THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GRAMMAR TRANSLATION METHOD (GTM) IN THE DIGITAL LEARNING OF READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at investigating the implementation of Grammar Translation Method (GTM) in the digital learning of reading comprehension. Noticeably, this study focuses on the students' responses towards its implementation. This study occupied the qualitative method. The data were then obtained using observation and questionnaire to address the first and second study aims respectively. The data of this study were obtained from 10 students of the first semester of English education, Suryakancana University. The results of the data analysis show that the implementation of GTM assists students in the reading comprehension process. Moreover, this method can be well suited to the digital learning despite the fact that this method is one of the classic methods. Students also gave positive responses of the method even though they spent more time in the translation steps and in comprehending the text in the target language.

Keywords: GTM, Digital Learning, Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the sectors impacted by the United Nations (UN) coronavirus, headquartered in New York, USA. Several schools and colleges are now cancelling face-to-face meetings and turning them into online classes to avoid the spread of coronavirus. Students are required to learn from home.

However, in fact, online learning has caused various issues among educational milieus. Many teachers and lecturers, for instance, are not yet competent to utilize the online learning applications, especially in several regions. Some studies also have shown that most students have negative views towards online learning. However, they decided to go through online learning since this was the best learning option during this global pandemic (Rohman et al., 2020). To facilitate online learning practices, some video conferencing tools are utilized, such as Zoom, Skype, and WebEx. Furthermore, various Learning Management Systems (LMSs), such as Canvas, Edmodo, Schoology, Google Classroom are also optimized to create an anticipated online learning environments. According to Zhao (2003), the current literature review has found that there is a lot of research on technology implementation in online education. The research focus is also various, started from the affordability and efficiency, the quality and effectiveness of online education, and many more.

On the other hand, Grammar Translation Method (GTM), as one of a traditional language teaching methods, has an undefeatable quality of practice. Practically, this method requires students to translate whole texts word by word and memorize numerous grammatical rules and expectations as well as enormous vocabulary lists (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, cited in Putri, 2012; Famularsih, 2020). The GTM in its original version may still be considered a fine method for students trained to become translators. However, for students who are more concerned with the development of their oral communication skills, it may not meet their needs until it is modified (Noll, 1999).

Orlando and Attard (2015) note that teaching with technology is not one-size-fits-all approach as it depends on the types of technology used and the curriculum content being taught. However, this research sees something promising if GTM is implemented in the current online learning practices, using particular technology tools. What to note now is what English skill that will fit the idea. With this in mind, teaching reading skill would likely meet the expectation of mediating the implementation of GTM in the technology-enhanced learning environment. GTM and the reading skills are interconnected in any ways, particularly in the way people comprehend the text by acknowledging the word choices. As one of the important receptive skills (Anderson, 1999), reading has seven purposes in general (Grabe & Stoller, 2002), that are "to search for simple information, to skim quickly, to learn from texts, to integrate information, to make a written text, to critique texts, and to get general comprehension. In the next level, reading helps teaching and learning process become more effective" (p. 13).

By acknowledging the linkages among online learning, GTM, and reading skill, this research aims at investigating the implementation of GTM in digital learning to teach reading comprehension. Furthermore, this study also intends to address the merits and the students' responses towards the implementation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS
Grammar Translation Method (GTM)
GTM is a foreign language teaching method based on the classical (sometimes referred to as traditional) method of teaching from Greek and Latin. The approach allows students to translate complete text word for word and to memorize a variety of grammatical rules and exceptions, as well as an immense number of vocabulary lists. The fundamental aim of teaching the target language through the GTM is to be able to read literature written in the target language.

Setiyadi (2020) lists the major characteristics of GTM, as follows:

1. Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language.
2. Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words.
3. Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.
4. Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words.
5. Reading of difficult classical texts is begun early.
6. Little attention is paid to the content of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis.
7. Often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue.
8. Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.
9. The focus is on accuracy, and not fluency.

Even though many new methods have been introduced, GTM remains a standard methodology for teaching English for some teachers (Setiyadi, 2020). It is in line with the statement from Harmer and Jeremy (2007) that say GTM still has its relevance. Even though it is not practiced as a method in the same way, but most language learners translate in their heads at various stages anyway and can learn a lot about a foreign language by comparing parts of it with parts of their mother tongue. However, a total concentration on GTM stops students from getting the kind of natural language input that will help the students acquire language (since the students always look at L1 equivalents) and it fails to give the students opportunities to activate the language knowledge. If the teachers and the students always translate the language, the L2 is not used for communication. The danger with GTM is, in other words, that it teaches the students about language but does not really help the students to communicate effectively with it.

