

The Knowledge and Readiness of Teachers Regarding The Utilization of Fun-Based Learning in English Oral Skills

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Abstract

This study investigates the knowledge and readiness of teachers regarding the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills within the context of national-type Tamil primary schools in the Segamat district of Malaysia. The research aims to identify the level of knowledge and readiness among teachers in integrating fun-based learning approaches into English language instruction. A total of 100 teachers were selected as participants through a simple random sampling procedure from 12 primary schools, totaling 120 individuals. The data analysis revealed a mean score of 3.84 (SD=0.41) for knowledge and 3.98 (SD=0.46) for readiness, indicating a moderate level of understanding among teachers regarding fun-based learning methods and a relatively high level of preparedness to implement these approaches in English oral skills instruction. These findings underscore the importance of continuous professional development and curriculum innovation to enhance teachers' proficiency and support the integration of fun-based learning techniques into English language education within Tamil primary schools in Malaysia.

Keywords: Knowledge, Readiness, Fun Based Learning, Oral Skills

Introduction

In Malaysia, the mastery of English language skills, particularly oral proficiency, is increasingly recognized as crucial for academic and professional success in the globalized world. However, despite various efforts to improve English language education, many Malaysian students still struggle with oral communication in English. Recognizing the importance of addressing this issue, educators have been exploring innovative teaching approaches, including fun-based learning methods, to enhance English oral skills among students.

Fun-based learning refers to the integration of enjoyable and interactive activities into the teaching and learning process. These activities are designed to engage students actively, foster creativity, and facilitate a conducive learning environment. Incorporating fun-based learning approaches into English language education has shown promising results in promoting students' motivation, participation, and overall language proficiency. Nevertheless, the successful implementation of these methods relies heavily on the knowledge and readiness of teachers.

This article aims to explore the knowledge and readiness of Malaysian teachers towards the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills development. By examining the perspectives, experiences, and challenges faced by teachers in integrating fun-based learning approaches, this study seeks to provide insights into enhancing English language education in Malaysia.

Despite the recognized benefits, the effective implementation of fun-based learning in English oral skills relies heavily on teachers' readiness and knowledge. Teachers play a central role in curriculum design, instructional delivery, and student support, thus their understanding and preparedness in utilizing fun-based approaches are pivotal. Understanding the current state of teachers' readiness and knowledge in this regard is crucial for identifying areas of improvement and designing targeted professional development initiatives.

Furthermore, recent developments in education policy and initiatives have aimed to address these challenges. For example, the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 emphasizes the importance of enhancing English proficiency among students and provides guidelines for improving English language teaching and learning in schools. Additionally, the implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in Malaysian schools aims to standardize English language proficiency levels and assessment practices.

This study holds significant implications for various stakeholders such as educators, students, curriculum designers and policy makers. By gaining insights into teachers' readiness and knowledge, this study can inform professional development programs tailored to enhance teachers' capacity in integrating fun-based learning into English oral skill instruction. Empowering educators with effective strategies can ultimately improve student outcomes and classroom experiences. Next, Students stand to benefit from engaging and enjoyable learning experiences that foster their English oral skills. Fun-based learning not only promotes active participation but also cultivates a positive attitude towards language learning, leading to increased motivation and proficiency. Understanding teachers' readiness and knowledge can inform the development of curriculum frameworks that incorporate fun-based learning principles. By aligning curriculum goals with effective pedagogical practices, curriculum designers can optimize learning outcomes and ensure relevance in today's educational landscape. Insights from this study can guide policy makers in formulating policies that support the integration of innovative teaching methodologies, such as fun-based learning, into mainstream educational practices. Policy initiatives that prioritize teacher training and resource allocation can facilitate the widespread adoption of effective instructional approaches, thereby promoting educational excellence and equity.

In conclusion exploring teachers' readiness and knowledge regarding the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills is vital for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of language instruction. By addressing the needs and challenges identified through this study, educators, students, curriculum designers, and policy makers can collaboratively work towards creating vibrant learning environments that empower individuals to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

II. Objective and Significance

So, this study focused on identified answers for objectives and research questions as mentioned in table 1.

Table 1

Research Objective with Its Significance

| Research Objective | Research Questions |
|---|--|
| Identifying the knowledge of using fun-based learning methods among SJKT English language teachers. | What is the level of knowledge of using fun-based learning methods among SJKT English language teachers |
| Identifying the readiness of teachers towards the utilization of fun-based learning methods among SJKT English language teachers. | What is the level of readiness of teachers towards the utilization of fun-based learning methods among SJKT English language teachers. |

iii. Material and Method

A) Design of study

The design of this study is quantitative and utilizes the survey research method. This method is employed to measure knowledge and readiness of teachers regarding the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills. The researcher distributes questionnaires to respondents and conducts descriptive analysis of the survey items. After collecting data from the random sample, it will be analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics.

