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RECONSTRUCTION OF EXPOSITORY STRATEGIES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LEARNING BASED ON AN ACTIVE APPROACH

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Abstract

This study examines how the expository strategy is used and reconstructed in elementary school learning based on a comprehensive review of open-access literature. The need for more active and meaningful learning in the 21st century requires teachers to combine expository teaching with student-centered approaches to support children's cognitive and social-emotional development. Using a qualitative content analysis method, relevant journals and books were analyzed to identify the strengths, limitations, and potential improvements of expository instruction. The findings show that while expository teaching remains useful for providing initial conceptual understanding, it often limits student engagement when used as the sole strategy. Research also indicates that integrating expository methods with contextual learning (CTL), problem-based learning (PBL), cooperative learning, and visual media can significantly increase students' motivation, comprehension, and participation. Through this integration, expository instruction becomes a supportive foundation for active learning activities that allow students to explore, discuss, and connect new knowledge with real-life experiences. The synthesis of the literature highlights the importance of reconstructing expository strategies so they remain relevant and aligned with the characteristics and developmental needs of elementary school learners.

Keywords: Cooperative Learning, CTL, Elementary School Students, Expository Strategies, Open Literature, PBL

INTRODUCTION

Improving the quality of learning in elementary schools is closely related to teachers' ability to select and combine strategies that are appropriate to the developmental needs of students. Education in the era of 21st-century competencies requires a learning process that emphasizes not only mastery of subject matter, but also the development of critical thinking, collaboration skills, and the ability to apply knowledge in real-life situations. Elementary school students need learning experiences that are relevant to their lives, full of activities, and provide space to build understanding gradually through interaction and exploration.

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Amid these demands, the expository strategy is still widely used as the main approach. This strategy has the advantage of delivering material quickly and in a structured manner, especially for initial concepts that require concise and clear explanations. However, a number of studies have noted that the dominant use of the Expository Strategy has the potential to reduce student activity, limit discussion space, and make the learning process dependent on short-term memorization (Sukatin et al., 2022). For elementary school students who are in the concrete operational stage of development, passive learning situations often result in information not lasting long and being difficult to apply in new contexts.

Meanwhile, more student-centered learning approaches such as Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), Problem-Based Learning (PBL), and cooperative learning continue to show positive impacts on understanding and learning independence. CTL helps students relate concepts to the real world, while PBL encourages students to tackle authentic problems, thereby honing their critical thinking skills. The cooperative model allows students to engage in teamwork, share knowledge, and develop essential social skills at the elementary school level (Izzatunnisa et al., 2024; Muhartini et al., 2023). The combination of these various approaches shows that active learning is more effective in building meaningful learning experiences.

Recent developments in educational research also show that students who are directly involved in processing information have a deeper understanding and more stable motivation to learn. Learning processes that allow room for exploration, experimentation, and discussion make it easier for students to connect new concepts with their own experiences. As a result, what they learn does not stop at mastering theory, but develops into skills that are relevant to their cognitive and social-emotional development.

In this context, the position of the Expository Strategy needs to be placed more proportionally. Expository still has pedagogical value, but its role is no longer as the only approach, but rather as a conceptual introduction that supports subsequent active learning activities. When Expository is combined with strategies that involve student participation, the learning process becomes more balanced: students gain initial understanding through teacher explanations, then deepen it through activities that require thinking, discussing, and interacting.

Efforts to reorganize the use of expository teaching are an important part of improving the quality of learning in elementary schools. The integration of traditional methods and innovative approaches creates a more lively, relevant, and harmonious learning space that is in line with the characteristics of the students. The strengthening of this learning model is expected to provide a new picture of how teachers can adapt existing strategies to be more contextual, meaningful, and in line with the demands of today's education.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a comprehensive literature review to analyze the role, challenges, and issues related to expository writing and elementary school learning. This study employs a literature review method by collecting and examining various open sources such as journals and books relevant to the topic of expository writing and elementary school learning. The literature review process begins with keyword searches, source selection, and then reading and noting important findings. This approach is in line with Snyder's (2019) explanation that literature studies are used to build understanding and arguments based on a credible and systematic synthesis of sources. After the sources were collected, the data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis, namely reading, reducing important information, grouping themes, and drawing conclusions, as explained by Miles et al. (2018) that qualitative analysis emphasizes filtering data until meaningful categories are formed. Using this method, researchers can map how expository strategies are critiqued and reconstructed based on the findings of various studies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the literature analysis show that expository strategies are still one of the methods frequently used by elementary school teachers because of their clear, structured, and easy-to-follow delivery. Research by Zainuri et al. (2024) found that expository strategies are effective as an introduction to material to provide initial understanding before students engage in more in-depth learning activities. However, most studies also emphasize that the sole use of expository strategies causes students to listen more than think or engage in activities. Because elementary school students are at a stage of development that requires physical activity, social interaction, and concrete experiences, dominant expository strategies can limit their learning potential.

