Pedagogical Implications of Teaching and Learning English in American Film[1] [2]

By Dr. Linda K. Parkyn[3] , Dr. John A. Beaney, and Dr. Kim D. Yúnez, Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

Several years ago, my daughter went to see Oliver Stone's new movie, *JFK*. She came home with her friend, and as we were eating dinner and discussing the Warren Commission Report, we verbally wondered if there might be more to the story than the initial report about John F. Kennedy's death. My daughter's friend Mike was incredulous at our conversation. He was having dinner with his friend's family, and we were verbally debating the veracity of people who worked in the US government. In the middle of his third helping of lasagna, Mike turned and said: "You don't actually believe that anyone in the government would not tell the whole story, do you?" Gales of laughter exploded from all members of the family assembled, until we all realized Mike wasn't laughing. He was serious, and he didn't believe that anyone in the US government would not reveal all to the American people. My daughter, a vocal political junkie, was ruthless. She asked question after question to shake his belief in the metanarrative of the United States of America, and Mike verbalized over and over again his firm faith that our leaders always have our best interests at heart.

Mike's version of America is the official or grand narrative. Some academics refer to it as the hegemonic narrative. Michael Peters and Colin Lankshear (1996) define hegemonic narratives as legitimating stories propagated for specific purposes to manipulate public consciousness by heralding a national set of common cultural ideals (Peters and Lankshear:2). Mike did not believe that there would be alternative explanations for the death of JFK. He thought that Oliver Stone was a kook, a moviemaker who had an active imagination. Some of us might agree with Mike, but Oliver Stone is an excellent example of a filmmaker who won't let the grand or official narrative be the only narrative. Oliver Stone is a postmodern filmmaker. His goal is never to offer one oppos-

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[3] Linda Parkyn can be reached at lparkyn@messiah.edu .

ing grand narrative, but rather to offer many other little narratives that call the grand narrative into question.

Often, little narratives are the stories of individuals and groups whose knowledge or histories have been marginalized by the larger culture. In the telling of the hegemonic narrative, these parts of the story have been excluded or ignored (Peters and Lankshear, 2). Recently, we all heard about "the little story" of Thomas Jefferson and the slave woman who was the love of his life. For 225 years, the hegemonic narrative, the official story, didn't let this story come to light. And now the story is changed. How long will it be until we see Oprah play the role of the slave woman and Richard Gere, the grieving widower, who loves her clandestinely inside Monticello until the end of his life? When this movie is written, there won't be a dry eye among serious moviegoers in America, and the hegemonic narrative of Thomas Jefferson will be amended. The little story will be incorporated into the grand narrative.

Other examples of how our thinking is altered by new portrayals of historical events are the movies *Saving Private Ryan* and *Thirteen Days*. The dramatizations of these invasions contain images that become etched in our minds in ways that affect our perception of D-Day, 1941 and the Bay of Pigs in Cuba. Not only do these films influence what we think about these events, but they also invite us to connect emotionally with the dramatic situation in a way that makes us feel like we know the characters and understand what they are going through. When I saw *Thirteen Days,* the story of the Bay of Pigs, I expected to see a glimpse of Marilyn Monroe running down a hallway in the White House. My hegemonic narrative of JFK has been forever changed by the little story about his life that has become embedded into the overall plot of the movie, 30 years after his death.

These little stories have been called by postmodern philosophers counter narratives, little oppositional stories, or extra stories, that allow the point of view of marginalized groups to find a place in academia. They often are oppositional in nature to the official story. They call into question the very nature of an official narrative. In the wake of September 11, many war movies are finding their place in telling the official narrative of the United States. Some of the recent war movies seek to change the common hegemonic notions that the public holds from earlier movies about wars our country has been involved in. These retellings make people like Mike very nervous. They give multiple points of view and often are the stories of uncomfortable realities that have been covered up.

Movie-goers like Mike, who have allowed the official version to construct their thinking, simply dismiss or discredit the alternative viewpoints. More discriminating movie-goers discuss and critique the central

narratives of the film, especially when they pertain to a subject of national debate or to an ongoing controversy. However, minor and incidental narratives, which are not likely to attract so much critical attention, often slip by undetected and unquestioned and thus, begin to control the way we see things.

