The Use of Talk-King Book to Enhance Pupils Reading Comprehension Skill in Malaysian Primary ESL Classroom: A Concept Paper

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Abstract

An essential ability for children' academic performance and lifetime learning is reading. ESL primary learners face challenges in reading, especially when it comes to reading comprehension. Thus, this study proposes to examine how well the interactive Talk-King Book works to improve reading comprehension in Malaysian primary ESL classrooms. The theoretical framework for this study is based on the ideas of interactive learning and technology integration in the classroom. The Technical and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework will be incorporated, in order to explain the interaction between technical, pedagogical, and content knowledge, which will govern the development and execution of the Talk-King Book intervention, which encourages reading comprehension. As such, this research will use quasi-experimental design. This design allows comparing two groups: an experimental group that receives the intervention (the use of Talk-King Book) and a control group that does not. The design enables the researchers to assess the impact of Talk-King Book on reading comprehension by measuring both groups' pre- and post-test scores to gather data.Descriptive and inferential statistics, such as t-tests or ANOVA will be used to analyse the data that are gathered. In this study, employing Talk-King Book is projected to greatly improve primary ESL learners' reading comprehension skills. The results of this study will add to the Body of Knowledge on interactive and technology integration on reading enhancement. Findings from this study will have implications for curriculum designers, educators, and legislators on the potential advantages of integrating interactive into reading teaching. The findings of this study will also have implications for curriculum designers, educators, and legislators on the potential advantages of integrating interactive into reading teaching. The

study emphasises the significance of taking into account pupils' preferences and levels of involvement when creating and putting into practise technologybased interventions.

Keywords: Educational Technology, Interactive Ebook, Interactive Learning, Primary ESL Learners, Reading Comprehension, Talk-King Book, Technology Integration.

Introduction

A crucial ability that language learners should acquire is reading to master other crucial language abilities e.g., speaking, listening, and writing. Reading is the process through which readers become used to diverse textual symbols and link them to pre-existing beliefs to learn and gather knowledge (Patiung, 2016). In other words, it is an activity where a person attempts to acquire words, cognition, and emotions connected to prior knowledge and extrapolate the information from the book (Nugroho, 2015). Reading is a skill that teaches pupils how to extract concepts from the text and create a knowledge of that idea (Bano et al., 2018). This shows that reading supports their acquisition of new information and learning throughout the educational process. Yet, teachers today struggle to motivate and inspire their pupils to read English-language materials, especially young language learners. Fong (2020) also discovered that just 27.2% of Malaysian pupils have overall English literacy. As a result, most struggle with not just reading but also comprehending a text, which is particularly tough for young learners.

In Malaysia, the National Library (Amendment) Act 1987 (Act A667) Part II Section 4(2) directs the National Library to "promote and facilitate the development of the reading habit", resulting in the issuance of the Reading Promotion Policy to carry out this directive. This policy is in line with the national approach on Library and Information Services' plan to "instill and develop a reading habit" (Rashid et al., 2016). In fact, the policy also supports the 1985 National Book Policy, which aimed to promote excellent reading among Malaysians. Despite receiving training in their reading classes, most pupils still have trouble understanding the reading content, thus making reading as their greatest challenge. Reading and understanding English texts is extremely difficult for those studying English as a second language (Salikin et al., 2017). An important factor for successful reading is the ability to comprehend the message in the writing where a pupil must be capable and informed about the subject matter to read. Comprehending what he is reading may also aid in composition and word choice. According to Nuttal (1982), pupils need to learn five elements of reading comprehension to properly comprehend a book: recognising the fundamental idea, finding specific information, drawing conclusions, finding references, and understanding the meaning of words or specific information. These components are seen to be challenging. Some use their prior knowledge and experience to infer meaning from the reading material (Alexander, 2018). It is only after reading every word and repeating the difficult topics where most readers can understand the text's contents. Consequently, this paper proposed three research questions:

1. To what extent does the Talk-king Book enhance pupils' interest and engagement in reading?

2. To what extent does the use of Talk-King Book enhance pupils' reading comprehension skills?

Literature Review The Conceptual Analysis

Mishra and Koehler's Technical and Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework (2006) which combines technological knowledge (TK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), and content knowledge (CK), offers an effective remedy for problems that teachers face when incorporating educational technology into their classrooms (Koehler et al., 2013). By differentiating these three types of knowledge, the TPACK framework explains how content and pedagogy must serve as the foundation for any effective technology integration. This framework also includes several concepts and practices that teachers may use as a reference when utilising technology to increase student engagement, promote active learning, and aid in the pupils' development of critical thinking and digital literacy skills (Figure 1). One of the fundamental elements of technology integration is the idea that technology should be employed as a tool. It emphasises the necessity of thoughtful use of technology in the curriculum to enhance educational goals and learning outcomes (Archambault & Barnett, 2010). With the aim of ensuring that technology serves as a learning facilitator, this encourages educators to integrate technological tools and resources they employ in their classrooms with the content and goals of their courses. Another element of the technology integration is the focus on student-centred and active learning practices, which empowers pupils' independence in learning either through group projects or independent learning where real-time learning can foster creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Utilising interactive multimedia, online discussions, simulations, and virtual laboratories can facilitate these types of learning (Valverde-Berrocoso, 2021).
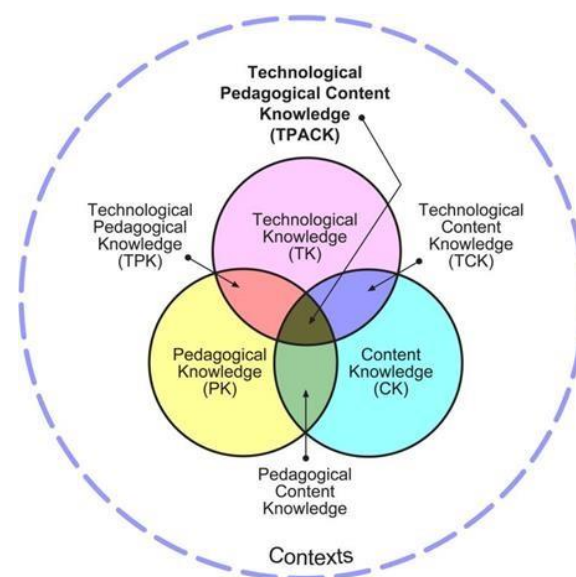

Figure 1: TPACK: Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge Framework

Digital and information literacy skills are also emphasised in the TPACK framework, especially in this digital age where they are expected to have the capacity to gather, assess, and synthesise information (Swallow & Olofson, 2017). Not only by including current issues (i.e., digital citizenship, internet safety, and privacy concerns), technology integration also promotes responsible use of technology and allows tailored learning experiences. Teachers can now efficiently track student growth, change classes, and provide them with quick feedback. At the same time, teacher professional development is also possible.

To equip teachers with the skills to successfully integrate technology and to keep up with emerging technologies and best practices, educational institutions must offer ongoing opportunities for professional development, collaborative learning communities, and support. Additionally, this paradigm recognises that technology has the power to promote global connectedness and to extend learning beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom (Graham, 2011). Technology facilitates understanding various cultures, broadens one's perspective of the world, and makes it simpler to collaborate with peers from different backgrounds and have various life experiences through online collaborations, virtual exchanges, and tools for multimedia communication. As a result, pupils may develop better communication, collaboration, and cultural competence skills. For educators to properly harness the potential of technology and incorporate it into educational practices, technology integration theory serves as a framework. The application of technology integration models may be used to achieve this. It promotes student-centred and active learning strategies, helps pupils become more digitally literate, allows for individualised learning, and promotes intercultural understanding. It also emphasises the strategic application of technology to enhance teaching and learning. When educators adopt the technology mindset, they may create dynamic and engaging learning environments for their pupils and prepare them for the digital period.

Reading and teaching reading skills
Reading is a fundamental skill that contributes to an individual's intellectual development and involves understanding the meaning of written symbols, word identification, vocabulary growth, fluency, and comprehension (Razak & Yunus, 2016). Interactivity serves as an engaging platform that develops readers' reading comprehension skills through its interactive components e.g. embedded comprehension questions, audio narration, highlighted text, and animations (Al-Jarf, 2021). Readers are given the opportunity to do active participation, promote deeper thought, and facilitate meaning creation (Maddocks, 2020). Vocabulary growth is one component of reading comprehension that can be enhanced with interactivity where there are features such as highlighted text, which visually emphasises specific words as they are spoken. This helps readers link understanding on how words are pronounced and how they are written. There are other interactive programmes that include interactive vocabulary aid, allowing users to click on words to acquire definitions or synonyms, thus expanding their general vocabulary (Chiew & Ismail, 2021). Inferential reasoning is another crucial component of reading comprehension. Interactivity often includes integrated comprehension assessments that encourage readers to draw conclusions, make predictions, and forge connections with the written word (Wrench & Garrett, 2011). Participating in inferential reasoning helps readers comprehend the content and develop higher-level information processing skills. Reading fluency and automaticity are also essential components of reading comprehension. Interactivity helps improve readers' oral reading skills and develop a sense of phrasing and tone. By reading along with highlighted text while listening to the story, readers can develop their reading fluency, leading to higher understanding (Li, 2020), if not motivation and engagement. Users of interactivity have access to a wide range of multimedia capabilities, such as sound effects, animations, and interactive images, which engage readers, spark their curiosity, and provide a lively reading experience (Chen, Yunus, & Maaroof, 2016). This flexibility ensures personalised instruction and training, enabling readers

