TESL pre-service teachers' perceptions on the use of Jazz chants in primary ESL classroom

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Abstract

Learning vocabulary is an essential aspect of mastering English language. In Malaysia, English as a second language (ESL) learners often struggle with memorizing vocabulary, which hinders their language acquisition. Since vocabulary grasp is a pre-requisite for language learning, Jazz chants can be an effective tool for ESL learners to learn vocabulary in the target language. This study used a survey approach to investigate the TESL pre-service teachers' perceptions on the use of Jazz chants in primary ESL classrooms. A total of 203 TESL pre-service teachers from five Institutes of Teacher Education (ITEs) participated in the study, responding to a questionnaire on the use of Jazz chants to enhance vocabulary learning. The findings indicated that the majority of respondents provided positive feedback and had knowledge of Jazz chants, and they utilized it frequently in teaching vocabulary. Additionally, the researcher found out that there is a weak positive correlation between these two attributes.

I. INTRODUCTION

English remains important in Malaysia as it is considered the second language after Malay Language and above other local languages. Malaysian students are introduced to English from their early years of education. The instruction of English as a second language is crucial in molding future generations as English has become a prominent language for communication worldwide. Therefore, vocabulary learning is a crucial aspect of English language teaching. Sanusi (2009) argued that learners cannot communicate effectively without possessing sufficient vocabulary in the targeted language.

English is taught as a second language in Malaysia from the pre-school stage, and vocabulary is considered to be an essential component of language competence. Vocabulary learning plays a crucial role in developing language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As Kunnu et al. (2016) mentioned, having a strong vocabulary allows learners to comprehend spoken and written language effectively, communicate ideas accurately, and express themselves confidently. Without a rich vocabulary, learners may struggle to understand the meaning of words, express their thoughts, and interact with others. Bakhsh (2016) also highlighted the significance of vocabulary in language learning, stating that a sound understanding of vocabulary is essential for learners to acquire communicative competence in the target language. Moreover, a lack of vocabulary knowledge can impede learners' progress and hinder their ability to comprehend and produce language effectively. Marshall and Hobsbaum (2015) added that young learners who lack a sufficient vocabulary may face difficulties expressing their thoughts and ideas, which may affect their social interactions and academic performance. Therefore, it is crucial for educators to prioritize vocabulary instruction in language learning programs to ensure learners acquire a rich and varied vocabulary.

To encourage young learners in their language acquisition, English language (EL) teachers should employ techniques that do not burden them. One effective method is the use of appropriate chants, such as Jazz chants, to help their students learn new vocabulary. Jazz chants are a form of rhythmic language presentation that links the rhythms of spoken American English to those of classic American jazz (Graham, 2006). Mustafa (2011) demonstrated that people recall music effortlessly and get stuck

when they try to say the lyrics with their everyday speaking intonation. Jazz chants work by allowing learners to sing the rhythm in their minds and remember the lyrics. Therefore, Singh and Hashim (2020) suggested that incorporating Jazz chants in lessons can help young learners improve and practice their English vocabulary easily. Based on this background, the researcher plans to conduct a survey on the TESL pre-service teachers' perceptions on the use of Jazz chants in primary ESL classroom.

Problem Statement

According to Hussaini et al. (2016), learning English vocabulary has always been a challenging skill for young learners, primarily due to their approach, which involves memorization but a lack of practice. For example, EL teachers may instruct them to memorize new vocabulary by reading it repeatedly. However, Laufer and Shmueli (1997) noted that young learners may initially remember their new language efficiently. Still, once they move on to the next new word, they may forget the previous one, regardless of how well it was explained. Additionally, they add that young learners may become frustrated when attempting to memorize words by inferring their meanings from context, as this method does not result in long-term retention.

Young learners in Malaysia commonly face the issue of being unable to memorize target vocabulary, which is crucial for language acquisition, as stated by Yang and Dai (2012). Rahimi and Sahragard (2008) also pointed out that Malaysian young learners frequently struggle to retain new phrases. Furthermore, Tham (2012) found that most young learners encounter difficulties in acquiring and recalling vocabulary, which hinders their ability to read, write, listen, and speak the language. To address this issue, Rahimi and Sahragard (2008) suggested that young learners should practice using the language both inside and outside the classroom. Due to the difficulty of learning vocabulary, young learners may lack interest in acquiring it, according to Tham (2012). Therefore, it is the responsibility of EL teachers to motivate young learners to acquire vocabulary in English. However, this task is challenging because English has a vast vocabulary, making it impossible to teach all words.

