

IDENTIFICATION OF VERBS IN A SHORT FILM *PASPORT EKSPRES*

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Abstract

This study focuses on the use of verbs in a short film. The objectives of the study were to identify and discuss the verbs presented in a Malay short film 'Pasport Ekspres'. The samples of the study consisted of 10 male and female subjects from a Malay language class at a university in Korea. The subjects were second year students majoring in the Malay-Indonesian language. The subjects were divided into groups of three. They were given 2 days to watch the film and then to identify and discuss the verbs in the film. After two days, the subjects were interviewed in groups. Each verb that they state had to have some evidence from the film. The results of the study revealed that the three groups managed to successfully identify and provide evidence of the verbs in the film. It is hoped that future studies will focus on the identification of verbs in Malay cartoons.

Keywords: verbs, short film, identify, evidence, discuss

INTRODUCTION

For foreign learners, learning the Malay language is easy when a student understands the words uttered or written. Malay language, like any other languages, has its own linguistic features that need to be learned and practiced through speaking, listening, reading and writing; thus, a language is difficult to learn when a person tries to take the short way out in learning. Learning through memorization was a favorite short cut method among foreign learners. The memorization of words as well as the memorization of when to use the words will ensure mistakes during speech and thus, engender a misunderstanding to others. Students tend to memorize words without knowing the meaning, which would lead to remembering the use of the words in a short period of time. Moreover, learning Malay is easy due to the use of the alphabet, similar to the English language, and therefore, students will not have any problem in recognizing the alphabets for reading and writing since they already know the ABCs. Subsequently, the motivation among

foreign students increases when the Malay language is learned with appropriate materials and task design. Educators will have to play the role of making sure that the students are interested in learning the language. The activities suggested will be able to enhance students in learning the Malay language.

Besides learning, speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in Malay, a student also has to learn vocabulary and grammar. To enhance student learning of Malay vocabulary and grammar, educators will play a major role in designing or creating new activities that would make the students want to learn the language. Conventional ways of teaching will still be accepted at schools. Moreover, with the new technology boom, teaching and learning will become more interesting. Educators have tried to inculcate the learning of Malay with other materials in order to have a better learning environment in the classroom. Students are motivated when they are given the chance to try out new activities in order to have a better understanding during class (Normaliza Abd Rahim et al., 2012). Hence, the use of technology has made students look forward to another new lesson. Technology is a way to boost up learner confidence in learning a new language (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2012a) and with the help of the teacher, learning will be more interesting (Normaliza Abd Rahim & Nik Ismail Harun, 2011).

Learning the Malay language also involves learning verbs. Verbs are important elements in a sentence that express actions, events or the state of being (Nik Safiah Karim et al., 2008). Previously, verbs were learned by showing pictures of someone performing the related activities. Students will learn by looking at the picture given and usually, teachers will ask the students to make a new sentence in order to ensure their understanding. Primary and secondary schools students learning the Malay language will learn it until they are able to fully understand the meaning of the verbs. Hence, at the university level as well as for foreign learners, new activities should be introduced in order to create an interesting lesson and also for learners to ultimately have a good understanding. Researches on verbs were carried out by Malaysian researchers, such as Fazal Mohamed Mohamed Sultan et al., (2010); Maslida Yusof et al., (2010); Maslida Yusof et al., (2011) and Mughni Murni Bustamam & Maslida Yusof (2011). Fazal Mohamed Mohamed Sultan et al.'s (2010) study focuses on the transitive verbs + *lagi* (again) structure among secondary school students in Malaysia. The study involved 1558 secondary students at two schools in Malaysia. The results showed that the use of transitive verbs + *lagi* (again) was accepted. Maslida Yusof et al.'s (2010) study describes the verbs of motion in the Malay language. The results of the study stated that the semantic structure of verbs and its relation to the occurrences of locatives prepositions and other arguments, such as noun phrases, were able to create various meanings.