to maximise their reading comprehension abilities. Interactive studies have been found to affect pupils' knowledge of the subject matter, fostering a love of reading and a positive reading attitude (Wang & Liu, 2019; Lin, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021).

Since English is a required subject in schools, teaching reading skills has become increasingly important. Daily expectation of speaking and listening in English necessitates the development of these abilities, besides those connected to reading, writing, and grammar. Additionally, teaching reading should not be done in a vacuum; rather, it should be a part of a comprehensive language acquisition approach. Additionally, top-down and bottom-up processing skills must be developed for an effective reading education. Bottom-up processing is the ability to decode and interpret individual words. Contrarily, top-down processing involves employing background knowledge, context, and schema to understand a piece of written communication's overall meaning (Birch, 2002). As a result, teachers must provide children with numerous opportunities to practise these skills by having them engage in a variety of reading activities (Mikulecky, 1990). Additionally, Brown & Frazier (2001) emphasises the need of fostering pupils' awareness of their metacognitive processes and teaching them efficient reading techniques. When they employ reading strategies like skimming, scanning, anticipating, and inferring from what they read, learners can approach a variety of text types with assurance and autonomy.

On the other hand, encouraging pupils to become conscious of their mental processes and monitoring their comprehension can be enhanced through authentic material selection, which is emphasised by (Horning & Brown, 1981). Learners are exposed to a variety of writing genres and styles while also providing real-world language input, such as newspaper articles, short stories, and magazine excerpts. By engaging with authentic content, pupils can develop their reading skills in a pertinent and contextualised way. Additionally, language teachers around the world have been impacted by the integration of multiple approaches in teaching reading skills. They have access to more workable strategies and pedagogical approaches, particularly integrating reading with other linguistic abilities, considering the use of both bottom-up and top-down processing, developing reading strategies and metacognitive awareness, and use of actual classroom resources. It is possible to make reading instruction more engaging and beneficial for kids, which can enhance their language proficiency and reading comprehension (Khumaidah, 2023).

Reading Comprehension

Understanding and making meaning of written content are key components of reading comprehension. Reading comprehension calls for the ability to infer meaning from a paragraph using prior knowledge, connections, and personal experiences. It is a skill that does not only require the ability to decode individual words but also the capacity to comprehend the entire argument, identify key ideas, draw inferences, and critically evaluate the information presented. The ability to read comprehension is a skill that is necessary for academic success and lifelong learning, involving a broad range of materials, from factual articles and textbooks to narrative fiction and poetry. There are several factors that influence one's capacity to understand what they have read. The ability to comprehend anything is facilitated by understanding the meanings of words, so vocabulary knowledge is essential (Raqqad et al., 2019). Readers who have a large vocabulary will find it simpler to navigate the text and grasp the nuances of the language. Fluency, which is the capacity to recognise words

and read fast, has an influence on both reading comprehension and speed of reading. People who read fluently can decode words without much difficulty, allowing them to focus on understanding the text.

Effective reading comprehension requires knowledge of the context and related experience. Readers use their own past knowledge and experiences to make connections with the text (Smith et al., 2021). Readers' ability to make connections between newly learned material and prior knowledge allows them to understand more complex concepts and engage in higher levels of cognition. Using several methods to comprehend the content is a crucial part of reading comprehension. Using these strategies, reading may be treated more attentively and purposefully and might involve actions like predicting, summarising, asking questions, drawing conclusions, and visualising. These reading strategies are used by proficient readers to increase comprehension and develop a closer connection with the reading material.

The development of pupils' reading comprehension skills is fostered by teachers in a variety of educational environments. They may help with schooling by explicitly teaching comprehension skills, providing opportunities for guided practice, and offering assistance and feedback. Additionally, teachers may promote a culture of reading by exposing pupils to a variety of works, enabling literary discussions, and promoting independent reading among their pupils. It is crucial to assess the student's reading comprehension to monitor their growth and identify any issues. pupils' reading comprehension can be assessed using a range of tools, such as standardised tests, evaluations created by the teacher, and informal observations. These tests offer critical information about the pupils' strengths and weaknesses, influencing instructional decisions and intervention techniques. Reading comprehension is a challenging ability that calls for a combination of vocabulary knowledge, fluency, prior knowledge, understanding strategies, and active engagement. The ability to comprehend, analyse, and critically assess textual information is a skill that those who have honed it may use to excel in school and effectively navigate the world (Lee, 2022).