Research Objectives

The research objectives are as follows:
1. to determine the level of TESL pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge of using Jazz chants in the primary ESL classroom.
2. to determine the frequency of TESL pre-service teachers' use of Jazz chants in the primary ESL classroom.
3. to investigate the relationship between TESL pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge on the use of Jazz chants and their frequency of using them in the primary ESL classroom.

Research Questions

The research objectives are as follows:
1. What is the level of TESL pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge of using Jazz chants in the primary ESL classroom?
2. What is the frequency of TESL pre-service teachers' use of Jazz chants in the primary ESL classroom?
3. What is the relationship between TESL pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge on the use of Jazz chants and their frequency of using them in the primary ESL classroom?

Literature Review

In this section, the researcher explained the theories underpinned the study. She also reviewed related studies pertaining to the use of Jazz chants in the English language teaching and learning process.

Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences includes musical intelligence as one of its eight types. Gardner's (2011) explanation of musical intelligence is the ability of a person to recognize and analyze various elements of sound, such as rhythm, sound patterns, and connections between different

sounds. Additionally, this type of intelligence encompasses the capacity to understand and interpret auditory information like rhymes.

Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences suggests that individuals with musical intelligence tend to enjoy activities related to music, such as performing, singing in a choir, playing in an orchestra, or creating songs or poems. These learners have an appreciation for various types of music and can process sound, rhythm, patterns, connections between sounds, and auditory information like rhymes. They often display musical behaviors like humming or clapping. As a result, Jazz chants with a rhythmic presentation are well-suited for primary ESL classrooms as the pupils enjoy interactive and engaging vocabulary learning. Jazz chants can help young learners understand and visualize the content better (Saricoban & Metin, 2000). To make vocabulary learning more interesting, teachers can incorporate natural music too.

Certain rhythms can stimulate the production of enzymes in the brain, leading to a sense of well-being, improved focus, reduced stress, increased empathy and love, and enhanced productivity during vocabulary learning. Incorporating music into daily classroom activities can benefit students who are sensitive to sound, as the brain is able to function at a higher level of abstraction, analysis, and synthesis when producing sounds, including the voice. Schellenberg (2006) indicated that music has a positive impact on a variety of cognitive activities, including language memory. Jazz chants are particularly effective for vocabulary retention due to their natural rhythm, stress, and intonation patterns that mimic regular spoken English. According to Graham (2006), English Language (EL) learners can easily create and practice vocabulary using Jazz chants with a formula, especially when familiar elements such as animals and food are incorporated by the teacher.

Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen's (1982) theory of the Affective Filter Hypothesis suggests that the process of acquiring a second language is influenced by emotional factors. This theory suggests that individuals have different levels of affective filters, which can affect their ability to acquire language. Krashen identified three affective variables that impact language acquisition: self-confidence, motivation, and anxiety. According to Myles and Mitchell (2014), learners with high affective filters may struggle with language acquisition, while those with low affective filters are likely to have high self-confidence, motivation, and low anxiety, which facilitates language acquisition. Engh (2013) found that the use of music in the ESL classroom can help decrease affective barriers and calm students, making them more receptive to language acquisition. Motivation, which is one of the variables in the Affective Filter Hypothesis, is strongly related to interest. When learners are motivated to be in the classroom, their interest in learning vocabulary is likely to be high. Using Jazz chants effectively during teaching and learning process can possibly help reduce learners' affective filters and improve their ability to acquire the language. Overall, the Affective Filter Hypothesis highlights the important role that emotional factors play in second language acquisition, and suggests that reducing affective barriers can facilitate language learning.

Related Studies

Letchumanan and Tan (2012) suggested the use of different methods to cultivate interest in ESL learners and expand their vocabulary efficiently. Singh and Hashim conducted a study titled "Using Jazz Chants to Increase Vocabulary Power among ESL Young Learners" in 2020. The study involved 30 low proficiency level young learners at a primary school in Malaysia. The research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using Jazz chants to teach English vocabulary. Results showed that all young learners showed improvement in the post-test after being taught vocabulary through Jazz chants. The study found that integrating music and Jazz chants can lead to successful English learning results, especially for low performing pupils.

