materials class translation activity (as well as repetitious exposure through discussions and viewings) were expected to provide enough qualified exposure and learning so as to enable the instructors to use these words as final exam listening comprehension questions. Class ratios of correct and incorrect answers may serve to validate the assumption. However, that analysis will be reserved for a separate, more in-depth analysis.

Second Semester Alterations

As noted earlier in this chapter, a seven-question survey was developed to test the hypothesis that the use of videotape materials as the central text in the language learning classroom will automatically result in an increase of student motivation.

Determination of the motivational impact of video use would be made through the comparison of the data received from the survey administered at the start of the semester and the survey administered at the conclusion of the first semester.

Prior to the analysis of these findings, the authors concluded that yet another test of the hypothesis could be achieved through a third survey administered at the end of the second semester, but that to further evaluate the validity of the assumed motivational power of video use, it would be necessary to switch materials. This would perhaps eliminate the "characteristic" class differences, given the possibility of claims that somehow different classes have individual personality traits that can negatively or positively affect the research findings. In other words, it could be argued that the video class survey results suggested greater student motivation simply because these students were more highly motivated. Increased levels of motivation could likewise be a result of teacher affinity behaviors, rather than the influence of the materials themselves. Therefore, it could be argued, findings of high motivation by semester's end would not prove that the use of video was actually motivational. Likewise, if the textbook class demonstrated low levels of motivation, it could be argued that the overall class "personality" was that of terminal disinterest. Likewise, the low reports of motivation could be blamed on poor relations between the students and their instructor.

These arguments could be eliminated to some degree by alterations in the second semester use of materials. It was assumed that the motivational benefits of video use could be demonstrated by a greater inclusion of textbook materials, resulting in lowered levels of motivation by the conclusion of the second semester. As for the textbook class, the use of video materials should lead to higher levels of student interest by the end of the term. Ideally, the two classes should switch materials and curricular foci in entirety, but realistically this would prove too traumatic for students.

The authors agreed to maintain, to as great a degree as possible, application of the student-centered approach. The major change was in materials use. For her video materials class, Instructor Lin elected a more independent path of action from her colleague. She developed her lessons around two films, A Walk in the Clouds and Forrest Gump, making use of the same approaches noted above such as discussions, debates, categorizations, etc. However, she included more "textbook" style materials, such as dialogues photocopied from various texts on practical language use, such as a Hotel Dialogue, Asking Directions, Going to the Bank, etc.

Instructor Fox made a greater change in his video materials class, abandoning the use of feature-length films except for two occasions of passive viewing, when video was relied upon as both an emergency substitute and a much-needed break from routine. His second semester focus was upon the use of television materials, as he took advantage of increasing sources of American sitcoms on Taiwan's cable television medium. Lessons were built around textbook topics, such as "Going to the Bank," with video recordings of *Home Improvement* and *Ally McBeal* as the now somewhat de-centered texts. As for his textbook class, Instructor Fox relied upon a heavy infusion of these same video materials plus some. Textbook lessons were supplemented by activities such as the silent viewing of a short scene from American dramas such as *Star Trek* or *Dark Towers*, to which students must then perform their own dialogues as accompaniment. Short stories on video from cinematic anthology series such as *Amazing Stories* or *New York Stories* were used for the creation of stories, with the programs being stopped short of their conclusions and students having to end the story through a simple narration or a more dramatic role-play. Likewise, a debate was carried out to effectively conclude a short story borrowed from the *HBO Creepshow* series, as students had to argue whether or not a character should marry a man simply because a fortune teller said that doing so would lead to

riches. The results of this second-semester switch are examined as part of the overall data analysis in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Data Analysis and Evaluation of Hypotheses

The working assumption upon which this research was built is the belief that students in the university language laboratory classroom setting will experience greater motivation toward the study of English as a foreign language if the instructor forsakes the use of a traditional textbook. This conjecture arose from the various experiences of the authors, who witnessed a pervading sense of boredom in the classroom whenever students were directed to "open their books," while a reaction of pleasurable anticipation often arose from the discovery that authentic videotape materials were going to be used. This suggested that the use of videotape materials could prove motivational, as these teaching aids never failed to bring pleasure to students, reduce their anxiety, avert boredom and enhance an overall sense of joy in the classroom. Under these conditions, according to the basic precepts of motivation studies and student-centered pedagogical approaches, student performance in terms of language acquistion would be increased. However, the question lingered: What was the exact cause of this shift in attitude? Was it the videotape materials themselves, or simply the joy of changing gears from the everyday class routine and doing something that was neither traditional nor demanding?

The only way to accurately determine which of these factors can claim responsibility for the change in student attitudes was to actually teach a class using only traditional text-related materials, and another using only videotape materials. To avoid the possibility of influence from the instructor or classroom methodologies, both classes were managed to a large degree under the principles of student-centered methodologies. It was also reasoned that freshmen classes would be most appropriate for this study, given the lesser likelihood that these students would have had much

experience of videotape materials in the classroom, providing something of a blank slate from which to begin our analysis. Unfortunately, in this endeavor, some real-world restrictions arose that could not be controlled. Unanticipated scheduling conflicts and departmental demands restricted the authors from each having the opportunity to instruct freshmen classes, thereby requiring the use of sophomore students. More difficult was the inability of the authors to procure sufficient subjects to enable each instructor to teach a full class using only textbook materials, and another using only videotape materials. A decision was made to have Instructor Lin teach a sophomore class using only videotape materials, as she had far greater experience in the use of these teaching aids. Instructor Fox likewise was able to take on the challenge of a teaching a sophomore class using only videotape materials, although he also was responsible for conducting a sophomore class using only traditional textbook materials and carefully avoiding the use of any videotape materials. Both the videotape and textbook classes were managed using the same student-centered activities and foci, as this would help eliminate the influence of different teaching methods upon learner attitudes.

