

The Language Game Method in Increasing Vocabulary and Reading Skills of Students with Hearing Disabilities

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Abstract: Students with hearing disabilities normally have affect on language acquisition. The purpose of this study was to identify the effectiveness of a language game method that uses the Language Game Kit to improve vocabulary and reading skills of students with hearing disabilities. This experimental study, uses quantitative methods and cognitive learning theory. The Learning Model used was modified from Barrows Schmidt, Tan, Terry & Moore. A total of 20 students with hearing loss from a school were tested with the Reading Literacy Screening Instrument Screening 2 Year 1 2015. The samples were divided into control groups and experimental groups of 10 individuals each. Both groups were tested with pre- and post-test. Results were collected and analyzed statistic descriptively involving frequency, percentage and group differences. The results showed that there was an increase in vocabulary and reading skills from the experimental group. The findings of the study also found that there was an increase in reading ability at construct 11 and 12 of the Malaysia's Ministry of Education Reading Literacy Screening Instrument Screening 2 Year 1 2015. Overall, the use of the Language Teaching Kit can improve vocabulary and reading skills.

Keywords: Hearing Impairment, Language Games Methods, Language Games Kits, Reading Literacy Screening Instruments

INTRODUCTION

Students with hearing disabilities have the potential to become proficient in the language field. However, some studies have found that they are weak in language learning, especially in terms of vocabulary and reading skills. In Malaysia, formal education is given to students with special hearing problems using the Malay Language Code (MLC), All-in-One Communication, KIU Speech and many other methods of learning and teaching. To further enhance the use of MLC, Whole Communications and others, the local signal and streamlined with Malay Language grammar code which shall be added such as noun and verb. Meanwhile, Malaysian Sign Language (MSL) is used in the deaf community in Malaysia and has been recognized as the language of the deaf, nationally. However, the two communication methods used are not enough to improve their academic level, especially to the mastery of the Malay Language of the students at the school. The technical aspects and methods of learning and teaching in the classroom also plays an important role in producing students who are capable of mastering learning and teaching.

Mohd Hanafi Mohd Yasin, Safani Bari, Nor Ain Mat Hassan 2013 wrote that the inability to listen became their weak point in language proficiency. This inability is due several factors, such as genetics, problems with the imperfections of the ear organs or nerves and health problems. Health problems are such as hot fever or germs infections. In reality learning a language is boring for students with hearing disabilities because the Malay language has rules of language that has to be learned. These factors slow down the

delivery of meaning and communication to students with hearing disabilities. This is based on a study conducted by Nor Hidayah Md Khanapiah (2016) and (Lee 2016).

This study is about language play activities called Language Games Kit to improve vocabulary and reading skills for students. The purpose of this study was to identify the effectiveness of the language game method using the Language Games Kit to improve vocabulary and reading skills of students with hearing disabilities. According to Adi Mario Stevanus (2014) in his study titled *Efforts to Increase Kids' Creativity Through Playing with Sand Of Group A Bukit Aksara Kota Semarang*, stated the benefits of playing sand to build student's creativity at school. He saw a 52.3% increasement in the growth of his students through this activity. This study is further supported by the statements of Zakiah Mohamad Ashari, Azlina Mohd Kosnin, Yeo Kee Jiar (2012) and Rohani, Nani and Mohd Sharani (2007), who conclude that Jean Piaget's theory-based play is conducive to children's environment and enhances interaction with the environment especially when they are equipped with materials. Some of the suggested activities include drawing, building, acting, playing jokes or playing with sand and water. air.

METHOD

The study design was a quantitative study using quasi-experimental methods. The study was conducted at a special education school with hearing loss involving 20 students. The students involved were divided into two groups, the control group and the experimental group, which consists of 10 students per group. The experimental group was given intervention using the Word Play Game Kit while the control group received conventional learning methods. Prior to the intervention, the experimental group and control were given a pre-test using Screening 2 Linus Instrument Year 1 2015. This study was conducted for eight weeks including pre- and post-intervention tests. Sample selection is based on existing subjects and subjects were not randomly selected because it is not practical. The instruments used in this study were the Reading Literacy Screening Instrument Screening 2 Year 1 and the Language Game Kit. The screening instrument is used as a measuring instrument and identifies the differences in vocabulary and reading skills to achieve the set objectives. The Word Set Kit was used as a study tool to improve student vocabulary. The research tool is used to measure variables so that the results of the study can be obtained accurately to answer the research questions. Test instruments for pre and post use the same test set that is the Reading Literacy Screening test. The reading skills instrument is divided into 12 constructs that test the students' reading skills.\

