

Improve Students' Ability To Remember Historical Facts:

Technical-Based Mneumonics Method

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Abstract—This action research aims to improve the ability of lower secondary school students in remembering the facts of history by using mneumonics. In this study, data collected in several ways, such as interviews with students, referring to diary entry of History teachers, analysis of students records, discussed with other History teachers, observed the students during the implementation process of mneumonik method. The mneumonics method implemented in two stages. The first stage, involved the introduction of individual mneumonics implemented and at the second level, this method carried out in groups. This study ultimately found that the method can help students remember History facts more effectively and help them to revise. In addition, students' creativity can also be unearthed. The main guidelines of this paper is referring Tang Geok Ling's writing titled "Improving Students Ability Given Historical Facts By Using Mneumonics Method".

Keywords- remembering history facts; Mneumonics Method

I. INTRODUCTION

Researcher conducted research in a school located in the Kota Kinabalu. The location is about 7 km away from Kota Kinabalu city center. It is a government aided secondary school (missionary school). The number of staffs at this school is 94. The total number of students is 1245. Chinese students are the majority and other races made up from Sino-Kadazan, Kadazan, Dusun, Malay, and others. Most parents of students in this school are traders, shopkeepers, civil and private sectors servants, technical workers and others.

II. RESEARCH PROBLEM: STUDENTS DIFFICULT TO REMEMBER THE HISTORY FACTS

A. *Difficulty To Remember The History Facts*

School History teachers are facing various problems in the History teaching and learning process. Obvious problem in the teaching and learning of History is in the long run. This problem is one source that can erode the interest of student in History. The author understood by History teachers that this problem is not only a problem of Form One students but other levels also facing the same problems. In addition, teachers of other subjects like Science, Geography, Mathematics are also facing the same problem.

B. *Samples*

Three Form One classes for the History subject have been taken as the samples. History subject is a new subject for students in Form One. After 3 months of teaching and learning, the teachers found that students from excellent class faced the same problem. This problem has been identified by teachers when asked students to give the correct answers immediately after the teachers teach, but they will forget the fact after the teaching session. This was proven once again when the author asked an excellent class students who scored marks less than 50% listed the reasons why they fail in History subject exam. Analysis of students' records found that the main factors that cause students to fail the exam is difficult to remind the History facts. Other factors identified were no revision, no reference materials, not focus on teachers teaching, History subject is considered less important and just focus on the Science, Mathematics and English subjects only.

Complaints of outstanding students

The following quotations are complaints of outstanding students from Form One excellent class on the problems of remembering History facts:

A. "I quickly forget even I did revision" (student A's note)

B. "I do not remember what I learned during my class in afternoon session" (student B's note)

C. "... I am interested in history, but it also brings a problem to me. I used to think history is easy, but when I am in Form One, now I find out History is quite difficult because too many things need to remember "(student C's note)

D. "I did not do revision earlier until the last minute because if study early, I will easily forget I finally could not recall all the revision topics" (student D's note).

From the perspective of researcher, these show that what has been learned by the students are to remain in their own short-term memory (limited capability at a time). Lessons that have served not included in their long-term memory (unlimited capacity, can store information in memory and gradually forgotten). Forgetting is a normal occurrence. The reason people forget is the absence of recommendations, and over time. In teaching and learning process, students were exposed to new information and they will focus on new information.

This new information will take over the old information and lead to long memory began to decay. However, strategic and certain approach can be used to help our students remember information and reduce forgetting. One way to reduce forgetting is that teachers should make learning something that is encouraging. Teachers can plan a variety of teaching methods that are relevant for each topic taught. For example, group activities, discussions, carrying out projects, cooperative learning, drill, mnemonics, question and answer session and more. Finally, complete content and organizational editing before formatting. Please take note of the following items when proofreading spelling and grammar:

C. *MNEUMONICS METHODS*

Define Problem of difficulty in remembering History facts must be resolved as it would be an obstacle to obtain higher performance. Thus, arose the various questions such as whether the techniques used in teaching and learning processes are compatible or not? The initiative as an educator, a teacher should introduce a suitable method or approach for teaching and learning process. One method that can be emphasized as a whole is mnemonics method.

