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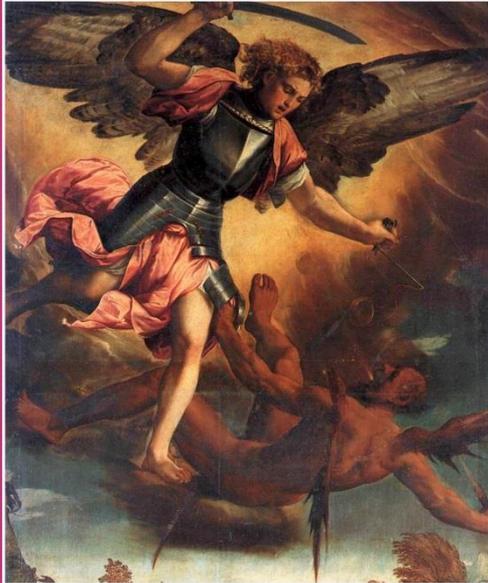
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The Effects of Powtoon on Form 2 Pupils' Understanding of Poems

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Abstract

This study was conducted to identify the effects of PowToon on Form 2 pupils' understanding of poems and pupils' perceptions on the use of PowToon in improving their comprehension of poems. This case study involved six Form 2 pupils from a secondary school in Bintangor. The research instruments were document analysis, focus-group interview, reflective journals, questionnaire and field note. The results showed that PowToon is able to enhance Form 2 pupils' understanding of poems, ease the process of understanding and have better engagement. Besides, participants of the study perceive PowToon as a learning tool that is attractive to be used.

Keywords: PowToon, Lower Secondary School Pupils, Literature, English Language

Los efectos de Powtoon en la comprensión de los poemas de los alumnos de Form 2

Resumen

Este estudio se realizó para identificar los efectos de PowToon en la comprensión de los poemas de los alumnos de Forma 2 y las percepciones de los alumnos sobre el uso de PowToon para mejorar su comprensión de los poemas. Este estudio de caso involucró a seis alumnos de la Forma 2 de una escuela secundaria en Bintangor. Los instrumentos de investigación fueron análisis de documentos, entrevistas a grupos focales, revistas reflexivas, cuestionarios y notas de campo. Los resultados mostraron que PowToon puede mejorar la comprensión de los poemas de los alumnos de la Forma 2, facilitar el proceso de comprensión y tener un mejor compromiso. Además, los participantes del estudio perciben a PowToon como una herramienta de aprendizaje que es atractiva para ser utilizada.

Palabras clave: PowToon, alumnos de secundaria inferior, literatura, lengua inglesa

1. INTRODUCTION

Policymakers' effort in highlighting the significance of literature can be seen when literature in action skill is included in every cycle of a lesson in English Scheme of Work for Form 1 and Form 2. The significant role of literature component is evidenced when the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 has made English literature component a compulsory element in both primary and secondary school educations. It is expected that English literature component is

able to assist pupils in having greater exposure to the English language and thus enhance the English proficiency level. However, pupils are having difficulty in appreciating and understanding literary texts (Yunus et al. 2013; Watanabe, 2019). A research was done by Othman et al. (2015) in Hulu Langat, Selangor showed that 58.3% of the Form 5 respondents agreed with the statement that it was difficult to understand the language used in the poems.

Thus, it is hoped that, through the use of PowToon in poetry lesson, pupils are able to generate more interest in learning poem and thus improve their comprehension of the poem. The innovation of the study is to identify the effects of PowToon on Form 2 pupils' understanding of poems and to identify pupils' perception towards the use of PowToon in improving their comprehension of poems.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The content standard and learning standard for literature in action are clearly stated in Form 2 Scheme of Work for English. Literature lesson is included in both textbook-based lessons and non-text-book based lessons. For textbook-based lessons, Form 2 pupils are provided with three literature books which are "Poetry for Pleasure", "One Thousand Dollars and Other Plays" and "Short Story Arena". Literature is not the main focus in English syllabus for Malaysian secondary school pupils however it is undeniable that it helps to improve the learning of English. English is learned as a second

language in Malaysia and pupils might not have enough exposure to the language. Through literature, pupils have more chances to read a different genre of texts (Coelho Vigário et al., 2016; Fathi & Dastoori, 2014).