Another study by Maslida Yusof et al. (2011) demonstrated the function of the preposition *daripada* (from) with verbs. The results of the study revealed that

the function of the preposition has showed a transition with a causative meaning. A study by Mughni Murni Bustamam & Maslida Yusof (2011) describes the semelfactive verbs in the Malay language. The results of this study revealed that semelfactive verbs are telic, imperfective paradox, single event and interval predicates and can also be an activity verb. Semelfactives are repetitive events that have no state of results state and hence, this situation makes the semelfactives to become atelic. Other research on Malay verbs focuses on the semantic structure of Malay motion verbs (Maslida Yusof, 2010), the problems and solving the structure of transitive verbs (Mohd Ra'in Shaari, 2011) and verbs by using the kinesthetic style of learning (Normaliza Abd Rahim & Siti Nur Aliaa Roslan, 2012). Thus, research on Malay language as a foreign language among students (Aishah Md Kassim, 2008; Yong Chyn Chye & Vijayaletchumy Subramaniam, 2012; Zena Moayad Najeeb et al., 2012) were also widely studied. On the other hand, there were also researches on Korean learners learning the Malay language (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2012a; 2012b).

OBJECTIVES

Based on the studies above, the objectives of the study were to identify and discuss Malay verbs in a short film, *Passport Ekspres*.

METHODOLOGY

The sample of study consisted of 10 male and female subjects from a Malay language class at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea. The subjects were second year students majoring in the Malay-Indonesian language. The subjects were divided into groups of three and four. A short film entitled *Passport Ekspres* was shown to the subjects during class. *Passport Ekspres* is a Malay short film with a duration of 20 minutes. They were given 2 days to watch the film. After viewing the film, they had to identify and discuss the verbs in the film. After two days, the subjects were interviewed in groups. Each verb that they stated had to be provided with evidence from the film. The characters and synopsis of the film are noted below.

There were three male actors in the film. The explanation of the male actors will be mentioned according to the appearance from the film. The first actor was a man around the age of 27. He worked in Kuala Lumpur and was used to the busy city life. His hometown is located in northern Malaysia. He was reluctant to go back home since he hated his life in the village. One day, he decided to go back home with a heavy heart. He thought that he would just stop there for a while and go back to Kuala Lumpur. The second actor was a man around the age of 28. He worked in Kuala Lumpur and wanted to go to Thailand, a country near the border of northern Malaysia. He came with a big rectangular box shaped bag. He was really looking forward to the visit. He realized that he had lost his passport when he

was on the train. The third actor was a man aged around the age of 27. He worked as a teacher at the village where the first and second man had stopped by. He saw the two of them sitting on the bench at the roadside. He told both men to appreciate the life at the village, which had beautiful scenery and have nice feelings about it. He helped both men in realizing the value of life and appreciate what they have at the present.

In the beginning of the story, the first actor was walking to the train. He was trying to find his cabin and when he found it, he put his bag on the bunk bed. The second actor came in with his big rectangular box shaped bag. They introduced themselves. The first actor went out to get some food while the second actor opened his bag to find that his passport was not there. He was disappointed since he was really looking forward to go to Thailand. The next scene showed that both men reached their destination. They were sitting on the bench at the roadside. The first actor did not want to go back to his house at the village while the second actor was worried about his passport. Both of them were discussing of ways to find the passport. While they were chatting, they saw a man walking towards them. The third actor was a teacher at one of the schools at the village. He was a friend of the first actor. He loved the village and the village life. He told the two men that the village has changed and has become more beautiful. All three actors went to the paddy field that made them serene and relaxed. The beautiful scenery had made them realized that village life was not bad after all. They climbed up the sign board and shouted in order to release their stress and to their surprise, they smiled with satisfaction. At the end of the film, the three of them parted their own ways. The first man went to his village. The second actor went back to Kuala Lumpur to find his passport and the third actor went home.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All subjects were interviewed based on the short film. The subjects were to state the verbs from the short film and they were to give evidence from the film. The interviews were taped and the extracts from the interviews were analyzed in groups. The discussion, according to the subjects, was based on two scenes; the 'train' and 'destination' scenes.

Subjects 1, 2 and 3

Subjects 1, 2 and 3 have the same view on the verbs, and the evidences were nearly the same. Subjects 1, 2 and 3 stated that there were 9 verbs from the 'train' scene. The verbs were as follows: *jalan*-walk, *panjat*-climb, *duduk*-sit, *buka*-open, *cari*-find, *salam*-shake, *pandang*-look, *angkat*-lift and *cakap*-talk. Subjects 1, 2 and 3 uttered that all the verbs were related to the main actor and a few were related to the second main actor. The verb *jalan*-walk and *panjat*-climb were from the main actor when he was walking towards the train and climbing up the steps of

the train. The subjects also stated that the main actor was holding his bag and looking at the number of the cabin stated in his ticket. On the other hand, Subjects 1, 2 and 3 stated the verbs *duduk*-sit, *buka*-open, *cakap*-talk, *cari*-find and *salam*-shake appeared when the main actor had found the cabin and he met the main actor in the same cabin. He was sitting down when the main actor came in. They shook hands and introduced themselves. The main actor opened his bag while sitting down on the chair. Subjects 1, 2 and 3 uttered that both actors were talking and chatting about their trip to the north. Subjects 1, 2 and 3 also stated that the verbs *pandang*-look, *angkat*-lift and *cakap*-talk were observed when the main actor was sitting alone in the cabin. He lifted his bag and put it on the table. He opened the bag to find his passport in order to enter the countries up north. Subjects 1, 2 and 3 mentioned that the main actor was panicking when he could not find his passport and the actor was talking to himself about the situation.

