INTEGRATION OF THE 21st CENTURY LEARNING SKILLS (4C'S) USING GOOGLE CLASSROOM: DEVELOPING NARRATIVE WRITING SKILLS AMONG MALAYSIAN UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

4C	Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking and Creativity Thinking
ADDIE	Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation
ASSURE	Analyse learners, State objectives, Select media and materials, Utilise materials, Require learner performance, and Evaluate and Revise the learning and teaching process
CEFR	Common European Framework of Reference
CMS	Computer Mediated Communication
D	Device Aspect
DL	Device Usability
DN	Done
DLS	Mobile Learning
DS	Social Technology
ESL	English as Second Language
F	Frequently
FR	Further Remarks
FRAME	Framework for the Rational Analysis of Mobile Education
I	Item
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IC	Idea Convergence
IG	Idea Generating
IO	Idea Organising
JPN	*Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri*
KPM	*Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia*
L	Learner Aspect
LT	Language Teacher

LS	Interaction Technology
MAMMAT	Mobile-Assisted Mind Mapping Technique
MOE	Ministry of Education
MKOs	More Knowledgeable Others
N	Never
NA	Not Applicable
O	Occasionally
P	Pending
PT	Parent
OCL	Online Collaborative Learning
S	Social Aspect
ST	Student
SPM	*Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia*
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
USM	*Universiti Sains Malaysia*
VF	Very Frequently
VR	Very Rarely
W	Week
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

LIST OF APPENDICES

INTEGRASI KEMAHIRAN PEMBELAJARAN ABAD KE-21 (4C'S)

MENGGUNAKAN GOOGLE CLASSROOM:

PEMBANGUNAN KEMAHIRAN PENULISAN NARATIF DALAM

KALANGAN PELAJAR SEKOLAH MENENGAH ATAS DI MALAYSIA

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini mendedahkan cara pelajar-pelajar sekolah menengah atas di sekolah-sekolah menengah kebangsaan di Malaysia dalam menggunakan kemahiran-kemahiran pembelajaran 4C abad ke-21 yang utama, iaitu kemahiran komunikasi, kolaborasi, pemikiran kritikal dan pemikiran kreativiti dalam membangunkan kemahiran penulisan naratif dengan menggunakan platform pembelajaran dalam talian dengan pembelajaran mudah alih. Oleh itu, kajian ini dijalankan di dua buah sekolah menengah dari dua negeri yang berbeza. Modul penulisan naratif yang menggabungkan empat elemen-elemen 4C's telah dibangunkan untuk latihan penulisan naratif menggunakan platform teknologi. Kajian ini merupakan satu kajian yang menggunakan pendekatan kaedah kajian campuran untuk mengumpul data secara keseluruhan dalam kajian ini. Tujuan menggunakan reka bentuk kajian campuran adalah untuk menentukan dengan lebih dekat kemajuan pelajar dalam penulisan naratif dengan menggunakan 4C utama melalui platform teknologi, terutamanya di sekolah menengah kebangsaan di Malaysia. Selain itu, guru dan ibu bapa turut terlibat untuk mengkaji aktiviti-aktiviti pelajar ketika menggunakan platform teknologi dalam meningkatkan kemahiran penulisan naratif mereka. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan instrumen-instrumen kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Bagi instrumen kuantitatif, kaedah pengumpulan data adalah dengan menggunakan pra ujian dan pasca ujian. Bagi kaedah kualitatif pula, pengumpulan data melibatkan pemerhatian peserta, analisis dokumen,

temu bual kumpulan fokus dengan pelajar-pelajar, dan temu bual separa berstruktur dengan guru-guru bahasa dan ibu bapa. Dapatan-dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa 4C's mempunyai potensi yang baik untuk meningkatkan kemampuan pelajar-pelajar dalam meningkatkan kemahiran penulisan naratif mereka. Pelajar-pelajar berasa selesa untuk mengamalkan kemahiran penulisan naratif mereka dengan menggunakan platform pembelajaran dalam talian dengan pembelajaran mudah alih yang telah menciptakan ruang bagi mereka untuk berkomunikasi, bekerjasama, menggunakan pemikiran kritikal dan pemikiran kreatif walaupun terdapat beberapa cabaran dalam kajian ini. Data keseluruhan menunjukkan bahawa para pelajar mempunyai peningkatan yang lebih baik dalam dua aspek iaitu dalam pembinaan idea utama dan penyusunan idea-idea utama dalam beberapa perenggan berbanding dengan ciri-ciri tatabahasa dan kosa kata. Akhir sekali, kajian ini juga telah menonjolkan peluang-peluang baharu untuk penyelidikan pada masa hadapan. Kajian masa hadapan untuk pembangunan aplikasi penulisan yang betul melalui teknologi boleh dijalankan oleh pihak bertanggungjawab untuk pelajar-pelajar di sekolah-sekolah rendah, sekolah-sekolah menengah dan institusi-institusi pengajian tinggi di Malaysia bagi meningkatkan kemahiran menulis mereka dengan berkesan. Penciptaan aplikasi penulisan bukan sahaja digunakan untuk mata pelajaran bahasa Inggeris tetapi boleh digunakan untuk pembelajaran mata pelajaran lain. Para-para penyelidik, penggubal dasar dan guru juga perlu menyediakan lebih banyak latihan linguistik mengikut tahap-tahap pelajar untuk meningkatkan kemahiran menulis mereka secara keseluruhan pada masa hadapan.

