

Additional English Language Materials and the Learners with Disabilities' Learning Outcomes in Malaysia: A Correlational Study

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between the use of additional instructional materials—including technological tools, pedagogical resources, and supplementary learning aids—by special education teachers and the classroom performance of learners with disabilities in Malaysia, as measured by Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah (PBD) assessments. The sample consisted of 33 special education teachers (22 females and 11 male), representing diverse teaching backgrounds and experience levels across Malaysian primary schools. Quantitative data were collected through teacher questionnaires and analysed using Spearman's rank-order correlation and chi-square tests in SPSS 20.0. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.757$, $p < 0.001$) between the frequency of additional material use and learners' performance outcomes. Furthermore, a moderate correlation ($r = 0.287$, $p < 0.01$) was identified between teachers' perceptions of learners' performance and their reported use of additional materials. These results highlight the practical significance of incorporating structured and consistent additional materials to enhance learning outcomes for students with disabilities. The study underscores the need for standardising supplementary resources to ensure equitable access and effectiveness. Policymakers and educators are encouraged to develop guidelines for integrating these materials, emphasizing their role in promoting inclusive education practices and improving learner performance.

Keywords: *Special Education, Additional Materials, Learners' Performance, Correlation Analysis*

INTRODUCTION

English language teaching nowadays has become more challenging and diverse due to the increasing number of learners with disabilities. The World Health Organisation's statistic (WHO, 2021) has identified 15% of the world population are coming from the disabled people. The disabilities can be in the form of vision impairment, deaf or difficulty in hearing, mental health conditions or intellectual disabilities. With this increasing numbers of disabled learners nationwide, teaching English requires specific attention and considerations in forming thorough and selective materials to be used during the learning session.

The education world has recognised certain learning disabilities that could be given attention when grouping the learners. Dyslexia could be associated with learners who have problems in reading. Learners who are dyslexic normally have poor understanding in the phonological processes, rhyming, vocabulary, decoding or written expression (Berninger & Richards, 2020). Dyscalculia is another related category with dyslexia where the learners normally have issues in doing basic calculation. This can be seen when they have issues in counting money, telling the time, or solving simple math problems (Shaywitz & Shaywitz, 2020). There will be another category of dyslexia, called dysgraphia where the

learners have major issues in writing. Normally, they have problems forming letters due to the inability to grip the pencil correctly (Butterworth et al., 2021).. In a bigger case, they have problems in associating syntax structure and grammar and this could be clearly seen when they have a large gap between the written ideas and utterances.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is another category of disabilities where the learners are commonly showing some traits of attention impairment, impulsivity, and motor overactivity. They could be associated with behaviour problems where sometimes they could be aggressive due to the excessive energy they have or showing withdrawn behaviours due to lack of self-esteem and frustration (McCloskey & Perkins, 2021). Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is another form of disorder that could be associated with learning disabilities. Children who are autistic suffer a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects their social communication and behaviour. They commonly portray some traits like poor language development, struggle in social interactions and to a certain extent, they may show some repetitive behaviours (Thapar & Cooper, 2020). Despite the disabilities they own, their education could not be neglected. The act and law of education in most countries give great attention to ensuring that the learners with disabilities should be given equal chances of getting education.

1. Education Development for Learners with Disabilities

The awareness on learning disabilities started in between mid 1960s and 1975 (Lord et al., 2021). Historically, the state legislatures, federal court and the U.S. Congress fought strongly on the educational rights for children with disabilities. In the 1970s, millions of disabled children are denied access to education and in many cases, the public schools served them inadequately (Harry & Klingner, 2022). The persons who were physically and mentally disordered became the target of discrimination for many years. However, the climate of discrimination started to fade when the clause of protecting and giving equal rights to the people with disabilities had been inserted to the national laws and act. All learners with disabilities are protected under a federal act, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Under this act, it has specified this group with the term Specific Learning Disability (SLD) who has disorders in one or more basic psychological processes in understanding spoken or written language that could result in imperfect disability to listen, speak, think, write or do simple mathematical processes (Harry & Klingner, 2022). This act has paved the way for all elementary and secondary schools to welcome learners with disabilities, ensuring equal access to education.

