

THE EFFECTS OF VISUAL MATERIALS ON STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF VOCABULARY IN LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research paper is to find out how visual materials affect student's understanding on literature and their perception towards usage of visual materials to learning literature. The targets of this research were 39 form 4 intermediate class students in a secondary school in Ipoh town, Perak. Students' understanding on literature is based on their score in the vocabulary recognition test. Questionnaire and semi-structured interview were used to obtain students' insight on usage of visual materials in learning literature. Using the visual materials, students can understand the literature and word meanings better. They showed positive attitude towards usage of visual materials during literature class.

KEYWORDS

Literacy, literature, visual materials.

1. INTRODUCTION

Annually, the education sector in Malaysia is given the largest chunk of the budget. In Budget 2016, it was stated that a sum of RM41.3 billion will be allocated to the education sector in 2016. According to Ministry of Finance Malaysia, the ministry came up with the "Prospering the Rakyat" themed budget. This budget is based on giving priorities to the citizens. The third priority in the budget is empowering human capital. Under this priority, there are five measures that the ministry has named to empower the human capital. Firstly, the ministry shall improve the quality of education. In order to increase proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia and English, a sum of RM135 million is allocated for upholding Bahasa Malaysia and bolstering English Language. The ministry also considered the importance of the English Language to face current global competition. They formulated another two initiatives, namely the Dual Language Programme and Highly Immersive Programme.

These two projects will be implemented as an option at a cost of RM38.5 million. In this respect, 300 schools have been identified as a pilot project. These two projects are aimed at increasing the fluency of English among students, but will not jeopardise the standing of Bahasa Malaysia as the national language. The Ministry of Education's second measure is to strengthen the higher education in Malaysia. Their third measure is aimed to transform the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Their fourth measure is intended to empower the youth, community and NGOs. Lastly, the Ministry of Finance will empower human capital through a quality workforce. All these five measures will converge into empowering the human capital that sustains the national development. Despite the money pumped into the education field, the students are still performing badly in the English Subject. The low performance of students in English has been a frequent and major topic of concern in the Malaysian education scene. According to the Ministry of Education Malaysia, our country's consistently high levels of

expenditure in the education field is not having the return on investments as high as desired. Even though there is almost universal access to primary education and significant improvements in access to secondary education, there are still improvements to be done in the dimension of quality, equity and unity.

The current system produces students that are admirably strong in Bahasa Malaysia (BM) as compared to English. In the 2010 Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) exams, 75% students achieved credit in BM, but only 28% students achieved credit in English paper against the Cambridge 1119 standards. This might prove challenging for fresh school leavers to adapt to working life due to poor English proficiency. According to the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, poor English proficiency among fresh graduates has been regularly ranked as top five issues faced by Malaysian employers since 2006.

As stated in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025, it is vital to accurately tackle the needs of all Malaysians and plan for the nation to perform at an international level. A highly-successful education system must be established especially in the Malaysian context to cater to the Malaysian's need. The Blueprint will continue to adhere to vision of the National Education Philosophy's vision of a balanced education as a foundation for individual student aspirations. Every child is expected to achieve bilingual proficiency. All children will be able to be at minimum operationally proficient in Bahasa Malaysia as the national language and language of unity, as well as in English the international language. In short, students that graduated from school should be able to work in both Bahasa Malaysia and English mediated environment.

In order to tackle this problem, the Ministry of Education has introduced many strategies to transform the Malaysian education system. In 13 years to come, the ministry aims to change our education system to become more effective and sustainable. Some of the initiatives taken to strengthen the English language proficiency are testing and retraining of English teachers, expansion of The Literacy and Numeracy Screening (LINUS) programme and remedial support as well as blended learning model. Every student shall be taught by an English teacher who is proficient according to international standards. This situation shall be achieved by requiring all 61,000 English teachers to partake and pass the Cambridge Placement Test (CPT) within two years. Teachers who have yet to meet the standard shall receive intensive upskilling.

Moreover, the LINUS programme is expanded to include English literacy. Students from Year 1 to Year 3 shall be screened twice a year to determine whether their progression in Bahasa Malaysia and English is at an expected pace. Those who are falling behind shall be given remedial coaching until they are able to return to the mainstream curriculum. Besides that, The Ministry will also explore the introduction of blended learning models that leverage technology to enhance student learning.

Hence, it is vital to enhance the literacy in our Malaysian school students. Literacy can be achieved through studying literature. Krishnan et al. (2012) strongly believed that the roles of literature in the language curriculum were inseparable. Based on their study, it was concluded that learning literature can actually encourage the students to read and inadvertently improve student's vocabulary. The vast vocabulary attained through the literature helped their students to write confidently and creatively. Besides that, teacher's style of teaching as well as the text chosen played crucial roles in attracting the students' interest. Hence, promoting the interest of learning English language via the teaching of literature should be considered as a major strategy to improve students' proficiency in the target language. As a result, literature can be a great tool to achieve literacy.

1.1. Problem Statement

Understanding vocabulary used in the texts is a very important aspect in English language learning. This is because word meanings used in texts can only be absorbed when the words are actually comprehended. Unfortunately, nowadays students are facing difficulty in understanding the vocabulary used in the literary texts that they read. Hence, this inconvenience will hinder the students' ability to infer the meanings in the texts and hamper their interest to enjoy the literary works.

