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EFFECTS OF DIFFERENTIATED TEACHING APPROACHES ON MASTERY OF WRITING SKILLS IN YEAR 4 ARABIC LANGUAGE

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Abstract

Differentiated Teaching is a teaching approach that takes into account the uniqueness of student profiles born from race, background, culture, language, religion, socioeconomics and experience to achieve the learning objectives in the teacher's teaching plan. The most common problems encountered in the process of learning Arabic, especially writing skills, are mistakes in writing letters, words (sentences), phrases (contents) and composing sentences. This study aims to see the effect of the Differentiated Teaching Approaches on the mastery of Arabic writing skills in Kota Belud, Sabah. This study employs a quasi-experimental quantitative research method conducted on 38 Year 4 students consisting of 20 students for the control group and 18 students for the treatment group. The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using the statistic non-parametric Wilcoxon signed rank test. The results of non-parametric statistical tests show that there is a significant difference for the treatment group in the pre-test and post-test. The findings of the study prove that there is a large or high treatment effect in the mastery of Year 4 Arabic writing skills against the treatment group in the post-test compared to the pre-test. Therefore, the researcher suggests that this study be a guide and empirical evidence that the Different Teaching Approach has a high impact on the level of student mastery in writing skills and proves that students can improve interaction and involvement in class better. Thus, changing the perception of students towards Arabic subjects which have been considered difficult to learn. This study can convince teachers to be more creative and innovative in producing teaching aids that celebrate the diversity of students.

Keywords: different teaching, writing skills, Arabic language, Arabic learning, innovative teaching methods

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INTRODUCTION

The demographic diversity of the population in this country gives rise to student profiles with different backgrounds, cultures, languages, beliefs, experiences and social structures. These characteristics make each student unique and different from various aspects such as existing knowledge, abilities and interests as well as learning ability. Today, the Arabic language is growing in terms of teaching and learning, making it the most studied elective or additional language since its introduction in 2005. Arabic language curriculum focuses on the four main language skills, namely, listening skills, speaking skills, writing skills and reading skills. Writing is one of the most important skills in learning a foreign language. Through writing, students will be able to increase their other skills and improve their language skills.

Nevertheless, some problems often occur in the process of teaching and learning Arabic. According to Mohd Feham Ghalib and Mohd Firdaus Yahaya (2011), most Arabic language teachers still use conventional and old teaching methods. Conventional teaching is purely teacher-centered and needs to be improved using a student-centered approach. In fact, students need to change their roles from passive receivers of information to explorers in various fields of information. Meanwhile, the teacher functions as a facilitator in the management of teaching and learning sessions. In addition, writing skills are one of the four main basic skills in learning Arabic and are very complex. This is because Arabic writing skills are connected to eye movement, hand movement and brain intelligence. This is because Arabic writing skills are related to eye movement, hand movement from right to left, and brain intelligence). The most frequent mistakes made by students in Arabic writing are weaknesses in the use of word and sentence forms or patterns, word selection (lexical items), spelling (orthography) and so on.

Thus, the quality of teaching plays an important role in helping students master these skills. Teachers need to prepare themselves with critical ideas to provide more creative teaching aids and meet the needs of different students For example, Tomlinson (2014) states that Different Teaching is implemented in the classroom with teachers taking into account students' willingness to learn, students' interests as well as students' learning profiles as the main focus before teachers plan lessons in the classroom. In general, the purpose of this study is to determine the effect of the Differentiated Teaching Approaches on the Mastery of Year Four Arabic Writing Skills in primary school. In this study, the treatment group underwent a teaching and learning session using the Different Teaching Approach, while the control group followed a conventional teaching and learning session. In particular, the research

questions aim to determine the following: Is there a difference in the mastery of Year Four Arabic writing skills between the control group and the treatment group in the pre-test? Is there a difference in the mastery of Year Four Arabic writing skills between the control group and the treatment group in the post-test?. Finally, is there a difference in the mastery of Year 4 Arabic writing skills for the treatment group in the pre-test and post-test?.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Differentiated Teaching, or Different Pedagogy is a teaching approach introduced by the Malaysian Ministry of Education in 2019 (MOE, 2019). Differentiated Teaching is a method of a teaching approach that aims to meet the learning needs and provide equal learning opportunities to each student. This will be performed according to their cognitive level and learning situation in order to be able to learn optimally. Learning a language involves a number of essential skills, including writing. Several previous studies have shown the effect of Different Teaching. Among them is Najiba Abdullah's (2014) study, which looked at the effect of different learning methods on students' motivation and achievement in Arabic as a foreign language. The results of the analysis of the one-way ANCOVA showed that there was a significant difference in the mean score between the treatment group and the control group in the post-test after controlling for the pre-test, $F(1.97) = 25.87$, $p = .000$. Partial Eta Squared is a widely employed method for examining the magnitude of differences between groups (Pallant, 2005). In this study, the magnitude of the mean difference is small, which is .042. According to Cohen (1988), the guideline shown by partial Eta squared is matched and considered a small effect size. The results of the findings show that Different Teaching shows an effect through increasing the level of student achievement in reading. The mean score for the reading construct for the treatment group was higher than the mean score for the control group. In addition, there is a significant difference between the two groups at the significance level (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected in this research.

