

TEACHING NARRATIVE WRITING ABOUT BULLY: THE USE OF WHATSAPP ON PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

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Abstract ~ This paper presents and discusses a part of study on the use of WhatsApp in teaching narrative writing to Malaysian primary school pupils. Research shows that most Malaysian learners are moderate users of writing strategies and despite learning English as a second language for several years, they are still weak in English, especially in writing skills. Based on the comparison made between the Year 5 and Year 6 English textbook, it was observed that the topic on bully is given heavy emphasis on both textbooks, which implicitly indicates high prevalence of bully happening in Malaysian schools. Therefore, bully was chosen as the topic for the narrative writing. A mobile messaging app, WhatsApp was employed as a tool for the teaching of narrative writing about bully. This study attempts to identify the effects of WhatsApp in teaching narrative writing to Year 6 primary school pupils in the aspect of content as well as on the pupils' comprehension about bully. Eight Year 6 pupils from one primary school in Negeri Sembilan were involved in this case study and data were collected through document analysis (writing scripts and WhatsApp discussion thread), focus group interviews and field notes. The findings of the post-test revealed that 50% of the participants were able to score one or two marks higher in the aspect of content. The pupils' comprehension on bully was also enhanced as they learnt to be empathy and responsible towards the issue of bully. The findings of this study are hoped to shed some lights on how educators could integrate the use of mobile messaging apps in language teaching and raise awareness on the issue of bully through such integration.

Keywords: bully, education, m-learning, narrative writing, WhatsApp

1.0 Introduction

Writing is one of four language skills that should be mastered by language learners, including foreign language learners (Rahmawati et al. 2019). It is often been perceived as one of the most difficult and challenging skills to master, even it is to be acquired and learned in one's native language (Falcicola et al. 2014 cited in Chiew & Nurhidayah, 2016). Kellogg (2001) cited in Muhammad Fareed et al. (2016) discussed that writing is considered as a complex skill as it is a cognitive process that tests memory, thinking ability and verbal command to successfully express the ideas. Basma (2013) elaborated that writing requires pupils to draw on many skills simultaneously as they must write, think and compose using proper grammar and spelling. For foreign writers, being proficient in writing could be a challenge as it involves more than constructing grammatically correct forms and with less language knowledge and confidence, often lead them to struggle with the second or foreign language and writing skills in general (Nooreiny et al., 2011). Based on the review of past studies, Mastan et al. (2017) concluded that among the common problems faced by second language writers of English include the inability to generate ideas in the L2, inaccurate use of grammar, insufficient vocabulary as well as lack of exposure to various kinds of effective writing strategies.

In the context of Malaysian education system, the aim of the English Language Curriculum for Primary Schools is to develop pupils' ability to write and present a range of texts using appropriate language, style and form for different purposes and audience through a variety of media. For the summative assessment, writing is tested as one of the compulsory subjects in the national examination, Primary School Assessment Test (UPSR) for Year 6 pupils. However, it is argued that the proficiency of English among Malaysian children is on the decline despite learning English as a second language for several years and they are still weak in English, especially in their writing skills (Chan et al. 2018). Moreover, research shows that most Malaysian learners are moderate users of writing strategies (Nooreiny & Mazlin, 2013 cited in Mastan et al. 2017). Studies conducted by Saadiyah and Kaladevi (2009) and Erma Farida and Maslawati (2018) identified six common errors found in the writing of Malaysian learners; singular/plural form, verb tense, word choice, preposition, subject-verb agreement and word order while the use of articles, subject-verb agreement and copula 'be' are the three most frequent errors detected. Correspondingly, Swaran Singh et al. (2017) pointed out that students' inability to write well is believed to be due to the insufficient knowledge of grammatical rules and concepts while first

language (L1) interference is also observed in the study by Ghabool et al. (2012) as they considered it as very tangible in writing.

1.1 The Use of WhatsApp in Writing

Based on the writing problems discussed earlier, there is a crucial need to find innovative ways to support and hopefully improve the writing of the pupils by extending language learning and instruction outside of the classroom. Therefore, one of the ways is employed in this study which is the implementation of WhatsApp, a mobile messaging app to teach narrative writing in virtual environment. Graham and Perin (2007) cited in Muhammad Fareed et al. (2016) emphasized that students' writing ability could be improved by fostering their interest, motivation and enjoyment for writing through the use of technology. The use of mobile technology could support the second language learning as experiencing mobile learning would offer the pupils with access to vast and various types of learning materials in the internet, meaningful collaborative learning environment as well as immediate feedback from teachers and peers (Ahmad & Love, 2013).