Interactive Contents and Improving Reading Comprehension

Interactive contents have recently drawn attention as a viable method to enhance pupils' reading comprehension skills, revealing a cross-age benefit from utilising them. It offers the benefits of combining traditional print books with added interactive features, churning on a multimodal reading experience that uses a variety of interactive features, including integrated comprehension questions, audio narration, and text that is highlighted in animations. These features, which offer additional assistance, scaffolding, and opportunities for engagement, are meant to make it simpler for readers to understand the content. Due to the way that interactive text with visual and audible cues, they provide readers a rich and dynamic reading experience (Yang, 2023).

An essential element of interactive electronic books is audio narration. For younger readers or those who have trouble reading, having access to audio assistance, where the text is read aloud may be helpful. Some of its advantages include the improvement of listening abilities, the promotion of precise pronunciation, and the modelling of fluent reading. pupils who read interactive ebooks with audio narration had significant gains in their word identification, reading fluency, and overall reading comprehension (Chen et al., 2017). Besides that, certain words or phrases may be underlined to emphasise them visually while the text is being read aloud. Young readers may better integrate spoken and written language by adopting this visual

cue. Word identification, word-sentence mapping, and vocabulary growth are all aided by the highlighted text feature. Additionally, it makes it simpler to locate terms within phrases. A useful approach for assessing and reinforcing content understanding is the inclusion of comprehension questions inside interactive. In addition to evaluating the characters and events, and making conclusions, these questions urge readers to think on the topic of the work, which promotes critical thinking and improves their understanding of the subject. Using interactive texts that contain comprehension questions inside the text may significantly increase reading comprehension, according to multiple studies.

By providing additional contextual information and facilitating visualisation, the use of visual aids and animations in interactive assists in the comprehending process. Access to images during reading allows better visualisation, effective means of making connections, and ability to understand the meaning of the information in the text. Interactive elements, such as clickable images or animations, can assist to improve engagement and make content simpler to traverse. Using visual aids leads to better overall comprehension scores, which help readers understand the material more thoroughly. Interacting with an ebook has advantages that extend beyond a single reader's reading experience. The collaborative learning possibilities provided by these activities enable pupils to engage in peer discussions, share ideas, and jointly deduce meaning from the text. User participation, social interaction, and opinion sharing are all made possible through collaborative aspects like chat tools and discussion boards. Through dialogues and the negotiating of meaning in the context of group reading activities, pupils are given a supportive environment to improve their comprehension skills. Numerous studies have been conducted to determine whether interactive can improve readers' understanding (Li et al., 2019; Lin & Lin, 2020; Hsieh, 2020; Tan & Guo, 2018).

Sound effect in English Language Learning

Sound effects are important in English Language development (ELE) because they may improve the educational experience and foster language development. The use of certain sounds or noises to transmit meaning or create an atmosphere in language learning materials or exercises is referred to as employing sound effects, often known as auditory cues or audio stimuli (Gao & Yang, 2020). Increased engagement, better understanding, and greater memory of linguistic ideas are just a few advantages of using sound effects in ELE. Sound effects can draw learners' attention and provide a stimulating learning environment. It may add life and interaction to language learning materials, directing pupils' attention to certain language characteristics or exercises. Sound effects can be helpful indications for pupils who are still honing their listening comprehension to identify and comprehend certain language aspects including intonation patterns, speech rhythms, and pronunciation variances. Learners can more effectively internalise various English language qualities and advance their comprehension abilities by listening to sound effects that represent various language features. Additionally, sound effects can help people remember vocabulary and grammar. When numerous senses are used, human memory is frequently improved, and auditory information can be especially effective at enhancing language acquisition (Yassaei, 2012). Learning may be made easier by having pupils associate certain sounds with particular words, phrases, or grammatical structures. This can help them remember and retain information.