In addition, Peralta (2010) conducted a study titled "The Use of Jazz Chants for Children in the Teaching-learning Process of English" with the aim of enhancing communication and listening skills and integrating language concepts. The study included information on Jazz chants and the

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, both of which emphasize the importance of communicative teaching and learning. The study involved three phases, in which Jazz chants were introduced to seventh-grade students at Santiago de Compostela Elementary School: presentation, practice, and production. The findings indicated that Jazz chants were highly effective in supporting English language learning, as seen in the production stage where students successfully engaged in a role-play of The Little Red Hen. Using Jazz chants as scripts learned in the presentation and practice stages, students were able to communicate and participate actively in the role-play. The teacher who collaborated with the researcher also offered a positive perspective on the approach, finding it to be an innovative strategy that not only helped students acquire vocabulary but also made classroom activities enjoyable. Peralta concluded that Jazz chants can significantly improve students' speaking and listening abilities while strengthening grammar structures in everyday contexts.

As vocabulary is considered the fundamental aspect of language learning, teachers should prioritize assessing their pupils' vocabulary level. Bancroft (1985) suggested that EL teachers should use Jazz chants to improve the outcomes of English language learning among young learners. This indicates that regular Jazz chants activities can aid young learners in expanding their vocabulary and boosting their motivation in the learning process (Artini & Padmadewi, 2019). Since TESL pre-service teachers are future English teachers who are currently undergoing training, their attitudes toward the use of Jazz chants in teaching English can provide valuable insights into the topic. The findings of this study may assist stakeholders in implementing appropriate measures to ensure that TESL pre-service teachers receive sufficient exposure to theories, models, pedagogies, and other teaching strategies that can be applied in their future teaching practices, especially in the use of Jazz chants in primary ESL classroom.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

In this section, the researcher provide details on the research design as well as the sampling involved in the study. She also discussed the research instruments and procedures used in this study.

Research Design
A survey design was selected for this study as it was considered appropriate for collecting information from a large number of respondents. According to Avedian (2014), surveys are an effective means of obtaining information about a population's attitudes, actions, beliefs, and views that cannot be directly observed. By using this design, the researcher would be able to address the research questions formulated for the study.

Sampling
The total number of TESL pre-service teachers of June 2018 intake in the five ITEs namely, ITE Batu Lintang Campus, ITE Dato Razali Ismail Campus, ITE Gaya Campus, ITE Ipoh Campus, and ITE International Language Campus was 427. This group of TESL pre-service teachers had completed two phases of practicum. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, with 203 respondents sampled out of the population.

Research Instrument
According to Polit-O'Hara and Hungler (1997), questionnaires are an important tool for collecting information from respondents in research. In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire to gather data on the TESL pre-service teachers' perceptions on the use of Jazz chants in primary ESL classroom. The questionnaire was adapted from Singh and Hashim (2020) and consisted of 11 items that TESL pre-service teachers must respond to. The questionnaire was divided into three sections: Section A included demographic questions, Section B consisted of five questions on TESL preservice teachers' pedagogical knowledge of using Jazz chants, and Section C contained six questions on the frequency of TESL pre-service teachers' use of Jazz chants. The language used in the questionnaire was simple to avoid confusion and obtain clear responses from the respondents. Nemoto and Beglar (2014) suggested that each item in a questionnaire should measure only one idea, be clear and easy to

understand for the respondents. The questionnaire was designed with a 5-point Likert scale, where respondents choose "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Neutral", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree" as their responses.

Validity And Reliability

According to Bolarinwa's (2015) definition, face validity is when an expert examines the questionnaire items and confirms that the test is a valid measure of the topic being tested based solely on its face value. Hence, it was essential for the researcher to have her supervisor review the questionnaire items to ensure that they effectively convey the main idea of the study. In this study, the questionnaire items were analyzed and evaluated by the researcher's supervisor before their administration, and various modifications were made to enhance its validity.

According to Bolarinwa (2015), a reliable measurement procedure such as a questionnaire, test, or observation should produce consistent results upon repeated trials. To achieve a high level of reliability for the questionnaire used in this study, a pilot test was carried out. This demonstrates the significance of pilot test in evaluating the effectiveness of the questionnaire utilized in this study. To test the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted, with an Alpha Cronbach score of 0.97. The pilot test involved selecting 30 respondents who met the researcher's criteria for the target respondents, all of whom were TESL pre-service teachers from ITE Ipoh Campus. The feedback obtained during the pilot test was analyzed, and adjustments were made to the questionnaire. The results of the pilot test indicated that the language used in the questionnaire was easily understood by the respondents. Additionally, the 11 items in the questionnaire were revised to be more precise to reduce the issue of redundancy. After the revisions were made, the questionnaire was reviewed by the supervisor to ensure its validity and reliability before being administered to the respondents.

