

Can Literature Impact Reading and Writing Skills: Form 5 Students' Perspective based on the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" in a Local Secondary School

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Abstract

Reading and writing skills have been the basis of a strong foundation in our educational system since its inception and new ways were being discovered or developed to increase students' interest in those basic components of learning. On the other hand, Literature, which is a means of expressing self through the medium of the language, is frequently used in English as a Second Language (ESL) Classroom as an authentic method of teaching the target language which is incorporated in classrooms to improve English proficiency in reading and writing. This study delves into Form 5 students' perspective on the impact of the novel "Dear Mr. Kilmer" on the reading and writing skills in a local secondary school. The research investigates how engaging with literature can influence students' understanding, reading skills, and writing skills. A mixed-methods approach was employed to gather insights from 50 students and their teacher. The study's design comprised three sections: understanding of the novel's content, reading skill enhancement, and writing skill improvement. The results indicated majority of students demonstrated a strong grasp of the narrative, exemplifying the novel's capacity to engage and resonate with young readers. The exploration of the novel's impact on reading skills illuminated a consistent pattern of improvement across decoding, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary expansion. Regarding writing skills, the study showcased the novel's positive influence on students' abilities. The students' self-assessment of their writing skills revealed an overall enhancement in constructing sentences, identifying genre and content, and recognizing voice. The teacher also highlighted how the novel's relatable characters, themes, and letter format resonate with students, offering a personal connection that enhances language learning. The study's limitations included a relatively small sample size, self-reported data, short-term focus, and a specific educational context.

Keywords: Reading Skills, Writing Skills, Novel, Literature, ESL, English Proficiency, Dear Mr Kilmer

Introduction

English language plays a vital role, especially in students' academic progress as it enables them to communicate with one another. English language is one of the most important aspects for the students to master as it broadens their minds, sharpens their communication

skill, emotional skills and improves the quality of life by providing various job opportunities once they have graduated high school. Malaysia is one of the Asian countries that is adopting a bilingual system of education. The aim is to establish a balance between national and international needs and challenges manifested through linguistic educational policies (Gill & Kirkpatrick, 2013).

In Malaysia, it has been observed that Malaysian understudies between 11 to 13 years of learning to formal English lessons in schools, however their language competence are still a long way from satisfactory (David et al, 2015). It is a well-known fact that students' proficiency level in Malaysia is low as the aspects of the English language in terms of grammar, vocabularies and etc, completely differs from our country's national language, Bahasa Melayu.

Reading and writing skills have been the basis of a strong foundation in our educational system since its inception and new ways were being discovered or developed to increase students' interest in those basic components of learning. Often, students are mostly encouraged to read outside the classroom to enhance their reading comprehension, vocabulary, general knowledge, and cultural awareness (Pearson, 2015). Many researchers agree that through reading, students can increase their vocabulary knowledge which is very useful in acquiring other skills in language learning. Therefore, it is essential for student improving the reading skill. Writing skills are undoubtedly essential, particularly in academic and professional settings, serving as a vital medium to convey thoughts, ideas, and arguments. Effective writing is intricately linked to thorough reading. Without exposure to well-crafted written texts, students struggle to produce quality written work.

Literature, which is a means of expressing self through the medium of the language, is frequently used in English as a Second Language (ESL) Classroom. Stern (1991) echoed that an approach that integrates literature study with the mastery of the language and the further development of language proficiency is one of the reasons why it is important to incorporate literature in ESL classrooms. Thus, considering the benefits on the reading and writing aspects that literature provides, the researchers thinks that the teaching of literature to the ESL learners will improve the students' proficiency.

In this research, the researchers will be analysing to what extend does the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" written by Anne Scraff improve the Reading and Writing skills of Form 5 students in a local secondary school. The novel Dear Mr Kilmer is a sensitive moving story about a fifteen-year-old farm boy named Richard Knight, who lives on a farm with his father (Pa), brother (Gus) and sister (Angie). Moreover, the researchers analyses the three main components which are the character, point of view and the theme in the novel to further study on whether the students can understand and interpret the listed components accordingly, which later justifies that it has improve their English proficiency, in terms of reading and writing skills.

Literature Review

Definition of English Literature

English Literature is a term used to define written or spoken material. Broadly speaking, "literature" is used to describe any material that came from creative writing, but the term is most used to refer to works of creative writing to more technical or scientific including works

of poetry, drama, fiction, and non-fiction (Ashwin Chouhan, 2016). The types of literature material that can be used in a literature class include:

1. Short stories
2. Poems
3. Novels
4. Plays
5. Song lyrics

Literature has been a very important component when it comes to the English education. By learning literature, students can learn English without having to understand the grammatical rules directly. With the presence of literature, students can learn both the language and other elements such as culture, moral values, life lessons and other relatable real-life lessons (Harwati Hashim, 2019).

Literature for English Language Proficiency

The interconnectedness of language and literature, the easy accessibility, universality, and appeal of literature make it an effective choice for perfection of the language (Dr. Shagufia Parween, 2021). Since literature is a microcosmic representation of cultures, specifically, the cultures of the languages in which the texts are composed, incorporation of language through literature into the classroom serves to create cultural awareness among the learners, thereby minimizing the possibility of cultural misunderstandings or communication issues. Students will be able to get acquainted with the kinds of words, phrases, sentences, and linguistic expressions to be used and those to be avoided when they are communicating with a person or a group that belongs to any specific culture.

Reading Skill

Okilagwe (1998) provided a definition of reading as a cognitive process wherein students engage critical thinking to derive meaningful interpretations from words, phrases, and sentences. Heilman (1967), as referenced by Khoirunnisa and Safitri (2018), reinforced this idea by asserting that reading involves a complex process of knowledge acquisition, requiring effective cognitive strategies to comprehend the text's organization, title, and main idea. Krashen and William (2012) suggested that reading serves as a catalyst for improving grammar and vocabulary resources. Okebukola (2004) echoed this sentiment by highlighting reading's role in transmitting knowledge across generations. Beyond enhancing fluency, grammar competence, and lexical proficiency, reading also expands students' understanding of English-speaking cultures (Inderjit, 2014). Druckman (2016) introduced a different dimension, viewing reading habit as a prolonged process that begins with learning letters and progresses through words, phrases, sentences, and complete texts, particularly encouraged during early stages. Greene (2001) supported this, suggesting that establishing a reading habit from an early age allows it to evolve into a lifelong practice.

