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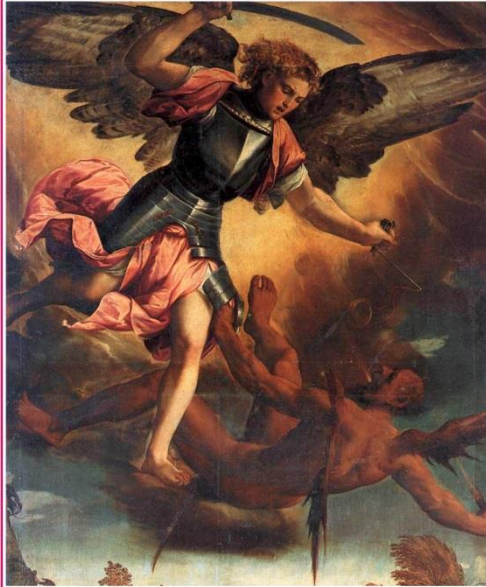
Using "Jas-To-Bloom" to Improve Year 3 Pupils' Ability in Writing Simple Sentences

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the use of 'Jas-To-Bloom' as a strategy in improving writing ability. A case study was carried out to investigate the use of 'Jas-To-Bloom' in improving Year 3 pupils' ability in writing. Data was collected via a series of pre-test and post-test, interview with five participants, field notes written by the researcher and document analysis of lesson plans. The results reveal that the use of 'Jas-To-Bloom' helps to improve pupils' ability in writing. The result also shows that the pupils could develop more ideas in writing and able to write their ideas in simple sentences.

Keywords: Jas-To-Bloom, Writing Skills, Simple Sentence, Lower Primary School Pupils, English As A Second Language.

Utilizar "jas-a-bloom" para mejorar el año 3 pupiles de la habilidad en escribir sentencias simples

Resumen

Este estudio tiene como objetivo explorar el uso de "Jas-To-Bloom" como estrategia para mejorar la capacidad de escritura. Se llevó a cabo un estudio de caso para investigar el uso de "Jas-To-Bloom" para mejorar la capacidad de los alumnos de Year 3 en la escritura. Los datos se recopilaron a través de una serie de pruebas preliminares y posteriores, entrevistas con cinco participantes, notas de campo escritas por el investigador y análisis de documentos de los planes de lecciones. Los resultados revelan que el uso de "Jas-To-Bloom" ayuda a mejorar la capacidad de los alumnos en la escritura. El resultado también muestra que los alumnos pueden desarrollar más ideas por escrito y pueden escribir sus ideas en oraciones simples.

Palabras clave: Jas-to-Bloom, habilidades de escritura, oraciones simples, alumnos de bachillerato, inglés como segundo idioma.

1. INTRODUCTION

The English language has increasingly become the international language for business and commerce, science and technology, as well as international relations and diplomacy. (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2015) Hence, it is the most frequently taught second or foreign language around the world. (Thirusanku & Yunus, 2012).

Among all the four English language skills, writing is one of the crucial productive skills. Cakrawati (2012) justifies that writing is a productive practice attained through a number of steps, involving the exploration and transmission of ideas into written form, and repeated revision to create a grammatically and orderly texts. The ability to write well would place the pupils at a great advantage. However, writing has always been a struggle among ESL learners. It is often perceived as the more difficult skill compared to listening and reading skill. (Berman & Cheng, 2010; Rincon-Flores et al., 2018).

As a novel strategy, this paper will report the findings of a case study that explored the use of "Jas-To-Bloom" in improving Year 3 pupils' ability in writing simple sentences in a national type primary school in Malaysia. Data was collected through tests, interviews, field notes and document analysis with the research participants regarding (a) the implementation of social constructivist in "Jas-To-Bloom"; and (b) the use of "Jas-To-Bloom" to improve pupils' ability in writing simple sentences.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing skills are a vital part of communication. This is because good writing skills allow the pupils to deliver their message clearly and ease to a far larger audience than through face-to-face conversations. (http://www.skillsyouneed.com/writing-skills.html) The ability to write simple sentences is absolutely important. It is one of

the writing skills that should be mastered by Level One pupils in Malaysia. It is highlighted in the learning standards 4.3.3 where the pupils will be able to plan, draft and write an increased range of simple sentences. Writing simple sentences is the basis of all kinds of writing. After mastering the penmanship, a child learns to write simple sentences before he or she can proceed to descriptive, narrative and formal writing. To sum up, the pupils should become proficient in writing simple sentences in order for them to progress to Level Two which focuses on more complex and varied paragraph writing (Maciel et al., 2016; Tabatabaei et al, 2014).