Not only in the U.S., other countries have been positively impacted on the establishment of the act for the learners with disabilities. In the U.K, the Education Acts 1981 gave great impacts on the learning disabilities awareness in this nation. The two key concepts of need and inclusive have been prioritised in the education policy (Yell et al., 2021). Malaysia on the other hand, the Education Act 1996 promises the right to education for all children, including those with disabilities. The Ministry of Education in Malaysia offers appropriate education services for the children with disabilities (Musa, 2021). There are several services provided by the Malaysian government specifically for learners with disabilities. Integrated Special Education Program (Pendidikan Khas Integrasi) is a program that provides inclusive education for children with disabilities in mainstream schools. On the other hand, Special Education Schools (Sekolah Pendidikan Khas) are specifically provided for children who have hearing impairments, visual impairments, and physical disabilities. They are not inclusively experiencing the learning process together with the mainstream learners.

2. The Use of Textbook in the Teaching and Learning Process

For years, the education field recognised textbooks as one of the main resources in assisting the teaching and learning process (Ismail et al., 2021). They offer an organised learning input for the learners and are normally used as the primary resource for the teaching and learning process (Tomlinson, 2020). For instance, textbooks have become one of the main components in K-12 education in the United States (Musa et al., 2022). In the U.S., the textbooks need to be purchased by the learners. In Japan, textbooks are closely implemented in all schools. They become mandatory for all schools to utilise the textbooks and they are regularly being revised to meet the current standards (Lee et al., 2021). There are other countries like India and Malaysia that provide free textbooks for all learners (Johnson & Bowers, 2020).

The ideology of providing free textbooks is to ensure education could be accessed equally in the whole region by all.

The similarities of making textbooks as the primary resource by many countries is due to certain potential benefits that could be experienced by many. First, the textbooks are well structured and organised. In most textbooks, they have been clearly divided into some headings and manageable subheadings (Nasir et al., 2021). Besides, the textbooks provide holistic coverage on the targeted input that learners should obtain during the learning sessions. This is because the textbooks have been developed based on the national aspirations that are set by the scholars and experts (Jalalian & Abdul, 2021). As textbooks are designed by the scholars and experts, this could ensure the consistency of quality level (Manap et al., 2021). The quality of the resource could be maintained when the contents are written by the experts from the field, and in addition, they are always up-to-date to the current changes and needs. In many processes of designing textbooks, they will undergo a few layers of reviewing before they are released to the learners.

Nevertheless, there will be some drawbacks that could be highlighted from the practice if using the textbooks. Cost of printing textbooks would be one of the points that caused issues in some countries (McGrath, 2021). This is because the production of the textbooks could be very high especially when the new version of the textbooks are released. These new versions are produced after a few processes of revising the existing textbooks to fulfil the current changes in education. Certainly, this process of producing new versions of the textbooks could have great implications for the financial aspects especially those countries that provide textbooks for free for the learners. Though the textbook covers most of the targeted input that the learners are expected to learn, many scholars believe that it limits the interactivity among the learners (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2021). In many textbooks designed, they are generally fixed with the text-based format that does not allow maximum interaction from the learners. This is because textbooks offer one-way communication which suppresses the learners from expanding their language potential. Since textbooks are not constantly being revised, they have potential for outdated information (Shrum & Glisan, 2021). The rapid changes in the education world especially due to the advancement of technology and science to a certain extent make the textbooks to be outdated quickly. The revising process of the textbooks would undergo few cycles and be time-consuming when it involves experts and scholars. It needs a thorough discussion before coming to a final decision.