Talif (1995) stated that pupils have the fear to study literature because of their belief - they will read difficult texts. When pupils skim and scan through the text, they will soon find out that the language used in literary works is not simple or unfamiliar to them. Hence, pupils will have a mindset that literature is a difficult subject and they feel reluctant to learn it. Pupils are lacking clarity about the literature and hence it can affect their interest in learning literature. On the other hand, in Ezeokoli & Igbor's (2013) study, non-facilitative methods and strategies adopted by teachers have been identified as one of the factors that influence pupils' learning of literature.

Hence, a new approach in the teaching of literature is important in order to enhance the students' reading comprehension. The researchers uploaded videos, pictures, video clips and animations onto PowToon. This study was embarked to identify the effects on the integration of PowToon towards Form 2 pupils' understanding of poems.

Related Past Studies

There are several past studies related to this study but none of them uses PowToon as the intervention. Most of the past studies focused on the use of visual aids in teaching literature component. Shabiralyani et al. (2015) had conducted a study on the impacts of

visual aids in enhancing the learning process and they found that pupils were able to comprehend a lesson easier with the help of visual aids such as pictures, models, charts, maps and videos. Another study was carried out by Yunus et al. (2013). The objective of their study is to identify the effects of visual aids as motivational tools in improving pupils' interest in reading. Their findings indicate that through watching the video clips, they were able to assist the learners to understand poems better. In addition, the use of visual aids was able to arouse pupils' interest in learning. In the study, the researcher introduced a few videos creating tools as the intervention tools which include Plotagon, PowToon and GoAnimate.

The study shows that PowToon is a more ideal video creating tool in comparison to other video creating platforms. As there are a few past studies which pointed out the positive effects of visual aids, PowToon, a video creating platform which is rich in visual elements is chosen as the intervention for this study. By using PowToon, teachers can customize the videos by inserting charts, pictures, video clips and animations. Such features of PowToon make PowToon an ideal visual aid which is able to facilitate the teaching and learning process.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this research, a case study is chosen as the research design. The research instruments employed in this study are a focus group interview (FGI), field note from classroom observation (CO),

document analysis (DA) and reflective journal (RJ). The interview questions for the focus group interview are derived from the Technology Acceptance Model which aims to seek participants' perceptions on the use of PowToon in poetry lesson. Field notes are used to record the behaviour and pupils' participation during the poetry lesson with PowToon. Document analysis is used to compare the pupils' performance of pre-test and post-test while the reflective journal is used to complement the answers given by the participants during the focus group interview.

Purposive sampling is used in this study. The purposive sampling method is a type of non-probability sampling and it can be used in both qualitative research and quantitative research. The participants are chosen based on their achievement for the English test. The researcher takes note of pupils' performance in their topical test and examination. Pupils with a dissatisfactory performance for literature components are chosen. Table 1 shows the profile of the six participants.

Participant/ Pseudonyms Given	Gender	Race	Language Proficiency	Age	Language Spoken at Home
1/P1	Female	Chinese	Intermediate	14	Dialect (FooChow), Mandarin
2/P2	Female	Chinese	Intermediate	14	Mandarin
3/P3	Female	Iban	Intermediate	14	Iban, Bahasa

					Melayu
4/P4	Female	Iban	Intermediate	14	Iban
5/P5	Male	Chinese	Intermediate	14	Mandarin
6/P6	Male	Chinese	Intermediate	15	Mandarin

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Profile

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussion are explained based on the two research questions (RQ) of the study which are:

1. What are the effects of the use of PowToon in understanding the poems?
2. What are Form 2 pupils' perceptions towards the use of PowToon in understanding poems?

Research Question 1

In order to answer RQ1, data from document analysis, the focus group interview (FGI), classroom observations (CO) and reflective journals were analysed. Document analysis involves the data obtained from Pre-Test and Post-Test. The focus group interview responses were recorded and transcribed. The observations were carried out for four times during the literature lessons with PowToon videos and field notes were prepared. Six participants were interviewed and their learning condition during the study was observed. To triangulate the data, the participants were asked to prepare reflective journals. Based

on the data obtained, thematic analysis is done. The effects of the use of PowToon in understanding the poems are divided into three themes which are (a) improve pupils' understanding of the poems (b) to ease the process of understanding the poems and (c) better engagement of pupils throughout the literature lesson.

Improve Pupils' Understanding of the Poems

Pre-Test and Post-Test were carried out to seek the changes in pupils' understanding of poems before and after the use of PowToon in learning poems. Both pre-test and post-test are prepared based on the poem "My Hero" and "What is Red?" All participants show improvement in the post-test and the differences of marks are shown in the table below.

