Journal of Valartamil, eISSN 2716-5507
Volume 6, No.1, 2025, (36-41)

The Effectiveness of Visualization, Auditory and Kinesthetic (VAK) Model on Short Story Writing among Form 4 students

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Received: 02 Oct 2024; **Revised:** 10 Apr 2025; **Accepted:** 20 Apr 2025; **Published:** 30 April 2025

To cite this article (APA): Jesslyn, J., & Muniisvaran, K. (2025). The Effectiveness of Visualization, Auditory and Kinesthetic (VAK) Model on Short Story Writing among Form 4 students. *Journal of Valartamil*, *6*(1), 36-41. https://doi.org/10.37134/jvt.vol6.1.6.2025

Abstract: This study examines the efficacy of the Visualization, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) model in enhancing 50 Form 4 students' short story writing skills. By adapting instructional strategies to students' preferred learning styles, the VAK approach aims to address difficulties in short story writing difficulties. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered using a mixed-method approach to evaluate student involvement and writing skill advancements.

Key words: Visualization, Auditory, Kinesthetic model, short story writing, learning styles

INTRODUCTION

In today's educational landscape, recognizing diverse learning styles is essential to promoting student success. The Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) model offers a structured approach for engaging students based on their preferred learning modalities. This study investigates the influence of the VAK model on enhancing Form 4 students' short story writing skills, with a particular focus on Tamil language composition. The findings aim to provide educators with valuable strategies for implementing differentiated instruction to improve writing outcomes and support holistic student development.

Background of the Study

Learning styles have always been an important consideration in education. The Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) model, developed in the 1970s, categorizes learning into three modalities which are visual, auditory and kinesthetic. The visual learners absorb information through seeing, auditory learners through hearing, and kinesthetic learners through hands-on activities. By aligning teaching methods with these preferences, educators can enhance students' academic performance, motivation, and ability to retain information. The VAK model offers a practical way to help students overcome common challenges in writing

short stories, a vital part of language learning that relies heavily on creativity and cognitive engagement.

For Form 4 students studying Tamil, writing challenges often stem from the complexities of grammar, vocabulary, and organizing ideas into clear, coherent essays. By using VAK-based strategies, teachers can provide focused and personalized support to tackle these issues. This approach not only helps students improve their writing skills but also boosts their confidence, creating a more positive and productive learning experience.

Problem Statement

Many Form 4 students struggle with the basics of composition, even though strong short story writing skills are crucial. This challenge is especially apparent in Tamil language classes, where students often find it difficult to organize their thoughts, choose the right words, and form clear sentences. This study examines whether the Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) model could provide a more effective approach by tailoring teaching methods to match each student's unique learning style, helping to build their confidence and improve their writing skills.

Research Purpose

This study seeks to explore whether the VAK learning model can help Form 4 students improve their short story writing skills. Specifically, it aims to:

1. Evaluate the short story writing difficulties that Form 4 students face.
2. Examine how the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements of the VAK model can be used to solve these issues.
3. Analyze how the VAK model affects students' motivation and writing performance overall.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the 1970s, Walter Burke Barbe introduced the Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic (VAK) model to enhance learning outcomes by aligning teaching methods with students' dominant sensory modalities. The VAK model categorizes learning into three primary styles: visual learners, who process information through images, visualization, and spatial awareness; auditory learners, who excel when they hear explanations and engage in verbal discussions; and kinesthetic learners, who learn best through physical activity and hands-on experiences. These preferences significantly influence how students absorb and retain information (Barbe et al., 1979). Neil Fleming later expanded on this model, suggesting that tailoring teaching strategies to individual learning styles can improve student engagement and understanding.

Research has shown that the VAK model can positively impact student performance across various subjects. Visual learners, for example, often benefit from tools like color-coded notes, videos, and mind maps, which help them organize ideas before putting them into writing (DePorter & Hernacki, 1999). Auditory learners tend to perform better when they can listen to explanations or participate in discussions, helping them articulate complex ideas more clearly (Murphy, 2004). Kinesthetic learners thrive in movement-based learning environments, where abstract concepts like sentence structure or story flow become more tangible through physical interaction (Aqel & Mahmoud, 2006).

