

The Effect of a Teaching Model Based on the Stages of Teaching Self-Regulated Strategies on Improving Persuasive Writing Skills among Eighth Basic-Grade Students

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine how a teaching model using Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) stages affects persuasive writing skills for eighth graders of SMPB. This study used a quasi-experimental design with 47 students in two groups (experimental and control). In order to attain the goals of the study, a persuasive writing test was designed to assess students performance in the following writing skills: introduction, body, conclusion, writing style and writing mechanics. Conventional instruction was used for the control group, and SRSD instructional model was used for the experimental group. The instructional intervention took place for 8 weeks. The statistical analyses performed, such as ANCOVA and MANCOVA, showed that the differences between the scores of the two groups was statistically significantly in favor of the experimental group ($p < 0.05$). The results indicated that the SRSD model had a significant positive impact on persuasive writing in terms of the development of persuasive writing skills, especially in the structural organization of persuasive texts. The study emphasizes the importance of applying SRL strategies in Arabic language learning to improve students' writing skills and to encourage independent learning.

Keywords: Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD); persuasive writing; Arabic language instruction; self-regulated learning; writing skills; eighth-grade students.

1. Introduction

Writing is viewed as one of the basic language skills which students use to communicate their thoughts, opinions and experiences in a structured and meaningful way. In persuasive writing, in which learners are required to formulate arguments, provide the participants with logical evidence, and persuade the audience by engaging them in orderly and convincing discourse, its significance takes on an increased form¹. Persuasive writing is not just a language skill, it is a complex thinking process that includes organizing the ideas, planning and structuring ideas, assessing evidence, and checking the quality of written work. Although it is a topic that is important for students to study, many students struggle with making their writing persuasive, especially in the areas of organizing arguments, weaving ideas together in a coherent way, and providing logical evidence to support their opinions.

The multiple communicative, educational and functional uses of writing place it at a central role in academic and social life. Students use writing for expressing emotions, summarising, answering examination questions and writing reports and assignments. In this context, the effective writer must not only be linguistically correct, but also be able to present internal thoughts in an organized, coherent, and logical written discourse that includes clear organization and coherent structure². The Arabic

¹ 'Ismā'īl, Balīgh. *al-Kitābah al-Akādīmiyyah: Dalīl Tanmiyat Mahārāt al-Kitābah al-Iqnā'iyyah al-Hijājiyyah*. Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 2022.

² Chen, Jie. "Impacts of Self-Regulated Strategy Development on Students' Self-Efficacy in Writing." *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (2021).

language scholars have pointed out that writing is an ongoing process and requires continuous practice, guidance and exposure to organized instructional procedures which foster students' cognitive and linguistic development.

Persuasive writing is one of the more challenging tasks of functional writing because students will need to present a position, consider opposing perspectives, and present convincing evidence to support a position. In many classrooms of the Arabic language, however, the teaching and learning of language has, in the past, been mainly descriptive and expressive, with little attention to argumentative and persuasive types of writing. This, therefore, frequently leads to students making a poor showing in creating persuasive texts and organizing ideas properly.

To address the challenges, recent educational research has concentrated on the need for instructional strategies that involve cognitive and metacognitive processes in writing practice. The Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) model is one of the most important models used in this direction; it is a model that integrates explicit writing training and self-regulation strategies like planning, monitoring, self-evaluation and revision. The SRSD model gives students a sequence of learning that will allow them to take ownership of their writing and become more strategic, solving more problems themselves. The SRSD model involves stages of instruction sequenced in a way that builds background knowledge, discusses (or discusses and models), provides guided support and models, and provides independent performance .

The effectiveness of the SRSD model in improving persuasive writing has been shown in previous studies in various learning environments. Festas³ showed that eighth-grade students in Portugal who were taught using SRSD writing strategies produced significantly more in terms of writing a persuasive text compared to students who were taught conventional. In the same vein, researchers have found that teaching using the SRSD method resulted in significant gains in students' persuasive writing⁴. The overall results indicate that SRSD positively affects writing organization, argument construction, and writing self-regulated learning.

Although international research on SRSD has increased, there is still limited research addressing the effectiveness of SRSD in the context of Arabic language instruction in local contexts and for middle school learners. This discrepancy creates a need to explore further the possibility of using SRSD to enhance the persuasive writing for Arabic learners. Thus, the present study aims to investigate the application of the SRSD teaching model to enhance persuasive writing skill of the 8th-grade students.

