



The Implementation of Teaching at the Right Level to Improve Students Expository Writing Skills

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan peningkatan keterampilan menulis teks eksposisi siswa melalui penerapan *Teaching at the Right Level* pada tahap perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Pendekatan yang digunakan yaitu pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian tindakan kelas. Teknik yang digunakan mengumpulkan data yaitu wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Data proses penelitian dianalisis dengan teknik deskriptif kualitatif sedangkan data hasil penelitian dianalisis dengan teknik deskriptif kuantitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran keterampilan menulis teks eksposisi mengalami peningkatan baik dalam tahap perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Pada tahap perencanaan dilakukan penyamaan persepsi tentang RPP, waktu, sumber belajar, media pembelajaran, dan penilaian akhir. Pada siklus I siswa mengerjakan LKPD yang sama, namun tidak terjadi peningkatan maka pada siklus II diberikan LKPD yang berbeda antara siswa sangat mahir, mahir, dan belum mahir. Pada tahap pelaksanaan siklus I hasil yang diperoleh kurang memuaskan dan suasana kelas kurang kondusif maka dilanjutkan ke siklus II, hasil yang diperoleh lebih efektif dan memuaskan. Siswa lebih antusias dan termotivasi mengikuti pembelajaran. Hasil pada tahap evaluasi diperoleh rerata nilai siswa secara keseluruhan pada siklus I sebesar 65,24 sedangkan pada siklus II sebesar 82,31 dengan persentase peningkatan 17,07%.

Kata kunci : Peningkatan, Keterampilan Menulis, Teks Eksposisi, *Teaching at the Right Level*

Abstract

This research aims to describe the improvement in students' exposition writing skills through the application of Teaching at the Right Level at the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. The approach used is a descriptive qualitative approach with the type of classroom action research. The techniques used to collect data are interviews, observations, and documentation. The data from the research process were analyzed using qualitative descriptive techniques, while the research results were analyzed using quantitative descriptive techniques. The research results show that the learning of exposition text writing skills has improved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages. In the planning stage, a consensus was reached regarding the lesson plan, time, learning resources, teaching media, and final assessment. In cycle I, students worked on the same LKPD, but there was no improvement, so in cycle II, different LKPDs were given to students who were very proficient, proficient, and not proficient. At the implementation stage of cycle I, the results obtained were less satisfactory and the classroom atmosphere was less conducive, so it continued to cycle II, where the results obtained were more effective and satisfactory. Students were more enthusiastic and motivated to participate in the learning. The results at the evaluation stage showed an overall average student score of 65.24 in cycle I, while in cycle II it was 82.31, with a percentage increase of 17.07%.

Keywords: Improvement, Writing Skills, Expository Text, Teaching at the Right Level

Introduction

"Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) is an evidence-based approach to education that focuses on ensuring students are taught at their current level of learning" (Siti & Nining, 2023) (Rika et al., 2024) (Kembong & Hartini, 2024). This method acknowledges that students learn differently and that they might need to fill in any gaps in their core knowledge before tackling more complex content. TaRL seeks to enhance learning outcomes and eventually reduce the achievement gap between students from various socioeconomic backgrounds by recognising and resolving these disparities. TaRL keeps students from falling behind and losing interest in the material by adjusting instruction to meet their specific needs. This strategy has been shown to work in a variety of global contexts, improving student performance and fostering overall academic achievement.

"Educators may create more effective and interesting learning environments and eventually improve student achievement in economics by putting Teaching at The Right Level (TaRL) approaches into practice. To enhance instruction and student results, educational policymakers might think about encouraging schools to implement the TaRL model. Professional development opportunities focused on TaRL could offer insights into effective instructional techniques, assessment methods, and classroom management strategies aligned with this model, empowering teachers to maximise its potential impact on student learning.

Curriculum designers might explore ways to integrate the principles of TaRL into existing curricula to ensure students receive the support they need to succeed in economics and other subjects. Further research is warranted to explore the long-term effects of implementing the TaRL model and investigate the specific mechanisms through which it influences student achievement." (Kembong & Hartini, 2024). For example, in a school district where students come from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, teachers can use

TaRL to assess each student's current level of understanding and provide targeted support to help them progress. By identifying and addressing individual learning gaps, educators can help students master foundational skills and build confidence in their abilities. This personalised approach can lead to improved academic outcomes for all students, regardless of their background or prior academic performance.

