Improving the Speaking Skill of Slow Learner Students in English Subject by Creating and Using the Interactive Learning Aid 'My Story My Game'

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ABSTRACT

The slow learner students in special education program who do not speak English as their first language have the ability to improve their speaking skill in the subject through their participation in creating and usage of interactive learning aid 'My Story My Game'. These interactive slides were created together with the students so that they could gain the experience in inventing their own learning source. This action research study was implemented with qualitative research design. The data obtained through observation, documents analysis and students' achievement outcomes which were recorded in the checklists, pictures and videos. Data proved that the students had improved their speaking skill in English subject from mastery level 1 to the highest mastery level 4. This learning aid innovation was implemented together with consistent drilling technique in sentences pronunciation and reading which was done in ten intervention sessions. ADDIE design model became the main framework in completing the whole research. Four special need students who are diagnosed with slow learner, age between 12 to 13 years old, in a school in Kuching city have participated in this research. Observation findings showed that the students' involvement in interactive learning increased their vocabularies, communication level, and boosted their motivation in learning English. It helped to develop their knowledge and skill in information technology through the creation of interactive slides. In addition, it improved teacher's teaching practice in designing, planning, and implementing the learning sessions to achieve the most effective outcomes widely.

Keywords: slow learner, interactive learning, speaking skill, and information technology

Introduction

Slow learner students need more time, repetition, and instructional support to understand and assimilate new information compared to the average pace of their peers. These students require tailored learning approaches that are suitable to their needs. Siti Muhibah Nor and Zetty Nurzuliana Rashed (2018) in their study stated that attractive learning techniques contributed to effective learning outcomes when given delivering sufficient knowledge and drilling.

Interactive learning aids provide great benefits to special education students especially to the slow learners. They fill the students' need in obtaining knowledge and developing their skills in mastering the subjects taught. *My Story My Game* is the combination of various interactive source of learning aids for instance the educational

games, multimedia tools like Power Point slides, visual aids, information technology, and collaborative learning. The involvement of teachers and parents could enhance the learning effectiveness of the students.

Attractive learning aids would not produce effective learning outcomes without the right teaching technique. To improve the communication ability of these students, drilling technique was practiced. Mastering the speaking skill helps to boost one's confidence level and motivation. Appropriate words, clear pronunciation, and organize speech are among the crucial elements in speaking skill. Quazi Farzana Yesmin et al. (2020) mentioned that consistent practice could enhance the speaking ability of the special need children. For instance, joining active conversation, record the speech, and observe good speakers.

Thus, the combination of interactive learning aid and drilling technique was chosen to achieve the main objectives of this study.

Justification of Best Practices Implementation

Before this research was conducted, I normally used the traditional and ordinary teaching and learning technique, which was using the textbooks, activity books and watching videos as the primary teaching sources. The main objective was to complete the lesson plans and achieve minimum level of learning skills including speaking, reading, and writing. After a while, I found that my students were not able to remember many things or practice any skill consistently though they have done them in class. Dawood (2017) agreed that students face difficulties in speaking the second language because it is not their mother language as they are not living in the society who speak the language.

My slow learner students face difficulty in speaking English due to limited comprehension and lack of practice. Their mastery level in speaking skill is low, based on the classroom assessment results, TP2. Therefore, I believed that I must think of an effective learning technique to be practised to ensure the skill is consistently developed and eventually increase the students' classroom achievement to TP4. According to Kadri and Hayroman (2021), interactive learning application attracted the students' interest in learning and increased their participation during lessons. Therefore, I have designed and created interactive slides with participation of my students themselves as the background voices in the pictures and slides.

Objectives

The objectives of best practice implementation are:
1. Improve the speaking skill of the slow learner students by using the interactive learning aid *My Story My Game.*

2. Increase the students' interest and motivation in learning English through active participation in creating their learning aid.

Implementation of Best Practice

This research was conducted in Sekolah Kebangsaan Tabuan Ulu in Kuching city. Four students, aged between 12 to 13 years old were chosen for this study. They are the special need students who currently schooling in the Integrated Special Education Program (ISEP) in Year 5. Three of the students do not speak English as their mother tongue. I have been teaching them English for almost one year. The implementation process of this action research was planned based on the ADDIE model which was created in 1975. It was modified according to the research need.

Research Model Framework

This research used ADDIE model framework as the instructional materials in creating the interactive learning aid *My Story My Game.* Figure 1 shows five phases that become the main guidelines for this purpose; Analyse, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate.

Figure 1
ADDIE Model
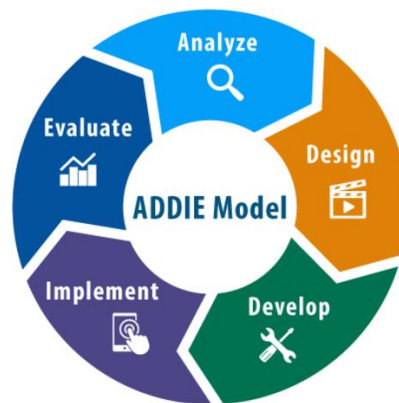
Research Planning

Table 1 shows the description of five phases of ADDIE model that indicates clearly the implementation process of this research.