The study is an effort to answer the primary research question:

- Does there exist any mean scores difference, at $\alpha = 0.05$, between the mean scores of the two groups (experimental and control group) in persuasive writing skills due to SRSD instructional model?

This study also explores variations between the sub-skills of persuasive writing such as introduction, body, conclusion, writing style and writing mechanics.

In order to answer the said questions, the study adopted a quasi-experimental research design with an experimental group and a control group to get the answers to the above stated research questions. Pre and post tests were used to determine the effectiveness of the instructional intervention and to assess students' persuasive writing abilities.

2. Literature Review

³ Festas, I., A. L. Oliveira, J. A. Rebelo, M. H. Damião, K. R. Harris, and S. Graham. "Professional Development in Self-Regulated Strategy Development: Effects on the Writing Performance of Eighth Grade Portuguese Students." *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 40 (2015): 17–27.

⁴ Sartika, D., and R. Rachmanita. "The Effect of Self-Regulated Strategy Development on Students' Skill to Write Persuasive Text." *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* 2, no. 1 (2017): 33–49.

The Effect of a Teaching Model Based on the Stages of Teaching Self-Regulated Strategies on Improving Persuasive Writing Skills among Eighth Basic-Grade Students

In modern educational thought, writing instruction has come a long way from the product-oriented approach to the process and cognitively-oriented approach. Persuasive writing is one of the most intellectually challenging forms of written communication that students must produce within this transformation because students need to produce grammatically correct texts, to develop logical arguments, to organise evidence logically, and to think critically about opposing arguments.

Persuasive writing is strongly related to higher-order thinking skills, self-regulation and metacognitive awareness. Writing is known to be a recursive cognitive process, a process that involves planning, drafting, revising, monitoring and evaluating ideas instead of being thought of as a linear activity⁵. Even so, teaching writing in Arabic language classes still focuses on achieving product-based goals and writing for the purpose of expression rather than on developing argumentative writing skills⁶.

Students may struggle with structuring ideas, structuring arguments and incorporating evidence into persuasive writing in this context. From the functional and educational viewpoints, writing fulfills many communicative functions, including learning, assessment, and real-life communication; however, it needs to be practiced and taught consistently and effectively⁷.

To overcome these problems, teaching models that can facilitate cognitive and metacognitive engagement have been widely recommended. One of the most known of these models is the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) model which combines explicit writing instruction with self-regulation strategies like planning, goal setting, self-monitoring and self-evaluation⁸. SRSD believes that writing is a systematic process that can be taught systematically with scaffolded stages that transfer responsibility over the writing task from teacher to student.

The SRSD model usually consists of background knowledge, discuss strategies, model, guided practice, and performance/ind. practice. Through these phases students will learn to strategically control their writing process and to enhance their capacity to write coherent and well-constructed texts. Studies have shown that SRSD can be effectively adapted to other genres such as persuasive writing because of the focus on argument construction and planning strategies⁹.

The effectiveness of SRSD in enhancing students' performance in persuasive writing has been proven in empirical studies. The students who learned SRSD significantly improved their writing quality and structure of their essay compared to the students who learned traditionally¹⁰. Likewise, Barkel found that ELLs' persuasive writing increased following SRSD-based instruction¹¹.

⁵ Shahātah, Hasan. *al-Kitābah al-Iqnā' iyyah al-Hijājiyyah: Fikr Jadīd min al-Nazariyyah ilā al-Taṭbīq*. Cairo: Dār al-‘Ālam al-‘Arabī, 2010.

⁶ ‘Abd al-Qādir, Maḥmūd. “Barnāmaj Muqtarah Qā’im ‘alā al-Ta’allum al-Mustanid ilā al-Dimāgh li-Tanmiyat Mahārāt al-Kitābah al-Iqnā’ iyyah wa-Atharuhu fī al-Hiss al-Lughawī Ladā Ṭullāb Shu‘bat al-Lughah al-‘Arabiyyah bi-Kulliyyat al-Tarbiyah.” *Majallat al-Qirā’ah wa-al-Ma’rifah* 158 (2014): 31–83.

⁷ Yūnus, Faṭḥī. *Istirāṭijiyāt Ta’līm al-Lughah al-‘Arabiyyah fī al-Marḥalah al-Thānawiyah*. n.p., 2001.

⁸ Harris, K. R., S. Graham, L. H. Mason, and B. Friedlander. *Powerful Writing Strategies for All Students*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing, 2008.