For example, in a movie that everyone has seen in the recent past, *Castaway,* Tom Hanks plays a character that is marooned on a desert island for a few years as the sole survivor of a plane crash in the middle of the ocean. In a movie that seeks to portray the human survival instinct, how much do you remember from the movie about a little narrative, the story of FedEx? Hanks' character plays a FedEx delivery manager who never loses sight of his goal to deliver the package. In fact, the FedEx package is instrumental in saving his life. In the movie the hegemonic narrative is the survival of a man alone against all odds. The counter narrative is the story of FedEx. How many of us in this room who saw the movie might now, if given a choice, choose FedEx over UPS when we need to mail a package? How many of us would even realize that we might choose one over the other because of the story? Little stories within the hegemonic narratives are often taken at face value and not critiqued.

Let's move the discussion to our own discipline of language teaching. An example from the popular television program *The Simpsons* will help us to clarify. My introduction to *The Simpsons* was when my middle school age son and his friends called me into the den to see the program where Bart Simpson and his friends are sitting in the middle of a Spanish class. As the teacher circled the room asking *¿Cómo está usted?*, Bart and his friends were muttering under their breath, *taco, burrito, enchilada*.... The five boys, all enrolled in Spanish I at the time, were howling. I was not amused, and even a little hurt that they would think that I would laugh. They simply thought I would enjoy it. We agreed to disagree agreeably. *The Simpsons* language classroom was a very different classroom from the one in which I thought I would ever enter to teach. But what did those five middle school boys think a language classroom would be like? How did they imagine it based on their experience of Bart and his friends?

This uncomfortable experience led me to question how movies represent language teaching. How many little stories about language teaching are embedded in the official narratives delivered by films? As I began to think, I centered in on one of the oldest movies I remember seeing, and I thought about Henry Higgins and Eliza Doolittle. Language teaching may be incidental to the main motif of the plot, the love that Professor Henry Higgins exhibits for Eliza Doolittle in the 1964 film, *My Fair Lady*, but by bracketing the little story of how he taught language,

we can better see how his method of teaching impacted Eliza's social standing. If you can remember, Professor Higgins meets Eliza, who is selling flowers, and he says: "Look at her, a prisoner of the gutter, condemned by every syllable she utters...A woman who makes such detestable noises has no right to live." Could Professor Higgins represent the hegemonic notion that mastery of proper English is justifiably the key to socioeconomic advancement? The student, Eliza, needs fixing, and the scientific management approach to language instruction is the answer.

Couldn't you just see professor Henry Higgins at the MEXTESOL conference? He would have a table with a machine to improve pronunciation: "The rain in Spain stays mainly on the plain... I think she's got it!" The underlying assumptions about language teaching in *My Fair Lady* represent the behaviorist approach. And look how many students were taught just this way: students who can't for the life of them remember one word of the language when they finish their studies or if they do manage to produce a small tidbit of the target language they gleefully resort to an inflexible repertoire of memorized phrases. *My Fair Lady*, in an incidental way, probably reflected and affected the way languages were taught and thought about. In any case, the cultural and pedagogical assumptions embedded in the way teachers taught languages at the time were made clear in the little narrative of the movie.

And so, with this experience, we embarked upon the notion that we would watch American films that have little narratives about language teaching embedded in movies as part of the story. In none of these films is language teaching the main story. The hegemonic narrative of the plots are usually unaffected by the parts of the stories that have to do with teaching language. We decided to explore the cultural and pedagogical assumptions about language teaching and learning embedded in the incidental narratives of American film.

In the movie *Stripes*, two friends who are dissatisfied with their jobs decide to join the army for a bit of fun, to meet girls and to keep the world safe for democracy. Russell, a likeable but altogether clueless drifter, is apparently teaching English to make ends meet. It is evident that Russell does little or no planning for his lessons, but why would he need to, since his objective is "to have a great time." The class is very stiff and the students mechanically repeat whatever input they are given. Further in the movie, Russell wants to sing and fills the time with fun-and-games. Russell will probably not be certified to teach any time soon, but had he continued his career in education, his teaching would have served as a classic example of what methodology instructors have called the 4-*f* approach to teaching, an approach to teaching culture that centers around *f*olk dances, *f*estivals, *f*airs and *f*ood.