The use of WhatsApp as the intervention for the teaching of narrative writing in this study could suit the learning needs of the 'Digital Natives' as the pupils in 21st century era are the members of Generation Z and Alpha. The term 'Digital Natives' is referred to the "native speakers of the digital language of computer games, email, internet, mobile phones and instant messaging" (Prensky, 2001). In this study, the participants are Year 6 pupils and in the Malaysian education system, Year 6 pupils are 12-year-old children of the current year and they are born in the year 2006 which place them as Generation Z (Gen Z). Gen Z is born between 1995 to 2012 and this generation grows up witnessing the widespread of electronic gadgets and digital technologies that characterized them as generation of tech savvy and globally connected in the virtual world (Anjali, 2014). Therefore, in this study, WhatsApp allows them to learn at anytime and anywhere without the need to present physically and they could manipulate the connectivity of WhatsApp through the discussion and feedback received from the teacher and peers in the WhatsApp group. In addition, the implementation of WhatsApp is aligned with the aim of the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 which is to optimize the integration of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) in enhancing the teaching and learning as the Ministry of Education believes that ICT has tremendous potential to accelerate the learning of a wide range of knowledge and thinking skills.

1.2 The Topic of Bully

The Malaysia National Philosophy of Education (NPE) aims at producing Malaysian citizens who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being. These aims are well-reflected in one of the underlying pedagogical principles of the Curriculum which is character-building. This principle emphasizes that lessons based on values have to be incorporated in teaching and learning in order to impart the importance of good values for the wholesome development of individuals. In Year 5 English textbook by Ministry of Education (2014), this principle is translated into the topic of 'Self-Protection' which focuses on the importance of protecting oneself from harm. This topic is further elaborated in the writing module as the pupils are required to write a narrative essay entitled 'The Big Bully' based on pictures and words given in the textbook. Proceeding to Year 6 textbook by Ministry of Education (2015), the character-building principle is integrated in the topic 'Step Up!' which discusses on current issues such as smoking, drugs and bullying. The issue on bullying is further elaborated on the issue of cyberbullying which provides information on the definition, statistics, factors and prevention of cyberbullying.

Based on the comparison made between the Year 5 and Year 6 English textbook, it was observed that the topic on bully is given heavy emphasis on both textbooks which implicitly indicates high prevalence of bully happening in Malaysian schools as Wan Ismail et al. (2014) stated that bullying is common in Malaysian schools and it has received great attention that their study reported 8 out of 10 school children in Malaysia experience some forms of bullying. Therefore, bully was chosen in this study as the topic for the teaching of narrative writing through WhatsApp aiming at enhancing the pupils' comprehension and increase their awareness on the issue of bully which could eventually produce individuals who possess high moral standards and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as stated in the Malaysia National Philosophy of Education.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

In reviewing the past studies on the teaching of English writing through the use of WhatsApp, most of the studies took place in the setting of secondary and tertiary context and to date, there has been very limited studies conducted in primary school context. Therefore, this study attempted to identify the effects of WhatsApp in teaching narrative writing to Year 6 primary school pupils in the aspect of content. The topic of the narrative writing is bully. Data were gathered to answer the following research questions;

1. How does WhatsApp affect the content of the pupils' narrative writing on the topic of bully?

2. How does WhatsApp enhance the pupils' comprehension on the issue of bully?

The following sections discuss on related literature, methodology, the findings and discussions as well as the implications of the study that could significantly impact the teaching and learning process on English writing.

2.0 Constructivist Theory

This study is grounded based on the theory of constructivist, which then divided into two primary perspectives namely cognitive constructivism and social constructivism. Eggen and Kauchak (2010) outlined four characteristics of this theory that influence learning;

- i. Learners construct knowledge that makes sense to them.
- ii. New learning depends on current understanding.
- iii. Social interaction facilitates learning.
- iv. The most meaningful learning occurs within real-world tasks.

For cognitive constructivism, this theory could occur when the pupils discover appropriate examples of bully as well as the meaning of words independently through the searching of relevant images and vocabulary via the internet and dictionary apps rather than having the information presented by the teacher researcher or other experts. For social constructivism, this theory could occur when the pupils developed their knowledge on vocabulary and sentence construction in order to produce a meaningful content through social interaction and corrective feedback given by the teacher researcher and other participants in the WhatsApp group. The interaction also allows them to be significantly aware on the topic of bully as a direct result of the exchanged information in the WhatsApp group. Extending from the social constructivism theory, learners benefit most from the interaction with a more knowledgeable other when they are working in their zone of proximal development or ZPD (Figure 2.0), (Eggen & Kauchak 2010). Roosevelt (2008) cited in Shabani et al. (2010) discussed that the aim of this theory is to keep learners in their own ZPDs as frequent as possible by providing them interesting and meaningful learning and problem-solving tasks that are slightly difficult. Thus, in order to complete the tasks, they are required to collaborate with another more competent peer or with a teacher or adult. The purpose of promoting this kind of collaboration is to ensure that the learner would possibly be able to complete the same task individually next time, and through that process, the learner's ZPD for that particular task will have been raised.