During the teacher's practicum in a secondary school in Gunung Rapat area, Ipoh, she noticed students had vocabulary difficulties during literature classes. When she taught the students the short story *Leaving and Tanjong Rhu*, students had problem understanding the key terms that were present in the literary work. Even though contextual clues and glossary had been provided later on, students still showed incompetence to understand the words used. She realised they need more than efforts on word level to comprehend the text. Hence, she decided to tackle this issue as her action research topic.

This action research was conducted in a secondary school in Ipoh town, Perak. This action research was intended to find out how visual materials in English Literature classes could affect the young learners understanding on the vocabulary present in the text. Besides that, another goal of this action research was to attain student's perspective of using visual materials to learn the vocabulary present in the literary work. She needed to know whether visual materials used were able captivate student's attention to learn or not.

1.2. Research Objectives

There were two objectives of the research:

1. To find out how the visual materials affect student's understanding on vocabulary used in literary texts in English literature classroom
2. To find out student's perspective on using visual materials to learn vocabulary in literature

1.3. Research Objectives

This research would answer the following questions:

1. How effective is the usage of visual materials in helping students to understand vocabulary the literary text?
2. What are the student's attitude towards usage of visual materials in learning vocabulary in literature?

1.4. Significance of the Study

1.4.1. Significance for Policy

The results from this research can give an impact to schools with similar problems, where intermediate classes have problems understanding the vocabulary used in literature lessons. The findings are expected to provide plausible methods and approaches to help students to understand vocabulary used in literary texts in English literature classroom. The findings can offer methods in visual context where students can rely on pictures to comprehend word meaning. The findings

are very important to school administrations to assist teachers include visual materials in their lesson plan, if they want to take a step further than normal chalk and talk.

Besides that, the results of this research can give an impact to the Ministry of Education as well. The findings are expected to help the Curriculum Division to come up with new curriculum specifications that encompasses visual materials. The findings can suggest appropriate pictures to be included into the literary texts.

1.4.2. Significance for Practice

The findings of this research are expected to provide useful feedback for English literature teachers and improve their teaching practice. The results from this research can help secondary school teachers to fully utilise visual materials as their main tool to develop students' understanding on vocabulary in literature. Literature teachers can benefit from this action research.

1.5. Definition of Terms

1.5.1. Literacy

According to Boyse (2010), literacy means being able to read and write. According to the National Council of Teachers of English (as cited in Boyse, 2010), literacy is a dynamic interaction of the social and cognitive realms, with textual understandings growing from students' knowledge of their worlds to knowledge of the external world. Literacy encompasses reading, writing and a variety of social and intellectual practices that call upon the voice as well as the eye and hand. It also extends to the new media including non-digitalized multimedia, and digitalized multimedia.

In the teacher's action research, literacy is defined as students' ability to comprehend the word meaning in the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade*. The students' ability to comprehend word meaning is measured by their scores in vocabulary recognition test.

1.5.2. Literature

According to Krishnan et al. (2012), literature is a body of written or oral work to stimulate the imagination and confront the reader with unique vision of life. It is a creative, universal form of expression that addresses the emotional, spiritual, or intellectual concern of humanity.

In the teacher's action research, literature is restricted to the usage of the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade*. The poem is currently used in the literary component of KBSM Form 4 syllabus.

1.5.3. Visual Materials

Visual materials refer them to the images used as teaching aids in classroom activities. According to Baker (2012), visual images are created with a purpose using certain techniques. In order to "read" or analyse and image, the students must be able to understand the purpose and recognise the techniques. Images can be used to influence and persuade, hence teachers must learn how to teach with and about images to help students understand the language of photography better.

In the teacher's action research, visual materials are defined as the usage of real photos to teach the target vocabulary in the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade*.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. English Literature Teaching in Malaysia

2.1.1. English Literature in Malaysia Schools

In the Malaysian secondary school, literature component is added to the curriculum of English by the English Curriculum Division. Different types of literary texts are included from Form One to Form Five. The literature component plays a very important role in shaping students' creative potential. According to Nor Hashimah Isa and Che Ton Mahmud (2012), the implementation of literature components in secondary schools enables students to engage themselves in literary works for enjoyment and self development. Through the exposure of literary works, students will develop an understanding of other societies, cultures, values and traditions that will contribute to their emotional and spiritual growth.

According to Nor Hashimah Isa and Che Ton Mahmud (2012), selected literary works in English that are chosen by the English Curriculum Division seeks to enrich students' knowledge of English language and at the same time develop an awareness of own creative potential. Besides language proficiency, literature can foster a good understanding of other societies, cultures, values and traditions that will contribute to the students' emotional and spiritual growth. The texts selected are from various genres encompassing short stories, novels, drama and poems. A range of literary texts include Malaysian, British, European, Australian, American and African works. The literary works can inculcate values and broaden student's outlook.