Whereas Russell teaches English to put a few dollars in his pocket, the protagonist of *Good Morning Vietnam,* does so to attract the attention of a language student. In this film the entertaining radio DJ Adrian Cronauer pursues a Vietnamese girl through the streets of Saigon to the door of her English class. After bribing the regular teacher to abandon the class, he instantly becomes an "English teacher," hoping to impress the girl with his newfound status. After a few uncomfortable moments of failed communication, Cronauer admits, "I can't really teach English...I can only tell you about how you can talk on maybe the real streets of America." In a flippant manner he then proceeds to teach the class some street jargon like "baby what's happenin'?," "let's groove," and "slip me some skin."

Even though Cronauer is forced to admit that he's not prepared to teach, he does something admirable. He closes the cover on textbook English and invites the students to engage in conversations that might take place on American streets. Even in his impromptu role as teacher, Cronauer has enough sense to manage a classroom conversation in a way that resembles real language use. In a later classroom scene, Cronauer builds up authentic communication situations and prods his Vietnamese students to react as an American might by asking, "What would you say," or "What would you do?"

Cronauer's approach to teaching can be better understood when one considers his approach to radio broadcasting. His show becomes popular because he ignores the constraints of convention and official censorship, in part in order to heighten the comic effect of his offhanded remarks, but also in the interest of truth-telling. Cronauer seems to believe that students, like the GIs, deserve the chance to prepare themselves to deal with reality, or maybe more accurately, with the absurdity of their reality. This of course is very threatening to the officers in charge of radio programming since they only report stories that create the impression that the Americans are in control of the situation in Vietnam. As a broadcaster, Cronauer is interested in cutting through the bunk of the official narrative. With sarcasm he deconstructs the sugar-coated official story and by doing so, simultaneously angers his superiors and wins his way into the GIs hearts.

Just as Cronauer's raw remarks lift the spirits of the American troops who are engaged in an escalating war, his light-hearted approach to teaching helps students to laugh at their imperfect command of the English language. Language teachers know the feeling when students enjoy the classroom, and we would feel gratified by a comment from a student like the one made by the woman as she exits Cronauer's classroom, "We like your lessons better than the books." Cronauer's students are not bogged down with thinking about what the book says and the

monotonous drills and repetitions that characterize the audiolingual method.

Although Adrian Cronauer's off-the-cuff approach to teaching American street jargon is immensely entertaining, the underlying assumption of these types of classroom scenes subtly suggest that any clown who speaks English can teach it. As much as we as language teachers would like to think that most viewers of this film would not share this assumption, we may need to think about how students think that their native-speaking peers should be able to tutor them simply because they speak the language. The truth is that sustained learning does not occur in the absence of deliberate pedagogy. Our students succeed because we deliberately set them up to succeed and they are doing their part as well. We prepare our students for a range of situations by connecting new information to the knowledge base that is slowly and deliberately built up over a sequence of language courses. Adrian Cronauer taught his novice level students just enough to get them into trouble. A quick and simple test of which method works best, that of traditional conversation, or the spontaneous method of the stand up comic will assist here. In the year 2002, which of these phrases has endured the test of time, "I want to buy some butter and some cheese, please," or "Hey baby, slip me some skin."

In stark contrast to Adrian Cronauer and Russell, the restrained protagonist of *Mr. Chips* conducts his class with utmost propriety. A Latin teacher during World War II at Brookfield Academy, an all male boarding school in the English countryside, Mr. Chips represents the image that many Americans have of language teachers. His teaching is, quite frankly, atrocious. He asks his students to stand and read a passage in Latin, then translate that passage into English. The students do their homework and they can translate, but they hate it, because they find it boring and unimportant for them. Mr. Chips does try to interest his students in the Latin language and the Roman culture, but he fails miserably. In an early scene he explains the *lex canulaerer*, the law which allowed patricians to marry plebeians. He suggests that the students can remember this law if they just think of a Miss Plebeian who wants to marry a Mr. Patrician. When the patrician says that this is not allowed, she responds, "yes you *can you liar*."