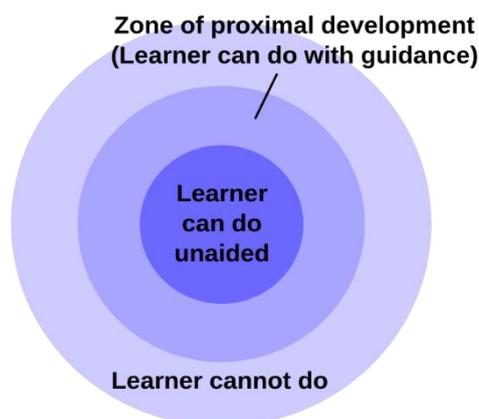


Figure 2.0: Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

2.1 Writing Components & Narrative Writing

Writing consists of five components; content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics (Salikin & Tahir, 2017). Similarly, Rahmawati et al. (2019) discussed that the assessment of writing competence could be analytically determined by five components, namely: (1) grammatical, (2) vocabulary, (3) mechanics, (4) fluency (style and ease of communication), and (5) form (organization). For this study it only focused on the component of content and how the use of WhatsApp could enhance this component in teaching narrative writing on the topic of bully. Salikin and Tahir (2017) referred content as the unity and logical relationship of the sentences in one's writing. Thus, content could be referred as how the sentences are written impeccably in order to ensure the logical sequence of the story as well as the intended meaning for each sentence could be conveyed meaningfully.

For narrative writing, it is the most common text types that children are expected to compose in the initial years of their primary school (Gibbons, 2002). This is because students are naturally inclined to write stories of their interests more than other types of writing. Narrative writing is defined as a story writing or report of events, personal experiences, or any similar incidents, whether they are real or fictitious (Ahmed, 2015). Narrative writing contains a sequence of events together with characters and setting (Nesamalar et al., 2005). Gibbons further elaborated that narratives, like all text types, have a purpose which may be to entertain or teach and narratives have a particular organizational structure which consists of orientation, events, complication and resolution. For orientation, its purpose is to set the scene, introduce the characters and provide some details of who, when and where. Then, there are a number of events, that lead to conflicts in the story which is referred to as complication. Finally, the problem or conflict is resolved in the final part of the story, which is the resolution. There are also typical linguistic features common to narratives. First, narratives are sequenced in time and often signalled by the conjunctions or connectives such as *one day*, *the next morning* and *finally*. Second, the tense use is usually past tense as narratives often narrate events that have already happened. Third, narratives use action verbs that describe what people do such as *walked*, *saw* and *went*. Lastly, narratives contain dialogue and “saying” verbs that explain how people speak such as *said*, *told* and *reported*. In this study, the topic of WhatsApp discussion revolved on ‘bully’ in which the pupils discussed on the scene of bully, the characters in the scene, the events that lead to bully and the complications as well as the resolution which stopped the bullying. therefore, in this study, it looked at how the use of WhatsApp could enhance the content of the pupil’s narrative writing in delivering its orientation, events, complication and resolution logically and in unity.

2.2 M-learning

The use of WhatsApp as the intervention tool in teaching narrative writing reflects the mobile learning concept or m-learning. M-learning is a new discovery in the development of e-learning and distance learning. It refers to the capabilities that mobile technology devices have significantly impacted to a physical classroom context as well as to the activities of students as they participate in the learning process (Vázquez-Cano, 2014). M-learning provides the opportunity for a more student-centered approach in learning where the student is more responsible for acquiring, processing and using information as well as increased interactivity between teachers and students (Ibrahim & Kadiri 2018). As technologies are developing rapidly, mobile devices have also becoming more affordable, effective and easy to use as they could further manipulate the advantages of e-learning system (Ahmad & Love, 2013).

The implications of m-learning have a significant contribution to the field of language teaching as MALL is then introduced. MALL is an acronym for mobile-assisted language learning and it is defined as “an approach to language learning that is assisted or enhanced through the use of a handheld mobile device” (Valarmathi, 2011). MALL is a subset of both m-learning and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) that could support the retention and utilization of language skills acquired by the language learners (Burston, 2013). Hao et al. (2018) explained that mobile technology could significantly improve the language learning process due to the affordances and portability the technology may offer as it could reduce the students’ anxiety by allowing them to practice the language without the need for face-to-face interaction as well as develop daily reading habits.

2.3 WhatsApp

One example of m-learning is WhatsApp. WhatsApp is a cross-platform messaging app with a focus on privacy, security and speed (Basma, 2013). Cohavi (2013) cited in Linda and Ida (2018) explained that the application has been on the market since 2010 and its main purpose is to replace the existing SMS platform for a system that is free of charge in an advertisement-free environment. WhatsApp acts as a platform of sending and receiving messages to and from individuals or groups which includes various functions like text messages, images, audio and video files as well as links to web addresses.

For this study, WhatsApp is chosen for several reasons. First, WhatsApp is a free messaging app with no ads and subscription fees. Second, WhatsApp provides the accessibility to send and receive messages via groups created thus, for this study, the discussion of the narrative writing is conducted in the group as the pupils could send to and receive feedback from the teacher researcher and other group members simultaneously. Third, WhatsApp has no limits on the size of media thus, allows users to share and exchange unlimited number of photos, videos and any files of any format of up to 2GB each. Another interesting feature available in WhatsApp is emoji. Sabrina and Benedictus (2017) defined emoji as an image that could express facial expression and gestures as well as concrete images. The use of emoji in the context of this study functioned as a motivational tool for the pupils such as the ‘applause’ emoji was used to compliment the pupils. Hence, by providing such emoji, the pupils’ affective filter could be reduced and lead to long-term retention.