Writing Skill

Writing is recognized as a productive skill through which meanings are conveyed in written form (Harl, 2013). Echoing this perspective, Hedge (2005) contended that writing fulfilled the communication need by enabling writers to articulate ideas, emotions, and arguments to specific readers or groups. Simultaneously, writing entails mental work, involving idea generation, sentence and paragraph organization, and engaging readers' attention. Writing emerges as a multifaceted cognitive challenge, evaluating memory, language prowess, and

thinking ability (Kellogg, 2018). Gebharb (2000) echoed this, attributing word choice, grammar, syntax, mechanics, and organization to the elements linked with writing (p. 221). Consequently, writing is a composite process, encompassing steps from idea generation and organization to drafting and refinement (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). Hence, the incorporation of academic writing in the school curriculum becomes essential for equipping students to effectively handle writing assignments (Bailey, 2003).

The Correlation between Writing and Reading Skills

The existing body of literature asserts that writing entails careful considerations of word choice, syntax, and organization (Gebharb, 2000), constituting a complex process involving idea generation, outlining, drafting, and revising (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). The integration of reading as a facilitator for the writing process is recognized. Horning and Kraemer (2013) formulated a theory advocating the use of reading as an effective instructional approach for teaching and learning writing in educational settings. Echoing this notion, Luu (2012) affirmed that the integration of reading and writing positively impacted the enhancement of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' writing skills. Furthermore, extensive reading exhibited notable effects on improving students' writing, particularly in terms of grammar accuracy (Alqadi & Alkadi, 2013). Consistently, there's a strong belief in the significant correlation between writing and reading, as reading constitutes a fundamental step within the writing process, serving as an information-gathering phase (Khoirunnisa & Safitri, 2018). Furthermore, Ahn (2014) affirmed the pivotal role of reading in fostering writing proficiency. His study indicated that the implementation of critical reading as a pedagogical technique could enhance students' essay writing skills. Similarly, Plakans and Gebril (2012) emphasized reading's positive impact on students' writing performance, noting that extensive reading nurtures idea formulation, opinion shaping, and language acquisition.

The Role of Literature in English in Malaysian Education Setting

Presently, literature holds a pivotal role within the English language curriculum (Sanub & Yunus, 2017; Sivapalan et al., 2017; Xian et al., 2017). As stipulated by Surat Pekeliling Ikhtisas Bil 4/2000, the incorporation of literature into the syllabus is guided by four key objectives. Firstly, it aims to cultivate a love for reading and foster positive reading habits among Malaysian students. Moreover, the inclusion of approved literary texts is envisioned to enhance these students' proficiency in the English language. Additionally, literature is anticipated to contribute to the nurturing of favorable personal growth and character development among students (Jennie Awing Ukat & Hanita Hanim Ismail, 2022). Lastly, the introduction of literature into the curriculum is expected to expand students' perspectives by exposing them to diverse cultures and worldviews (Teh & Isa, 2016). The introduction of literature into the curriculum sought to cultivate a genuine passion for reading and establish positive reading habits among Malaysian students. By exposing students to a diverse range of literary works, educators aimed to spark a love for reading that extends beyond academic requirements. Secondly, the inclusion of literature aimed to enhance students' English language proficiency. Engaging with literary language and narratives deepens students' language skills, expanding their vocabulary, comprehension, and overall language competence.

Language through Literature

Utilizing literature as a medium for language acquisition proves to be a highly efficacious approach for comprehending, learning, and mastering any language. Instead of relying on conventional methods such as exercises involving gap filling, multiple-choice questions, or word matching to enhance language skills, a more suitable alternative is to furnish students with literary texts. This approach involves immersing students in literary works that effectively exemplify the usage of these language concepts. It not only captures students' interest but also contributes to the refinement of their reading pace and writing style. In terms of writing style, exposure to literature equips students with insights into proper punctuation, capitalization, word order, sentence structure, and more. In essence, the process of learning a language through literature streamlines the experience, rendering it both enjoyable and efficacious (K Kavitharaj, 2017). In the language-based approach, the role of the teacher transforms into that of a facilitator and guide. While students actively interact with literary materials, the teacher plays a pivotal role in introducing and clarifying technical terms, ensuring that students grasp the nuances of language usage. The language-based approach is rooted in the belief that language is a living entity, best understood and internalized when experienced within authentic and engaging contexts. By leveraging literature as a medium for language instruction, educators capitalize on the rich narratives and diverse language forms present in literary works. This approach not only cultivates language skills but also nurtures critical thinking, cultural awareness, and the ability to effectively communicate ideas.

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, the researchers will be utilising a mixed-mode research design, as it allows for the collection of objective and precise data that could be analysed statistically and thematically. The mixed-mode study that relies on both quantitative and qualitative approach appears to be suitable as it can better assist the researchers in identifying the prevalence and severity of the research purpose. Using a descriptive quantitative research design, the researchers will be able to collect data from large sample of Form 5 students to identify to what extent Form 5 students' reading and writing skills is being impacted while or after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer". On the other hand, the qualitative research design will also be used so that the researchers can get an insight from the students' and their teacher's thoughts and perspective on their proficiency of reading and writing skill.

Location of the Study

This study will be conducted at a local secondary school in Klang Valley District, Selangor, a government secondary school.

Sample of Study

This study's sample will consist of 50 Form 5 students that reads the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" in a local secondary school in Klang Valley District, Selangor. This group of students will be the primary focus of this study, as the objective and research question itself focus on identifying the extent on the impact of the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" on reading and writing skills.

Sampling Technique

For this study, a simple random sampling method will be employed. This technique enjoys widespread recognition in research, fostering comparability and reproducibility of outcomes

by fellow researchers. Furthermore, employing random sampling diminishes the likelihood of bias during sample selection, as each population member is given an equal opportunity of selection. This broadens the applicability of the study's findings to a larger population of Form 5 students to study their reading and writing skills.

Research Procedure

The researchers begins by gathering information about Form 5 students' perception on reading novel in a local secondary school. The researchers will send the questionnaire in the form of Google form to the respondents via WhatsApp. Meanwhile, the researchers will conduct an interview with the teacher from the local secondary school via Ms Teams. Once all the quantitative data has been collected, it will be transferred to SPSS, for the quantitative analysis of complex data. The open-ended questions and interview outcomes will then be analysed by the researchers using thematic analysis.

