

Learn Idioms The Fun And Mobile Way With Quizizz

Yasmine Liong Pui Kwan Abdullah, Alia Nathara Abdullah, Peremalatha Govindasamy, Melor Md. Yunus

Abstract: Literacy in the English language is, undoubtedly important as it is one of the prominent languages in education over the years. Among the four skills, the most difficult skill to be mastered by ESL pupils is the writing skill and using idioms is even more challenging. Locally, the use of idioms in writing for national examination, Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) 1119/1 paper, is essential because it reflects pupils' language competency, thus enhances their chances to score more credits. Self-assess learning (SAL), on the other hand, plays an essential role for teachers to provide suitable and accessible learning material. Pupils could access these learning materials at their own convenience via a game-based platform (Quizizz). Hence, this is a mobile self-assess learning via Quizizz. This action research aims to determine if Quizizz could help forty seventeen-year-old pupils from a suburban school learn idioms. Findings and discussion are based on the comparative analysis of their continuous essay writings, the number of idioms used pre- and post-SAL as well as their achievement scores from each level of the quizzes provided in Quizizz.

Index Terms: English as Second Language (ESL), essay writing, idioms, mobile learning, online quizzes, Quizizz, Self-assess learning (SAL)

1 INTRODUCTION

The English language is used in most of the parts of the world. The Ministry of Education of Malaysia (MOE) introduced the MBMMBI (Memartabatkan Bahasa Malaysia Memperkukuh Bahasa Ingeris) policy in 2010 realising the importance of the language. The policy repositions Bahasa Melayu as the national language of Malaysia and English as the language of international communication [1] as MOE aspires for all the pupils of Malaysia to be able to acquire both the languages [2]. In Malaysia, the English language is considered the second most important language. It is being taught as a second language and for some parts of Malaysia such as Sabah and Sarawak, as a foreign language [3]. English language learners in Malaysia are ESL pupils. When they sit for Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) in secondary school, their competence in using the language is tested. They need to write one directed essay and one continuous essay for English Paper 1, which is 1119/1. When they display the use of idioms, proverbs and high-level vocabulary in their essays, it also showcases their competence level in the language. However, acquiring the writing skill is not easy as it is a production skill, especially for ESL pupils [4],[9]. According to Raimes (1983), pupils need to learn grammar rules, idioms and vocabulary to be able to write using the language. Therefore, for them to be able to use idioms in their essays, they need to know idioms. From the time they were in Year 1 to Form 5, they were taught a set of idioms which are included in the English syllabi. Teachers do not teach idioms in isolation, so pupils need to add on to their knowledge of idioms and the usage at the cost of their own time. This is where self-assess learning (SAL) comes into the picture. Self-assess learning centres (SALC) can be found in most of the schools. SAL materials are mostly hardcopy materials such as worksheets, printed materials and others.

SAL allows pupils to learn at their own pace, place and time. It is easier if they can do their SAL through mobile learning. This action research aims to determine the effectiveness of the use of Quizizz in improving pupils' use of idioms in their writing. The objectives of this action research are to determine:

1. if self-assess learning via Quizizz increases pupils' usage of idioms in their writing
2. if there is a difference in pupils' essay writing scores post-SAL quizzes.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Idioms

ESL pupils are expected to know the grammar rules, idioms and the vocabulary of the English language before the acquisition of writing skill [8]. Idioms are a part of the English language syllabus in Malaysia. Pupils are expected to know idioms as idioms are taught in both primary and secondary schools. When they are in Form 5, they have to write one guided and one continuous essay to answer their English 1119/1 paper. They need to demonstrate the use of idioms in their essays to qualify them for higher scores. In a study done by Hinkel (2017), it is found that learning idiomatic language components can improve students' productive skill. Idioms are referred to as a type of figurative language, and they convey meaning through different expressions [10]. One example of idioms is "Can't judge a book by its cover" which means we should not judge someone or something based on merely the appearance because sometime they may not be what they seem to be. Idioms tend to be an area of difficulty when it comes to ESL, as it is ubiquitous for ESL pupils to interpret the idioms literally [11],[12]. Therefore, they need to understand the meaning of the idioms first so that they will not make errors when attempting to use idioms in their essays.

2.2 Mobile learning

Mobile gives teachers and pupils access to the learning system in an environment where only portable devices and wireless network are needed [13]. The four qualities of mobile learning are mobility, easy access, unlimited learning resources, and learning with real context. ICT provides access to a wide range of content which is more engaging and interactive [2],[14]. Learning is more flexible for pupils besides access to extensive learning resources to help them improve

- Yasmine Liong Pui Kwan Abdullah is currently pursuing a masters degree program in TESL in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia. E-mail: rizulhisham@gmail.com
- Alia Nathara Abdullah is currently pursuing a masters degree program in TESL in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia. E-mail: anathara89@gmail.com
- Premalatha Govindasamy is currently pursuing a masters degree program in TESL in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia. E-mail: gpremalatha31@gmail.com
- Melor Md. Yunus is currently an Assoc. Prof. in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia. E-mail: melor@ukm.edu

whether they are in urban or rural parts of Malaysia. Mobile learning is also a fun and effective way for pupils to practice their vocabulary, English expressions and communication [13]. Pupils displayed positive perceptions of mobile learning as they find it useful when it comes to enhancing their English language proficiency levels [14],[15]. In the study done by Kwon & Lee (2010), mobile learning increased content accessibility and learning interest of ESL learners.