Mnemonics method is a method that can help students with associate memory of a substance or phrases based on the of letters to remember with something meaningful to the students (Rachel, Jami'ah & Kasnani, 2000: 43). For example, students need to remember the acronym "PESIS", which means the development of Physical, Emotional, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Social. Method or approach had long been used by teachers and students but it is not inovative and creative. Innovation is a creative change. This method is very consistent with the duties of a teacher as facilitator or in other words, the facilitator or coach. The average students, when asked, the main problems that arise in teaching and learning process is interest in the subject. For example, many students are not interested in learning the History subject. So, we as educators must be able to reflect on themselves. Try to ask yourself is the teaching method being used is easy presented or interesting? The most important thing for a teacher is to attract students to the subject being taught.

D. *Objectives Of Study & Study Questions*

- This action research aims to:
 1. change teachers' teaching practice to the approach that allows students to easily remember the facts of history,
 2. to introduce mnemonics method to students, and
 3. allow students to use mnemonics method to help themselves to remember history facts.
- This study aims to answer the following questions:
 1. Is there any mnemonics can help excellent students to increase their capacity to remember History facts?
 2. How do teachers implement the mnemonics to excellent Form One students?
 3. How far is the mnemonics method effective to excellent Form One students?

Target

The target group in this study were Form One students from which comprises 50 students. Many students from this class scored less than 50 points in the first term examination. Only 12 out of 50 students who earned 50 marks and above. Table 1 shows the results of the History subject in first term examination.

Table 1: Results of The Excellent Form One Class For History Subject In First Term Examination

Marks (Grade)	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
80-100 (A)	2	4
65-79 (B)	5	10
50-64 (C)	12	24
40-49 (D)	22	44
0-39 (E)	9	18
Total	50	100

Based on Table 1, it can be concluded that although excellent Form One class is the best class in Form One, but the achievement of the first term examination in the History subject was found unsatisfactory. The principal source was identified, namely the students difficult to remember the facts of history. In this study, teachers and pupils played their respective roles. Teacher introduced students to the mnemonics methods. Teacher also applied mnemonics method in teaching and learning process based on appropriate topics. Students must create a character based on the phrase to remember History fact. The teacher presented the lesson content. Students cannot totally accept the phrase given. Students must understand the concept and purpose of the base letters used.

E. *Data Collection Technique*

The action research was commenced in May 2012 to identify research focus. The focus of the study were identified based on discussions and interviews with other History teachers, observation of students behavior, students reaction when given the questions and the results of their History subject in first term examination.

1. *Results of the student in first term exam*

Through the data of first term results for Form One excellent class, the researcher has to analyze the results of the first term of the clas and found 50% of the students get below 50 marks for the subject. This has troubling History teacher for the performance of the best class in Form One. Hereby, researcher has taken the decision to identify factors that caused this situation happened.

2. *Student Notes*

Researcher directed students who scored less than 50% to list the factors that caused them to fail in the examination. Most told the factor is difficult to remember History fact. With this, researcher focused on the study problem (difficult remembering history facts) among students by introducing mnemonics methods to students.

3. Teacher Notes

Teachers have been recorded in my observations on the implementation of the mnemonics in a notebook. Researchers have read and examined the entire record of teachers to make interpretations and conclusions of the study.

4. Interviews with students

The researcher has interviewed 6 students to receive feedback on the mnemonics method introduced. Students selected for this interview are selected from each group (one from each group). The result of this interview enabled the researcher to make interpretations and conclusions of the study.

