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The usage of Wopzzle in Enriching Pupils' Mastery of Vocabulary Learnt

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Abstract

Vocabulary is the core when learning a new language. However, most of the learners are not able to master the vocabulary learnt, therefore, enriching the mastery of vocabulary learnt is crucial for L2 learners. Teaching medium such as ICT has gained its popularity among teachers since it helps to create alternative environment to L2 learners. This action research attempted to investigate the effectiveness of using Wopzzle to enrich pupils' mastery of vocabulary learnt. Wopzzle is an innovative teaching medium using the features of hyperlink, picture and sound clip in Microsoft Powerpoint. The participants of this research comprised of a total of 30 pupils from Year 1. 15 were chosen from SJKC A, Pahang and another 15 were selected from SJKC B, Perlis. A set of pre and post-test was given to the participants before and after to measure the level of enrichment in mastering the vocabulary learnt. The findings revealed that Wopzzle is an effective tool to enrich the mastery of vocabulary learnt among Year 1 pupils. The results of this study may be beneficial to English teachers to incorporate ICT into their teaching. Future research is suggested to investigate the use of Wopzzle on other Year of pupils.

Keywords: Wopzzle, Enrich, Vocabulary, ICT, Picture

Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is not something which is entirely new in our current society. It has been widely used in different fields for different purposes throughout the time. According to Daniels (2002) ICTs have become within a very short time, one of the basic building blocks of modern society. It brings varieties of positive impacts, which have undeniably affected teaching, learning and research. A great deal of research has proven the benefits to the quality of education (Al-Ansari, 2006). Furthermore, the use of ICTs in school can also help to stimulate the children's higher order thinking skill. Kelman cited in Ali (2012) stated that higher order thinking skills can be enhanced by using technology (as cited in Yunus & Suliman, 2014).

Moreover, Yunus, Nording, Salehi, Embil and Salehi (2013) suggest that the notion of ICT in educational fields refers to systems that enable gathering, manipulation, management, access, and communication of information in different forms. Since 21st century classroom learning was

introduced, there are numerous ways used by teachers as it provides the help and supports for teaching and learning for both teachers as well as students. This is because, the use of technology in education contributes a lot in the pedagogical aspects in which the application of ICT will lead to effective learning with the help and supports from ICT elements and components (Jamieson-Procter et al., 2013)

Ahmad et al. (2016) Malaysian Ministry of Education (MOE) plans to utilize ICT in improving the quality of learning in Malaysia. This introduction is in line with the seventh shift of the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2025, which focuses on leveraging ICT to scale up quality learning across Malaysia. Teachers are incorporating the use of computer-based communication into teaching and learning process between both teacher and learners. It is crucial as it offers flexibility in millions ways for students to learn about their respective subject area.

Microsoft PowerPoint is a multimedia equipment that can be innovated and used as a teaching tool to teach vocabulary. According to Austin, Rudkin & Gaskins (1986), Microsoft PowerPoint is a presentation software program that allows users to make use of images, coloured texts with simple animation. All the features offer is very useful and can be exploited to help students to learn. A word puzzle game called Wopzzle is innovated based on the idea of pictures game using Microsoft PowerPoint. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate the effectiveness of using Wopzzle to enrich pupils' mastery of vocabulary learnt.

Poor mastery or difficulty in remembering and retaining the new words learnt could be seen as a major concern for L2 learners. It could further develop into bigger problems if the problem is not taken seriously. It might prevent them from becoming proficient users of target language. Alqahtani (2015) vocabulary mastery plays an important role in the four language skills and it has to be considered that vocabulary mastery is one of the needed components of language. In order to comprehend a text successfully, learners must have sufficient word knowledge. Richard and Renandya (2002, p.255) state that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides much basis of how the learners speak, listen, read, and write well. They need to be able to recognise as well as understand the meaning of the words encounter throughout the process of comprehension.

For this research, Microsoft PowerPoint is used as a platform to enrich pupils' mastery of vocabulary learnt. The researchers exploit the features found in Microsoft PowerPoint and use its profound features such as the visual aids as well as its animation to aid pupils to master the vocabulary learnt. A word puzzle game called Wopzzle is innovated based on the idea of pictures game using Microsoft PowerPoint. Therefore, in this research, 'Wopzzle' is used to enrich pupils' mastery of vocabulary learnt. Thus, the aim of this research is to enrich the pupils' mastery of vocabulary learnt using Wopzzle in the teaching and learning session.

Methodology

Research Design

The researchers used action research approach based on Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) model in order to investigate the effectiveness of using Wopzzle to enrich pupils' mastery of vocabulary learnt. This model has been widely used among the practitioners. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988; 2000)

describe the Action Research Spiral as consisting the following moments: Planning, Acting, Observing, and Reflecting (as cited in Bantfield & Cayago-Glealn, 2006).