B) Sampling Method

In this study, the researcher selected teachers from 12 national-type Tamil primary schools in the Segamat district, totaling 120 individuals. A simple random sampling procedure was employed for the selection of study samples. Thus, a total of 100 teachers were chosen as the study sample.

C) Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is divided into three sections, namely Section A, B, and C. Section A comprises a personal information questionnaire for respondents, including gender, age, educational level, and years of service. Section B measures teachers' knowledge of using fun-based learning methods in English oral skills. Meanwhile, Section C assesses teachers' readiness to utilize fun-based learning methods in English oral skills. The questionnaire consists of 27 items covering teacher demographics, knowledge, and readiness. It utilizes a 5-point Likert scale where number 5 (strongly agree) and number 1 (strongly disagree). Respondents are required to circle the number that represents their opinion on the research topic. Thus, the overall score will be obtained by summing up the scores for each teacher's knowledge and readiness in using fun-based learning methods with oral skills. Table 1 mentioned questionnaire content which used in this research.

Table 1

Questionnaire Content

| Section | Constructed Measured | Number of Items | Item |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Section A | Demographic Factor | 7 items | 1 –7 |
| Section B | Level of Teacher's Knowledge | 10 items | 1 – 10 |
| Section C | Level of Teacher's Readiness | 10 items | 1 – 10 |

D) Research Findings

A total of 100 teachers were involved in this study. Data analysis related to the gender of respondents indicates that 73% of participants in this study are female educators, while the remaining 27% are male teachers. Meanwhile 72% of respondents having a bachelor's degree, 8% with masters in education and 20% respondents with diploma. The tenure as teachers reveals that 80% have experience ranging from 6 to 15 years, while 17% of them have experience between 16 to 30 years. Finally, findings also indicate that 3% of them have experience of 31 years or more. This study conducted to identify the level of knowledge and readiness of teachers regarding the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills. Data showed mean score of knowledge is 3.84 (SD=0.41) and mean score readiness is 3.98 (SD=0.46).

Table 2

The level of teachers in knowledge and Readiness

| Variables | Min | Sisihan Piawai | Levels |
|--------------|------|----------------|--------|
| 1. Knowledge | 3.84 | 0.41 | High |
| 2. Readiness | 3.98 | 0.46 | High |

Discussion

The study involved 100 teachers to investigate their knowledge and readiness regarding the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills. Analysis of the demographic data revealed several noteworthy findings. Firstly, in terms of gender distribution, the majority of participants (73%) were female educators, while the remaining 27% were male teachers. This gender imbalance in the teaching profession is not uncommon and reflects broader trends observed in educational settings worldwide. The higher representation of female teachers could be attributed to various factors, including societal norms, career preferences, and cultural expectations.

Regarding educational qualifications, the data indicated that 72% of respondents held a bachelor's degree, while 8% had obtained a master's degree in education. Additionally, 20% of respondents possessed a diploma. This distribution suggests a predominantly well-educated cohort of teachers, with a significant proportion holding at least a bachelor's degree. The relatively low percentage of teachers with a master's degree may reflect challenges in pursuing higher education while balancing professional responsibilities. Furthermore, examining the tenure of teachers revealed interesting insights into their professional experience. The majority (80%) of respondents had teaching experience ranging from 6 to 15 years, indicating a relatively experienced group of educators. Additionally, 17% of participants reported having between 16 to 30 years of teaching experience, while 3% had 31 years or more. These findings highlight the diverse range of experience levels among the

surveyed teachers, which could influence their perspectives, teaching approaches, and receptiveness to new methodologies.

The primary focus of the study was to assess teachers' knowledge and readiness concerning the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills. The mean scores obtained for both constructs provide valuable insights into the participants' perceptions and preparedness. The mean score for knowledge was 3.84 (SD=0.41), indicating a moderate level of understanding among teachers regarding fun-based learning methods in English oral skills. This suggests that while teachers possess a certain level of familiarity with these pedagogical approaches, there may be room for improvement in deepening their knowledge and understanding further. Additional training, professional development opportunities, and access to relevant resources could enhance teachers' proficiency in implementing fun-based learning techniques effectively.

In contrast, the mean score for readiness was slightly higher at 3.98 (SD=0.46), indicating a relatively high level of preparedness among teachers to utilize fun-based learning methods in English oral skills instruction. This finding is encouraging as it suggests that teachers are open to adopting innovative teaching approaches and are willing to incorporate fun-based activities into their pedagogical practices. However, it is essential to ensure ongoing support and resources are available to sustain and reinforce teachers' readiness over time.