Literary appreciation is the fundamental basis to understanding and enjoying a work of literature. The level of literary appreciation can only result from reading literary texts that gives a genuine and meaningful impact on the individual. According to Nor Hashimah Isa and Che Ton Mahmud (2012), careful consideration must be given to selection of texts for use in the literature classroom in order to achieve the high level of literary appreciation. The path to success in using literature in ESL classroom depends greatly on the texts selected.

The study conducted by Nor Hashimah Isa and Che Ton Mahmud (2012) showed four important conclusions. Firstly, authors or poets with a simple style of writing which poses minimal linguistic difficulties to the students. Secondly, students' age and interests would weigh heavily in relation to the themes. Thirdly, texts should be selected based on Malaysian and Asian context during the students' initial acquaintance with the literature component. Works from the Western literary canon can be introduced at the upper secondary level. Fourthly, a wide range of texts should be made available for students' selection. The themes should revolve around issues on adolescents, mystery, love and care, adventure, horror, family life and science fiction. The themes selected should be happy ones. The evidences arising from this study suggest that a new literary selection is necessary for Malaysian secondary schools. The literary texts used in Malaysian secondary schools should be ideally affective and intellectually challenging.

In order to raise the literary appreciation of students, Asian literature should be widely promoted to Malaysian student. According to Kaur & Nooraida Mahmor (2014), local Malaysian literature as well as neighbouring countries and Asian countries must be acknowledged and promoted. The local and Asian literary texts will offer students a more progressive and pragmatic view of the world. Students should be introduced to Malaysia's rich literary tradition which are culturally and historically relevant to the youth of today. Hence, introducing local literary texts to the students will be beneficial in the long run because students can become engaged to texts that are culturally known to them. However, introducing foreign literature is good because it exposes students to

different world-views and enhance students' knowledge of different cultures and traditions. Literature should no longer be considered as a tool merely to increase English proficiency; it should serve as a bridge to educate young Malaysians of their rich literary traditions, heritage and culture. The functional aspects of literature in the classroom to enhance English proficiency are undeniable.

Literature also plays an important role in enhancing students' language skills. Krishnan et al. (2012) found out that learning literature has helped students to improve their grasp of the English language tremendously. It was also found that students perceive learning literature as important and integral in the holistic development of language of the students. Based on their findings, they found the literature components had a significant impact in stimulating students' interest in learning English. Students also found English literature activities as interesting and enjoyable. The teachers realised the importance of teaching literature because the subject had broadened the students' view point about culture and world views, besides improving students' grasp of the target language. Students expressed their opinions that they had their own choice of texts. Their first choice was simple language with simple issues in the texts and familiarity with the texts.

2.1.2. Literature Teaching Difficulties

Most often times, teachers are faced with difficulties. A study conducted by Sidhu & Chan (2010) showed that English teachers also paid little emphasis on both co-operative and collaborative learning necessary for Contemporary Children's Literature programme (CCL). Further analysis revealed that teachers emphasised on Q&A comprehension in the CCL classroom. When they analysed the interactions, they found out that very little time was spent on comprehension instruction. Teachers were fixated on assessments and giving assignments. Teachers provided very little assistance with classroom assignments. Besides that, the photocopied worksheets taken from commercial workbooks were the only resource material used by teachers in the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, the Reader was seldom used, referred to or exploited for study in the CCL classroom and the study of literary elements was minimal. All these findings indicate that perhaps the MOE needs to re-examine the nature of the implementation of the CCL programme.

Kow (2007) discovered several issues in the teaching and learning of literature among primary school students. Her paper explores the issues in teaching and learning of children's literature in Malaysia. In weak classes, teachers are strongly advised to focus on UPSR examinations. Teachers spend their time coaching weak students on the techniques to pass UPSR English paper. Due to the fact that the literature component is not tested in the examinations, the literature component is not taken seriously. She noted that teaching literary text merely teaches understanding of the story, but literature on the other hand goes on to instil the love of reading. She suggested the need to move beyond literature as small "I" into Literature with a big "L". It focuses on the use of connectors, persuasive language, new words and deducing their meanings from context. Literature as big 'L', however, goes beyond that because language is used to reach out to the imagination and emotion of readers.

Another study conducted by Ahmed Ozkan and A. Nejat Tongur (2014), showed reasons teachers choose to shy away from using literature for reading comprehension activities. Their study showed that ELT teachers regarded insufficient class time, large number of students and curriculum restriction as the biggest obstacles against using literature. The teachers perceived literary works to be linguistically difficult. Hence they believed the literary works will demotivate the average student. A considerable number of teachers were unwilling to use literature in the reading comprehension activities because they consider the literary works require

the teachers to paraphrase, clarify, and explain literary works. The teachers also believed that the students are dependent on their ready-made interpretations.

2.1.3. Enhancing Learning with Visuals

According to Smaldinc (2012), one of the most common visuals that can be found in a classroom is pictures. Pictures are photographic representation of people, places and things. These pictures should be readily available on the Internet and in books, magazines and newspapers. Smaldinc (2012) also believes that visuals can serve a lot of purposes in a classroom. One of the functions of using visuals is to provide a concrete referent for ideas. In the classroom, a teacher uses visuals to help students remember the content taught more easily. Besides that, visuals can motivate learners to be engaged in their learning process. Visuals draw on learner's personal interest to make the learning instructions relevant.