"Providing students with opportunities to practice and receive feedback on their writing is crucial for improving their skills in writing expository texts" (Emin & H., 2022). "By incorporating regular writing assignments into the curriculum, teachers can help students develop their ability to organise and communicate their ideas effectively. These assignments can include reviewing or summarising material, constructing arguments, applying information to different circumstances, and incorporating personal experiences" (Judith & Arthur, n.d.).

Additionally, providing students with specific criteria for success in expository writing can help them understand what is expected of them and how to improve their work. "To help students become more confident and proficient writers, educators should provide daily time for students to write, teach them the writing process, and focus on developing fundamental writing skills such as handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing, and word processing. This can help students gain confidence in their writing abilities and communicate their ideas effectively. However, research has not explicitly examined the impact of providing daily opportunities for writing practice, and assessment is crucial to guide instruction and determine when students are ready for more challenging tasks" (Langer, n.d.) (Alisha et al., 2012).

In addition to helping them intellectually, this will also help them in their future professional and personal pursuits. In the end, teachers can enable students to express themselves convincingly and clearly in every circumstance by cultivating a solid foundation in writing abilities." Since good communication is an essential ability for

long-term success, improving writing skills is a wise investment. Form completion, memo preparation, and work summarisation are examples of occupational writing duties. Employers place a high value on correctness and clarity in on-the-job writing, stressing the importance of succinct communication.

Grammar is frequently emphasised as a crucial component of staff writing classes. Traditional writing programs should focus on job-specific tasks and materials to enhance writing skills effectively" (Carnevale, n.d.). For example, a teacher may provide personalised feedback on a student's essays, pointing out areas for improvement and offering strategies for revision. By receiving constructive criticism and specific suggestions for enhancement, students can learn how to refine their writing and develop their own unique voice. This personalised guidance can ultimately lead to increased confidence in their writing abilities and a greater sense of accomplishment in their academic work.

"Effective communication is crucial in various aspects of life, including relationships, careers, and personal growth.

Intercultural communication plays a significant role in enhancing career prospects, personal development, and cultural awareness. It allows individuals to exchange insights, improve decision-making skills, and develop new contacts, ultimately leading to increased employment opportunities. Students who engage in intercultural communication gain critical skills valued by employers, such as problem-solving, teamwork, and leadership. Overall, intercultural communication is essential for navigating a globalised world and achieving success in diverse environments" (Žegunienė, 2022).

Additionally, understanding how to communicate effectively can also lead to improved problem-solving skills and conflict resolution. "Constructive feedback on writing can help students understand the impact of their words and improve clarity in conveying ideas. However, research shows that students may sometimes misunderstand or ignore teacher feedback, leading to

challenges in revising their drafts. While students generally value teacher-written feedback, its direct impact on writing development remains unclear, as students may struggle to implement suggested revisions effectively" (Fiona, 2006) (April et al., 2011). In their future employment, when successful communication is essential, this can be really helpful. Strong communication abilities can also help students deal with difficult circumstances with poise and compassion, which will ultimately result in improved relationships and personal development.

Have produced a range of outcomes. While some studies have found little to no benefit, others have found notable gains in academic performance. TaRL significantly improved the basic reading and numeracy skills of primary school pupils, according to research done in rural India. A research study conducted in Kenya, however, discovered that the program had little to no impact on the learning results of the students.

"The Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) model has been successfully adapted to various contexts and settings, allowing for experimentation with different modes of implementation to meet the variations of context. This adaptability has been enabled through research partnerships and evaluation of different programme variants. However, there remains a notable gap in research specifically probing the implementation of the TaRL model within high school economics curricula, with limited studies addressing this area. Further research is needed to determine the true effectiveness of TaRL in different educational contexts, including high school economics education" (Michelle & Jason, 2020) (Kembong & Hartini, 2024).