Data Collection

Firstly, the researchers will identify the respondents who are currently studying the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" in a local secondary school at Klang Valley District, Selangor. The researchers will then approach the respondents in person, explain to them on the purpose of the study and how their contribution will be transformed into the research. Upon receiving approval from the supervisor, the questionnaire will be distributed to each respondent through WhatsApp. Each questionnaire set will be accompanied by a cover letter describing the researchers' background, the subject of the study, the significance of the respondent's responses to the study's success, the researchers' request for cooperation, and the confidentiality of the respondent's responses. Meanwhile, the researchers will also construct questions for the interview with the teacher and email it to the supervisor. Upon approval, the researchers will then set up an online interview session through Ms Teams.

Instruments of Study

This study's instrument will be a Google Form questionnaire consisting of a series of questions administered to participants to collect data based on their understanding and an interview with the students' teacher. The first section will include a questionnaire cover page that covers the researchers' background, the topic of the study, and the importance of the respondent's responses to the study's success. The second section will contain demographic information about the participant. The third section, which includes questions based on the students' overall understanding on the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer". Section 4 will focus on the first dependent variable which is the reading skill while Section 5 will be all about the writing skill. On the other hand, the interview questions were constructed based on the two main dependent variables of this study, consisting of nine main questions relating to the students' progress on reading and writing skills while or after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".

Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire for this research will be analysed using SPSS software, where the frequencies and descriptive analysis are performed, as well as the reliability and normality tests of the statements, whereas the open-ended questions and interview transcripts will be analysed through thematic analysis.

Findings

Descriptive Analysis

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	25	50%
Female	25	50%
TOTAL	50	100%

The questionnaire that was sent out for this study received a total of 50 responses, all of which were collected from Form 5 students at a local secondary school. All the responses are valid and useful for the research.

Socio-Demographic Information

For the demographic section of the questionnaire, there are a total of six items: gender, ethnicity, classification of participants current reading and writing skills, whether the participants are reading the novel and current chapter that participants are reading/read.

Gender

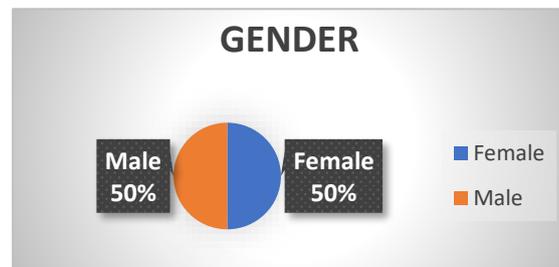


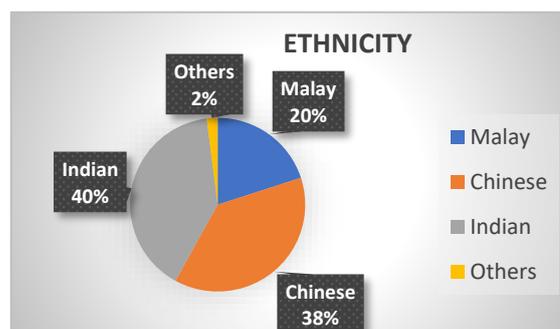
Table 4.2.1.1

Frequency and Percentage of Age

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Malay	10	20%
Chinese	19	38%
Indian	20	40%
Others	1	2%
TOTAL	50	100%

For the gender analysis, there were 25 female respondents with a frequency of 25 and a solid percentage of 50%, meanwhile the other half respondents consist of 25 male respondents with a frequency of 25 with a solid percentage of 50%. The percentage, along with the number of female and male participants, indicate that the female and male population is equal in the local secondary school.

Ethnicity



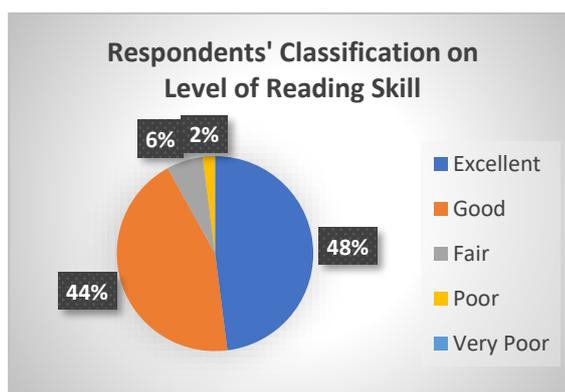
In terms of ethnicity, the majority of respondents were Indians, with a frequency of 20 and a solid percentage of 40%, whereas the second highest ethnicity was Chinese, with a frequency of 19 and a solid percentage of 38%. Malay respondents were the fewest in number, with a frequency of 10 and a solid percentage of 20%, followed by Others with a frequency of 1 and percentage of 2%. Hence, to sum up, there were four distinct ethnicities among the respondents, with Indian and Chinese constituting the majority.

Respondents' Classification on Level of Reading Skill

Table 4.2.1.2

Frequency and Percentage of Ethnicity

RESPONDENTS' CLASSIFICATION ON LEVEL OF READING SKILL	N	Percentage (%)
Excellent	24	48%
Good	22	44%
Fair	3	6%
Poor	1	2%
Very Poor	0	0%
TOTAL	50	100%



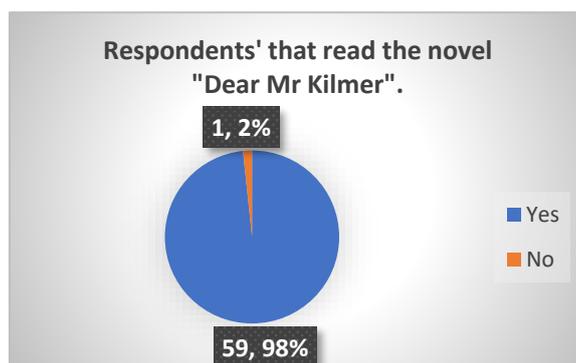
According to Table 3, the classification on level of reading, most of the respondents rate their level of reading skill as excellent, with a frequency of 24 and a solid percentage of 48%. Then it is followed by good, with a frequency of 22 and a percentage of 44%, whereas the remaining respondents classified themselves as fair with a frequency of 3 and a solid percentage of 6%. Only 1 out of the 50 respondents have classified their level of reading skill as poor and holds a percentage of 2%. Therefore, the results show that the most respondents classified their reading skill as excellent and good.

