INTEGRATING MOVIE CLIPS IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF GRAMMAR: A CASE STUDY IN AN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

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Dedicated to my parents

Chandrasekaran Perumal and Neermala Devi

my dearest husband

Pasupathy Raj Munusamy

my sisters

Hemalatha Chandrasekaran and Theva Priya Chandrasekaran

my Brother

Yogendran Chandrasekaran

For their support and encouragement

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to examine the effectiveness of integrating movie clips in the teaching and learning of English grammar in an industrial training institute. The study was designed to investigate whether integrating movie clips in English grammar lesson will affect students' performance in grammar. It also examined students' feedback towards learning English Grammar through integrating movie clips in their grammar lesson. The study was conducted within a period of six weeks where respondents were divided into two groups namely the experimental group and control group. Three types of activities were carried out during the treatment period for three week continuously on the experimental group. On the other hand, the control group was exposed to the same grammatical item using the traditional method. The differences in students' performance were tested using Pre-test and Post-test. Students' feedback on learning grammar through movie clips was gathered using questionnaires. Results gathered showed that teaching of grammar using movie clips has the most significant improvement compared to the traditional method. Feedbacks from the questionnaires also showed that almost all students gave positive remarks on the teaching of English grammar through movie clips.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengkaji keberkesanan mengintegrasikan klip filem dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran tatabahasa Bahasa Inggeris di salah sebuah institut latihan perindustrian. Kajian ini digubal untuk menyiasat sama ada mengintegrasikan klip filem dalam pelajaran tata bahasa Inggeris akan menjejaskan prestasi pelajar dalam tatabahasa. Ia juga meneliti maklum balas pelajar terhadap pembelajaran Tatabahasa Bahasa Inggeris apabila klip filem diintegrasikan dalam pelajaran tatabahasa mereka. Kajian ini dijalankan dalam tempoh enam minggu di mana responden telah dibahagikan kepada dua kumpulan iaitu kumpulan eksperimen dan kumpulan kawalan. Tiga jenis aktiviti telah dijalankan sepanjang tempoh rawatan selama tiga minggu secara berterusan bagi kumpulan eksperimen. Manakala, kumpulan kawalan telah didedahkan kepada tatabahasa yang sama menggunakan kaedah tradisional. Perbezaan dalam prestasi pelajar diuji dengan menggunakan ujian pra dan ujian pos. Maklum balas pelajar terhadap pembelajaran tatabahasa melalui klip filem telah dikumpulkan menggunakan soal selidik. Keputusan berkumpul menunjukkan bahawa pengajaran tatabahasa menggunakan klip filem peningkatan paling ketara berbanding dengan kaedah tradisional. Maklum balas daripada soal selidik juga menunjukkan bahawa hampir semua pelajar di situ memberikan kenyataan yang positif terhadap pengajaran tatabahasa Inggeris melalui klip filem.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0   Introduction

Increasing requirement of proficiency in English language in university entries and in the job market proves that a sound knowledge of grammar possessed by speakers of the English language is essential (Pragasam, 2009). Grammar is viewed as a crucial element for communication to take place because it shows how language is used. Teaching English language for workplace purposes for students of Industrial Training institutes has taken place throughout the country since 2005 (Noraini Ahmad, 2008).

The importance of teaching English language was seen when students completing the industrial training courses start to venture into industries and companies. Maros (2000) believed that good proficiency in English language is crucial for graduates to perform in the industrial world. As such, English language is treated as an important component in industrial training institutes in the country because the current industries use this global language in their daily communication in workplace as almost all their mother companies are based in other countries. This resulted in the employment of various skill workers from all parts of the world. Communication in one language familiar to all has become a must at workplace

today. English language plays a vital role as a standard language when it comes to communication at workplace.

The Department of Industrial Training Institute of Malaysia consider that the students graduating from the industrial training institutes here require at least minimum level of proficiency to survive in today's competitive world (Noraini Ahmad, 2008). For that, students must possess good grammatical knowledge in order to enable themselves to communicate effectively and confidently. Grammar is perceived essential for these students and is taught in the first semester for the students. Strengthening the grammatical knowledge in the first semester will help the students to perform better in the second semester.

1.1   Background of the Study

According to Hussein (2004:1), teachers kept on debating on the best method yet to teach grammar for generations. However, not many Malaysian English teachers relish the thoughts of teaching grammar on account of the complexity and irregularities in the English Language. Teachers have to find a way to make grammar lessons effective, beneficial and interesting. For that, teachers are responsible to use some well-developed and fascinating techniques that can captivate students' attention during grammar lessons. Thus, the selection of material should depend upon the maturity level of the pupil and objectives of teaching English language.