"Teacher training, support systems, and community involvement are crucial factors that can contribute to the success of a program. Teacher education programs are planning to increase training in family involvement, recognising the benefits for students, teachers, parents, and the broader community. Professional organisations like the National Parent Teacher Association

emphasise the importance of family involvement and set national standards for programs. Inservice training for teachers and administrators is also essential to sustain knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes toward families" (Angela et al., 1997). By examining these variables more closely, educators and policymakers can tailor TaRL to better suit the needs of students in diverse environments. Ultimately, continued evaluation and refinement of the TaRL approach will be crucial in maximising its impact on student learning outcomes worldwide.

The impact of teacher training on the success of TaRL programs in different regions. "The implementation of Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) has been shown to increase student learning motivation and engagement. Studies have found that students' motivation levels significantly improved after the TaRL approach was implemented, leading to higher academic achievement. Teachers have noted that TaRL helps in designing interactive learning tailored to individual students' needs and abilities, thus enhancing student engagement in the learning process. Overall, TaRL has a positive impact on student motivation and engagement in various subjects, including physical education and reading." (Didik & Anwar, 2024) (Baso & Muhammad, 2024) (Kembong & Hartini, 2024).

"Further research could explore the relationship between TaRL and writing skills, as strong literacy skills are essential for academic success" (Siti & Nining, 2023) (Aswasulasikin et al., 2024). Furthermore, examining how teacher preparation affects the effectiveness of TaRL programs across various geographies may offer insightful information on implementation best practices. Gaining insight into how TaRL affects student engagement and motivation can also assist teachers in adjusting their methods to maximise learning outcome improvement. TaRL's potential to revolutionise education and empower students globally can be fully realised by tackling these important issues.

"To create a supportive and inclusive learning environment, provide ongoing professional development for teachers, and incorporate technology to enhance learning, it is essential to understand the complex process of teacher professional learning. This process involves multiple systems, such as the individual teacher, the school, and the learning activities or tasks. The individual teacher system includes their prior experiences, beliefs about learning, and classroom practices. School-level systems involve the contexts of the school that support teaching and learning. Incorporating technology to enhance learning requires a smart learning environment that is effective, efficient, and engaging, adapting to the learner's needs" (V. & David, 2011) (Raban, n.d.) (E. et al., 2016).

Collaborating with local communities and stakeholders can also help tailor TaRL programs to meet the specific needs and challenges of each region. Additionally, regularly monitoring and evaluating the impact of TaRL interventions can help educators make data-driven decisions to continuously improve their teaching practises." Educators can maximise the benefits of Teaching at The Right Level (TaRL) by implementing methodologies that foster engaging and effective learning environments, enhancing student success in economics. They can also consider promoting the adoption of the TaRL model in schools to improve teaching quality and student outcomes.

Professional development opportunities focused on TaRL could provide insights into effective instructional techniques, assessment methods, and classroom management strategies aligned with this model. Curriculum designers can integrate the principles of TaRL into existing curricula to ensure students receive the support they need to succeed in economics and other subjects. Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of

implementing the TaRL model and investigate the specific mechanisms through which it influences student achievement" (Kembong & Hartini, 2024) (Siti & Nining, 2023).

"By creating a supportive and nurturing environment, teachers can indeed enhance the learning experience for their students. Educators in California have expressed a strong desire for professional development in creating supportive environments for students, including developing personally and socially responsible young people, supporting students' social and emotional development, and meeting children's physical and mental health needs. Culturally responsive teaching, which involves recognising students' cultural backgrounds and strengths, can also contribute to a positive learning environment" (Channa, 2018).

Integrating technology into the classroom can also make learning more interactive and personalised for students, increasing their overall engagement and motivation. By working closely with communities and stakeholders, educators can gain valuable insights into the unique needs of their students and adapt their TaRL programs accordingly. Through regular monitoring and evaluation, educators can track the progress of their students and make informed decisions to enhance their teaching methods. "Regular monitoring and evaluation by educators is crucial for tracking student progress and making informed decisions to enhance teaching methods. Data-informed decision-making involves more than just having a data system; it requires leadership, tools for generating actionable data, professional development, and time for analysing data. The U.S. Department of Education is conducting a national study to understand how data systems are used in schools and the impact on instruction. Educators need to adopt a continuous-improvement perspective, reflect

on student outcomes, and refine practices based on data [1]. Professional development and technical support for data interpretation are essential for effective data-informed decision-making" (Christine et al., 2009).