The social effects of visual materials should also be considered when utilising the visual materials in class. According to Rose (2012), 'visual culture' is a concern for its social effects because the images visualise (or render invisible) the social differences. Critical approaches must be taken to understand how images can picture social power relations. Secondly, the writers on visual culture are always concerned with how the images are looked at, not how the images themselves look. It must be stressed that the ways of the audience perceive the images are different, because the audience will always relate the images to themselves. Thirdly, the embedded-ness of visual images in a wider culture should be emphasized. A particular historical visual is central to any images. The possibilities of the visual exclusion or inclusions of the members in the society is prominent when the notion of culture is slipped into the discussion.

Hence, it is vital to know the criteria for critical visual methodology. Rose (2012) stated that there are three criteria to visual culture. Firstly, the teachers need to take images seriously. Visuals should not be regarded as a mere add-on to the teaching process. Visual representations have their own effect on influencing the student's perception. Secondly, the teachers should consider the social conditions and effects of visual objects. Cultural practices like visual representations both depend on and produce social inclusions and exclusions. Critical account needs to be addressed to both the practices and the cultural meanings and effects. Thirdly, the teachers should consider their own way of looking at images. It is necessary to reflect on how the teacher as a critic look at visual images.

2.2. A Cognitive Approach to Literature Teaching

2.2.1. Input Hypothesis

The central idea of Krashen's view of second language acquisition (as cited in Gass & Mackey, 2013) is The Input Hypothesis. The Input Hypothesis claims that the humans acquire language in only one way, which is by understanding messages, or by receiving 'comprehensible input'. The 'comprehensible input' should contain grammatical structure that are just a bit advanced than the student's current level of second language development (denoted as $i + 1$, with i standing as input and $+1$ signifying that the challenging level is just a bit advanced than the student's current level of proficiency). For example, if a learner is at the stage 'i', then acquisition within the learner takes place when he/she is exposed to 'Comprehensible Input' that belongs to level 'i + 1'.

Krashen suggests that students are able to understand this challenging level of language input by using context, extralinguistic information such as gestures and pictures, and general background knowledge. 'Comprehensible Input' is the target language that the learner would not be able to produce but can still understand. It goes beyond the choice of words and involves presentation of

context, explanation, rewording of unclear parts, the use of visual cues and meaning negotiation. In other words, input can be made comprehensible as a result of these extra cues. Hence, language teachers should provide context via visual aids (pictures and objects) and even discussion of familiar topics. These visual aids can challenge the students to link the pictures to the words they need to learn. According to Krashen, grammatical structures do not need to be inserted deliberately. If input is understood and there is sufficient amount of it, $i + 1$ is automatically provided.

2.2.1. Affective Filter Hypothesis

Comprehensible input is essential for acquisition, but insufficient. Krashen's fifth hypothesis (as cited in Gass & Mackey, 2013) addresses affective or social-emotional factors that related to second language acquisition. Krashen concludes the most affective factor favouring second language acquisition are a low-anxiety learning environment, student's motivation to learn the language, self-confidence and self-esteem. In order for students to acquire the language, they need to be 'open' to the input. The 'affective filter' is a mental block that prevents students from fully understanding the comprehensible input they receive for language acquisition.

When the student is unmotivated, the filter will be high. This means that students may perceive the comprehensible input, but it will not be processed. This occurs when the student lacks confidence, is anxious or when he is being defensive, especially when he considers the language class to be threatening where his weaknesses will be revealed. But the filter becomes low when the student is not concerned of failing to acquire the language and considers himself to be a potential member of the group.

When the student is motivated, the filter is low, meaning the students can process the comprehensible input to learn the language. Hence, it is important for language teachers to allow students to undergo a silent period which allows the students to listen and understand the language, instead of forcing production by using rote drillings.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

In order to answer the listed research questions, a teacher action research design was crafted. The treatment that was employed in this research was the use of visual materials that correspond to the target vocabulary in the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade*. The independent variable was the use of visual materials, and the dependent variables were the post-test 1 and post-test 2 results. A pre-test was administered to determine the students' previous knowledge before the intervention was carried out. Samples were not provided with treatment of visual materials during cycle one. During cycle two, the samples are then provided with the treatments of visual materials. A questionnaire was distributed to the students to gain their opinions of the visual materials used. Two students were selected to be interviewed to gain their perceptions and insights on the visual materials used. Appropriate prompts were used to elicit responses from students based on the questionnaire.

Following the triangulation method of cross-checking data collected, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in effort to provide evidence of students' understandings and perceptions. ANOVA repeated measures was carried out to prove the reliability of the tests. Both cycles of post-tests results were aimed to prove students' understanding of the target vocabulary. On the other hand, the questionnaire and interviews were intended to gain students' insight on

usage of visual materials to learn vocabulary in literary work. The collected data would be analysed. The questionnaire result was tabulated using the Descriptive Statistics using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The questionnaire was explained using the median. Discussion of the analysed data will be coupled with literature review. Suggestions and conclusions will be based on the findings.