3. The Language Learning Outcome

Durán (2018) highlighted several key aspects when measuring learners' language learning outcomes. Proficiency refers to the overall level of competence in the target language. It can be measured using standardized tests such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) or other proficiency scales. Proficiency tests evaluate learners' skills in various areas, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Assessing learners' vocabulary knowledge involves evaluating the range and depth of their vocabulary. This can be done through vocabulary tests or tasks that require learners to use and understand specific words in context. The mastery of grammar and syntax rules is crucial for effective communication. Assessments in this area can involve tasks that test learners' understanding and application of grammatical structures, sentence formation, and correct word order. The ability to pronounce words and sentences accurately and use appropriate intonation patterns contributes to clear and comprehensible speech. Pronunciation assessments may involve tasks such as reading aloud, repeating sentences, or engaging in conversational activities.

Listening comprehension measures a learner's ability to understand spoken language. Assessments may involve listening to dialogues, lectures, or recordings and answering questions or completing tasks based on the content (Nasir et al., 2021). Assessments of reading comprehension evaluate a learner's ability to understand written texts in the target language. Tasks can include reading passages and answering questions, summarizing the main ideas, or identifying specific information (Gultom & Oktaviani, 2022). Writing assessments gauge learners' ability to produce coherent and accurate written texts. Tasks may involve writing essays, letters, summaries, or reports, and they may be evaluated based on organization, grammar, vocabulary, and overall clarity of expression.

Assessments of speaking skills focus on learners' ability to express themselves orally in the target language. Tasks can include conversations, role-plays, presentations, or interviews, and they may assess fluency, accuracy, vocabulary usage, and ability to engage in meaningful communication.

Language learning also involves developing an understanding of the target culture (Ismail et al., 2021). Assessments in this area can explore learners' knowledge of cultural practices, customs, traditions, and social norms associated with the target language.

4. The Learning Outcomes of the Learners with Learning Disabilities in Malaysia

In Malaysia, instrument development has been given much attention like the ones designed for the mainstream learners. Similarly, to the mainstream, special education learners' learning experience is being directed with the Assessment and Curricular Standard Document known as *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran* (DSKP). The document provides teachers on the content standards, learning standards and performance standards that learners should achieve in that particular year (Nasir et al., 2021). Similar to the mainstream schools, the DSKP for learning disabilities comprises the learning standards that need to be achieved by the learners based on the four main language skills namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

The learning objectives of special education in Malaysia focus on equipping learners with essential and relevant skills, and the learning standards are designed to align with these goals (Manap et al., 2020). For the context of this study, the learning standards for listening outcomes emphasise on the learners' abilities to recognise and reproduce limited target language skills confidently. For speaking learning outcomes, the learners are expected to respond and produce meaningful words and fixed phrases on very familiar topics confidently. This means, even a one-word response from the learners which is meaningful and relevant to the context, the learning objective is achieved. On the other hand, the reading outcomes aim the learners to understand the main ideas, specific information and details of very simple phrases and sentences confidently. Meanwhile, the writing outcomes for lower primary pupils with learning disabilities will be less complex than the mainstream learners. The pupils are expected to acquire some basic writing skills including correct spelling for the words level, punctuations such as uppercase and lowercase, and the highest level of writing is up to writing simple sentences. Again, the objective of the learning for the learners with learning disabilities is to enable them to acquire some basic skills for them to easily fit into the mainstream world.

5. The Importance of Having Additional Materials

Considering the drawbacks listed of teachers relying entirely on the textbooks, there are studies that found the urge of having additional materials in supporting the primary resource, textbooks. Since revising the textbooks would involve many layers of processes in suiting to the current changes, having additional materials in hand might be helpful. This is because additional materials provide a diverse learning style that could not be attained by the primary resource (McGrath, 2021). By having additional materials, teachers can provide a variety of resources to cater the different learning styles through the interactive and recent activities that learners could relate and engage easily.

In addition, additional materials can be one of methods to be used as reinforcement. The idea of learning a new language requires a longer time to be understood by certain learners. Therefore, the additional materials provided would benefit the learners by improving their understanding of a certain new concept learned through the repetition practices and eventually improve retention (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2021). Besides, the use of additional materials in the teaching and learning process could give opportunities for the learners to be exposed to authentic language (Shrum & Glisan, 2021). The limited content offered in the textbooks could limit the learners' opportunities to learn language that is used outside the classroom. For example, the colloquial language that teachers might introduce to learners through materials such as news articles or movie reviews indirectly embodies the concept of contextualized language (Van Lier, 2021). where it gives exposure to the learners on how a word or phrase can vary based on the situation or information surrounding it.