To improve writing ability among the pupils, a combination of social constructivist theory and 5W1H approach is one of the alternatives. They are the underpinning theories and approaches related to "Jas-To-Bloom" in this study. Wilson & Stacey (2004) explains that the social constructivist paradigm focuses on learner-centred learning in which the learners can share their knowledge, skills, experiences, and perspectives with each other. Students are

There are number of past research related to this study. Most of the studies focus on collaborative learning, task-based learning and scaffolding. Shih (2011) had done mixed-method research on peer assessment process among the first year English majors from a technological university in Taiwan. The study disclosed that students can reflect and learn from each other, and construct meaningful knowledge and skills through collaborative learning and interaction. In addition, Gholami Pasand & Tahriri (2017) experiment study investigated the impact of peer scaffolding on writing accuracy among

the university students in Guilan and revealed that EFL students who practised peer scaffolding produce more accurate argumentative essays. Throughout the study, the students showed some supportive and scaffolding behaviours.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this research, a case study was chosen as the research design. According to Yin (2017), a case study refers to an empirical investigation that explores a current situation within its real-life context, especially when the limitations are not clearly identified. Having to said, a case study is applied when the contextual conditions are believed to be highly connected to the phenomenon of study. In this research, the case study was implemented to get an in-depth analysis of the use of "Jas-To-Bloom" in improving pupils' ability in writing simple sentences (Indriastuti, 2019).

Purposive sampling was utilised in this study. Tongco (2007) explains that the purposive sampling is the deliberate choice of participants due to the qualities they possess. The population of the study was the Year 3 pupils in a national type primary school in Malaysia. Five research participants were selected based on several criteria. Firstly, the participants have an average command of English. They also face difficulty in writing orderly simple sentences although they have the vocabularies. Lastly, the participants always use direct translation from their mother tongue. These common characteristics

were spottable through pupils' writing works and the result of the pre-test. The five pupils who fulfilled these requirements were chosen as the research participants to provide an answer to the research questions of the study.

There was four research instrument applied in this study, namely tests, interview, field notes and document analysis. In this research, there were two tests conducted, including the pre-test before using "Jas-To-Bloom" and the post-test after using "Jas-To-Bloom". The results of the pre-test and post-test were compared and analysed. The interview was carried out to collect information from the research participants so as to triangulate the data collected from the tests. Likewise, the field notes were written in three stages, comprising before, while and after using "Jas-To-Bloom". The field notes were used to record the flow of the lessons and some behaviours observed throughout the process. Finally, the document analysis was the collection of lesson plans. The analysis complemented the data collected from the field notes.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings and discussion are justified based on the two research questions (RQ) of the study.

RQ1: How does the Social Constructivist Theory Implement in the "Jas-To-Bloom"?

To answer RQ1, data from field notes (FN), interview (I) and document analysis (DA) were analysed. The data was collected from multiple sources for triangulation. The analysis was grouped into three aspects, including (a) activities, (b) materials, and (c) teacher's and learners' roles.

While-writing 35 minutes	1. Based on the pictures and words given, the participants *explore and practise using the "Jas-To-Bloom" with their peers.* 2. The participants *ask and answer the questions based on the pictures using the "Jas-To-Bloom" with their peers.* 3. Then, the participants *discuss the simple sentences with their peers and write down the sentences* individually.

Figure 1: While-writing Stage of a Lesson Plan (Day 3) in the

Document Analysis

By referring to Figure 1, the participants discover the materials with their peers actively. Then, they ask and answer the questions with their peers to seek knowledge in order to improve their writings. After that, they create their own meaning of the knowledge gained by writing down the sentences by themselves. These findings are also detected in the field notes and interview.

