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The Application of Teaching Aids and School Supportive Factors in Learning Reading Skill among the Remedial Students in Under Enrolment Schools

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Abstract

An important aspect in learning a language is the ability to read and understand what is read. Thus, this study will examine the use of teaching aids and the supportive factors in learning to read among remedial students in under enrolment school. The study showed that the teachers’ perception on the use of teaching aids and the effectiveness of supportive factors can help to attract students with the overall mean score of 3.29 (SD = .57). They agree that teaching aids help their teaching with the mean score of 3:56, (SD = .53). With the overall mean score of 2:43, (SD = 78) it shows that the administration and the supportive factors assist in enhancing the performance of reading skills. In conclusion, teaching aids will give a very positive impact in increasing the students’ ability to read.

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1. Introductions

Mastery of reading and understanding the text in a language is very important to enable a person to gain knowledge from various sources. Reading to understand and remember a lot of material is a major

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challenge to the students. In fact, one important aspect in learning a language is the ability to read and understand what is read. A student will not be able to master both reading skills and understanding the text easily. Reading skills and understand what is read from the text, is not only important in the Malay Language but in other subjects as well. Therefore, the aspect of reading and understanding text should be emphasized seriously, especially in teaching and learning of Malay Language. Although the Malay language is the medium in the education system in this country, there are students in primary and secondary schools that could not read or could not read efficiently with correct and clear pronunciation or do not understand what they have read. The question about the declining performance of students in the Malay language became an issue among various parties, especially among teachers, parents and researchers of the development and progress of Malay language. Education is an important in this challenging world. Therefore, all parties should cooperate to ensure the attainment of the National Education Philosophy. They must play their role in looking at the success of students, especially students in the remedial class. The use of teaching aids in teaching and learning process is very important. This is because it will assist effective learning for students, particularly for remedial students. Teaching aids also facilitate the students to understand the lessons presented by teachers (Razhiyah, 2006). This opinion also agreed with the statement of teaching and learning aspects of the Malay language should use contemporary approaches and methods (Akma, 2006). However, teachers also need to be familiar with the use of teaching aids that could attract the attention of students. In the meantime, the success of a pupil also depends on the climate or environment and facilities available in schools. According to Yahya Othman (2005), research proves that students in schools with warm and conducive environment have high achievement compared to students in schools with less cheerful and conducive environment.

1.1. Research objective

General research objectives of analyzing the use of teaching aids and supporting the school factors in learning to read among remedial pupils of under enrolment schools. The specific objectives of the study were to:
- Identify the effectiveness of the teaching aids in the remedial classes in an effort to attract students in learning to read; and
- Identify school climate factors in reading achievement among remedial students.

1.2. Research questions

To explain the objectives of the study, the question of this study established that:
- How effective is the use of teaching aids helps teachers to attract pupils in the process of learning and reading among remedial students?
- Do the school climate factors affect the reading achievement of remedial students?

1.3. Statement of Problem

According Mahamod Zamri (2001), the achievement of pupils in public examinations for the Malay language paper shows many weaknesses and there are candidates who failed and did not reach the level of distinction. Pupils normally made mistakes in spelling, grammar, sentence construction, maturity of ideas and presentation of ideas. This happens due to lack of knowledge on current issues and poor grammar skills. This vulnerability occurs due to lack of reading interest among the pupils. In addition, the tendency to read is influenced by many factors such as environment, schools, the role of parents and the existence of reading materials and libraries. Results of a study conducted by Kid and Greene (2002) in Yahya
Othman (2008) stated that adult readers are also facing problems in terms of reading fluency, vocabulary, word analysis, phonemic awareness and understanding. In addition, the unconcerned attitude with the continuity of the process of reading is also accounted for reading problems among students. In the learning process, the ability of students to obtain an information need to be assisted by the use of teaching aids. According to Abdul Rasid Jamian and Arbaie Sujud (2001), the use of media in teaching students accelerates the process of understanding. In addition, the teaching aids also help students to understand better. Therefore, teachers need to use various resources to teach reading skills among remedial students. The failure of teachers to use the teaching aids will result in deterioration of students’ achievement. This is identified by Abdul Rasid Jamian and Yahya Othman (2006), the use of teaching aids in the teaching of Malay language greatly influences the use of grammar. On the whole the teachers also felt that the use of appropriate teaching aids can increase student motivation in the Malay language. Consequently, school climate and administrator of schools affect the performance of the pupils to some extent. There are studies that show the school climate affects students’ performance. Benard (1995) states that school climate have an element of caring and support, high expectations and opportunities to engage in activities at school can enrich the perseverance and strength. According to Suffean (1996), positive teacher expectations of students will produce a positive result and vice versa. Thus, teachers and school administration should provide adequate infrastructure and have positive attitude to ensure the remedial students' success.

