

## THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHING THE *ILIAD* WITH MOTION PICTURES ON THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF STUDENTS

Halide Gamze İnce Yakar and Ayşe Yücel Çetin  
Gazi University  
Turkey

### Abstract

This study aims to reveal the influence of teaching the *Iliad* with motion pictures on the academic success of Turkish tenth class students. The case study pattern is used in accordance with a qualitative research method. Percentage, frequency and arithmetic mean methods are used in the analysis of data, while SPSS 14. 0 T test is used in the analysis of significance. The experimental group watched the movie selected and shortened in relation to the *Iliad* during Turkish Literature course while the control group followed traditional teaching methods (plain lecturing). It is found that the academic success rates of the experimental and control groups differ in this difference is in favor of the group who watched the movie.

### Introduction

In epic teaching, it is possible to create a more effective learning environment by utilizing the multi dimensional learning environment offered by the cinema technology. In contrast to traditional learning methods, a learning environment enriched with cinema films will provide that weave a better understanding of the text event and are able to analyze the content. This will contribute to the facts that the student can concretize in mind the universal values, equality, extraordinary events of mythical periods which are far and difficult to understand for the student, democratic values mentality and way of life. In addition it can contribute to the access of the student's competence in terms of visual art. The so-called seventh art, which is cinema, has an important role in the literary education because it provides a practical and living learning environment as it is widespread and has easy access.

### Conceptual Framework

#### Literature — Cinema — Adaptation

The adaptation concept which is restructured with the technical possibilities of the other art branch, it is possible to meet with it many outstanding examples in the art branches such as literature, theatre, cinema, painting, etc. With these adaptations the interaction between the branches of art feeds both art branches in

terms of content. In our study Turkish and world cinema films adapted from epics were reviewed, listed and films of epics within the curriculum of Turkish Literature were watched and classified for educational use.

The development of communication technologies has also lead to changes in the general lines of literature. Radio, cinema and then television have influenced the dimensions and styles of literature adaptations.

### **Education with Cinema Films**

After the Lumière brothers in 1895 invented the film camera, until 1907 films were used for educational purposes. During the period between two world wars, cinema films assumed functions such as entertainment, education social, cultural history transferors.

In these years it was observed that visual methods were much more successful than classical methods including unlimited auditory elements based on oral expression of teachers (Duffey, 1918, p. 5). Research again made in those years did put forward significant results in issues of importance of cinema films on like sleep pattern of children, moral standards, sexual crimes, and social crimes.

Education reformers have emphasized that teachers should have technical material for use of films, a film library and detailed film catalogues. In the 1930s most of American schools and therefore also the teachers gained these opportunities (Pattison, 2006).

### **Use of Film in Education**

Before showing the film, the teacher must make his preparations and must control the projection device, computer and similar devices to be used. It also must be checked whether the CD of the film is damaged or not. There are three basic methods to use films in the class: 1.) to watch the film before processing the topic, 2.) to watch the film after processing the topic, and 3.) to watch the film to repeat the topic.

The method of using films can be defined as follows: reasoning, experimental studies, analogy, satire, symbolism, meaning, experience, and time (Champoux, 1999, p. 244). According to the most of the research in this field, before watching the film it is necessary to black out the room, to eliminate noise from external sources or conspicuous elements, and to review the seating arrangement. Before showing the film, the teacher has to ask questions about the film and its topic must introduce the film, must create interest in the film. The teacher should choose one of the following methods while watching the film: 1.) to watch the whole chosen film and to answer questions about the film and text for understanding or 2.) to stop the film at important sections, name the details and to answer questions. Some parts or the whole film can be re-watched if necessary.

One of the most used methods for the use of films in classes is “to read the book — watch the film.” It is important to support this method with the comparison of the book and the film and to make contrast analysis (Teasley & Wilder, 1994).

You should also guide students on how to access educational films outside the class. Access should be provided through links given to these films and videos on the web site of the school (Fu-xia, 2006, p. 57). If the films are not of domestic production, dubbing in the language of the audience should be considered for a better understanding. Some of the students may not be willing to read the subtitle (Champoux, 1999, p. 249). Furthermore students reading the subtitle are confronted with the possibility to miss some visual elements.

