Improving factual essay writing skills among form four students through 'JIGSAW' approach technique

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Abstract: This study was carried out with the topic of 'JIGSAW' approach to improve essay writing skills among form four students. The objectives of this study is to find out the problem faced in expository essay writing among Form four students and to improve expository essay writing skills among Form four students through 'JIGSAW' approach. This study has been conducted qualitatively. An interview was conducted with teachers about the problems faced by the students about their ability to write factual essays and the problems were identified. This study is able to find out that the method of "JIGSAW" approach can improve the factual essay writing skills among Form Four students.

Keywords: Factual essay, Writing skills, JIGSAW, Improvisation, Form four students

INTRODUCTION

Essay is the main form of prose expression. The purpose of factual essay is to explain a subject or to define a subject, or to explain a subject. Writing is one of the basic skills of education, including listening, speaking, reading, and language. Grammar is one of the most important skills. However, in today's era, it seems that there are more problems in writing skills in primary and secondary school students than in other skills in schools. For this, the primary problem students face in essay writing is that teaching approaches to learning writing skills are not attractive to students. Therefore, it is important to deal with approaches to improve writing skills. Keeping this in mind, this study was undertaken to find out the role of "JIGSAW" approach in improving students' factual writing skills.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In 2017, the Ministry of Education introduced the Standards-Based Curriculum for Secondary Schools in the Malaysian Education Plan. This document was revised and published as the Integrated Tamil Language Curriculum for Secondary Schools. (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2017, 2018) In the Standard Based Curriculum for Tamil Language, the Malaysian Curriculum Department emphasizes that learning and teaching for Form 4 students should eventually lead to the ability to create multiple forms of writing. (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia) Writing is one of the four core skills taught in schools. Literacy is as important as other skills in the art program for elementary school. (Palanivelu,

2006) The writing form is to write the ideas that arise in our thinking on paper. (Arivunambi,2006) In that sense, essay also plays an important role in writing skills. Essay is an important component in determining the achievement of students through essay writing. One of the types of essays used for this study is the opinion essay. Factual essay is about describing the feelings of something in terms of consequences (Slamet, 2008). (A factual essay is one that explains and exemplifies a particular concept. A factual essay must have an understanding of the topic. Only then can the relevant information be properly presented. 'A good essay requires a strong understanding of information structure' (Ariyanti, 2017). Moreover, writing is It's not about memorizing or memorizing something, it's about the connection between language and thought (Cullingford, 2000).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

About 2 Tamil teachers and 10 Tamil language students were included in this research.

The researcher used quantitative and qualitative method to analyze the data of this study. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to analyze the researcher data and to achieve the two objectives of the study. The researcher has systematically carried out the analysis based on the results of pre-test and post-test.

Table 1 Comparison of pretest-posttest test scores

STUDENTS	PRE-TEST (MARKS 70)	POST-TEST (MARKS 70)	DIFFERENCE (/70)
Student 1	40	52	12
Student 2	34	45	11
Student 3	38	42	4
Student 4	30	46	16
Student 5	36	45	9
Student 6	46	55	9
Student 7	38	48	18
Student 8	42	52	10
Student 9	40	55	15
Student 10	55	58	3

The above table shows the comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of the students in the study. All student scores on pretest increased significantly on posttest. The lowest score in the pretest is 30. The highest score in the same test is 55 marks. However, the lowest score in the pretest was 42 and the highest score was 58 in posttest. The students' understanding of the factual essay can be clearly seen through the difference in these scores. A student who scored low (30) in pretest scored (46) in posttest. (16) has risen in point difference. The reason for this improvement is 'JIGSAW' as a new approach used by the author. The 'JIGSAW' approach has developed factual essay writing skills among students. A student who scored (34) in predictive test scored (45) in posttest. (11) has risen in point difference. Students who scored low on the pretest scored first level scores between 30 - 45 on the post test. Conversely, students who scored as low as 30 to 40 on the pretest scored above 40 on the post test. The difference in scores of all students has increased.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study was conducted based on two objectives. Through this study, the 'JIGSAW' approach has improved the factual essay writing skills of four students. First of all, this study carried out by the researcher in Tamil on improving the ability to write a factual essay using the 'jigsaw' approach is also helpful for other researchers. It is the opinion of the researcher that it will not only benefit the researchers but also the teachers.

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