Table 1
Implementation Process Table

Phase	Key Points	Intervention Planning
Analyze	➢ Identify problem. ➢ Intervention needs analysis. ➢ Identify learning goal. ➢ Choose students involved. ➢ Identify students' needs. ➢ Find required resources.	i. Questions to be addressed: ● *Who are the students involved?* ● *What are their learning constraints?* ● *How long is the intervention process?* ii. Issues are identified based on earlier observation and classroom achievement of 4 students. ii. Establish objectives to solve issues. iii. Set the duration of the implementation process.
Design	➢ Create a learning intervention outline. ➢ High-level mapping of learning intervention. ➢ Mapping of evaluation methods. ➢ Development of a communication strategy.	i. Deals with learning objectives and planned strategies to attain goals. ii. Create the storyboards – *My Story My Game* for English subject. iii. Design the prototype – create slides from Power Point application. iv. Prepare implementation timetable and checklists for evidence documentation.

| Develop | ➢ Creation of learning aid.

➢ Determine the instructional strategies, media, and methods.

➢ Quality evaluation.

➢ Development and evaluation of assessments & observation.

➢ Deployment of learning technology.

➢ Development of a communication strategy. | i. Create learning aid based on storyboards and prototype designed.

ii. Conduct pilot test and learning aid review.

iii. Apply graphic design – insert pictures and sound for the slides accordingly based on storyboards.

iv. Compose learning strategies on how to use the learning aid at the most effective way.

Voices recording process |

Implementation (4 weeks)	➢ Participation preparation. ➢ Training delivery & participation. ➢ Changes in the physical environment. ➢ Implementation of intervention plan. ➢ Execution of formal evaluation.	i. Students are introduced with the application and learn the training and learning process until they reach the objectives. ii. Teacher guides the students to learning and drilling by using the computer according to schedule. iii. Involve pre-intervention and post-intervention process. iv. Record the results. Intervention sessions
Evaluation (Final week)	➢ Evaluation. ➢ Continuous learning. ➢ Propose points of improvements. ➢ Evaluation of the program effectiveness.	i. Result achieved through data collection from observation, assessment checklist, and document analysis. ii. Strength and weaknesses of the learning aid are identified. iii. Second observation or reflection is conducted.

Intervention Process

Table 2 shows the intervention process of using *My Story My Game* apps.

Table 2
Intervention Process Table

WEEK	ACTIVITIES / PICTURES	DESCRIPTION
1	Morning talk Pre-intervention of Student A	➢ Teacher and students held daily morning talk for 15 minutes before the school sessions start. The talk was done individually and in group. ➢ The sessions were done for 5 days in the first week.
2	Learning aid introduction	➢ Students were introduced with the interactive slides created from the Power Point application named *My Story My Game.* ➢ Students were taught on how to open the apps and play with it step by step. ➢ Students were given 1 laptop each during intervention sessions. Sometimes, they would learn in pairs.

	Keyword 1	➢ Students were asked about their **identity/ name.** ➢ Each student chose his/her own name based on pictures given. ➢ The picture chosen would move and appear with audio. ➢ Students repeated the answers five times until they pronounced them correctly. ➢ Students' achievements were recorded.
	Keyword 2	➢ Students were asked about their favourite **pastimes**. ➢ Each student chose his/her hobby based on pictures given. ➢ The picture chosen would move and appear with audio. ➢ Students repeated the answers five times until they pronounced them correctly. ➢ Students' achievements were recorded.
3	Keyword 3	➢ Students were asked about their **pets**. ➢ Each student chose his/her pet based on pictures given. ➢ The picture chosen would move and appear with audio. ➢ Students repeated the answers five times until they pronounced them correctly. ➢ Students' achievements were recorded.
	Keyword 4	➢ Students were asked about their **ambitions**. ➢ Each student chose his/her ambition

		based on pictures given.
		➤ The picture chosen would move and appear with audio.
		➤ Students repeated the answers five times until they pronounced them correctly.
		➤ Students' achievements were recorded.
4	Keyword 5 	➤ Students were asked about their dream **houses**.
		➤ Each student chose his/her house based on pictures given.
		➤ The picture chosen will move and appear with audio.
		➤ Students repeated the answers five times until they pronounced them correctly.
		➤ Students' achievements were recorded.
		Intervention process of Student A
5	 Post-intervention of Student A	➤ Students' achievements were recorded in the checklists, pictures, and videos.
		➤ Final analysis was done to determine intervention's success or failure.