In conclusion, everyone should cooperate in ensuring the success of remedial students to compete with the mainstream students. In this case, the teacher has a big role in ensuring that teaching and learning takes place effectively. Therefore, teachers should prepare themselves with sufficient pedagogical knowledge to face the current challenges. Teachers also need to be more creative and innovative in delivering instruction. The school management is equally important in ensuring the success of these remedial students. The nature of remedial students who need more love and a conducive learning environment should be taken into account by the school management.

2. Research Methodology

This research is a study in the form of survey or a descriptive study which mainly used a questionnaire. According to Mohd Majid Konting (2005), descriptive studies are studies that seek to explain a situation. The aspects to be studied is the background of the teachers’ gender, race, age, highest academic qualification, approval of the professional, specialization, and the remedial teaching experience, teachers' perception of the teaching aids, the facilities available in schools and school administration and service, problems in teaching reading skills of Year Two remedial pupils.

Questionnaires were given to teachers who teach Malay language for remedial pupils in under enrolment schools. A total of 300 schools were identified at random. But 242 completed questionnaires were returned. Accordingly, 242 respondents who are teaching Year 2 in under enrolment school (Perak, Johor, Pahang, Kedah, Sabah and Sarawak) have returned completed questionnaires. Researchers used a questionnaire that is divided into two parts; the items are about teaching aids and their respective items, the facilities and problems of school administration and service. These items have no right or wrong answer because the assessment is only seen by the degree of agreement on the items presented on four point Likert scale. 1. Strongly Disagree (SD), 2. Disagree (D), 3. Agree (A), 4. Strongly Agree (SA). For this study, the data obtained is analyzed by using the 'Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 14.0. To describe the information or data obtained, the analysis used is the frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation to see the relevant aspects. Researchers also submit questions to interview students about their views on the use of teaching aids in learning. This is consistent with Patton (2002) who states that the researchers would receive from the interview something that cannot be observed directly, such as feelings, thoughts and tendencies. Denzin (2001) in Piaw (2006) who states that an
interview should be more than just used as a tool for information gathering, it must be reflective and can reflect real life conditions of a phenomenon. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003) method of descriptive data collection through interviews is the most common especially in studies involving the perception of samples. Consequently, researchers do an interview to the pupils for more detailed information within a short time.

3. Findings

3.1. Respondent Demographics

The findings of this study include demographics of the respondents, the effective use of teaching aids and school climate factors to the achievement of remedial students. The sample data by state and gender, out of 242 respondents, 78 are male and 164 female teachers from six states namely Sabah, Sarawak, Johor, Kedah, Pahang and Perak. Sabah with 15 respondents, comprising of 10 male and 5 female teachers. Sarawak with 104 respondents consisting of 35 male and 69 female teachers. Next, a total of 21 respondents, comprising of 8 male and 13 female teachers for the state of Johor. While Kedah with 23 respondents, composed of 5 male and 18 female teachers. For Pahang, the total of 9 male and 18 female teachers, involving 27 teachers. The state of Perak, a total of 52 respondents, comprising of 11 male and 41 female. Based racial categories are divided into three major groups namely Malay, Chinese and Indians. Majority of the respondents in this study are Malay with a total of 106 people (43.8%). While the Chinese 56 people (23.1%). For the Indians 31 people (12.8%). Next, other races are 49 people (20.2%). Other races include Iban, Kadazan, Kenyah, Dusun, Kadazan-Dusun, Dayak, and others. About the findings of academic qualification, on the whole it is seen that the majority of respondents have a degree / Bachelor, 193 people (80.1%). While for respondents with SPM / MCE were a total of 28 people (11.6%). For of STPM / STP / HSC, there are 13 people (5.4%). Only seven people (2.9%) are at master level. While the respondents’ professional qualification, a total of 125 people (53.9%) have the KPLI/DPLI qualification. Respondent with KDC qualification with the total of 49 people (21.1%). Teaching Diploma consisted of 42 people (18.1%) and respondents with a Certificate of Malaysian Teaching, 16 people (6.9%).

