The Use of Media Literacy – Foreign Movies to Promote Students’ Participation in a Malaysian Context

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Abstract: It is crucial for teachers to try various approaches and methods to create active learning. Bringing media literacy into second language classroom can attract students’ interests in the landscape of Malaysian classrooms. To acquire English Language in the 21st century, it is a common practice for teachers to provide extensive exposure of media literacy and presenting opportunities for students to experience active learning. Introducing foreign movie in an English Language classroom motivates students’ participation. The language classroom can be fun when the use of foreign movies is integrated in the lesson and active learning will promote students’ participation.

Keywords: Media Literacy, Foreign Movie, Promote, Participation, Active Learning, Second Language

1. Introduction

In Malaysia, English is the second language that are being taught formally from kindergarten to secondary school and even further practice in the university in our education system. Whether it is classroom learning, online blended learning or remote learning, any learning which is interactive will increase student engagement. The more engaged the students in a lesson, the more learning will take place. Jackson (2011) stressed that students will construct and take ownership of learning through active participation in the classroom.

Notably, Liu & Stella (2015) proffered that active interaction among language learners provide them more opportunities to learn new knowledge in the language lesson. In order to acquire or learn the second language, student who participated in the classroom activities actively learn the language well. Participation in the classroom is an essential part of language learning and students must engage in classroom activities in order to learn the foreign or second language. Moreover, Baker (2012); Firth & Wagner (2007) and Matusiak (2013) have proven that the relationship between participation and learning is important in language learning.

Equally, from the perspectives of psychological and sociolinguistic, classroom participation has been researched widely. Evaluating these perspectives may generate knowledge on approaches to enhance student participation in the English language lesson. ESL teachers should vary the teaching to improve the students’ ability in learning English and to look for ways to motivate and enhance students’ interests in learning English. Teachers can help students by providing them with the proper opportunity and approach like integrating media literacy in the language classroom.

2. Media Literacy in Education

In the same way, Demir (2006) contended that media is one of the components in communication and a powerful instrument that can shape personalities and change the way human comprehend knowledge of the world. It means that the communicator and communicant are a media in teaching and learning. In other word it can be said that mediator of all the equipment or something that used to transfer a message or information from teacher to students in teaching and learning process. According to Liu & Stella (2015) using media in learning can aid the acquisition of knowledge for children in the modern classroom.

Likewise, the research of Badke (2009) showed that the role of media literacy in student lives occurred with the development of television and movies and presently the internet can affect learning. Media literacy in education aligns the Malaysian government initiative of integrating technology to enhance teaching and learning process in the classrooms. Considering how well the students are exposed to such exposure, there will be no excuse for teachers especially in English language classroom not to take on the challenge as well as integrating variety of methods in teaching and learning process. Integrating media literacy such as movie clips, videos or animations in the classroom will help students to be more attentive and their interest in the targeted language increased where indirectly this will promote students’ participation and improvement in their proficiency (Yeh, 2016).
There are three views in using media in the classroom: 1) through media, 2) with media and 3) about media. In the first view, media literacy is often understood as simply as the use of TV or film as a teaching tool (Hobbs, 2011), where there are still abundant of other tools available in other forms that can be use in teaching include internet, PowerPoint, music, newspapers and books. In the second view of using media, media literacy can perhaps be referred to as the skills and knowledge requires using and interpreting media. The second view highlights the integration and implementation of the media into the school’s curriculum as well as takes the approach seriously as valuable teaching resources. While teachers may question the practicality of including media literacy into the already crowded curricula, it was argued that media literacy can and should be integrated and that it should not be an extra burden on teachers or students (Lasekani, 2016). In other words, media literacy should be practice in all the school subjects. The third view of using media is that the teacher should help the students to understand the role, the usage and the etiquette of media in order to grow alongside reality. Media literacy education should involve not only teaching through and with media but also teaching about media (Yeh, 2016).