The results of the study also show that reconstructing expository strategies is very important, namely by making them an introduction to concepts before moving on to active learning models such as CTL (Contextual Teaching and Learning), PBL (Problem Based Learning), and cooperative learning. The findings of Muhartini et al. (2023) explain that a combination of initial explanations from teachers and problem-solving activities makes students understand the material better and become more involved. In line with this, Fathurrahman's (2024) research shows that CTL helps students connect the subject matter with real experiences so that their understanding becomes more meaningful. This means that expository teaching is not eliminated, but enriched with a more active approach so that students not only receive information, but also process and use it in everyday contexts.

In addition to improving understanding, the reconstruction of expository teaching also affects students' learning motivation. Aripin's (2025) study shows that structured expository helps students feel more prepared to face the material because the teacher provides a clear initial overview. However, motivation will increase even more if, after the initial explanation, students engage in activities that require them to participate, discuss, or solve problems. This makes it clear that expository is only useful if it does not stand alone but is supported by an active learning model that directly involves students.

The literature also shows that expository reinforcement can be done using visual media. Putri & Riyana (2023) found that the use of images, videos, or illustrations during expository teaching

made elementary school students more focused and helped them understand the material more easily. Meanwhile, cooperative learning is also an ideal combination. Apriyanti et al. (2021) reported that students tend to understand concepts more quickly after working together in small groups, especially if the teacher has previously provided a theoretical framework through expository teaching. This shows that expository strategies can be a foundation that leads students to interaction- and collaboration-based learning.

Additional findings from the analysis show that reconstructed expository teaching helps meet the cognitive development needs of elementary school children. According to Gunawan (2019), elementary school children are in the concrete operational stage, so they need activities that can be touched, seen, or experienced directly. If teachers only use lectures, these needs are not met, and students tend to be passive. However, when expository teaching is followed by contextual activities, simple experiments, group discussions, or problem solving, learning becomes more appropriate to their developmental characteristics.

Methodologically, all findings in this study were analyzed using a qualitative content analysis approach. This technique involves the process of reading sources in depth, sorting important information, grouping themes, and drawing conclusions. Miles et al. (2018) explain that content analysis allows researchers to construct interpretations based on thematic categories that emerge from the data. This approach is reinforced by Lyhne et al. (2025), who emphasize that modern content analysis also requires a deep understanding of context so that the synthesis results are stronger and more accurate. With this approach, general patterns regarding the expository role, its weaknesses, and how to reconstruct it can be clearly identified.

Overall, the results of the literature analysis show that expository strategies have a clear role as a framework for initial learning, but their effectiveness is highly dependent on how teachers combine them with other more active approaches. Various studies show that after students receive preliminary explanations, they need follow-up activities that allow for exploration, discussion, and hands-on practice. The integration of expository with CTL, PBL, cooperative learning, and visual media makes the learning process more dynamic and in line with the developmental needs of elementary school students. These findings enrich our understanding of how expository can be repurposed, not only as a lecture, but as the beginning of a more complete and interactive learning sequence.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on a literature review, expository strategies still play an important role in providing a conceptual foundation for learning in elementary schools, especially when students need a clear initial overview before engaging in more complex learning activities. However, this strategy cannot stand alone because elementary school students need active, concrete learning experiences that involve interaction. Studies show that expository learning becomes more effective when it is reconstructed and combined with approaches such as CTL, PBL, cooperative learning, and the use of visual media. This integration allows students to process information more deeply, connect concepts with real-life experiences, and participate actively in the learning process. Thus, the reconstruction of expository learning not only improves the weaknesses of the lecture method, but also builds a

learning model that is more in line with the cognitive development and learning needs of elementary school students in the era of modern learning.

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