3.2. Research Sample

The participants were placed in non-probability sample groups based on which hour of the day the day they were present for the English classes, and whether or not they turned in a signed parent permission form. The singular sample group consisted of 39 students (n1=39). Students were present for all three lessons; hence their numbers did not fluctuate throughout the cycles. Samples were selected based on the criteria listed below:

Table 1. Criteria for sample selection

| Criteria | Description |
|------------------------|--|
| Age | 16-17 |
| Proficiency | Intermediate level |
| Economic background | Middle class |
| Educational background | 6 years in Primary school with 4 years in Secondary school |
| Parent permission form | Turned in |

3.3. Research Instrument

3.3.1. 7-Items Vocabulary Recognition Test

In all cycles, the same 7-items vocabulary recognition test was used to assess student's knowledge of the target vocabulary words:

- 1) brigade – a subdivision of army
- 2) league – three miles
- 3) blunder – dubious mistake
- 4) bold – confident and courageous
- 5) thundered – making a loud and deep resounding noise

The meanings of the word were dependent on the context of the poem.

The words were chosen due to their feasibility for use of visual materials, besides their presence in the literary work to be discussed.

3.3.2. Questionnaire

A questionnaire consisting of 10 questions was given to each student to be completed at the end of the cycles. Each of the questions enquired the students to place a tick in the box expressing their opinions in a Likert- Type items of Strongly Agree, Slightly Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire will gather information on students' perception concerning the usage of visual materials in the classroom.

3.3.3. Semi-Structured Interview

Two students were selected at random after the cycles. Verbal consents were acquired from the students as well as the school administrators before proceeding with the interviews. The questions asked pertained to the questions available in the questionnaire whereby the selected students can elaborate on their perceptions of the usage of visual materials. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

3.4. Procedure of data collection

Table 2. Timeline and overview of procedures for each cycle

| Time Line and Overview of Procedures for Each Cycle | | |
|---|--------------------------------|--|
| Lesson 1 | 10 minutes 20 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-test • Teaching of The Charge of Light Brigade without visual materials • Post-test 1 |
| Lesson 2 | 30 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed the poem • Using visual materials to explain the target vocabulary • Asked students comprehension questions related to the poem • Discussion of themes and moral values • Asked students personal questions using target vocabulary |
| Lesson 3 | 30 minutes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed the story and key terms using visual materials • Asked students to recite poem out aloud • Discussion of literary devices • Post-test 2 • Distributed questionnaires for students to fill in |
| Recess time | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interview |

3.5. Limitations of the Study

The research was limited to the final year students studying in a secondary school in Perak, Malaysia. The results of the research depend on the validity and reliability of the

3.6. Procedure of Data Analysis

The purpose of a pre-test was to establish a baseline for comparison of participants' prior knowledge of the target vocabulary. Post tests can be compared with the pre-test to detect any increments in student's performance.

ANOVA repeated measures is used to test the significance of the results. According to Lunds Research Ltd Online, Repeated-measures ANOVA compares the means of three or more matched groups. The term repeated- measures strictly applies only when treatments are given repeatedly to each subject, and the term randomized block is used when randomly assign treatments within each group (block) of matched subjects. In the end results, the P value will give more information on the significance of the test.

If the overall P value is large, the data do not give any reason to conclude that the means differ. Even if the true means were equal, it should not be surprising to find means this far apart just by chance. This is not the same as saying that the true means are the same. There is just no compelling evidence that they differ.

If the overall P value is small, then it is unlikely that the differences observed are due to random sampling. The idea that all the populations have identical means can be rejected. This doesn't mean that every mean differs from every other mean, only that at least one differs from the rest.

Besides that, the questionnaire was tabulated to reveal students' preference of the usage of visual materials in the classroom. Descriptive statistics as a feature in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) can give more information on the students' opinion regarding the stated questions in the questionnaire. SPSS was used to calculate the central tendency of each question. The median score used to explain the questionnaire results. The median score gives more information on the level of agreement of respondents with the questionnaire question. Due to the fact that the questions listed in the questionnaire were Likert-Type questions instead of Likert Scale questions (Boone, 2012), median was used to explain the results instead of mean.

To validate the data gathered from the questionnaire, a semi-structured interview was conducted with two students, after the last cycle of the action research. The questions posed in the interview reflected the items available in the construct of the questionnaire. The interviews will also reveal more insight on students' opinion of the visual materials usage in classroom to teach literature. Both results shall be converged with the interview analysis to get a better understanding of students' opinion on the discussed matter.

4. ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1. Respondents' Information

There were 39 respondents who took part in this action research. The participants were form 4 students from two intermediate classes in a secondary school in Ipoh, Perak. There were 14 male students and 25 female students selected to partake in the action research. They were all 16 years old. Their English proficiency level is intermediate. They came from a middle class economic background. All of them shared similar educational background, where they spent 6 years in primary school and at their fourth year in secondary school. All of them turned in the parent permission letter given prior to the action research.