This contorted piece of logic leaves his students both speechless and uninspired. His attempt is a total failure, and even he knows it. In an earlier scene with a colleague, Mr. Chips rhetorically asks, "What is a worse failure than a teacher who can't make his pupils grasp the importance of what he has to teach?"

After he completes this sad language lesson, he tries to motivate the students with the explanation that, "we have a mutual duty." He has

a duty to teach, and they a duty to learn. Isn't this how many of our students in the lower level classes view language class? We know that students sometimes enroll in our classes because they must fulfill the language requirement, whether they like it or not.

Near the end of the movie Mr. Chips finally is able to interest his students in the Latin language and Roman culture. As the German bombers fly overhead, his students heroically translate Caesar's *Gaelic Wars*. As the students translate the Latin into English, they are intrigued to discover that the *germani* fought the Romans centuries ago, just as the Germans fight the English as the students translate in class in 1944. Mr. Chips says, "You can see how these dead languages can sometimes come to life again?" A student goes on to translate, "Our men attacked the enemy so fiercely when the signal was given." Latin is no longer a burden, but is now a useful tool to gain relevant information. A spark of interest has been ignited, and the students no longer focus on the language itself, but rather the cultural content which is revealed to them through the tool of language. They have finally grasped a small glimpse of the importance of what Mr. Chips has to teach them.

The hegemonic narrative is, "Latin teachers are terribly boring, and the material is completely irrelevant. Students must learn this material, although they detest it." Here the counter narrative is, "Latin class can be interesting, if the students can see the relevance to their lives." Although as language teachers we may be uncomfortable with this movie, we would probably agree that both the hegemonic and the counter narrative are true. If we were to begin the first day of class by saying that we are going to learn this language because it is our mutual duty, how many students would be motivated to learn? Whereas some students appreciate structure and design for its own sake, most students need us to demonstrate why language is significant to them. Unless we help them acquire the cultural content which is revealed behind the structures of language, they will see language class as a mere duty.

The 1972 movie *Cabaret* presents Liza Minnelli as Sally Bowles, a young American entertainer, and Michael York as Brian Roberts, a young English student of German in Berlin in 1931. Sally has been in Berlin for only a few months, and despite the fact that she states that she has begun to think in German, her proficiency level is at best novice mid. As she shows Brian the boarding house where she lives and where he will rent a room, she uses a few broken German phrases, such as *Fraulein Schneider nicht zu Haus,* or *das Toilette*. In another scene when she leaves her laundry at a laundry service, she cannot even explain that she wants it ready on Tuesday. She is rescued by Maximilian, a wealthy Jewish German who speaks flawless English. The official narrative suggests that her inability to speak German is a mere inconvenience be-

cause many Germans speak enough English to help. Language learning is not very important for Americans because other people speak English. Sally Bowles can function at the novice mid level and expect other people to come to the rescue. Even though she lives in Germany, we do not expect her to advance beyond the novice level.

Brian hopes to pay rent in Berlin with his earnings from English lessons. Since his room is so small, Sally graciously suggests that he give lessons in her room, which has a separate sitting area with a table. In one scene Brian reviews verb conjugations with Herr Wendell, as Sally arrives. Herr Wendell becomes so frustrated with the verb conjugations that he swears. This presents the official story of how the American culture has perceived language teaching and learning: We must go through the tedious, frustrating process of study and review of verb conjugations in various tenses. The next student, Fraulein Landauer, a very wealthy German, arrives for her lesson. Apparently she would prefer to forgo a review of the verb tenses, as she suggests that all four engage in English conversation. It is at this point that the counter narrative begins. As Fraulein Landauer speaks of a recent cold she had, she mispronounces the word *phlegm*, and is corrected by Brian. His authority as an English teacher is brought into question when he cannot explain why the *g* in the word *phlegm* is not pronounced. Sally then moves the conversation to the topic of syphilis, and she uses an impolite word, which the Germans do not know. Sally searches her meager German vocabulary and eventually finds an appropriate German word. This leaves both Germans speechless, because they believe that such vocabulary is improper for polite conversation. This type of vocabulary would be used by ill-mannered, uneducated people, yet they associate knowledge of English with the upper, well-educated class in Germany.