With the use and analysis of educational films, it was seen that success is obtained in the comparison of willing and unwilling students in terms of keeping in memory, motivation, active learning, skills and habits, imagination, the effect on students of various levels and so on (Kinder, 1953, p. 236).

## Method

In this qualitative study the case study design was used. As text the *Iliad* included in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade unit of Turkish Literature Curriculum “Turkish Literature in the Epic Period” was selected. Questions and analysis units prepared for epic were prepared in the direction of gains and related resources and were eliminated by three experts.

The study was realized in Zonguldak, Karadeniz Ereğli (Heraclia) with a total of 30 focus (15 students of the 10 Science A class of the Karadeniz Ereğli High School/ College, and 15 Students of the 10 Science B class). The reason why this school was selected for the study is that statistics did show that this school was in the forefront in terms of success of student placement in universities in the years 2006–2009. The study was made with two groups randomly assigned as test and control groups.

In accordance to the length of the text in the literature books of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade a part of the *Iliad* was determined for the control group to be read. At the beginning of this section also the plot summary was given.

By reviewing issues such as the success of adapting the epic to cinema, image and sound quality, success of players and staff and in the direction of related sources and studies, the film *Troy* made in 2004 and directed by Wolfgang Peters, adapted from the *Iliad* of Homeros by David Benioff was shown to the test group. It was considered that the film was appropriate for the cognitive, physical and emotional levels of the students, and that the plot and subject of the epic was expressed well. A section of 30 minutes related to the text of the film was cut with a film cutting program to be shown to the students.

In order too prevent that the examiner entering the class to operate the study — together with his observations from pilot studies — and thus to affect the results of the study, the study was carried out by the teacher of the class.

The examiner was only present as observer. The teacher was provided with the study file, the text of the chosen epic, the film *Troy* and other details to be issued during the study. The selected text of the epic was read to the control group, the class was issued with traditional method and questions were answered. For the test group the 30 minutes *Troy* film was shown and questions were answered.

Also, studies for the validity, reliability and generalization of the research were made. It was provided that data given during specified hours in a period of two months before the application of the study/ research were described in a detailed way. Depth focused data were betrayed through the comparison, interpretation and conceptualization of data obtained from query results, analysis of documents and researcher notes and it was taken advantage of the method variation. During the analyzing of the document, the opinion of three experts was considered, and it has been prepared a separate correlation analysis table for each application of the control and test groups to show the neutrality of the scoring system between these readers. Correlation scores are close to 0,01 level and significant.

## Results and Comments

Students were asked questions prepared in accordance to the gains defined by the literary curriculum. These gains are as follows: making explanations on the creation of epics, explain that in different civilizations and nations a epic period was lived, determination of functions of the people in the plot explanation of how the epic themes express universal features of human beings, analysis of the epic plot, determination of features, explanation of mythological elements with the mentality of the related period.

### Results on Sub-purposes

“Is there a significant difference in the success in the first and second application of the test group students educated with a cinema film adapted by the epic in order to understand the whole text?”

Table 1: t-Test Results for dependent groups of first test scores for academic success of the students in the test group

Test	N	$\bar{X}$	S	Sd	T	P
Pretest	15	24,67	2,69	14	2,20	0,046
Final test		23,07	2,79			

According to Table 1 it was determined that there is a significant difference between the academic success first test- final test scores of the test group making class by watching films ( $t(14) = 2,20$ ;  $p < 0,046$ ). While the arithmetic average of the first test results of students in the test group is  $\bar{X} = 24,67$ , the arithmetic average of the final test results was determined as  $\bar{X} = 23,07$ . It was seen that the difference between this scores is in favor of the first tests.

### Results on Sub-purposes

“Is there a significant difference in the success in the first and second application of the control group students educated with a traditional education method (lecture) in order to understand the whole text?”

Table 2: t-Test Results for dependent groups of first test scores for academic success of the students in the control group

Test	n	$\bar{X}$	S	Sd	t	P
Pretest	15	17,53	2,47	14	6,61	0,000
Final test		9,73	4,15			

According to Table 2 it was determined that there is a significant difference between the academic success first test-final test scores of the test group making class by traditional education in the control group ( $t(14) = 6,61$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). While the arithmetic average of the first test results of students in the control group is  $\bar{X} = 17,53$ , the arithmetic average of the final test results was determined as  $\bar{X} = 9,73$ . It was seen that the difference between this scores is in favor of the first tests.