A problem arose with the realization that these conditions would enable the authors only to compare and contrast the attitudinal differences between those who received their instruction from traditional textbook materials, and those whose focus was upon the moving image as a source of education. To remedy this, the instructors made a slight variation in their treatment of the second semester syllabi. To her videotape instruction, Instructor Lin added greater amounts of traditional teaching materials, such as prepared dialogues and sentence pattern practices. Instructor Fox maintained, in his videotape teaching, the focus upon videotape instruction but varied his materials by using television sitcoms as well as full-length cinematic offerings. For his textbook course, Instructor Fox offered his students a variety of random

experiences using videotape materials. It should be noted that student turnover from the first to second semesters is typically minimal, reflecting change in no more than seven percent of the class makeup.

The following analysis provides a two-fold focus as it examines the central hypothesis regarding the motivational advantages of videotape materials and simultaneously seeks to gain insight into whether or not such motivation is achieved through the materials themselves or through the simple presence of divergence from the routine. The working hypothesis developed for this unique experiment states that the use of videotape materials as the central text in the language learning classroom, under conditions of a student-centered approach, will automatically result in an increase of student motivation, as can be demonstrated through the learner's attitude toward the subject, the course, and perceptions of linguistic skills improvement.

To test this hypothesis, a seven-question survey was devised to gauge student attitudes prior to the class and at the conclusion of the first semester. In addition, to determine whether or not previously observed increases in positive motivation were due to the videotape materials themselves, or to the factor of change itself, the same survey questions were administered at the close of the second semester. The following labels can thus be applied to the analysis:

Lin V1A: The survey administered to Instructor Lin's videotape materials class at the start of the first semester.

Lin V1B: The survey administered to Instructor Lin's videotape materials class at the conclusion of the first semester.

Lin V2: The survey administered to Instructor Lin's videotape materials class at the conclusion of the second semester.

Fox V1A: The survey administered to Instructor Fox's videotape materials class at the start of the first semester.

Fox V1B: The survey administered to Instructor Fox's videotape materials class at the conclusion of the first semester.

Fox V2: The survey administered to Instructor Fox's videotape materials class at the conclusion of the second semester.

Fox T1A: The survey administered to Instructor Fox's textbook materials class at the start of the first semester.

Fox T1B: The survey administered to Instructor Fox's textbook materials class at the conclusion of the second semester.

Fox T2: The survey administered to Instructor Fox's textbook materials class at the conclusion of the second semester.

Survey 1A: The survey administered to students at the start of the first semester.

Survey 1B: The survey administered to students at the conclusion of the first semester.

Survey 2: The survey administered to students at the conclusion of the second semester.

Slight variations likewise exist in the wording of the seven questions within the surveys administered at the start and conclusion of the first semester and conclusion of the second semester. These will be noted in the analysis, but for graphic representation will be signified only as **Q1** for Question One, **Q2** for Question Two, etc. The survey was administered in a Chinese-language format, and translated into English for the purposes of this report. The original questionnaires are attached as appendices A and B. Given the nature and focus of this research, not all questions can be predicated upon a pre-established hypothesis, as some of these items were designed as markers to suggest directions for further study. The response breakdown of this questionnaire included the options: Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree. The tables below offer these using the abbreviations **SA** (Strongly

Agree); **A** (Agree); **N** (Neutral); **D** (Disagree); and **SD** (Strongly Disagree). Also provided in the tables are the combined results of the positive responses (**SA/A** serving to symbolize Strongly Agree and Agree) and negative responses (**SD/D** serving to symbolize Strongly Disagree and Disagree).

Question One: *Before this semester I was interested in learning English.*

No hypothetical basis exists for this question, as it is intended to offer a basis for comparison. However, some expectations can be established according to the survey administered. In other words, while the results of this question in Survey 1A are completely unpredictable, we can expect the results of this same question in Survey 1B to attain verification from the results of Question 2 in Survey 1B. Question 2 in Survey 1B should likewise provide some indication of the results of Question 1 in Survey 2. The survey results are as follows:

Table 1. **Q1 Survey 1A**

Before this semester I was interested in learning English.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response
[SA/A]	31	55.35%	18	31.48%	18	31.58%
SA	11	19.64%	5	8.77%	7	12.28%
A	20	35.71%	13	22.71%	11	19.30%
N	21	37.50%	30	52.63%	35	61.40%
D	3	5.36%	7	12.28%	4	7.02%
SD	1	1.79%	2	3.51%	0	0%
[SD/D]	4	7.15	9	15.79%	4	7.02%

Table 2. **Q1 Survey 1B**

After this semester I am more interested in learning English.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response
[SA/A]	34	60.71	34	59.65	43	75.44
SA	2	3.57	7	12.28	11	19.30
A	32	57.14	27	47.37	32	56.14
N	22	39.29	21	36.84	14	24.56
D	0	0	2	3.50	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
[SD/D]	0	0	2	3.50	0	0

Table 3. **Q1 Survey 2**

After this full year, I am more interested in learning English.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=48)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response
[SA/A]	38	67.86	54	94.74	41	87.72
SA	7	12.50	17	29.83	1	17.54
A	31	55.36	37	64.91	40	70.18
N	18	32.14	3	5.26	7	12.28
D	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
[SD/D]	0	0	0	0	0	0

Question One Data Analysis

The results of Table 1 suggest that Instructor Lin's class entered the semester with a relatively high degree of motivation, as over 55 percent of her students responded positively when asked about their previous desire to learn English. The same could not be said for Instructor Fox's classes, both of which registered statistically identical levels of satisfaction, less than 32 percent of students responding positively to the suggestion that they entered the semester with an already eager attitude toward the study of English. On the other side of the scale, Instructor Fox also faced a greater challenge in his video materials class, in which almost 16 percent of students noted their lack of interest in the subject. That is in comparison to Instructor Lin's video materials class and Instructor Fox's textbook class, both of which had only slightly more than seven percent of respondents reporting negative motivation.

