



**THE EFFICACY OF USING CONCEPT OF RELATABILITY IN TEACHING OF
LITERATURE FOR MALAYSIAN SCHOOL STUDENTS**

VASUNDERA A/P KUMARASAN

2004922

SUPERVISOR: MS. MALVIN KAUR A/P KUNDEN SINGH

UALZ3023 FYP2 REPORT

**SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONS) ENGLISH EDUCATION
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**

OCTOBER TRIMESTER 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who have supported me throughout the journey of completing this final year project. First and foremost, I extend my sincere thanks to my supervisor, Ms. Malvin Kaur A/P Kunden Singh, whose guidance, expertise, and unwavering support have been invaluable throughout this research process. Her insightful feedback and encouragement have significantly contributed to the quality of this work.

I am also deeply grateful to my parents, whose unconditional love, patience, and support have been a constant source of strength and motivation. Their belief in my abilities has been instrumental in helping me overcome challenges and persevere. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the various stakeholders who have contributed to this project, including Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) lecturers and students, SK (ACS) Methodist Kampar students and teachers, as well as the authorities. Their cooperation, time, and input have been crucial in shaping this research. Finally, I extend my appreciation to my friends and colleagues who have offered their support and encouragement throughout this academic journey. This project would not have been possible without the collective support of all these individuals, and I am truly thankful for their contributions.

ABSTRACT

Literature is an area of language that many students show apathy towards in the 21st century as education is moving vastly. One of the reasons behind this is literature being portrayed as unrelatable and mere form of art. The simple concept of relatability can improve the quality of both teaching and learning in the literary domain. Many teaching approaches are used in schools to teach literature in Malaysian schools. Relatability on the other hand is a concept that defines aspects that are closely connected to one's real life experiences. This concept shall be implemented in teaching of literature to make literature an expression of life and not just a form of art. This initiative curbs the declining interest in the literature pursuit as it introduces the concept of relatability as a teaching approach. This study investigates the efficacy of using the concept of relatability to teach literature in Malaysian primary schools. The experimental designed study, combining quantitative analysis of students pretest and post-test with qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews and controlled implementations, yielded positive results. The research was conducted in a primary school in the Southern Kinta District of Perak with a sample of 33 Year 6 students and 3 english language teachers. Findings reveal that incorporating the concept of relatability in teaching literature makes literature learning more relatable for the students. This report provides insightful contributions and recommendations for educators and also a foundation for research on teaching approaches of literature for 21st-century classrooms.

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1.0 CHAPTER 1

1.1 Background of Study

Relatability is a concept that highlights the ability to sympathize and parallelize with a matter in relation to one's real-life experiences (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2023). An aspect is relatable when an individual is able to closely correlate to the aspect based on their lives. Relatability plays a crucial role in the memory of a person. According to Robert Stahl's Information Processing Model proposed in 1985, when an event or information is similar to one's personal life incidents, then the new memory ties itself close to the initial event creating a chain of occurrences that is stored in the mind as one folder. When recalled, the entire series of events and information are retrieved together (Sousa, 2022, p.38). This amazing mechanism in the human brain allows efficient storage of memory through the simple concept of relatability. In his book *How the Brain Learns*, David Sousa has shown how the brain processes information through which he explains that when the brain is trained to connect meaning to new information it gets stored in the long-term memory. He also adds that educators should put good use to making meaning in learning and teaching as well as aiding students in providing useful information for them by relevance (Sousa, 2022, p. 38). In fact, the concept of relatability is just as important not only in education but also in many aspects such as communication and relationships. In a study conducted in the United States and Brazil to identify the most

enjoyable way of learning for Gen Z college students yielded that relatability in learning was one of the most preferred ways of learning among them. Being able to apply taught content in relevance to their current and past lives has made it much easier to understand the content in-depth (Seemiller et al.). The concept of relatability can often be helpful in learning and creating meaningful experiences in schools that can be fruitful in the future.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Although the concept of relatability seems to be beneficial in teaching, it is often overlooked in the English subject especially in Teaching of Literature. Literature should be a space of creativity for students to explore the artistry of the language and for that students should be able to understand, and closely relate to the literary material in relevance to their own experiences. Unfortunately, due to syntactic and lexical difficulty, phonetic and semantics obscurity, the students perceive literature learning negatively. Another difficulty is the cultural barrier that students have towards other Asian cultures creates a hurdle for them in relating and learning Literature (Khatib et al. 2011). The lack of interest and fear towards literature has resulted in the abstinence of world literatures as a whole and many students fail to see the value of history and culture. The concept of relatability can be promoted in schools from a young age in the English subject and prominently in teaching of literature. In the vast moving education system of Malaysia, students should be taught on relating to information and making meaning to the taught material. Many approaches are used to teach literature in schools currently and many past studies suggest that the moral-philosophical method is a common approach to teach literature (Suhaimi Engku Atek et al., 2020). However, the efficacy of these approaches remain vague. Besides, the usage and efficiency of using the concept of relatability in the teaching approaches to teach literature is left unexplored in the research pedagogy.

1.3 Research Questions

The Research Queries are as follows:

- I) What are the teaching approaches used by teachers to teach literary materials in Malaysian Schools?
- II) Why is the implementation of the concept of relatability important in teaching literature?
- III) What is the connection between the teaching approach and the learning quality of literature in classrooms?

1.4 Research Objectives

The present study aims to obtain the following objectives:

- I) To identify the teaching approaches used by the teachers to teach literature in Malaysian schools.
- II) To study the efficacy of using the concept of relatability in teaching of literature in Malaysian schools.

III) To examine the relationship between the teaching approaches and the quality of learning literature in Malaysian schools.

1.5 Significance of Study

This study will be beneficial to numerous parties including the students, teachers and trainee teachers. As the principle of study may result in an increased efficacy in student's understanding, tertiary students and lecturers may also benefit from the study. On another perspective it also increases both the teaching and the learning quality in an institution as the learning environment is more relatable when the concept of relatability is implied. Literature learning can be enjoyed by children from primary schools all the way up to tertiary domains.

1.6 Limitation of Study

The study might be a little distinctive to other components of English. The study is an experimental study that is being carried out only in Malaysian Primary classrooms. Depending on the regions, the results of the research might vary accordingly. Alongside, the proficiency of the students also heavily affect the direction of the research as well as the age of the students being a variable factor as well. On the other hand, the study is dependent on the qualitative approach due to the context of it. Although some quantitative aspects are included, the study is mostly qualitative.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1 Teaching Literature (Teaching of Literature)

Teaching of literature refers to the subject of teaching literature in classrooms. In this context the teaching of literary materials in a classroom.

