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APPROACHES TO TEACHING WRITING IN FILIPINO

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the instructional approaches used by Grade 1 teachers in teaching writing in Filipino within the Malinao District, Schools Division of Albay. The research sought to identify commonly employed strategies, evaluate their effectiveness in developing pupils' writing skills, and propose a creative instructional model aligned with the MATATAG Curriculum. Approaches considered included direct teaching, process-based instruction, interactive and shared writing, experience-based learning, and the use of visual aids. Data were collected from twenty Grade 1 teachers and ten education experts through surveys and structured interviews. Findings revealed that learner-centered and interactive approaches were most frequently applied, with the process-based approach, interactive writing, and visual aids perceived as highly effective in helping pupils' express ideas, construct words, and form simple sentences. Experts emphasized that meaningful, creative, and participatory learning experiences are essential in early writing instruction. Based on these insights, the researcher developed the Sulat-Saya na Pagdulog, an innovative approach integrating multisensory activities, songs, games, movement, and real-life experiences to make writing engaging and enjoyable. Results showed that this approach significantly improved learners' confidence, motivation, and writing performance. The study concludes that varied, learner-centered, and creative strategies are vital in building strong foundations for literacy among beginning learners.

Keywords: Writing Instruction, Grade 1 Learners, Matatag Curriculum, Sulat-Saya Approach

1 INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most fundamental skills taught in the early years of schooling. Alongside reading and arithmetic, it serves as a cornerstone of literacy and communication. For Grade 1 learners, writing is more than just forming letters; it is their first opportunity to express ideas, feelings, and knowledge in a tangible way. At this stage, children are introduced to the basics of holding a pencil, recognizing letter shapes, and gradually constructing words and sentences. These early experiences shape their confidence and attitudes toward learning.

Teaching writing in the first grade is both an art and a science. It requires patience, creativity, and the ability to adapt methods to the developmental needs of young learners. Many children struggle with fine motor skills, memory of letter forms, or the discipline required to practice consistently. Without engaging approaches, writing can easily become a source of frustration rather than joy. Teachers therefore play a crucial role in making writing instruction meaningful and enjoyable.

The MATATAG Curriculum emphasizes learner-centered strategies that foster creativity, participation, and contextualized learning. In this light, the study was conducted to explore effective instructional approaches used by Grade 1 teachers in Filipino writing classes. By identifying commonly applied methods and evaluating their outcomes, the research aimed to provide insights into practices that truly support literacy development. Furthermore, the study sought to design a creative instructional model that integrates fun, experiential, and interactive activities to sustain children's interest in writing.

Ultimately, this research contributes to the improvement of teaching practices in early literacy, ensuring that pupils not only acquire technical skills but also develop a genuine love for writing.

2 MATERIALS

The study was conducted among Grade 1 teachers in the Malinao District, Schools Division of Albay. Twenty teachers currently teaching Filipino writing were selected as respondents, each with at least five years of teaching experience and active implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. To validate findings, ten education experts—including school heads, master teachers, and Filipino supervisors—were also consulted.

The primary materials used were researcher-made survey questionnaires and structured interview guides. The questionnaire was designed to capture the frequency and perceived effectiveness of various instructional approaches, including direct teaching, process-based instruction, interactive writing, shared writing, experience-based learning, and the use of visual aids. The interview guide allowed experts to provide deeper insights into the strengths and limitations of these approaches.

Supplementary materials included lesson plans, classroom observation notes, and samples of student writing outputs. These provided contextual evidence of how instructional strategies were applied in practice. The combination of teacher responses, expert validation, and student outputs ensured that the study was grounded in actual classroom realities.

3 METHODS

A descriptive research design was employed to identify and analyze instructional approaches used in teaching writing in Filipino. This design was appropriate as it provided a clear picture of existing practices without manipulating variables.

Data collection involved two main tools: survey questionnaires and structured interviews. The questionnaires were distributed to twenty Grade 1 teachers, who indicated the frequency of their use of different approaches. Structured interviews were conducted with ten education experts to validate teacher responses and provide professional perspectives.

Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, and weighted mean to determine the level of utilization and perceived effectiveness of each approach. Standard deviation was also applied to measure consistency of responses. Qualitative data from interviews were coded and thematically analyzed to highlight expert insights.