The effectiveness of the GTM can vary depending on the intent of language learning. Teachers should also evaluate the language learning needs of students before determining which approach to implement. The GTM in its original form can still be considered a fine method for students who have been qualified to become translators. However, students who are more concerned with improving their oral communication skills may not be able to fulfil their needs until they have improved.

There is an improvement in GTM. Initially, teachers can use the target language as a means of instruction in classes, either in teaching grammar or in asking students to translate. This can increase the linguistic chances or exposure of their students to the target language, especially in terms of speaking and listening skills. This favours teachers, particularly if they are non-native, and students. Thus, both sides can practice and be more exposed to the target language. Language is about competence and success. Awareness of English learners about the target language must be used in practice. In addition, such a way of learning will help to establish a situation in which teachers and students can spontaneously and naturally use the target language. For most second-language learners, being exposed to the real situation in which the target language is used, particularly for Indonesian students, seems to be out of reach. In their home country, they learn English and are taught by non-native teachers. There is no question that such an imaginary English group would allow students to develop their oral communication skills in particular. If the class used English as a medium of instruction were to be used, any modified GTM might be used as a means of language teaching.

First on the part of teaching grammar, teachers should avoid teaching grammar in such a comprehensive way that more linguistic explanations are needed. Explaining 'husband' is etymologically derived from 'hus' and 'bondi' may not be needed. Instead, they may ask their students to make as many sentences as possible orally by following such grammatical guidelines. This will offer students a large part of the language teaching process. Second, in relation to translation, teachers should prefer students to make oral translations rather than written ones. As a result, the class can save time to do something else, for example, students are asked to prepare more than one translation of a single sentence before comparing it to the others. As a result, the class is expected to hear more translations than the number of students in the class, and each student is expected to defend his/her translations among the best. In reality, translation exercises can give students the freedom to express their ideas in a peculiar way through their specific translations and at the same time to check their comprehension.

In addition, translation from the first language to the target language should be predominant, as it will acclimatize them to use the target language rather than their native language. However if the path of translation is from the target language to the student's first language, teachers can ask their students to do back-translation from their first language to the target language again. In this way, the GTM will engage the target language in its communicative role.

From the above explanation, another factor that influences teaching and learning process is method. According to Brown (2001), method is a generalized set of classroom specification for accomplishing linguistic objectives. Method tends to be concerned primarily with teacher and student roles and behaviour and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject matter objectives, sequencing, and material. The teaching methods are essential for the purpose of instruction, so every teacher should have them. Since the effective teaching and learning process depends on how the teacher teaches. If students think that the teacher is good at teaching, they will be attentive and enthusiastic about the lesson that the teacher gives.

Digital Learning
The term of "online learning" is related to the 21st Century Education. European Commission (2001) explains it as the use of new multimedia technologies and the internet to improve the quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services as well as remote exchanges and collaboration. Nowadays the words "Training in the 21st century" and "Training in the 21st century" are widely known.

The definition of 21st century education suggests that lecturers should develop their education and ensure that their students meet the requirements of 21st century skills. The relevant skill is expected to establish students' ability for competitive career and good life, skills for lifelong learning and creative innovation, and skills for literacy, information, media, and technology (Suherdi, 2012). Orlando and Attard (2015) reported that teaching with technology is not a one size fits all approach as it depends on the types of technology in use at the time and also the curriculum content being taught. Furthermore, lecturers should integrate technologies with content and pedagogy in teaching processes.

The 21st century learning is characterized by student's ability in developing social skills. One of them is technological skills to exploit ICT tools appropriately (Hwee & Chai, 2018). As a result, lecturers should be able to cultivate the ability to be more innovative in using ology to meet the learning needs of students. Teaching and learning processes should not only take place in the classroom, but technology should be used by both lecturers and students to promote language learning materials. Lectures may ask students to use their gadgets, such as smartphones or laptops, to do something useful and meaningful. For online learning, lecturers need the Learning Management System (LMS) as a forum for teaching and learning activities. The use of the Learning Management System (LMS) is an online learning practice intended to promote collaborative teaching and learning processes.

LMSs and online learning platforms can be used for K-12 and higher education. The best LMS for 2018 are Absorb, Moodle, Canvas, Schoology, Blackboard Learn, Brightspace, Edmodo, Qiuzlet and Google classroom. Chakraborty and Muyia (2014) reveal several factors that can create interesting learning experiences for online learners namely creating and maintaining a positive learning environment, building learning communities, providing consistent feedback on time, and using the right technology to deliver the right material. By using one of LMS, students do not feel bored online learning activities (Mustafa, 2015).