It is these findings that will provide a basis for comparison in the effort to establish verification of the proposed hypothesis that students in the university language laboratory classroom setting experience greater motivation toward the study of English as a foreign language if the instructor forsakes the use of a traditional textbook. The results of Survey 1B, which was administered at the end of the first semester after an initial experience with an entire term in which (for the video materials class) traditional textbook aids were strictly avoided or in which (for the textbook class) all videotape materials were withdrawn from use, must be contrasted with those of Survey 1A. This will suggest the inspirational efficacy of these materials and methodologies. According to the aforementioned hypothesis, this comparison should demonstrate a strong increase in the percentage of students in the video materials classes who responded positively. In other words, after a full semester

of careful avoidance of video materials, these students should show greater motivation toward the study of English by responding positively to the statement: After this semester, I am now more interested in learning English. While an increase in positive responses should likewise be expected from those attending the textbook-only class, it may be assumed that this figure would be somewhat smaller than that of the other class surveys.

Indeed, all three classes demonstrated increases in motivation as a direct result of their experience with this semester. The smallest increase was found in Instructor Lin's class, which saw a 55 percent satisfaction rate climb to almost 61 percent, an actual increase of only 5.36 percent. This is considerably lower than the almost doubling in positive responses that were registered by both of Instructor Fox's classes. Instructor Lin's results were also disheartening in the number of students who registered strong motivation toward the subject (with almost 20 percent noting their strong agreement to the Question One statement) in the first survey, and those who registered strong motivation toward the study of English in the second survey (with only slightly less than four percent of students checking off their strong agreement to the Question One statement). Although these numbers do not provide the high degree of improvement that would be necessary to provide unalterable proof of the hypothesis, they nevertheless demonstrate support for the hypothesis, especially as the second survey saw a 100 percent decrease in the number of students reporting negative motivation as a result of their experience of the video materials class.

Greater support may be suggested by the results of Instructor Fox's video materials class surveys. The percentage of students reporting greater desire to study English as a direct result of their experience during the semester increased much more dramatically, rising 21.17 percent to almost 60 percent, a sharp increase from the first semester's relatively lackluster 31 percent response rate. The number of students

reporting negative motivation as a result of the class fell to only 3.5 percent, a spectacular drop from the first survey results of almost 16 percent dissatisfaction. These numbers would provide powerful proof of the efficacy of using only video materials in a student-centered approach, were it not for the equally positive results attained from the textbook class.

The number of students reporting positive motivation as a result of their class increased dramatically by almost 44 percent. The initial survey revealed less than 32 percent of participants had come to the class with a high degree of motivation toward the study of English. By semester's end, however, that number had grown to over 75 percent of respondents. This is a full 10 percentage points above Instructor Fox's video materials class, a suggestion that perhaps the hypothesis remains at best unproven, and at worst disproved.

It may prove even more disheartening to discover that by the end of the second semester, during which more traditional textbook materials were included in the video materials syllabus and video materials were included in the textbook syllabus, the percentage of positive responses in the video materials class went up slightly, while those in the textbook class fell somewhat. Further consideration of other survey questions remains.

Question Two: *I like the English Lab Class*

Like the first question, this query is intended to establish the approximate levels of motivation with which students approach this type of classroom setting. The language lab, unlike other class environments, does not provide the seating mobility of other classrooms. Rather, with an emphasis upon individual study and interaction with the instructor, classmates and subject matter by means of the audiovisual equipment (headphones, microphones, etc.), the language lab class differs from

traditional language courses that provide seating alternatives and more personal interactions between classmates and with the instructor. It may be expected that students, having experienced the rigidity and technological remove of the language lab, will show slightly less enthusiasm for this classroom setting.

As demonstrative of the working hypothesis, however, it can be expected that the use of video materials will overcome the disadvantages of the language lab setting and lead to an improved attitude toward the lab classroom experience.

Table 4. **Q2 Survey 1A**

I like the English Lab Class.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response
[SA/A]	20	35.71	15	26.31	25	43.86
SA	7	12.50	1	1.75	2	3.51
A	13	23.21	14	24.56	23	40.35
N	22	39.29	28	49.12	19	33.33
D	13	23.21	10	17.55	12	21.05
SD	1	1.79	4	7.02	1	1.76
[SD/D]	14	25.00	14	24.57	13	22.81

Table 5. **Q2 Survey 1B**

I liked this English Lab Class.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response

[SA/A]	38	67.85	48	84.21	44	77.19
SA	6	10.71	17	29.82	18	31.58
A	32	57.14	31	54.39	26	45.61
N	17	30.36	9	15.79	13	22.81
D	1	1.79	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
[SD/D]	1	1.79	0	0	0	0

Table 6. **Q2 Survey 2**

I liked this English Lab Class.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response
[SA/A]	47	83.93	53	92.98	52	91.23
SA	18	32.14	27	47.37	15	26.32
A	29	51.79	26	45.61	37	64.91
N	9	16.07	4	7.02	5	8.77
D	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
[SD/D]	0	0	0	0	0	0

Question Two Data Analysis

The results of this survey demonstrate that exposure to the student-centered methodologies adapted for use by Instructors Lin and Fox did indeed have a positive influence upon student attitudes toward the language lab setting. Unfortunately, it

cannot be conclusively stated that the use of videotape materials had anything to do with this contentment, as can be found through the comparison of the numbers obtained from the video-materials and textbook classes. Instructor Lin's video materials class registered an almost 68 percent rate of satisfaction by the end of the second semester, a full 32 percentage points improvement; Instructor Fox's video materials class saw a more dramatic jump from 26 percent at the start of the semester to approximately 84 percent, a rise of nearly 58 percentage points. The textbook class saw only a 33 percent rise from the numbers gleaned at the start of the first semester. If Instructor Fox's survey results were the only source of analysis, a case might be suggested for the argument that the presence of videotape materials had something to do with the slightly higher (but statistically insignificant) numbers of satisfied students. Unfortunately, there remains a negative gap between the results of the textbook class and those of Instructor Lin's video-materials class, with the numbers showing more positive results in the textbook class. This difference may be attributed to affinity-seeking behavioral differences between the two instructors, as well as personality differences among students.