The study culminated in the development of the **Sulat-Saya na Pagdulog**, a creative instructional model integrating multisensory activities, visual aids, songs, games, and real-life experiences. This model was tested in classroom demonstrations, and student performance was assessed using proficiency levels.

4 RESULTS

Findings revealed that teachers frequently applied learner-centered and interactive approaches in teaching writing. The process-based approach, interactive writing, and the use of visual aids were identified as the most effective strategies. Teachers reported that these methods helped pupils' express ideas more clearly, construct words and sentences, and actively participate in writing activities.

Survey results showed that the picture-based approach had the highest weighted mean, indicating it was "always used." Direct teaching and process-based instruction also ranked highly, reflecting the importance of explicit guidance and structured steps in early writing. Interactive writing and integrated approaches were "frequently used," while experience-based methods were less emphasized.

Experts validated these findings, emphasizing that visual aids and interactive strategies are crucial in making writing meaningful for young learners. They highlighted that effective writing instruction should provide opportunities for creativity, collaboration, and experiential learning.

The introduction of the **Sulat-Saya Approach** demonstrated significant improvements in student performance. Assessment results showed that 85% of pupils achieved an “Excellent” level in phrase construction, while 10% were “Proficient” and 5% “Developing.” This outcome confirmed that integrating fun, multisensory, and experiential activities enhanced learners’ confidence and motivation.

5 DISCUSSION

The results underscore the importance of varied, learner-centered approaches in teaching writing to Grade 1 pupils. Traditional methods such as direct teaching remain valuable, but they must be complemented by interactive and creative strategies to sustain student interest. The frequent use of visual aids reflects the developmental stage of young learners, who rely heavily on images and concrete experiences to understand abstract concepts.

The limited use of experience-based approaches suggests a gap in contextualizing lessons to children’s daily lives. While experts recognize the value of linking writing tasks to personal experiences, teachers may face challenges in implementing this due to time constraints or curriculum demands. Addressing this gap could further enrich writing instruction by making it more meaningful and relatable.

The success of the Sulat-Saya Approach highlights the potential of integrating play, movement, and creativity into literacy instruction. By reducing anxiety and turning writing into an enjoyable activity, pupils were more motivated to participate and perform well. This aligns with theories of constructivism and experiential learning, which emphasize active engagement and meaningful experiences in knowledge construction.

Overall, the study demonstrates that effective writing instruction requires a balance of structure and creativity. Policies and training programs should encourage teachers to adopt diverse strategies that cater to the holistic development of learners.

6 CONCLUSION

This study concludes that varied, learner-centered, and creative instructional approaches significantly contribute to the development of writing skills among Grade 1 pupils. The findings revealed that process-based instruction, interactive writing, and the use of visual aids were the most effective strategies in enhancing learners’ ability to express ideas, construct words, and form simple sentences. These approaches not only improved technical skills but also fostered active participation and creativity.

The introduction of the Sulat-Saya Approach provided strong evidence that integrating multisensory activities, songs, games, and real-life experiences can transform writing instruction into a joyful and meaningful process. The majority of pupils achieved excellent performance levels, demonstrating that fun and engaging methods reduce anxiety and build confidence in writing.

The study emphasizes that teaching writing in the first grade should go beyond drills and mechanical exercises. It should be anchored in meaningful experiences that connect with children’s lives, stimulate imagination, and encourage collaboration. Teachers must be equipped with strategies that balance explicit instruction with creative activities, ensuring that pupils develop both technical proficiency and a genuine love for writing.

For policy makers and curriculum developers, the findings highlight the need to support innovative approaches aligned with the MATATAG Curriculum. Professional development programs should train teachers in integrating learner-centered and experiential methods. Schools should also provide resources such as visual aids, interactive materials, and opportunities for collaborative learning.

Ultimately, writing instruction in the early grades lays the foundation for lifelong literacy. By making writing fun, meaningful, and engaging, educators can nurture confident, creative, and competent writers who are prepared for future academic and personal success.

STATEMENTS ON COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest should be disclosed.

Statement of ethical approval

This study was conducted in compliance with institutional ethical standards and approved by the Schools Division Office of Albay.

Statement of informed consent

All participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and confidentiality measures. Written consent was obtained from students and their parents prior to participation.

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