The Participants

A group of 30 Year 1 pupils which has been exposed to the conventional English language teaching approach for 6 months were chosen for this research. 15 of them were chosen from SJKC A, Pahang, which is located in East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia and another 15 of them were selected from SJKC B, Perlis, which is the Northern part of Malaysia. The reason why Year 1 pupils were selected to be the participants is because vocabulary acquisition begins in early childhood. The acquisition of vocabulary begins long before children are of school age so the factors that influence development during early childhood are also important.

Materials

Pre-test

The pre-test gathered a 16 set of questions was given to the participants a week before the intervention. The test contained a matching section. The participants based on the picture in the pre-test and match the correct words to its correct answers.

Post-test

At the end of the intervention, the participants were administered a test again to check their improvement. The test contained the similar items as the pre-test.

Survey questionnaire

A set of survey questionnaire was given to the participants after the intervention. It contains 5 items and each item is constructed to check on their feedbacks towards intervention. All the items are measured by four-point Likert-scale ranger from Agree (Smiley Face) and Disagree (Sad Face).

Procedure

In this study, an action research with the utilization of Wopzzle as an innovative approach to help pupils to enrich their mastery of vocabulary learnt. This research was conducted for almost 2 weeks. The study was carried out in two schools in Malaysia. The targeted participants are Primary Year 1 pupils. With the focus on one particular topic in the Year 1 syllabus, the 30 participants who went through the conventional approach of teaching on the topic, were given a pre-test. After the pre-test was obtained. The intervention was carried out to the participants. Once the intervention cycle was completed. Participants were given a post-test which contained the same questions as the pre-test to test on their mastery of the vocabulary learnt. The researcher will then compare the result of the pre and post-test. Following that was the distribution of survey questionnaire to the participants. Participants were required to provide feedbacks on their opinions toward the intervention applied. Analysis of the questionnaire will be done afterward.

Result

The following shows Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 indicate the findings of this research conducted.

Pre and Post Test Score Improvement	Percentage of Score's Improvement	Numbers of Participants
0	0%	3
1-14	6% - 88%	27
	Total	30

Table 1: Percentage of Scores between Pre and Post-Test.

Table 1 shows the difference percentage of scores obtained from the participants. The data revealed that 3 out of 30 participants obtained 0% of improvement in the pre and post-test as they have already obtained full scores for their pre-test. Whereas 27 of them showed a significant of achievement in increment of 5% and above in the both pre and post-test. The highest percentage of increment is 88%. Therefore, based on the results shown above, it can be seen that Wopzzle has helped pupils to master their vocabulary learnt.

Items	Statement	Agree		Disagree	
1	I enjoy using Wopzzle to learn vocabulary.	28	93%	2	7%
2	Wopzzle helps me to understand the meaning of vocabulary learnt more.	26	87%	4	13%
3	Wopzzle motivates me to learn vocabulary.	27	90%	3	10%
4	Wopzzle helps me to remember vocabulary learnt better.	28	93%	2	7%
5	Wopzzle makes vocabulary learning process more fun and interesting.	27	90%	3	10%

Table 2: Questionnaire's result on Wopzzle

Table 2 represents questionnaire's result of Wopzzle obtained. Items 1, 3 and 5 imply pupils' enjoyment and motivation while Wopzzle is used in teaching and learning session. Based on the results obtained, we can see a mean percentage of agreement on items 1, 3 and 5 is 91%. Majority of the participants claimed that they enjoyed using Wopzzle as it was fun and interesting. Additionally, it motivated the participants to learn vocabulary better than the conventional approach. Nevertheless, the mean percentage of disagreement on items 1, 3 and 5 is only 9%, which indicates only a small amount of participants disagreed on the items. It could be the reason that the participants still preferred the old method way of learning vocabulary.

Whereas, items 2 and 4 infer that Wopzzle allows participants to understand and remember the vocabulary learnt better. A mean percentage of agreement on items 2 and 4 is 90%. Most of the participants agreed that Wopzzle facilitated them to understand and remember the vocabulary learnt more effectively. Despite that, a mean percentage of disagreement on items 2 and 4 is only 10%. It could signify that the participants might need a longer time to familiarize themselves with Wopzzle.

	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			t
	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	
PreTest & PostTest	0.8100	-7.8566	-4.5434	-7.654*

N=30 *p<0.05

Table 3: Paired Two Sample T-Test analysis of the Pre and Post-Test

Based on Table 2 above, Paired two sample t test was used to examine the different between score obtained by participants before and after intervention carried out. Research found out that there is significant difference between the score obtained by participants before and after the intervention with $t(29) = -7.654$, $p < 0.05$. Therefore, the hypothesis of the research which is Wopzzle is effective in helping pupils to enrich their mastery of vocabulary learnt.