Question 3: *I liked the way my English lab class was taught.*

The focus of this question is the instructional methods of the lab class teacher, with the aim of the first survey being the establishment of a basis upon which to evaluate student appreciation of the student-centered methods used by Instructors Lin and Fox. If the authors are correct in their assumption that students will react positively to the student-centered methodology as applied in this class, the results of this question should prove overwhelmingly positive in both the video materials and textbook classes. This determination will be based upon the findings of the second survey, and re-confirmed by the third.

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Table 7. **Q3 Survey 1A**

I liked the way my previous English lab class was taught.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response
[SA/A]	25	44.65	23	40.35	25	43.86
SA	11	19.65	8	14.04	7	12.28
A	14	25.00	15	26.31	18	31.58
N	18	32.14	21	36.84	25	43.86
D	9	16.07	9	15.79	7	12.28
SD	4	7.14	4	7.02	0	0
[SD/D]	13	23.21	13	22.81	7	12.28

Table 8. **Q3 Survey 1B**

I liked the way this English lab class was taught.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response
[SA/A]	44	78.57	55	96.49	52	91.22
SA	9	16.07	30	52.63	26	45.61
A	35	62.50	25	43.86	26	45.61
N	11	19.64	2	3.51	4	7.02
D	1	1.79	0	0	1	1.76
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0

[SD/D]	1	1.79	0	0	1	1.76

Table 9. **Q3 Survey 2**

I liked the way this English lab class was taught.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%Response	n	%Response	n	%Response
[SA/A]	52	92.86	57	100	56	98.24
SA	25	44.64	38	66.67	26	45.61
A	27	48.22	19	33.33	30	52.63
N	4	7.14	0	0	1	1.76
D	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
[SD/D]	0	0	0	0	0	0

Question Three Data Analysis

Even the simplest of comparisons reveals a powerful increase in satisfaction with the teaching methodology employed by Instructors Lin and Fox, providing strong support for the assumption that students react positively to a student-centered approach. Most dramatic are the comparative results of Instructor Fox video materials and textbook classes, which saw satisfaction levels at the end of the first semester rise by more than 56 percent and 47 percent, respectively. Instructor Lin saw a near 34 percent increase in the number of satisfied students. The movement toward increased satisfaction continued through the second semester, with Instructor Lin receiving a more than 48 percent increase in satisfaction from her students as

compared to the first survey results, while 100 percent of Instructor Fox's video materials class reported satisfaction, and 98 percent of his textbook students gave a thumbs-up for the student-centered approach.

These findings lend strong support to the use of student-centered methodologies, especially when used in conjunction with video materials. It can possibly be speculated that the overwhelmingly powerful levels of support given at the end of the second semester was a result of lessened levels of stress attained through the abandonment of regular quizzes, as was practiced in the first semester. Of course, this will inevitably lead to arguments about the validity of purposely avoiding strict methods of testing and accusations of pandering to student demands for "play" in the classroom setting. This not being the site for such a debate, it can only be noted that the authors recommend further in-depth study be given to this question, especially as it relates to the culturally and administratively unique context of Taiwan's higher education setting.

Question Four: *I liked all the activities we did in this lab class.*

This question was designed to offer a closer focus upon what was responsible for the high levels of satisfaction reported in Question Three—or more appropriately, the high levels of satisfaction that were expected by the authors. By asking students to offer feedback upon the activities undertaken in this class, the authors are able to separate the methods from the personalities of the instructors. High levels of positive responses would give support to the various student-centered classroom techniques, while slightly lower numbers would suggest that teacher personality and various affinity behaviors undertaken by the instructors had some role in the high levels of satisfaction reported for Question Three.

It should also be noted that this may at first seem like a loaded question, as

students are required to pass judgement upon "all" the activities they performed as part of the class. This means they must factor into their considerations various class exercises that they may not have enjoyed, such as oral presentations and translation activities, or even role play performances. That undoubtedly can also be expected to account for an anticipated decrease in the percentage of students responding favorably.

Table 10. **Q4 Survey 1A**

I liked all the activities we did in my previous lab class.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	26	46.43	25	43.86	24	42.11
SA	7	12.50	4	7.02	4	7.02
A	19	33.93	21	36.84	20	35.09
N	24	42.86	21	36.84	28	49.12
D	6	10.71	8	14.04	5	8.77
SD	0	0	3	5.26	0	0
SD/D	6	10.71	11	19.3	5	8.77

Table 11. **Q4 Survey 1B**

I liked all the activities we did in this lab class.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=56)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	37	66.07	46	80.70	48	84.21

SA	8	14.28	14	24.56	16	28.07
A	29	51.79	32	56.14	32	56.14
N	19	33.93	11	19.30	8	14.04
D	0	0	0	0	1	1.75
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD/D	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 12. **Q4 Survey 2**

I liked all the activities we did in this lab class.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	47	83.93	55	96.49	52	91.23
SA	19	33.93	25	43.86	23	40.35
A	28	50.00	30	52.63	29	50.88
N	9	16.07	2	3.51	5	8.77
D	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD/D	0	0	0	0	0	0

