GRAMMOV: LEARNING GRAMMAR USING MOVIES

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ABSTRACT

English grammar learning can be challenging for many ESL users for its non-overgeneralization features. As fun is deemed as a significant element in any learning process, excerpts from movies were used as e-content to assist in teaching English grammar. Recall technique in semi structured interviews were carried out on pre-identified average students after learning grammar using movies to unfold their learning acceptance. Findings suggest average learners show minimal benefit of such learning technique.

Keywords: ESL; grammar; movie

1. INTRODUCTION

The learning of English grammar has been a challenge to English as second language (ESL) learners (Mohamad. 2009). Mohamad (2009) found students excel in learning grammar using internet activities as opposed to traditional method "chalk and talk" yet newer studies (Tengku Intan Suzila, et.al, 2018; Solano, et.al, 2017; and Gunuç, & Babacan, 2017) found mediamorphosis is not suitable for average learners. Mediamorphosis can be fun to many highly digitized natives yet the changes from one media to another in learning environment may be overwhelming for averagely digitalized students (Tengku Intan Suzila, et.al, 2018).

The element of fun is highly associated to learning acceleration yet it has to be an immersive and instructionally fun too (Allen, 2016). Thus, the present study adopts movie excerpts as a fun e-content to assist in ESL grammar learning.
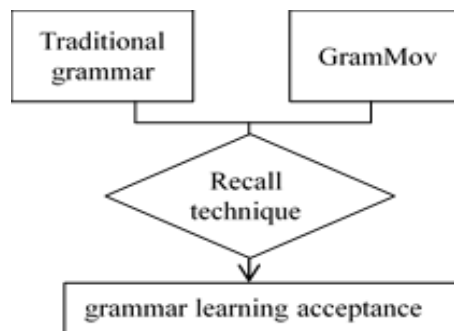

Figure 1: Research procedure

1.1. Research Question

Can the use of movie excerpt as e-content improve ESL grammar learning acceptance?

1.2. Research Objective

To unfold average ESL students' ESL grammar learning acceptance of movie excerpt as e-content.

1.3. Research procedure

Allen (2016) offers the background that initiated the present study. The present study adapts (Ikram, 2015) for it procedure. Recall technique in semi-structured interviews were carried out with a focus group of five conveniently selected students after 28 students were taught English basic part of speech and tenses using traditional grammar drilling and learning grammar using movies excerpt were made. Figure 1 illustrates the present research procedure.

1. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative approach is adopted for the present study to better understand students' grammar learning acceptance. Average students serve as the subject of the present study. The problem that led to the current study is, average ESL students seem to face great challenges in grasping English grammar using traditional method as suggested in (Mohamad, 2009). Therefore, intervention in the form of mainstream movie excerpts to add an element of fun is made.

2.1 Recall technique

Memory activities include recollection and familiarity which are differentiated by wants (to remember) and seen before (Srivastava & Vul, 2017). Thus, the recall technique used in this present study is based on familiarity – seen before. The encoding process is from movies and classroom activity whilst the retrieval processes happens in a semi-interview session. Srivastava and Vul (2017) states "differences in memory performance in recognition and recall are attributable to no deeper issue than an ecological preference to test memory using more items than lists (Srivastava and Vul 2017:8)." Yet, as it adds to the element of fun in learning (Allen, 2016), the present study proposes such experiment on average learners.

2.2 The present study

A focus group consisting of five students was interviewed to unfold their grammar learning acceptance using movie excerpts as e-content. Coding of the recall technique semi-structured interview is shown in Table 1. Yet, for the purpose of the present paper, only some of the descriptive analysis shall be discussed.

Table 1: Coding

Parts of speech		Tenses	
Properties	Weight	Properties	Weight
Noun/pronoun	4	Simple	1
Verb	3	Progressive	2
Adverb/adjective	2	Perfect	3
Preposition	1	Perfect progressive	4

2. RESULT

Some examples of scenes and the transcribed interviews are as the following:

> Scene1:
> Thor: "Where **is it**? This Crown?"
> Surtur: "**This is** my crown, the source of my power."
> Thor: "Oh, **that's** a crown. I thought **it was** a big eyebrow."
> Surtur: "**It's** a crown."(Marvel Studios,2017)

Question 1: Can you recall how singular and plural nouns and verbs agreement is important in English?

> **1:1** It **is** a crown (giggled)
> **2:1** *tak ingat lah 's' letak kat mana* (I don't remember where to put 's')
> **3:1** *Macam* "This **is**" *tu ke puan*? (like 'this is,' madam?)
> **4:1** movie *tunjuk* 'crown **is**' *dan guna* '**this**' (in the movie, 'crown is' and 'this')
> **5:1** camne puan? (how, madam?)

> Scene2:
> Thor**:** "So, Earth **has** wizards now?"
> Dr. Strange: "The preferred term is Master of the Mystic Arts.
> Thor, I sense a great change in your future. Destiny **has** dire plans for you, my friend."
> Thor: "I **have** dire plans for destiny." ."(Marvel Studios,2017)

Question two: Can you recall how 'has' and 'have' are used?

> **1:2** I **have** plans…*macam tu, kan?*
> **2:2** *satu* has.. *tu betul* (one –has, that is correct)
> **3:2** I *selalu* have, tapi satu I ni…
> **4:2** confuse *lah*
> **5:2** tak tau lah

Scene3:
Fan *(to Thor)*:**"**Sorry to hear that Jane **dumped** you."
Thor *(aside to Loki)*: "She **didn't dump** me, you know. I **dumped** her. It **was** a mutual **dumping**." ."(Marvel Studios,2017)

Question three: Can you recall how the word 'dump' is used to describe time?

1:3 tak ingat lah
2:3 past *tu..*
3:3 ada –**ed**..
4:3 *yang* mutual dumping *tu? ...*
5:3 *tak paham puan* (don't understand, madam)

3. DISCUSSION

Average learners' feedback from recall technique semi-structured interview suggests that students show minimal acceptance of learning grammar using movie excerpts as e-content. This parallel to (Solano, et.al, 2017, Gunuç, & N. Babacan, 2017, and Tengku Intan Suzila, et.al no date). In 1:1 the student imitated the dialogue and giggled suggesting that he found it fun. In 2:1 clarification for understanding had to be made twice to ensure translated meaning was captured.

Asking for clarification shows uncertainty in giving answers is common as seen in 3:1 and 1:2. Overall, feedback suggests that each shown movie excerpts with written dialogue and written explanation demands further verbal explanation from the educators. Thus, a video recorded explanation is also insufficient. Tengku Intan Suzila, et.al, no date) also noted that mediamorphosis among average learners is of lower acceptance.

Properties that fall under tenses seem to have lower acceptance over parts of speech. Although general acceptance may be seen, correlation to performance has to be examined. Therefore, the educator needs to play a part in explaining the role of tenses in English. The movie excerpts assisted in understanding time line based on the movie plot.

The plots of the movies seem to be a distraction of the learning process as interest was led towards the plot. This is also seen in (Tengku Intan Suzila, et.a,l no date).

5. CONCLUSION

Using movie excerpts as part of e-content may be limitedly constructive towards average students. Although it adds the element of fun, it distracts the learning acceptance of these students. The role of the educator cannot be denied. Thus, it is significant that educators understand the needs of their target students as there is no blanket rule to teaching.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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