Discussion and Findings

Pre and Post Test

A significant improvement of pre and post-test implied that the use of Wopzzle to help pupils to enrich their mastery of vocabulary learnt was effective. The results of this study have shown that mastery of vocabulary learnt are better when they are associated with images than just with a simple text. Sadeghi and Farzizadeh (2013) agreed that teaching vocabulary through visual aids help pupils to gain more in vocabulary learning. Mastery of vocabulary learnt are significantly enriched and improved since Wopzzle contains variety of interesting and colourful pictures. By using Wopzzle, pupils are no longer learning vocabulary via conventional drilling method. According to British Council (2005), drilling of structures per se seems much less likely to be useful because of the mental processing that is required to apply a new piece of language for the learners. Constant drills and pointless memorisation are stressful to the young learners especially towards the Year 1 children.

Furthermore, inculcation of ICT was also contributed to the result of the finding. ICT is viewed not as a conventional method, but a new creative method of teaching which the researcher interpreted, as one which could activate active learning among the students (Mullamaa, 2010). Traditional teaching methods such as "chalk and talk" no longer conform to the needs of the today's students. Conventional way of drillings pupils with vocabulary is less likely to motivate them in mastery of vocabulary learnt.

Through this research, the combination of Wopzzle, a word puzzle game together with ICT showed a rather great improvement in pupils' mastery of vocabulary. Pupils showed positive attitude towards enriching their mastery of vocabulary. Ghaviekr and Rosdy (2015) impose that students will benefit from ICT integration where they are not bounded to the limited curriculum and resources, instead hands-on activities in a technology-based course is designed to help them to stimulate their understanding about the subject. The research objective is achieved based on the pre and post test result which indicates Wopzzle is able to help pupils to enrich their vocabulary mastery.

Survey Questionnaire

Apart from that, the result obtained from survey questionnaire also supported enrichment in pupils' mastery of vocabulary learnt. 26 out of 30 participants marked agree on all the items 1,3 and 5 which indicated that they preferred to use Wopzzle in the learning of vocabulary. As mentioned earlier, Wopzzle was innovated based on the idea of word puzzle game, created using the distinct features of Microsoft Power Point. Therefore, it was able to capture the young learners' attention towards vocabulary mastery. They are motivated in their learning when the lesson is fun and interesting. Instead of learning through the conventional approach, pupils were fascinated by the use of Wopzzle as it is enjoyable and attractive. Wimolmas (2013) stated that students who are more highly motivated will participate actively and pay more attention to a certain learning task or activity.

Therefore, majority of the pupils shown agreement on having fun and enjoying using Wopzzle to learn vocabulary. However, a majority of 25 participants out of 30 agreed that on item 2 and 4 whereby they believed that Wopzzle helps them to understand and remember the meaning of vocabulary learnt better. Wopzzle provides learners a huge opportunity to play with the words repeatedly. When pupils are able to use the words actively, the chances of him or her to master the vocabulary is higher. Wopzzle is created to help pupils to enrich their mastery of vocabulary learnt. The association of vocabulary and images helps to improve pupils' mastery of vocabulary. When pupils can associate the words learnt with something meaningful, it helps them to retain the vocabulary better. Also, the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for this research helps affects learners' attitude in a positive way in their learning process. Chien, Wu and Hsu (2014) has shown that students in school are having high expectation on ICT integration in classroom as the new generation are born and grown with technologies and could be define as the digital – native phenomenon. The use of ICT as an aid to teaching and learning has a significant impact on pupils' academic performance. Hence, the adoption and use of ICT in education influence the way pupils are taught and how they learn.

Conclusion

Yunus, Salehi and Amini (2016) concluded in their research study, vocabulary acquisition is a problematic and time-consuming task, using the appropriate method for teaching and learning vocabulary is extremely crucial. Due to this scenario, Wopzzle was served as a tool under the theory of active learning to help learners learn vocabulary easier. In the end, the results of the findings of the research has shown that the use of Wopzzle is able to help pupils to enrich their mastery of vocabulary learnt. They were able to remember the vocabulary learnt easily with the help of Wopzzle as it contains colourful images as well as audio clip.

This research is able to contribute in ICT field as it helps affects learners' attitude in a positive way in their learning process. Yusuf (2005) the field of education has been affected by ICT, which has undoubtedly affected teaching, learning and research. The use of ICT as an aid to teaching and learning has a significant impact on pupils' academic performance. Hence, the adoption and use of ICT in education influence the way pupils are taught and how they learn. For further study, it is suggested to exploit Wopzzle by making use of its distinct features for other languages such as Chinese, Malay, Tamil and etc. Besides, it can also be used to test other language skills like reading and writing.

Implication

Wopzzle promotes active learning among pupils as well as motivate pupils to carry out discussion among the peers. It is a game based activity, Yunus, Suliman and Embil (2013) suggested that games are one of two very effective techniques to allow second or foreign language learners practice in the target language. It also encouraged their participation and promoted their interest in learning vocabulary. Wopzzle helps the teacher to cater for the needs of pupils' variety of learning styles in order to amplify their learning of English vocabulary.

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