Suggested Research Methodology Research design

A quasi-experimental research design will be used for this paper to evaluate the effectiveness of Talk-King Book in enhancing pupils' reading comprehension skill. With this approach, two groups may be compared: an experimental group that receives the intervention (the usage of the Talk-King Book) and a control group that retains its existing way of learning. By comparing results from the pre- and post-test for each group, the design enables the researchers to determine the effect of Talk-King Book on reading comprehension. For this study, a sample of 120 pupils from three different primary urban schools from Sentul, Kuala Lumpur will be used as the pupils are of different proficiency and background. Additionally, Kuala Lumpur was chosen as the research site because it is a city where participants in the study come from various races (namely Malay, Chinese and Indian) and where most of its pupils are comfortable using technology. Moreover, the population of interest, which consists of primary pupils who have the target age and reading comprehension level, is represented by the sample. Hence, the pre-test, post-test and questionnaire will be administered to the pupils to see if pupils' comprehension abilities have improved because of the intervention.

Data collection and analysis procedures

There are 2 ways of collecting data: (1) pre- and post-test, and (2) questionnaire. In the first instrument, the experimental and control groups will be subjected to pre- and post-tests to learn more about their viewpoints and experiences using Talk-King Book and to investigate the effectiveness of Talk-King Book in enhancing reading comprehension among primary ESL learners. Prior to the intervention, pupils' pre-test reading comprehension skills will be evaluated; following the intervention, their post-test reading comprehension performance will be evaluated. To measure pupils' reading comprehension performance and their attitudes towards reading after the intervention a questionnaire will be conducted after the intervention. There are seven multiple-choice questions with five distinct reading comprehension components which make up the test, adopted from the Get Smart Plus 3 textbook which is aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) syllabus. These questions are considered appropriate and suitable for year three pupils as the topic is culturally relevant and it also activates pupils' prior knowledge about the topic. The five elements of reading comprehension were identifying the main idea, making inferences, identifying references, locating information, and understanding word or vocabulary meaning.

Besides that, a questionnaire will also be utilised to collect the quantitative data on the pupils' reading comprehension abilities, attitudes towards reading, and opinions on the Talk-King Book intervention. The questionnaire, which comprises 20 questions, will be adapted from James (2017) with the following response options: "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). Only 7 questions were adapted because only those questions were suitable for this research at answering the research question. Moreover, a TESL-trained expert will be consulted before the administration of the survey to assess the questionnaire's Face Validity. The gathered quantitative data will be examined and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, which are t-tests. By using Cronbach's alpha analysis, the survey items in the questionnaire were evaluated for reliability (Yunus et al., 2021).

Ethical Considerations

Ethics play a crucial role in research, particularly when it involves human subjects (Hill, 2011). There are several ethical issues that need to be taken into account in the study that examines the usage of Talk-King Book to improve reading comprehension in primary pupils. First, each participant must indicate informed permission. They will be given full disclosure of the study's objectives, methods, potential dangers, and benefits to allow discretion between participating or otherwise. To safeguard participant names and personal information, confidentiality and anonymity should also be guaranteed. Their safety and well-being are another ethical factor. The Talk-King Book intervention and any related activities must be carefully monitored to make sure that no physical or psychological harm is done to the pupils. The study must be conducted in a polite and encouraging setting. Researchers must also think about how volunteers will be treated fairly, and inclusion and exclusion standards must be supported by valid arguments (Pillay, 2014). Any version of bias or discrimination based on characteristics like gender, colour, ethnicity, or socioeconomic position will be avoided in the research. The study should also abide with the rules of responsible research conduct and academic honesty. It is important to retain accurate recognition and reference of prior research and sources. Any possible conflicts of interest should be declared in order to maintain the research process' integrity and transparency.

Conclusion

The use of Talk-King books to support pupils' reading remains debatable; some consider it as an improper reading material. Although listening will never completely replace actual reading, Talk-King books may undoubtedly offer a helpful medium for pupils who struggle with reading and improve their reading comprehension abilities due to its distinctive narrative storytelling. Its use in classroom learning and teaching has been studied, revealing a potential for enhancing pupils' reading comprehension and proficiency. Additionally, the joy of listening to Talk-King books is comparable to that of reading a printed book. Its advantages in terms of literacy will undoubtedly assist pupils in meeting the reading requirements set by the national educational system. Pupils can utilise Talk-King books independently to achieve their reading requirements in school. They will become more prepared and able to comprehend the book. Therefore, this method may be used to understand the text's content and information. Additionally, it can help pupils become more proficient in the English language. In conclusion, employing Talk-King books as a learning tool may considerably increase the challenging skill of reading comprehension. The addition of components like audio narration, highlighted text, embedded comprehension questions, visual aid, and personalised training gives readers a more in-depth and interesting reading experience. Talk-King books are advantageous for the development of pupils' vocabularies as well as their reading fluency, engagement, and thinking abilities since they make use of so many interactive aspects. Increasing amounts of studies show that Talk-King books improve readers' comprehension skills.

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