Participant	Pre-Test (40%)	Post- Test (40%)	Difference in Marks
Participant 1	21	24	+3
Participant 2	18	20	+2
Participant 3	24	27	+3
Participant 4	20	26	+6
Participant 5	13	15	+2
Participant 6	15	18	+3

Table 2: Marks Obtained by Participant in Pre-Test and Post-Test

The improvement in marks shows that participants can have a better understanding of poems after the use of PowToon in learning poems. Most of the participants showed improvement in short essay questions as they were able to explain the meaning in a more detailed

way. Participant 4 showed the best improvement in answering short essay questions. Before the use of PowToon in teaching poems, Participant 4 was able to write a meaning for each line but she was unable to make a further explanation. After the intervention by using PowToon, Participant 4 was able to make an accurate explanation and elaboration for the meaning for each line. In the data collected from the reflective journals (RJ), 3 participants mentioned in their reflective journals that they had a better understanding of poems after watching PowToon videos and thus they were able to perform better in the post-test.

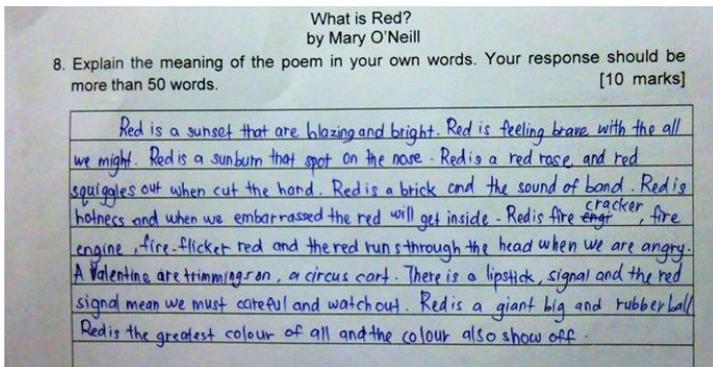


Figure 1: Response Given by Participant 4 in the Pre-Test

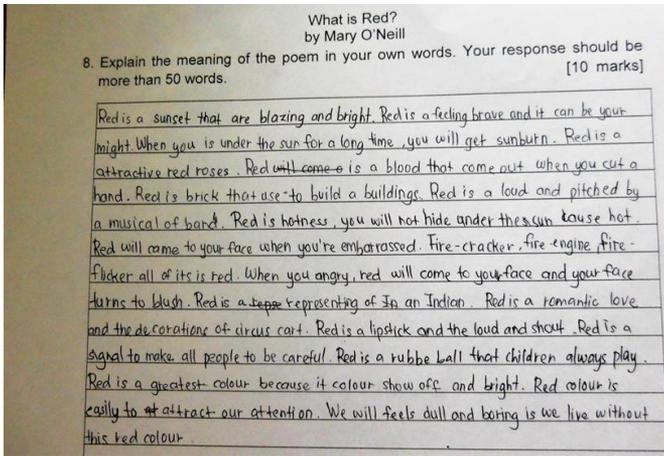


Figure 2: Response Given by Participant 4 in the Post-Test

“I write **more good answer** after video, I remember meaning from the video.” (P3, RJ)

“Cartoons from PowToon make a movement, so I **remember the meaning of the poem**”. (P6, RJ)

To triangulate the data, the researcher posted two questions to participants during the focus group interview (FGI) which are (a) Does PowToon improve your learning of poems? and (b) Does PowToon enhance your understanding of poems? All six participants agreed with the statement that PowToon improves their understanding of poems. This finding is in line with Cognitive Evaluation Theory by Deci and Ryan (1985) which explains the role of classroom conditions in supporting pupils' learning. In this study, PowToon has created a fun learning environment for the pupils and pupils learning are enhanced and thus improve pupils' understanding of poems.

“Yes, **is improve**, because I think lah, use PowToon, the video made of PowToon is very, err, is **very easy to understanding**.” (P1, FGI)

“Some stanza that in the poems we may not understand very much, so the teacher can put the explanation in the video, **so we can understand**”. (P2, FGI)

To Ease the Process of Understanding the Poems

Besides, the findings show that PowToon is able to ease the process of learning poems. All participants found learning poems through PowToon is easy. With the use of PowToon, teacher inserts related pictures, animations and sound effect in the video which are able to enhance the process of learning poems. Words are translated into motion, animation and sound. Besides, the researcher also inserts the meaning of lines in the PowToon videos. While learners were watching the video, they read the meaning of the poem at the same time and thus generated understanding towards the poems. In the focus group interview session, three questions were posted to the participants to seek their perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of PowToon. The three questions are (a) Do you find learning through PowToon easy? (b) Is it easy to use PowToon in learning poems? Four participants gave a clear response that they thought PowToon eases the learning of poems.