Sample selection was conducted on a purpose-based sample that involved students with hearing disabilities in this special education school. Because of the sample was limited, generalization cannot be carried out. Therefore, the study was based on criteria that focused on one level for students to master constructs 1 to 12.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data that has been analyzed, researchers have analyzed the extent of how far the Language Game Kit can help improve vocabulary and reading skills of students with hearing impairment throught the intervention held. Subject selection is from all ages that doesn't master construct 1 to 12 in reading skills. Learning and teaching sessions were conducted in the recovery class for the experimental group while for the control group, the subjects had the ordinary learning session in the classroom. The subject background of the control group and the experimental group was by gender and race. Based on the analysis conducted by the experimental and control groups, 45% of them were male students and the rest were female students. For the race category, Malays represents 65%, followed by 25% of Chinese and 10% Indians only. The findings of the study were analyzed based on pre- and post-test results from 20 participants in the Reading Literacy Screening 2 Year 1. To answer the first study question that was the level of proficiency in building compound sentences of the experimental group after following the Language Teaching Methods in pre and post-test.

Table 1: Post-Construction Test Analysis 1 to 12 of Experimental Groups after the use of the Language Game Kit

Respondents / Constructors	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6	K7	K8	K9	K10	K11	K12	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE (%)
P1	15	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	48	70%
P2	15	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	69	100%
P3	15	5	5	5	5	5	3	4	3	4	2	2	58	84%
P4	15	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	53	77%
P5	15	5	5	5	6	5	5	4	4	3	3	3	60	87%
P6	15	5	4	5	3	3	5	4	5	5	3	3	60	87%
P7	15	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	3	58	84%
P8	15	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	50	72%
P9	15	5	5	3	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	2	55	80%
P10	15	5	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	69	100%
Total Marks	150	47	45	44	44	40	39	38	39	38	30	29	580	84
Min score	15	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	58	84.1
Percentage	100	94	90	88	73	80	78	76	78	76	75	72.5	84	85

Table 1 is a record of the scores obtained by the 10 students who went through the detailed post-test process. This score was obtained after the intervention using the Language Game Kit to the experimental group. The average scores obtained showed improvement mainly from constructs 3 to 10. Of the 10 respondents in this experimental group, 2 of them received full marks from the post-test. Respondents generally have no problem mastering constructs 1 and 2 because it tests their basic reading knowledge but for constructions 3 to 12, they are more difficult they involve difficult words. However, based on this analysis, the researchers also found no significant increase in the study subjects based on the percentage of scores per student.

Table 2: Achievement of Literacy Test Readings of Experimental Groups before and after treatment

Subject of Study	Pre-test	Post-test
P1	30%	70%
P2	30%	100%
P3	26%	84%
P4	34%	77%
P5	34%	87%
P6	36%	87%
P7	18%	84%
P8	20%	72%
P9	20%	80%
P10	18%	100%

Table 2 refers to the achievement of reading literacy tests for the experimental group. The achievements shown are the difference between pre-test and post-test. Based on the table, there is an increase in student test achievement for the experimental group. There were 2 subjects who achieved a 100% score with an increase of 70% and 82% compared to the pre-test. In addition, most subjects showed improvement in post-test. For P1 subjects, there was no significant improvement in post-achievement. This is because this subject is often absent from school due to health problems. This subject is therefore unable to participate in ongoing interventions.

To answer the second study question, descriptive statistics and inferences were used. The t test results were used to determine whether there was a significant relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variables at $p < .05$. p must be less than 0.05 to determine the mean difference between pre- and post-test. Therefore, the table above shows the mean difference between pre- and post-test for the treatment group. There was increased vocabulary and reading skills for the participants in the experimental group on both the pre- and post-test. This indicated that there was a mean difference between pre- and post-test for the treatment group with a mean score of 0.288 before the intervention and an increase of 0.326 to 0.614.