When teachers have greater autonomy in selecting materials for their learners, it can, to some extent, serve as a motivating factor for them to remain actively engaged in teaching. This is because during the process of adopting and adapting the additional materials, teachers would consider many aspects reflecting the learners' needs and background (Van Lier, 2021). When the learners aren't threatened with the teaching materials provided to them, their interests and motivation will be enhanced indirectly.

There are many studies conducted to provide a strong idea that additional materials impacted positively for the mainstream learners (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2021). For example, the language development of the learners is enhanced from the integration of additional materials besides the primary resources used in the classroom. Scholars identified that additional materials allow more interaction among the learners due to the adoption and adaptation done by the teachers in preparing the additional materials for the learners. As the materials act as the supplementary materials during the learning session, they offer better reinforcement of the targeted language input that is aimed to be learned (Van Lier, 2021). However, there will be a necessity for researchers to identify how far this claim is true on learners with disabilities. There could be a sensible idea whether the additional materials for English language learning supplement the learning for the learners with disabilities. To sum up, this study aims to see the relationship between the use of additional English language materials among special education teachers and the learners with disabilities' language learning outcomes focusing in the Malaysia context. The following questions are tied to be answered within the respect of this study.

1. What is the relationship between the number of additional English language materials usage among special education teachers and the learners with disabilities' learning outcomes in Malaysia?
2. What is the relationship between the special education teachers' perspective on the learners' learning outcomes with the number of additional English language materials they used on the learners?

METHODS

This section is expanded by four dimensions which are participants, instrumentation, design and procedure.

1. Participants

This study consisted of 33 special education teachers from Malaysia primary schools who are teaching learners with learning disabilities. From these 33 teachers, 10 of them were males and another 23 were females. Each teacher was selected based on their teaching experience in teaching English for children with learning disabilities. This is to ensure the validity of the data obtained as their involvement in assessing the pupils in the classroom assessment (PBD) would determine the effectiveness of the additional materials with the pupils' writing outcomes. Table 1 summarises the data of the participants.

Table 1 Participants Features

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	10	30.3	30.3	30.3
	Female	23	69.7	69.7	100.0
	Total	33	100.0	100.0	

2. Instruments

In order to collect quantitative data, a questionnaire which was adapted from the questionnaire developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1961, an international organization that promotes policies to improve economic and social well-being around the world. The PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) is one of the projects run by the OECD to assess the knowledge and skills of students in participating countries and Malaysia is one of the countries under this project. Therefore, it is relevant to adapt this questionnaire for the purpose of this study. This adapted questionnaire consists of 14 items with a combination of closed-ended questions reflecting the research questions that are being measured for this study. The closed-ended

questions consist of fixed response options including dichotomous questions (Yes or No) and also five point-Likert scale.

In order to obtain the learners with disabilities' language learning outcomes, the researcher collects the data from the learners' Classroom-based Assessment or commonly addressed as *Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah* (PBD). This is the formal documents used by the teachers in all schools to assess the learners' performance level. Similarly to the mainstream learners, the learners with disabilities also are being assessed by the teachers of their English language performance based on the six performance levels. The performance levels are measured from the lowest Performance level 1 (PL 1) to PL 6 with distinct descriptors for each level. Having the responses from the teachers from the questionnaire and also the data obtained from the learners' PBD, the researcher could measure the correlation between the use of additional English language materials among special education teachers and the learners with disabilities' language learning outcomes.

3. Research Design

This study exhibited the non-experimental design where a quantitative approach was applied. In order to answer the research questions, the researcher applied a correlational research design. This is because the correlational design is applied when the researcher is examining the relationship between two or more variables (Johnson & Bowers, 2020). In this research, the researcher was intended to measure the degree to which the use of additional materials among special education teachers and the learners with disabilities' learning outcome are significant to each other, without manipulating any of the variables. In correlational research design, the data obtained by the researchers were naturally taken from the observations and feedback. Then, the researcher would analyse the data to determine if there's any statistical relationship between the variables.