1.7.2 Teaching Approach

A teaching approach is to use a particular technique to teach a material. In teaching literature, the approach used by the instructor is a teaching approach and it can differ from one to another depending on the students' proficiency.

1.7.3 Concept of Relatability

According to Dzakiria, the Concept of relatability can be defined as the degree of relatedness of one content to another content or the personal lives of the learners. It is also often referred to as the theory of relatability. It basically means, to the extent that a taught material is relatable to the students' lives and experiences (Dzakiria, 2012).

1.7.4 Literary Contents and Materials

The materials used to teach literature in a classroom is a material. It can be anything from props to poetry, stories or even digital materials. All the materials that aid the teaching process can be considered a teaching material.

1.7.5 Taught Content

Taught content refers to the materials that are being taught in the classroom.

1.7.6 Generation Z

Generation Z are people (generally Americans) whom are born in the late 1990s and early 2000s and they are typically referred as Gen-Z (Eldridge, 2023).

2.0 CHAPTER 2

Introduction

This chapter of the study will enclose literature reviews of the research in terms of the teaching of literature domain and the approaches used in the component to teach students. Furthermore, the relationship between the teaching approach and the learning quality is also studied. The concept of relatability, its appearance in past-studies as well as the usage of the 1983 Keller's ARCS Model in creating relevance are disclosed. Lastly, zooming into the research gap of the study and its justifications on the lack of research on the proposed concept.

2.1 Teaching of Literature

Teaching of Literature is also known as teaching language arts in a classroom globally in ESL classrooms. The education system is generally optimistic and oftentimes focuses on the holistic aspects of academia, that is exactly what is imparted in most subjects in schools. On the other hand, literature creates an alternative perspective. According to Elizabeth T. E (2019), it is a

space for educators to create awareness on global topics and political intercessions of a nation. In other words, the intricate process of how today's belief systems are created, are taught in literature (Elizabeth Thomas et al., 2019). The racial disintegration that started at one point and the current ideology of racial harmony are all taught in literary works such as *A Raisin in The Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (Elizabeth Thomas et al., 2019). Beyond that, teaching of literature also serves a purpose to help students make meaning in what they learn as stated by Lodding et al. (2019). Through commonly used mediums such as genre instructions, silent reading, book presentations and classroom discussions, students are taught how to make meaning, learn values of a culture, explore genres in creative language and mental enrichment (Lodding et al., 2019).

Naimi (2019) states that Literature is also a space for readers to think, dream and share common thoughts and ideologies. In teaching this component, students need guidance to study literary materials and their importance in education. Besides, literature also helps in the development of all 4 language aspects (speaking, listening, reading and writing) while simultaneously encouraging critical and creative thinking (Naimi, 2019). Hence, it is evident that teaching literature is important in the English language subject. According to another past study by Syahrul.N (2021), literature is a substantial component in language development. The materials chosen to be taught are very important and the classrooms should be engaging and penetrative enough. This way of teaching literature makes sure that the students are able to understand the main messages that are conveyed through the material and have their own perspectives towards literature as well. As teachers, during this process, appreciation of every students' perspectives is also important as part of learning (Syahrul, 2021).

2.2 Teaching Approaches of TOL

For so many decades, educators have used many approaches to teach the literary component in ESL classrooms. Some of them are the integrated approach where the students directly make meaning through their personal life experiences. The language-based approach is also widely used, where the students learn to thoroughly analyse the creative use of language and learn stylistics such as metaphors and simile. Primary schools tend to utilize this method to ensure the children are intrigued to learn literature. A school in Johor has used this method and it shows effectiveness in keeping the children interested throughout the lessons. It was also encouraged to incorporate this method in overall language lessons among ESl learners (Ab Hamid and Abdul Aziz 2020). According to Timucin (2001), these approaches are the alternatives to the previously mentioned moral-philosophical method which is a more direct and traditional approach to teaching literature and they are more student-centred in nature (Timucin, 2001).

In Malaysian classrooms, group activities are also widely used to teach literature. These activities are classified according to their respective rationales such as content-teaching, personal-enrichment and also language-directed. In content-teaching, the students read, learn and then they discuss the literary material. As for personal-enrichment, the students learn to relate the materials and lastly the language-directed approach is very similar to the widely used language-based approach. As mentioned by Ghazali et al. (2009), these group activities are widely used strategies in the Malaysian classrooms and teachers and students do prefer these methods in learning literature (Ghazali et al., 2009). Teaching approaches alter the literature learning experience for students in ESL classrooms.

Another intricate study on the literature teaching methods by Fikray et al. (2022) has listed six teaching approaches that are widely used in Malaysian ESL classrooms. The approaches are the information-based approach that highlights the knowledge in the material, paraphrastic approach that uses rewarding systems, code-switching and direct translations in teaching and

the stylistic approach that analyses the linguistic aspects of the material. Other approaches disclosed in the study are the language-based approach which emphasizes on the syntax, semantics and phonology of the literary material, reader-response approach that focuses on creating relevance within the taught material and lastly the commonly known moral-philosophical method that illustrates the moral values of the materials. These methods are widely in practice in Malaysia to teach literature to the students (Fikray et al., 2022).

In an alternative context Chalise (2023) implies that literature teaching is also used as a psychological method of therapy. This means that teaching literature involves a deep brain-stimulation especially in self-exploratory aspects of the students. Therefore it can also be considered as a way for teachers to teach empathy, psychological development and well being to the students through literary materials. This is also a great approach to teach literature as it helps in the emotional regulation of the students (Chalise, 2023).

2.3 The Relationship Between Teaching Approaches and Learning Quality

Teaching approaches can impact the learning quality directly. In other words, the teaching approach and learning outcome can have a correlative relationship. Creative ways to teach content can yield a positive outcome in classrooms. Malaysian classrooms are relatively larger in size even up to 30 students in classes, a teaching approach that caters to large groups is challenging as the effectiveness of the approach is still crucial. According to the study done by Carpenter (2006), four methods were studied for their effectiveness in larger classrooms, the direct lecture method, lecture followed by discussions, the jigsaw method and also the case study method. The jigsaw method was proven to be the most effective method according to students' achieved learning outcomes (Carpenter, 2006).

