

THE IMPACT OF NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION

MANJIT KAUR D/O SAMA SINGH



**LANGUAGE FACULTY
UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS
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2006**

THE IMPACT OF NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION

BY

MANJIT KAUR D/O SAMA SINGH

**THIS ACADEMIC EXERCISE IS SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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PENGAKUAN

Saya mengaku disertasi ini adalah hasil kerja saya sendiri kecuali nukilan dan ringkasan yang setiap satunya saya jelaskan sumbernya.

07.10.2006

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**(MANJIT KAUR A/P
SAMA SINGH)**

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this dissertation is my own except for quotations and summarize which have been duly acknowledged.

07.10.2006

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**(MANJIT KAUR D/O
SAMA SINGH)**

DEDICATION

**Dedicated especially to my caring and understanding parents,
respected family members, my beautiful and courageous
daughters Jasmeer Kaur and Gurjit Kaur,
and to my beloved husband
Ranjit Singh in memory.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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To my father and mother for highlighting the finer principles in life and their endless guidance, love and most of all showing me what endurance is all about. My loving and understanding children especially Jasmeer Kaur and Gurjit Kaur for adding special meaning to my life. Special thanks to my brothers, sisters and other family members for their guidance, support and assistance in the duration of this study.

Finally, my special thanks and appreciation to the staff, administrators and students of 3B & 3E (2006) SMK Metho dist (ACS), Jalan Lahat, Ipoh, Perak who had given me their fullest cooperation and support in the gathering of data and information for this study. Lastly but not least, would like to thank those who had helped in one way or the other in the completion of this research.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan di SMK Methodist (ACS), Jalan Lahat, Ipoh, Perak bagi pelajar-pelajar tingkatan 3B & 3E (2006) iaitu seramai 40 orang responden. Ia bertujuan untuk mengkaji sejauh manakah berkesanannya metodologi penggunaan suratkhbar di bilik darjah untuk membolehkan pelajar menulis karangan dengan baik dalam Bahasa Inggeris mengikut skema peperiksaan PMR. Tujuan penyelidikan “The Impact Of NIE” dijalankan untuk mengetahui keberkesanannya dan suasana pembelajaran yang bermakna terutama sekali dalam “guided writing composition” kertas 2. Pembelajaran penggunaan akhbar dalam darjah diterima kerana mampu meningkatkan mutu pembelajaran dan meningkatkan pencapaian dan keyakinan diri pelajar yang terdedah kepada kaedah tersebut. Pembelajaran penggunaan akhbar di bilik darjah menggunakan pendekatan yang mengutamakan cara belajar yang berbeza untuk mengerakkan motivasi dan minat. Oleh yang demikian, para pendidik seharusnya menggunakan kaedah pembelajaran penggunaan akhbar di dalam bilik darjah untuk meningkatkan mutu pengajaran dan pembelajaran.

ABSTRACT

The research on the impact of newspapers was carried out in Sekolah Menengah Methodist (ACS), Jalan Lahat, Ipoh, Perak. The aim of the research was to assess whether the use of newspaper (NIE) in the classroom can help students in their essay writing skills for Paper Two of the English Language PMR examination. Using newspaper in the classroom can promote interaction, meaningful learning and also promote guided writing compositions. Newspaper in education is generally accepted as an important tool that can enhance teaching and learning. Many researchers have conducted studies on the impact of newspaper in education and asserted that students' who are exposed to this method display a high degree of achievement, self-esteem and confidence. Newspaper in education caters for students' learning styles which is very relevant to create motivation and interest among students. Consequently, teachers should apply the use of newspaper in the classroom to enhance learning and teaching.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS, ABBREVIATIONS OR NOMENCLATURE

NIE	Newspapers in Education
ICT	Information Communication Technology
NST	New Straits Times
PMR	Penilaian Menengah Rendah
SSP	School Sponsorship Programme
SMK	Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan
NIE	Newspaper in English
KPM	Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia
ESL	English as a Second Language
ACS	Anglo Chinese School
EFL	English Foreign Language

