Consumption and Production of Short Film: toward the Conceptualization of Multimodal Language Learning for Developing 6Cs Skills in the Digital Age

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Abstract. The 21st century’s democratization and demonetisation of multimodal learning sources allows anyone to be both consumers and producers at the same time. The present study argues that the consumption and production of independent short films through affordable digital devices as beneficial for multimodal language learning, befitting the student’s interest and the building of the six essential skills of their 21st-century context. The present study was designed as library research observing 30 most recommended articles in the related topic by Google Scholar, published in reputable international journal from 2010 to 2020. It is argued that consumption and productions of short films can be used for enhancing the students’ language skills. They can be used to tap the students’ creativity, communicative skills, critical thinking, and collaborative skills. At the same time, they can also be used to enhance their compassion toward issues around their society and environment during the implementation of procedural and computational thinking in this consumption and productions of short films. These also place the students as the subjects of the learning process, where their views, opinions, and feelings about certain issues matter so they can play their role in making the world a better place to live in.

1. Introduction
Technology advancement has influenced the transformation of humans’ life. In the 21st century, technology develops exponentially (Diamandis & Kotler, 2012; Naisbitt & Aburdene, 1990). It results in the democratization of digital technology and demonetization of many applications. It allows people to be consumers and producers at the same time. Furthermore, the rapid changes in the 21st-century influence various sectors including the expected skills that must be mastered by students where it leads to the need to update the aim of the learning process [3]. As Trilling & Fadel (2009) explain, the teaching and learning process and activity should be able to allow students to enhance their 6C skills.

One of the outcomes of digital technology that experiences demonetization as it can be accessed freely on various platforms. It is a combination of literature, photography, theatre, art, and music (Rea & Irving, 2010). A short film is a motion picture that has duration not more than 40 minutes; it has limits of characters which are not for than four (Cooper &Dancyger, 2004). There are many types of short films: fiction, documentary, animation, video-art, etc.[4]. With the limited space and short duration, a short film can include only a few characters in simple plot. Thus it is easier to consume.
Due to that reason, short films as multimodal learning media are considered suitable to be utilized for the teaching and learning process[5].

If it is observed further, the process of film production also experiences demonetization. The demonetization is in terms of the equipment needed and in terms of supporting software. There are five main steps in the production of a short film that can be included in the teaching and learning process, namely (1) Development of the film script, (2) Preproduction, (3) Film production, (4) Postproduction, (5) Exhibition (Rea & Irving, 2010). This process allows anyone to consume and produce short films easily. Supported by the advance of information technology and its broadband internet as well as knowledge support by the teachers, students have abundant access to audiovisual entertainment and education from various websites available online[6].

With the ease of access and the abundance of online sources, short films can present teachers and educators an alternative for their English as Foreign Language (EFL) Classes. As a multimodal work of art, short films include language, structure, and cultural aspects that form the unity of a short film, that can be cultivated as a learning media that can offer various benefits. Thus, this article aims at elaborating how the consumption and production of short films can promote the development of the 6C skills in the learning and teaching process, especially in the context of EFL in the 21st century.

2. Method
This study was a qualitative research employing library research method[7]. The data were collected from related articles within the scope of the study from 2010 – 2020. Furthermore, in collecting the data, Google Scholar was used as a platform to browse related articles. There were 25 articles found under the keywords: short films for learning, short films for EFL learning, short films for ESL learning, a short film for creativity among students, short films for collaboration among students, short films and awareness, short film and compassion, short film and critical skill among students.

3. Finding and Discussion
In this era, technological development gives benefits in the educational field as learning media. Exposing students to visual media will enhance their approach to language [8]. The use of learning media improves the students’ understanding, complementing the teacher’s explanation for a fuller learning experience. Nevertheless, learning media should be interesting for students so they are motivated in their learning process because learning motivation can support the learning process [9].

One of the media that students are familiar with are short films. Short films are found to allow multimodal learning since it provides opportunities for all human senses to engage. It is because short films include text, visual, audio, and expressions of emotions. Thus, students are allowed to learn through various modes, such as visual, audio, and kinaesthetic. In terms of language learning, students’ language skills can be improved, especially in terms of the four skills, fluency, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, interactional skills, and even their colloquial slang, and pragmatics [10–16].

Furthermore, including short films in the language learning process, both in terms of consumption and production, will result in the enhancement of 6C skills needed in the 21st century, namely creativity, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, compassion, and computational skills. These benefits can be obtained due to democratized and demonetized technology which allows them to consume and produce short films for learning.