Correlational research can be divided into three types namely bivariate correlation studies, prediction studies and multi correlation studies (Yell et al., 2021). Bivariate correlation studies measure the degree of association between two variables. Meanwhile, prediction studies are conducted when the researcher intends to identify the variables that are predictive of an outcome of interest. Multi correlation studies are relevant to be used when the researcher focuses to identify the complex relationship between multiple factors. For this purpose of this study, Bivariate correlation study was conducted to fulfil the aim of this research. The researcher's interest was to examine the relationship between two variables, the use of the additional materials among the special education teachers and the learners with disabilities' English learning outcomes.

4. Research Procedure

Correlational research requires the researcher to collect the data from the variables simultaneously (Fraenkel et al., 2021). This means the researcher will distribute the questionnaire to the special education teachers within the 3 months of this research being conducted. Besides the questionnaire, the researcher would obtain the Classroom Assessment data that reflected the pupils with the learning disabilities' English performance level. Though this correlational research is non-experimental research where it does not involve pre and post evaluation from the researcher, yet the differences in the usage number of additional materials among the teachers and the learners' PBD result would expose some significant data for the researcher to measure its correlation to one another.

In order to analyse the data, the researcher would run an analysis test using the Spearman's rank-order correlation since the data was certainly identified as a nonparametric alternative. Spearman's correlation coefficient is executed by the researcher based on the rank of the data rather than the actual values where it eventually measures the degree of association between the two variables. The chi-square test was used for descriptive analysis to identify the significant relationship between the number of additional materials used in a week by the teachers and the pupils' performance level from PBD.

RESULT

According to the analysed data, some descriptive information was gathered. Table 2 presented information about the results of descriptive statistics. From Table 2, the mean score indicated that out of 33 respondents, the average of them were at least used a minimum of 4 times additional materials in a week which reflected the average score of classroom assessment (PBD) with performance level (PL) 3 and 4.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
No of additional materials used in a week	33	2	5	4.03	.918
Pupil's final year writing performance level	33	3	5	3.88	.545
Valid N (listwise)	33				

To justify further, Table 3 provides a detailed summary on the frequency of the teachers who used additional materials in a week. From Table 3, it's identified from 33 special education teachers, the majority of them had at least used additional materials four times in a week and none of them had ever used any additional material. This reflects indirectly that all teachers were not only using the textbook in their lessons but there were additional materials needed to support the main resource. This data would be significant in determining that the pupils' PBD performance level were affected by this teaching approach.

Table 3 Frequency of the Additional Materials Usage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	3	9.1	9.1	9.1
	3	4	12.1	12.1	21.2
	4	15	45.5	45.5	66.7
	5	11	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	33	100.0	100.0	

1. Relationship Between the Use of Additional Materials Among and the Learners with Disabilities' Learning Outcome in Malaysia.

Before running the analysis, the normality test was completed in determining the correct analysis should be executed on the obtained data. The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov (Table 4) for both the number of additional materials used among the special education teachers and the learners with learning disabilities' writing outcome are suitable for the non-parametric analysis ($p < .05$). Therefore, the researcher considered running Spearman correlation analysis to examine the correlation between the two variables (the number of additional materials used among the special education teachers and the learners with learning disabilities' learning outcome).

Table 4 The Normality Test of the Data from the Number of Additional Materials used in a Week and the Pupils' PBD Performance Level

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pupil's final year writing performance level	.376	33	<.001	.718	33	<.001
No of additional materials used in a week	.275	33	<.001	.821	33	<.001

^aLilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the confirmed method to run the analysis, the researcher obtained the correlation results between the number of additional materials usage among the teachers and the pupils' final year performance level. Table 5 summarised the analysis.

The results from Table 5 indicated that the correlation coefficient with $r=0.757$ ($r>.01$) positively indicated that the learners' writing performance is highly influenced by the number of additional materials usage among the teachers. This can be inferred that the more teachers use the additional materials in their teaching and learning, the better the learning outcome among the learners' with learning disabilities.