The data gleaned from these three surveys indicates strong overall acceptance of the pedagogical techniques used by Instructors Lin and Fox. It can also be pointed out that these findings do offer support to the authors' belief that students find favor with most of the student-centered techniques adapted for use in these classes. At the end of the first semester, Instructor Lin's video materials class saw an almost 20 percent increase in the number of students who viewed her class techniques more favorably

over those adopted by their previous instructors, a figure that increased to a 37.5 percentage rate of approval by the close of the second semester. Instructor Fox's video materials class received a near doubling in the number of students expressing satisfaction with the variously adapted student-centered activities, as the initial figure of 43.86 percent satisfaction rose to 80.70 percent by the close of the first semester, and 96.49 percent by the end of the second. The textbook class saw the most dramatic numbers, with an exact doubling in the number of students who favored the student-centered approaches adopted by Instructor Fox over the activities undertaken by their previous instructors. Here the numbers went from an initial 42.11 percent approval rating to 84.21 by the close of the first semester, and 91.23 by the end of the second. These numbers are high, but they are nevertheless somewhat lower than those gleaned by Question Three, suggesting the (seemingly negligible) influence of unpopular class activities and teacher affinity.

Question Five: *I liked the teaching materials used in this lab class.*

Having already determined through the previous two questions the overall student attitude toward both the management and methods adapted for use in this experimental class situation, it is necessary to focus on student attitudes toward the materials themselves. For the video materials class, this means asking students to pass judgement on the film-related aids such as the teacher-created handouts (dialogues, sentence patterns, vocabulary lists, newspaper articles, songs, photographs, etc.), teacher-edited videotapes, and the full-length films themselves (although these were likewise edited to a shorter format). In the textbook class, students were being asked to consider their attitudes toward the New Wave series textbook and the accompanying tape, as well as teacher-prepared materials such as the mid-term performance dialogue, grammar practice patterns, and songs. For the second semester,

students in the textbook class could likewise include various film-related materials for consideration. The inclusion of these video-based materials, if the hypothesis of video-as-motivational holds true, should lead to a greater percentage of positive responses from the textbook students at the end of the second semester. Meanwhile, the inclusion of more print-based materials in Instructor Lin's class may lead to a slight drop in favorable responses, as these shift the focus away from film-based materials and inbue the class with a stronger sense of the traditional class environment they have grown accustomed to through their earlier years in high school.

Table 13. **Q5 Survey 1A**

I liked the teaching materials used in my previous lab class.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	21	37.50	23	40.35	22	38.60
SA	6	10.71	2	3.51	2	3.51
A	15	26.79	21	36.84	20	35.09
N	18	32.14	25	43.86	30	52.63
D	16	28.57	7	12.28	5	8.77
SD	1	1.79	2	3.51	0	0
SD/D	17	30.36	9	15.79	5	8.77

Table 14. **Q5 Survey 1B**

I liked the teaching materials used in this lab class.

	Lin V1A (N=55)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%

SA/A	46	82.14	49	85.96	42	73.68
SA	14	25.00	17	29.82	8	14.03
A	32	57.14	32	56.14	34	59.65
N	9	16.07	8	14.04	15	26.32
D	1	1.79	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD/D	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 15. **Q5 Survey 2**

I liked the teaching materials used in this lab class.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	52	92.86	55	96.49	48	84.21
SA	19	33.93	29	50.88	15	26.32
A	33	58.93	26	45.61	33	57.89
N	4	7.14	2	3.51	9	15.79
D	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD/D	0	0	0	0	0	0

Question Five Data Analysis

The opinions expressed by students reveal a strong partiality toward the video-based materials. All three classes started the semester off with relatively equal rates of satisfaction, as between 38 to 40 percent of student respondents responded

positively when asked their opinion of the educational materials used in previous lab class experiences. Many favored neutrality, but in Instructor Lin's class a whopping 30 percent expressed dissatisfaction with the materials used by previous instructors. By the end of the first semester, those numbers had changed dramatically, with the greatest steps toward the positive being taken by students in the video materials classes.

Instructor Lin's video materials class, by the end of the first semester, saw an almost 45 percent increase in favorable responses toward the teaching materials used in her class, while Instructor Fox's class experienced an almost identical increase of almost 46 percent. By the end of the first semester, Instructors Lin and Fox enjoyed 82 percent and near 86 percent approval ratings, respectively, for the video-based materials they used, figures that went up to almost 93 percent and 96 percent respectively. The numbers in the textbook class also increased, but the rise was nowhere near as dramatic as that experienced by the video materials classes. From more than 38 percent approval at the start of the semester, the percentage of positive responses rose to almost 74 percent by the end of the term, and to approximately 84 percent by the end of the second semester.

These numbers strongly suggest the influence of video-based materials upon student satisfaction. While far from discounting the motivational value of textbook materials, for it cannot be overlooked that by the end of the first semester the approval rating had increased in the textbook class by some 35 percent, these numbers nevertheless provide encouragement to those considering the motivational value of videotape materials in the language lab setting.

Question Six. *The language lab class improved my listening comprehension skills.*

This question is obviously designed to rate student perceptions of self-ability.

This is an especially relevant area of examination, as motivational theorists and educators have pointed out the correlation between motivation and self-perceptions of abilities. A learner with low motivation toward both the class and the subject will tend to downgrade either the academic advantages of the class (those skills that were either taught by the instructor or learned by the student) or the perceived self-ability to learn information in this class or subject.

It is the hypothesis of this study that the use of a syllabus built entirely upon video materials and centered around subjects tied directly to these materials (feature-length commercially produced films) will increase student motivation. Greater levels of motivation will naturally lead, according to the logic of this hypothesis, to increases in perceived self-abilities. In other words, students with greater intrinsic motivation will voluntarily work harder and find greater pleasure in the class, thereby increasing their likelihood of learning and the perceptions of having learned. High numbers of positive responses to this question will support the original hypothesis of this research, while low responses will cast a shadow of doubt upon the unproved theory.