Overall, by implementing these strategies, educators can create a dynamic and effective learning environment that fosters student success and achievement. For example, educators in a rural community may collaborate with local leaders and parents to understand the specific challenges faced by their students, such as limited access to technology or resources. By tailoring their TaRL program to address these obstacles, educators can create a more inclusive and effective learning experience for all students. Through ongoing feedback and evaluation, educators can measure the impact of their interventions and make adjustments to ensure continuous improvement in student outcomes. However, in a different scenario, educators in an urban setting may struggle to collaborate with a diverse range of stakeholders due to logistical challenges and competing priorities. Without adequate support and resources, implementing a TaRL program that addresses the specific needs of students in this environment may prove to be ineffective and unsustainable.

Method

This research is classified as classroom action research to describe and observe the students' learning process through the application of TaRL in writing exposition texts. The research was conducted at the end of July 2024 at SMA Pondok Pesantren Puteri Ummul Mukminin Makassar, Jalan Perintis Kemerdekaan Km. 17 Makassar, involving 35 students from class X.4. The research data consists of planning, implementation, and evaluation data obtained through observation, documentation, and tests. The sources of data for this research are teachers, students, and researchers. This research is designed in 2 cycles. The implementation of cycle I will be continued in cycle II, which is the implementation of improvements from cycle I. If the results of cycle II are still not optimal,

then it will continue to the next cycle. Each cycle consists of the planning stage, action stage, observation stage, and reflection stage.

In the planning stage, teachers and researchers identify the inhibiting and supporting factors faced by teachers in the classroom, plan classroom learning, discuss the approach applied, namely Teaching at the Right Level, and determine the topics and teaching materials. Then, in the action phase, the researcher created a summary consisting of the preparation, implementation, and follow-up stages, while the teacher taught using the TaRL approach. The observation stage was conducted using an observation sheet in the form of monitoring attendance, activity, and the learning process. Then, in the reflection stage, the teacher and researcher analyze the actions, discuss and deliberate on the appropriateness of the actions, find solutions to problems, and interpret and conclude the data obtained. The data collection techniques include tests, questionnaires, interviews, observations, rating scales, recording, and documentation. The collected data is analyzed using the flow data model (Miles and Huberman, 1992:18), which starts with reviewing all the data, then reducing the data, presenting the data, and finally concluding or verifying.

Result and Discussion

The research data on planning, implementation, and evaluation were analyzed based on activities in cycle I and cycle II, including tests and non-tests (observation sheets, interview guidelines, field notes, and documentation) to seek improvements in finding research results and to be more meticulous in their implementation.

At the planning stage of cycle I, the teacher and researcher collaboratively aligned their perceptions regarding the lesson plan to be implemented, the main topics, time, learning resources, and the application of the approach. The results obtained were considered insufficient, so the learning outcomes did not reach the maximum value. Therefore, the design of the learning process in cycle II is intended to improve the process

and learning outcomes in cycle I. In this second cycle, the implementation of TaRL is still used and applied more maximally. The teacher and researcher redesigned the lesson plan, and observations were conducted on the teacher and students during the process of learning exposition text writing skills.

In the implementation stage of cycle I, 3 meetings (2x45 minutes) were conducted. The results of student activities for each meeting are outlined as follows.

