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THE WARRIORS: A CSR MODEL FOR ESL TRAINERS

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ABSTRACT

The Warriors - Life is a battle, Warrior Up! is a unique corporate social responsibility (CSR) training module for teaching languages to rural school students in Baling, Kedah. The language experts have designed a CSR module that consists of language games that can cater to the school children's learning styles - the kinesthetic style which consists of task-based activities located at several pit-stops focusing on the four language learning skills – reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This module requires students in groups to explore and make decisions to complete all tasks at each pit stop. This model is an adaptation of collaborative learning, game-based learning, and autonomous learning where various aspects of language learning strategies have been integrated to enhance language proficiency. Students are introduced to cognitive, mnemonic, metacognitive, affective, and social skills to improve their confidence in using languages for a day program. By the day's end, trainers observed that most students were excited as they had shown high participation, enjoyment, and engagement. The participants had dared to challenge themselves and be warriors to use the language courageously.

Keywords: Autonomous learning, collaborative learning, CSR Model, Game-based learning, ESL students, Language learning, and soft skills.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Warriors - Life is a battle, Warrior Up! is a CSR training module for teaching English languages to rural school students. The module consists of task-based activities focusing on the four language learning skills – reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The module's uniqueness transforms the formal or structured learning strategies to learn languages into a more energetic and exciting ambiance. This module aims to boost children's self-confidence in using English and encourage them to use English while having fun completing the games. The objectives are to improve English language as well as their soft skills. Based on Oxford Taxonomy (Oxford, 1997), this module integrates various aspects of language learning strategies to enhance language proficiency among school children. As the theme represents itself, a language “warrior” is born as these children challenge themselves and use the languages confidently.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Baling Warriors event had prepared more than 400 students for the 21st learning skills, emphasizing the 4Cs (Communication, Creativity, Collaboration, and Critical Thinking). This methodology section will explain the important steps in implementing the project. Firstly, the students were divided into groups of 10 members. Then, they were asked to choose their group leader, group name, and their cheer. Once they were ready, they began to go to their first pit stop and moved in groups. This concept is known as autonomy where “the ability to take charge of one’s learning” and the ability to make their own decision (Thanasoulas, 2000). At each pit stop, while playing the games, the students were competing among themselves to be the winner. The winner of each game will be granted the token. After completing all the games, students gathered back in the hall. Winners were chosen based on those who had the most tokens.

3. FINDINGS

Based on the trainer’s observation and interview, the trainers agreed that the participants improved their language learning skills significantly.

Language learning	Observation
Attitude	Trainers said students enjoyed the games. They cheered their friends by shouting and laughing during the activities. Trainers felt satisfied after the program ended.
Behavior	Students had shown full engagement. Students must sit and focus while listening to the instructions. Students were able to follow instructions and moved accordingly.
Cognitive	Students were able to understand instructions and complete the task successfully. Students were able to memorize new vocabulary. Students exchanged and contributed ideas to their group members.

Figure 1 Summary of Findings from Trainers

Participants also strongly agreed that the games improved their listening, speaking, and reading skills. Most said they improved their communication skills with their team members. According to Oxford, when students are assigned to groups they must apply “cooperative learning [which] refers to a particular set of classroom techniques that foster learner interdependence as a route to cognitive and social development” (1997). In short, this CSR module can encourage school students to build their self-confidence and to apply non-native languages in their daily conversations.

4. CONCLUSION

This CSR model offers various aspects of language learning strategies that have been integrated to enhance the language proficiency of school students. The model is expected to have a significant impact on society, especially on the young generation in schools. It specifically delivers a language enhancement program in interesting and creative ways. It encourages active learning and seeking new experiences and knowledge. Moreover, it can sharpen the participants' soft skills.

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