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ABSTRACT

This study discovers how upper secondary students at national secondary schools in Malaysia used the main 4C's of 21st century learning skills which are communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity thinking in developing narrative writing skills using an online learning platform via mobile learning. Therefore, this study was conducted in two secondary schools from two different states. A narrative writing module which was 4C's to WRITE module was developed to practise narrative writing elements by using technology platform. It was a study which employed mixed-method data collections in this study. Teachers and parents were involved to examine the students' activities when applying technology platforms to foster their narrative writing skills. The data were collected by using quantitative and qualitative instruments. For quantitative, the data collection method included pre-test and post-test, while the qualitative method involved participant observation, document analysis, focus group interview with the students, as well as semi-structured interview with the language teachers and parents. The findings elucidated that the 4C's had a good potential to enhance the students' ability to improve their narrative writing skills as their post-test marks improved when compared with their pre-test marks for both schools. The qualitative outcomes indicated that students had shown positive feedback to practise their narrative writing skills by using the Google Classroom platform via mobile learning which created a room for them to communicate, collaborate, as well

as use their critical thinking and creativity thinking despite some challenges in this study. The overall data indicated that students were able to progress better in two aspects which were in constructing main ideas and organising the ideas into some paragraphs when compared with the grammar and vocabulary features. Finally, this study has also highlighted new opportunities for future research. Future studies could be conducted for proper development of a writing application through technology by concerning all the responsible parties which could be implemented for the students at primary schools, secondary schools, and tertiary institutions in Malaysia as they would progress in their writing skills effectively. The creation of writing application is not only used for English subject but could be used for learning other subjects. Researchers, policymakers and teachers would also need to prepare more linguistic practices according to the students' levels to enhance in their overall writing skills in the future.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Overview of the Study

English language has been broadly spoken and used in Malaysia for many years and it has been naturally known as a second significant language of the country. Nearly everyone in Malaysia uses English in his or her daily life even though it is not his or her first language. In today's global world, the importance of English cannot be denied since English is the greatest global language that plays a vital role in every human's life in determining future goals or careers (Mara & Mohammad, 2021). English has become a universal language that is taught all over the world and in this Internet and information age, English is now recognised as the world's most dominant language (Mosiur & Mehar, 2021). The increasing demand for English language has made it an invaluable skill for children to master in order to have a secure future in Malaysia. It is essential to know the English language immensely to obtain victory and gain information in every phase of life as it is the lingua franca of the generation and the most taught language among people around the world (Kirkpatrick, 2020; Walker, 2021).

English has become the world's most commonly used language in every field and event in the world which includes every human activity, such as communication, education, tourism, culture, and technology. This happens not only in social life but also in education programmes (Aziz & Kashinathan, 2021). For this reason, students in Malaysia need to master this fundamental language wisely. There are four major skills in learning English language among students, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Ahmed & Bidin, 2016 cited in Manzoor, Azhar, & Malik, 2020).

Rahman, Azmi and Hassan (2020) detailed that among the four skills, the most difficult skill is writing in Malaysia. This is because writing skills are difficult to be measured when compared with other language skills. However, writing is one of the language skills that has an important role in teaching and studying English as a Second Language (ESL) as it is a comprehensive skill that helps to improve grammar, vocabulary, reasoning, preparing, writing, revision, and other elements (Putri & Aminatun, 2021).

There are various ways to teach English language among students and one of them is by incorporating the use of technology resources. Teachers would need to use appropriate methods to deliver the content as it is one of the important elements in the enhancement of students' performance and contribute to positive learning outcomes (Handayani & Aminatun, 2020). They can incorporate various types of technology resources to foster writing ability among students. Technology has always been a significant part of the learning environment. It is an essential part of the teaching profession among teachers to facilitate the learning process among learners using technology in this 21st century (Fitria, 2020). Besides that, technology aids in developing students' skills by creating interesting and meaningful activities. Accordingly, it is very significant for teachers to integrate technology tools in the language learning process.

It is imperative for teachers to understand the generation differences and learning preferences of students in order to develop productive learning environment. In this present technology driven era, students have different leaning needs when compared with their predecessors. To improve language learning in the new generation, it is recommended to use appropriate materials and tools in teaching and learning by educators. This is because the use of appropriate materials and tools is undeniably

helpful in making the process more meaningful. If teachers and students could engage their teaching and learning atmosphere with technologies, students will excel in their education. This is because technologies can transform the classroom into an interactive and a favourable learning platform when compared with the traditional teaching methods (Azar & Tan, 2020). Using technology in education is vital in this era for enabling the students to learn by using interactive ways and for any inevitable circumstances, in which they are restricted from going to their physically classes but still can take part in their learning process due to the technology innovation.

In order to train students for future work, activities to integrate the main four skills (4C's) are useful in the Malaysia's language teaching and learning curriculum through the use of various teaching methods in classrooms. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has introduced new textbooks among students from occasionally to enable students to improve the main four skills (4C's) in their life. In the new textbooks, the elements of 4C's are emphasised. Hence, teachers play the main role in determining the outcomes of the 21st century learning. Teachers' awareness and understanding towards an innovation in education stimulate their action, decision and practice in classroom. This is because they are the main factor that contributes to students' performance in mastering the 21st century skills.