Table 5 The Results of Correlation Analysis between the Number of Additional Materials Usage Among the Teachers and the Pupils' Final Year Performance Level

		No of additional materials used in a week	Pupil's final year writing performance level
No of additional materials used in a week	Pearson Correlation	1	.757**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	33	33
Pupil's final year writing performance level	Pearson Correlation	.757**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	33	33

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In justifying the inferential analysis made, the researcher elaborated further in detail based on the descriptive analysis. The chi-square analysis was performed to determine whether the categorical variables between the number of additional materials usage in a week and the pupils' performance level (PBD). Table 6 summarises the findings from the data.

Table 6 The Results of Cross Tabulation Between the Number of Additional Materials Usage and the Learners' Performance Level

		Pupil's final year writing performance level			Total
		PL3	PL4	PL5	
No of additional materials used in a week	2 times	3	0	0	3
	3 times	4	0	0	4
	4 times	0	14	1	15
	5 times	0	9	2	11
Total		7	23	3	33

From the data, it is distinctly shown that the pattern on the number of additional materials usage among the teachers affected the learners' performance level. The learners achieved a higher performance level of PL4 and PL5 when the teachers actively used the additional materials in a week. From this table, the researcher interpreted the data from the chi-square analysis perspective. In the next page, Table 7 illustrates the findings obtained from the performed analysis.

Table 7 The Results of Chi-Square Analysis Between the Number of Additional Materials Usage and the Learners' Performance Level

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.046 ^a	6	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	34.923	6	<.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	18.321	1	<.001
N of Valid Cases	33		

^a10 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .27.

From the data, the asymptotic significance data shows $p < 0.001$ which means it is below than the alpha value $\alpha < 0.005$. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between the number of additional materials usage and the learners' performance level. This data becomes strong evidence of the claim that the learners can achieve higher performance levels in the PBD when the teachers frequently use the additional materials during the teaching and learning sessions.

2. The Relationship Between the Special Education Teachers' Perspective on The Learners' Learning Outcomes with the Number of Additional English Language Materials they Used on the Learners

Besides examining the correlation between the number of additional materials usage with the learners' learning outcome, the researcher also intended to determine the learners' language learning outcomes based on the special education teachers' perspective as well. The Likert-scale responses obtained from the questionnaire prompted on the teachers were significant in finding the results. Table 8 provides the correlation analysis conducted on the teachers' perspective and the number of additional materials usage on the learners' with the learning disabilities.

Table 8 The Results of Correlation Analysis Between the Teachers' Perspective and the Number of Additional Materials Usage on the Learners' with the Learning Disabilities

			Teachers' perspective on the learners' learning outcomes	No of additional materials used in a week
Spearman's rho	Teachers' perspective on the learners' learning outcomes	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.287
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.106
		N	33	33
	No of additional materials used in a week	Correlation Coefficient	.287	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.106	.
		N	33	33

From the Table 8, it reveals that the special education teachers believed that the learners' positive learning outcomes were strongly influenced by their teaching practice of using the additional materials during the teaching and learning sessions. The correlation coefficient between the teachers' perspective on the learners' learning outcomes and the number of additional materials usage among them reveals the significant values of $r = 0.287$ ($r > .01$). From this finding, it can be concluded that the learners' learning outcome including their ability to practise basic language skills, producing simple vocabularies, the time frame to complete the tasks and to certain extent in mastery basic grammar rules are strongly influenced by the frequency of the teachers using the additional materials into their teaching practice.

DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of additional materials in enhancing learning outcomes among learners with disabilities. The positive correlation between the frequency of additional material usage and learners' writing performance underscores the necessity for teachers to move beyond textbook reliance. This aligns with Tomlinson and Masuhara (2021), who emphasised the importance of dynamic and interactive resources to accommodate diverse learning styles. Additional materials offer tailored and reinforced learning opportunities, especially for students with learning disabilities who require repeated exposure to concepts for better retention. Moreover, the significant chi-square results suggest that teachers' frequent use of supplementary materials directly impacts performance levels, with students achieving higher levels (PL4–PL5) under such conditions. This supports McGrath (2021), who noted that additional materials create opportunities for authentic and contextualized learning experiences. For example, integrating materials like news articles or interactive tasks encourages real-world language application and fosters a more engaging classroom environment.