⁹ Graham, S., and D. Perin. *Writing Next: Effective Strategies to Improve Writing of Adolescents in Middle and High Schools—A Report to Carnegie Corporation of New York*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007.

¹⁰ al-Ḥallāq, ‘Alī. *al-Marjī ‘fī Tadrīs Mahārāt al-Lughah al-‘Arabiyyah wa-‘Ulūmihā*. Beirut: al-Mu’assasah al-Ḥadīthah lil-Kitāb, 2010.

¹¹ Barkel, A. A. *Self-Regulated Strategy Development Writing Instruction with Elementary-Aged Students Learning English*. Doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University, 2018.

The results for persuasive writing were also significantly better for Indonesian students in terms of organization, vocabulary and content development¹². Furthermore, Escott and McCrudden emphasized how beneficial SRSD was for students when building coherent persuasive arguments¹³. Similarly, Mazeh and Safa (2020) found that the SRSD technique was an effective intervention for increasing the writing competence in persuasive writing of Lebanese students and that the technique had significant effects on improving students' engagement and quality of writing¹⁴.

All of these studies indicate that the SRSD approach improves the product and process of writing by improving students' planning, monitoring, and evaluating their writing. There is, however, little research that looks at the applicability of SRSD in Arabic language environments, specifically in the middle-school level. This constitutes an obvious research vacuum particularly in the context of the prevailing difficulties that face persuasive writing in Arabic education systems.

The purpose of the present study is to fill this gap by examining the impact of the SRSD instructional model on enhancing the skills of persuasive writing of eighth-grade students in an Arabic educational environment.

3. Statistical Analysis and Results

3.1 Statistical Analysis Procedures

For the purposes of answering the first research question and the testing of the main hypothesis, means, standard deviations and adjusted means were calculated for the performance of both study groups on the overall persuasive writing test. One-way Analysis of Covariance (One-way ANCOVA) was used to compare the means of the post test scores, using teaching method as the independent variable, and assuming that the test scores satisfy the criteria for ANOVA.

For the second research question and its sub-hypotheses, means, standard deviations, and adjusted means were determined for each persuasive writing skill, separately (introduction, body, conclusion, writing style, and writing mechanics). The assumption of the one-way multivariate analysis of covariance (One-way MANCOVA) was confirmed before the test was performed, and this was used to test the statistical difference between sub-skills' means across the groups.

The partial eta squared measure was used to assess the magnitude of the teaching method effect (Cohen, 1988) for effect size. The effect size was defined as small (0.01), medium (0.06), and large (>0.14).

Table (3) displays the means and standard deviations of the overall persuasive writing performance (pre-, post-, and adjusted post-test scores)

| Group | Mean | Standard Deviation | t-value | df | Sig. ($\alpha = 0.05$) |
|---------------------------|-------|--------------------|---------|----|--------------------------|
| Control (Traditional) | 23.22 | 4.08 | -1.075 | 45 | 0.288 |
| Experimental (SRSD Model) | 24.50 | 4.10 | | | |

Table (4): Results of One-Way ANCOVA for Overall Persuasive Writing Skills

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F-value | Sig. | Eta Squared |
|----------------------|----------------|----|-------------|---------|-------|-------------|
| Pre-test (Covariate) | 7322.331 | 1 | 7322.331 | - | - | - |
| Teaching Method | 2380.225 | 1 | 2380.225 | 17.839 | 0.000 | 0.288 |
| Error | 5870.828 | 44 | 133.428 | | | |
| Corrected Total | 17178.213 | 46 | | | | |

¹² 'Abd al-Bārī, Māhir. *al-Kitābah al-Wazīfiyyah wa-al-Ibdā' iyyah*. Amman: Dār al-Masīrah, 2010.

¹³ Escott, S., and M. T. McCrudden. "Investigating Self-Regulated Strategy Development for Persuasive Writing with Elementary School Students in Aotearoa/New Zealand." *Journal of Research in Childhood Education* 36, no. 3 (2022): 392–405

¹⁴ Mazeh, N., and N. Safa. "The Effect of Self-Regulated Strategy Development on Persuasive Writing: A Quasi-Experimental Study Among Grade 6 Students in Lebanese Private Schools." *Journal of Education and Practice* 11, no. 32 (2020): 17–31.

The Effect of a Teaching Model Based on the Stages of Teaching Self-Regulated Strategies on Improving Persuasive Writing Skills among Eighth Basic-Grade Students

The statistically significant difference, in favor of the experimental group, is evident in the results presented in Tables (3) and (4). The adjusted mean score of the experimental group was obtained (42.38) and the control group (27.96). This effect is confirmed by the F-value and the significance value (17.839 and 0.000).