Respondents' that Read the Novel "Dear Mr Kilmer"

Table 4.2.1.5

Frequency and Percentage of Respondents' That Read the Novel "Dear Mr Kilmer"

RESPONDENTS' THAT READ THE NOVEL "DEAR MR KILMER"	N	Percentage (%)
Yes	49	98%
No	1	2%
TOTAL	50	100%



Based on Table 5, it shows that 59 respondents have voted yes for reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" with a solid 98% percentage. On the other hand, only 1 respondent voted no for reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer". Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents have read the novel.

Table 4.2.1.7

Mean and Standard Deviation of Demographic Background

	Gender	Ethnicity	Reading Skill	Writing Skill
Mean	1.50	2.24	4.38	4.40
Standard Deviation	0.505	0.797	0.697	0.700
N	50	50	50	50

According to the analysis presented above in Table 7, the writing skill item has the greatest mean value of 4.40, while chapters item has the highest standard deviation value of 1.057. Gender has the lowest mean and standard deviation values, with 1.50 and 0.505, respectively.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics offer a comprehensive snapshot of the analyzed dataset without making any inferences rooted in probability theory. This aids the study by presenting a condensed representation of the data using basic quantitative measures like the average and the spread of values, as indicated in the following example.

Respondents Understanding on the Novel “Dear Mr Kilmer”

Table 4.2.2.1

Frequency and Percentage of Respondents Understanding on the Novel “Dear Mr Kilmer”

Statements	Likert scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. I enjoy reading the novel “Dear Mr Kilmer” during my free time	Strongly Agree	34	68%
	Agree	15	15%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
2. I truly understand the reason why Richard has different beliefs and principles regarding life and that he does not have the rights to kill animals, unlike Pa and Gus.	Strongly Agree	24	48%
	Agree	25	50%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
3. I admire Richard’s firm principle and his courage when he signed to show sympathy for the Schermers, the Germans, even though his classmates tried to stop him.	Strongly Agree	22	44%
	Agree	27	54%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
4. The poem “Tree” written by Mr. Joyce Kilmer inspired Richard to write a letter to him, and Richard then has the confidence to share his poetry with others once Mr. Joyce Kilmer encouraged him to do so.	Strongly Agree	27	54%
	Agree	21	42%
	Neutral	2	4%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
5. I believe in Hannah’s opinion when she wrote about making peace, and the real enemy is the war itself. Her suggestion on the civilians to wage war against prejudice and hatred and learn to accept others regardless of caste, creed and colour is indeed true.	Strongly Agree	29	58%
	Agree	20	40%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
6. I can conclude that discrimination and prejudice are widespread in Turtle Lake when everyone was not happy about Hannah winning the “Liberty Lady” role as some parents complained to the principle regarding this issue.	Strongly Agree	25	50%
	Agree	24	48%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
7. I stand against Ike Lewis’s accusations that Richard was siding the Schermers when he declined the role of	Strongly Agree	30	60%
	Agree	19	38%
	Neutral	1	2%

“Doughboy”, and that Richard was unpatriotic and hopes Germans will win the war.	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
8. In my perspective, I believe Pa remained silent when Gus left for Sioux City because he was angry but at the same time, he was worried about hard-headed and hasty Gus as he lost his brother, Uncle Roland, the same way.	Strongly Agree	29	58%
	Agree	21	42%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
9. Richard wrote the poem “In Memory of Sergeant Joyce Kilmer” as a dedication for Mr Kilmer’s sacrifice in the war.	Strongly Agree	24	48%
	Agree	25	50%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
10. I support Richard’s decision to publish his poem in “The Turtle Lake Weekly” as suggested by the Schermers, even though he knows that Pa will be disappointed.	Strongly Agree	27	54%
	Agree	22	44%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%

Table 4.2.2.2

Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents Understanding on the Novel “Dear Mr Kilmer”

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. I enjoy reading the novel “Dear Mr Kilmer” during my free time	4.66	0.519
2. I truly understand the reason why Richard has different beliefs and principles regarding life and that he does not have the rights to kill animals, unlike Pa and Gus.	4.46	0.542
3. I admire Richard’s firm principle and his courage when he signed to show sympathy for the Schermers, the Germans, even though his classmates tried to stop him.	4.42	0.538
4. The poem “Tree” written by Mr. Joyce Kilmer inspired Richard to write a letter to him, and Richard then has the confidence to share his poetry with others once Mr. Joyce Kilmer encouraged him to do so.	4.50	0.580
5. I believe in Hannah’s opinion when she wrote about making peace, and the real enemy is the war itself. Her suggestion on the civilians to wage war against prejudice and hatred and learn to accept others regardless of caste, creed and colour is indeed true.	4.56	0.541
6. I can conclude that discrimination and prejudice are widespread in Turtle Lake when everyone was not happy about Hannah winning the “Liberty Lady” role as some parents complained to the principle regarding this issue.	4.48	0.544

7. I stand against Ike Lewis's accusations that Richard was siding the Schermers when he declined the role of "Doughboy", and that Richard was unpatriotic and hopes Germans will win the war.	4.58	0.538
8. In my perspective, I believe Pa remained silent when Gus left for Sioux City because he was angry but at the same time, he was worried about hard-headed and hasty Gus as he lost his brother, Uncle Roland, the same way.	4.58	0.499
9. Richard wrote the poem "In Memory of Sergeant Joyce Kilmer" as a dedication for Mr Kilmer's sacrifice in the war.	4.46	0.542
10. I support Richard's decision to publish his poem in "The Turtle Lake Weekly" as suggested by the Schermers, even though he knows that Pa will be disappointed.	4.52	0.544
Average	4.52	0.021

Table 2 illustrates the results of the depth of students' understanding after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer". The highest mean score was 4.66 (SD = 0.519). Followed by 4.58 (SD = 0.538) as the second highest mean score. The third highest mean score is 4.56 (SD = 0.541). Followed by 4.50 (SD = 0.580), 4.52 (SD = 0.544), 4.48 (SD = 0.544), 4.46 (SD = 0.542) and 4.42 (SD = 0.538) are the mean score achieved for rest of the questions. The average mean score of this skill related questions is 4.52 (SD = 0.021) which indicates that the respondent do have a deep understanding of the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".

RQ1: To what extent does the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" help the Form 5 students' from a Local Secondary School to improve their Reading skill?