Data Collection And Data Analysis Procedures

Several steps were implemented to gather data for this study. The survey utilized in this research was adapted from a study conducted by Singh and Hashim (2020). An official request was sent to the authors through email to obtain consent to use their questionnaire for this research. Following that, the questionnaire was disseminated online via WhatsApp and Telegram to 203 TESL pre-service teachers of June 2018 intake from the five ITEs. The data were gathered by recording the number of responses received by the researcher. The data obtained from the questionnaire was processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20, a software application that assisted in the processing of quantitative data. The survey utilized quantitative data in which descriptive analysis was generated in terms of mean scores and standard deviations. Additionally, inferential analysis was interpreted using the Pearson Correlation Interpretation Table.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The researcher presented the respondents' profile obtained from the survey. She also presented the results and discussions of the survey conducted in terms of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Respondents' Profile

A total of 203 TESL pre-service teachers who underwent practicum and had experience in the English teaching and learning process participated in the survey. They completed their practicum and had gained teaching experience in a real classroom setting during the practicum phases. They were selected from five Institutes of Teacher Education and were asked to answer a questionnaire about their perceptions on the use of Jazz chants in primary ESL classroom. The selection process involved simple random sampling. Table 1 displays the number of respondents by gender.

Table 1
Number of Respondents

Gender	N	%

Male	52	25.6%	
Female	151	74.4%	

Findings

Table 2 provides details of the means and standard deviations for the 11 items representing the two attributes of TESL pre-service teachers' perceptions on the use of Jazz chants in primary ESL classroom, namely: pedagogical knowledge (K) and frequency of use (F). Using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "1" for "Strongly Disagree" to "5" for "Strongly Agree", mean 0-1.00 means "Strongly Disagree", mean 1.01-2.00 means "Disagree", mean 2.01-3.00 means "Neutral", mean 3.01-4.00 means "Agree" and mean above 4.01 means "Strongly Agree". In general, the mean scores for the two attributes were relatively high, indicating that many TESL pre-service teachers have positive perceptions on the use of Jazz chants in primary ESL classroom (*M* > 4.01).

Table 2

TESL Pre-Service Teachers' Pedagogical Knowledge and Frequency of Using Jazz Chant, Means, Standard Deviations and Total Number of Respondents (N= 203)

Code	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
	Pedagogical Knowledge of Using Jazz Chants		
K1	Jazz chants are useful in the teaching of vocabulary.	4.67	.55
K2	Jazz chants help pupils to develop vocabulary.	4.66	.53
K3	Jazz chants enable pupils to remember chunks of language.	4.67	.55
K4	Jazz chants provide opportunity for great exposure to vocabulary.	4.70	.49
K5	Jazz chants help pupils to gain better understanding of vocabulary.	4.65	.56
	Frequency of Using Jazz Chants		
F1	I use Jazz chants in my English language for vocabulary learning.	4.28	.88
F2	I use Jazz chants as an effective method to introduce vocabulary.	4.39	.84
F3	I enjoy using Jazz chants for the pupils to gain more vocabulary.	4.42	.79
F4	I use Jazz chants to accelerate the grasp of vocabulary.	4.39	.82
F5	I use Jazz chants as an entertaining way of teaching vocabulary.	4.42	.82
F6	I use Jazz chants to encourage pupils to learn English.	4.42	.83

In terms of the first attribute of TESL pre-service teachers' perceptions, the respondents appeared to have high pedagogical knowledge of using Jazz chants in primary ESL classrooms. As drawn from the data, all of the mean values were over 4.01 (i.e., K1 = 4.67, K2 = 4.66, K3 = 4.67, K4 = 4.70 and K5 = 4.65) reflected that the respondents strongly agreed that Jazz chants are useful in the teaching of vocabulary, help pupils to develop vocabulary, enable pupils to remember chunks of language, provide opportunity for great exposure to improve vocabulary grasp and help pupils to gain better understanding of vocabulary.