- "They discussed and corrected their peers, then they wrote down the sentences individually…" (FN, during the intervention)
- "We discuss together." (I, Participant 2)
- "With friends. We share ideas." (I, Participant 5)

The activities allow the participants to take responsibility for their own learning. They also encourage interaction and collaboration among the participants. With a little guidance from the teacher when

necessary, the participants explore and develop their writing ability actively through the activities. This is complemented by Gholami Pasand & Tahriri (2017) research. The more competent writers scaffold the less competent ones while the less competent writers can contribute at some occasions during the activities. These findings also agree with the social constructivist theory, supported by Shih (2011) whereby learners can reflect and learn from each other. They construct meaningful knowledge and skills through collaboration and interaction.

In this research, the teacher's and learners' roles are very much different from the ordinary classic classroom. This finding is in accordance to Zhaochun (2015) study whereby the task-based learning approach has converted the teachers' role from being rigid to amiable while the learners' role from a passive receiver to an active participant. The information collected in this research discloses that the teacher acts as the facilitator of the classroom activities while the participants become more responsible and active in their own learning.

- "The participants consulted the researcher when they were not sure of the spelling. The researcher did not give the answer directly. Instead, she spelt the words using phonics." (FN, during the interview)

- "…I can remember. I know the questions." (I, Participant 1)

- "Yes, I want. I can write sentences myself very easy. Not scary." (I, Participant 5)

The data collected from the interview and the field notes show that the teacher is always ready to help the participants. She guides and leads the participants to find out the solution instead of revealing the

answer at once. On the other hand, the participants are actively constructing their own knowledge socially from their learning experience. They become more responsible and fully participate in their own learning.

RQ2: How does the Use of "Jas-To-Bloom" Improve Year 3 Pupils Ability in Writing Simple Sentences?

As for RQ2, the findings were mainly interpreted from the data collected in the tests (T), field notes (FN) and interview (I). Different sources and instruments were used to triangulate the data gathered. There were three themes investigated from the analysis: (a) improve pupils' writing ability, (b) develop pupils' motivation in writing, and (c) promote fun and meaningful learning.

Firstly, the use of "Jas-To-Bloom" improves participants' writing ability. This is evident in the pre-test and the post-test where the changes in pupils' writing ability before and after the use of "Jas-To-Bloom" were noted. The results of the pre-test and the post-test are presented in Figure 2. All the participants show a significant improvement in the post-test.
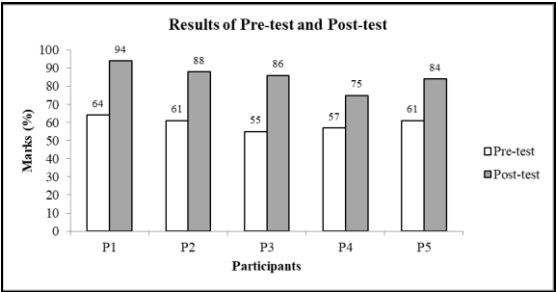

Figure 2: Results of the Pre-Test and Post-Test

The improvement in marks shows that the participants are able to write better simple sentences after using "Jas-To-Bloom". By looking at each and every writing component, it is found that the pupils improve the most in the writing content. After the use of "Jas-To-Bloom", the pupils can write more details in their sentences. Furthermore, the average score of the sentence structure also shows a meaningful increment. In other words, the participants have developed their ability to arrange their ideas into words correctly. These findings are triangulated with the evidence found from the field notes.

- "…the participants wrote more words and longer simple sentences…" (FN, after the intervention)

The data shows that the participants have more ideas on what to write after using "Jas-To-Bloom". It is parallel to Mas et al. (2017) research whereby the increment of word count in writing results in longer and more detailed sentences. It makes the sentences consist of more ideas.

"Jas-To-Bloom" Develops Pupils' Motivation in Writing

Besides, the findings also justify that the use of "Jas-To-Bloom" helps to develop pupils' motivation in writing. From the interview, participants' responses can be grouped into three themes as shown in Table 1.

