

Chapter 28

GRAMMODO: A Platform in Learning Grammar among ESL Learners in Malaysia

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Abstract

Acquisition of grammar is very significant to be highlighted in learning a language. Yet, in order to comprehend the rules of the grammar is quite challenging for some of the young learners. Thus, learning grammar through technology tool can be interactive and helpful among the primary school pupils. 'Edmodo' is one of the educational learning networks used to provide an easy way for teachers to administer online classroom activities and it has been used widely across the globe. In Finland, the analysis of the experience of applying 'Edmodo' as a learning aid to support group work had been conducted a couple of years ago. Malaysia also has been implementing this tool among the students in both school and university levels. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of implementing 'Grammodo'; learning grammar using 'Edmodo' among Year 3 pupils. This study was conducted in a primary school in Johor, Malaysia. A total of thirty five pupils (n=35) were selected by using random sampling method. Data was collected using a mixed-method approach as pre and post test and a set of questionnaire were carried out throughout the study. The findings indicated positive outcome among the participants after learning grammar via this tool. The results from this study is highly essential to be highlighted so that other educators could also apply this tool in their teaching and learning activities as well as to enhance the pupils' understanding in grammar acquisition.

Keywords: Grammar, Edmodo, e-learning, technology, ESL learners

Introduction

English language is ought to be acquired as it is not only being practiced to communicate among each other all over the world but also important in education field. According to Crystal (1997) as cited in Sharifian (2013), he declared that, "around two billion people are now using English around the world and English has an official role in more than 70 countries and territories". Other than that, the use of English language as the important language to communicate by people around the world has also been highlighted by Sharifian (2013) where he maintained that, "the majority of international travels are from non-English speaking countries to non-English speaking countries, requiring the use of an international language, which is in most cases English". In Malaysia, some of the people practice English as their first language with their family (Sharifian, 2013). Moreover, in education field, English Language subject is one of the core subjects taught in schools. Therefore, all students in school as well as in university should pass this subject in order to qualify their level of education.

Education system should be implemented according to the present and current approach of learning. By changing and improvising the way of teaching may offer positive impacts to the pupils'

achievement in learning English as well as escalate the teachers' expertise in teaching. Implementation of ICT tools in teaching and learning English should be centralized and applied not only to attract the pupils' attention but also to provide another mean of learning to all teachers as well as among the pupils. In schools, teachers may use ICT tools such as computers and LCD (Liquid-Crystal Display) projector provided in teaching English. Yet, it is not only about the tools used but also how the tools are integrated during the lesson. Thus, teachers have to be creative and innovative so that the teaching and learning process can be carried out in more effective and interactive way. In a study conducted by Madut and Yunus (2016), they claimed that, "using innovative material is an alternative and untraditional ways of teaching which helps students to acquire an effective communicative competence in the target language". Hence, learning grammar through technology tool can be more interactive and helpful among the primary school pupils.

Yet, in order to comprehend the rules of the grammar is quite challenging for some of the young learners. According to Chambers and Yunus (2017), "having a good foundation in basic grammar is the biggest challenge for today's learners". It explains that difficulties in learning grammar currently become one of the challenges faced by the learners. The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of implementing 'Edmodo' in learning grammar among Year 5 pupils in one of the primary schools in Malaysia.

Content

At the present time, the urge of integrating ICT tools in teaching and learning has been centralized all over the world. "In this age of modern technology and ICTs, online social networks have captured the attention of educators and policy-makers as an alternative tool for language teaching and learning", (Yunus and Salehi, 2012). 'Edmodo' is one of the educational learning networks used to provide an easy way for teachers to administer online classroom activities and it has been used widely across the globe. In Finland, the analysis of the experience of applying 'Edmodo' as a learning aid to support group work had been conducted a couple of years ago. Yet, the implementation of the technology needs to be developed in order to suit with the pupils' level of proficiency as well as to provide more interactive way of learning grammar specifically. This is highly supported by Madut and Yunus (2016) as they asserted that, "effective and efficient learning materials need to be developed, implemented, and continuously improved". Therefore, in this research, the 'Edmodo' application has been developed into 'Grammodo' which represents the learning of grammar using Edmodo; activities regarding grammar were provided in more interesting way.

Implication & Conclusion

Numbers of advantages have been identified throughout this research. By implementing 'Grammodo' among the pupils would contribute to autonomous learning where the pupils are doing and accomplishing the tasks provided on their own. Regarding this matter, teachers play their role not only as educators but also as the facilitators who will provide minimal assistance to the pupils in completing the tasks. Gradually, it promotes an independent learning among the pupils thus, motivating them to be more confident in learning. From the questionnaire, the data indicated that most of the pupils claimed that they were learning independently when doing activity via 'Grammodo'. This is because there was very limited assistance from teacher hence they have to complete the task on their own. Gradually, teachers play a very significant role in producing a group of learners who are more independent. As Duong and Shepo (2014) asserted that, "teachers hold positive attitudes towards the promotion of learner's autonomy in language as the facilitators, counselor, and variable resources". This is also sustained by Benson (2001) as cited in Bisse (2016), "the idea that learners need to be able to take control over their own learning to be successful not just in class, but to learn independently without a teacher outside the class, has become widely accepted in mainstream language teaching".

Besides that, parents' involvement is very important because Mohd Ismail (2006, p. 21) had clarified that good cooperation between the parents and school will better help the school to develop

the pupils' achievement not only in academic aspect but also in building good attitude among the pupils. Parents and teachers can exchange ideas and discuss methods that might be applied to improve the pupils' learning. Regarding this, the parents play a very important role in working together with the school. This notion is maintained by Mohd Ismail where he declared parents should give their cooperation with the school in order to solve any problems regarding their children's matter (ibid, p. 68). In order to create good bond with the parents, numbers and various activities outside of classroom should be carried out which involving the parents to get together into the activities; one of them is having discussion through Grammodo networking. This is maintained by Nembhard (2005, p. 19), declared that one of the six ideals of bonding between teacher and parents is by getting the parents to support the school program. Inevitably, the parents are not only helping the teachers in the lesson but also creating a good relationship between each other since they will be communicating among each other via the Grammodo discussion platform. By collaborating with the parents would build good relationship and trust thus, a mutual respect and acceptance can be achieved (ibid). Therefore, it is easier for teachers to explain and discuss about their children's achievement in learning English.

In conclusion, the inclusion of implementing ICT at present time is really accommodating and efficient in teaching English among the Malaysian ESL learners. By applying 'Grammodo' as one of the platforms in teaching English grammar would definitely boost up the pupils' interest and confidence to learn more. Thus, other educators could take into consideration in implementing 'Grammodo' in teaching English in their classroom so that the teaching and learning process can be more interactive and meaningful. In addition, support from parents is very important as well as the policy makers are responsible to provide a better facilities in all schools in Malaysia to make it a success.

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