First Dependent Variable: Reading Skill

Table 4.2.2.3

Frequency and Percentage of Respondents' Reading Skill after Reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer"

Statements	Likert scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. I find it interesting to read the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" as I am able to acquire more knowledge.	Strongly Agree	38	76%
	Agree	12	24%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
2. I am able to understand other people's point of view after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	Strongly Agree	27	54%
	Agree	22	44%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
3. I find it easy to decode the meaning of the poem "In Memory of Sergeant Joyce Kilmer".	Strongly Agree	23	46%
	Agree	27	54%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Agree	31	62%

4. I am able to understand the feeling and the emotion that is being portrayed by Richard when he writes the letter to Mr Kilmer.	Agree	19	38%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
5. I am able to read the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" fluently in the classroom as I can understand the flow of the story.	Strongly Agree	29	58%
	Agree	21	42%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	0	0%
6. Reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" ensures that I read every word correctly, as it is easier to discuss with my peers later on.	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Agree	33	66%
	Agree	16	32%
	Neutral	1	2%
7. I can see that my fluency has progressed after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Agree	27	54%
	Agree	23	46%
8. Reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" helps to improve my vocabulary significantly.	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Agree	30	60%
9. I usually take notes of less-common words, idiomatic expressions, and other useful structures from the text of the novel.	Agree	20	40%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
10. I am able to master English language effectively after expanding my vocabulary after/while reading "Dear Mr Kilmer" novel.	Strongly Agree	31	62%
	Agree	18	36%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	1	2%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Agree	29	58%
	Agree	20	40%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%

Table 4.2.2.3

Frequency and Percentage of Respondents' Reading Skill after Reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. I find it interesting to read the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" as I am able to acquire more knowledge	4.76	0.431
2. I am able to understand other people's point of view after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	4.52	0.544
3. I find it easy to decode the meaning of the poem "In Memory of Sergeant Joyce Kilmer".	4.46	0.503
4. I am able to understand the feeling and the emotion that is being portrayed by Richard when he writes the letter to Mr Kilmer.	4.62	0.490
5. I am able to read the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" fluently in the classroom as I can understand the flow of the story.	4.58	0.499
6. Reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" ensures that I read every word correctly, as it is easier to discuss with my peers later on.	4.64	0.525
7. I can see that my fluency has progressed after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	4.54	0.503
8. Reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" helps to improve my vocabulary significantly.	4.60	0.495
9. I usually take notes of less-common words, idiomatic expressions, and other useful structures from the text of the novel.	4.58	0.609
10. I am able to master English language effectively after expanding my vocabulary after/while reading "Dear Mr Kilmer" novel.	4.56	0.541
Average	4.586 @ 4.59	0.046

Table 4 illustrates the results of to what extent of respondents' reading skill improvised after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer". The highest mean score was 4.76 (SD = 0.431). Followed by 4.64 (SD = 0.525) as the second highest mean score. The third highest mean score is 4.62 (SD = 0.490). Followed by 4.60 (SD = 0.495), 4.58 (SD = 0.449), 4.56 (SD = 0.541), 4.54 (SD = 0.503) and 4.52 (SD = 0.544) are the mean score achieved for the rest of the questions. The average mean score of this skill related questions is 4.59 (SD = 0.046) which indicates the respondents' reading skill have really improved after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".

RQ2: To what extent does the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" help the Form 5 students' from a Local Secondary School to improve their Writing skill?

Second Dependent Variable: Writing Skill

Table 4.2.2.5

Frequency and Percentage of Respondents' Writing Skill after Reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer"

Statements	Likert scale	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1. I am able to write creatively with the knowledge acquired after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	Strongly Agree	33	66%
	Agree	13	26%
	Neutral	2	4%
	Disagree	1	4%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
2. I am able to widen my lexical resources and improve my way of writing sentences, paragraphs, and essays after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	Strongly Agree	27	54%
	Agree	22	44%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
3. I find it easier to construct complex sentences after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	Strongly Agree	30	60%
	Agree	18	36%
	Neutral	2	4%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
4. The knowledge of vocabulary learnt from the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" improves my writing skill.	Strongly Agree	30	60%
	Agree	19	38%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
5. I am well aware of the concept of genre while writing an essay after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	Strongly Agree	35	70%
	Agree	13	26%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	1	2%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
6. I feel more focused while writing an essay if it is based on a historical genre after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	Strongly Agree	25	50%
	Agree	23	46%
	Neutral	1	2%

	Disagree	1	2%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
7. Understanding the genre of the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" motivates me to have a better insight of the other genres while writing an essay.	Strongly Agree	23	46%
	Agree	27	54%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
	8. I clearly understand the importance of including voice while writing an essay after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	Strongly Agree	28
	Agree	21	42%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	1	2%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
9. I am well aware that voice is much needed to describe characters to the readers while writing my essay.	Strongly Agree	31	62%
	Agree	18	36%
	Neutral	0	0%
	Disagree	1	2%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%
10. I believe that without a voice, my essay could never deliver the right content to the readers.	Strongly Agree	28	56%
	Agree	21	42%
	Neutral	1	2%
	Disagree	0	0%
	Strongly Disagree	0	0%

Table 4.2.2.6

Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents' Writing Skill after Reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. I am able to write creatively with the knowledge acquired after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	4.54	0.762
2. I am able to widen my lexical resources and improve my way of writing sentences, paragraphs, and essays after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	4.52	0.544
3. I find it easier to construct complex sentences after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	4.56	0.577
4. The knowledge of vocabulary learnt from the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" improves my writing skill.	4.58	0.538
5. I am well aware of the concept of genre while writing an essay after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	4.64	0.631
6. I feel more focused while writing an essay if it is based on a historical genre after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	4.44	0.644
7. Understanding the genre of the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" motivates me to have a better insight of the other genres while writing an essay.	4.46	0.503
8. I clearly understand the importance of including voice while writing an essay after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".	4.52	0.614
9. I am well aware that voice is much needed to describe characters to the readers while writing my essay.	4.58	0.609
10. I believe that without a voice, my essay could never deliver the right content to the readers.	4.54	0.542
Average	4.538 @ 4.54	0.074

Table 6 illustrates the results of to what extent of respondents' reading skill improvised after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer". The highest mean score was 4.64 (SD = 0.631). Followed by 4.58 (SD = 0.609) as the second highest mean score. The third highest mean score is 4.62 (SD = 0.490). Followed by 4.56 (SD = 0.577) , 4.54 (SD = 0.762) , 4.54 (SD = 0.544) , 4.46 (SD = 0.503) and 4.52 (SD = 0.544) are the mean score achieved for the rest of the questions. The average mean score of this skill related questions is 4.54 (SD = 0.074) which indicates the respondents' writing skill have really improved after reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer".