Discussion(s)

The results showed that there was an increase in vocabulary and reading skills for special education students with hearing loss after participating in a learning intervention program using the Language Games Kit. The results of the pre and post-test using the Reading Literacy Screening instrument Screening 2 Year 1 2015 showed an improvement in the treatment group compared to the control group. This finding supports the findings of the study of Yahya and Dayang Raini (2011) and concludes in their study that fun learning should involve teachers' creativity that will influence the learning environment in the classroom.

Language games have become one of the most suitable teaching techniques in language learning (Kamarudin, 1993; Ladousse 1987; Wrigh 1991). The results from Sharifah & Aliza (2013) suggest that play activities involving exploration of materials or objects will enhance children's cognitive skills -Here. Among the game activities that enhance cognitive skills are games such as puzzles, congkak and lego (Norliza 2016).

These findings also showed differences in vocabulary and reading skills for the treatment and control groups after the intervention. Yahya Othman (2003) study that was conducted using a language game method called Quick Reading Kit (QRK) found that this method has a synthetic approach that refers to principles that are organized from simple to more difficult parts. The contents of the items in this Word Cards start with simple words and grow into sentences. This finding was also supported by Zulkefli Ahmad, Zainudin Abu Bakar, Ismail Saliyan (2014) who studied about literacy through the concept of learning while playing in early childhood education. Their study found that approach through playing requires careful planning in advance so that children can interact with the environment in a more comfortable environment.

The importance of this study is to enhance student's participation in the teaching and learning process. Based on the observation of the researcher, students enjoy learning activities while playing. To enhance student motivation, researchers also reward students with praises and economic tokens for successfully carrying out intervention tasks. These kind of encouragement can have a positive effect on students' interest in learning and doing activities such as this language game. The activities promoted bilateral communication between student-teacher, student-student and student with materials that reduce dependence on teachers but also depend on friends and materials used.

Such activities can be conducted in schools but teachers need to use a variety of methods to attract students so that students do not become bored easily and enjoy using the materials provided by the teacher. A material will become more attractive when it can be used to its fullest with the techniques, delivery and intermediate materials used. This Language Game Method encourages students to organize words or sentences into groups. Therefore, students need to first understand the required group of words or sentences and this has led to a high level of memory and understanding of a particular group of words.

This language game method works well for all students of all levels and for all other subjects. Therefore, teachers should wisely adapt this activity to other subjects by using the manuals provided and the techniques appropriate to the students and subjects to be taught. This method can also be used at home with the help of parents and family members to help their children regardless of their age and abilities.

This Language Game Method can have a great impact on students in schools, teachers and the ministry, especially the Special Education Division (SED). Good impact will be gained as this activity kit helps shape student's learning and behavior to become more independent and improve communication with peers and teachers. This is because this material is designed to attract students to make learning interesting and interactive. These materials also make students learn in groups and concentrate on materials. Activities that involve movement in the classroom will improve self-confidence and increase the enjoyment of learning. This Language Game Kit is seen as effective in having systematic and advanced features that are suitable for students with hearing disabilities. Besides that, this language game Kit is suitable to use in contests, games and other activities that can be conducted in and out of the classroom.

In the meantime, this material also has good implications for the motivational aspect of educators consisting of Year 1 teachers, recovery teachers and pre-school teachers with built-in materials. In addition, this language game Kit enables the Special Education Division (SED) to assist teachers by disseminate these activities in learning and teaching through courses conducted by the ministry. Further, the ministry can play a role in helping to improve the use of materials that are designed to encourage teachers to innovate in the field of teaching innovation. This will help to improve the ability of teachers and schools especially under the management of SED.

Suggestions of a follow-up study on vocabulary development and reading skills in children with hearing impairment are as early as 2 years old so that learning methods will become more effective as children grow older. Further, this set of Language Games can be customized to suit the students for example, the intellectual level, age and ability of the student to be intervened. This is so that this Language Game kit can also be used for other students either special need students or students from the mainstream.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings show that there is an improvement in vocabulary learning and reading skills using the Language Game Kit for students with hearing loss. This study will also supplement existing learning methods especially for special education teachers to help improve vocabulary and reading skills for students in school. However, a high degree of persistence and commitment is needed especially to produce materials that are robust and appropriate to the students' abilities. Parents should also provide support especially in ensuring that the assistance provided can be carried out continuously at home.

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