3.1 Tapping students’ creativity with short films
Short films can trigger creativity and storytelling skills because students need to activate their imagination to comprehend meaningful content presented in the short films they watch [4,17]. It is due to the reason that the presence of multimedia, such as short films, in the learning process enables students with a diversity of intelligence skills to learn [5]. This indicates the presence of multimodal learning. As students gather the information presented in the form of text, images, and sound, the learning process will be more motivating; thus, it will make them more engaged and interested[9,18].

Multimodal learning process with the inclusion of short films occurs when a stimulus that can be sensed is received, then a process of perception formation occurs, and is stored as an experienced [5]. In addition, short films establish an entertaining and enjoyable language learning
process [11]. Teachers can assign students to produce their own short films. Consequently, students can creatively create and share their stories to explore broader perspectives [6]. Their creativity will be needed during constructing the storyboard. It is due to the reason that they have to link the facts and their ideas together. Furthermore, it is also crucial for them to organize the best flow for their films [19]. Throughout the process of producing short films, students’ creativity will be challenged since they have to compile their ideas to present a product. Their creativity is also necessary when they have to utilize technology in the process of production in which it is accessible and affordable.

3.2 Promoting communication using short films
Watching short films can be considered a form of communication. It is due to the reason that films are media to deliver a message that can influence the audience. Short films provide various kinds of discourse which include the use of language in most contexts that cannot be found in textbooks [20, 21]. The contexts included may be in the form of status, age, and sex of participants, the speaker's feelings and communicative intentions, the relationship the speaker has with the hearer, the content of the utterance, and the situation where the utterance occurs [20]. Moreover, short films can expose students to authentic and varied language use, real-life conversation, and natural expression. This exposure will allow students to learn how to communicate based on contexts. Short films are also beneficial for them to learn natural flow of speech, pronunciation, and expressions of the dialogue [11, 13, 14]. Students’ will be stimulated to exchange ideas in the spoken and written form, especially when it includes animation [22]. It helps students to improve their diversities understanding and communication skills [12].

Like writing stories, producing short films also require writing to communicate fundamental human experiences [6]. Teachers may ask students to perform certain roles based on the film that they have watched and identify miscommunication occurs in the role play to make students recognize and learn about how to address people as well as communicate appropriately based on context [20, 23]. As students perform a scene, they obtain opportunities to communicate using their own words when doing a role-play [8]. They will face real communicative situations as they are required to transfer what they learn during rehearsed and unrehearsed scenes in real life [8]. Communication skill is also necessary during film production when students need to re-shot or re-record a few scenes [19]. As students are required to work in a group, they are forced to immerse in more opportunities to communicate and use the language [14].

3.3 Encouraging students’ critical thinking using short films
Including multimedia that are in relevance to their daily life experience is found to be one of the reasons of the high correlation between students’ thinking skills and their motivation to learn [22]. In this case, using short films as learning media is an active teaching and learning approach which implements a student-centred approach. Therefore, students’ critical thinking skills will be stimulated to discover and construct their knowledge, explore a new concept, enrich conceptual understanding, obtain answers to daily life questions, explanation ability, and participate in class [12, 22, 24]. The integration between language in print and visual in the film allows students to understand and conceptualize a deeper meaning of the story [25]. This is when multimodal learning occurs since all of the students' senses are included. However, if teachers only show a film to the students without having further discussion, they will get insufficient edification [25]. As a result, it is crucial to plan activities that require students’ deep thinking. Teachers can assign students to use their critical thinking to identify views conveyed in the story of a short film since the message is usually complex and presented in a sophisticated way [6]. Teachers can also stimulate students’ critical thinking skills through analysis, whether analyzing short films as a whole or analyzing a specific character [26]. Assigning students to produce their short films also requires their critical thinking skills since they have to select their topic critically and do the research [19]. These activities will require them to utilize technology to explore a deeper understanding of certain issues they want to include in their short films.
3.4 Building collaboration in the production of short films
Collaboration should be taught to students as it is crucial for their future because they will work with people from different cultural backgrounds [26]. Watching films will help students to acquire knowledge and information, especially about places, times, as well as the way people live, interact, and treat others [20]. Students can discuss their understanding with each other or with teachers so they can collaboratively connect their active learning experiences [24]. Integrating short films in language learning is also found to be effective in engaging students to collaborate because it promotes learning-oriented interaction, engagement among students, and active learning environment [10]. In this case, teachers can allow integration of the four language skills. While watching the film, listening and reading skills can be integrated. Meanwhile, after watching the films, teachers can assign writing and speaking tasks [21] which may require collaboration among students. These activities can be, such as developing written or spoken summary of the films after combining their understanding, or establishing a debate in regards to general ideas covered in the film [11, 21]. In terms of producing a short film, students may work in a group which consists of four to six members to prepare a role play based on a scene they select or memorize. It will require collaboration and equal participation of each student [10, 11]. Collaboration is also essential when planning and organizing their short films [19]. As for teachers, providing an opportunity for students to discuss, report, and share their films will make them excited and proud [19].