As a result, the aim of carrying out this present study is to determine the effectiveness of applying all the main 4C's (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity thinking) of 21st century learning skills in developing students' narrative writing skills before they sit for their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination. Another purpose of this study is to integrate all the 4C's through online learning platform by using mobile learning. This study is different from the previous study as a narrative writing module, 4C's to WRITE module was created by taking

into consideration to enable students to develop their narrative writing skills to construct main ideas by minimising the writer's block, organise the ideas into paragraphs and nurture their linguistic features that are related to a story writing. Additionally, this current study enables language teachers and parents to take part in the treatment phase to observe the students overall narrative writing activities by using technologies. Carrying out this research could spread positive opinion among teachers and parents that utilising technology platforms is essential to help students to improve their narrative writing skills.

1.2   Background of the Study

In this 21st century, the role of education system is to provide students with the skills that they would need to succeed in this globalisation world and help them to grow their confidence to practise those skills in order for them to face the challenges of the future (Tan, 2021). Thus, it is paramount to provoke such important subjects in preparing the future generation with the needs of 21st century education skills (Rachmadtullah, Yustitia, Setiawan, Fanny, Pramulia, Susiloningsih, & Ardhian, 2020). In order to prepare the students for this new world, policymakers need to transform the way they educate the students. Besides that, teachers would need to use various teaching methods to deliver any subject contents to the students in this era with the use of technology tools to help students to achieve their excellence in education fields (Padmadewi, Artini, & Agustini, 2020).

Many past studies illustrated that the element of technology plays an important role in education system to educate the young generation to be knowledgeable in their studies (Albashtawi & Al Bataineh, 2020; Panigrahi, Srivastava, & Panigrahi, 2021; Zheng, Bhagat, Zhen, & Zhang, 2020). Additionally, the method of learning has to be

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in line with the Education 4.0 which is the teaching and learning process would occur by implementing technology (Bujang, Selamat, Krejcar, Maresova, & Nyuyen 2020; Qureshi, Khan, Raza, Imran, & Ismail, 2021). On the same spectrum, students nowadays are keen to integrate technology in their teaching and learning as they are engaged with a number of technology tools in their daily lives.

English language education in Malaysia has endured several transformations in the last three decades. The latest two substantial transformations are through National Education Blueprint (2013-2025) and English Language Education Roadmap for Malaysia (2015-2025). On the other hand, the roadmap is associated with the National Educational Blueprint to function as a guide for English language curriculum designers and teachers to ensure that students achieve the proficiency level associated to the international standards and are benchmarked by referring to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). There are six levels of language proficiency outlined in CEFR in relation to the five skills, such as listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing on a scale beginning with A1 and progressing through A2, B1, B2, C1, and finally, C2. The aim of using the CEFR guideline is to ensure that students accomplish at least B1 proficiency level by the end of secondary school period (Khair & Shah, 2021).

The National Educational Blueprint (2013-2025) has also given importance to enhance Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching and learning process in the present curriculum system. Hence, the Shift 7 of National Education Blueprint noted on the significance of information and communication technology (ICT) to improve the excellence of learning in Malaysia, which provides Internet access and virtual learning atmosphere (Azar & Tan, 2020). Furthermore, integrating technology tools in learning is a fundamental element as it helps students to increase

students' enthusiasm and foster their problem-solving skills, as well as to enable them to think critically which is parallel to the alteration brought by the latest technologies upon our world as a whole (Tengler, Kastner-Hauler, & Sabitzer, 2021).

Using mobile learning for the students is spreading extensively today due to the overwhelming rise in technology. Dias and Victor (2022) stated that the usage of mobile learning is more user-friendly and this makes them to be a productive device for learning inside and outside the classrooms. Furthermore, mobile learning plays a central role in the educational sector of the world to enable students to receive learning (Biswas, Roy, & Roy, 2020; Criollo, Guerrero-Arias, Jaramillo-Alcazar, & Lujan-Mora, 2021). Henceforth, in Malaysia, mobile learning is presently gaining momentum and discovered by many educators and researchers (Abd Samad, Ihsan, & Khalid, 2021). Some previous studies revealed that mobile learning is in the beginning stage in Malaysia (Latef, 2020; Ismail & Azizan, 2012 as cited in Shuib, Azizan, & Ganapathy, 2018; Ismail, Omar, Don, Pornomo, & Kasa, 2022). Henceforth, in recent years, several researchers mentioned that there has been a significant progress in the number of research focused on mobile learning in all the academic levels, such as in primary schools, secondary schools, post-secondary institutions, or in tertiary levels in Malaysia (Abd Samad, Ihsan, & Khalid, 2021, Amelia & Abidin, 2018; Azli, Shah & Mohamad, 2018; Darmi & Albion, 2017; Abd Karim, Abu, Adnan, & Suhandoko, 2018; Krishnapatria, Kurniati & Saefullah, 2019; Abdul Latef, Frohlich, Calic, & Muhammad, 2018; Ng, Azlah, Kamal, & Manion, 2020; Nihayati & Indriani, 2021, Suhaimi, Mohamad, & Yamat, 2019).