In a study done by the Taiwanese educators Huang et al. (2019), the Keller's ARCS 1983 Model was used with AR (Augmented Reality) to create a relative, context-aware environment for elementary students to learn contexts. The study highlights that the teaching approach using AR recreates reality and is able to make students understand better therefore learn better (Huang et al., 2019). This shows that the teaching approach positively correlates to the learning outcome. To be more specific, the students felt that the AR had created a more relatable environment for the students.

Exploring further into the correlation between teaching approaches and the learning quality, it can be said that specific teaching methods can benefit the learning quality significantly. A past study on creating quality teachers by Hamid (2020), it has been shown that understanding the specific needs of students, tailoring classes according to the attributes of children to motivate their learning process and adapting materials accordingly affects the students' mental development positively. The cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects of the mind are developing positively when the teaching methods are effective (Hamid, 2020). This is also supported by another study on the efficiency of using problem-solving methods to improve learning quality (Kuniati et al., 2021). The study found out that using this particular method was successfully able to trigger psychomotor skills of the students. The students were able to learn better due to increased levels of cognitive and affective thinking skills (Kuniati et al., 2021). These studies reveal that the teaching methods used in the classrooms help the students possess different skills and subsequently these skills affect the learning quality of the classroom.

2.4 Concept of Relatability

Concept of Relatability makes sure that students relate to the taught content. The teaching approaches may adapt to any relativity such as the students' culture, personal experience and stages of life. Using cultural models that depict the target students' culture helps them to relate to the taught content and learn at ease. Relatability can be introduced to students by including their culture in teaching. Many other literary mediums such as stories and fairy tales can be used in teaching the concept of relatability in the form of literature (Cleto and Warman). According to Cleto and Warman from *Marvels and Tales* (2019), teaching fairy tales and stories can promote a sense of identity among the students while initiating the complex emotion of empathizing with others. Children then learn to explore cultural values through the stories that are taught to them. As a result the students relate the stories and fairy tales while simultaneously placing themselves as one of the characters. Placing themselves as one of the characters is one easy way of relating to the literary material (Cleto and Warman, 2019).

Another study conducted in Saudi Arabia by two scholars to investigate the effect of using cultural models to teach the English Language to EFL students (Ilyas and Afzal, 2021). According to Ilyas and Afzal (2021), this has resulted in an increase in cultural consciousness that led to increased student autonomy and motivation to learn the language. The students find it much easier to understand the content that is being taught as they are able to closely relate to their personal experiences and lives while learning. Beyond that, using cultural models also promote critical thinking as well as intrinsic motivation for the students to expand their learning experiences (Ilyas and Afzal).

Concept of Relatability is also mentioned in a study conducted in Australia that explores the role of relatability among Early Career Researchers (ECR). In the study, one of the main findings was that the quality of relatability of a content in the learning makes the most meaning out of it and creates more relevance to one's personal life. Towards the completion of the study, the ability to relate to a number of factors were identified such as relatability to educational

and research tools, and relatability to humans and environments. This study proposes that using the concept of relatability enhances the learning experience in the Research and Development field as well (Miller, 2019).

According to a past study by Kanai (2018), the concept of relatability in a classroom brings a sense of belonging and inclusivity to the students. By introducing the students to relatability, relating to reality while retaining the existing beliefs and ideologies is possible. Students are able to clearly use the existing ideas as scaffoldings while they learn new information and relate to them as a whole (Kanai, 2018). Overall, the concept of relatability makes learning quality better and it can be adapted in the classroom using the ARCS Model as reference.

2.5 ARCS Model by Keller 1983 and The Effect of Relevance

The ARCS Model was proposed by John M.Keller in 1983 to encourage learning motivation through relevance. According to Song and Kao (2023), the Model suggests four tactics namely Attention, Relevance, Confidence & Satisfaction. To imply this model a subject matter shall be used to grab attention (Attention) first. While maintaining the attention, then the subject matter is to be altered to suit the students (Relevance) which is usually towards cultural adaptation. Now there is a bridge from the students' prior knowledge and the new knowledge that the instructor wants to convey. As the students are able to relate to the subject, their confidence (Confidence) improves. This tactic expects them to be able to clarify, provide feedback and delegate tasks well. Instructors must be careful to set these expectations clearly. Finally, the learning process is then complete (Satisfaction) where the students attain a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as they are able to relate what they know to what is taught (Song and Kao, 2023). This model can be used by teachers to adapt materials to promote motivation and to ensure learning content is relevant in an ESL classroom.

A case study done by Kim (2020) highlights that the ARCS Model is also beneficial in terms of teachers relevance as well. When using the Model in a classroom, the teacher experiences more exposure and receives a longer attention span from the students. Beyond that, this makes it easier for the teacher to relate to the students providing the teacher with more teaching confidence and satisfaction. The study states that it is a great teaching model for teachers (Kim, 2020). It can be seen that using the ARCS model as a reference model helps in teaching and also controlled implementations where the teacher might need more attention and involvement from the students. Another study reveals that the ARCS model acts as a great motivating strategy in a classroom. The relevance factor that this model promotes makes learning fun for students thus, making it a motivating environment for the students to learn. The relatedness the students experience helps them to be intrinsically motivated to learn well (Karimi et al., 2018).

2.6 Research Gap

After an in-depth study, it is evident that few studies in the Teaching of Literature domain are focussed on the relevance and suitability of literary materials used in the classrooms. A number of them are aimed at the most commonly used moral-philosophical approach in teaching literature, information-based approach as well as the paraphrastic approach. A particular study has investigated the effectiveness of the common approach used and another study suggested the efficacy of alternative methods to teach instead. Although the studies spotlight that relatedness to the materials check the learning outcomes, the concept of relatability is not well-established and its importance in learning has not been appreciated in education, especially teaching of literature. This study aims to give an insight on the preference and efficiency of using the concept of relatability in teaching literature especially in Malaysian school settings.

This study also aims to establish the existence of the concept of relatability as an indirect success factor in many past researches involving relatable teaching methods in classrooms.

3.0 CHAPTER 3

Introduction

This research adheres to an experimental design to scrutinize the effectiveness of integrating the concept of relatability in teaching literature. The study involves three stages namely, pre-implementation, controlled implementation, and post-implementation. Focused on higher-secondary Malaysian school students and English teachers, this study seeks to gauge the impact

of the concept of relatability in teaching the literature component of the English Language Subject.