2.3 Quizizz

Quizizz is a free online e-learning tool which works on any devices such as smartphones, tabs, notebooks and others. In other words, it is a mobile learning tool which is also cost-effective. It is used by teachers to create online quizzes which is common nowadays [16]. Pupils can keep track of their progress as they can take the online quizzes repeatedly, but the questions are randomised each time they play [17]. To play the quizzes, pupils need to enter a game code which will be provided by the creator of the quiz, which is the teacher in this case. Pupils can play the quiz again and again before the teacher ends the quiz. Both pupils and teachers can review the achievement of each pupil participated in the quiz. Pupils can also review each question found in the quiz to view the correct answer [17]. In their study, results showed a significant improvement in the grammar understanding of a majority of learners. Games created are interactive, and it allows pupils to learn interactively by participating in the activities via their devices [18]. The study done by Zhao showed that Quizizz brings a positive impact on learners' learning experiences. In another study, Nokham & Chaiyo stated that learning took place when learners did quizzes via Quizizz and Kahoot and many learners had responded positively to these apps.

2.4 Self-assess learning (SAL)

Self-assess learning is defined as a process where pupils evaluate their learning progress and identify which way suits their learning knowledge and ability [19],[20]. The self-assessment process involves self-monitoring, self-judgement and learning targets and instructional correctives [19]. Self-monitoring relates to what pupils do when they self-assess. Self-judgement involves pupils' learning progress towards achieving targeted learning performance. Learning targets and instructional correctives requires pupils to set goals and choose activities to improve their learning. They return to the initial step which is self-monitoring once the process is completed. With the growth of mobile technology, pupils are not limited to traditional classroom learning. Formal education is developed into the form of online learning, flipped classroom, self-study language options and others [21]. Due to this, it is even easier for pupils to access learning resources and set plans for their own learning. In their study, Cole & Vanderplank stated that it is possible for learners to improve on their level of proficiency in a foreign language even without formal classroom instruction. The Internet has transformed informal language learning which results in the achievement of high levels of proficiency among independent and informal learners of foreign language [22].

3 METHODOLOGY

This study is action research of three levels. This study consisted of forty seventeen-year-old suburban pupils with intermediate English Language writing achievement, who attended a public urban secondary school located in Kajang,

Selangor, Malaysia. Firstly, by applying flipped-classroom via Google Classroom, the teacher shared a link to a Youtube video on idioms and pupils needed to watch the video, Then, the pupils were asked to share examples of idioms and their meanings on Google Classroom as the pre-SAL assessment to test their knowledge on idioms. Next, the teacher introduced the pupils to SAL idioms Level 1 by doing it in the class, thus indicating the first level of this study. The quiz in SAL idioms Level 1 consists of pictures or online gifs; a visual representation of the idioms that pupils need to match with suitable idioms. After that, pupils were required to complete the other two sets of SAL quizzes, the second and third levels, at their own time. Level Two consists of pictures or gifs acting as illustrative aids to short sentences that require pupils to match or fill in the blanks with suitable idioms. Similarly, SAL idioms of Level Three has the is almost the same as Level Two, but more complex and demand accuracy over surface understanding. After completing all three levels, pupils were asked to write a continuous essay in the classroom using idioms they had learned through the quizzes. A comparative analysis was made to show if the usage of idioms have increased by comparing the marks from the continuous essays they have written for SPM trial paper Section B with the continuous essays they have written post-SAL quizzes. The marking was done by one of the researchers who is also the English Language teacher of the class using the SPM 1119/1 marking scheme. The result obtained during the pre- and post-SAL is presented in Figure 1 while the comparison of the number of pupils who used idioms pre and post-SAL is presented in Figure 2 and the comparison of pupils' scores in continuous essays pre and post-SAL is presented in Figure 3.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings are presented in two sections. The first section discusses the number of pupils who used idioms and the number of idioms used during SPM trial and after doing the quizzes on Quizizz. Section two discusses the comparison of marks scored by the 40 pupils pre and post-SAL quizzes. The essays are marked using the SPM 1119/1 marking scheme.

4.1 Self-assess learning in increasing the usage of idioms via Quizizz

The pre-SAL essay is the continuous essay the 40 pupils have written for SPM 1119/1 trial paper. The post-SAL essay is another continuous essay written by the same pupils after completing the quizzes on Quizizz, which is their SAL activity.