On the other hand, Subjects 1, 2 and 3 stated that there were 10 verbs from the 'destination' scene. The verbs were *jalan*-walk, *duduk*-sit, *lihat*-look, *pandang*-look, *salam*-shake, *ucap*-utter, *panjat*-climb, *jerit*-shout, *berdiri*-stand and *cakap*-speak. Subjects 1, 2 and 3 stated the verbs *jalan*-walk, *cakap*-speak, *duduk*-sit, *lihat*-look and *pandang*-look were noticed when both actors got off from the train and sat down at the roadside. They were looking around the village area and looked at each other while speaking to one another about the passport problem. Subjects 1, 2 and 3 stated that the main actor sympathized with the second actor since he could not enter the other country without a passport. Subjects 1, 2 and 3 uttered that the actors were looking at a person who was walking towards them. The verbs found were *salam*-shake, *ucap*-utter, *panjat*-climb, *jerit*-shout, *berdiri*-stand and *cakap*-speak. The subjects stated that both actors shook hands with the man who came to them since the second main actor knew the man. There was another scene of the third man giving a speech during an assembly at a school, implying that the man is a teacher. The subjects mentioned that the man was informed about the missing passport; soon after, all three men started walking towards a tourist sign board. All of them climbed onto the sign board and started shouting. They were standing on the sign board and continued to speak to each other. The subjects uttered that all the three actors parted their ways towards the end of the film.

Subjects 4, 5 and 6

All of the three subjects, Subjects 4, 5 and 6, have different views compared to Subjects 1, 2 and 3. The views were related to those of the main and second actors in the film. Subjects 4, 5 and 6 began discussing about the fact that the main actor in the film was the first person who appeared in the film. The man who was seen carrying a bag and found the cabin in the train was the main actor. Subjects 4, 5 and 6 stated that there were 9 verbs from the 'train' scene. The verbs were *jalan*-walk, *panjat*-climb, *duduk*-sit, *buka*-open, *cari*-find, *salam*-shake,

pandang-look, *angkat*-lift and *cakap*-talk. The subjects stated that the main actor conducted the verbs '*jalan*-walk, *panjat*-climb and *duduk*-sit while walking to the train, climbing up the steps to the train and sitting down in the cabin. A while later, the second actor came with a bag that looked like a rectangular box. The subjects added that the verbs involved here were *buka*-open, *cari*-find, *salam*-shake, *pandang*-look, *angkat*-lift and *cakap*-talk. Both actors were involved with the verbs as they were talking to each other and introduced themselves. Then, the main actor left the cabin to get some food. The second actor was left in the cabin. He lifted and opened his rectangular box bag and tried to find his passport. The subjects uttered that the second actor was looking outside the window of the train thinking of the location of his passport and became worried about it. At this time, the main actor was not in the scene.

On the other hand, Subjects 4, 5 and 6 stated that there were 10 verbs from the 'destination' scene. The verbs were similar to the verbs stated by Subjects 1, 2 and 3. The verbs were *jalan*-walk, *duduk*-sit, *lihat*-look, *pandang*-look, *salam*-shake, *ucap*-utter, *panjat*-climb, *jerit*-shout, *berdiri*-stand and *cakap*-speak. Subjects 4, 5 and 6 stated that the main actor was really nice when he kept company with the second actor. In this scene when both actors were walking and the main actor was so nice that he was seen sitting down on the chair with the second actor thinking of ways about finding the passport, the verbs *jalan*-walk and *duduk*-sit were involved. While they were sitting down, they saw a man walking towards them. Subjects 4, 5 and 6 uttered that the verbs involved were *lihat*-look, *pandang*-look, *salam*-shake, *ucap*-utter, *panjat*-climb, *jerit*-shout, *berdiri*-stand and *cakap*-speak. The subjects claimed that both actors were looking at the man. The main actor was surprised since he knew the man. They shook hands. The subjects stated that there was another scene of a flashback when the man was seen giving a speech during an assembly at a school. The subjects continued that the actors when to another place where there was a big sign board made of stone. All the actors climbed onto the sign board. They started shouting out aloud while standing on the sign board. The actors started talking again. The subjects mentioned that the actors parted ways when the main actor went back to his village, the second actor went back to Kuala Lumpur and the third man when back home.

