



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI

PITRAM 2026

Pertandingan Inovasi Antara Asasi Malaysia

Extended Abstract Book



11 dan 12 APRIL 2026

Dewan Berlian

Universiti Teknologi MARA

Cawangan Selangor

Kampus Puncak Alam



UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
MARA

Pusat
Asasi



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN TINGGI



MAJLIS DEKAN/PENGARAH ASASI
UNIVERSITI AWAM MALAYSIA

***Sembang!:* A Card Game Bridging Intercultural Gaps on Malaysian Dialects via Game-Based Education**

Mirza Aliff Hakimi bin Azli¹, Muhamad Noor Irsyad bin Mohd Noor Akhmar¹, Muhammad Fitri bin Roslee¹, Wan Muhammad Azriel Ieman bin Wan Mohd Azwal Farizal¹, Naqib Ayser bin Nasrulzaili¹, Amirul Nazmi bin Azrymi¹

¹Department of Languages and Management, Centre for Foundation Studies, International Islamic University Malaysia, 26300 Gambang, Pahang Darul Makmur, Malaysia

*nazmiazrymi@iium.edu.my

ABSTRACT

Malaysia's multicultural society houses a plethora of dialects, reflecting distinct identities and lived experiences within shared languages. Despite this richness, these dialectal differences are often trivialised or stereotyped. Additionally, many Malaysians still face difficulties in recognising and adapting to such a variety. Understanding these variations is essential for effective intercultural communication and helps reduce the issue of dialects being discriminated against and seen as inferior to others. 'Sembang!' is a card-based game aimed at enhancing Malaysians' awareness of local dialects and promoting an entertaining, collaborative learning experience. Guided by the ADDIE instructional design model, the game adopts a prompt-response, judge-mediated format in which players respond to prompts using cards written in specific dialects, with a rotating judge evaluating the appropriateness and justification of each response. The player with the best response will be awarded the prompt card. The game is decided by the number of prompt cards won at the end of the game. This interactive structure encourages semantic interpretation, critical thinking, and reflective language use, while supporting diverse learning styles. The game was tested with participants from different backgrounds, with its effectiveness measured via a set of administered pre-test and post-test. Findings indicate an effective improvement of dialectical vocabulary through collaborative learning and social play. Overall, 'Sembang!' demonstrates the potential of culture-based educational games to support language learning, promotes intercultural sensitivity and challenges dialect-related stereotypes, whilst also becoming an inclusive and effective approach for integrating local dialects within various educational contexts.

Keywords: Malaysian dialects, game-based education, intercultural communication, multicultural society, language learning

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of the Project and Methodology

As people progress within an information-laden era, dialects remain vital markers of cultural identity and heritage. However, regional variations are frequently misused or misunderstood in daily discourse. Despite the academic focus on standard languages, Malaysia faces a significant deficit in educational frameworks dedicated to dialectal learning. This lack of emphasis fosters miscommunication and neglect, highlighting an urgent need for innovative pedagogical tools to preserve linguistic diversity and enhance intercultural competence. This project then attempts to bridge that gap, introducing '**SEMBANG!**' (*Seloka Melayu Beraneka Loghat*) as an

educational tool to enhance Malaysians' awareness and understanding of their local dialects, as well as to promote positive intercultural communication and reduce dialect-related stereotypes.

The primary focus of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of 'Sembang!', a purpose-built card game, in enhancing awareness and recognition of various Malaysian dialects. The research is structured around the ADDIE instructional design model, focusing specifically on how a prompt-response and judge-mediated game mechanic facilitates semantic interpretation and reflective language use among players. Limited to the linguistic and social impact of local Malaysian dialects, it does not aim to provide a comprehensive linguistic analysis of dialect phonology but rather focuses on vocabulary acquisition and the reduction of dialect-related stereotypes through social play.

The research involved participants from diverse cultural and regional backgrounds to ensure a multicultural perspective. The scope of data collection is confined to a pre-test and post-test experimental design. Evaluation is based on the measurable improvement of dialectal vocabulary and qualitative shifts in intercultural sensitivity observed during the testing phase. While the findings suggest broader applications, this study specifically examines the game's utility within collaborative learning environments and its potential for integration into localized educational curricula.

In playing the game, up to seven people can play this game at a time. Each player will be given five answer cards each, and one player will be appointed as a judge called '*Pak Belalang*' in every round by using a rotation mechanism. '*Pak Belalang*' will pick one question/situation card and show it to all players. Players then must choose the most suitable answer from their hands based on the question/situation given. '*Pak Belalang*' will choose the most suitable answer, and the question/situation card is given to the round winner, which will count as points. Players must collect 8 question/situation cards (i.e. points) to win the game.

1.2 Literature Review

Current scholarship identifies a paradoxical "pride-but-inferiority" complex in Malaysian sociolinguistics; while citizens value regional dialects, these are often relegated to intimate settings and viewed as inferior to Standard Malay (How, Chan, & Abdullah, 2015). This spatial confinement fosters systemic stereotyping and linguistic discrimination.

Furthermore, the difficulty of noun identification in indigenous languages like Kadazan-Dusun underscores a critical need for gamified learning strategies to prevent dialectal extinction (Dunis, Sintian, & Yusof, 2024). To address these gaps, this study utilizes the ADDIE instructional design model. Previous applications of ADDIE have demonstrated significant efficacy across diverse developmental domains, including specialized education (Ding & Toran, 2025), suggesting its robustness as a framework for bridging intercultural learning gaps and standardizing educational game development (Burlian et. al., 2019).