While differentiated instruction has a solid foundation in educational research, the specific application of the VAK model to writing instruction has been less explored. Olson (2020) highlights the cognitive benefits of writing, which engages multiple brain regions,

particularly when taught through varied sensory approaches. By incorporating VAK principles into writing lessons, educators can help students internalize the structures and creative techniques essential for strong writing. Recent studies suggest that learning models like VAK can improve writing fluency and quality, especially for students who struggle with conventional teaching methods (Rajendran, 2020).

In summary, while more targeted research is needed, existing evidence indicates that the VAK model could be an effective strategy for helping Form 4 students improve their writing abilities.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection to assess the effectiveness of the VAK model. A total of 50 Form 4 students from two secondary schools were selected as the sample. These students were chosen based on their initial writing assessments, which highlighted specific challenges in short story writing particularly in areas such as topic organization, vocabulary usage, and grammatical accuracy. To accommodate diverse learning styles, students were divided into groups and assigned tasks that aligned with the VAK model. Over the course of three weeks, students received short story writing instruction that focused on the visual, auditory, or kinesthetic components of the VAK model in each lesson.

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to evaluate the impact of the VAK model. Students completed writing assessments before and after the intervention, which measured key skills like coherence, vocabulary, sentence structure, and organization. These pre- and post-intervention assessments served as benchmarks to track student progress throughout the study. In addition, classroom observations were conducted to evaluate student engagement and participation in the VAK-based lessons. Teachers noted students' responses to kinesthetic activities, visual aids, and auditory inputs, as well as their overall involvement in writing tasks. After the intervention, students were asked to complete surveys and provide feedback on their learning preferences, the ease of the lessons, and their overall satisfaction with the VAK strategies. This feedback was essential in gauging how the VAK model affected their comfort, motivation, and writing skills.

Each week of the three-week intervention focused on one specific element of the VAK model. In the introductory phase, teachers introduced the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic components of the VAK model to students, explaining how each could support their writing tasks. The goal was to help students understand the connection between their learning preferences and the strategies they would use in writing. This phase also included surveys and initial observational tasks to identify each student's preferred learning style.

During the implementation phase, targeted strategies were employed for each learning style. Visual learners were provided with mind maps, graphic organizers, and videos to help them organize their ideas and structure their essays. These visual aids, such as flowcharts and layouts, supported students in logically arranging their thoughts. Auditory learners participated in group discussions, listened to spoken explanations, and engaged with video lessons to strengthen their language skills and vocabulary. These activities encouraged students to listen, share their thoughts, and respond to feedback. Kinesthetic learners benefited from role-playing and hands-on activities, such as storyboarding, that allowed them to physically engage with the material. These interactive approaches helped them organize their stories in a collaborative and dynamic way. The intervention concluded with a reflection and feedback phase.

To assess the impact of the VAK model on students' writing skills, both quantitative and qualitative data were carefully analyzed. The pre- and post-test scores were compared to

measure improvements in writing quality, with a focus on organization, vocabulary, coherence, and fluency. Qualitative data from surveys and classroom observations were also analyzed thematically to explore student participation, learning preferences, and satisfaction with the VAK components. This comprehensive approach provided valuable insights into how the VAK model addressed individual learning needs and allowed teachers to identify the most effective strategies for improving students' writing skills.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study examined the impact of the Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) learning model on enhancing short story writing skills among Form 4 students. The results reveals a clear trend, students who were taught using the VAK model demonstrated notable improvement in their writing skills compared to those who were taught using traditional methods. These findings suggest that the VAK approach, which incorporates various learning styles, is an effective way to engage students and foster creativity in writing.

Group	Pre-Test Average Score (%)	Post-Test Average Score (%)	Percentage Above 60% (Post-Test)
Experimental Group	40.32%	50.28%	32%
Control Group	39.24%	43.00%	8%

Before the intervention, both the experimental and control groups faced challenges with short story writing. The pre-test results revealed common difficulties such as poor narrative structure, lack of engagement, and frequent grammatical errors. Many students, particularly in the control group, expressed a lack of interest in writing short stories, which was evident in their low pre-test scores. However, after the intervention, the experimental group showed notable improvement. Their average score increased from 40.32% to 50.28%, with 32% of students achieving scores above 60%, compared to only 8% in the control group. This improvement demonstrates that the VAK model successfully enhanced students' ability to write short stories.