About the respondent’s specialization, there were 16 fractions of specialization shown by the findings of the study. The majority of remedial teachers have the option of Special Remedial with the total of 138 (57.0%). Malay Language Specialization is the second highest with a total of 50 people (20.7%). Majoring in Chinese language, 13 people (5.37%). Tamil language, 8 (3.31%). Specialized in Mathematics, 7 (2.89%). Chinese studies, six people (2.47%) and Tamil Studies, 5 people (2.06%).

Finally the teaching experience of respondents. Respondents who have less than a year teaching experience in special remedial classes was 37 people (15.4%). Next, respondents who have experience teaching special remedial students 1 to 2 years with the total of 65 people (27.0%). Most of the respondents in this study have 3 to 5 years experience with a total of 131 people (54.4%). Not many respondents have taught more than five years, that is 8 (3.3%).
3.2. Effectiveness of the use of teaching aids to help teachers in remedial student teaching-learning process

The use of teaching aids in the teaching and learning can give a good impact on pupils. Indeed, the use of teaching aids in the process of teaching-learning cannot be denied that its use can result in effective learning and able to attract students to pursue activities in the classroom. Table 8 below shows the teachers' perception of the effectiveness of teaching aid materials.

Table 1: Use of Teaching Aids in Remedial Students Teaching-Learning Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers prepare teaching aid before teaching and learning to read started</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers use many visual aids to teach students to avoid getting bored</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers create teaching aids based on student ability</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers use audio-visual equipment to attract students in reading</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graded readers are used to select pupils who are weak</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching aid helped teachers' teaching process</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows respondents' perception on the effectiveness of teaching aid usage that can help teachers to attract students in the learning process of reading remedial students. The findings show the overall mean score of 3.29, (SD = .57). This clearly shows that use of teaching aids gives a relatively high impact in improving student achievement, particularly in reading remedial. Results from the analysis of information related to the use of teaching aids, the teachers agreed a lot of visual aids help the process of teaching. Almost all respondents agreed with this statement. The mean score is 3.56, (SD = 0.53). While the expression of graded readers are suitable to select students who are weak has the mean score of 3.40, (SD = .56). In addition, teachers who prepared teaching aid before teaching and learning of reading started has the mean score, 3.28, (SD = .51). For the expression of many teachers use teaching aids to prevent students getting bored has the mean score of 3.21,(SD = .58). Next, the expression of teachers create teaching aids based on the ability of students obtaining the mean score 3.11, (SD = .62). Researchers also conducted interviews with students to identify their learning situations when teachers used teaching aids in teaching-learning process. The findings found that the type of teaching aids frequently used by teachers. (Refer Table 1).

Table 2: Types of Teaching Aids

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Type Of Teaching Aids</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Word Cards</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>85.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Picture Books</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sentence Cards</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The study showed that most teachers use the word cards (93.8%) in the teaching of reading skills among the remedial students. This is followed by pictures (85.9%), picture books (75.0%), sentence cards (71.9%) and computers (56.3%). Few teachers use transparency, (3.1%). Researchers also found that students agree that the teaching aids allow them to see pictures and easy to understand. This is because they are happier when teachers use visual aids when they learn reading skills. (Refer Table 2).

3.3. School Climate Factors Affect Remedial Student Reading Achievement

To produce students who excel in academics, do not depend totally on the teachers. In fact, environmental factors also influence the educational performance of students, especially students in the remedial class. Environmental factors may also be known as the climate and the factors including facilities in a school.