3.1 Research Design

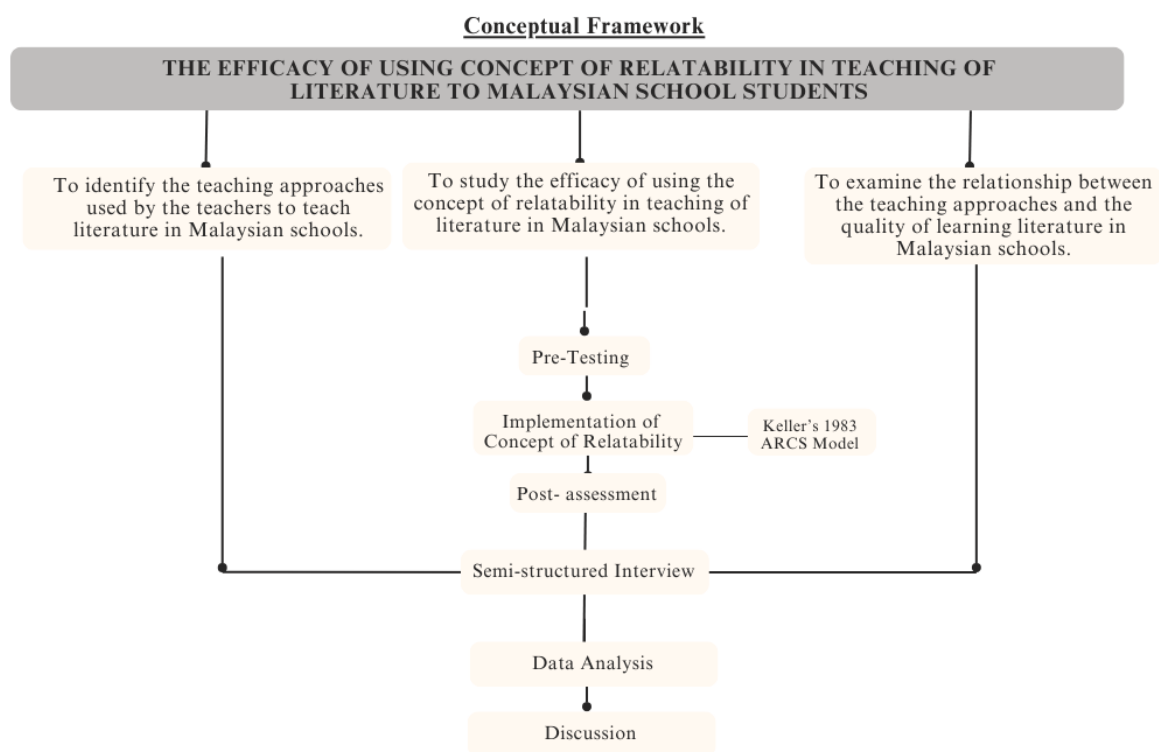
The research adopts an experimental design, comprising pre-implementation, controlled implementation, and post-implementation phases (Outhwaite et al., 2019). These sequential stages provide a structured framework to assess the influence of the proposed concept on teaching literature. The pre-implementation phase involves a pre-test to establish baseline understanding on the students current proficiency. During the controlled implementation, the proposed concept is to be implemented. Thus, adaptation of literary materials need to be done using Keller's 1983 ARCS Model as a guide during this stage. Finally, the post-implementation phase assesses the efficiency of the concept through subjective post-assessments and semi-structured interviews.

3.2 Research Framework

Embedded within the experimental design, the research framework navigates through key stages. It commences with the pre-implementation phase, moves to a controlled implementation of the concept of relatability, and concludes with a post-implementation evaluation. During pre-implementation, the first instrument, the pre-test will be carried out, where the students will be seated for a brief test. This test will ensure the current proficiency of the students is known and recognised. The implementation stage then includes teaching the students literary contexts from the current Malaysian textbooks, anthologies and poetry collections. With the aid of the Keller's ARCS Model, the materials will be adapted to be relevant to the students. The students will also be taught on how to relate to the taught content.

As per sequence, the post-implementation stage will be the third instrument, the post-test will be answered by the students. This framework provides a comprehensive structure for investigating the application of relatability in literature teaching, ensuring a systematic analysis of its efficacy.

3.3 Conceptual Framework of The Concept of Relatability



3.4 Research Instruments

The research utilizes multiple instruments to gather comprehensive data. A pre-test, the initial assessment tool, consisting of multiple-choice and subjective forms. This instrument contains an intermediate level literary material from one of Anthology of Poems for Years 4, 5, and 6

which is part of the national English language syllabus, followed by objective questions and a handful of subjective questions. The implementation phase employs the concept of relatability where the students are taught literary materials such as poems and short stories with the proposed concept being implemented during the production stage. John. M. Keller's 1983 ARCS model will be used for adapting class materials to the relevance of Malaysian culture. The third instrument, a post-test will be conducted where the students will be answering another intermediate level literary paper with both objective and subjective segments. Lastly, semi-structured interviews further enrich the research, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the teachers perspectives on this implementation and the concept.

3.5 Samples and Sampling Methods

Malaysian primary school students, preferably with at least one year of exposure to literature classes and at least three English teachers will be the sample. Convenient sampling is the sampling technique. This means the students and teachers will be chosen based on availability, aligning with the non-probability sampling strategy. This approach facilitates practical sample selection while maintaining a focus on those with substantial experience in literature education (Farrokhi and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012).

3.6 Data Collection

Considering the multi-layered nature of the study, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods is to be conducted. Surveys and pre-tests and post-tests offer

quantitative data, while semi-structured interviews provide a qualitative understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions on the proposed concept.

3.7 Data Analysis

To analyze the collected data effectively, a mixed-methods approach is to be adapted. Quantitative data from pre-tests and post-tests can be analysed manually via statistical analyses, while qualitative data from interviews can be thematically analyzed. This comprehensive strategy ensures a holistic interpretation of the research findings (Brooks et al., 2018).

Summary

In conclusion, this research adopts an experimental design to systematically investigate the impact of incorporating the concept of relatability in teaching literature for higher-secondary Malaysian primary school students. The research framework, guided by the ARCS model in material adaptation, shapes the strategic implementation of relatability in teaching literature. Utilizing a diverse set of research instruments and sampling methods, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the effectiveness of relatability in the Malaysian educational context. The data collection, descriptive and thematic analysis methods further enhance the depth and breadth of insights gathered, contributing valuable perspectives from both students and teachers. This study may contribute to the future pedagogical studies and the education field providing insights to the secondary and tertiary institutions.