The official narrative proposes that knowledge of English is desirable for social advancement and is a symbol of superior social status. Whereas Sally will probably remain at the novice mid level in German, we expect that Herr Wendell will improve his proficiency level.

This also presents the counter narrative about language teaching. Brian is prepared to give a grammar lesson (the official narrative of how language is taught and learned) to his next student, but his control of the learning environment quickly erodes as the counter narrative begins. Herr Wendell stays beyond his lesson so as to get acquainted with Fraulein Landauer, who changes the lesson plan. Then, Sally not only refuses to leave, but she also leads the topic of discussion. With this total lack of control, the lesson plan goes out the window. As language teachers we understand the difficulty which often arises when we try to initiate open-ended conversation in the target language. We experience moments of silence, and the conversation is often stilted at first, as we try to find a

topic that interests and motivates students enough to focus on the content rather than on the structure. Nevertheless we know that this is the only way that our students can acquire language in the classroom setting. Both Herr Wendell and Fraulein Landauer learned much more in open-ended conversation, than he did with the verb conjugations.

Dances with Wolves presents a 19th century lieutenant assigned to an isolated outpost near Lakota territory on the prairie. Just as he slowly befriends a wild wolf, so too he befriends the members of a Lakota tribe, as he experiences all aspects of their culture. He eats their food, uses their tools, adorns his body with their paint and jewelry, wears their clothing, and celebrates with them. He participates in courtship and marriage rituals, and he bonds with the men when he hunts the buffalo and in battle against an enemy tribe. We know that hunting is a highly valued skill in the Lakota culture, as he enters into their folklore as a hunting hero, and is repeatedly asked to tell the story once again of how he killed the buffalo single handedly. Future generations will repeat the story of the lieutenant's heroic actions. Most significantly for our purposes, the lieutenant is able to enter the Lakota culture to the extent that he does, because he learns to speak their language.

We all know that Lakota is a difficult language for English speakers, yet knowledge of the language is essential if the lieutenant is to enter into the culture, be accepted as an equal, and become a folk hero. The significance of the Lakota language is stressed throughout the film with the use of subtitles whenever the Indians speak. Before he becomes proficient in the language, the lieutenant must rely on the translations provided by Stands with a Fist, who was taken by the Indians from her white family as a young girl, and who must strive to find distant English words.

As the lieutenant repeats a phrase, she corrects him with an explanation of the meaning of his mistaken discourse. She does not focus on any particular element of the discourse, but rather repeats the entire phrase.

In another scene of the movie, the conversation between the lieutenant and tribal chief suggests that the lieutenant's language training lasted over an extended period of time. By this time his language ability is pretty impressive. As the Lakota flows from his lips we read the English translation below his face. We suddenly feel that he has crossed a cultural line and has gone over to the other side. We wonder whether he will ever return.

The entire narrative of *Dances with Wolves* is in opposition to the official narrative that our culture had so long promoted about native Americans. The narrative suggests that, "not all Indians were uncivilized sub-humans. Some of these tribes may very well have had civilized val-

ues of right and wrong. It is our task to move beyond our cultural stereotypes and prejudice, and learn about a people's culture from their perspective. What we learn may not only dispel our cultural notions about the "uncivilized" others, but may also reveal uncivilized behavior in our own culture." This last aspect is eloquently demonstrated when the Lakota discover that white men have slaughtered hundreds of buffalo only for their skin. When the Lakota find the bloody carcasses left on the prairie to rot, they are shocked as they contemplate this uncivilized behavior. The embedded narrative tells us that proficiency in the language is the key to successful entry into a culture, and that a language is best learned by extended contact with native speakers.

The humility with which the lieutenant approaches the Lakota people allows him to free himself from the shackles of ethnocentricity. This attitude toward other cultures and languages is sadly lacking in the other films that we have selected. In this way *Dances with Wolves* serves as a positive model. Most language teachers can identify with the lieutenant as we have learned about other cultures in a similar manner. We would be very proud if the lieutenant had started his path of cultural exploration in one of our language sections of Lakota, and went on to spend the semester with a Lakota tribe, and returned to campus proficient in the language.