On the same trend, using mobile learning to enhance language skills has the ability to improve language skills for the students (Haron, Al Abri, & Alotaibi, 2021). Nowadays, in English language teaching, teachers tend to integrate technology tools

to support and motivate students to learn the English language. It is clearly addressed that by using various types of mobile devices, language teachers can make their lessons to be more reliable, interactive and motivating when compared with the conventional teaching methods (Azar & Tan, 2021; Jong & Tan, 2021; Hasram, Nasir, Mohamad, Daud, Rahman, & Mohammad, 2021). Aside from that, there are numerous online learning platforms which can be used via the mobile learning to learn language skills with the students (Bawanti & Arifani, 2021). Thus, teachers would need to start to practise in using technologies to teach language skills with the primary and secondary students in Malaysia to enable these students to progress well in English language.

Writing is one of important skills and students would need to master the skill successfully. Nevertheless, students find that writing skill is the most difficult skill to master (Rahman, Azmi, & Hassan, 2020). Accordingly, this study specifically focuses in improving narrative writing skills for the upper secondary students by using Google Classroom via mobile learning. In Malaysia, policymakers take a lot of initiative to move forward in accordance with technological development accessible in this 21st century learning in education system (Sulaiman & Ismail, 2020). Several studies have been conducted and the findings showed positive impacts of using technology in language learning skills. Yunus, Zakaria and Sulaiman (2019), as well as Jong and Tan (2021) elucidated that online learning platforms have a high possibility to develop chances for second language students to participate in the writing activities. Accordingly, the Google Classroom platform in teaching narrative writing skills has been selected which would be discussed in Chapter 2.

In this study, the researcher has chosen to conduct this research in developing narrative writing skills when compared with other types of writing for the upper secondary students. Narrative writing is a method of evolving stories-based students'

experiences and their thoughts in a certain time (Wang, Xu, Jiang, & Jin, 2023). It is one of the most significant writing skills that students would need to master as it offers many advantages, such as developing students' creativity skill and providing literary understanding as a whole. An educational psychologist Bruner (2007) remarked that narrative writing is extremely significant in the field of education, culture and daily lives to help the students to progress in their imaginative thinking and creativity, as well as to increase the relation of social gaps as cited in Adam (2015). Students in this era are digital natives because of their engagement in the digital world. Students in secondary schools would need to learn how to write a proper essay. It is vital to establish activities that will motivate them to write. This shows that developing writing activities which will enable students to write is very paramount in the long term. This would help the students to like writing and write appropriately. Henceforth, narrative writing skills or story writing has the potential to develop the students' overall writing skills. This is because story writing involves the writer's perceptions and experiences. When the students could progress to write an essay, it would assist them to learn basically on how to identify the main ideas, write their ideas and supporting details in a few paragraphs, as well as use proper grammar and vocabulary elements. Classroom assessments are inadequate; hence, technology is used to help in assisting the students to use the writing elements correctly. On top of that, story writing boosts their critical thinking and creativity thinking to write an interesting storyline (Awang, Lateh, Mahmud, Nazir, & Syima, 2020).

Most importantly, the researcher in this study recommends integrating the main four skills (4C's) of 21st century learning skills to encourage students to develop their narrative writing skills by using the 4C's to WRITE module. The four main skills are communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity thinking skills.

Teachers in this century would need to change their teaching pedagogy by implementing technology tools in their teaching to enhance students' motivation and participation in the learning process. Generally, teachers do not have enough time to teach each type of writing skill to the students for a long period due to time constraint and they would need to focus on other language skills (Alharbi, 2020). As a result, the researcher in this study applies one of the approaches that has the high possibility to encourage students in improving their narrative writing skills. This means that the researcher incorporates the main four skills (4C's) of 21st century learning skills in narrative writing content areas.

Communication is one of important elements in this digital era. Thus, the activities which allow students to communicate with one another by using the Google Classroom platform via mobile learning are created. Using online learning platform is fundamental in the learning environment as some students are very anxious and may not be able to communicate their ideas correctly in the classrooms. Hence, using online learning platform can overcome this problem as this allows all students to freely communicate their opinions and show their interest to write in order to share their ideas when compared with formal learning in classrooms (Putri & Aminatun, 2021). Other than that, many students have their own mobile devices. When students communicate with one another by using online learning platform via mobile devices to write their essays regularly in writing in the second language, it helps to boost their confidence level (Jong & Tan, 2021; Yunus, Zakaria, & Sulaiman, 2019). In the present study, students communicate with their group members to develop their skills to learn how to construct main ideas and organisation aspect for narrative writing.

Furthermore, the element of collaboration is evident in today's world due to technology advancement and online teaching. When integrating the element of collaboration during the learning process, it allows more authentic cooperation and teamwork with the students when compared with the individual writing tasks (Tanrikulu, 2022). Moreover, Ghavifekr (2020) explained that the element of collaboration enables students to exchange ideas, views, and opinions with their peers in a group assignment. This is also supported by Lopez-Pellisa, Rotger and Rodriguez-Gallego (2021), in which they mentioned that the element of collaboration is important because students can get inspiration to be included in their writing. This allows them to check the accuracy in writing elements in groups.