Subjects 7, 8, 9 and 10

All of the four subjects, Subjects 7, 8, 9 and 10, have different views compared to Subjects 1, 2 and 3 and Subjects 4, 5 and 6. The subjects 7, 8, 9 and 10 stated that all three men were the main actors in the film. The subjects suggested that all the actors have an important role in the film. The subjects also stated that the verbs involved in the first scene were '*jalan*-walk, *panjat*-climb, *duduk*-sit, *buka*-open, *cari*-find, *salam*-shake, *pandang*-look, *angkat*-lift and *cakap*-talk. The subjects added that the first actor appeared in the film, portraying that he was not

really keen to go back to his home town. He was reluctant to stay and he was not looking forward to stay long at his village. The first actor was seen walking to the train and climbing up the steps on the train. He was seen sitting down on the chair inside the cabin when the second actor came in. They introduced themselves and shook hands. The first actor left the cabin to get some food while the second actor was trying to find his passport. The second actor lifted and opened his bag and could not find his passport. He was disappointed and while looking outside the window, he thought about ways of dealing with the lost passport. The four subjects also mentioned that the second actor that appeared in the film was really keen in going to another country up north; however, he was so disappointed when he lost his passport. The subjects suggested that the verbs involved in the 'train' scene were easy to identify if they understood the storyline.

On the other hand, Subjects 7, 8, 9 and 10 stated that the verbs involved from the 'destination' scene were *jalan*-walk, *duduk*-sit, *lihat*-look, *pandang*-look, *salam*-shake, *ucap*-utter, *panjat*-climb, *jerit*-shout, *berdiri*-stand and *cakap*-speak. The verbs identified were similar to the verbs from the other two groups. The storyline was also the same as that of the other two groups. This showed that the groups understood the storyline of the film. The subjects stated that both actors were walking and another scene showed that the first actor was sitting down with the second actor on the bench at the roadside. The first actor sympathized with the second actor for his lost passport. While they were sitting down and looking at the other side of the road, they saw the third actor walking towards them. Since the first actor knew the man, he introduced him to the second actor. They shook hands. The third actor was a teacher. There was a scene when he was giving a speech at the school assembly. The subjects continued and said that all three actors were appreciating the scenery of the paddy field and they felt so serene and relaxed. The actors climbed up the sign board that was made of bricks and stated shouting out their names. The subjects felt that the actors felt relief after shouting and they also felt that they knew what to do next. All of the four subjects revealed that the third actor came in the scene in order to help both of them to realize and appreciate life as it is. The ending of the film showed the actors departing their own ways.

To sum up, the discussion above showed that all of the subjects were able to identify the verbs from the short film. Although it seemed that the task was relatively easy, for the students to be able to give evidence in the Malay language was a difficult task. Since the subjects were working in small groups, they were able to discuss the answers with their group members. The subjects seemed to understand the storyline of the film and were able to provide evidence in the form of stories. The evidences were acceptable since it was the correct answers. Identification of Malay verbs was successful among the subjects. The subjects demonstrated gestures and actions of the verbs from the film that they viewed. This way, the subjects were also offering evidence in the verbal and non-verbal forms.

The results of the study were parallel to the findings of the study by Yong Chyn Chye & Vijayaletchumy Subramaniam (2012), where foreign students learning the Malay language will use the Malay language as much as possible. Furthermore, the findings were similar to the study by Normaliza Abd Rahim (2012a), where learning the Malay language would be more interesting with the help of online movies or films.

CONCLUSION

This study implicates educators of the Malay language to take short film into consideration as an activity in identifying verbs. Educators will find that short films are a useful activity since a short film last only about 20 minutes, which would allow students to concentrate on viewing the film and fulfilling the given task. Foreign students learning the Malay language will also benefits in the study by taking into consideration that they will learn Malay verbs through viewing a short film and they will also learn through discussions with other group members on the task given to them in the target language. Students will also learn about identification and providing evidences with their answers. It is hoped that future studies will focus on the identification of verbs in Malay cartoons.

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