Impact of Best Practice Implementation

The usage of *My Story My Game* interactive slides was executed together with drilling technique. All the students were involved in the voice recording sessions where they participated in creating the interactive parts of the slides. Table 3 shows the early observation achievements of the students. Student A, B and D were at the minimum level of speaking skill where their number of words were less than 5 and they needed full guidance during learning sessions. Their confidence and memory level were low. Their pronunciation skills were also at the lowest level. While student C who can converse quite well in English needed minimum guidance.

Table 3
Students' Achievement Checklist (Before intervention)

Indicator	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
Words	5	5	10	3
Guidance	Maximum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Confidence	Low	Low	High	Low
Memory	Low	Low	Moderate	Low
Speaking skill	Level 1	Level 1	Level 3	Level 1

Table 4 shows the students' achievement after the intervention was done. Three of them, student A, B and D have increased level of speaking skill where their number of words have reached up to 10 and they needed minimum guidance after the intervention. Their confidence and memory level grew higher. Their pronunciation skill level increased from mastery level 1 to level 2 and level 3. Student C has improved his level of achievement after completed the intervention.

Table 4
Students' Achievement Checklist (After intervention)

Indicator	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
Words	8	10	15	7
Guidance	Minimum	Minimum	None	Minimum
Confidence	Moderate	High	Higher	Moderate
Memory	Moderate	High	High	Moderate
Speaking skill	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 2

Anastasia (2022) stated in her study that providing an enjoyable learning environment helped to motivate special need children.

Figure 2 shows the Classroom Assessment Standards Guidance for Speaking English skill as the reference to set the students' achievement level in speaking. The indication was obtained through the evidence from the checklists, pictures, and videos recorded along the intervention process.

Figure 2
Classroom Assessment Standards Guide for Speaking English

KSSR PENDIDIKAN KHAS (MASALAH PEMBELAJARAN) BAHASA INGGERIS TAHUN 5

Performance Standards Guide for Speaking Skills

PERFORMANCE LEVEL	DESCRIPTORS FOR SPEAKING SKILLS	NOTES
1	• Hardly asks and responds to personal information, asks about and describes daily activities even with a lot of support. • Hardly asks about, makes simple predictions and describes people and objects using simple sentences even with a lot of support. • Hardly retells very short basic stories even with a lot of support.	Requires support to achieve curriculum target (A1 Mid)
2	• Shows ability to ask and respond to personal information, ask about and describe daily activities with a lot of support. • Shows ability to ask about, makes simple predictions and describes people and objects using simple sentences with a lot of support. • Shows ability to retell very short basic stories with a lot of support.	On track to achieve curriculum target (A1 Mid)
3	• Shows ability to ask and respond to personal information, ask about and describe daily activities with support. • Shows ability to ask about, makes simple predictions and describes people and objects using simple sentences with support. • Shows ability to retell very short basic stories with support.	Achieves expectations of curriculum target (A1 Mid)
4	• Shows ability to ask and respond to personal information, ask about and describe daily activities with very minimal support. • Shows ability to ask about, makes simple predictions and describes people and objects using simple sentences with very minimal support. • Shows ability to retell very short basic stories with very minimal support.	On track to exceed expectations (A1 Mid)
5	• Shows ability to ask and respond to personal information, ask about and describe daily activities appropriately. • Shows ability to ask about, makes simple predictions and describes people and objects using simple sentences appropriately. • Shows ability to retell very short basic stories appropriately.	Working towards exceeding expectations (A1 Mid)
6	• Shows ability to ask and respond to personal information, ask about and describe daily activities confidently. • Shows ability to ask about, makes simple predictions and describes people and objects using simple sentences confidently. • Shows ability to retell very short basic stories confidently.	Exceeds expectations (A1 Mid)

Note: Documents source from Curriculum Development Department, Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

Summary and Recommendations

The interactive slides *My Story My Game* which was implemented with drilling technique has proved to be an effective learning aid to improve speaking skill of the slow learner students. Four students have completed twelve intervention sessions; pre and post, and achieved expected result based on teacher's observation and assessment checklist. The experience of taking part in the learning aid creation had given positive feedback and boost the students' interest in learning English. Their motivation has increased. Thus, it resulted in students' achievement especially in speaking and information technology skills. Bao and Liu (2021) proved that self-esteem, motivation and anxiety have big impacts on the efforts and increase participation in learning second language.

Students who are diagnosed as slow learners require support in mastering English subjects at school. It needs the right techniques and method to enable them to develop their academic skills. However, it does not have to be about reading and writing all the time. There are many other ways to achieve the mission. It also improved my teaching skill in term of methods and techniques used in delivering the lessons. As a teacher, I have to be more creative in attracting the students' interest in learning English.

These interactive slides are simple and easy to create. It is suggested for the use of all education level in all subjects. It can be modified based on number of slides, topics, pictures, and difficulty level.

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