Table 3: Teacher Perceptions on School Facilities and Services and Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remedial classes are too small, crowded and not according to the standard</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers often lack the appropriate teaching aids</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading materials are not enough</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and Communication Technology Equipment are not provided</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate provision for the remedial program's expenses</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload is too much given by the school</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not enough guidance and support from school administrators</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always instructed to solve a variety of non-teaching job</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often asked to become a teacher substitute for teachers who attended course or on holiday</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School administrator are not concerned about the remedial class at school</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 above shows the results of analysis of data related to school facilities and services and school administration that contributed to the achievement of remedial students. The findings indicate that the overall mean score of 2.43, (SD = .78). This indicates that the facility and the school administration contribute in improving the achievement of reading skill among remedial students in particular. Results from the analysis found that the majority of respondents agreed that there is not enough provision to finance the remedial program by obtaining the mean score 3.04, (SD = .81). The teachers said that they disagreed with the statement about teachers often lack the appropriate teaching aids which obtain the mean score of 2.85, (SD = .85). In addition, respondents also do not quite agree that there are not enough reading materials with the mean score of 2.73, (SD = .86). Respondents also do not quite agree that the remedial class is too small, crowded and not in accordance with the standard, mean score 2.66, (SD = 1.0). However, some respondents disagree with the statement about too much work load is given by the school, mean score 2.40, (SD = .74). Most respondents also disagreed with the statement remedial teachers are directed to solve a variety of non-teaching job with the mean score of 2.23, (SD = .66). They also disagreed with the statement they do not have enough guidance and support from school administrators with the mean score 2.19, (SD = .63). They also disagreed with the statement of Information and Communication Technology equipment are not supplied by acquiring the mean score
2.04, (SD = .87). Finally, majority of them disagreed that the administrators do not care about remedial classes in schools with a mean score of 1.93, (SD = .68).

4. Study Justification

This study has some interest or justification in ensuring remedial students’ learning is not compromised. Among the justifications that can be obtained as a result of this study is that we can know the real problems in reading skills among the remedial students. As known, the basic reading skills are very important in our daily life. Thus, if basic skills are not given more emphasized, it is to some extent can hinder the efforts of the government in ensuring the reduction of illiteracy rates among Malaysians. In the meantime, these findings could also know about the perception of teachers on the use of teaching aids. Teaching basic skills to read should be given particular emphasis to remedial students to master it. Therefore, the diversity of teaching aid is very important as learning to read is sometimes considered boring by some students. Therefore, remedial teachers need to prepare themselves particularly in ensuring effective learning takes place. In other words, teachers need to be more creative in ensuring that pupils are not bored during the process teaching-learning.

In addition, these findings could also know the perception of the school supportive factors in the remedial students learning process. This is important because all the facilities and infrastructure for the remedial class must be provided by the school management. Therefore, the results of this study can prove that the supportive factors are also very important. This is because the support from the school could have an impact on learning basic skills in reading for remedial students.

5. Proposal

Hence, some suggestions should be given emphasis in improving the performance of teaching-learning of reading among remedial students. Remedial students should be taught through more attractive approach with varied teaching aids. Use materials that could attract the attention of students. To further enhance the performance of remedial students, remedial teachers need to upgrade their teaching patterns comparable to the current world. Remedial teachers, especially the Malay language is to be more creative and innovative in providing the best to their students. This is because the Malay language is often associated with tedious subjects that bored pupils and sometimes considered difficult by some students. In addition, management and school administrators also play an important role in ensuring that teachers deliver a quality service to students. The management and administrators also need to support the teachers to ensure that teachers will transform their teaching into a better direction. In this case, the management and administrators need to hold more pedagogical courses at the school level by inviting outside speakers to impart the latest pedagogy to teachers. In addition, the management and school administrators also need to ensure that the infrastructure for remedial classes is adequate and in good condition. Good and sufficient infrastructure can help in the success of this remedial program. Ongoing efforts given by all everyone will provide a positive impact on remedial student learning.

6. Conclusion

The study showed that teaching aids usage has relatively high impact in improving remedial student achievement, particularly in reading skill. Almost all respondents acknowledged that teaching aids help the teaching process. This shows that teaching aids is an important element in ensuring that teaching and learning takes place effectively. As discussed at the beginning of this writing, teaching aids is potential to produce meaningful learning. This means that, every teacher especially remedial teachers, in particular,
need to ensure the maximum use of the teaching aids during teaching and learning process. Teaching aids usage enable learning to be meaningful and even get rid of boredom and tiredness of the student, particularly students in the remedial class. In an effort to strengthen the teaching of basic reading skills, teachers should be competent and capable in providing a more effective teaching by using a technique or a more creative approach. In addition, remedial teachers need to be more committed to impart knowledge to students. However, efforts to reinforce the reading skills of remedial students must be accompanied by strong support by the school administration. This is because the complete infrastructure and facilities must be provided by the school administration. Therefore, the administration should be more sensitive in ensuring that all requirements and equipment are adequate in remedial classes.

Therefore, strong efforts of the teachers and the support of the administration could increase the excellence of students in basic skills reading remedial. Both parties need to nourish the mobilization of energy for this remedial program towards meaningful learning.

Reference