Two students were selected at random to be interviewed on their experiences after the action research cycles ended. Their details are as listed below:

Table 3. Details of interviewees

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Student | S1 | S1 |
| Gender | Male | Female |
| Proficiency | Intermediate | Intermediate |
| Class | 4s2 | 4s2 |
| Age | 16 | 16 |
| Audio file length | 7:12 | 4:13 |

4.2. Results of Pre-test

Before the intervention method was introduced, a pre-test was administered to find out the students' prior knowledge. The table and graph below show the results:

Table 4. Results of Pre-Test

| Score | Number of student |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 7 (full marks) | 6 |
| 6 | 10 |
| 5 | 13 |
| 4 | 5 |
| 3 | 5 |

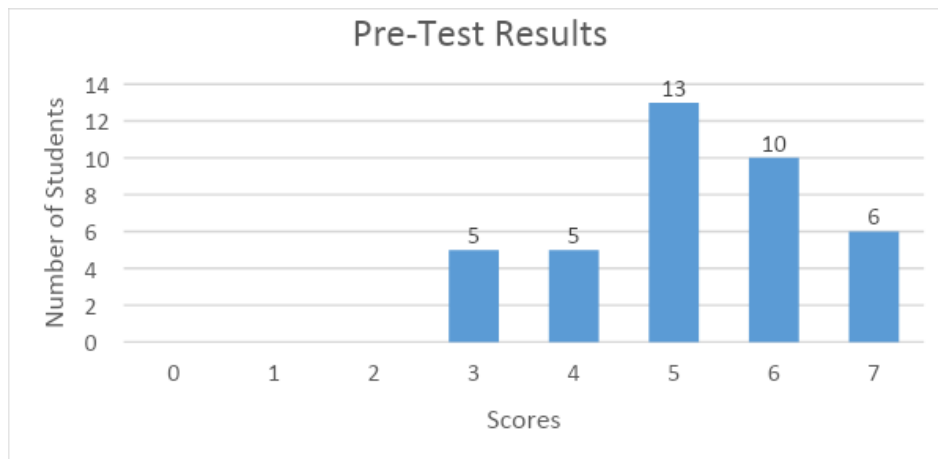


Figure 1. Results of Pre-Test

4.3. Results of First Cycle of Action Research

After the pre-test, the first cycle of the action research was carried out. The first round of action research consisted teaching of the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade* without the usage of the visual materials. The table and graph below show the results:

Table 5. Results of Post Test 1

| Score | Number of student |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 7 (full marks) | 17 |
| 6 | 11 |
| 5 | 9 |
| 4 | 2 |

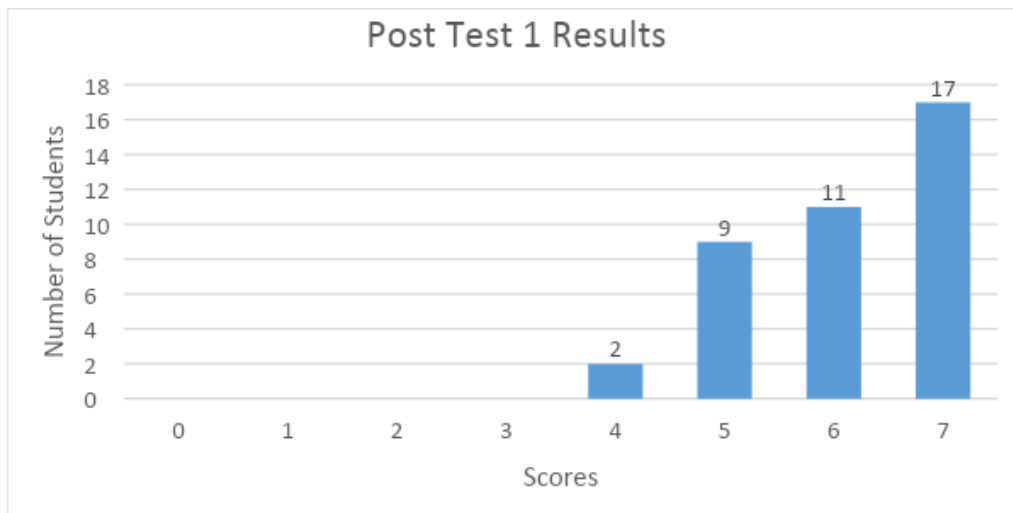


Figure 2. Results of Post Test 1

4.4. Results of Second Cycle of Action Research

After the first cycle of the action research, a second cycle of the action research was carried out. The second round of action research consisted teaching of the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade* with the usage of the visual materials. The table and graph below show the results:

Table 6. Results of Post Test 2

| Score | Number of student |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 7 (full marks) | 27 |
| 6 | 10 |
| 5 | 1 |
| 3 | 1 |