To make it clearer, for narrative essays, students would need to narrate a good storyline to impress their teachers and to obtain a high mark. Sometimes, students do not have ideas and always use the same ideas to construct their narrative essays. Students in the upper secondary level would need to know how to construct relevant ideas according to their level to explain mainly the events in their storyline significantly. This shows that when students are allowed to communicate, it has a great potential to enable them to construct better ideas. In addition, students would need to understand that another vital aspect for narrative essays involves the elements of plot, in which they would need to insert proper characters, settings, themes, moral values, and element of suspense, as well as create some events. Thus, by including the two elements which are communication and collaboration skills, it can help students to communicate and collaborate to complete the narrative writing assignments. Students in the upper secondary level would need to practise constructing narrative essays with full of excitement and suspense, as well as developing their own interesting storyline to arouse teachers' interest to read their essays. When students keep on

practising regularly for a period of time, it would help them to easily list down the main ideas or contents which are pertinent for narrative writing skills.

Additionally, the researcher in this study has included another two skills which are critical thinking and creativity thinking to enable the students to improve their grammar features and vocabulary skills to write a good piece of storyline. Teachers in Malaysia, especially the language teachers grapple with the question on how to teach narrative writing effectively to the students (Jan & Aziz, 2023; Jayavalan, Razali, & Abu, 2018; Mastan, Nooreiny Maarof, & Mohamed Amin Embi, 2017; Shamsulbahri & Aziz, 2020). At this point, students still have to master the aspects of grammar because they often make mistakes and are unable to produce a good narrative as they are used to their native language. In narrative writing, students would need to use their critical thinking to evaluate the paragraph writing and explain the storyline by using appropriate grammar and vocabulary aspects. On top of that, students have a lack of vocabulary skills. Henceforth, in this present study, the researcher plans to use the students' critical thinking and creativity thinking skills through various activities from the 4C's to WRITE module to improve their grammar features which are related to narrative writing skills and to enrich their vocabulary skills to enable them to write a good narrative essay in the future.

From 1994, Critical and Creativity Thinking Skills (CCTS) had been implemented in the National Curriculum through *Kurikulum Baru Sekolah Rendah* (KBSR) and *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah* (KBSM). After enduring numerous changes in the education system, in 2011, Primary Standard-based Curriculum was introduced and its secondary level complement, Secondary Standard-based Curriculum followed suit in 2014. The aim of the changes in the education system by the Ministry of Education (MOE) was to support thinking skills by

emphasising the skill of reasoning (Parimaladevi & Ahmad, 2019). When applying activities that are related to students' cognitive skills, which are remembering, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, it helps them to improve and perform appropriately in their writing elements. All these are reflected in the revised Bloom's Taxonomy Model (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Bloom's thinking skill is alienated into two groups that are Lower Order Thinking Skills (LOTS) and Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). LOTS comprises knowledge, understanding and application, while HOT includes analysis, evaluating and creating.

HOTS is the aptitude to apply knowledge, skills and values in reasoning, as well as reflecting for problem solving, making choices, inventing, and creating. Onosko and Newmann (1994) mentioned that HOTS is the ability by an individual to apply the potential of the mind in facing new problems. HOTS includes four skills, namely, critical thinking skill, creativity thinking skill, reasoning skill, and thinking strategy (Parimaladevi & Ahmad, 2019). The capacity to assess a concept logically and rationally, as well as reach a well-informed decision based on solid arguments and evidence is known as critical thinking skills. The capacity to use original imagination, as well as unconventional thinking to generate or create something unique and valuable is referred to as creative thinking skill. Students will be applying their lower order thinking skills, as well as higher order thinking skills for completing their grammar and vocabulary exercises in this study.

The use students' critical thinking is intended to indulge the students in grammar and vocabulary activities. This is because students are not only required to write their essays by including concrete main ideas and organise the elements of plot into a few paragraphs, but they are required to write their narrative essays by including proper grammar features and vocabulary words to make the story to be interesting. The

researcher creates a series of activities which enable the students to use their critical thinking to do the grammar and vocabulary exercises which are related to narrative writing skills. Students would need to be aware about some grammar aspects and vocabulary words that they would need to employ for narrative writing skills.

Moreover, students do not only need to use their critical thinking to apply the grammar features and vocabulary words for narrative writing, but they would need write their narrative creatively. Thus, in this study, researcher includes activities to enable them to use the grammar features and vocabulary words creatively to narrate a good narrative essay in the future. This shows that students' critical thinking and creativity thinking skills play a major factor. For example, students would need to be creative to include some expressive words, idioms, phrases, proverbs, similes, and dialogues to enable them to make their storyline to flow interestingly. In addition, they would need to create their own new product of narrative essay to make the SPM paper evaluators feel interested to read their narrative essay rather than them memorising any sample narrative essays. As a result, a number of activities which have been created in the 4C's to WRITE module have the possibility to enable students to use their critical thinking and creativity thinking. This would encourage them to develop their fluency in the narrative writing skills and improve their understanding of using proper grammar rules and vocabulary aspects for narrative essays. It is a stepping stone for the secondary students to use all the 4C's to enable them to practise their narrative writing skills by using a prepared module.