4.0 CHAPTER 4

Introduction

This chapter illustrates the data collection process for the research and the mixed-method study which comprises an experimental research design with a pretest, controlled implementations and a post-test. The findings of the proposed methods would be able to theorize the research questions and objectives. The research analysis would utilize tables to illustrate the obtained data, where the data includes the scores obtained by each of the students during pre-test and post-test. A total of 34 students from SK Methodist (ACS) Kampar, were sampled by availability for the study. The obtained scores from the pre-test and the post-test were tabulated and analysed. On the other hand, a thematic analysis would be carried out to analyse the data obtained from the structured-interviews provided by 3 English teachers from the school who were available for the research.

4.1 Data Analysis of Research Objective 1 - To Identify the Teaching Approaches used by the Teachers to Teach Literature in Malaysian Schools.

To achieve the second objective of study, structured interviews were carried out in identifying the methods used to teach literature in SK Methodist (ACS) Kampar. The data from the structures-interviews would be presented in the form of transcripts. The participants involved in the interviews are the English language teachers from the school, who were sampled by availability. Before the interview started, the teachers were given an introductory passage for them to prepare for the interview as it was mostly spontaneous due to the nature of the sampling. The interview consists of two sections A & B. Section A consists of questions directioned to study the approaches used to teach literature in Malaysian schools. Section B of the interview questions on the concept of relatability. The structured interviews were carried out in the school and the teachers were asked questions according to the script prepared. All three teachers were interviewed with the same order of questions and their responses were recorded for transcription purposes.

4.1.1 Participants Demographic Data

The teachers particulars are as follows:

Participant	Gender	Age	Years of Experience
1	Male	63	40 + years
2	Male	31	8 + years
3	Female	65	40 + years

Table 4.1.1 Demographic Data of Interviewees

The interviewees were SK Methodist (ACS) Kampar school English teachers. Three teachers were interviewed through availability. Two out of them are veteran teachers who had taught a multitude of students and the other teacher had slightly over 8 years of experience in the teaching field.

Section A: Approaches to Teach Literature

This section of the interview consists of 6 questions and 4 of them will be thematically analysed according to the main themes identified in the semi-structured interview.

4.1.2 Teaching Literature in Classrooms

This segment shows that all three teachers incorporate literature into their classrooms regularly.

Interviewee 1: Yes.

Interviewee 2 : Yes, I do.

Interviewee 3 : Yes, 1 day a week.

4.1.3 The importance of Literature in English Classrooms

In referring to the importance of the teaching literature in classrooms, the teachers agreed on various perspectives such as using literature as a medium to teach moral values, as a form of self-exploration and self-expression and also expansion of language proficiency.

Importance of Literature	Explanations	Interviewee Response
Medium for Moral Values	Literature is a way for pupils to learn about moral values through characterization of stories which gives them an exemplary depiction of righteousness.	<i>I1: ...Normally they learn about moral values and then they can distinguish the characters that they should follow like...</i>
Form of Self-Exploration	Pupils are able to learn and explore more on their emotions through literature.	<i>I2: ...To express their emotions and everything...</i>
Expansion of Language Proficiency	Various creative usages of the language are used which in turn help the students learn and explore other elements of the English Language	<i>I3: Literature is an element where it strengthens the vocabulary of the pupils...</i>

Table 4.1.3 Importance of Literature

4.1.4 The Teaching Approaches Used to Teach Literature

The teacher used a variety of methods to teach literature in their classrooms including commonly known methods such as the visual-learning method, audio-lingual methods and virtual learning method which uses the aid of virtual assistants. Question- and answer method is also utilized to reinforce the literature class.

Approaches Used to Teach Literature	Explanations	Interviewee Response
Visual Learning	Using the TV to let the pupils watch short stories is used commonly as the school had the facility.	<i>I1: ...television to play a short story there and the pupils would watch...</i>
Audio Learning	Audio-dependant learning is used to help the senses of the students engaged in the learning process.	<i>I2: ... depend on a lot of videos, recordings, audio recordings...</i>
Virtual Learning	Many videos and audio-lingual learning methods are used and perceived to be an effective method as well.	<i>I3: ...To me the most effective approach is virtual learning ...</i>

Table 4.1.4 Literature Approaches used In Classrooms

4.1.5 Effective Methods in Teaching Literature to Primary Students

This segment of the interview was to identify the most effective methods to teach literature from the teachers' perspective. It revealed that the teachers do indeed have a preferred method to teach literature effectively. It was suggested that regardless of the method, the reinforcement using Question and Answer method is a must especially when it comes to mixed-proficiency schools. Furthermore, visual blended methods are preferred as they offer something to intrigue the pupils.

Effective Approaches Teach Literature	Explanations	Interviewee Response
Visual-Blended Approach	<p>Using both the traditional method of explaining thoroughly combined with visual aids are used to teach literature.</p> <p>Since most of the students are digital natives, they tend to learn better with the aid of technology</p> <p>Teaching with technology helps keep the senses of the students active as they learn.</p>	<p><i>I1: ...visual and blended method...</i></p> <p><i>I2: ...helps the current generation who actually depend a lot on handphones</i></p> <p><i>I3: ...they are able to see and learn...</i></p>

Table 4.1.5 Effective Literature Approaches

4.2 Data Analysis of Research Objective 2 - To Study the Efficacy of Using Concept of Relatability in Teaching of Literature in Malaysian School

The data from the pre-tests and post-tests would be presented in the form of a table. The first table contains the overall demographic data of the students followed by the pretest and post-test scores obtained by the students. The pre-test and post-test scores will then be analysed further to understand the direction of the research. The participants involved in the study are from two different classes with mixed-proficiencies from SK Methodist (ACS) Kampar. Prior to the pretest, the students were taught to analyse simple poetry by their respective English language teachers. The pretest consisted of a poem from the Malaysian School Literature Anthology (UBM, 2013) "A Garden" by Leila Berg. This poem was a low-proficiency poem as the students were of mixed-proficiency making sure all the students could take part. It had two sections, the first section had objective questions followed by subjective questions in the second section. The test ensured to test the level of relatability the students possessed

before the implementation. They were then given a fixed period of time to attempt the pretest. Their scores for the pre-test were recorded.

A controlled implementation of 5 weeks was carried out after the pretest. The students were taught the concept of relatability. The emphasis was to make sure they are relating to what they learn in the classroom. They were taught to thoroughly understand the taught material and try to relate and connect deeply with what they have learnt. This was reflected in the lesson outcomes of the classes.