Normality Test

A normality test is used to determine whether a given dataset follows a normal distribution. Skewness and kurtosis are two statistical measures that are often employed as part of normality testing.

Table 4.3.1
Normality Test of Dependent Variable

		Statistics	
		DV1	DV2
N	Valid	50	50
	Missing	0	0
Mean		45.8600	45.3800
Median		46.0000	46.5000
Std. Deviation		3.49933	4.44876
Skewness		-.387	-1.129
Std. Error of Skewness		.337	.337
Kurtosis		-1.024	1.061
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.662	.662

For the sample of 50, the absolute skewness value must be between negative 2 and positive 2 and the absolute kurtosis value must be between negative 7 and positive 7. The skewness and kurtosis for dependent variable 1 (DV1) which is the reading skill is -0.387 and -1.024, therefore, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed. Meanwhile, the skewness and kurtosis for dependent variable 2 (DV2) which is the writing skill is -1.129 and 1.061, therefore, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed.

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis evaluates the extent to which a tool remains impartial and maintains consistent measurements across various components and time periods.

Table 4.4.1
Reliability Analysis of Dependent Variable

	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
DV1	Reading Skill	0.870	10
DV2	Writing Skill	0.909	10

. Based on the results presented above, it can clearly be seen that all the values obtained are relatively high and have given a high degree of accuracy for the variables, with the second dependent variable, writing skill, having the highest value of (0.909) and followed by the first dependent variable, which is the reading skill with a value of (0.870). This suggests that the items in each of these scales are reliable and consistent in measuring the construct that they are designed to measure. Therefore, the reliability of this research study has also been validated.

Thematic Analysis

By employing thematic analysis, researchers can systematically explore and make sense of the data, ultimately leading to the extraction of meaningful themes, concepts, and insights. This method entails a step-by-step process that enables researchers to extract and understand the underlying layers of meaning present in the data.

Open Ended Questions

Respondents Understanding on the Novel “Dear Mr Kilmer”.

Question 1: Based on your understanding, discuss the relationship between Pa and Richard

Based on the collected data from the first open-ended question, 43 respondents were able to discuss and describe Pa and Richard relationship based on the novel “Dear Mr Kilmer”. This shows that the respondents have a deep understanding of the novel and are aware of what is happening with Pa and Richard. The respondents described the relationship between Pa and Richard as complex relationship, as they have a rough start in the beginning of the novel, however, it evolves into a more meaningful and loving connection through communicating with one another. Pa became more supportive and present after reading the letters written by Richard as he reveals his inner thoughts and feelings and that gives Pa a chance to gain a deeper understanding of him. The respondents also described their relationship to be transformed into mutual respect and love. This data also shows that the respondents do understand the depth of Pa and Richard’s relationship as they are able to explain the progress of the relationship from the beginning to the ending of the novel.

First Dependent Variable: Reading Skill

RQ1: To what extent does the novel “Dear Mr Kilmer” help the Form 5 students’ from a Local Secondary School to improve their Reading skill?

Question 2: Based on your understanding, explain the theme “self-versus community” from the novel “Dear Mr Kilmer”.

Based on the collected data from the second open-ended question, 44 respondents can explain the theme self-versus community from the novel “Dear Mr Kilmer”. As a result, it can be observed that the respondents are able to explain the theme self-versus community and relate the example events that happened throughout the novel. The respondents explained the self-versus community theme by referring to Richard facing obstacles and having moments of self-doubt as he fights his own identity and resists the pressures of conformity. The self-versus community theme highlights the tension between individual aspirations and the expectations imposed by society, ultimately asking readers to consider the importance of following one's passion even when it goes against the grain. His sagacity serves as Richard's guide, illuminating the interconnected nature of personal growth and contentment with the way one interacts with and supports those in their vicinity.

Second Dependent Variable: Writing Skill

RQ2: To what extent does the novel “Dear Mr Kilmer” help the Form 5 students’ from a Local Secondary School to improve their Writing skill?

Question 3: Based on your understanding, choose one character from the novel “Dear Mr Kilmer” and explain why you admire him/her the most.

The 9 respondents explained Richard as a character that they truly admire for his kindness, resilience, and authenticity and his willingness to help others, determination in the face of adversity, and ability to stay true to himself are qualities that we can all strive to emulate. Through Richard's actions and personality, the novel "Dear Mr. Kilmer" reminds us of the importance of compassion, self-belief, and the power of being true to oneself. Another 9 respondents described Pa’s character as admirable because of his hard work, love for his family, integrity, and resilience. Pa is a loving and caring father. He is always there for Bernie and Melinda, supporting and guiding them through their difficult times. Pa encourages Bernie's passion for writing and is genuinely interested in his work. He even writes letters to

Mr. Kilmer on Bernie's behalf, showing his genuine concern for his son's dreams and aspirations. 7 respondents explained Gus's character as highly intelligent and possesses a thirst for knowledge. He is constantly seeking to expand his horizons, both academically and personally. This insatiable curiosity drives him to pursue a deeper understanding of the world and the people in it, making him a well-rounded individual. They also admire Gus because demonstrates remarkable leadership qualities. Fearlessly standing up for his convictions, he becomes a voice for those who may not have one. The 8 respondents described Hannah's character as closest friend, offering him a genuine connection and a safe space for self-expression. She listens to him without judgment and provides the encouragement he needs to pursue his passion for poetry. Hannah's unwavering support allows Richard to strengthen his self-confidence and belief in his abilities. Hannah is depicted as a compassionate and caring individual. Lastly, 9 respondents described Mr Joyce Kilmer character as the power of art and literature to touch the lives of others, even beyond the artist's lifetime. His poems continue to resonate with readers, including Richard, long after his passing. This enduring impact is something that readers may admire about Mr. Kilmer, as it signifies the lasting impression that art can have on individuals.

Interview

Question 1: How do the students respond to reading the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer"? Do they find it engaging and enjoyable?

The teacher said different students react uniquely to novels based on their preferences, interests, and reading levels. Despite this, "Dear Mr. Kilmer" is commonly included in high school literature curricula due to its relevance to young readers. The book's relatable characters, themes of friendship, self-discovery, and adolescent challenges, as well as its unique letter format, contribute to its appeal for students. It addresses topics like bullying, personal growth, and social dynamics that can resonate with many.