Apart from that, just like in conventional learning atmosphere, a parent's role is vital on students' success. Consequently, a parent also plays an important role in a student's online learning environment. The involvement of parents in online learning in Malaysia would need to be cultivated from now onwards to enable the students to

succeed in their learning process when using technologies (Ricker, Belenky, & Koziarski, 2021). When parents are involved, they would be able to check their children's development in each phase and they could help their children whenever the children face any difficulties (Puspita, 2021). Furthermore, parents could be guided by the school authority to train them to keep monitoring their children's progress when using online learning platforms. This is essential as when students are unable to go to school due to some restrictions as flood, haze and any diseases, parents are still able to follow their children's development in their subject matter. Moreover, nowadays, Malaysian government has highlighted the importance of technologies in the education sector. Hence, parents could be taught to use technologies to enable the success of integrating technology in education for their children.

Generally, there are a few studies which have been carried out in Malaysian to practise narrative writing skills by using technology. However, the current study focuses on using the main 4C's of 21st century learning skills by creating a narrative writing module which is known as 4C's to WRITE module to be incorporated through the Google Classroom via mobile learning in the Malaysian secondary schools' context. Thus, this study explores the students' improvement in narrative writing skills after implementing the 4C's by using the Google Classroom via mobile learning in selected schools in Malaysia. Moreover, during the treatment, the students take part in a number of activities in order for them to improve their narrative writing skills and parents are included in the treatment to observe their children's progress which is rarely done by the previous researchers.

1.3   Preliminary Study

The researcher had conducted two preliminary studies before carrying out this research to collect some concrete reasons regarding writing skills for the upper secondary students in Malaysian National schools. The first preliminary (see Appendix 1) study was done by interviewing five paper evaluators of the SPM English Paper 1119/1. The aim of conducting the first preliminary study was to identify the level of writing ability among SPM students in Malaysia and the types of essays that they are interested in to write. Moreover, this study was conducted to identify the major problems that faced by SPM students while constructing their essays and addressing some of the ways of overcoming students' writing difficulties before conducting this present study. Each paper evaluator has different teaching and marking experiences. Ten questions were constructed to ask the evaluators during the interview session by the researcher. It was a semi-structured interview session, and open-ended questions were asked verbally during the interview session by the researcher. The interview was carried out by using Google Meet and the researcher took notes throughout the session. Each evaluator was interviewed for about 30 minutes. After receiving the outcomes from the five evaluators, the outcomes were analysed according to common themes by using NVivo version 12. The themes are: (a) types of writing skills, (b) difficulties in constructing main ideas, (c) pessimism in arranging ideas into paragraphs, (d) barriers in language features, (e) insufficient time to practice writing skills, (f) integrating technology resources, (g) applying non-conventional teaching methods, (h) providing sufficient technological skills, (i) developing appropriate supplementary writing materials, and (j) involvement of parents.

Overall, from the findings revealed that upper secondary students would need to master their writing skills. Though there were many types of essays, the evaluators discovered that the SPM candidates would like to choose the types of essays which enabled them to share their experiences rather than choosing the types of essays that they would need to provide and explain about the factual information. However, students had problems to construct their main ideas. The good students were able to differentiate the main ideas with supporting details and examples. Nonetheless, the average and weak students struggled to produce a good piece of essay because they were always confused to produce main ideas, supporting details and examples. Moreover, another issue faced by students was their ability in arranging their ideas into a few paragraphs precisely. They also demonstrated a tendency to make grammar mistakes and exhibited a lack of vocabulary knowledge. Students also made a lot of grammar mistakes and repeated same vocabulary words, especially those from the average and the beginner levels. According to the paper evaluators, students did not use their critical thinking and creativity thinking to construct their essays. Furthermore, students confronted a main problem in writing tasks when associated with other three skills because of insufficient time to practise writing skills in classroom. Teachers would need to focus on other language skills as they were required to follow their syllabus. Therefore, the evaluators provided some suggestions to overcome writing difficulties among the SPM candidates. Firstly, students are technology-savvy and teachers would need to change their teaching methods which are aligned with the students' needs. Secondly, teachers would need to incorporate technology resources when teaching writing skills to the students and language teachers would need to transform their teaching pedagogics. To integrate technology resources in teaching writing skills, teachers would need strategies to use various types of technology

platforms to teach writing skills to students because not all the teachers are technology-savvy. When they do not have enough exposure to technology, they feel demotivated to apply technology resources in their teaching process. Then, when teachers are mandatory to use different teaching approaches to teach writing skills, the responsible parties would need to produce and make adequate online materials for language teachers to incorporate them when using online platforms to teach writing skills to students. Lastly, the evaluators suggested that parents' involvement through online platforms is crucial to monitor their children's progress and performance in writing skills.

Other than that, the researcher conducted the second preliminary study (see Appendix 2) to explore the acceptance of using the main four skills of 21st century learning and technology platform to teach narrative writing skills. The aim of this preliminary study was to identify the readiness of language teachers in Malaysia of applying the 4C's and using online learning platform to nurture narrative writing skills. Thirty questions were comprised by the researcher. A total of 100 language teachers in Malaysia who teach English to Form 4 students answered the questionnaire.