Online learning becomes a trend among higher institutions as an alternative approach in teaching and learning processes. It is a solution to overcome physical distance and bring students closer together by carrying out projects in online learning (Haron, Yasmin, & Ibrahim, 2015). In teaching English, the students have experiences that online learning platforms help them to practice language skills and to acquire new English vocabularies (Cakrawati, 2017). Another digital platform that can give a driving force to advance for online learning is WhatsApp. It is essentially a correspondence application but shares various highlights with social media applications. The use of social media provides feedback between teachers and students and it makes them communicate more efficiently and effectively (Archambault et al., 2016). WhatsApp was founded in 2009 in California and has become well-known to 1.5 billion users in 180 countries, making it the most used chat application, along with Facebook messenger. It offers text, images, audio, video, free messages, and calls. Ngalomba (2020) states that WhatsApp is cost-effective and user friendly and has competitive advantage over the other social media. WhatsApp provides a safe application due to the inclusion of end-to-end encryption (E2EE) procedure.

In addition, discussions, lecture notifications, assignment and submission deadlines can be communicated through WhatsApp. Students may also contact their lecturer through WhatsApp regardless of time differences, physical distance in office hours of work. As a consequence, the lecturer will automatically give students individual feedback. Using WhatsApp will enhance learning experience and make it reasonably easy for lecturers to communicate with students at their own pace.

However, according to Purwanto et al., (2020), some believe that the unplanned and rapid move to online learning with no training, insufficient bandwidth, and little preparation will result in a poor user experience in teaching activities. The online learning also gives challenges for many academic staff who increasingly require higher levels of technological competency and proficiency. To solve these challenges in online learning, the institutions need to provide professional development for instructors, training for learners, and technical support for content development (Kebritchi, Lipschuetz, & Santiague, 2017). Moreover, some of the student anxieties in online learning could be overcame. Henceforth, it will give benefit to the students through the pedagogical methods.

Another idea comes from Purwanto et al. (2020) that the students' implication in using online learning in this pandemic situation is that they feel forced to study remotely without adequate facilities and infrastructure at home. This facility is very important for teaching and learning processes, such as tablets, computers or cell phones, which will make it easier for students to participate and listen to their teachers' explanations in the online teaching and learning process. Butler (2012) states that delivering materials in online learning is limited. It makes students feel bored and lack challenges in teaching and learning processes. Croft, Dalton, and Grant (2010) argues the lack of interaction and discussion between students on non-cohort-based courses lessens

the richness of the learning experience and omits a significant element of the constructivist approach to learning.

Social interaction plays an important role in learning. Interacting with other students or teachers has proven to be quite effective in assisting the students to manage their thoughts, reflect on their understanding, and find gaps in their reasoning (Okita, 2012). However, in online learning activities the interactions among lecturer and students can be supported by using emoticons. The use of emoticons is to represent emotional and personality nuances present in face-to-face communication (Dunlap et al., 2016).

In this research, students definitely have their own opinions and knowledge of studying online in the event of a COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of a study of student experience in online learning are supposed to be recommendations for lecturers and universities to carry out this online learning operation in order to keep it running smoothly and optimally. The purpose of this research therefore is to investigate the perception of learners about online learning in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of this study is to obtain information on the students' experience of using the COVID-19 online learning application in the English classroom.

Reading Comprehension

English is very important in our country as a foreign language. Learners of English must also strive to master the four language skills. Alexander (1983) states that in learning English we have to learn the four language skills, consisting of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Reading as one of the two receptive skills has an important role in the learning process (Anderson, 1999). Reading links the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text in forming meanings as information. Through reading, students can get much information in or out of the classroom. As a set of skills that involves making sense and deriving meaning from the printed words, reading gives some advantages to reader. According to Grabe and Stoller (2002), reading has seven purposes in general. They are to search for simple information, to skim quickly, to learn from texts, to integrate information, to make a written text, to criticize the texts, and to get general comprehension.

In the next level, reading helps teaching and learning process become more effective. It is one of the most critical language learning skills besides listening, speaking and writing. For Indonesian students, this is a bridge to understanding textbooks in a number of disciplines. This means that students can still face a lot of difficulties in learning science books such as sociology, biology, chemistry, etc. No wonder, university students sometimes ask a skilled translator for help in translating their English assignments. Since they are lack of knowledge of English, they also find it difficult to read their compulsory books written in that language. It is quite another matter for students to learn their native language and to read in a foreign language.