Question 2: Have you observed any notable improvements in your students' reading skills during the time they have spent reading "Dear Mr Kilmer" in the classroom?

Firstly, it expands vocabulary through exposure to diverse language in context. Secondly, it enhances comprehension by fostering critical analysis of plot, characters, and themes. Thirdly, it cultivates analytical skills through discussions and assessments. Fourthly, it encourages inferencing and interpretation, honing students' ability to deduce implied information. When the novel resonates with students, it boosts their motivation to read attentively and think deeply, fostering better reading habits and skills.

Question 3: Can you identify any noticeable progress in the fluency of your students' reading after engaging with the novel?

The teacher shared that engaging with a novel like 'Dear Mr. Kilmer' can yield observable enhancements in students' reading fluency. Reading fluency encompasses accurate, smooth, and expressive reading. The consistent writing style, vocabulary, and sentence structure in a novel fosters comfort with language, resulting in smoother reading. Extended engagement with the text through a novel offers ample practice, refining reading skills and boosting fluency.

Question 4: How effectively are your students able to comprehend and interpret the meaning of the text from "Dear Mr Kilmer"?

Comprehension and interpretation of 'Dear Mr. Kilmer' vary due to factors like reading levels, teacher guidance, and classroom discussions. Tailored for middle school, the novel's themes and language suit this age group. Teachers guide discussions, activities, and assignments to deepen understanding. Analyzing characters, plot, and themes fosters critical thinking. Activities like vocabulary exercises and personal connections enhance engagement.

Question 5: Have you noticed any expansion in your students' vocabulary as a result of reading the novel?

Reading novels like "Dear Mr. Kilmer" enhances students' vocabulary by exposing them to diverse languages. This exposure, coupled with contextual learning, aids in understanding and retention. Novel-based repetition reinforces word meanings. Varied contexts in novels help grasp nuanced meanings. New words may be incorporated into speech and writing. Assessments include quizzes and discussions using novel words. Gradual vocabulary growth results from consistent exposure to diverse texts.

Question 6: In your opinion, does reading "Dear Mr Kilmer" have a positive impact on your students' writing skills? If yes, what aspects of the novel contribute to this enhancement?

Overall, the impact of "Dear Mr. Kilmer" on students' writing skills depends on how actively the students engage with the novel, the quality of classroom discussions and activities, and the guidance of the teacher. Encouraging students to analyze the novel's elements, discuss its themes, and apply what they've learned to their own writing can lead to significant improvements in their writing abilities.

Question 7: Are your students able to discern the genre of "Dear Mr Kilmer" after reading it, and how does this ability affect their understanding of the text?

"Dear Mr. Kilmer" belongs to the young adult fiction genre, targeting teenage readers with themes of friendship, self-discovery, and challenges. Recognizing the genre aids students in setting expectations and connecting with relatable experiences. Identifying the YA genre enables anticipation of themes like identity and relationships, guiding analysis. The emphasis on character relationships gains significance, and comprehension of YA language and style deepens.

Question 8: Do you believe that the voice in "Dear Mr Kilmer" aids your students' understanding of the concept of voice in literature? Furthermore, have you observed any improvement in their implementation of this concept in their writing?

"Dear Mr. Kilmer" employs an epistolary format with multiple character voices expressed through letters. This format aids students in comprehending literary voice. Analyzing distinct language, tone, and style in character letters enhances their understanding of voice's role in literature. The novel fosters students' ability to create unique voices in their writing by observing character portrayal. Analytical thinking about voice's contribution to characters and storytelling transfers to their own writing.

Question 9: In conclusion, to what extent do you perceive that the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" contributes to the overall improvement of your students' reading and writing skills?

Teachers' perceptions of the novel "Dear Mr. Kilmer" impacting students' reading and writing skills vary due to teaching methods, engagement, and individual strengths. From personal experience, the novel enhances reading comprehension and vocabulary growth, while also improving writing skills such as description and character development. Exposure to diverse styles inspires experimentation and applying literary elements to writing boosts confidence.

Conclusion

Dependent Variable (Research Questions)

RQ1: To what extent does the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" help the Form 5 students' from a Local Secondary School to improve their Reading skill?

First Dependent Variable

The Reading Skills of the students after reading "Dear Mr Kilmer" novel.

By focusing on decoding and understanding sentences, the questionnaire addresses the fundamental ability of students to decipher and comprehend the meanings of words, phrases, and sentences within the context of the novel. This skill is essential for building a coherent understanding of the narrative and its underlying themes. Fluency, another critical aspect, pertains to students' capacity to read text accurately, smoothly, and with appropriate expression. Additionally, vocabulary expansion is a key facet of reading skill enhancement. Engaging with a novel like "Dear Mr. Kilmer" introduces students to a diverse range of vocabulary words that they might not typically encounter in everyday conversations. Such exposure to new vocabulary enriches their language repertoire and enhances their ability to comprehend complex texts. This objective aims to analyze the questionnaire responses to determine if students perceive improvements in their decoding and comprehension skills, fluency, and vocabulary growth because of their interaction with the novel. This investigation goes beyond acknowledging the general role of reading skills in comprehension to explore how a focused literary work can serve as a catalyst for skill development. Ultimately, the study aims to illuminate the unique contribution of "Dear Mr. Kilmer" to the enhancement of Form 5 students' reading skills.

The collected data underscores a prevalent pattern indicating that a significant majority of students perceive themselves as having attained a higher level of proficiency in various dimensions of reading skill through their interaction with the novel. These aspects encompass their ability to decode and comprehend sentences, their fluency in reading, and the expansion of their vocabulary. The results reflect that the students, when self-assessing, report improvements across the spectrum of reading skill components. This includes their capacity to decode complex sentence structures, comprehend the nuances of the text, read more fluently, and grasp a wider range of vocabulary. This holistic progress underscores the positive impact that the novel "Dear Mr. Kilmer" has had on their reading skills. To delve deeper into the depth of their comprehension, the researchers included an open-ended question that prompted the students to expound on the theme of "self-versus community" as presented in the novel. Employing thematic analysis to scrutinize these responses yielded insightful findings. The students demonstrated their ability to elucidate this theme by offering pertinent examples from the events within the novel and effectively relating them back to the characters' experiences. This further suggests that the students' reading skill was significantly enriched during their engagement with the narrative of "Dear Mr. Kilmer." The ability of the

students to not only identify the theme but also to analyze it in relation to specific events and characters showcases the depth of their engagement with the novel's content. This observation, coupled with the self-assessment of their reading skill enhancements, lends substantial weight to the notion that "Dear Mr. Kilmer" indeed played a substantial role in fostering the students' reading proficiency.