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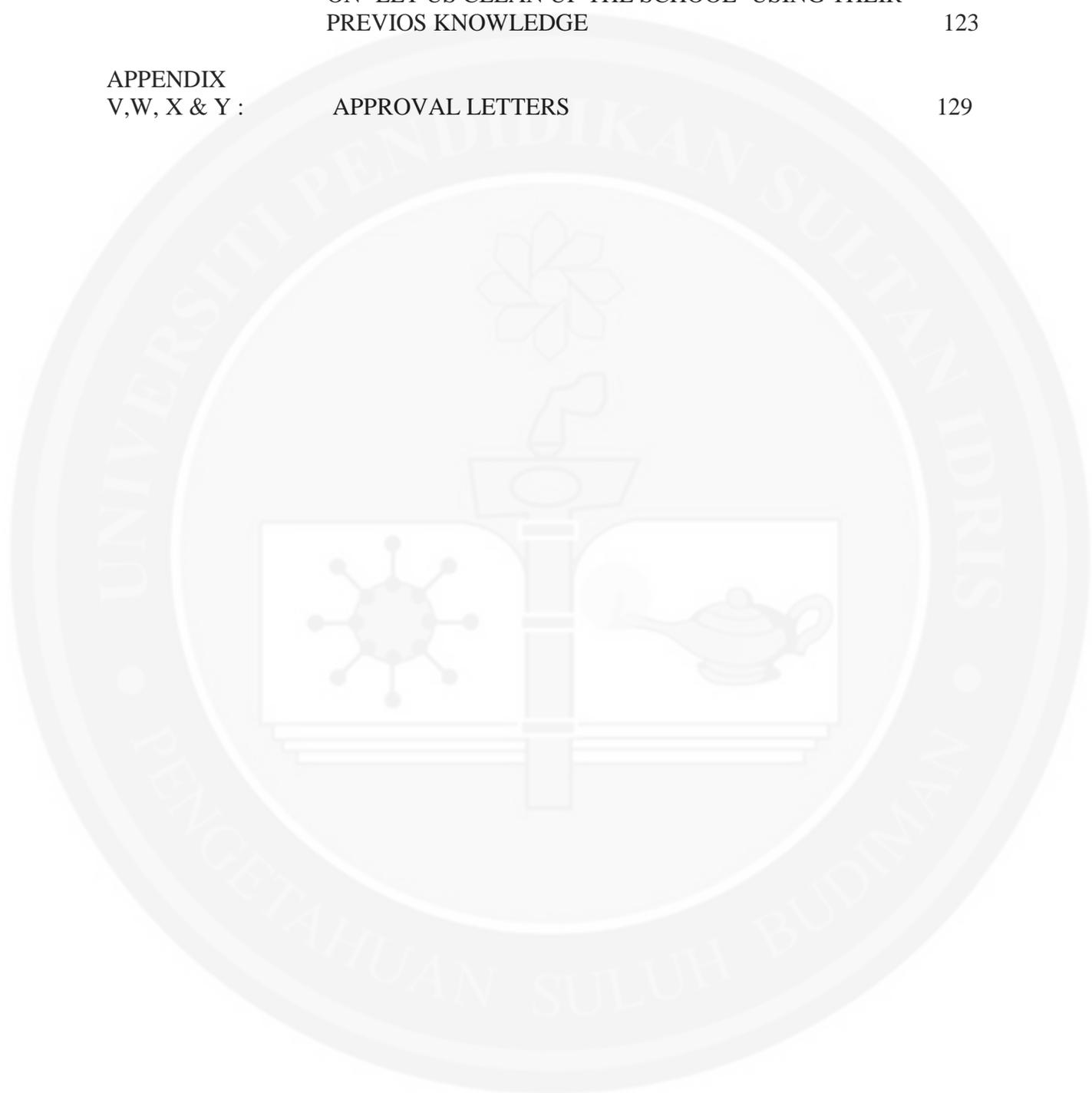
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The newspaper is a widely used media in schools due to a national campaign by major newspapers known as “Newspapers in Education” (NIE). This initiative encourages the use of newspapers as an educational tool both to complement and to supplement the traditional classroom texts and resource materials (Newton, 1985). “The newspaper as an Effective Teaching Tool” (1981) explains the intent of the programme and provides a variety of classroom activities using newspapers. The success of this broad initiative is evident in projects such as “Newspapers are for kids, too!” designed for young children and their parents; with creative ideas to help children to improve reading, writing, social studies, mathematics, and science skills. It can easily be modified for classroom use in the elementary grades (Hermann, 1981).