After the controlled implementation, the students were given a post-test with a poem of similar difficulty as the pretest to ensure data reliability. Another poem "Swinging" by Leila Berg was chosen and it is a low-proficiency poem as well. The allocated time for both pre-tests and post-tests were the same. The obtained scores from the post-test were also recorded. Both data were then analysed to understand the flow of the research better.

4.2.1 Demographic Data of Students

Demography	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
12 years old	34	100.00
Gender		
Male	17	50.00
Female	17	50.00

Table 4.2.1 Students' Demography

The demographic data represents the distribution of age and gender of the students, all of whom are 12 years old. The gender distribution is evenly split, with 50% of the participants being male and being female. This even distribution across both age and gender suggests a balanced representation within

this specific demographic group, allowing for comparisons and analysis that are not skewed by age or gender differences.

4.2.2 Scores Obtained in Pretest and Post-test

Student	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score
S1	16	20
S2	15	20
S3	14	18
S4	14	19
S5	16	17
S6	20	20
S7	15	18
S8	17	20
S9	18	20
S10	20	20
S11	18	20
S12	17	19
S13	9	18
S14	19	20
S15	16	18
S16	16	18
S17	13	18
S18	10	18
S19	16	18

S20	12	20
S21	13	20
S22	15	19
S23	20	20
S24	15	20
S25	10	17
S26	17	19
S27	14	18
S28	15	18
S29	19	18
S30	19	18
S31	19	20
S32	18	19
S33	18	19
S34	19	18

Table 4.2.2 Pretest & Post-test Distribution

The table displays the test scores obtained by the students in their pretest and post-tests respectively. The pretest shows the initial ability (proficiency) of the students in poetry analysis as it is. The post-test on the other hand depicts the ability of the students after the continuous implementation of the concept of relatability. The distribution of the pretest and post-test scores shows the improvement of the students ability in poetry analysis along with relating to the taught content. The degree of improvement in the scores can be seen further in the statistical analysis. The statistical analysis will be able to indicate the efficacy of the concept of relatability used in the study.

4.2.3 Pretest and Post-Test

The pretest and post-test scores are then used to tabulate the mean, mode, median and standard deviation to. The data analysis of student performance through pretest and post-test scores, using statistical measures such as mode, median, mean, and standard deviation. The mode is the test score with the highest frequency in the data. According to Maitournam (2019), the mean provides a central score around which the data points are distributed from. It shows the average score which can be used to predict the overall scores of the test scores. The second quartile of the test scores is the median, which marks the middle score of the data set. To further analyse the test scores, standard deviation is calculated to understand the measure of variation in a set of data. Lower standard deviations indicate the scores being closer to the mean, while higher standard deviations indicate the scores being spread out over a wider range (Darling, 2024).

Tabulation	Pretest	Post-test
Mode	15,16,19	18,20
Median	16	19
Mean	15.94	18.88
Standard Deviation	2.89	0.99

Table 4.2.3 Pretest & Post-test Statistical Analysis

In the pretest, the mode scores are 15, 16, and 19. The median score is 16, this means that half of the students scored below and half scored above this value, suggesting a central possibility close to the mode and mean. The mean score of 15.94 confirms that this central tendency is slightly lower than the median, which indicates a slight skew in the lower range of scores. The standard deviation of 2.89 shows that there was moderate variability in the pretest scores, meaning that students' performances were spread out around the stated mean scores.

In the post-test, the mode scores shifted to 18 and 20, which reflects an overall improvement in performance. The median increased to 19, showing that the central score in the post-test is higher than in the pretest. The mean also increased significantly to 18.88, which illustrates that the students performed better in the post-test. Notably, the standard deviation decreased to 0.99, which indicates that the scores were more consistent and clustered closely around the mean score in the post-test. The implementation of the proposed concept improved the scores and yielded a uniform performance among the students.

Semi-structured Interview Analysis

4.2.4 The Concept of Relatability

This segment is to identify the exposure of the interviewees towards the concept of relatability. While one interviewee has not heard of the concept at all, the other two of them knew the concept as it is.

Interviewee 1: I have heard but to tell you that I really 100% understand it, I can't say that.

Interviewee 2: Yes, I have heard of it.

Interviewee 3: No. I'm sorry.

4.2.5 The Perception of Malaysian School Literary Materials and Relatability

The next question imposed to the interviewees was on their opinion on the literary material used to teach Malaysian students and the relatability of the materials in coherence to Malaysian (Asian) culture. Some examples such as *The Jungle Book*, *Gulliver's Travels* and *The Wizard of Oz* were included in the interview to give the interviewees an exemplary explanation before they gave their opinion on the materials used. The interviews were in harmony as they all agreed on the materials being unrelatable to the students as they encompass a different cultural context. It was also stated that the legacy of the local

Malaysian heroes are left behind and that it is far more relatable and noble for the students to learn and the teacher suggested some examples such as Pak Pandir legacy and the Lebai Malang story. It was suggested that the interest of literature is curtailing among the students due to this factor, as the culture they learn is hard for them to visualize in the first place.

Relatability of Malaysian Literature Materials	Explanations	Interviewee Response
Low Relatability	<p>The current literary materials are not related to Malaysian (Asian) culture in any terms.</p> <p>Students cannot comprehend the culture, characters introduced in the story which hinders them from appreciating such stories.</p> <p>The materials use a completely different cultural aspect which makes them new and foreign for the students, which also burdens the learning process.</p>	<p><i>I1: ...what we have is not connected to our surroundings, our culture, to the Malaysian background...</i></p> <p><i>I2: ...They have no idea what this whole story is about...</i></p> <p><i>I3: ...using a different setting with a different background. For a student in Malaysia, they'll find it very difficult for them to comprehend.</i></p>

Table 4.2.5 Malaysian Literary Materials and Relatability

4.2.6 The Usage of More Relatable Literary Materials to Teach Literature, Creating an Impact to Learn and Implore Literature Among the Students.

The question asked was to get the perceptions of the teachers if there was a change in the literary materials used in schools in which they were more localised to the Asian and Malaysian Culture. The teachers suggested that it might lift up their learning curve and the students will be more intrigued to learn literature. Some examples were also given by the teachers such as using Malaysian Folklore and introducing local culture knowledge such as fishermen-livelihood based stories which are said to be far more relatable to the students.