“I think it is easier for me to understand the lesson.” (P2, FGI)

“I think is also easy when teacher shows the PowToon.” (P4, FGI)

“I think the PowToon is, is for me is easy to understand the poem”. (P5, FGI)

Better Engagement of Pupils throughout the Literature

Lesson

PowToon promotes a better engagement of pupils throughout the literature lesson. Based on the data obtained from the field note, it was observed that all learners were attracted to the PowToon video during literature lesson. All pupils paid attention to the PowToon videos and some pupils even jotted down the notes from the video. Besides, it was observed that some pupils laughed when they saw the funny action acted by the cartoon characters in the PowToon videos. Two pupils even imitated the movement of the cartoon characters. For example, for the poem, “My Hero”, the researcher inserted an animation of character defeating enemies, the pupils imitated the action and this helped them to remember the meaning of the vocabulary, “defeat”. In addition, it was observed that 2 pupils made slight movement following the rhythm of the background music. Pupils also gave comments such as “The vampire is cute” and “The sunset is beautiful” while they were watching the videos. After the video, the teacher asked, “Do you enjoy watching the PowToon video?” All pupils answered “Yes”. The data of field note also showed that pupils gave responses actively on the PowToon video shown to them. Apart from that, the data can be supported when participants wrote in their reflective journal (RJ) that they paid full attention to the PowToon video.

“I **attract** to cartoons”. (P3, RJ)

“I **pay attention** to video”. (P4, RJ)

During the Focus Group Interview session, participants also responded that they found lessons with PowToon interesting and they enjoyed the lessons with PowToon videos. When the researcher asked the participants whether they would like to have more lessons with PowToon videos, all of the participants agree with the suggestion. The animated PowToon video creates a fun learning classroom which minimizes the effective filter and thus facilitates their comprehension of poems.

“Very agree.” (P5, FGI)

“Yes, I agree, of course”. (P3, FGI)

Research Question 2

In order to answer RQ2, participants were asked to give their perception of the use of PowToon. Data gained from focus group interview (FGI), field note (F.N.) of classroom observation and reflective journal (RJ) of participants are analysed. The analysis is divided into three themes which are (a) attractive features of PowToon (b) ease of use as a learning tool and (c) disadvantages of using PowToon in learning.

Attractive Features of PowToon

All participants viewed PowToon as an interesting and attractive teaching tool. When the participants were asked whether they thought learning poems through PowToon is easy, all of them agreed and they

gave the reasons that there were attractive pictures and animations in the videos. The visual aids in PowToon videos have made PowToon an eye-catching learning tool which is able to grab pupils' attention in learning poems.

“**Interesting and funny pictures** inside” (P1, FGI)

“**Interesting characteristic** inside, nice music” (P3, FGI)

“Many **pictures**, and the funny.” (P4, FGI)

“It has the **pictures**” (P5, FGI)

During the observation, the researchers noted that the animations managed to attract pupils. All pupils paid full attention when watching the videos. Some pupils also imitated the movement of the characters and this proved that pupils are fascinated by attractive features of animations. As to validate the data gained from the focus group interview and classroom observation, participants were asked to write a reflective journal. In the reflective journal prepared by the participants, they claimed that PowToon videos have attractive features which made the lessons more enjoyable and fun. The findings are parallel with Ashford & Guth's (2016) statement that it is fun to use PowToon as characters and scenes can be created to reflect real people and situations

“PowToon **has nice music and pictures**, moving characters make the action”. (P4, RJ)

“The **music of PowToon is good**, pictures are very nice”. (P3, RJ)

“The hero move, **very cute**, can learn the word”. (P5, RJ)

5. CONCLUSION

As discussed in the introduction, literature components in Malaysia English Syllabus aim to enhance pupils' language learning but pupils find it difficult to understand literary texts, specifically, poems. Therefore, this study attempts to seek the effects of PowToon on Form 2 pupils' understanding of poems. Findings of the study reveal that PowToon is able to enhance Form 2 pupils' understanding of poems, ease the process of understanding poems and pupils are able to have a better engagement to lessons. Besides, participants of the study perceive PowToon as a learning tool which is attractive and easy to be used.

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