The Minister of Education, Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein asserts that “*our children must understand that they should and can learn English. Giving them newspapers connects them to a larger English-speaking Malaysian public*” (NST, 16 August, 2005, p.1).

Whether it is spoken or written as a native or second language, there is no denial that English is the international language of communication and knowledge. A good command of English is an advantage in a competitive world where knowledge is in real-time and progress in double time. It is important to ensure Malaysians have a strong “global” voice to access information. An accelerated path to English, language acquisition, and a broader world view comes through the use of newspapers in the classroom.

Bringing newspapers into the classroom is a proven way to help students not only to know about current issues or events but further development (NIE Starter Kit, 2005). Recent research report indicates that students who use the newspapers in class score 10% to 30% higher on standardized reading, writing and mathematics tests (<http://www.jsonline.com/nie>). Indeed students go beyond current events, using newspaper stories, photographs, columns, advertisements, comics and graphs. Workshops boost learning and teaching effectiveness.

Shahrul Hafeez (2006 p10) informs that English teachers of a school near Kuala Kangsar, Perak, Malaysia found that newspapers are better than books and workbooks in

teaching the language. Students relate more to current issues, especially sports, entertainment and crime. It is also known that the use of newspapers in schools has a positive effect on student attitudes toward reading in general (Karen's Linguistics Issues, 2002).

In Malaysia, the leading English language dailies the New Straits Times and The Star run well established and widely employed Newspaper in English (NIE) initiatives in schools and colleges. This type of project aims to encourage the use of the newspaper as a language learning resource.

It is known that the use of newspapers in schools has a positive effect on students' attitudes toward reading in general. Newspaper in education is not a new concept as teachers used newspapers as a teaching tool in the 1990's (Transforming lessons with The Star, 2005). Using newspapers makes the lessons less teacher centred (Emmeline Tan, 2005). Teachers who use the newspaper as a teaching or learning tool in the classroom are quick to admit that the NIE concept does not make "the child fit the learning", but makes "the learning fit the child". In addition, they report a greater excitement for language learning, improved English scores and more knowledgeable students. Whether it is to teach syllabus or to enrich instruction, the newspaper is a versatile tool in the hands of an enterprising English teacher. Since 1985, The New Straits Times Newspaper – In – Education (NIE) has played an important role and it is set to take even greater strides.

“Sow a thought, reap an action; sow an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny,” states a Chinese proverb. The destiny will be sown by teachers especially for our students to gain a true knowledge society. Each day NST publishes articles that cover a range of subjects that can be adapted to suit curriculum requirements at all levels. There are various articles teaching creative and critical thinking, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, writing as well as science and mathematics terminology. As the news is current, relevant and dynamic, lessons can be kept interesting. The NIE articles are “living” text and encourage students to push the limits of their creativity to engage in a more holistic approach to language learning.

With reference to the PMR examination, writing is tested in Question One of the PMR English Language Paper Two and constitutes an important component, taking up 30 marks or 60% of the overall marks in Paper 2 (*Format Pentaksiran, Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2005*)

Writing essays is not an easy skill. Students’ ability to write a good composition lies in their command of the language, particularly in grammar and sentence structure.

However, the researcher is of the view that the use of mass media such as the newspaper to supplement writing materials can help students to write good compositions. In the PMR examination. S. Suganthi (2006, July,7 pg 8) reports that teachers use newspapers in lessons so that the lesson is interesting and helps students in their writing performance. “Teacher asks us to cut out pictures from the NST and write about them in our own words,” said student Muhamad Shahidi Mat Rasul, who saw his English grades

improving from C to A. Using newspapers in the classrooms will help the students to improve their ability in writing skills.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The philosophy of our education is to develop in our students their intellect, attitudes, self-confidence and their ability to think logically, creatively and also to be able to think critically.

Using newspapers in the classroom is indeed a good start for students to improve writing skills for the PMR examination especially when writing essays. It allows the students to come up with interesting ideas and information. Using newspapers also provide students with purposeful and valuable language practice.