Several studies have been conducted involving secondary and tertiary students in the teaching of English writing through the use of WhatsApp. Study by Andujar (2016) yielded positive result as statistically significant differences between experimental and control group illustrated major improvements on the number

of errors in the aspect of grammatical, lexical and mechanical on 80 Spanish ESL third-year students' writing development. Similarly, the experimental group outperformed the control group in punctuation marks, sentence structures and vocabulary on the writing skills of 30 second year college students (Said, 2015). Findings by Çetinkaya and Sütçü (2018) on 123 ninth grade students found that the achievement of the students in WhatsApp group increased meaningfully as compared with the other groups thus, it indicated that the environment in which WhatsApp is used as a support to traditional environment could be considered effective in improving the English vocabulary learning. Similarly, the findings in the study by Hashemifardnia et al. (2018) on 50 Iranian tertiary students showed that the students who received instruction through WhatsApp had better performance on vocabulary learning as compared to those who were trained traditionally. Correspondingly, the results of t-test scores in the study by Bensalem (2018) indicated that WhatsApp group significantly outperformed the traditional group on a vocabulary test of 40 EFL university students thus, concluded that WhatsApp has significantly increased learners' vocabulary learning. Study by Bataineh et al. (2018) reveal statistically significant differences in the participants' paraphrasing and summarizing skills thus, confirmed the potential effectiveness of e-mail and WhatsApp as catalysts for paraphrasing and summarizing on 45 Jordanian EFL tenth-grade students. Nevertheless, one study was found conducted in primary school setting by Ali et al. (2018) and they concluded that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control group of 100 Grade 5 EFL students hence, the finding suggested that the teaching of grammar through mobile phones has a positive impact on the learners' grammar.

2.4 Bullying

Volk et al. (2014) argued that the most familiar and widely cited definition of bullying comes from Dan Olweus, originally proposed in the 1970s as he defines bullying as;

“A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students.”

Wan Ismail et al. (2014) simplified this definition by referring bully as a repeated act of aggression toward a weaker victim. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) cited in Ang et al. (2018) explained that among different age-based bullying, child bullying has garnered the most research attention and this is supported by Nachiappan et al. (2018) that bullying behaviour among school children have become a global phenomenon. Balakrishnan (2018) elaborated that bully occurrences often involve multiple parties, with the prominent ones being the bullies, victims and bystanders or witnesses. Bullies are often referred to those who perpetrate a bullying incident; victims are those who have been bullied whereas bystanders are people who have witnessed a bullying/victimization incident online.

In the Malaysian context, Wan Ismail et al. (2014) stated that bullying is common in Malaysian schools and it has received great attention due to the high prevalence as their study reported that 8 out of 10 school children in Malaysia experience some forms of bullying. This prevalence supports the claim by Ahmad Sudan (2016) as studies that have been conducted on school bullying in Malaysia indicated that bullying in Malaysian schools are rampant although not at the alarming state. Based on previous findings, Wan Ismail et al. concluded that risk-taking behaviour among young adolescents aged 13 years, in rural development schemes found the prevalence of bullying behaviour at 14.4% while similar study among 280 young adolescents of the same age group but in an urban area in the south of Malaysia reported a prevalence of 21.1%. Another bigger study involving 2528 school children aged 10–12 years recruited from 29 schools in Perak found that 53.2% of the respondents admitted their involvement in bullying behaviour. Nachiappan et al. (2018) conducted a study on the causes of bully among Malaysian students from National Primary Schools, National Type Chinese Primary Schools and National Type Tamil Primary Schools found that among the main causes that lead to bully is the attitude of the students which includes jealousy and revenge towards friends as well as lack of parents' concern for children. The study also included that there are also other causes that contribute to bullying behaviour among primary school children such as peer influences, media influences and lack of knowledge on bully. Therefore, based on the severity of bully issue evident in the reviewed studies, the purpose of this study is to enhance the pupils' comprehension on the issue of bully as well as raise their awareness on bully through the teaching of narrative writing using WhatsApp.

3.0 Research Method

This study employed employed a qualitative research approach which specifically implemented a case study as the research design.

3.1 Setting & Participants

This study was conducted in one primary school located in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. The school was selected due to its location in the outskirts of town and majority of the pupils have limited access to the use of English outside of the classroom such as English extra classes, thus they are only depending on the English lessons in

school for the learning of the language. In the aspect of language proficiency, the proficiency level of the pupils in this study is at A2 level as according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) descriptors. Darmi et al. (2017) explained that A2 level refers to elementary English users who are able to understand sentences and frequently used expressions, communicate in simple and routine tasks as well as describe oneself in simple terms. The selection criteria of the participants are Year 6 pupils age 12 years old and they must own a smartphone with mobile subscription and WhatsApp account as well as their parents consented them to use the smartphone for the learning of narrative writing. Eight Year 6 pupils, consisted of four boys (B1, B2, B3, B4) and four girls (G1, G2, G3, G4) were selected as the participants and all of them are Malay. In terms of maturity level, children from 12 years onwards are able to combine ideas logically, think about possibilities rather than just reality and solve problems using scientific reasoning (O'Reilly et al., 2013) thus, at this age, the pupils of this study are assumed to possess a better level of maturity in understanding the functions and features of WhatsApp in the narrative writing process.