Reading in their own language is better than learning the language because they have learned their own vocabulary and structure. It is difficult for them to read in the target language. They are expected to have an appropriate knowledge of the language, which has a different vocabulary and structure framework. Reading methods play an important role in the comprehension of reading materials. They support students who want to read effectively. Teachers should know some of the reading strategies they need for their school work. There are several methods of reading that can be used in teaching reading, and one of them is the Grammar Translation Method (GTM).

METHOD

In this research, the researchers are using two instruments, observation and questionnaire to gain the data.

Observation

To address how GTM is implemented in the online reading class, the researchers used observation. As stated by Johnson and Christensen (2014), observation is defined as the watching of behavioural patterns of people in certain situations to obtain information about the phenomenon of interest. The observer should attempt to be unobtrusive so as not to affect what is being observed. Observation is an important way of collecting information about people because people do not

always do what they say they do. It is a maxim in the social and behavioural sciences that attitudes and behaviour are not always congruent.

By doing the observation, the researchers are expected to gain data as natural as possible. Qualitative observation involves observing all potentially relevant phenomena and taking extensive field notes without specifying in advance exactly what is to be observed. In other words, qualitative observation is usually done for exploratory purposes. It is also usually done in natural settings. In fact, the terms qualitative observation and naturalistic observation are frequently treated as synonyms in the research literature.

Questionnaire

Then, researchers used questionnaire to reveal students' responses the implementation of GTM in digital learning to teach reading comprehension. As stated by Johnson and Christensen (2014), questionnaire is a self-report data-collection instrument that each research participant fills out as part of a research study. Researchers use questionnaires to obtain information about the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personality, and behavioural intentions of research participants. In other words, researchers attempt to measure many different kinds of characteristics using questionnaires. An open-ended questionnaire allows participants to answer as they please in either way. Open-ended questions take the researchers through the study participants' natural language and worlds and thus, open-ended questions have mainly qualitative data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the results of the questionnaire. The participants were asked about their thoughts regarding the implementation of GTM in the online reading class.

Table 1. Questionnaire Results

No	Name	Grade	Participants response
1.	VN	2B	I think it's fun, at least increase my skill reading.
2.	DBY	2A	I think the material is quite easy. So far, I have had no problems, because the material is quite understood.
3.	MADN	2A	I think this lesson is quite easy because it can be understood in such a short time. I don't have any problem because this lesson is easy to understand.
4	OIL	2A	I think this method is quite effective because some of us don't have sufficient English skill to comprehend the text directly
5	RN	2B	I think this method helps us to comprehend the text, but it takes more time because we have to translate it first.
6	SFZ	2A	This method would be great if it is implemented in the lower grade such as senior or junior high school because the majority of the 3rd semester students of higher education have sufficient English skill to comprehend the text
7	H	2B	This method helps me to comprehend the text, since we translate the text to our native language
8	IN	2A	I think this method helps us with difficult or unfamiliar vocabulary
9	LMZ	2B	By translating the text we can easily the message of the text, so we are confident to answer the question
10	RG	2B	This method is great but it takes more time because we have to translate the text.

Based on the result of the questionnaire above, it can be concluded that this method is helpful to comprehend the text, to get the message of the text and to answer the included question from the text. By translating the text the students can comprehend the text the way they comprehend a text in their native language and assure them to answer the included question of the text. However, some students consider this method taking more time than comprehend the text

directly because they have to pass translating phase to answer the question and considered this method is more suitable for lower grade, such as junior high school and senior high school.

Table 2. Test Results

No	Name	Grade	Score Test
1.	VN	2B	80
2.	DBY	2A	90
3.	MADN	2A	90
4	OIL	2A	90
5	RN	2B	90
6	SFZ	2A	90
7	H	2B	80
8	IN	2A	70
9	LMZ	2B	70
10	RG	2B	80

From the result of the test, we can see that the students are able to get the massage of the text and use them to answer the question. Therefore, this method can be considered still reliable to be implemented to teach reading comprehension in digital learning.

CONCLUSION

Based on the observation and data collection from questionnaire, the researcher found good result from the students' assignment which average score is 83% of the total score. Despite the fact that Grammar Translation Method considered as one of the classic method or traditional method, this method is still reliable to be implemented to teach reading comprehension in digital learning. Proven by the result of the observation, questionnaire, and test. The researcher suggests to vary this method in its practice to obtain more various results and combine the method with the technology that is suitable to compete with the development of technology, classroom transformation and specifically the current situation during the pandemic of Covid-19.

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