RQ2: To what extent does the novel "Dear Mr Kilmer" helps the Form 5 students' from a Local Secondary School to improve their Writing skill?

Second Dependent Variable

The Writing Skills of the students after writing "Dear Mr Kilmer" novel.

As students interact with the novel's narrative, they are exposed to a diverse array of sentence structures, writing styles, and linguistic techniques employed by the author. By closely examining the construction of sentence structures in the novel, students can internalize these patterns and employ them in their own writing endeavors. The exposure to varied sentence structures enhances their ability to convey ideas more effectively and craft coherent compositions. Furthermore, exploring the genre and content knowledge inherent in the novel allows students to grasp the nuances of different writing styles and genres. This exposure equips them with the skills to recognize and utilize genre-specific conventions in their own writing, thereby enhancing their versatility and adaptability as writers. Additionally, engaging with the content of the novel introduces students to themes, characters, and narrative elements that contribute to their depth of content knowledge. This broader perspective aids students in infusing their own writing with richer and more profound content. Recognizing voice is another pivotal aspect of effective writing. By observing the distinctions of voice within the novel, students can develop a heightened sensitivity to the importance of voice in conveying their own ideas and narratives. This not only enriches their writing but also facilitates the creation of authentic and engaging compositions. By assessing their proficiency in constructing sentences, identifying genre and content knowledge, and recognizing voice, the researchers can derive valuable insights into the novel's role in fostering the development of well-rounded and adept writers among the students.

The results of the self-evaluation by the students indicate that they perceive a tangible increase in their proficiency across all aspects of writing skill components. This positive trend further reinforces the notion that reading and engaging with literature, such as "Dear Mr. Kilmer," can indeed have a transformative impact on students' writing abilities. To delve even deeper into the students' writing prowess, an open-ended question was thoughtfully included in the questionnaire. This question prompted students to describe their favorite character from the novel, utilizing a provided set of character options. The application of thematic analysis to these responses yielded insightful and meaningful outcomes. The students' descriptions of their favorite characters demonstrated not only their grasp of appropriate vocabulary and sentence structure but also their ability to integrate content and genre elements that align with the novel's overarching themes. Therefore, the results of this section provide compelling evidence of the positive impact of "Dear Mr. Kilmer" on the enhancement of students' writing skills. These findings are not only substantiated by quantitative analysis but also enriched by the qualitative analysis of the students' writing expressions. Overall, the study showcases the novel's potential to significantly contribute to the development of students' writing proficiency.

Teacher's Perspective on the Impact of "Dear Mr Kilmer" on Students' Reading and Writing Skills and the Relation to Language Through Literature

The teacher acknowledges that students' reactions are influenced by their preferences, interests, and reading levels. This diversity underscores the individualized nature of literary engagement. The novel's relatable characters, themes, and unique letter format are mentioned as factors that contribute to its appeal and relevance to young readers. This demonstrates how literature, as a linguistic medium, engages students on a personal level, making language learning more meaningful and relatable. In terms of reading skills, the teacher emphasizes the multifaceted benefits of integrating the novel into instruction. The teacher notes that exposure to diverse language in context enhances vocabulary, while critical analysis of plot, characters, and themes fosters comprehension. These observations underscore how literature provides students with authentic language use in various contexts, contributing to both vocabulary enrichment and comprehension skills. Furthermore, the teacher discusses the novel's impact on writing skills. The teacher highlights the enhancement of descriptive language, character development, and other aspects of writing through engagement with the novel. This illustrates how students can internalize literary techniques and apply them to their own writing, showcasing the reciprocal relationship between reading and writing skills development. Throughout the teacher's responses, the concept of "voice" in literature emerges as a theme. The teacher explains how the novel's epistolary format with multiple character voices aids in understanding literary voice.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study has meticulously examined the impact of the novel "Dear Mr. Kilmer" on Form 5 students' understanding of its content, reading skills, and writing skills. The study successfully established the interconnectedness between language development and literature. The novel "Dear Mr. Kilmer" emerges as a powerful tool for enhancing students' understanding, reading skills, and writing abilities. By delving into the depths of literary themes, characters, and writing techniques, students are not only exposed to rich language but also challenged to engage with it on multiple levels. The study's comprehensive approach reinforces the pivotal role of literature in language development and highlights the novel's significance as a catalyst for students' growth in reading and writing prowess.

Implication of Study

The findings underscore the value of selecting literature that resonates with students' interests and experiences. Educators can use these insights to guide the selection of novels that not only align with academic objectives but also engage students effectively. Educators can integrate diverse reading strategies, such as discussions and reflective activities, to further enhance these skills. Meanwhile, the enhancement of writing skills through engagement with literature emphasizes the importance of studying well-crafted texts as models. Educators can use the novel's themes, characters, and techniques to guide writing instruction and foster creative and effective expression. By engaging with novels like "Dear Mr. Kilmer," students not only enhance their reading and writing abilities but also develop a deeper appreciation for language as a dynamic and expressive tool.

Limitation of Study

The sample size and demographics in this study is the size of 50 participants may limit the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. The study's focus on Form 5 students

from a specific educational context may not fully represent the diversity of students across different schools, regions, or cultural backgrounds. The next limitation of this study is the self-reported data. The study relies on self-reported data through questionnaires, which could be subject to response biases, social desirability bias, or misinterpretation of questions. The third limitation of this study is the short-term perspective. The study primarily focuses on short-term effects of engaging with the novel. Long-term effects on language skills or how these skills translate to real-world contexts are not explored. Acknowledging these limitations is essential for a balanced understanding of the study's findings.

Recommendation of Future Research

The first one is by diversifying the sample. The future researchers can conduct the study with a larger and more diverse sample that includes students from different educational contexts, schools, regions, and cultural backgrounds. The second one is by conducting a longitudinal study. The future researchers can consider conducting a longitudinal study to assess the long-term effects of engaging with the novel on students' language skills. Tracking students' progress over an extended period could reveal how the skills they acquired through the novel translate into real-world contexts. The third one is cultural and linguistic diversity. The future researchers can acknowledge and explore the impact of cultural and linguistic diversity on students' engagement with the novel and their subsequent language development. This could involve analyzing how students from different backgrounds relate to the themes and characters in the novel.

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