3.2 Data Collection Tools

Three data collection tools were used in this study; document analysis (DA), focus group interviews (FGI) and researcher's field notes (RFN). In this study, two documents were used for DA; the writing scripts of the pupils in both pre-test and post-test as well as the WhatsApp conversation thread. The documents were analyzed in order to track any progress of the pupils' narrative writing after the intervention of WhatsApp in the aspect of content. For FGI, its main aim is to retrieve in-depth exploration on the perceptions of the pupils on the use of WhatsApp in teaching narrative writing. For RFN, the teaching of narrative writing using WhatsApp in this study was not solely conducted in virtual environment, as there were also times when the teacher researcher was present physically with the pupils. During these times, the focus of the teacher researcher was to observe the facial expressions, reactions and engagement of the pupils.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

The procedure for the data collection occurred in four phases for four weeks. In Phase 1 (Week 1), upon receiving the guardian's consent, the pupils were briefed on the purpose and duration of the study before proceeded to pre-test. In the pre-test, the pupils answered one essay question on the topic 'bully in the canteen' based on the format of Section C in UPSR Writing paper. The pre-test was conducted in a classroom with an examination seating arrangement. The duration of the test was 40 minutes and administered by the teacher researcher. Phase 2 (Week 2-3) is the intervention phase with approximately 23-hour of total engagement. In this phase, the teacher researcher created a WhatsApp group and prior to the virtual discussion, the teacher researcher conducted a physical group discussion to explain the functions available and features of WhatsApp, the rules and regulations of the WhatsApp group as well as requested all the pupils to download at least one dictionary app in their smartphone. After 2-week of intervention, the pupils sat for the post-test in Phase 3 (Week 4). The question of the post-test was similar as in the pre-test which were marked by the same external examiner in Phase 1 and later followed by the interview. In Phase 4, data analysis then began.

3.4 WhatsApp Intervention

The WhatsApp intervention of this study adopted 'The Curriculum Cycle' introduced by Derewianka (1990) cited in Gibbons (2002). This Cycle outlines four stages of writing lesson with each stage has a particular teaching purpose discussing on the topic of bully.

Stage 1: Building the field

This stage aims to build sufficient background knowledge of the writing topic in order to ensure that the pupils would be able to write about it. The pupils would search relevant images related to bully in the internet and shared the images in the WhatsApp group. Then, the discussion revolved on identifying the types of bully shown in the images and elaborating on the factors that lead to bully.

Stage 2: Modelling the text type

This stage aims to develop the understanding on the purpose, overall structure and language features of the particular text type. Two notes expansion which contain pictures and related words on the topic of 'bully in the library' and 'bully in the lavatory' were used to model the text type.

Stage 3: Joint construction

This stage is teacher-guided which aims to illustrate the process of writing a text, emphasizing on the content and language of the writing. Sentences were constructed by the pupils based on the questions and prompts posed by the teacher. Any errors in the sentences would be immediately discussed and corrected by the teacher and other group members.

Stage 4: Independent writing

This final stage of the cycle aims at producing individual text. After correction has been made based on the teacher's and others' feedback, the pupils were required to submit their individual essays to the teacher's number, not in the WhatsApp group.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis involved two main phases; document analysis and data transcription. For document analysis, the writing scripts of both pre and post-test were marked by a qualified examiner appointed by the Malaysia Examination Syndicate who has 3-year of experience in marking UPSR papers. The analytic scale for rating composition tasks by Brown and Bailey (1984) cited in Brown (2004) was used as the marking guidelines. The range of marks given is from 1 to 20 with 1-5 marks is regarded as 'unacceptable', 6-11 is categorized as 'weak', 12-14 is categorized as 'adequate', 15-17 is regarded as 'good' and 18-20 is regarded as 'excellent'. For data transcription, the verbal statement of each respondent that have been recorded after the interview session were transcribed in verbatim. The transcription was then analyzed in searching for patterns and themes on the pupils' perception on the effects of WhatsApp in teaching narrative writing.

3.6 Validity & Reliability

In order to ensure the validity of this study, the data from all the three data instruments were triangulated in order to check for consistency and similarity. Apart of that, as this study employed the use of smartphone as the research tool and all the participants are considered as children, only those who volunteered and have been granted permission from the parents or guardians based on the consent form were chosen as participants for this study. The interview questions were also sent to the expert with 25 years of teaching English for validation before conducting the interview session. For the reliability aspect, the interview transcriptions and researcher's field notes were returned to the participants in order for them to review and check the accuracy of the researchers' interpretations. By reviewing the interview transcriptions and field notes, the possibilities of misinterpretation of the participants' behavior during the observations, biasness and lack of data could be significantly reduced. Apart of that, the writing scripts of both pre and post-test were marked by a qualified examiner appointed by the Malaysia Examination Syndicate who has 3-year of experience in marking UPSR papers using the analytic scale for rating composition tasks by Brown and Bailey (1984).