The effect size (Partial Eta Squared = 0.288) shows that about 28.8% of the improvement of persuasive writing skills can be attributed to the SRSD instructional model. It is concluded that the effectiveness of SRSD in supporting students in writing is evidenced by students' writing continuously being planned, revised, and self-evaluated, and this is able to directly improve the quality of students' writing.

3.2 Analysis of Sub-Skills Using MANCOVA

Means, standard deviations, and adjusted means were computed and a multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was used to analyze the effect of the SRSD model on each skill of persuasive writing individually. The results are given in Table (5) and (6).

Table (5) shows the means and standard deviations for sub-skill items of persuasive writing (post-test and adjusted scores)

| Skill | Teaching Method | Pre Mean | Pre SD | Post Mean | Post SD | Adjusted Mean |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------|--------|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Introduction | Traditional | 3.43 | 0.84 | 3.87 | 1.01 | 4.21 |
| | SRSD Model | 3.75 | 0.99 | 7.42 | 3.63 | 7.09 |
| Body | Traditional | 9.35 | 2.74 | 9.70 | 2.87 | 10.43 |
| | SRSD Model | 9.75 | 1.85 | 16.25 | 7.19 | 15.55 |
| Conclusion | Traditional | 2.17 | 0.58 | 2.78 | 1.17 | 3.01 |
| | SRSD Model | 2.33 | 0.76 | 4.67 | 2.18 | 4.45 |
| Writing Style | Traditional | 4.17 | 0.58 | 4.87 | 1.32 | 5.39 |
| | SRSD Model | 4.50 | 1.22 | 7.92 | 5.19 | 7.42 |
| Writing Mechanics | Traditional | 4.09 | 0.42 | 4.70 | 1.66 | 5.25 |
| | SRSD Model | 4.17 | 0.56 | 8.08 | 5.26 | 7.56 |

Table (6): Results of One-Way MANCOVA for Sub-Skills of Persuasive Writing

| Skill | F-value | df | Sig. | Eta Squared |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|-------|-------------|
| Introduction | 28.780 | 1 / 40 | 0.000 | 0.418 |
| Body | 28.061 | 1 / 40 | 0.000 | 0.412 |
| Conclusion | 21.759 | 1 / 40 | 0.000 | 0.352 |
| Writing Style | 7.441 | 1 / 40 | 0.009 | 0.157 |
| Writing Mechanics | 8.530 | 1 / 40 | 0.006 | 0.176 |

The results of the Hotelling's Trace ($p = 0.000$) showed that there were statistically significant differences between the experimental group and the control group in favor of the experimental group in all of the sub-skills.

The results of the effect sizes indicated that the SRSD model was the most effective one in relation to the components of the structural writing, which is measured by the value of the introduction component (41.8%), body component (41.2%), and conclusion component (35.2%). This demonstrates that the model places high importance on students forming a clear position, building well organized arguments and creating a logical conclusion to a text, which leads to very structured and well organized texts.

Writing style and writing mechanics, on the other hand, had smaller but still significant effect sizes (+15.7% and +17.6%). This discrepancy could be due to the type of skills that is required, which rely on long-term language learning, such as learning more vocabulary and grasping grammatical and spelling rules, which may take a longer time to acquire than the structural writing skills.

The results presented here generally confirm that the SRSD model is an effective instructional approach in teaching writing for students to develop an effective and systematic process to organize their ideas into persuasive writing.

4. Discussion

The results of this study show that the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) instructional model has a significant effect on improving persuasive writing skills of 8th grade students. The effect size (0.288) indicates that about 28.8% of the total improvement in performance is due to using this instructional model, which is effective in improving students' persuasive writing skills.

The findings also indicated that the experimental group showed significant improvement in all sub-skills of persuasive writing, particularly in terms of the structure of the writing (introduction, body, and conclusion) than in terms of the style and mechanical accuracy of the writing. The pattern indicates that SRSD effectively enhanced the organization of the text and the development of logical arguments, but not so clearly in the area of language refinement.

The outcomes can be attributed to the built-in structure of the SRSD model that explicitly teaches students a sequence of self-regulatory strategies, such as pre-writing planning, generating ideas, developing arguments, and self-monitoring for revision and self-evaluation. This systematic sequence makes writing a cognitively guided activity in which students self-regulate and control their own writing.