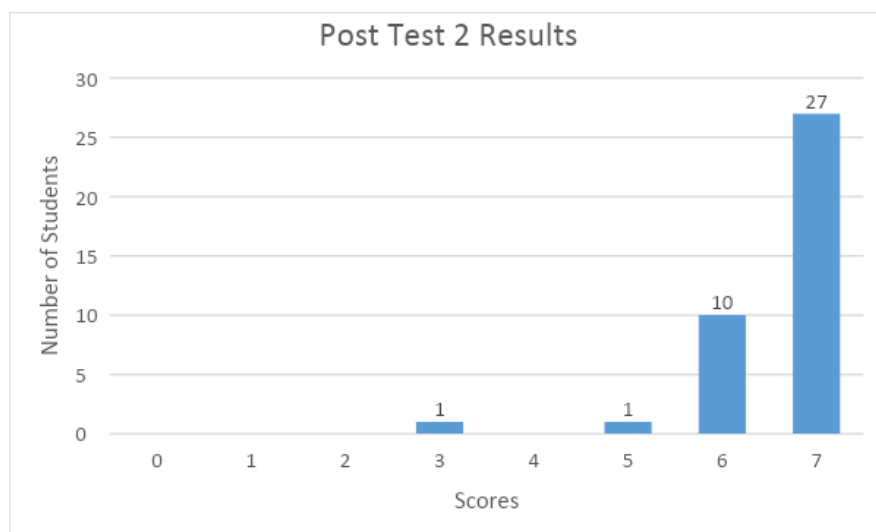


Figure 3. Results of Post Test 2

4.5. ANOVA Repeated Measures on Tests Results

The ANOVA repeated measures was carried out to ensure the reliability of the test results. The results of the ANOVA repeated measures is as below:

Table 7. ANOVA summary

| Source | SS | df | MS | F | P |
|-----------|----------|-----|--------|-------|---------|
| Treatment | 40.0171 | 2 | 20.009 | 87.82 | <0.0001 |
| Ss/Bl | 97.453 | 38 | | | |
| Error | 17.3162 | 76 | 0.228 | | |
| Total | 154.7863 | 116 | | | |

As Table 7 stated, the p-value is 0.0001, which is lower than 0.05. This means that the results is reliable and significant. It is unlikely that the differences observed are due to random sampling. The idea that all the populations have identical means is now rejected.

4.6. Questionnaire Results

A questionnaire was distributed to all the participants after the last cycle of the action research. They were asked to answer accordingly to the 5-point likert-type as provided in the questionnaire. The questionnaires were then collected and analysed using the descriptive analysis in SPSS. The results are as below:

Table 8. Questionnaire result

| Question items | Median |
|---|--------|
| 1 Learning the poem is fun with pictures displayed | 5 |
| 2 The pictures displayed attracts my attention to the poem | 4 |
| 3 The pictures displayed is colourful | 4 |
| 4 The pictures displayed is relevant to the poem | 4 |
| 5 I think learning poem with the use of pictures is a new experience | 4 |
| 6 The pictures help me to understand the poem better | 5 |
| 7 The pictures help me to understand the words in the poem better | 5 |
| 8 I can remember the word meanings better when I think of the pictures | 4 |
| 9 I prefer the teacher to use pictures in the next literature class | 5 |
| 10 I think learning poem using pictures is better, compared to without using it | 5 |

4.7. Interview Results

The interview results can be divided into two main themes, students' response towards the visual material and students' preference of learning literature using visual materials and students' knowledge.

4.7.1. Students' Response Towards the Visual Materials

Both students stated they were attracted to the visual materials used to teach the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade*.

Student A thought that it was fun to learn poem using pictures (S1 L8). The pictures displayed displayed the poem well and allowed him to understand the poem easily (S1 L9). He agreed that

the pictures attracted his attention to the poem (S1 L11). He thought that the pictures were fun, and displayed the message clearly (S1 L13).

Student B also thought that it was fun to learn poem using pictures (S2 L9). She thought that pictures were colourful (S2 L10).

4.7.2. Students' Preferences of Learning Literature using Visual Materials

Both students gave mixed responses when asked of their preferences of learning literature using visual materials.

Student A gave a negative feedback when asked, his preference of using pictures to learn the poem. He could understand the poem just by reading the notes himself (S1 L20). He thought that the pictures did not help with his learning of the poem (S1 L21). He did not prefer the usage of pictures to learn the poem (S1 L23).

On the other hand, student B preferred to rely on pictures to learn the poem (S2 L21). But she stated that the method should not be used too often (S2 L21). She stated it would become boring for her (S2 L22). She thought that using pictures to teach poem is better than without pictures (S2 L25).

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Discussion on the First Research Question

Pertaining to the first research question, it is plausible that the usage of visual materials was very effective in helping students to understand the vocabulary in the literary text.

Table 9. Comparative analysis of Pre-test, Post-test 1 and Post-test 2

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|-------------|----|------|----------------|
| Pre-test | 38 | 5.18 | 1.22 |
| Post-test 1 | 38 | 5.37 | 0.93 |
| Post-test 2 | 38 | 6.62 | 0.58 |

From Table 9, it is obvious that there is an increment from the Post-test 1. The mean of Post-test 1 increased from 5.37 to 6.62 in Post-test 2. This means that teaching literature, the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade* is more effective using the visual materials, which are the photos embedded in the PowerPoint presentation, as compared to teaching it without usage of visuals.

The results of Pre-test (which serves as a benchmark of students' previous knowledge) were rather high at 5.18 because the students were already introduced to this poem before the teacher's intervention. The teacher's action research was conducted before the exams as a revision to them.

In Post Test 2, there was a student who scored only 3 marks. This could probably be due to insufficient time allocated for the students to answer all 7 questions. This is because the particular student answered incorrectly for the last four questions. It is speculated that the student rushed while answering, causing him to answer incorrectly.