Table 16. **Q6 Survey 1A**

My previous language lab class improved my listening comprehension skills.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	17	30.36	15	26.32	16	28.07
SA	0	0	0	0	3	5.26
A	17	30.36	15	26.32	13	22.81
N	22	39.29	22	38.60	27	47.37

D	13	23.21	17	29.82	13	22.81
SD	4	7.14	3	5.26	1	1.75
SD/D	17	30.35	20	35.08	14	24.56

Table 17. **Q6 Survey 1B**

This language lab class improved my listening comprehension skills.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	30	53.58	35	61.40	37	64.91
SA	1	1.79	3	5.26	6	10.53
A	29	51.79	32	56.14	31	54.38
N	24	42.85	20	35.09	18	31.58
D	2	3.57	2	3.51	2	3.51
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD/D	2	3.57	2	3.51	2	3.51

Table 18. **Q6 Survey 2**

This language lab class improved my listening comprehension skills.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	27	48.22	39	68.42	43	75.44
SA	3	5.36	15	26.32	12	21.05
A	24	42.86	24	42.10	31	54.39
N	27	48.21	18	31.58	14	24.56

D	2	3.57	0	0	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD/D	2	3.57	0	0	0	0

Question Six: Data Analysis

Students entered the first semester of this language lab course with relatively low opinions of their previous language lab experience vis-a-vis the advancement of their listening comprehension skills. The highest positive score was a 30 percent response rate in Instructor Lin's class, a figure that was attained solely by those who "agreed" with the survey statement, while the "strong" agreement category went unchecked. This changed by the end of the first semester, when over 53 percent of Instructor Lin's students responded positively to the suggestion that the class had improved their listening abilities, an increase of approximately 23 percent. Student responses within Instructor Fox's video materials class were even more impressive, with the original 26 percent approval rating moving up to 61 percent, an increase of 35 percent.

Unfortunately, these numbers do little to prove the value of video materials as motivation-boosting aids that automatically lead to enhanced perceptions of self-ability, at least as far as listening skills are concerned. At least, this is true when the figures are compared to the results of the textbook class, which saw the greatest change from an original 28 percent positive response rate to almost 65 percent approval, a jump of over 36 percent.

More encouraging for the hypothesis are the figures gleaned from the surveys administered at the end of the second semester, when textbook-based materials were added to the video materials classes, and video materials were added to the textbook class. Both video materials classes experienced a drop in the number of students who saw the class as having been valuable in building their listening comprehension skills.

It can perhaps be postulated that the inclusion of more textbook materials, at the expense of video-based materials, led to a decrease in the number of students who perceived that the class was helping them improve their listening comprehension skills.

Meanwhile, the inclusion of video materials in the textbook class can be cited, perhaps, as the reason why 75 percent of students cited their lab class as a having helped them improve their listening skills. This figure is more than 10 percentage points above the previous survey's findings, and some 47 percentage points higher than the numbers received at the start of the semester.

Of course, these numbers may also represent a change in approach toward the teaching of listening skills. For the first semester, as noted earlier, Instructors Lin and Fox broke from the style of student-centered teaching and included some very direct and seemingly strict teacher-centered methods aimed solely at the improvement of listening skills. These methods -- which were built upon the repetition of visual and audio excerpts of the selected films, explanation of confusing vocabulary words/phrases, reenactments, pattern practices, individual queries and quizzes -- by their very nature forced students into the act of quickly memorizing words within the classroom setting, a technique their previous educational backgrounds have uniquely prepared them for. The sensation of "hard work" and the repetition of quizzes in both practice and actual formats may have something to do with the perception of improvement. These practices were not repeated in the second semester, when the focus shifted in the video materials classes to more passive approaches toward listening skills improvement.

The teacher-centered methods noted above were likewise used in the textbook class, for both semesters, using only the professionally prepared audiotape that accompanies the textbook. A memorized dialogue composed of various words and

phrases taken from the video materials classes, as well as vocabulary terms from the textbook, was also used as a source of aural input. Students were required to memorize and perform the dialogue in both English and Mandarin, knowing that these same words were likely to appear on their final exam's listening comprehension section. The textbook students did not, however, have to face a gauntlet of quizzes before and after each audiotape dialogue. None of this explains, however, why the results from the conclusion of the first semester should prove to be higher than those of the video materials classes.

It can be assumed that the inclusion of video materials in the second semester of the textbook class -- materials that were used purposely toward the enhancement of student speaking skills -- gave students the impression of greater exposure to the target language. This may account for the percentage of those who viewed the class positively as having enhanced their listening skills, while the students in the video materials class may have noted a cutback in exposure.

Question Seven: *This language lab class improved my speaking skills.*

The motivational theory underlying this question is identical to that stated in the introductory defense of the previous survey question. The obvious difference between the previous survey question and this is obvious: The focus has shifted to the student self-perception of improvement in the category of oral production skills. It may be expected that the end of the first semester will see an increase in the percentage of positive responses, a hypothesized possible result of the combined forces of student-centered methods of instruction and the use of video materials, both of which are assumed to help build motivation.

Table 19. **Q7 Survey 1A**

My previous language lab class improved my speaking skills.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	12	21.43	15	26.31	13	22.81
SA	1	1.79	1	1.75	2	3.51
A	11	19.64	14	24.56	11	19.30
N	28	50.00	18	31.58	29	50.88
D	11	19.64	18	31.58	14	24.56
SD	5	8.93	6	10.53	1	1.75
SD/D	16	28.57	24	42.11	15	26.31

Table 20. **Q7 Survey 1B**

This language lab class improved my speaking skills.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	27	48.22	14	24.56	31	54.39
SA	1	1.79	2	3.51	4	7.02
A	26	46.43	12	21.05	27	47.37
N	27	48.21	41	71.93	24	42.10
D	2	3.57	2	3.51	2	3.51
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD/D	2	3.57	2	3.51	2	3.51

Table 21. **Q7 Survey 2**

This language lab class improved my speaking skills.

