INNOVATION IN ACTION: TURNING IDEAS INTO REALITY

Chapter 24

Enhancing Pupils' Vocabulary Acquisition Through the Use of BrightEnglish

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ABSTRACT

Acquiring a foreign language requires a strong foundation in vocabulary. Without mastering this fundamental element, learners often face difficulties in understanding and using the language effectively. This issue is commonly observed among non-native English speakers in Malaysia, where English is taught as a second language. Many elementary school students struggle to speak and write proficiently in English. During English lessons, they often revert to using their mother tongue, Malay, which highlights the challenges they face. When asked to write basic words, many are unable to spell them correctly. To address this issue, teachers have implemented various interventions, one of which is the development of BrightEnglish. BrightEnglish introduces a new approach to teaching vocabulary to primary school students. The website aligns with the goal of integrating technology into teaching and learning. It offers a variety of interactive activities, including educational games, to help students acquire vocabulary in an engaging way. Additionally, the platform introduces students to modern methods of learning and knowledge acquisition. What makes BrightEnglish unique is its adaptable content, which can be tailored to meet the diverse needs of students and teachers across different regions, cultures, and subjects—not just English. Moreover, it serves as a tool for teachers to explore and implement technology-enhanced learning in their classrooms. In doing so, BrightEnglish supports both teachers and students in their journey toward improved language acquisition.

Key Words: Vocabulary, BrightEnglish, Technology, Interactive Materials, Online Learning

1. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary forms the foundation of language learning. A lack of sufficient vocabulary knowledge presents a significant obstacle for most students, particularly those learning a second language (L2). To effectively acquire a language, learners must develop four key skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing—all of which are heavily influenced by vocabulary proficiency. Despite its importance, many students find vocabulary acquisition to

be one of the most challenging aspects of language learning. Therefore, it is essential to explore students' vocabulary knowledge and introduce effective methods for vocabulary instruction. Well-designed learning systems can simplify vocabulary acquisition and enhance overall L2 learning. Vocabulary instruction supports students in understanding and communicating in English, which remains a demanding task without a solid lexical foundation.

In Malaysia, the nation must acquire and learn English as a second language starting from the pre-school level. In fact, vocabulary is one of the core elements of language aptitude and reflects how well listeners listen, speak, read and write (Kunnu, Uiphant & Sukwises, 2016). The importance of teaching English as a second language had been given emphasis in Malaysia so that pupils who are able to read and understand different English texts for information and enjoyment can be produced.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Teaching and Learning Vocabulary

Vocabulary plays a vital role in English language learning. It serves as the foundation that connects the four essential skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To achieve a high level of proficiency, pupils need to acquire a sufficient range of vocabulary and understand how to use it effectively. However, equipping primary pupils with an adequate vocabulary remains a challenging task for English language teachers, despite the use of various teaching strategies designed to support vocabulary learning (Yunus et al., 2020).

According to Indriyani and Sugirin (2019), vocabulary is imperative to be acquired by the learners. Recent studies in second and foreign language acquisition emphasised that non-native speakers need a good foundation of vocabulary knowledge in order to become successful English language users (Viera, 2016). Within the Malaysian context, the teaching and learning process of vocabulary in English language begins as early as Primary 1 and onwards to Primary 6 (Ministry of Education, 2017).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Innovation model

The ADDIE model was used in the development of the website. It is an Instructional Design model that has withstood the test of time and use. (University of Washington,2024). During the analysis phase, the developer identified a key problem: pupils in primary school were struggling to learn vocabulary effectively. In response, the developer proposed the creation of a website specifically designed to address this issue, while also aligning with the educational digitalization policy. In the design and development phases, the website was created using Google Sites as the platform. Educational materials were sourced from various reliable resources that the developer believed would support vocabulary acquisition. Interactive games, for instance, were incorporated using Wordwall—an online tool for creating engaging educational activities. In the implementation phase, the innovation was tested with 30 pupils over a period of three weeks. During this period, the developer encountered several challenges related to the use of the innovations. Prompt actions were taken to address and resolve these issues to ensure the effectiveness of the implementation. Finally, in the

evaluation phase, a Google Form was distributed to the participants to gather feedback on their experience. The results and insights gained from this feedback will be discussed in the following section.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Following the implementation of the BrightEnglish programme over a period of three weeks, positive outcomes were observed (refer to Figure 1). Pupils demonstrated improved understanding of basic vocabulary and were able to recall previously taught content effectively. Additionally, the programme enhanced their ability to spell vocabulary items accurately. This innovation has proven effective in helping pupils acquire a solid foundation in language learning while engaging in enjoyable activities. Moreover, it has successfully met the objective of integrating digital technology into the learning process.
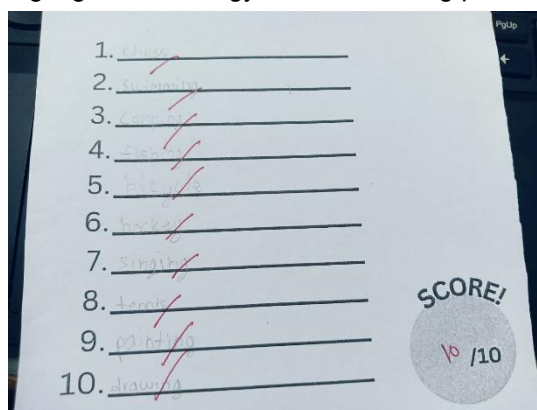

Figure 9: Vocabulary exercise

Figure 2 presents the data collected from the participants. The findings indicate that pupils found the activities provided on the website to be interesting. Out of 30 participants, nearly half responded that the website's activities were engaging. This suggests that the materials used were effective in capturing the pupils' attention. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that this innovation contributes to making lessons more engaging and enjoyable.
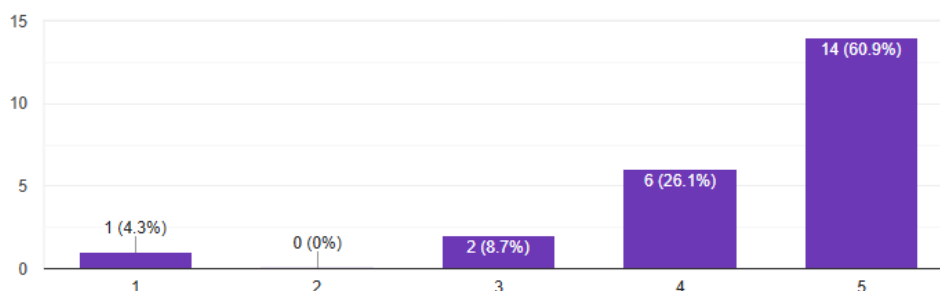

Figure 2: Pupils' response after using the BrightEnglish.

5. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, the innovation has proven effective in helping pupils learn vocabulary. The website demonstrates strong potential for enhancing lesson enjoyment for both students and teachers. For educators interested in using this innovation, it is highly recommended that they tailor the website to suit both their teaching objectives and their pupils' specific needs.

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