Impact of Relatable Literature Materials	Explanations	Interviewee Response
Exposure to Local Folklore	Using relatable literary materials can help the students learn of the local heroes whom they can relate to and learn from.	<i>I1: ...We have good local heroes. Some of the people don't even know of their existence...</i>
Increased Interest in Learning Literature	Exposure to relatable material allows the students to relate, imagine and learn at their own pace. This creates a riveting space of interest for the students. Providing stories that are rooted to Malaysian culture will spark the children's interest to learn literature.	<i>I2: ...more interesting for them...</i> <i>I3: Most students will be intrigued and I believe it...</i>

Table 4.2.6 The Impact of Relatable Literary Materials

4.2.7 Relatable Materials to be Included in Teaching to Increase Learning Quality

Correlation of Relatability and Learning Quality	Explanations	Interviewee Response
Relatable Curriculum Improves Overall Proficiency	When useful information is included in the syllabus, the students will be able to improve their language proficiency which will enhance their learning experience.	<i>I1: ...If you want to improve the English in Malaysia at present for this generation, it's important...</i>
Relatable Information Fosters Learning Interest	Students should be taught relatable information that they can use in their daily lives. They will also show interest in learning topics that they can use later on.	<i>I2: ...Yes, I do...everything in which they will be exposed very soon or later the students will be more interested in that particular subject.</i>

Table 4.2.7 Correlation of Relatability and Learning Quality

4.3 Data Analysis of Research Objective 3 - To Examine the Relationship Between the Teaching Approaches and The Quality of Learning Literature in Malaysian Schools.

4.3.1 Perception on Learning Quality

The interview was then directed towards studying the respondents' perception towards the learning quality of a classroom and the aspects that make up . The teachers had said that good knowledge that can be applied out of class can correlate to quality learning. Besides, they had also stated that understanding of a taught material and them relating to the knowledge is considered quality learning as well.

Perception on Learning Quality	Explanations	Interviewee Response
Applicability	The aspects that are taught in classrooms should be applicable in real-life. Then the learning itself is effective and useful to the students. Quality learning is when the knowledge acquired comes in handy for the students in their everyday lives.	<p><i>I1: ...So in my opinion learning quality refers to the applicability of them taking in the information and being able to apply what they learn...</i></p> <p><i>I2: ... they can relate to their understanding better if they can relate to something in their own life...</i></p> <p><i>I3: ...relate it to the environment or what they have around that...</i></p>

Comprehensive	Learning quality refers to the understanding of the students at the end of the lesson. Students should have learned the content in an in-depth manner.	<i>I3: ... at least have some understanding about what the content is all about...</i>
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Table 4.3.1 Perception on Learning Quality

4.3.2 The Correlation Between Teaching Approaches Used and the Learning Quality in the Classroom

The final question of Section A had revealed that the teachers do agree that the teaching approach is tied closely to the learning quality of the classroom. They have said that good teaching approaches in fact yield good learning quality by the end of the lesson. This is due to the increased motivation and drive among the students to learn the taught content and material.

Correlation of Teaching Approach and Learning Quality	Explanations	Interviewee Response
Achieving Learning Outcomes	A good teaching can be measured through the flow of the activity and the students learning what is expected to be learnt by the end of the lesson.	<i>I1: ...So a good teaching method which is sufficient should give a good learning quality...</i>

Effective Acquisition	The level of understanding of the students' determines the effectiveness of the teaching methods. Good teaching methods will be able to yield a good level of understanding among the students.	<p><i>I2: ...what we teach definitely matters in what we can see at the end of the learning process.</i></p> <p><i>I3: ...If the approach is good, the level of understanding will be better.</i></p>
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Table 4.3.2 Correlation of Teaching Approach and Learning Quality

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter showed the findings obtained from the study of the efficacy of the concept of relatability. Data from the pretests and post-tests were tabulated, while the data collected from the semi-structured interview sessions were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis.

5.0 CHAPTER 5

Introduction

This study delves into the effectiveness of various teaching approaches in Malaysian schools, particularly focusing on literature education. By analyzing pretest and post-test scores, the research provides insights into the evolution of student performance, highlighting the role of statistical measures such as mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. Additionally, the study explores the significance

of incorporating relatable literary materials and technology-enhanced methods to foster student engagement and improve learning outcomes. Through a comprehensive examination of these elements, the research offers valuable perspectives on enhancing English language education, paving the way for pedagogical innovation and cultural relevance in the classroom.

5.1 Discussion for Research Objective 1 - To Identify the Teaching Approaches used by the Teachers to Teach Literature in Malaysian Schools.

The study focused on identifying the teaching approaches used by teachers to teach literature in Malaysian schools. The research involved structured interviews with English language teachers from SK Methodist (ACS) Kampar school. Three English language teachers were interviewed and Two of them were veteran teachers with over 40 years of experience whereas one teacher has around 8+ years of experience. The interview comprised of two sections namely, the approaches used to teach literature and the exploration of the concept of relatability which is the primary concept of the research.

Importance of Literature in English Classrooms

Teachers unanimously agreed on the significance of teaching literature. Literature was viewed as a medium for teaching moral values, a form of self-exploration and self-expression and also as a resource to expand language proficiency. Teaching approaches used by the teachers'include visual learning method, using the TV to watch the short stories instead of reading them, audio learning method which relies on videos, recordings, and audio recordings and also virtual learning methods which utilize virtual assistants and technology-based approaches. Teachers preferred a "visual-blended approach" as an effective approach as it combines traditional explanations with visual aids. This was considered particularly effective for the current generation of digital natives

Discussion and Implications

The findings suggest that teachers in Malaysian schools recognize the value of incorporating literature into their English language classrooms. There's a clear trend towards using technology-enhanced teaching methods, reflecting an adaptation to the learning preferences of modern students. The preference for visual-blended approaches indicates a balance between traditional teaching methods and innovative, technology-driven strategies. These insights reflect the development of effective literature teaching strategies in the Malaysian education system, potentially leading to an improved engagement and learning outcomes for students.

5.2 Discussion for Research Objective 2 - To Study the Efficacy of Using Concept of Relatability in Teaching of Literature in Malaysian School

Pretest and Post-Test Analysis

The analysis of pretest and post-test scores provides valuable insights on the students' performance and the effectiveness of the implementation of the concept of relatability to teach literature. The statistical analysis includes the mode, median, mean, and standard deviation, offering a comprehensive view of the overall data. The pretest mode scores of 15, 16, and 19 indicate a distribution of scores with multiple high frequencies, suggesting variability in the students' performance. The median score of 16 suggests that half of the students scored below and half scored above this value, indicating a central tendency close to the mode and mean. The mean score of 15.94, slightly lower than the median, suggests a slight skew towards lower scores. A standard deviation of 2.89 indicates moderate variability in the pretest, reflecting a spread of scores around the mean scores.