	Lin V1A (N=56)		**Fox V1A** (N=57)		**Fox T1A** (N=57)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
SA/A	23	41.07	34	59.65	31	54.39
SA	3	5.36	12	21.05	6	10.53
A	20	35.71	22	38.60	25	43.86
N	31	55.36	21	36.84	26	45.61
D	2	3.57	2	3.51	0	0
SD	0	0	0	0	0	0
SD/D	2	3.57	2	3.51	0	0

Question Seven: Data Analysis

The results of the three surveys, taken together, offer a less-than-clear picture, and certainly prove inconclusive as far as the stated hypothesis of student motivation positively affecting self-perceptions of improvement. The comparison between the two surveys administered at the start and finish of the first semester reveals this quite clearly. By the close of the first semester, Instructor Lin's video materials class saw a more than doubling in the number of positive responses to the statement of speaking skills improvement. Likewise did the textbook class see a near doubling of positive affirmations. This is in contrast to Instructor Fox's video materials class, which saw a decrease in the number of students who felt their speaking abilities improved as a result of this lab class.

The end of the second semester offered no insights, as the textbook class remained stationary in the number of positive responses, and Instructor Lin's video class fell slightly to 41 percent. Unexpectedly, however, Instructor Fox's video class

took a steep climb toward almost 60 percent approval, a rise of 35 percentage points above the numbers offered by the closing of the first term. This is in contrast to the expected results of falling video materials class surveys and rising textbook class survey results.

No matter how these numbers are looked at, they fail to provide any conclusive demonstration of the validity of the hypothesis that the video materials class would result in greater numbers of students who saw themselves as improving (both aurally and orally), an expectation built upon the belief in the motivational power of video-based materials and the link between motivation and effort that leads to improved academic performance. Neither teacher affinity nor alterations in content and approach can explain these seemingly contradictory and confusing numbers.

Summary and Suggestions

The experimental classroom approach discussed in this study was undertaken as a direct result of the authors' observation of a problem seemingly innate to the educational experiences of adult students in institutes of higher education. The problem can best be described as an aversion toward textbooks, regardless of the quality of the texts or the democratic methods by which the texts were chosen. The moment of asking students to focus upon the textbook is almost always accompanied by a pervading sense of disappointment and boredom. In short, the use of a textbook in the language classroom setting proves disheartening rather than inspiring or motivational.

This is a problem that the authors speculated has little or nothing to do with the quality of the textbook, but is rooted instead in memories of high school language classes and the high levels of stress that accompanied the average student's first experience of studying English in this setting. While many students flourished in these demanding classroom settings, still more suffered from the stress of

textbook-based grammatical approaches. They bring these seemingly ingrained memories with them to the university setting, and perhaps unconsciously project their anxieties toward the language-learning experience upon the textbook, rather than upon the subject, the instructor or the educational system at large.

Student dissatisfaction with the use of textbooks should not be seen as an overall condemnation of textbooks, nor can it be seen as evidence that instructors need to abandon entirely the use of textbooks. Many experienced educators will testify to the value of a quality textbook, while noting in the same breath the need for the instructor to adopt very careful classroom management techniques that serve to highlight and enhance the valuable aspects of the textbook. Unfortunately, it is not realistic to expect any and all of the hundreds of university language instructors throughout Taiwan to attain this expertise in the most efficient use of the textbook. An alternative must be achieved, and it has been the longstanding belief of the authors that the use of videotape materials is one possible avenue out of this dilemma.

Videotape materials produced by the home entertainment industry are naturally inspiring given their holistic appeal to the human sensual experience. Through the combination of sound, moving images and in many instances the use of subtitles, commercially produced videos demand greater use of the viewer's neural abilities, thereby exercising and enhancing centers of the brain devoted to aural input, speech decoding, visual recognition and apperception of symbolic patterns necessary for reading. This is not to mention that these materials are designed for entertainment, and carry with them the memories of pleasurable experiences enjoyed in the privacy of the living room or in the more communal intimacy of a darkened movie theater. Given the high levels of pleasure connected to the viewing of the moving image, it is not unreasonable for the authors to assume that video materials are inherently motivational.

But like a sculpture that has yet to be released from a block of stone, the truly educational value of the commercially produced cinematic materials remains trapped within the categorization of "supplementary materials." As a glance at most guides on using video materials will reveal, the most common classroom approach is to view video materials as supplementary to the textbook, designed to accompany a textbook-inspired lesson or briefly spark flagging student attention.

It was therefore the goal of this research to move beyond the realm of simple supplementation or distraction from the textbook, and allow the full motivational power of video materials to flourish by creating a syllabus centered completely around the moving image. In other words, it was the goal of these authors to replace the textbook with the videotape, building upon the assumption that the removal of the printed page would likewise eliminate all traces of student disinterest. Meanwhile, the focus upon the videotape as the central source of language input would, it was assumed, increase student motivation toward the learning of English as a foreign language. The working hypothesis was that the act of eliminating a textbook and replacing it with commercially produced videotape materials would prove motivational to students. This suggests that the power to motivate is inherent to the experience of the cinematic in the classroom setting.

Testing this hypothesis demanded the radical and highly experimental approach of actually eliminating, in an authentic classroom setting, the textbook-based syllabus and replacing it with a series of lesson plans built upon or around moving picture productions. To test the efficacy of this experiment, a trilogy of surveys (a single survey administered on three separate occasions) was designed and administered to students. It was expected that the results of this survey would demonstrate the validity of the assumption that the moving image could more effectively replace the printed word vis-à-vis the question of motivational impact.