Good communication in the language can be achieved when the sentences are structured with correct grammar rules that can be used for communication (Nunan, 1991; Zhongganggao, 2001; Mc Kay, 1987). On the other hand, Lynch (2005) stated that teaching grammar explicitly or a grammar-focused lesson does not help good communication. This method of teaching grammar will make the lesson boring and difficult to students because the same lesson and rules of grammar are being repeated every year using the same method until they finish their school.

Learning grammar is included as one of the items in the English language syllabus for the students of industrial training institutes in the country to enable them to improve their communication skills. These students have no confidence to communicate in English because of the lack of grammar knowledge. There is a serious need to look at a different way of enabling these students to receive the input of grammar rules. Using chalk and talk to explain the grammar rules to students can be dull and teacher centred (Hamzah & Duarado, 2010). Teaching grammar will be successful if the material selected and methods of teaching are suitable.

Students attending these industrial training programmes in industrial training institutes throughout this country are those who did not perform well in their Malaysian Certificate of Examination (MCE or SPM). As such, students of these Industrial Training Institutes in Malaysia are mostly from lower level of proficiency in English (Bekri.et.al, 2011)

The current situation seen during the teaching and learning process in the institute is showing that students do not pay attention to what the teacher tries to teach. They are keener at looking at the things that is going on outside their classroom. Johnson (2005) said that, even though with energy, enthusiasm and a student-centered approach to teaching, students still slump in their seats and yawn at us. They sigh and watch the clock and students are actually doing their best to convince us that they hate learning because learners who are asked to discuss or listen to something without any visual focus often find their attention wandering. Therefore an exercise that uses both aural and visual cues such as listening to stories and songs or watching films, plays and television programmes is likely to give pleasure. This entertainment programmes can also encourages students to contribute to a task.

1.2   Statement of Problem

The teaching of English to tertiary level students in Malaysia creates specific demands which are not adequately met by textbooks used in the institutes. It has been a basic problem for many teachers, as many of their students have no more than intermediate-level English (Gaudart, Hughes, & Michael, 1996). They also added that these learners nonetheless will have to deal with advanced academic concepts in their studies, involving an attention to accuracy and detail in language which they have not previously needed. It is known that teaching methods influence the understanding and performance of students.

The current approach used to teach English Grammar in industrial training institutes in Malaysia does not match the proficiency level of students in the institutes. There is no interactive activity which can grab students' attention in class. Due to this, students face problem to acquire grammar skills as they are unable to concentrate during the lesson. They are not motivated at all in the class. These students have always been seen concentrating more on things happening outside the classroom rather than focusing on what is being presented to them. There is a need to modify the current teaching approach by integrating authentic materials, allowing students to engage themselves in the process of learning the grammar effectively. It is expected that teaching grammar through authentic materials such as movie clips are able to improve students' performance in grammar skill.

1.3   Research Objectives

This study is designed to achieve the following research objectives. They are:

a)   to investigate whether integrating movie clips in English grammar lesson will affect students' performance in grammar .

b)   to identify students' feedback towards learning English Grammar through integrating movie clips in English grammar lessons.

1.4   Research Questions

Two research questions are formulated to meet the research objectives. They are:

a)   To what extent does integrating movie clips in English Grammar lesson affect students' performance in grammar?

b)   What is students' feedback towards learning grammar through integrating movie clips in English grammar lessons?

1.5   Significance of Research

The significance of the research is to help teachers to find innovative and creative method to teach English grammar to the students not only of industrial training institutes in the country but also other learning institutes throughout the worlds. It is hoped that this research is able to provide better techniques that will allow students to learn attentively and participate actively in the teaching and learning process. Using movie clips to teach English has already been widely practised in schools in the country, however using movie clips to teach grammar is still a new scenario at industrial training institutes here and thus, it needs to be

considered when it comes to planning a classroom lesson to be exciting and beneficial.

Students will be able to grasp what is taught only when the input is given to them in the manner they would like to learn. This helps in improving their performance in grammar. Furthermore, it is time for the teachers to actually look beyond their current skill and upgrade their teaching techniques in classroom. If this method of integrating movies in grammar classroom is effective, this technique should be shared with other ESL teachers for the benefit of all learners.

It is also hoped that students are able to use the grammatical knowledge that they acquire from the lesson using movie clips in their daily communication. The knowledge of these grammatical items is very important as they walk into the working environment where they have to attend meetings, communicate with colleagues, write technical reports and many more.

1.6   Scope of Study

This study was conducted in two classes of semester one in an Industrial Training Institute in Malaysia involving thirty students from each class. The students chosen for this study are from the same level of proficiency. For this study, four types of grammar tenses, namely, simple present tense, present continuous tense, simple past tense and past continuous tense were chosen as the grammatical item because this item is one of the grammatical items which are quite difficult to be learned by this student. The grammatical items are few of those in the current syllabus that they have to learn during their course in the institute.

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