In addition, Collins' study (2013) employed multilevel investigation activities and activity menus as a Differentiated Teaching Approaches in three chemistry learning units, namely laboratory techniques and measurements, matter and mole concepts, and stoichiometry. This study was conducted on students in grades 10, 11 and 12 for two semesters from September 2011 to March 2012. This study found that student achievement increased after following the different teaching and learning approaches. In addition, it was found that student achievement is higher when assignments are determined based on the level of readiness determined by the teacher compared to assignments that are carried out according to the students' choices.

As Nor hafizah (2015) found in her study on essay model imitation in the context of learning to write Arabic essays, respondents implemented three imitation techniques to mimic *Istifham, Nida', Amr, and Nahy* language styles, namely the Model Imitation technique, the Lexical Substitution technique and the Overall Substitution technique Sentence. Besides that, the study also recorded the highest error made by

the respondents, which was a syntax error. Accordingly, this study demonstrates that this method can be used to teach and learn Arabic language writing by teachers and students. Additionally, Asmam and A.I. Nadia (2021) in their action research found that using the "Yadun Yayaya" teaching and learning method at a school in Seremban was able to help students improve their skills in writing the letter Ya in Arabic words.

On the other hand, the action research conducted by P. Konstantinou-Katzi et. al (2013) studied the effect of a Different Teaching Approach on engagement, motivation and understanding of calculus concepts among 27 male students in the first year of a mechanical engineering course. Teaching and learning are designed so that students start learning based on their level of readiness and develop according to their respective learning rates. Students have the opportunity to follow a variety of learning interactions while completing assignments individually, in groups and as a whole class. This study shows that 70.37% of the respondents noted an increase in grades after following teaching and learning via Different Teaching Approach. Students' attitudes towards mathematics and the Differentiated Teaching Approaches were also found to be positive. In the structured interview that was conducted, the students admitted that they enjoyed following the course because they had the opportunity to complete the exercises in class and not just listen to the teacher's teaching.

METHODOLOGI

This study employs a quasi-experimental quantitative design of pre-and post-tests on two groups of students, namely a control group that was not given an intervention and a treatment group that was given a different teaching intervention in Arabic writing skills. In this study, the researcher has taken a total of n = 38 samples among students who take Arabic subjects in primary school in SK Sembirai, Kota Belud Sabah with the same characteristics, traits, and characters as the real sample. Students were divided into two groups, namely the treatment group (n = 18) and the control group (n = 20). This study also uses an instrument which is the Year Four Arabic Writing Mastery Test. The instrument in this study was built based on the objective of the study to examine the effect of Differentiated Teaching Approaches on the mastery of Year Four Arabic writing skills.

The researcher was comply with all the conditions of the experimental study procedure i.e. the researcher cannot control the teaching class, the researcher appoints teachers of existing subjects to teach, and the researcher will give briefings, information, and training to the teachers who teach about the purpose of the study. carried out and using the Daily Lesson Plan that has been planned by the teacher according to the existing syllabus for the control group. While the Differentiated Teaching Plan covers the Raft Strategy and Think Tac Toe Strategy that has been built by the researcher according to the Curriculum Standard Document and the Assessment is given to the treatment group.

The test was reviewed and examined based on the scores achieved by students from both groups in Year Four Arabic writing skills. Group data were collected and analyzed using the SPSS program version 22. To answer all three research questions, statistics or the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was employed to see significant differences between the pre-and post-tests for the control and treatment groups. According to Cohen and Maniaon (1986), the Wilcoxon signed rank test is a non-parametric statistical test utilized to analyze two paired variables (pair test) on the same sample from two different data (pre and post). Researchers use four justifications to use the Wilcoxon signed rank test in this study, namely, the sample size of the treatment study is less than n = < 30, the data distribution is not normal, and the data is from an interval scale or ratio.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ho1: There is no significant difference in Mastery of Year 4 Arabic Writing Skills between the control group and the treatment group in the pre-test.

Wilcoxon signed rank test analysis was used to identify the difference in the mean score of mastery of writing skills between the control group and the treatment group in the pre-test. The results of the analysis of the Wilcoxon signed rank test are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 below shows a significant difference in the mastery of Arabic writing skills in Year 4 between the control group and the treatment group in the pre-test. The data show that the control group obtained mean = 35.8 and sd = 21.201 with a higher mastery of writing skills compared to the treatment group, which obtained = 32.7222 and sd = 19.592. The results of the study show that there is no significant difference in the mastery of Arabic writing skills in Year 4 between the control group and the treatment group in the pre-test with the Z score value (21.201, 38) = -.653, Sig = .531 (p>.005). Therefore, the level of achievement of the control group and the treatment group in the pre-test is statistically equivalent. The size effect does not need to be seen because the results of the study show that it is not significant. This indicates that ***Ho1 fails to be rejected***.