3. Importance of Media Literacy

Teachers around the world have long integrated their teaching approach and/or process with variety of media literacy. In the 80’s and 90’s, teachers used newspapers, magazines, comic strips and atlas maps to teach in the classroom, to further enhance the quality of their teachings. These tools or materials are considered as traditional media literacy. Align with the 21st century teaching and learning, a lot of tools such as television, radio, computer and internet have been integrated into classroom in which this has changed the students’ learning process as well as their thinking skills. These have opened unlimited doors of opportunities to improve teachers’ pedagogies as well as conveying information to students. By using foreign movie is a shift from the conventional and it arouses curiosities and participations among students. This strategy is also an alternative approach for the teachers to attract the students’ interest and attention towards the teaching and learning process.

Use of Foreign Movies in ESL Classroom

In the ESL classroom integrating foreign movie is a great way for students to learn a second language creatively and meaningfully. Furthermore, foreign movies are used as set induction to introduce a new lesson or to initiate group discussions in ESL classrooms. Integrating foreign movies in the lesson is a fun way for students to enjoy watching the movie and to acquire the learning points simultaneously for they are also an inclusive piece of students’ lives. The foreign movies aroused students’ curiosity and learning. Moreover, by integrating popular foreign movies in ESL classrooms, students can be guided to be self-regulated learners to perform tasks in their own pace of learning.

4. Strategies to Use Foreign Movies

The strategies to use foreign movies will provide space for students of different learning styles to develop learning in different ways. The visibility of movies enabled the visual and auditory learners to understand more by interpreting the language in a visual and auditory context. The visual context improves understanding, enhances all the four language skills and increases student participation. Most importantly, teachers’ roles in the selection of movie and preparation of language instructions will make learning motivating and enjoyable.

Active learning can take place with the various strategies employed to integrate foreign movies into ESL classrooms. First strategy, teacher can select a suitable scene from the foreign movie for oral practice, Students work in pairs and follow the instructions given. It is suggested that one student will face the screen or view the movie and the other student is not allowed to view the movie. The excerpt of the movie is played without any volume. The student that views the screen will describe or mime the scene to his or her partner. Then, have the two partners change positions. Students in pairs are encouraged to compare and assess their own learning.

The next strategy that teachers can use in the classroom is to request students to role play or act. By role playing, students will be more confident in verbalizing their speech in a fun and relaxed manner. The students are required to watch a scene from the foreign movie for about ten to fifteen minutes. Students are placed in groups and they will roleplay the character they view in the movie. Every student in the group will roleplay one character. This will provide an opportunity for students to speak confidently in the language classroom.

Teachers can devise creative tasks for the practice and production stage during the lesson. ways to perform this activity. The average learners are allocated a short period of time to practice before presentation of the role play. On the other hand, advanced learners can create an impromptu improvised version of the play. For the
challenged learners, they can print an extract of the script and practice the role play. Students are encouraged to wear costumes and design props for their presentation. Teachers can carry out differentiated learning through these tasks.

The third strategy is to provide opportunity for students to predict the next part of a movie and it will be more interesting with foreign movie. Teacher can either create multiple choice questions as prompts or motivate students to predict the happening orally or in writing. Teacher will play the clip of the movie and students view the movie for a period of two minutes. Then, students are requested to guess the upcoming plot or scene of the movie. This activity is suitable for group participation. Time is allocated for group discussion and student sharing moments. Lastly, teacher will play the next scene of the movie for students to evaluate their own predictions.

Lastly, the fourth strategy is to let students view the title of the movie, listen to the song of the foreign movie and match the song to the correct title of the movie. Students are to predict, and to write a brief justification on the choice of their answers. Perform the gallery walk. This strategy is hoped to create a lot of fun and active participation in learning.

5. Conclusion

By using foreign movie in a language classroom, students’ learning is more real and authentic for it is connected to the real world outside classroom walls. The use of media literacy such as movies, films is one of the most creative pedagogical method and it creates an impact in ESL learning context. Best movies itself are not good solutions in ESL learning or teaching but the “what” and “how” the ESL teachers do with the movies especially foreign movies will create impactful solutions to teaching and learning in ESL classrooms.

References