From a pedagogical perspective, special education teachers' autonomy in selecting materials further enhances lesson relevance and learner motivation. Studies by Van Lier (2021) and Nasir et al. (2021) corroborate this, showing that customized materials address individual learners' needs and abilities. In this study, teachers observed improvements in learners' ability to produce basic vocabulary, complete tasks on time, and practice fundamental language skills, validating the positive impact of additional resources. Nonetheless, certain extraneous variables such as the difficulty level or selection criteria for additional materials—could influence learning outcomes. Future research should explore standardized approaches to material selection to ensure consistency in performance assessments.

The data obtained from the respondents indicated that there is a significant correlation between these variables. The integration of additional materials in the teaching and learning process besides the textbooks as the primary resources can positively impact the learners with learning disabilities performance level in English (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2021). From the findings, the researcher explored the notion that the learners' performance level in the target language is higher when the teachers utilise additional materials in their teaching approaches. The claim made earlier on the use of additional materials as the enhancement resources other than the primary resources (McGrath, 2021) can be a good key point in this study. The findings reveal teachers' perspectives on the positive changes in their learners as a result of engaging with the additional materials. As the teachers adopt and adapt the materials based on the textbooks, it will give a more dynamic and interactive learning environment for the learners, especially those with learning disabilities (Shrum & Glisan, 2021). Besides, the positive engagement of the learners with the additional materials is proven in this study when the teachers claimed that the learners could complete the tasks reflecting the four main language skills within the time frame given. This is the main purpose of teachers having additional materials included into their teaching approach.

As the usage of additional materials aims to cater the differences and acknowledge different abilities of the learners, the positive impact could be reflected from their learning outcomes. In this study, the correlation between the practice of using the additional materials and the learners' performance levels is very significant. In the context of Malaysian schools, learners' language development is assessed through classroom evaluations known as PBD. This serves as the most effective indicator of their performance level in the target language (Nasir & Efendi, 2021).

Although the data collected presents the findings and answers the research questions, some extraneous variables, such as the approach used to select additional materials for learners with disabilities, were beyond the researcher's control in this study. These variables can, however, be considered and addressed in future research. The difficulty level of the additional materials used may influence the learners' performance outcomes. This research would be more reliable if teachers assess learners' performance based on the use of similar additional materials. This approach would enhance the accuracy and validity of the data, making it more representative of the entire population. At this point, researchers could confidently conclude that the use of additional materials is significantly related to the performance levels of learners with disabilities.

CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights the significant relationship between the use of additional English language materials and the learning outcomes of learners with disabilities in Malaysian primary schools. The findings demonstrate that teachers who frequently incorporate supplementary materials into their lessons observe higher performance levels among their students. This outcome underscores the importance of moving beyond textbook reliance to create a more engaging and interactive learning environment. By providing additional resources, teachers address the diverse needs of learners with disabilities, helping them develop fundamental language skills such as vocabulary acquisition, sentence formation, and basic grammar understanding. The study also shows that the dynamic and flexible use of supplementary materials positively impacts learners' motivation, confidence, and ability to complete tasks within expected time frames. These results align with broader expectations, emphasizing the role of innovative teaching approaches in improving educational outcomes. This research adds to the understanding of how targeted instructional strategies can close learning gaps for students with

disabilities, contributing to the development of more inclusive and effective educational practices. While the study reflects strong evidence of these positive outcomes, further exploration into standardised material use and long-term impacts is recommended to ensure consistent progress and support for learners with disabilities.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data used and presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding authors. Rest assured that the real names and other personal information of the participants will remain anonymous.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest, financial or non-financial, that could be perceived as influencing the outcomes or interpretation of this research.

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