Gan Lee Sheah (2006) states that society and individuals are wishing to play its role in moulding a generation of readers and people with knowledge of current affairs. Students from rural areas should be given more exposure to the English Language so that they would be able to stride confidently in a globalise world.

Newspapers also help students to keep themselves in line with the world's progress.

Students are exposed to a wide variety of text types and language styles. Therefore,

newspapers are indeed valuable authentic material that can be handy to manage, easily utilized in various ways, informative with latest and current information.

The New Straits Times School Sponsorship Programme is an opportunity for Malaysians to contribute to nation-building through the sponsorship of newspapers in schools in rural and semi-urban areas. More than 53,000 students from all over Malaysia have benefited from the programme since it was officially launched by Education Minister Datuk Seri Hishamuddin Hussein on August 15, 2005. (NST, 20 August, 2006).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The skill of writing is an integral part of language writing. A secondary school student must be able to write compositions. This is because writing is tested in secondary school examinations. In addition, many students face a lot of problems when they are asked to write compositions. Teachers usually expect students to produce a complete composition at the end of a writing lesson and do not take into account the difficulties that students face in writing. In order to write, a student must have amongst other things a good vocabulary foundation and also some basic knowledge about grammar. In addition, students must also learn how to write interesting essays. They usually do not get enough guidance in writing when they do not use this approach or method especially using the newspapers.

The newspaper is used as a teaching tool (<http://www.ups.edu/polgor/oneil>) accessed on 2nd August, 2005. The printed medium exposes students to how the English Language is used through genres used in reports. Constant exposure to newspapers will add to the schematic knowledge of current issues, world view and liberate their thoughts and views, and widen their perspectives (Theyv Rajaretnam, 2002). Therefore, the usage of the newspaper is considered a strategy to enhance students' performances in writing essays.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Newspaper text is an example of real life language data. For learners with a limit English Language environment, newspapers can be a source of enrichment and increased language exposure. The main objective of this study is to test the effectiveness of using the newspaper in the Lower Secondary School as an aid to Language Learning in writing essays.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study specifically aimed at seeking answers to the following research questions: -

- (1) Is there a significant difference between the scores of the pre and post test results of essay writing by students in the experimental group after discussion based on newspaper texts?
- (2) Is there a significant difference in the mean scores for the post -test in writing compositions between the experimental group and the control group?
- (3) Is the newspaper the main source of the experimental group of students' essays during the two treatments?
- (4) Is there a significant difference between the scores of the pre -test and post- test results of essay writing by students' in the experimental and control groups?

1.6 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The rationale of this study is to show that newspapers can be used to help students to improve their essay writing abilities. (Ur, 2002 & Barbara Shapley, 1990). In Malaysia, the leading English Language dailies the New Straits Times and The Star run well established and widely employed Newspaper in English (NIE) initiatives in Malaysian schools and colleges. This type of project aims to encourage the user of the newspaper as a language learning resource.

Newspaper articles can be used for “language awareness activities” (Wright & Bolitho, 1993) and for ‘genre analysis” (Flowerdew, 1993). Newspaper text is cheap, relatively plentiful and easily accessible. Newspaper (as organizations) tend to positively encourage the use of their products in educational institutions by teachers and learners, offering discounted cover price to students and organizing workshops, competitions and activities for teachers and learners.

Newspaper text is easy to physically manipulate. It can be cut out, cut up, jumbled up, rearranged, combined, pasted etc. If reprographic facilities such as photocopying of presentable materials through the “cut and paste” method. Alternatively, a whole page or section or newspaper can be utilized with learners seeking out examples of certain language features or following teacher rubrics to do tasks on the text.

The languages in newspapers tend to be more current and main stream. Other type of text such as those extracted from literary or specialized sources may present encounters with idiomatic, regional, colloquial, and esoteric or technical usage. Fossilized or stylistic idiosyncrasies may occur. The use of any extra or outside material is more demanding on teachers. They must organize, design and produce tasks to exploit newspaper text as well as select the text in the first place. Using an article or newspaper text may throw up points of learner questions that the teacher does not anticipate.

In a developed country like Malaysia, where the medium of instruction is Bahasa Malaysia (the national language), English is taught as a second language in all Malaysian