As for the second attribute of TESL pre-service teachers' perceptions, the respondents appeared to have high frequency of using Jazz chants in the primary ESL classrooms. As drawn from the data, all of the mean values were over 4.01 (i.e., F1 = 4.28, F2 = 4.39, F3 = 4.42, F4 = 4.39, F5 = 4.42 and F6 = 4.42) reflected that the respondents strongly agreed that they used Jazz chants frequently in the primary ESL classroom, especially in vocabulary learning, as an effective method to introduce vocabulary, for the pupils to gain more vocabulary than usual, to accelerate the grasp of vocabulary, as a highly motivating and entertaining way of teaching vocabulary and to encourage pupils to learn English.

Table 3

Correlation Between Pedagogical Knowledge and Frequency of Using Jazz Chants

		Pedagogical Knowledge of Using Jazz Chants	Frequency of Using Jazz Chants
Pedagogical Knowledge of Using Jazz Chants	Pearson Correlation	1	.307
	Sig (2 tailed)		.000
	N	203	.203
Frequency of Using Jazz Chants	Pearson Correlation	.307	1
	Sig (2 tailed)	.000	
	N	.203	203

Additionally, the *t*-value, which represents the correlation between pedagogical knowledge of using Jazz chants and their frequency of use, is 0.307 (refer to Table 3). The data suggests that there is a significant relationship between the TESL pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge of Jazz chants and their frequency of using them. However, this relationship is classified as only having a low positive relationship according to the Pearson Correlation Interpretation Table.

Discussions

According to the results of this study, incorporating Jazz chants into primary ESL classrooms has a favorable effect on vocabulary learning. According to Bancroft (1985), incorporating Jazz chants can be beneficial for EL teachers to improve their learners' outcomes. TESL pre-service teachers view Jazz chants as a valuable tool for teaching vocabulary. To effectively use Jazz chants for vocabulary instruction, educators must first acquire knowledge of the pedagogical approach. English teachers can explore and adopt different teaching methods to teach vocabulary, and they can also incorporate the learner-centered principle when utilizing Jazz chants for vocabulary instruction. In order to effectively use Jazz chants, teachers need to experiment and test Jazz chants prior to English classroom instructions.

According to Peralta (2010), the beats of Jazz chants are enjoyable and serve as an excellent memory aid. Teachers require training on the implementation of Jazz chants, as their expertise and self-awareness play a significant role in creating a stimulating and learner-centered classroom environment. Even though a good understanding of Jazz chants can make the ESL classroom interactive, fun and meaningful, it does not necessary influence the use of Jazz chants in the primary ESL classroom. This could be due to the fact that the respondents were able to use Jazz chants without having extensive knowledge about them, meaning that knowledge does not necessarily affect or influence their frequency of use. Based on these reasons, the researcher concludes that there was a low positive correlation between TESL pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge of Jazz chants and their frequency of using Jazz chants in the primary ESL classroom.

IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this section, the researcher concluded her study. additionally, she provided a few suggestions for future research.

Conclusion

Based on the high mean score in all items, it can be inferred by the researcher that the TESL pre-service teachers had a high level of knowledge and implementation frequency of Jazz chants in primary ESL classroom. Additionally, based on the findings, the researcher determined that there was a weak positive correlation between the TESL pre-service teachers' pedagogical knowledge of using Jazz chants and the frequency of their usage in the primary ESL classrooms. The majority of TESL pre-service teachers provided positive feedback and had pedagogical knowledge of Jazz chants, and they utilized them frequently in teaching vocabulary. Additionally, the TESL pre-service teachers' frequency of using Jazz chants in the primary ESL classroom was somewhat not influenced or affected by their pedagogical knowledge of using Jazz chants.

Suggestions For Future Research

To enhance the accuracy of the data and findings, the first suggestion was to conduct the survey on an equal number of male and female respondents from different year of intake. Improvements could be made on the questionnaire for future research on the same topic. In particular, the demographic section should include an item to find out the familiarity of respondents with Jazz chants. This will allow the researcher to filter respondents and obtain more reliable and valid results on the use of Jazz chants. Another potential improvement was to conduct the survey among primary school teachers instead of TESL pre-service teachers. By doing so, data could be collected to examine the pedagogical knowledge and use of Jazz chants in teaching vocabulary among primary school teachers, and to compare the outcomes with those obtained from the survey of TESL pre-service teachers. This comparison would provide insights into the similarities and differences between the two groups.

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