Pocahontas is another cookie cutter Disney movie with the same plot as all the others. An enticing young girl meets a strapping young man, but some obstacle stands in the way of a relationship. By the end of the movie the obstacle has been overcome, and the two live happily ever after. The obstacle here, of course, is that the Englishman, John Smith, cannot have a relationship with Pocahontas because she is an Indian.

When they have their first conversation she speaks no English. Suddenly and magically Pocahontas is overcome with understanding when she hears the song of the willow tree, which sings, "Listen with your heart; you will understand. Let it break upon you like a wave upon the sand." After the inspiration passes over her a few times she states, "My name is Pocahontas." She learns English in a few seconds. She needs no teacher, no practice, no extended contact with native speakers. She merely listens with her heart, and she understands. This embedded narrative teaches American children that learning a language is a simple matter, and teachers are unnecessary in the accomplishment of this task.

The 1956 classic movie, *The King and I*, is the story of Mrs. Anna Leonowens and her son Lewis who travel to Bangkok where she has been contracted to teach English to the children of the royal household. She goes to Siam and she finds Siamese customs to be quite different

from English ones, which often brings her into conflict with the king. Anna's reasons for being there are seen in opposition to the king's assumptions about what an English teacher might be like. The king, in expressing his views about teaching and learning languages, says to Anna: "Siam to be scientific country, everybody speaking English." But he also shows his ambivalence to all that he seeks to learn when he says "How am I to ever learn the truth if different English books state different things?" In this movie the pedagogical assumptions from the king's point of view portray that English is a civilizing, modernizing entity. The Siamese are backward and insensitive. The future lies in English books. The relationship between the teacher and the student is conflicted by their different assumptions from their distinct cultures. The king of Siam wishes to send elephants to help Abraham Lincoln with the civil war and as much as Anna would like to try to explain, but she can't for the life of her figure out what to say or how to explain why this would not be a good idea.

A lavish remake of the now familiar story of *The King and I* was produced in 1999 and entitled *Anna and the King*. It is the same story. The young British widow travels to Siam in 1862 to work as a schoolteacher for the king's 58 children. Put off at first, she and the monarch soon develop an understanding and an unspoken attraction that cannot be fulfilled. However, the interesting part of this particular narrative is that the Siamese people seem to have changed dramatically from the 1956 version. In this version the young prince balks at the idea that the imperialist English schoolteacher has something to teach him. He inquires of his father "Have I done something to offend you? His father responds, "Of course not." The son then asks, "Then why do you punish me with imperialist schoolteacher?" The metanarrative of English teaching being a civilizing and modernizing entity is narrowed in the politically correct culture of 1999.

When we juxtapose the incidental narratives of American films with our actual pedagogical practice, we begin to understand the disconnect between public opinion and what we really want and hope to do in a language classroom. The film quotes and images and representations on the grid at the end of this paper demonstrate that most of these films reinforce deficient paradigms of language instruction, study and learning. The portrayal of modern language teachers as clowns or the students of languages as ignorant dupes affect student expectations. The myth of immediate socioeconomic gains without regard to race, class, or power is real in many students' lives, especially as they approach the discipline of second language study. The myths of becoming bilingual and bicultural overnight can be demoralizing to students who take the first year of a language and still can not have meaningful conversations with native speakers. We cannot easily dismiss these films as

Hollywood fictions if these images coincide with the mainstream cultural myths about our profession and student perceptions of what is going to happen in a modern language classroom. Movies are everywhere, and they shape our world. As language teachers we need to be prepared to question the metanarratives and refute the misconceptions about our profession that pervade our culture. And isn't this why we come to conferences such as MEXTESOL, so that we not only understand the attitudes that our students have, but that we also learn to better articulate our own pedagogical assumptions?