4.0 Results & Discussion

4.1 How does WhatsApp affect the content of the pupils' narrative writing on the topic of bully?

Figure 4.1 shows the result of pre and post-test for the aspect of content. The figure revealed that four of the pupils or 50% of them were able to score one or two marks higher in their post-test. B2 has progressed from 14 to 16 marks while B4 improved from 12 to 14 marks. For the girls, G1 and G4 showed improvement from 15 to 16 marks. On the other hand, the other four pupils or 50% of them showed a slight decrease in their post-test marks. The marks for B1 decreased from 15 to 13 while B3 decreased from 16 to 15 marks. For the girls, the marks for G1 and G2 both decreased from 17 to 15.

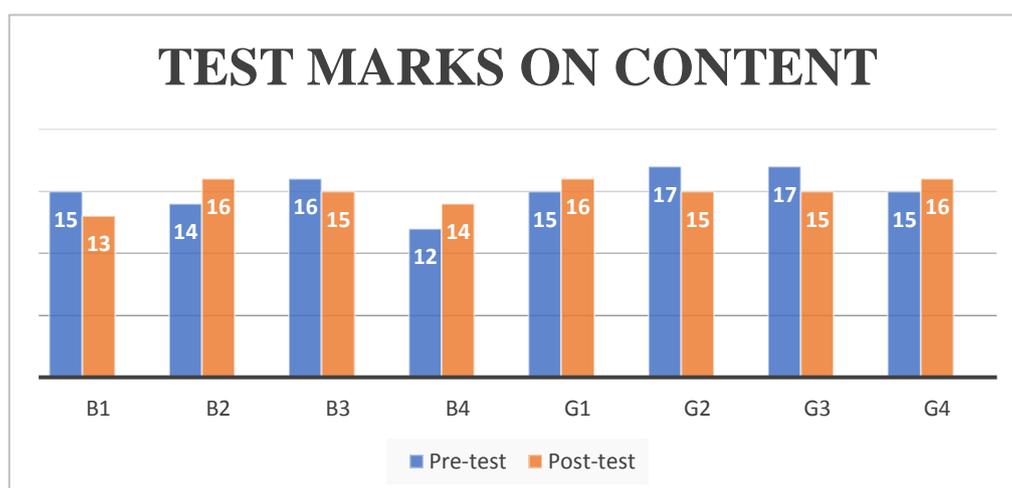


Figure 4.1.1: Test marks on Content

The progress made by 50% of the pupils could be due to their effort in searching for relevant images related to bully in the internet as well as the discussion which reflects the cognitive constructivism theory on identifying the types of bully shown in the images and elaborating on the factors that lead to bully which occurred at the stage of 'Building the Field' during the WhatsApp intervention. By discussing on the examples of bully and reasons or factors that lead to bully, the pupils were not only strengthened their background knowledge on bully but also able to internalize the feeling of the bully and the victims of the bully thus, expressed the internalization into their narrative writing, or in simpler words, when the pupils understood the topic of the writing clearly through the discussion with the teacher, they would possibly able to write the content of the writing meaningfully. Another significant factor could be due to immediate feedback provided by the teacher researcher and other members of the WhatsApp group on the appropriate words that should be used in the context of their narrative writing which reflects the social constructivism theory. This interaction occurred when the teacher and other group members corrected the pupils' sentences or suggested relevant words to be used in the sentences. The pupils would then amend the sentences almost instantly before posting back the corrected sentences into the WhatsApp to be learnt by other group members. Hence, the pupils were able to construct their own understanding on the vocabulary which then contributed for a more accurate and relevant content as proved in the post-test marks. The pupils' progress also reflects the ZPD theory in which the gap between the tasks that the pupils could do unaided and the tasks that the pupils could not do by themselves would eventually shrink, thus the pupils are expected to accomplish the same tasks individually next time.

This finding is corroborated with the study by Hashemifardnia et al. (2018) as they concluded that mobile phones and mobile applications in language learning allow the students to learn beyond classroom borders as online chatting could facilitate the development of the students' interactive competence thus, this virtual interaction resulted in easy and effective learning. Apart of that, this study is also supported the finding by Bataineh et al. (2018) when their study proved that the group chat feature of WhatsApp has enabled the participants of this group to receive similar input simultaneously hence, facilitated their collaboration in practicing writing. Similarly, Said (2015) discussed that WhatsApp technology could enhance students' active participation in the EFL classroom as it provides the opportunity for free language practice well as to relate their opinions to those of others in discussing the vocabulary of the writing.

The following example shows the sentences written by B2 in the pre and post-test;

Pre-test:

Amirul and his friend was punished dear discipline teacher.