Overall, the findings underscore the importance of continuous professional development initiatives tailored to enhance teachers' knowledge and readiness in implementing fun-based learning approaches effectively. By equipping educators with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources, schools can create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment that promotes English oral skills development effectively. Moreover, fostering a supportive school culture that encourages collaboration, experimentation, and reflective practice can further facilitate the successful integration of fun-based learning methods into English language instruction.

Implication

The implications of this study regarding the knowledge and readiness of teachers concerning the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills are significant in shaping educational practices and policies. Understanding these implications can guide stakeholders in implementing effective strategies to enhance language instruction and promote student learning outcomes.

The moderate level of understanding among teachers regarding fun-based learning methods in English oral skills, as indicated by the study findings, underscores the importance of targeted teacher training and professional development initiatives. Professional development programs should incorporate hands-on training, peer collaboration, and access to resources aligned with the principles of fun-based learning. For instance, workshops, seminars, and online courses focusing on interactive teaching strategies can empower teachers to create engaging learning experiences that enhance students' oral proficiency in English (Khezrlou et al., 2020).

The high level of preparedness among teachers to utilize fun-based learning methods in English oral skills instruction signifies a positive attitude towards innovation and experimentation in teaching practices. This presents an opportunity for curriculum designers and educational policymakers to integrate fun-based learning approaches into the formal curriculum. Additionally, ongoing support and mentorship from educational leaders can facilitate the successful implementation of fun-based learning strategies in diverse classroom settings (Cheng & Hampson, 2020). Furthermore, the adoption of fun-based learning methods has the potential to enhance student engagement and motivation in language learning. Research suggests that interactive and enjoyable learning experiences can stimulate students' interest and intrinsic motivation, leading to improved learning outcomes (Pishghadam et al., 2021). This, in turn, can lead to greater student retention, deeper understanding, and increased proficiency in spoken English.

The findings of this study have far-reaching implications for teacher training, curriculum design, student engagement, and equity in English language education. By leveraging the insights gained from this research, stakeholders can collaborate to implement evidence-based practices that promote effective language instruction, foster student engagement, and empower learners to achieve linguistic proficiency and communicative competence in English.

Conclusion

The assessment of teachers' knowledge and readiness concerning the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills provides valuable insights into the landscape of English language education, particularly within the context of Tamil schools in Malaysia. The findings reveal significant implications for teacher training, curriculum development, student engagement, and equity in language instruction.

First and foremost, the data highlights the moderate level of understanding among teachers regarding fun-based learning methods in English oral skills, with a mean knowledge score of 3.84 (SD=0.41). This suggests that while educators in Tamil schools possess a certain level of familiarity with these pedagogical approaches, there is still room for improvement in deepening their knowledge and understanding. Given the importance of English proficiency in today's globalized world, it is imperative for teachers to undergo targeted training and professional development initiatives to enhance their proficiency in implementing fun-based learning techniques effectively.

Additionally, the study reveals a relatively high level of preparedness among teachers to utilize fun-based learning methods in English oral skills instruction, with a mean readiness score of 3.98 (SD=0.46). This positive finding indicates that teachers in Tamil schools are open to adopting innovative teaching approaches and are willing to incorporate fun-based activities into their pedagogical practices. This readiness bodes well for the integration of fun-based learning approaches into the formal curriculum, as it signifies educators' receptiveness to change and innovation.

The implications of these findings extend to curriculum design and implementation within Tamil schools. By incorporating fun-based learning methods into the formal curriculum, educators can create a more dynamic and engaging learning environment that promotes

English oral skills development effectively. Furthermore, fostering a supportive school culture that encourages collaboration, experimentation, and reflective practice can facilitate the successful integration of fun-based learning methods into English language instruction.

Moreover, the adoption of fun-based learning approaches has the potential to enhance student engagement and motivation in language learning. By incorporating elements of gamification, storytelling, role-playing, and multimedia into English oral skills instruction, teachers can create immersive learning experiences that captivate students' interest and promote active participation. This, in turn, can lead to greater student retention, deeper understanding, and increased proficiency in spoken English among students in Tamil schools.

Importantly, it is essential to ensure that fun-based learning approaches are accessible and inclusive for all students, regardless of their backgrounds or learning needs. Teachers should employ differentiated instruction strategies to accommodate diverse learning styles, abilities, and preferences, thus fostering an inclusive learning environment that celebrates diversity and values individual differences.

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the importance of assessing and enhancing teachers' knowledge and readiness regarding the utilization of fun-based learning in English oral skills. By prioritizing continuous professional development, curriculum innovation, student engagement, and equity in language instruction, stakeholders can collaboratively work towards improving English language education outcomes and empowering students to achieve linguistic proficiency and communicative competence in English.

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