Among the most effective activities were Story Mapping and Metaphorming. Story Mapping, which combines visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements, provided students with a structured approach to organize their thoughts and better understand the relationship between story elements like theme, characters, and plot. This helped students produce more coherent and detailed stories, as reflected in their post-test scores. Metaphorming, on the other hand, encouraged students to think creatively by visualizing abstract ideas through metaphors. This process allowed them to engage with the material in a more imaginative way, leading to richer, more descriptive writing.

Another highly impactful activity was Role-playing, which involved students acting out characters and scenes from their stories. This kinesthetic activity gave students a deeper understanding of character development and dialogue. By physically embodying the characters they were writing about, students were able to connect with their stories on a more emotional level, which was evident in the authenticity of their dialogue and the depth of their characters. This hands-on approach not only helped students understand their narratives more deeply but also made the writing process more engaging and enjoyable.

In contrast, the control group, which was taught using conventional methods, showed only modest improvement. Although there was a slight increase in their post-test scores, the overall quality of their writing remained stagnant. This highlights the limitations of traditional

teaching methods, which often fail to capture students' interest or foster creativity in writing. The minimal progress observed in the control group further emphasizes the effectiveness of the VAK model in stimulating greater engagement and improving writing skills.

The success of the VAK model in this study can be attributed to its ability to address different learning styles simultaneously. By incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements into the learning process, the VAK model ensured that every student had the opportunity to engage with the content in a way that suited their individual learning preferences. Students who thrived on visual stimuli benefited from Metaphorming and Story Mapping, while those who are more auditory learners engaged deeply with Watching Video and Role-playing. Kinesthetic learners, on the other hand, found Role-playing particularly effective, as it allowed them to physically embody the story and deepen their understanding of character interactions.

The findings of this study have important implications for future teaching practices. The VAK model not only improves students' writing skills but also enhances their creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. By offering a variety of learning experiences, teachers can create a more inclusive classroom environment that accommodates the diverse needs of students. Furthermore, the success of the VAK model in short story writing suggests that it could be beneficial in other subjects that require creative problem-solving and critical thinking. By engaging students in different ways, teachers can help them develop a deeper understanding of the material and improve their overall academic performance.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the VAK learning model is a powerful tool for improving short story writing skills among Form 4 students. By combining visual, auditory, and kinesthetic strategies, the VAK model creates a more engaging and effective learning experience. The results suggest that incorporating these multimodal techniques into teaching practices could lead to greater student engagement, creativity, and academic success, not just in writing but across a range of subjects.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant impact of the VAK (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic) model on Form 4 students' writing abilities. The results show that the VAK approach not only improved students' writing skills but also enhanced students enthusiasm, engagement, and confidence in their writing tasks by tailoring instruction to each student's unique learning preferences. The quantitative data, from pre- and post-tests, alongside qualitative data from surveys and classroom observations, provide valuable insights. Initially, the VAK model helped address specific challenges students faced in writing, particularly in sentence structure, vocabulary selection, and organizing ideas. The pre- and post-surveys indicated a noticeable increase in student motivation and involvement in writing assignments. By the end of the intervention, many students exhibited greater excitement and self-assurance in their writing, a stark contrast to the disinterest and lack of confidence reported before the intervention. This boost in motivation was especially prominent among kinesthetic and visual learners, who found the VAK-based strategies engaging and more aligned with their learning preferences.

The study also underscored the importance of differentiated teaching methods. The VAK model proved effective in meeting the diverse learning needs of students, creating a more dynamic and inclusive classroom environment by incorporating auditory, visual, and kinesthetic elements. This approach not only enhanced students' writing skills but also contributed to their overall academic development and positive learning dispositions.

In conclusion, the VAK model presents an effective strategy for improving secondary school students' writing proficiency. The study suggests that by implementing this model,

educators can better accommodate students' varied learning preferences, creating more personalized and successful learning environments. Future research could explore the use of the VAK model in different educational settings or examine its long-term impact on students' performance across other subjects. Further studies could also investigate how the VAK model can be applied to other aspects of language learning, such as listening and reading comprehension, thereby demonstrating its versatility and potential to improve overall student achievement.

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