The findings disclosed that majority of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the integration of online learning platforms via mobile learning had a great possible to have more ownership of students' learning, as well as to permit students to collaborate and communicate which allows them to think critically and creatively to progress interesting ideas. Moreover, majority of respondents stated that they strongly agree and agree that the 4C's skills through mobile learning platform had a great chance to develop ideas, improve organisation skills, as well as progress students' vocabulary skills and grammar knowledge. Additionally, majority of respondents positively agreed that students would need continuous writing practices after their

group activities because generally in any public examinations, they would need to write their individual essay.

After the researcher conducted both preliminary studies, it was observed that the upper secondary students would need more practices to improve each type of writing skill. Therefore, the researcher selected narrative writing than the other types of writing. This is because students could practise the type of essay that they could write when compared with the type of essay that they would need to write about facts. After conducting the two preliminary studies, a lot of usefulness information was gathered before carrying out the present study. This is because both preliminary studies suggested that an appropriate writing module which can be used as a guideline for online learning platforms would need to be created. This module can help students to communicate and collaborate their ideas to complete the given writing tasks. Furthermore, creating a writing module will be useful for helping language teachers to integrate technologies in teaching writing skills as the writing module will serve as a guideline. Therefore, the 4C's to WRITE module to be used has been created during the treatment phase. Besides that, a treatment has been planned by involving all the main 4C's to develop students' narrative writing skills. This treatment will help students to communicate, collaborate, as well as use their critical thinking and creativity thinking to progress in their narrative writing skills. Students would also need continuous writing activities to progress in their writing skills. After taking it into consideration, individual narrative writing practices have been created to be utilised by using online learning platform in this study and the topics for students' individual writing assessment are added in the 4C's to WRITE module. After the preliminary studies, deliberation of involving parents in the online learning platform to motivate

them was also taken into consideration to monitor their children's development in writing abilities via technologies.

1.4 Statement of Problems

(i) Types of writing skills

The researcher found a number of issues before conducting this current study. According to the preliminary study that was conducted with the teachers from different schools (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2), it was found that students chose story writing or the type of essays that could express their experiences, thoughts and opinions in their examinations when compared with other types of essays that would need to elaborate about facts. From the pre-test (from pilot study), it was revealed that students still faced problems and were unable to score high marks for their narrative essays. The major problems that were encountered by students were lack of ideas, unorganised sequences of storyline and inability to put their ideas in paragraphs (plot for story writing). They also had a lack of grammar and vocabulary knowledge, as well as did not know to use appropriate linguistic features to compose a story. Besides that, students did not use their critical thinking and creativity thinking to construct their sentences or storylines; hence, this remained less interesting. The data from the both preliminary studies and pilot study were supported by the research which had been done by Amalia, Abdullah, and Fatimah (2021), Awang, Lateh, Mahmud, Nazir, and Syima (2021), Karim (2021), Saravanan, Palanisamy and Aziz (2021), as well as Selvaraj, Aziz, Mariam, and Pahat (2020).

Students would need to develop ideas systematically in each paragraph to develop their ideas to flow interestingly to arouse teachers' attention to read their essays. However, lack of ideas with the students causes their story to be less interesting.

This causes them to score low marks in their narrative writing (Saravanan, Palanisamy, & Aziz, 2021). This suggests that students would also need to use their critical thinking and creativity skills to create a stimulating storyline.

Writing a narrative essay also highlights on structure organisation. The progression of the students' story would need to be well-planned on how they organise their ideas for each paragraph. A good narrative writing safeguards related sections, ideas and arguments that are linked together in a reasonable and systematic manner. In narrative writing, stories are often organised in a certain way, with the characters and setting presented before the problem. Then, the plot progresses chronologically. The plot of a story involves a problem that the character would need to identify or a key event that they would need to navigate. Outlining the events or organising their ideas and how they unfold will help students to progress for the body of their story. It helps to create new and interesting ideas, as well as organise their ideas in a few paragraphs, in which the students are able to overcome in differentiating ideas which are introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution appropriately by including some characters, settings, themes, moral values, and events. Nevertheless, students are weak in their structure organisation due to various factors, such as the teaching methods employed by teachers, the types of replies that students receive from books and coaches, the type of writing activities done in classroom, or the lack of chances to practise writing (Melor & Chien, 2016; Moses & Mohamad, 2019). For organising the ideas, it requires writing mechanics, accuracy in selecting the right words, as well as adequate knowledge of syntax and grammar (AlTameemy, Alrefaee, & Alalwi, 2020).

Additionally, students are required to use grammar components appropriately to enable their ideas to develop significantly. In written text, they cannot get immediate

response. Henceforth, they would need to write clearly because it helps to provide clear meaning from the writer to the audience. This shows that grammatical knowledge plays an important part towards the meaning and the excellence of the printed writing (AlTameemy, Alrefaee, & Alalwi, 2020; Jubhari, Sasabone, & Nurliah, 2022). In other words, Malaysian students use different languages at home and English is their second language. When they learn grammar components, it helps them to write their written text by using Standard English. Students in Malaysia demonstrate difficulties in constructing compound and complex sentences which involve dependent and independent clauses because they fail to construct simple sentences (Raslee, Zaidi, Madaha Hanafi, Iksan, & Kamarudin, 2022). This shows that using various types of sentences is vital for narrative writing to make the storyline to be interesting. In this study, students mainly would need to improve their knowledge regarding the use of tenses, pronouns, connectors, types of sentences, and punctuated dialogue to construct a good storyline. Fadilah (2019) conducted a study in analysis of error in the use of simple past tense in writing narrative text and it was discovered that students had a tendency to make mistakes in using past tenses.