3.5 Raising compassion using short films
It is crucial to note that short films enable students to learn and be entertained. They also help them to feel and sense situations that they may have never experienced in their real life [26] as they can affect students’ psychology [27]. Similarly, Tognozzi (2010) considers that the inclusion of image and sound, both in the form of music or speech, allows the students to experience, reflect, and understand contextual meanings. Thus, it will lead to the enhancement of emotional connections. Their compassion can be increased as they empathize with the characters in a film due to the portrayal of the characters, dialogue, actions, or soundtrack [8]. It is due to the reason that both positive and negative emotions and experiences can be conveyed through film as it is used to represent someone’s own story as it is wished to be heard and understood [28]. Films with rich content that can represent diversities of culture in the language classroom are appropriate tools to enhance students’ understanding of diversity, cultural awareness, and their compassion to others. As students start to recognize diversities, their level of understanding will increase. Thus, empathy, sympathy, and appreciation will follow along the process [20]. In terms of improving their compassion, students may be given a task to produce their short films about environmental change to save the nature; thus, they can be agents of social change for initiating community dialogue [19]. Other themes they may explore are such as love, loss, belonging, and understandings others [6]. With the help of technology, being given these themes will enable students to spread meaningful messages not only to each other but also to a wider community. Therefore, by creating their production of shorts film, they are expected to inspire other people or can be as media for learning in the future.

3.6 Training Procedural thinking using short films
Tognozzi (2010) considers that students may have a different level in recognizing each skill of language. As he illustrated, students may recognize reading pattern, but it does not directly imply their ability to produce it in the written or spoken form. This is why instructional activities are of importance as they highlight the relationships among skills and enable students to synthesize those skills. Students will be exposed to real-world discourse as they are embedded with instructions into real communicative contexts [8]. When including short films in the teaching and learning process, there are things that must be considered by the teacher, namely the type of the films, excluding taboo context, and rating systems for appropriate ages [20]. Besides, there are two technical design features in preparing short films, namely the length of the short film and the characters participating/source of the message. The length of the short film should be considered because the longer it is, the harder students’ attention can be maintained. In terms of character participating, it can be considered within three levels, namely real actors, avatars, as well as both real actors and avatars [18].
In addition, students can create their short films with the help of teachers as well as supportive pedagogy and technology [6]. Giving students this kind of project will enable them to develop linguistic expression, immerse them in the elements of culture, and close the discrepancy between understanding and practice. Moreover, all of their language skills will be combined at once [8]. It also encourages them to learn through visual, audio, and kinesthetic. In doing a film-making project related to language learning, teachers can instruct students to follow the following key components, namely planning their story using a storyboard; writing the script; preparing props, characters, and backdrop; identifying film crews and their responsibilities; making the film; and, editing the film [12]. It is similar with the five steps film production suggested by Gold et al. (2018), namely selecting a topic and doing research; developing a storyboard and script; filming; editing; and showcasing the final film [19]. It will require technical skills, especially during the editing process, such as when the students add a description, shoot the video, edit footage, speed up or slow down, add background music, adjusting music, and remove unnecessary footage [29]. Furthermore, environmental issues that increase students' awareness and compassion can be included. Thus, they have to implement environmental knowledge when determining their content; pedagogical knowledge when leading the purpose of the film into educational purposes, and use technology to edit and finalize their films [29].

4. Conclusion

Technology advancement has given many opportunities for people to develop in every aspect, especially in the education field. A short film is a device that has many benefits as learning media. The benefit of a short film is not to entertain the students only but also to motivate the students so that they can enjoy the learning, and the learning process can be more meaningful. Moreover, short films give the students opportunities to enhance their languageskills in listening, speaking, reading, and also writing. In this case, multimodal learning is included where students can learn with all modes, namely visual, audio, and kinesthetic. Other than only consuming short films as learning media, teachers can assign students to produce their short films. Using devices that are easy to be found, cheaper, and handy, students will be able to make the production of their short films more effective. Including short films in language learning also allow them to enhance their 6C skills needed in the 21st century. In short, consuming and producing short films independently influences the way students think, act, socialize, and also students' knowledge that is also important for their future.

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