Post-test:

The discipline teacher give a warning and say "I should punish you and if you do it again I can report to your parent," and the boy was punished.

In the pre-test, B2 only wrote one passive sentence with the missing conjunction 'by' and he misspelled the word 'their' with 'dear' as he might be confused with the almost-similar pronunciation of both words. The pre-test sentence was written in a narrative way, which some readers could not feel the emotions involved in the situation. A significant progress was then observed in the post-test when the passive sentence was changed into active sentence as dialogue was added to the sentence. The dialogue described the strictness of the discipline teacher and how the teacher warned the bully through the use of the phrases "...should punish" and "...report to your parent", which explicitly convey the anger and disappointment of the teacher. The use of dialogue was considered meaningful as it informed the readers on the tense situation between the discipline teacher and the bully thus, helped to enhance the content of the story. Apart of that, it was observed that B2 only provided one action in describing the resolution of the story which is the bully and his friends get punished by the disciplined teacher in the pre-test. Additional actions taken by the disciplined teacher were added in the post-test when B2 further explained that the disciplined did not directly punish the bullies, rather he warned them first and will then punish and report to their respective parents if the bully occur again. This progress could be due to the discussion during the WhatsApp intervention as shown in Figure 4.1.2 when one pupil provided his suggestion on the resolution of the story which is the headmaster would report the bully to the parents and the parents would then need to come to the school while the bully apologized to the victim and regretted his action.

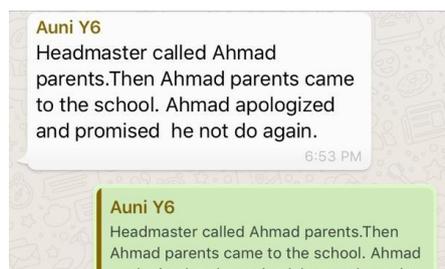


Figure 4.1.2: WhatsApp thread

The following example shows the sentences written by B4 in the pre and post-test;

Pre-test:

Zahid is a bully they pushed Haris... the bully is laugh...

Post-test:

...then the big bully is Jamal pushed Ali and they injured at elbow... and Jamal talk to Ali, "Give me your money now," said Jamal and Jamal and the gang laugh.

In the pre-test, B4 only wrote three phrases in a sentence to describe about the bully situation in which the verbs 'pushed' and 'laugh' are the only clue that indicated the severity of the bully. B4 did not provide detailed description about the emotion involved and the condition of the victim after he was being pushed by the bully. A significant progress was then observed in the post-test when B4 expanded his sentence by adding the word 'injured at elbow' to specifically describe about the condition of Ali after he was pushed by the bully, Jamal although there was a grammatical error on the use of pronoun 'they' to refer to Ali instead of 'he'. The content of this sentence is further enhanced through the use of dialogue when Jamal asked for money from Ali before laughing at the victim which could evoke the readers to imagine the stern expression of the bully and the tense situation of the bully. A detailed description about the bully situation could meaningfully touch the emotions of the readers on the feeling of Ali for being bullied and the misconduct of the bully and the gang.

The ability of B2 and B4 in including dialogue in the post-sentence to provide detailed description of the situation thus, further enhanced the content of the story could be due to the prompt made the teacher researcher during the WhatsApp discussion as shown in Figure 4.1.3. The teacher prompted the pupils to provide dialogue for the bully and victim instead of only describing the situation in narrative sentences, thus allowing the pupils to internalize the feeling of the bully as well as the victim through the use of dialogue, which was then applied by both the pupils in their post-test sentence. In addition, the achievement shown by 50% of the pupils was supported by the data retrieved from the FGI. The pupils responded that through the discussion in the WhatsApp group, they were able to read others' sentences that have been corrected by the teacher researcher thus, helped them to construct their own sentences without taking too much time to think. They also added that when reading others' sentences, they could get better ideas for their writing. In comparison to before they joined this study, they commented that they were always stuttered and hesitated on how to begin writing an essay. Fortunately, being able to utilize WhatsApp as the writing tool, they felt that they were much clearer on the ideas and sentence structures that should be used based on the discussion in the WhatsApp group.

"I can read my friends' sentences... (so) I can finish the essay faster." (G2)

"(Before this) I don't know what to write and now, I feel (much more) okay." (B4)

"(Before this) I was stuttered to write a sentence, now I get (many) ideas for my writing." (G1)



Figure 4.1.3: WhatsApp thread

4.2 How does WhatsApp enhance the pupils' comprehension on the issue of bully?

Based on the data analysis, there were two perspectives emerged on the pupils' comprehension on bully; (1) Perspective on the victims of bully and (2) Perspective on the role of oneself.