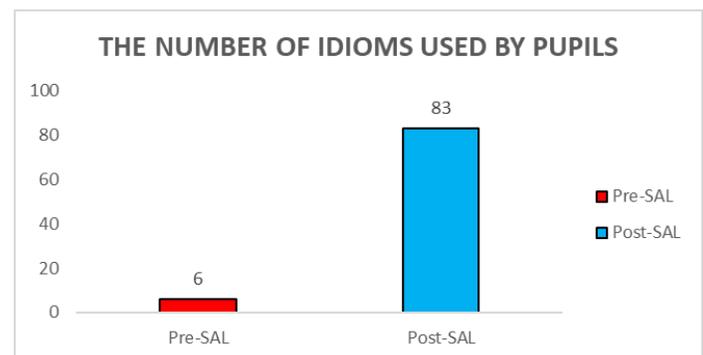


Fig. 1. The number of idioms used by pupils

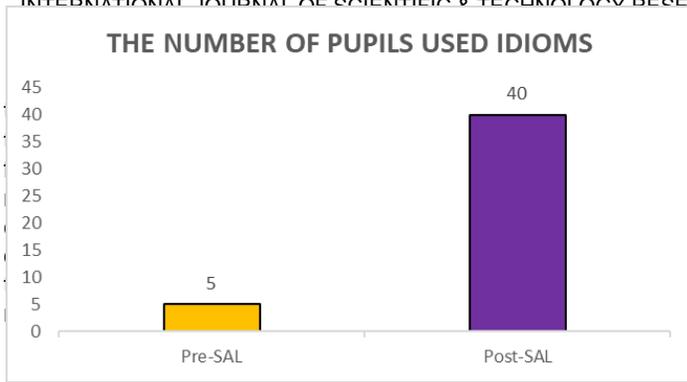


Fig. 2. The number of pupils used idioms

Figure 2 shows the number of pupils who used idioms in their continuous writing during SPM 1119/1 trial paper and the continuous essays after they have attempted the SAL quizzes via Quizizz. The total number of pupils who used idioms in their essays before SAL quizzes were only five. After the pupils have attempted the quizzes, the number increased tremendously to forty. This means that from only five pupils used idioms in their essays, after the SAL quizzes, all of them used idioms.

4.2 The difference in pupils' essay writing scores post-SAL quizzes

Figure 4 shows the percentage in the increment of pupils' scores after comparing the scores they got for SPM trial 1119/1 continuous writing with the continuous essay they wrote after attempting the online SAL quizzes via Quizizz.

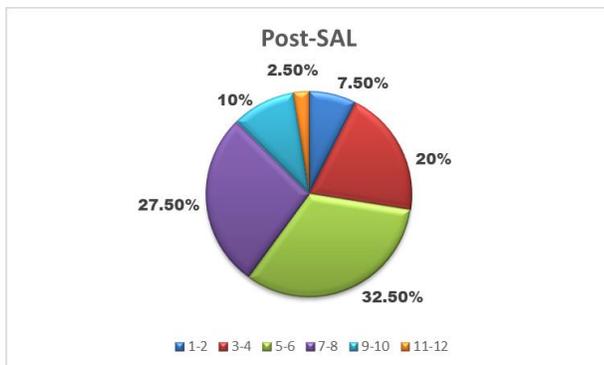


Fig. 3. The difference in pupils' scores post-SAL quizzes

As shown in Figure 3, a total of 7.5 per cent of pupils showed an increment of marks between one to two marks. Next, there is a total of 20 per cent of pupils who scores increased between three to four marks. Then, there is a total of 32.5 per cent who's marks increased between five to six marks. After that, 10 per cent of the pupils showed that their scores had increased between nine to ten marks. Lastly, 2.5 per cent of pupils scored higher post-SAL quizzes with the increment between eleven to twelve marks. From the results shown in Figure 4, it is evident that there was a significant increase in the scores of the pupils before and after they had attempted the SAL quizzes via Quizizz. Most of them showed an increment between five to six marks and a small number of pupils showed an increment of at least one to two marks. In summary, every pupil managed to score higher after they have attempted the online quizzes via Quizizz.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the result of this research, it is proven that self-assess learning (SAL) via Quizizz enables pupils to learn at their own pace, time and place. The reason is their learning expands from between four walls in their classroom to a borderless and unconstricted environment and atmosphere. Pupils could choose to learn whenever and wherever they want. One of the benefits of Quizizz is, pupils are able to attempt the quizzes repeatedly until they are satisfied with their achievements. SAL allow pupils to monitor their learning progress and plan how they want to improve their current standing. It is this significant, especially for ESL learners. Hence, it is recommended for the Ministry of Education, researchers, academicians and teachers to develop more online materials and quizzes so that pupils could access anywhere, anytime. This approach may have been successful in an urban school; therefore, it is suggested for future researchers to try to implement this approach in another education scenario. For example, a rural school to determine its effectiveness. By doing so, this approach could provide help to a range of ESL teachers and learners across our nation to improve their teaching and learning experiences.

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