Table 1. Student Activities in the First Meeting of Cycle I

No	Learning Activities	Percentage of Activity %			Amount
		Active	Less Active	Not Active	
1	The student collaborates with their group members to formulate the main issues in the reading material.	10 (28,57)	20 (57,14)	5 (14,28)	35 (100%)
2	The students listened attentively to the group leader who read out the results of their discussion.	7 (20)	10 (28,57)	18 (51,42)	35 (100%)
3	The student collaborates with their groupmate to summarize the main ideas found in the paragraph.	6 (17,14)	15 (42,85)	14 (40)	35 (100%)
4	Students ask and answer questions in determining the structure of the text, characteristics of expository text, and steps to compose expository text.	11 (31,42)	17 (48,57)	7 (20)	35 (100%)
5	Students respond to the opinions expressed by the text's author from both agreeing and disagreeing perspectives.	10 (28,57)	15 (42,85)	10 (28,57)	35 (100%)
6	The student motivates their peer who has not yet contributed to the discussion.	10 (28,57)	10 (28,57)	15 (42,85)	35 (100%)
7	Students provide solutions or ways out for the problems being discussed.	7 (20)	7 (20)	21 (60)	35 (100%)

Table 2. Student Activities in the Second Meeting of Cycle I

No	Learning Activities	Percentage of Activity %			Amount
		Active	Less Active	Not Active	
1	The student collaborates with their group members to formulate the main issues in the reading material.	20 (57,14)	10 (28,57)	5 (14,28)	35 (100%)
2	The students listened attentively to the group leader who read out the results of their discussion.	20 (57,14)	10 (28,57)	5 (14,28)	35 (100%)
3	The student collaborates with their groupmate to summarize the main ideas found in the paragraph.	24 (68,57)	7 (20)	4 (11,42)	35 (100%)
4	Students ask and answer questions in determining the structure of the text, characteristics of expository text, and steps to compose expository text.	15 (42,85)	10 (28,57)	10 (28,57)	35 (100%)
5	Students respond to the opinions expressed by the text's author from both agreeing and disagreeing perspectives.	12 (34,28)	17 (48,57)	6 (17,14)	35 (100%)

Table 3. Student Activities in the Third Meeting of Cycle I

No	Learning Activities	Percentage of Activity %			Amount
		Active	Less Active	Not Active	
1	The student collaborates with their group members to formulate the main issues in the reading material.	23 (65,71)	9 (23,14)	3 (11,15)	35 (100%)
2	The students listened attentively to the group leader who read out the results of their discussion.	23 (65,71)	0 (0)	7 (20)	35 (100%)
3	The student collaborates with their groupmate to summarize the main ideas found in the paragraph.	21 (60)	10 (28,57)	4 (11,42)	35 (100%)
4	Students ask and answer questions in determining the structure of the text, characteristics of expository text, and steps to compose expository text.	20 (57,14)	10 (28,57)	5 (14,28)	35 (100%)
5	Students respond to the opinions expressed by the text's author from both agreeing and disagreeing perspectives.	12 (34,28)	18 (51,42)	5 (14,28)	35 (100%)

The implementation phase of the learning activities in cycle II was carried out in 3 meetings.

Table 4. Student Activities in the First Meeting of Cycle II

No	Learning Activities	Percentage of Activity %			Amount
		Active	Less Active	Not Active	
1	The student collaborates with their group members to formulate the main issues in the reading material.	27 (77,14)	5 (14,28)	3 (8,57)	35 (100%)
2	The students listened attentively to the group leader who read out the results of their discussion.	30 (85,71)	5 (14,28)	0 (0)	35 (100%)
3	The student collaborates with their groupmate to summarize the main ideas found in the paragraph.	27 (77,14)	6 (17,14)	2 (5,71)	35 (100%)
4	Students ask and answer questions in determining the structure of the text, characteristics of expository text, and steps to compose expository text.	27 (77,14)	6 (17,14)	2 (5,71)	35 (100%)
5	Students respond to the opinions expressed by the text's author from both agreeing and disagreeing perspectives.	26 (74,28)	5 (14,28)	4 (11,42)	35 (100%)
6	The student motivates their peer who has not yet contributed to the discussion.	25 (71,42)	7 (20)	3 (8,57)	35 (100%)
7	Students provide solutions or ways out for the problems being discussed.	29 (82,85)	10 (28,57)	5 (14,28)	35 (100%)