4.2.1 Perspective on the Victims of Bully

All the pupils agreed that being the participants in this study has helped them to internalize the feelings of the bully victims. One of the them mentioned that he would feel depressed and anxious if he was the bully victim. He explained that depression and anxiety will gradually develop because the victim was afraid and refuse to go to school as the bully was still in the school and will look for the victim. Consequently, this would cause the victim to be left behind in the study and eventually affect his/her academic performance. The ability of the pupils to internalize the feelings of the bully victims is evident in the DA of WhatsApp thread as shown in Figure 4.2.1 when the one pupil used the word 'scared' to describe the feeling of the bully victim in the narrative writing when the bully approached the victim with fierce face even though the word 'scared' was not provided in the question. Apart of that, the participants commented that the bully victim would retaliate to the bully by taking revenge on the bully's action and one participant further elaborated that the victim would take revenge by hiring other bullies to confront the bully.

"When the bullies bully others, the victims would feel depressed." G3
"The victim will not come to school anymore... because (the victim is) afraid." B1
"... the victim will take revenge (on the bully)." B3

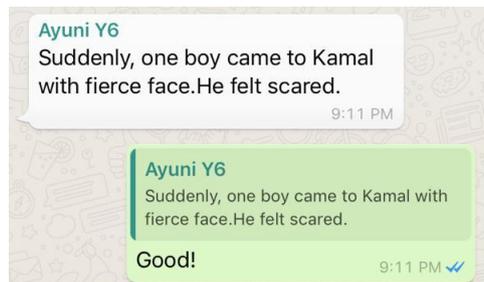


Figure 4.2.1: WhatsApp thread

4.2.2 Perspective on the Role of Oneself

Majority of the pupils agreed that being involved in this study has provided new insights to them on their role and responsibility towards the issue of bully. They are now informed that their major role is to report to the discipline teacher or headmaster when they encountered with bully situation as they are aware on the consequences that the bully victim would face if they fail to report the case to the school authority. One pupil commented that if she knew the parents or guardian of the victim, she would inform about the bully incident. The pupils' response was also evident in the WhatsApp thread as shown in Figure 4.2.2 when two pupils responded that they need to report to the teacher on the bully case as the bully would continue to happen if they do not lodge the report. Another pupil added that the discussion on bully in the narrative writing has taught him to be helpful towards each other and not to turn a blind eye on the bully issue. Moreover, the pupils agreed that they would be more careful in choosing friends because if they befriend with the bully, they might be involved in bully or the worst case, they would turn out to be the bully as well.

"(We) need to report to the teacher (about the bully)" G1
"(We) can help each other (to report on the bully)." B2
"(We) need to choose friend (carefully)." B4

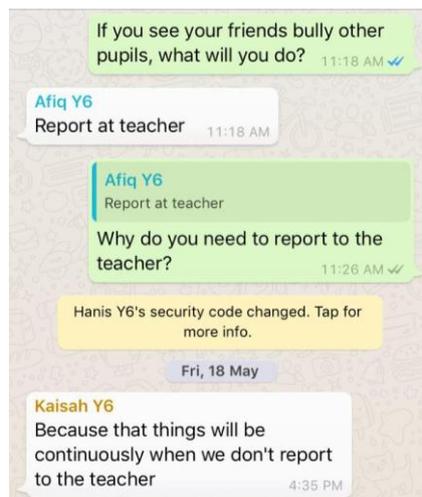


Figure 4.2.2: WhatsApp thread

5.0 Conclusion

This small-scale case study attempts to identify the effects of WhatsApp in teaching narrative writing to Year 6 primary school pupils in the aspect of content as well as on the pupils' comprehension about bully. Based on the DA of pre and post-test marks, it could be concluded that the use of WhatsApp in teaching narrative writing was found to significantly improve the content of the pupils as four pupils or 50% of them showed an increase of one and two marks in their post-test while decreased in marks was observed on the other half of the pupils. Positive response was also observed based on the FGI data as the pupils perceived WhatsApp as a useful tool for sentence construction through the sharing of corrected sentences in the WhatsApp group based on the feedback received from the teacher researcher and members of the group. Therefore, this finding could fill in the literature gap on pedagogical aspect in implementing WhatsApp as a technological in improving writing teaching strategies. This is supported by Bakhtiyar (2017) as the ability of WhatsApp to connect a teacher and a group of students everywhere and every time opens endless possibilities for them to learn English language skills autonomously including vocabulary in a non-threatening environment. On the other hand, the pupils' comprehension on bully was also enhanced as they learnt to be empathy and responsible towards the issue of bully. Based on the findings, all the pupils agreed that being the participants in this study has helped them to internalize the feelings of the bully victims as well as provided new insights to them on their role and responsibility towards the issue of bully.

Therefore, it is hoped the findings of the study could increase the pupils' engagement in learning English writing as the integration of mobile messaging app, WhatsApp could suit their 21st century learning needs as WhatsApp allows them to learn and collaborate interactively in a virtual learning environment. For the educators, the findings of this study could shed some lights on how the educators could manipulate the functions of mobile messaging apps in teaching English particularly the skill of writing as well as raise awareness on the issue of bully through such integration. The educators could also explore the latest features of the messaging apps particularly WhatsApp such as the audio recording, WhatsApp status and stickers and how these features could be integrated in the teaching of English language skills.

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