### Results and Comments on Sub-purposes

“Is there a significant difference for the students in achieving permanent knowledge between the study with an epic adapted cinema film and the traditional education methods?”

Table 3: t-Test Results for independent groups of first test scores for academic success of the students in the test and control group

Group	N	$\bar{X}$	S	Sd	t	P
Test	15	24,67	2,69	28	7,56	0,000
Control	15	17,53	2,47			

As it can be seen in Table 3 the arithmetic average of the scores received by the test group in the first application was  $\bar{X}=24,67$  and the arithmetic average of the scores received by the control group in the first application was found as  $\bar{X}=17,5$ . According to this data, it was determined that there is a significant difference between the academic success first test score of the test group and control group ( $t(28)=7,56; p>0,000$ ). According to this result, it was seen that the academic success of applications made directly after the trial study of the test and control group show differences and that this difference is in favor of the group watching the film.

Table 4: t-Test Results for independent groups of final test scores for academic success of the students in the test and control group

Group	N	$\bar{X}$	S	Sd	T	P
Test	15	23,07	2,79	28	10,33	0,000
Control	15	9,73	4,15			

As it can be seen in Table 4 the arithmetic average of the scores received by the test group in the final application was  $\bar{X}=23,07$  and the arithmetic average of the scores received by the control group in the final application was found as  $\bar{X}=9,73$ . According to this result, it was determined that there is a significant difference between the academic success first test score of the test group and control group ( $t(28)=10,33; p>0,000$ ). According to this result, it was seen that the academic success of applications made one month after the study of the test and control group show differences and that this difference is in favor of the group watching the film.

### Results on Sub-purposes

“Is there a difference between the vocabulary in the test group educated with films adapted from epics as a reflection of pleasure and enthusiasm gained from work of art and the vocabulary of students joining the study of education with traditional methods?”

Students of the test group watched a film which was adapted from epics. The enthusiasm, excitement and artistic interests of the students increased their attention. The answers to questions asked to the students watching the film and those receiving lectures were analyzed according to the number of words they used. In the first application we see that the test group has answered the questions with 1140 words and the control group with 618 words. In the second application which was made to determine the permanence of knowledge, the test group, did answered the questions with 713 words and the control group with 278 words.

## Results on Sub-purposes

“Is there a difference between the used word frequency in the test group educated with films adapted from epics and the used word frequency of students joining the study of education with traditional methods?”

In the first and second application the answers were analyzed in terms of used word frequency in the answers and no difference was observed between the test group and control group in the meaning of the text circles. In the list created for this purpose the special names *Troy, Paris, Achilles, Hector, Helen, Greek, God, of Troy, Agamemnon, Sparta, Akha*, the verbs *die, kidnap, bring, drag, kill, beat, run away, through*, and the nouns *war, cousin, daddy, arrow, cars, girls, horses, love, king, heel, his wife, and dead bodies* were used.

In terms of frequency according to the first application the first five words used by the test group are *Troy, Paris, Achilles, Hector*, and *Helen* whereas the first five words of the control group are *Paris, Hector, King, Troy*, and *friend*. In the second application made one month later the first five words used by the test group were *Troy, Paris, Achilles, Hector*, and *father* whereas the first five words of the control group were *Hector, kidnap, kill, drag*, and *Paris*.

## Conclusions

In the education of epics that builds up our studies, groups have been formed in order to evaluate the effect of education with the film. It is defined that in the arithmetical overall of the first application of the experiment group, the difference between the points are in favour of the first tests. It is defined that in the arithmetical overall of the first application of control group, the difference between the points are in favour of the first tests. It is detected that academic achievements of the experiment and control group in the application immediately after the experimental study, differ from each other and that difference is in favour of the group that watched the film. It is detected that academical achievements of the experiment and control group in the application one month after the study, differ from each other and that difference is in favour of the group that watched the film. The number and the frequency of the used words in both groups have been compared. It is defined that film watching activity has an understanding impact on the permanency of knowledge, the participation of the students to the class with their own words and vocabulary.