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDY FINDINGS

After In May, after their first term examination, researcher have determined the focus of my study, namely improving students' ability to remember the History facts through mnemonics. Researcher chose the focus of this review because researcher found that students from Form One excellent class scored less than 50% (for the first term examination) to the ground that they were unable to remember the the heaps history facts. Therefore, researcher have decided to help the students through the use of mnemonics method that can enhance the ability to remember History facts.

During the question and answer session, researcher found that the mnemonics method is actually not a new method for some students. This is because I've learned that since primary school, their science teachers have used this approach in teaching and learning. But at that time, students only received words that the network has been set or created by the teachers. Their teachers also adopted this method only once in a while in teaching and learning. Then students have no opportunity to show their creativity. Therefore, it can be concluded that students just learn mnemonics method but not able to apply it. Therefore, researcher feel this mnemonics method should be reintroduced more carefully so that students not only use this method in History subject but other subjects as well.

IV. INTRODUCED THE MNEUMONICS METHOD

In June 2012, researchers introduced mnemonics methods to students with the topic on previous studies. The chosen topic is "The Study of History". Mnemonics method, History Study Method can be simplified to be remembered through the use of 3 words only; Archaeological, Written, and Oral. Researchers have explained this to the students with mnemonics method. Then, the researcher asked students to create their own phrases by Historical Research Method topics. From researcher observations, several students were able to link the creative words. For example, as shown in Table 2.

Table 1: Students' Historical Research Methods Topics

1	Written method	official file	Written method	unprinted manuscript
2	Oral method	narrative	Oral method	conversation
3	Archaeological method	Artifact	Archaeological method	tablet

Table 2: Student's Range of Words In English and Malay

F.	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6
<i>Palembang</i>	Parameswara	Phang Qi Li	Paramewara	Patrick	Pak Abu	Panda
<i>Tenasik</i>	Think	Test	Tebu	Thought	Tidak	Teddy
<i>Muar</i>	Mango	Mother	Masuk	Macho	Mahu	Misteri
<i>Malaka</i>	Mee	Mood	Misai	Manchester	Makan	Musang

So, through the mnemonics group, the problems faced in the past week has been resolved. Based on the phrase coined by a group of students, it can be concluded that the phrase that is created depends on the creativity and the tendency of students. Mnemonics method group, the less creative students can discuss with students who are more creative. Ideas put in by students who are creative can indirectly stimulate the students who are less creative in order to generate said network without copying. To strengthen students' memory researcher also ordered each group display their work at the corner of History subject.

V. REFLECTION

In After several sessions of mnemonics methods teaching and learning carried out, the teacher was satisfied with the performance and ability displayed by the students. Although initially there were some students are not able to link words to themselves, but this problem can be overcome through mnemonics group. This also means that students will appreciate and feel satisfied with what they created (contribution in the group) compared with those given the absence of their own efforts. What is important is the creativity of students also unearthed. It is not only to overcome students memory to heaps of History facts but also increase the interest to study History.

As a result of interviews with 6 students (one from each group), it was found that the mnemonics method makes it easier for them to remember History with simple facts. This was evident during an interview with students, when I asked two students of the "History Research Methods" and 'Paramewara Journey to Malacca', it was found that they can say that the phrase was invented by them and gave the correct

answers. Students are also excited and interested in learning History subject through mnemonics. Researcher learned from the students that this mnemonic method was easier for them to make revisions. Students also hope that teachers will implement another mnemonics method suitable with the title in the near future. They want group practice mnemonics method in teaching and learning as they felt that the discussion can strengthen their memory about the History facts.

Based on this discussion, we can conclude that the mnemonics method can be used as a method or technique of teaching and learning for student teachers. Use of this technique is not limited to any subjects, but teachers need innovation and creativity itself. Suitability of this method more meaningful if the teachers and the students have high creativity in forming phrases. It is hoped that in this way, teaching and learning in the classroom will become easier and interesting. This is very relevant to current conditions and future students in need of a simple teaching and learning without compromising the objectives of teaching and learning.

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