Students are also unable to develop a fundamental storyline to write a narrative essay due to lack of vocabulary knowledge. The aptitude to write effectively hinges upon having an adequate vocabulary knowledge for the students and writing an essay reliant on the ability to draw upon words to describe an event (Amin & Wahyudin, 2022; Chen & Hirsh, 2012 as cited in Maskor & Baharudin, 2016). Therefore, a story will be interesting to be read when it is enriched with appropriate selection of words. On a contrary, students in Malaysia have difficulties in vocabulary knowledge because the English language is their second language (Tahir, Albakri, Adnan, Shaq, & Shah, 2020). This causes them to have difficulties to develop their storyline meaningfully

and interestingly. Moreover, they could not prompt circumstances well due to inadequate vocabulary, descriptive phrases and expressions. Consequently, the students find it very stressful to write narrative essays (David & Raj, 2019).

(ii)   Writing barriers among the students

The problems in writing skills for the students occur because it would need them to apply cognitive and linguistic strategies to construct a good piece of writing (Bulqiyah, Mahbub, & Nugraheni, 2021; Maghsoudi & Haririan, 2013). Besides that, they would need to have a comprehensive knowledge of grammar, have a huge acquaintance of vocabulary knowledge, know writing mechanics, and have wide-ranging of writing styles (Rashid, Ye, Hui, Li, & Shunting, 2022). Ker-hsin and Razali (2022) claimed that students are unable to write their essay as they lack of ideas due to less reading in their daily lives and it causes them to have difficulties to organise their ideas in paragraphs.

Moreover, students feel that it is tough to write a good essay due to lack of opportunities and exposure to practise writing (Su Ping, Verezub, Adi Badiozaman, & Chen, 2020). This phenomenon occurs because the language teachers would need to focus on other skills, as well as have time constraints and limited time to interact with all students during the classroom activities. When there is limited time, teachers do not have time to discuss the students' mistakes and weaknesses, in which the students tend to do in their writing skills. When writing mistakes are difficult to overcome, it makes students fail to produce a good piece of essay (Bulqiyah, Mahbub, & Nugraheni, 2021).

(iii)   Teachers' difficulties in teaching writing skills in Malaysia

Teachers use the same conventional approaches to teach writing skills in the Malaysian National schools. This phenomenon happened as teachers would need to focus on other three language skills and they cannot fully concentrate on the writing skills. They would also need to prepare their students for public examinations. Due to time constraint, they are not able to go in depth to teach each type of writing skills to their students by using various approaches. Due to lack of technology facilities at schools, it makes teachers not to integrate technology in their teaching process (Ng & Yunus, 2021). Even though teachers want to use technology platforms to carry out their lessons, they face another issue which is not having proper guidelines and modules which could serve as references when using the technology platforms. All the complications hinder the teachers to transform their teaching approaches (Azar & Tan, 2020).

Moreover, teachers face technical issues. There are teachers from different age groups in Malaysia. Those who are not technology-savvy would need technical support to use technologies in teaching (Tze Pheng, Hashim, & Ainil Sulaiman, 2021). Nonetheless, there is no proper and continuous technical support given to them to fully use technology in the writing process. This is because the incorporation of technology tools in national schools in Malaysia is still at the beginning stage and not fully implemented. Thus, teachers feel demotivated without a proper prolonged training to upgrade themselves to incorporate technology with their students.

(iv)   Barriers with parents' involvement

Parents face problems in monitoring their children's development of their writing skills. This scenario occurs as parents are acknowledged with their children's

progress once or twice in a year from their class teacher. In other words, the parents are in the know of their children's overall performance in their written examination for all the subjects. In contrast, parents are unable to identify the exact problems of their children in writing skills. When parents are not aware of their children's writing difficulties, they are unable to support or motivate their children (Moses & Mohamad, 2019). It reveals that parents would need to be given an opportunity to know each and every single weakness of their children in the writing development process.

Apart from that, parents face another issue of monitoring their children's progress during the inevitable circumstances, such as the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), haze, flood, any other unpredictable weather, and other scenarios which restrict their children from attending their physical classes in schools. Hence, the children would need to carry out their learning process via technology medium and it is another factor for parents to monitor their children. The parents will feel very stressed as not all the parents are technology-savvy (Reeves, 2021). Thus, school management and the respective subject teacher would need to collaborate with the parents to ensure that they will know their children's progress (Annamalai, 2021).

After assessing the aforementioned problems, it can be concluded that the main problem is in developing narrative writing skills. From the students' perspectives, they have difficulties to write a proper narrative essay as they are unable to identify main ideas, classify the elements of plot, as well as exhibit poor grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Based on the language teachers' perspectives, they are demotivated to apply technology platforms and complain that they do not have sufficient supplementary materials to be used for online lessons. With regards to the parents' perspectives, they claim that they are not included in the online lesson to view their children's progress and they do not have proper guideline to use technology platforms.