The teaching and learning of modern languages does not happen in a vacuum. There is a need for us as language teachers to realize where the culture is situated, and to know where our students are coming from. We need to contextualize our practices and realize that students come to us with several of these myths in their minds as they approach our classes. We need to be sure of the bases from which we teach: language teaching and learning would benefit from an attempt by us as teachers to make our theories of how we learn languages more explicit. The continuing struggle to understand, clarify, and articulate why we do certain things in our classrooms does matter. We as teachers need to choose our options for what happens in the classroom based on what the learners bring with them, as well as how neatly our lesson plans are formed. We need to remember the little stories, the counter narratives that mitigate against our tightly woven teaching practices. If what happens in class is situated oppositionally to a students' expectations, more work needs to be done.

Counter narratives are not readily critiqued by the movie-going public. We would all agree that the students in our classrooms today certainly qualify as part of the movie-going public. The pedagogical implications of English teaching in American films changes classroom expectations. As a result of these changes, and as a sign of them as well, we as instructors would do well to pay attention to them and to use them as analytical tools to improve our pedagogy.

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Anna and the King, Twentieth Century Fox, 1999.

Cabaret, Warner Brothers, 1972.

Dances with Wolves, Orion Pictures, 1990.

Good Morning Vietnam, Touchstone Pictures, 1987.

The King and I, Twentieth Century Fox, 1956.

Mr. Chips, MGM/UA Studios, 1969.

My Fair Lady, Warner Video, 1964.

Pocahontas, Walt Disney, 1990.

Stripes, Columbia Pictures, 1981.

Film	Film Quotes	Images/Representations
My Fair Lady 1964 Warner Video	"Look at her, a prisoner of the gutter/condemned by every syllable she utters." "A woman who makes such detestable noises has no right to live."	The key to socioeconomic advancement is mastery of the English language! Learning a language is behavioral; acquiring good English is a sophisticated response system acquired through operant conditioning. ***Behavioral***
Stripes 1981 Columbia Pictures	"I've never done this before…you know some English?" "OK, let's try it one more time: I met her on a Monday and my heart stood still."	Teaching language is all fun and games. Teaching culture centers around folk dance, festivals, fairs and food. Students are ignorant and as learners don't bring anything useful to the classroom. ***4-F Approach***
Good Morning Vietnam 1987 Touchstone Pictures	"I've never done this before. Can we try, my boyfriend's back? Why do I feel like the miracle worker up here. Hey baby, what's happening. Let's groove, slip me some skin."	Authentic classroom situations prepare students for using language in the real world; but without deliberate pedagogy students are prepared only for a limited range of communicative situations. ***Impromptu***
Mr. Chips 1969 MGM/UA Studios	"We have a mutual duty, in fact, and it is not a duty I, for one, am prepared to betray." "Sometimes these dead languages come to life."	Learning a foreign language is a duty: It's a formal obligation. Latin is boring and irrelevant but just learn it. Relevance enhances instruction and learning! ***Duty***
Cabaret 1972 Warner Brothers	"So, we shall make a party for speaking English, yes?…All the phlegm was here. Then why are they putting the g please?" "So, Mr. Professor! You do not know?"	Other people can just learn English. The teachers cannot explain everything! USE IT, as a teacher and a learner, to advance socioeconomically. ***Conversational***
Dances with Wolves 1990 Orion Pictures	"Wrong. You said fire lives on the prairie." "I did? Well no laughing, though."	Live with native speakers and repeat what you hear. Language proficiency becomes the key to cultural assimilation. ***Acculturation***
Pocahontas 1999 Walt Disney	"Listen with your heart; you will understand. Let it break upon you like a wave upon the sand."	Learning a language is simple…you start speaking flawlessly, immediately! You don't need teachers. ***Magic***
The King and I 1956 20th Century Fox	"Siam to be scientific country; everybody speaking English. How am I to ever learn the truth if different English books state different things?"	Advancement will come to the people if they learn English. English will make us modern and important. The Siamese are backward and primitive and learning language will make all the difference. ***Civilizing***
Anna and the King 1999 20th Century Fox	"Have I done something to offend you?" "Of course not." "Then why do you punish me with imperialist schoolteacher?" "Reform is vital for my country's survival. As tiny feet change, so will Siam."	In this version, the Siamese speak for themselves. English is shown to be a civilizing entity, but the people are less sure than the king. 1956 vs. 1999? ***Questioning***