In the research based upon learning with films, the comparative effect in learning status after a time has passed over the screening of the film (Butler et al., 2006; Malik, 1933; Sumstine, 1918). A second application was done one month after the education with films activity in our research. According to the results, it is detected that academical achievements of the experiment and control group in the application one month after the study, differ from each other and that difference is in favour of the group that watched the film.

In our research, it is concluded that the students in the film watching group answered the questions towards them with more words than the ones in the control group. In the group which conventional methods are used, it is observed that students usually copy the answers of the questions from the source text. The answers that both groups have given are scanned and compared by a frequency analyzer program. According to the results obtained by the frequency analysis of the words in the answers that is given by the students from both experiment and control groups, it is concluded that there are no difference between the notional frame of the material used in control group and material used in experimental group.

In the researches towards the usage of films for education, it is concluded according to the results that film usage is effective in efficient learning and permanent knowledgebase.

### References

- Allen, H. W. (1955). Research on film use: Class preparation. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 3(3), 183–196.
- Ash, P., & Carlton, B. J. (1953). The value of note-taking during film learning. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 23, 121–125.
- Butler, A. C., Zaromb, M. F., Lyle, B. K., & Roediger, L. H. (2009). Using popular films to enhance classroom learning. *Psychological Science*, 20, 1161–1168. Retrieved August 3, 2010, from <http://louisville.edu/psychology/lyle/ButlerEtAl-2009.pdf>
- Champoux, J. E. (1999). Film as a teaching resource. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 8(2), 240–251.
- Charters, W. W. (1933). *Motion pictures and youth*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Dale, E., Dunn, F. W., Hoban, C. F., & Schneider, E. (1937). *Motion pictures in education*. New York: The H. W. Wilson Company.
- Desmond, J. M., & Hawkes, P. (2006). *Adaptation: Studying film and literature*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Duffey, W. (1918). *Visual instruction through lantern slides and motion picture films*. Texas: University Six Times a Month.
- Elliott, G. M. (1948). *Film and education*. New York: Philosophical Library.
- Ford, W. E. (1947). Is note-taking when viewing motion pictures effective in high school science? *Education* 68, 125–127.
- Fu-xia, Z. (2006). Using epic films and documentaries in humanities-oriented education for English learners. *Sino-US English Teaching*, 3, 53–58.
- Hornbostel, V. O. (1955). Audio-visual education in urban school systems. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 3(3), 206–211.
- Ketcham, H. C., & Heath, R. W. (1953). The effectiveness of an educational film without direct visual presentation of content. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 11(4), 114–123.
- Kinder, J. S. (1953). Audio-visual research: Where to find it. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 1(4), 234–241.



- Kramsch, C., & Andersen, W. R. (1999). Teaching text and context through multimedia. *Language Learning & Technology*, 2(2), 114–123.
- Liu, J. (2010). An experimental study on the effectiveness of multimedia in college English teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 3, 191–194. Retrieved September 7, 2010, from <http://www.ccsenet.org/elt>
- Malik, H. (1933). *Türkiye 'de Sinema ve Tesirleri*. Ankara: Hâkimiyeti Milliye Matbaası.
- Pasin, R. (1951). *Modern Eğitimde Film*. İstanbul: İstanbul Basımevi.
- Pattison, L. (2006). Taking the movies to school: Science, efficiency, and the motion picture project, 1929–1939. *History Intellectual Culture*, 6, 1–15. Retrieved October 5, 2010, from <http://ucalgary.ca/hic>
- Rainford, L. (2003). How to read the image? Beckett's televisual memory. In J. Murphet & L. Rainford (Eds.), *Literature and visual technologies*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Steinberg, H., & Lewis, E. H. (1951) An experiment on the teaching value of a scientific film. *British Medical Journal*, 2, 465–467. Retrieved August 3, 2010, from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2070160/pdf/brmedj03508-0039.pdf>
- Teasley, A. B., & Wilder, A. (1994). Teaching for visual literacy: 50 great young adult films. *The Alan Review*, 21(3). Retrieved October 2, 2010, from <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/spring94/Teasley.html>
- Weber, J. J. (1922). *Comparative effectiveness of some visual aids in seventh grade instruction*. Chicago: The Educational Screen.
- Wegner, H. (1977). *Teaching with film*. Bloomington, IN: The Phi Delta Kapa Educational Foundation.