Response	Theme
"…it can help me to do a revision before the examination." (Participant 4)	Initiate revision
"It will teach me how to do long sentences." (Participant 2)	Give guidance
"…I can write perfect English sentences."	Promote self-

(Participant 5)	confidence

Table 1: Interview Response

Firstly, "Jas-To-Bloom" arouses participants' intention to do revision for examination. The participant mentioned that the use of "Jas-To-Bloom" encourages her to do a revision on writing sentences. Secondly, "Jas-To-Bloom" provides guidance to the participants to write correct simple sentences with more details. The participants articulated that "Jas-To-Bloom" has everything in it and through the questions, they are motivated to write longer sentences. Thirdly, "Jas-To-Bloom" develops self-confidence among the participants in writing simple sentences. The participants said that they can write perfect sentences after using "Jas-To-Bloom". In short, "Jas-To-Bloom" motivates the participants to write simple sentences. These findings are in line with the data collected from the field notes as follows.

• "…kept asking if they could bring back the "Jas-To-Bloom" (FN, during the intervention)

• "…the participants knew what to do for the task." (FN, during the intervention)

• "…the participants looked happy and confident when they answer the questions" (FN, after the intervention)

The data demonstrate that the participants are motivated to write using "Jas-To-Bloom". The findings are supported by Shabir (2016) whereby the 5W1H concept ensures the learners be capable of finding ideas from the same question words and does not require them a long

time to think of the content for their writings. Thus, the participants are in joy and motivated to complete the tasks without much trouble

"Jas-To-Bloom" Promotes Fun and Meaningful Learning

Lastly, the use of "Jas-To-Bloom" helps to promote fun and meaningful learning. Through the interview, it is found that the participants like to use the "Jas-To-Bloom" due to its interactivity, production of the meaningful outcome, and attractive features. Table 2 shows the analysis of participants' feedback from the interview.

Response	Theme
• "We discuss together." (Participant 2)	Interactive
• "Can do many many sentences." (Participant 3)	Meaningful outcome
• "…it has many questions. Very fun." (Participant 5)	
• "I can open up the petal one by one." (Participant 2)	Attractive features
• "It is beautiful. It is easy to make." (Participant 3)	

Table 2: Analysis of Participants' feedback

The themes analysed from the participants' interview responses contribute to the features of fun and meaningful learning experience. It maximises the participants learning experience. The use of "Jas-To-Bloom" ensures the participants to discuss and share ideas with one another. As stated in Narjess & Sayyed (2013) study, peer discussions help to explore ideas freely. It makes the participants' learning more interactive and provides more fun. Likewise, the discussions are consequential to produce a meaningful outcome. The participants write out their ideas into simple sentences after discussions. It makes the

participants engage in a purposeful task using the appealing and feasible instrument, namely "Jas-To-Bloom". The findings are further supported by the data collected from the field notes.

- "The participants creatively made the petals of the "Jas-To-Bloom colourful." (FN, during the intervention)
- "They were very excited and enjoyed the task very much." (FN, during the intervention)
- "…they liked to mark their peers' work…it was fun." (FN, during the intervention)

The data shows that the participants like to use "Jas-To-Bloom" and enjoy making it. They also like to correct their friends' mistakes using "Jas-To-Bloom". It makes the participants feeling confident and successful when they are able to identify the error. The participants are fully engaged in the teaching and learning process while using the "Jas-To-Bloom" joyously.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

Based on the findings, it is concluded that the social constructivist theory is implemented in the "Jas-To-Bloom". The application of Zone of Proximal Development and task-based learning are prominent in the use of "Jas-To-Bloom". Besides, it is also found that "Jas-To-Bloom" is a useful strategy to assist the Year 3 pupils in improving their ability to write simples sentences. The pupils have shown a significant improvement in their writing ability

In summary, "Jas-To-Bloom" is helpful to improve pupils' ability in writing simple sentences. The findings of this research are valuable to the ESL pupils, ESL teachers and curricular developers. Through this study, the ESL pupils can learn and improve on their writing skill. As for the ESL teachers, they get the opportunities to see the application of social constructivist theory in the "Jas-To-Bloom". The teachers can explore and learn to integrate this theory into their teaching practices. Also, the research highlights the issues in writing simple sentences. Thus, the curricular developers get the awareness to put more emphasis on simple sentence level in primary level one syllabus so as to build a strong writing foundation among the ESL pupils.

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