1.3 Overview of Main Results

Overall, the implementation of 'Sembang!' has successfully yielded significant findings regarding the integration of gamified learning in Malaysian sociolinguistics, particularly in improving dialectal vocabulary, raising intercultural sensitivity, as well as demonstrating efficacy of collaborative learning within the game-based education approach. This project also helps challenge and reduce dialect-based stereotypes and negative perceptions.

2. METHODOLOGY

This project employs a mixed method approach, whereby a focus on measurability and meanings, attitudes, and social processes cover the bases of a qualitative research. Specifically, this project used a quasi-experimental mixed method design to evaluate the effectiveness of ‘Sembang!’. By combining quantitative data from performance testing with qualitative observations of player interactions, the study provides a holistic view of both vocabulary acquisition and shifts in social attitude.

The study utilized the ADDIE Instructional Design Model to systematically develop the Sembang! card game. This framework was selected for its proven efficacy in helping learners master niche linguistic structures (Tias & Saprudin, 2025).

In **Analyse**, the problem with the lack of consciousness and understanding of dialect among students was identified via preliminary interviews with prospective game testers. It is also found that students specifically have a low knowledge of other states' dialects, resulting in a barrier towards communication between them. Next, at the **Design** stage, a set of cards to integrate dialect into game mechanics, including card layouts, rules, and learning objectives based on the problem statement are drafted. Then, **Development** follows. Card prototypes containing authentic dialect phrases are developed by gathering as much information and dialectal samples. The cards were then produced into physical versions.

At the **Implementation** stage, the game was piloted with a random sample of university students. This demographic was strategically selected to represent a multicultural microcosm susceptible to initial intercultural insensitivities. Before playing the game, testers are provided with a set of pre-test to answer, and subsequently a set of post-test, containing the same questions, after they have finished the game, in order to **Evaluate** their knowledge of the dialects.

After testing the game, the participants could choose to volunteer in an interview by project members regarding the various aspects of the product. The participants generally highlighted recommendations and feedback pertaining to number of players, scope and coverage of cultures, gameplay, and game regulations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The primary objective of the study was to measure the effectiveness of ‘Sembang!’ in improving dialectal vocabulary. Data from the pre-test and post-test show a significant upward trend in dialectal mastery:

Table 1. Evaluation Tool and Results

Evaluation Tool	Correct Answers (%)	Incorrect Answers (%)
Pre-Test	37%	63%
Post-Test	73%	27%

As shown, there was a 36% increase in correct responses following the game’s intervention. The initial 63% incorrect rate validates the identified gap wherein many Malaysians have struggled to recognize local dialects. The post-test results suggest that the game mechanic can successfully bridge this gap, moving participants toward a more inclusive understanding of

regional vocabularies. Feedback from the participants is critically thoughtful, such as a request for a richer set of vocabularies to be introduced from each dialect.

Based on the results, ‘Sembang!’ succeeded in replacing rote memorization with active justification and social play, significantly reducing learner anxiety through a low-stakes environment. This collaborative approach doubled dialect recognition scores, effectively transforming stigmatized regional sounds into structured, meaningful communication. Ultimately, the game’s interactive design fostered both vocabulary acquisition and a deeper cultural appreciation among participants.

4. CONCLUSION

‘Sembang!’ has successfully doubled dialect recognition from 37% to 73%, proving that gamified social play effectively reduces linguistic stereotyping. Findings confirm high engagement through collaborative meaning-making. In short, this project has successfully met its objectives of bridging intercultural gaps and improving dialectal mastery. Future recommendations include digitizing the platform for increased accessibility and expanding the lexicon to include contextual expressions. With significant commercial potential in academic and casual markets, ‘Sembang!’ serves as a scalable tool for cultural preservation and inclusive national education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Heartiest appreciation is given to the community of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), without whose support, the project will not be able to take flight. A major thank you also goes to the people at the Research and Innovation Unit, Centre for Foundation Studies, IIUM for facilitating the growth of this project.

REFERENCES

- Burlian, T., Sharmila, P., Alavesa, P., & Arhippainen, L. (2019). Revitalizing Viena Karelian dialect and culture with gamification. , 277-288.
- Ding, Y., & Toran, H. (2025). Application of ADDIE as an instructional design model in the teaching and rehabilitation of children with autism: A review. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 24(1), 87-115.
- Dunis, J., Sintian, M., & Yusof, M. (2024). Pengaplikasian permainan kad memori dalam pembelajaran kata nama am konkrit bahasa Kadazandusun [Memory card game in concrete common nouns learning in Kadazandusun language]. *Muallim Journal of Social Science and Humanities*. <https://doi.org/10.33306/mjssh/301>.
- How, S., Heng, C., & Abdullah, A. (2015). Language Vitality of Malaysian Languages and Its Relation to Identity. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 15. <https://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2015-1502-08>.
- Tias, H., & Saprudin, U. (2025). Interactive Learning Media for Mastering Lampung Language Vocabulary in 4th-5th Grade Elementary School Using the ADDIE Model. *International Journal Software Engineering and Computer Science (IJSECS)*. <https://doi.org/10.35870/ijsecs.v5i1.3854>.