The data shows that the intervention was successful. By Post-test 2, the mean was the highest recorded (6.62) as compared to Pre-test (5.18) and Post-Test 1 (5.37). This proves that the visual material was very effective in helping students understanding the vocabulary in the literary text.

There could be many reasons contributing to the intervention being successful. Firstly, the students found the learning poem with pictures was fun. Hence, according to Krashen's Affective Filter Theory, the students' affective filter could be lowered when the teacher introduced pictures to the students while she was teaching the poem. They felt less threatened, hence they were able absorb all the information that were taught in class.

Besides that, according to Krashen's Input Hypothesis, the pictures served as comprehensible input ($i + 1$) to the students. By relating the word to the picture, the students can understand the target vocabulary better. In relevance to the Image Schema Theory, the picture serves as image schema to help them understand and remember the words better. They fall back to the picture to comprehend and memorize the words.

5.2. Discussion on the Second Research Question

In accordance to the second research question, it has been proven that most students gave extreme positive feedback when exposed to the learning of literature with visual materials.

The medians for 10 questions in the questionnaire were either 4 or 5, meaning that all participants agreed or strongly agreed with all the statements. This means that all the students were supportive of using visual materials to learn the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade*. As Tomlinson has noted, attractive presentation and novelty are crucial elements to developing materials for classroom usage, the use of visuals in the literature class was a success. Learning with pictures was fun and the pictures actually attracted their attention to the poem. The pictures helped them to understand the poem better, and helped them to remember the word meanings better.

However, it is worthy to note that pictures do not work miracle all the time. Student A gave a negative feedback when asked, his preference of using pictures to learn the poem. Student A is an independent learner that did not need to rely on the use of visual materials (S1 L20). He could understand the poem just by reading the notes himself (S1 L20). He thought that the pictures did not help with his learning of the poem (S1 L21). He did not prefer the usage of pictures to learn the poem (S1 L23). The different learning styles of a class of students should be taken note of when developing materials for classroom use, just as Tomlinson as noted. Student B also noted that pictures should not be used all the time (S2 L21) as she figured that it might become boring for her (S2 L22). This is entirely true because constant use of pictures would become a routine and bore the students. Teachers need to learn to alternate between different types of visual materials to make the literature learning experience more interesting.

5.3. Implication of the Research

Based on the analysed data, the teacher will apply visuals to teach in her future classes, preferable pictures or videos. This is because students reaped obvious benefits from learning using visuals. As the Post-test 2 results suggested, almost two third of the class scored full marks after learning the poem with the usage of photos. The questionnaire results also reflected that the students were attracted to the poem due to the usage of pictures, and the pictures helped them to understand the poem better and even enhanced their memories of the poem.

Her next steps will be using songs or videos as a teaching material in class. This is because both students reflected that they would prefer teaching styles that did not limit to pictures or photos only.

As an action researcher, she learnt that she should be vigilant of her students' learning process. She did not understand the reasons students were unable to comprehend the literature taught. It took a while for her to figure out that they might prefer visuals more than word base teaching.

The results of this research has impacted her teaching in many ways. She realised she should include visuals into the presentation stage of her teaching practice. The visuals should not limit to pictures only, but songs and videos as well.

She has definitely conducted her classroom teachings differently from then onwards. She has fully utilised visuals in her teaching practices, not only in presentation stage, but expanded it to practice or even production stage.

She recommended to other student teachers or teachers to include visual materials into their teachings. This is because it is a clear benefit to teach using visuals. But, not all students might find visuals interesting, so she will advise them to proceed with caution, finding out the kind of multiple intelligences their students are before proceeding with using visuals in classroom teaching.

5.4. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The teacher should not continue her action research using the same procedures. The current action research did not consist of many cycles because of inevitable reasons such as school closing down due to haze and rescheduling of exams. In addition, the poem *The Charge of Light Brigade* was taught before, so it has actually affected her data slightly when students were able to answer full marks for the pre-test.

She should revise her action research by adding more research cycles. She should also change the research topic to a foreign topic that was not taught in class before, during her practicum.

The current data contributes to the field of material development tremendously, as the Ministry of Education can use the data to come up with appropriate pictures to be included into the literature text books. Text books with literary text only is bland, hence pictures or even audios or videos can be incorporated into the lesson to help the students to learn literature better, eventually grasping the English language better. It is the ministry's utmost goal to produce students that can use the language well when they turn into adults.

Students as the stakeholders benefits the most from this research study. This is because a visual learning experience is drawn for their sake. Instead of relying on texts only, they can fall back to pictures, audios or videos to learn literature better. These visual materials can help them to appreciate the literary text more, and inculcate their spiritual and emotional growth better. When the students are able to grow holistically, they can contribute to their family, organisation and country better as they venture into the working field.

5.5. Future Extension of Current Work

Amidst the pandemic of Covid-19, it is pertinent that the teacher is able to partake this valuable research result to be fully utilised in the online teaching and learning. The listed topics are a few areas for future research.

- What is the efficacy of using visual materials in online teaching and learning of literature?
- What additional tools can be used to fully utilise the visual materials in online teaching and learning of literature?
- How can an online literature lesson be incorporated with visual materials?
- How does use of visual materials in online teaching and learning of literature affect students' responses towards the learning?

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