In a more general cognitive context, results reinforce philosophical learning theories which view learning as an active and self-directed process of discovery and construction rather than as a process of knowledge transfer. In this way, SRSD is a constructivist approach in which students plan, reflect and revise to construct meaning. This also aligns with the ethical and reflective aspects of moral frameworks in other philosophical traditions that advocate for self-control, purposefulness, and the ongoing process of self-reflection and improvement in human actions.

The study itself does not explore religious texts, but the focus on self-regulation, self-reflection and deliberate change in behaviour and thinking can be easily linked to the wider ethical teachings across a range of faiths, with a greater focus on self-accountability and a constant drive to improve behaviour and thought. These parallelities make it clear that SRL is not only an educational but a human developmental principle which has universal significance.

Additionally, indirect links can be made to the educational culture in East Asian countries, which has traditionally focused on discipline, repetition, structured practice and mastery over a long period of time, of which the Chinese learning culture is especially noticeable. In conceptual similarity, the SRSD model has similarities with these traditions in terms of step by step explanation, the emphasis on practicing and the internalization of structured cognitive routines before independent performance.

Comparatively, the results are congruent with the previous study conducted by Sartika and Rachmanita (2017) and Escott and McCrudden (2022) who found that SRSD was effective in enhancing planning, organizing and revising skills in the process of writing persuasive texts. This convergence enhances the validity of the findings of this study and places them in the context of other empirical research findings relevant to the use of SRSD in writing instruction.

The explicit model of explicitly teaching students how to develop a coherent argument (introduce with a position, provide logically sequenced evidence in the body, and have a strong conclusion) is the reason for the better results in structural writing. This systematic method positively affects the coherence and argumentative clarity of texts.

The relatively modest increase in writing style and mechanics, on the other hand, could be attributed to the fact that these skills rely heavily on accumulation of knowledge over time, such as vocabulary and the accuracy of grammar, which is likely to be achieved by prolonged exposure and continuing practice over a longer period than is provided by a single intervention.

Modeling and guided practice also were important in helping students to understand the writing process in the SRSD phases. Students' confidence and autonomy increased by watching model lessons and increasingly using strategies with feedback. In addition, the ability to self regulate allowed learners

to keep track of their progress and assess their own writing, a positive factor for the quality of the writing.

The findings of this study suggest that the SRSD strategy must be considered as a component of Arabic language curriculum in teaching persuasive writing, the teaching assistant must be trained in the application of the SRSD strategy in the classroom, and the teaching of writing processes (planning, drafting, revising, and self-evaluation) should be given emphasis rather than the teaching of final products.

Future studies are recommended to be conducted on how SRSD affects creative writing, critical thinking, and oral expression, as well as the effectiveness of SRSD on other levels of education and to assess the sustainability of the instructional effects of SRSD.

5. Conclusion

The current study looked at the effectiveness of the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) instructional model for improving persuasive writing skills of Grade 8 students. The results suggest that SRSD is an effective instructional approach with an overall effect size of (0.288), a statistically significant positive effect on students' writing performance, and that a significant portion of the improvement in persuasive writing is a result of the instructional intervention.

Results showed that students who were instructed through the SRSD model achieved better than the students in the control group on all aspects of persuasive writing. Improvements were most significant in the structural aspects of writing (introduction, body, and conclusion) and were slightly smaller in writing style and mechanical accuracy. This sequence seems to work especially well for the development of higher-order organizational skills and skills in argumentative writing.

The effectiveness of SRSD may be due to its systematic and explicit instructional design, which will lead students through a step-by-step sequence of cognitive and metacognitive strategies such as planning, organizing ideas, constructing arguments, and self-monitoring and self-evaluation. This is a programmatic process that transforms writing from a spontaneous activity into a regulated cognitive activity, during which students are actively engaged in controlling and fine-tuning their writing.

As an educational perspective, the study confirms the significance of SRL approaches in learning complex skills in education. It emphasizes the importance of moving away from product-oriented teaching to process-oriented approaches to writing that focus on strategy use, reflection, and continual improvement.

Given these results, it is recommended in the following ways that SRSD can be used to enhance the quality of students persuasive writing and writing skills in general: It also reinforces the idea that explicit teaching of writing strategies, guided writing practice and self-regulation are crucial to the development of competent and independent writers.

Finally, the study recommends that the effectiveness of the SRSD technique on other language macro-areas, educational settings, and students' writing development and cognitive abilities be investigated.

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