Table 1.1 shows the analysis of the marginal test of homogeneity for the control group and the treatment group in the pre-test. The findings of the study show that the variant sample of Year 4 students from both the control group and the treatment group is composed of the same population since the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) indicates non-significance, sig = .512 (p>.005).

Table 1: Wilcoxon Test for Control Group and Treatment Group in Pre-Test

	Descriptive Statistics	Wilcoxon

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	Score Z	Sig (2-tailed)
Pre Control	20	35.8500	21.20148	9.14	100.50	-.653	.513
Pre Treatment	18	32.7222	19.59233	10.07	70.50		

Table 1.1: Marginal Homogeneity Test for Control Group and Treatment Group in Pre-Test

Po Pre Control & Pre Treatment	
Mean MH Statistic	627.500
Std. Deviation of MH Statistic	58.688
Std. MH Statistic	.656
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.512

Ho2: There is no significant difference in Mastery of Year 4 Arabic Writing Skills between the control group and the treatment group in the post-test.

The Wilcoxon signed rank test analysis was used to identify the difference in the mean score of writing skills mastery between the control group and the treatment group in the post-test. The results of the analysis of the Wilcoxon signed rank test are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 below shows a significant difference in the mastery of Year 4 Arabic writing skills between the control group that followed the conventional teaching and learning session and the treatment group that followed the teaching and learning session using the Differentiated Teaching Approaches before the post-test was implemented. The data show that the control group that uses conventional teaching obtained mean score values = 38.300 and sd = 23.156 lower than the treatment group that received the intervention with Differentiated Teaching Approaches with mean scores =59.7778 and sd = 18.919.

The results of the study show that there is a significant difference in the mastery of Arabic writing skills in Year 4 between the control group and the treatment group in the post-test with the Z score value = -2.875, and Sig (2-tailed) = .004, (p.005). Thus, ***Ho2 is rejected***. This shows that the level of mastery of writing skills in the treatment group is higher than in the control group in the post-test. The effect of the Differentiated Teaching Approaches of 5E inquiry on student achievement in the subject of chemical bonding. This study indicated that the mean post-test score for the treatment group (M=36.19, SD=15.45) was higher than the control group (M=31.29,

SD = 12.25). This proves that the Differentiated Teaching Approaches used to treat the treatment group is more effective.

Based on Cohen's (1988) and Chin's (1998) effect size interpretation table, the value of r = 0.64 is large or 64 percent (0.64 x 100). The results of this test show that there is a large or high treatment effect in the mastery of Year Four Arabic writing skills against the treatment group in the pre-test and post-test. Thus, ***Ho3 is rejected***. The effect size for Wilcoxon signed rank test analysis of the r-value is determined through the z-value shown in Figure 1.1

$$N = 18$$

$$r = \frac{z}{\sqrt{N}}$$

$$r = \frac{-2.729}{\sqrt{N}}$$

$$r = \frac{-2.729}{\sqrt{4.24}}$$

$$r = 0.64$$

Figure 1.1: The effect size for Wilcoxon analysis 'r' value.

The findings of the study were found to be in line with the findings of previous studies that showed an increase in the mean score in the post-test compared to the pre-test by using the Differentiated Teaching Approaches. The result is also consistent with Tomlinson (2003) who posited that students achieve better academically when the method of teaching is differentiated. For another example, The effect of different teaching approaches on student achievement in the chemical bond topic. In this study, the treatment group was treated using the 5E inquiry of the Different Teaching Approaches, while the control group was treated using the 5E inquiry of the teaching approach. The results of the study showed that the mean post-test score for the treatment group was higher than the control group. This shows that students' knowledge about chemical bonds in the treatment group increased after the intervention.

Table 2: Wilcoxon Test for Control Group and Treatment Group in Post-Test

	Descriptive Statistics				Wilcoxon	
N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Rank	Sum Rank	Score of Z	Sig

							(2-tailed)
Post-Control	20	36.4000	21.76888	21.497	149.50	-2.788	.005
Post-Treatment	18	59.7778	18.91951	19.283	21.50		

Table 2.1: Marginal Homogeneity Test for Control Group and Treatment Group in Post-Test

Post Control & Post Treatment	
Mean MH Statistic	667.000
Std. Deviation of MH Statistic	67.987
Std. MH Statistic	-2.714
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.007

Ho3: There is no significant difference in Mastery of Year 4 Arabic Writing Skills between the pre-test and post-test by the treatment group.