Table 5. Student Activities in the Second Meeting of Cycle II

No	Learning Activities	Percentage of Activity %			Amount
		Active	Less Active	Not Active	
1	The student collaborates with their group members to formulate the main issues in the reading material.	28 (80)	5 (14,28)	2 (5,71)	35 (100%)
2	The students listened attentively to the group leader who read out the results of their discussion.	29 (82,85)	3 (8,57)	3 (8,57)	35 (100%)
3	The student collaborates with their groupmate to summarize the main ideas found in the paragraph.	30 (85,71)	3 (8,57)	2 (5,71)	35 (100%)
4	Students ask and answer questions in determining the structure of the text, characteristics of expository text, and steps to compose expository text.	25 (71,42)	7 (20)	3 (8,57)	35 (100%)
5	Students respond to the opinions expressed by the text's author from both agreeing and disagreeing perspectives.	25 (71,42)	7 (20)	3 (8,57)	35 (100%)

Table 6. Student Activities in the Third Meeting of Cycle II

No	Learning Activities	Percentage of Activity %			Amount
		Active	Less Active	Not Active	
1	The student collaborates with their group members to formulate the main issues in the reading material.	30 (85,71)	5 (14,28)	0 (0)	35 (100%)
2	The students listened attentively to the group leader who read out the results of their discussion.	33 (94,28)	0 (0)	2 (5,71)	35 (100%)
3	The student collaborates with their groupmate to summarize the main ideas found in the paragraph.	33 (94,28)	2 (5,71)	0 (0)	35 (100%)
4	Students ask and answer questions in determining the structure of the text, characteristics of expository text, and steps to compose expository text.	27 (77,14)	5 (14,28)	3 (8,57)	35 (100%)
5	Students respond to the opinions expressed by the text's author from both agreeing and disagreeing perspectives.	30 (85,71)	4 (11,42)	1 (2,85)	35 (100%)

At the evaluation stage, the percentage results from 2 cycles were obtained. The assessment results of cycle II were carried out as an implementation of actions that are improvements in learning from cycle I. The following presents the details of the improvement in writing skills by applying Teaching at the Right Level for students in cycle I and cycle II.

Table 7. Student Ability Scores in Cycle I and Cycle II

No	Score Range	Cycle I		Cycle II		Level of Mastery
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
1	91-100	2	5,71	12	34,28	Very High
2	76-90	6	17,14	19	54,28	High
3	61-57	13	37,14	4	11,42	Currently
4	51-46	9	25,71	0	0	Low
5	<50	5	14,28	0	0	Very Low
Amount		35	100	35	100	

In the table, it is proven that the average student scores increased in cycle II based on the reflections from cycle I and the feedback from students during the cycle I interviews. Based on the results, it shows that students' academic performance, particularly in

writing skills, has improved.

Conclusion

Based on the research and discussion, it is concluded that the implementation of Teaching at the Right Level in writing skills among students has shown improvement in the planning, execution, and evaluation stages. At the planning stage, students were grouped according to their skill levels and worked on different LKPDs. At the implementation stage, after addressing the issues in cycle I, the implementation process of cycle II was more effective and satisfying. Students were more enthusiastic and motivated to participate in the learning process, and they began to have the courage and confidence to express their ideas in the exposition texts they created. The results at the evaluation stage showed that the average student score in cycle I was 65.24, while the score in cycle II was 82.31, with a percentage increase of 17.07%.

Recommendations for implementing TaRL to improve writing skills include providing ongoing professional development for teachers to ensure they are effectively implementing the program, integrating technology tools to enhance writing instruction and practice, and creating individualized learning plans for students based on their specific writing needs. Additionally, it is important to regularly assess student progress and adjust teaching strategies accordingly to ensure maximum impact. By following these recommendations, educators can effectively implement TaRL and help students improve their writing skills in a meaningful and sustainable way. on their specific writing needs. By incorporating these recommendations, schools can maximize the impact of the TaRL approach and help all students achieve success in writing.

Based on the research and evidence presented, it is clear that TaRL is a valuable tool for improving writing skills among students. By focusing on individualized instruction, ongoing teacher training, and the integration of technology, schools can create a supportive learning environment that meets

the unique needs of each student. Ultimately, the implementation of TaRL has the potential to significantly enhance student learning outcomes in writing and empower students to become confident and proficient writers.

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Curriculum Vitae

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