Unfortunately, the analysis of the survey results have failed to conclusively demonstrate that the use of video materials as the sole source of linguistic input is any more motivational than the use of a textbook offered through a student-centered classroom management approach. This is not to say that this yearlong effort proved futile, for important findings and further suggestions were revealed that can be of value to educators in Taiwan.

First, although this study does not give credence to the hypothesis that the textbook can be more effectively replaced by the videotape, there is nevertheless strong suggestion of the motivational value of the cinematic in the classroom setting. The survey query of student attitudes toward the materials used in class resulted in higher positive responses from video class students. Their support for the materials used in their class was much higher than that given to the materials used in the textbook-centered class. It should be noted that the data collected from this question is especially relevant in establishing the value of the videotape, as many of the supplementary materials used in the video class were likewise used in the textbook classroom, such as the song "Flowers are Red" and various discussion topics and grammar-based handouts. This sharing of materials eliminates the influence of these supplements upon the numbers attained from both groups, making this more of a comparison between the videotape and the textbook. In this event, it was the videotape that proved more favorable to the majority of students.

This study did uncover strong support for student-centered activities, but not conclusive support for using the video as a replacement for the textbook. The survey was especially useful in revealing strong student response to the student-centered methods, long a controversial issue in Taiwan where teachers complain that student-centered methodologies do not suit the students cultural and experiential backgrounds.

Second, students accept the use of video materials as especially relevant in the goal of improving their foreign language listening skills. This may be due to either the motivational aspects of video use, suggesting that motivated students either work harder or find less stress in the class and are therefore open to increased language acquisition. A related factor may be the passive act of viewing a video (an auditory as well as a visual experience). This passive act may increase student perceptions of increased listening comprehension abilities. The same argument, unfortunately, cannot be made for speaking skills in connection to the use of videotape materials. It may simply be the very nature of video that makes students believe they are working on their listening skills, which is somewhat ironic given the perception of the authors that their class activities were geared more toward oral production.

Third, this study gives strong support to the effectiveness of student-centered classroom management techniques. Although incidental, this finding is nevertheless of tremendous importance in the unique environment of education in Taiwan. The academic community in Taiwan remains divided over the validity of applying student-centered approaches to the average Taiwanese classroom situation. The argument against doing so is built upon the observation that students enter colleges and universities after a lifetime of exposure to teacher-centered behaviors. This argument implies that the sudden and unfamiliar shock of having the tables turned may prove discouraging to too many learners, leading to withdrawal and poor academic performance. This research demonstrates the fallacy of this line of thinking by showing strong student response toward the lessons conducted with student-centered approaches. Because it was not the primary focus of this research, however, this finding can best be noted as a subject for further examination by educators interested in the applicability of the student-centered approach to the Taiwan class setting.

The final result of this research can, at best, be noted as inconclusive. Perhaps various causes can be cited for this failure to either prove or disprove the stated hypothesis, but the most convincing argument is centered around the difficulty of establishing controlled conditions in an authentic environment. If conditions had been more appropriate, the researchers would have been able to work with a larger student population, a more equal distribution of subjects in both the textbook and video materials classrooms. Likewise, if the researchers had the luxury of removing themselves from the position of teachers, and were able to attend experimental classes as observers, more accurate commentary and results may have been attained.

The failure to either prove or disprove the working hypothesis of this research project does not invalidate its worth, as the possible mistakes experienced in this setting may perhaps be avoided in a more controlled environment—with, for example, shorter class sizes or appropriate segregated skills levels. More important is the realization that while the data garnered from the surveys are inconclusive vis-à-vis the hypothesis, they nevertheless lend support to the experiment undertaken by Instructors Lin and Fox. In other words, the findings do not offer any powerful notes of discouragement to their radical syllabi. Students appeared to be quite pleased with a syllabus built around cinematic sources, an observation that should ultimately prove encouraging to instructors who are considering similarly radical changes in their syllabi. This suggests that teachers should not be afraid to at least increase the amount of videotape materials they use in their classes, perhaps even using these materials as replacements for the traditional textbook. It also endorses the belief that good teachers have the intelligence and experience necessary to "go it alone" without the aid of a textbook, and that students may respond well to instructor-generated teaching materials. That this can be accomplished in the Taiwan classroom environment—it has actually been carried out successfully by the authors—should prove inspirational

for the radical few who are ready to challenge the authority of departmental heads and publishing houses that now stand guard over the dominance of the printed word.

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Appendix A

3 Formats for Motivation Survey---Film classes:

I. The initial motivation survey--done at the beginning of the semester

___1. Before this semester I was interested in learning English.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___2. I like the Freshman English lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___3. I liked the way my previous lab class was taught.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___4. I liked all the activities we did in this Lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___5. I liked the teaching materials used in my previous lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___6. My previous language lab class improved my listening comprehension skills.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___7. My previous language lab class improved my speaking skills.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

II. The second motivation survey--done by the end of first semester

___1. After this semester I am more interested in learning English.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___2. I liked this English lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___3. I liked the way this English lab class was taught.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___4. I liked all the activities we did in this English lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___5. I liked the teaching materials used in this English lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___6. This English lab class improved my listening comprehension skills.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___7. This English lab class improved my speaking skills.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

The third motivation survey--done by the end of the second semester

___1. After this full year I am more interested in learning English.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___2. I liked this English lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___3. I liked the way this English lab class was taught.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___4. I liked all the activities we did in this English lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___5. I liked the teaching materials used in this English lab class.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___6. This English lab class improved my listening comprehension skills.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

___7. This English lab class improved my speaking skills.

(1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) neutral (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree

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