Table 3 below shows a significant difference in the mastery of Year 4 Arabic writing skills for the treatment group in the pre-test and post-test. The treatment group followed a teaching and learning session using Differentiated Teaching approaches. The study data showed that the treatment group in the pre-test obtained a mean score value = 32.7222 and sd = 19.59233, while the post-test obtained a mean score value = 58.1111 and sd = 19.28391. These results show that the post-treatment test means increased better than the pre-treatment test mean. This shows that there is a significant difference in the mastery of Year 4 Arabic writing skills for the treatment group in the pre-test and post-test, with a value of (Z = -3.726, 18) and Sig (2-tailed) = .000, (p<. 005). The effect size of the pre-and post-test on the treatment group is r = 0.87.

Based on the effect size interpretation table of Cohen (1988) and Chin (1998), the value of r = 0.87 (d > 0.87) is large or 87 percent (0.87 x 100). The results of this test show that there is a large or high treatment effect in the mastery of Year 4 Arabic writing skills for the treatment group in the post-test compared to the pre-test. This proves that interventions implemented with Differentiated Teaching Approaches through a modification process using RAFT and Think Tac Toe techniques in teaching and learning activities greatly impact student achievement. Thus, ***Ho3 is rejected***.In terms of the effect size for Wilcoxon signed rank test analysis, the value of 'r' is determined through the value of 'z' given in Figure 1.2. The effect size for the Wilcoxon analysis r-value is determined through the given z-value:

$$N = 18$$

$$r = \frac{z}{\sqrt{N}}$$

$$r = \frac{-3.726}{\sqrt{18}}$$

$$r = \frac{-3.726}{\sqrt{4.24}}$$

$$r = 0.87$$

Figure 1.2: The effect size for the Wilcoxon analysis 'r' value.

The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of previous studies, such as the study conducted by Maslina Mohtar and Mohamad Firuz Jelaludin (2012), who examined the use of ICT in Different Teaching. The findings of their research show that activities and exercises given based on students' ability levels supported with ICT facilities have helped students carry out activities with more enthusiasm. This is because students are given the opportunity to do assignments according to their own abilities. The positive effect of the Differentiated Teaching Approach on mathematics achievement. The results of the study showed that the mean post-test score for the treatment group was almost twice as high as the control group. The teachers admit that the teaching materials used are appropriate and useful, especially for students who have difficulties in learning. All teachers that were interviewed agreed that the Differentiated Teaching Approaches improve the academic performance of their students.

Table 3: Wilcoxon Test for Treatment Group in Pre-Post Test

	Descriptive Statistic					Wilcoxon	
	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	Score Z	Sig (2-tailed)
Pre-Treatment	18	32.7222	19.59233	15.50	9.50	-3.726	.000
Post-Treatment		59.7778	19.28391	9.50	171.00		

Table 3.1: Marginal Homogeneity Test for Treatment Group in Pre-Post Test

Pre-Post Treatment	
Mean MH Statistic	589.000
Std. Deviation of MH Statistic	55.297
Std. MH Statistic	-4.132
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study can provide useful information in the field of education, especially teaching that uses Different Teaching Approaches. Among the implications of this study from the theoretical aspect is to prove that the Differentiated Teaching Approach is an alternative and flexible teaching method that can meet the needs and diversity of students by differentiating content, processes and products to help students master lessons effectively in accordance with the curriculum. Furthermore, this study can provide special benefits for respective educational bodies as empirical evidence of implementing the Different Teaching Approaches to be widely disseminated to all district education departments throughout Sabah.

In fact, this study can help respective educational bodies to give exposure to Arabic teachers to apply Different Teaching in teaching and learning to celebrate the diversity of students, whether in the city or rural areas. Next, this study is seen as a guide to develop lesson plans and provide teaching aids to Arabic teachers, whether an option or non-option teachers who lack teaching experience so that writing skills can be approached by weak students as well as students who have mastered it. In addition, Different Teaching can also attract the interest of students and change the perception of students regarding Arabic as a foreign language from difficult to learn to easy to learn and master.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this study shows that Different Teaching has the potential to increase mastery of Arabic writing skills in primary schools, especially in Year 4. Arabic teachers in Malaysia at the primary school level can apply Different Teaching to plan teaching and learning activities in Arabic writing skills. Continuity in this study is needed to improve students' mastery of other basic language skills, such as listening skills, speaking skills and reading skills, that maintain students' diversity and existing abilities. In addition, the Differentiated Teaching Approach is no longer limited to just completing the syllabus, but is capable of increasing interest and changing students' perception of Arabic from difficult to the most liked and enjoyable subject to learn.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

ETHICS STATEMENT: This study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles and academic integrity. All procedures were carried out responsibly, with informed consent obtained from participants and strict confidentiality maintained.

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