As for the posttest, the shift in mode scores to 18 and 20 reflects an overall improvement in students' performance. The increase in the median score to 19 indicates a higher central score in the post-test compared to the pretest. The mean score of 18.88, which is higher than the pretest mean, illustrates the

improvement in average performance. A lower standard deviation of 0.99 in the post-test suggests that scores were more closely clustered around the mean, indicating more consistent performance among students as compared to the pretest.

Overall, the post-test results demonstrate a significant improvement in student performance, with higher central tendency measures and reduced variability. This suggests that the teaching methods employed were effective in enhancing student learning outcomes. As suggested by Hamid (2020) and Kurniati et al. (2021) effective teaching methods tend to motivate students internally as well as engage them in classes effectively which in turn yields an achieved learning outcome.

Impact of Relatable Literature Materials

The findings highlight the importance of using relatable literature materials in teaching to enhance student engagement and learning quality. Using relatable literary materials, such as Malaysian folklore, helps students connect with local heroes and cultural narratives. This exposure fosters a sense of identity and pride, making learning more meaningful and engaging. Relatable materials allow students to connect with the content, sparking their interest and imagination. This creates a dynamic learning environment where students are more motivated to explore and learn at their own pace. As mentioned by Ilyas and Afzal, (2021) relatable materials spark a sense of identity and help students learn better through the concept of relatability. Incorporating relatable information into the curriculum enhances language proficiency and learning quality. Students are more likely to engage with content that is relevant to their lives and experiences, leading to improved learning outcomes.

5.3 Discussion for Research Objective 3 - To Examine the Relationship Between the Teaching Approaches and The Quality of Learning Literature in Malaysian Schools.

The pretest and post-test results reveal a significant improvement in student performance, which gives way to a deeper analysis. Looking into the shift in central tendency paves a clear trend in the efficacy of the concept of relatability. The mean score increased from 15.94 in the pretest to 18.88 in the post-test, indicating a substantial overall improvement. The median shifted from 16 to 19, suggesting that the improvement was consistent across the student population, not just driven by a few high performers. Furthermore, the standard deviation decreased dramatically from 2.89 in the pretest to 0.99 in the post-test. This reduction implies a more homogeneous performance level after the intervention, potentially indicating that the teaching methods were effective across different student ability levels. The post-test mode scores of 18 and 20 suggest a concentration of high achievers, indicating that the teaching methods may have been particularly effective for pushing students towards excellence.

Effectiveness of Teaching Approaches

The significant improvement in scores strongly suggests that the teaching approaches employed between the pretest and post-test were highly effective. The narrowing of the performance gap (as indicated by the reduced standard deviation) implies that these methods may be particularly good at addressing the needs of diverse learners. Given the marked improvement and reduced variability in scores, there might be an opportunity to standardize these effective teaching methods across a broader range of schools or subjects. As mentioned in a study by Huang et al. (2019), the outcomes of the classrooms reflect directly on the effectiveness of the teaching approach utilised by the teacher. Just as AR helped the students to relate and visualise to what they have learnt, concept of relatability implementations in classes have created a similar effect.

The Role of Relatable Literary Materials

The findings regarding relatable literary materials offer intriguing insights into pedagogical strategies on choosing resources for Malaysian students. The emphasis on Malaysian folklore and local heroes suggests that cultural relevance is a key factor in engaging students. This approach aligns with broader educational theories about the importance of culturally responsive teaching. By incorporating relatable materials, teachers are effectively bridging the gap between academic content and students' personal

experiences. This strategy may be particularly effective in fostering critical thinking skills as students learn to apply literary concepts to familiar contexts. The success of relatable materials in literature classes suggests potential benefits in other subjects. There may be opportunities to extend this approach to subjects like history, social studies, or even sciences by contextualizing content within local or relatable frameworks.

On a broader scale, the correlation between relatable curriculum and improved overall proficiency suggests that this approach might have long-lasting effects on students' language skills. This could have implications for future academic performance and even career prospects in a globalized world where English proficiency is highly valued.

While focusing on relatable, local content is beneficial, there's a need to ensure students are also exposed to diverse, global literature to broaden their perspectives. Future research could explore how to strike an optimal balance between local and international literary content. Implementing these approaches on a larger scale may require significant teacher training and resource development. Further studies could investigate the most effective ways to train teachers in using relatable materials and technology-enhanced methods. While the short-term improvements are clear, longitudinal studies would be valuable to assess the long-term impact of these teaching methods on students' academic performance and overall English proficiency. Given the effectiveness of visual-blended approaches, there's potential for further integration of technology in literature teaching. Future research could explore innovative ways to combine traditional storytelling with digital tools to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Limitations of Study

As much as the research was able to create a helpful insight in incorporating relatable literary materials and a more relative learning environment for the students, the effectiveness of this concept is exclusive to primary school students, the study is heavily dependent on student proficiency . Since the pupils are new to the concept of relatability, the effectiveness of this concept was somewhat there but if this study

were to be conducted in a secondary school where the students know what is relatability and they have a need for it as they are older, the efficacy would be much clearer. Besides the limited scope of this study, it is also crucial to comprehend that this study is also reliant on the proficiency of the students, the samples of this study have to be of a certain proficiency to be able to participate in this study.

Recommendations for Future Research

Keeping the limitations of the study, future research can be carried out in secondary levels to be able to see the efficacy of the concept more vividly. The students who have been exposed to literature learning might be able to yield different results in comparison to primary school students. Furthermore, the study can also be done with students of a higher proficiency where literary materials with a deeper level of relatedness can be implemented to see the students relating to what they learn and even discuss the topics further.

Conclusion

This research provides valuable insights into the current state of literature teaching in Malaysian schools and highlights the importance of adapting teaching methods to suit the needs of contemporary learners. The findings could be useful for educational policymakers, school administrators, and teachers looking to enhance their literature teaching practice. Besides, the research findings underscore the value of using relatable literature materials to improve student engagement and learning quality. By aligning the curriculum with students' cultural and personal experiences, educators can create a more effective and enriching learning environment. The findings not only demonstrate the effectiveness of culturally relevant, technology-enhanced teaching methods in literature education but also open up new avenues for pedagogical innovation across the curriculum. The significant improvement in student performance, coupled with the positive reception of relatable materials, suggests a promising direction for enhancing English language education in Malaysian schools and potentially beyond.

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