

Enhancing Grade 3 Learners' Creative Writing Through Makerspace Pedagogy

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Abstract— This research project explored the integration of MakerSpace interventions to enhance creative writing skills in Grade 3 learners. It addressed the challenges students face in expressing thoughts through writing, and aimed to unlock linguistic potential and stimulate imagination with interactive tools and collaborative spaces. Traditional teaching methods in Kenya often fail to foster a love for writing or produce proficient writers. Factors such as limited exposure to diverse materials and difficulty understanding English structures contribute to low motivation and poor performance. The study highlighted the need for engaging and effective teaching approaches. MakerSpace interventions offer hands-on, experiential learning that encouraged creativity and self-directed exploration. This approach improves language proficiency, vocabulary, grammar, and overall communication skills, leading to higher student motivation and better creative writing outcomes. The study employed qualitative methods, including observation, interviews, and document analysis, to assess the impact of MakerSpace on creative writing proficiency. Findings showed significant improvement in writing skills, engagement, and critical thinking when MakerSpace resources are used, particularly digital picture books with design thinking principles. This method shifted traditional teaching to hands-on approaches, empowering students and enhancing their educational experience. It is recommended that educators and researchers develop effective, innovative, and learner-centered strategies for teaching writing and promoting active student participation, emphasizing the importance of holistic skill development and a dynamic educational experience.

Keywords— *MakerSpace, Design Thinking, Traditional teaching methods, Intervention, Growth mindset.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Creative writing is a cornerstone of early childhood education, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, imagination, and effective communication. However, Grade 3 learners, particularly in English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts, often face significant challenges in this area. A literature review highlights these challenges, including limited vocabulary, improper grammar usage, deficient spelling skills, and a lack of exposure to diverse writing materials [1]. These obstacles hinder students' ability to express their thoughts and ideas effectively. Further there is emphasis that a limited vocabulary restricts students' ability to craft vivid descriptions, engaging dialogues, and compelling narratives, ultimately hindering their overall writing performance [2].

Traditional textbook-based approaches often fail to ignite a passion for storytelling and struggle to address these challenges [3]. There is a call for engaging pedagogical practices and carefully selected teaching materials to cultivate a vibrant learning environment that nurtures students' creative potential [4]. In this context, MakerSpace pedagogy, with its emphasis on hands-on, experiential learning, emerges as a promising solution.

MakerSpaces are collaborative workspaces equipped with various tools and materials, facilitating a natural learning process through critical thinking and problem-solving [5]. These spaces offer interactive tools, collaborative environments, and opportunities for self-directed learning, allowing students to engage in creative activities like story creation and multimedia presentations. This active engagement can expand vocabulary and improve grammar and spelling through practical application.

Furthermore, MakerSpaces provide a wellspring of engaging and diverse resources that can stimulate curiosity and foster a love for storytelling, potentially leading to significant improvements in creative writing skills [6]. By encouraging self-directed exploration and experimentation, MakerSpaces allow students to

pursue personal interests and develop new skills, ultimately boosting motivation and engagement, which can translate to better creative writing performance and overall academic success [5]. Additionally, incorporating principles of user-centered design thinking ensures that educational resources created in MakerSpaces are tailored to meet the specific needs of Grade 3 learners. This method promotes creativity, collaborative analysis, and reflective practice, further supporting the development of creative writing skills [7].

While existing literature on creative writing in Kenya has not yet explored the potential benefits of MakerSpaces, studies have highlighted their positive impact on individual exploration, skill development, and student engagement [6]. This suggests that integrating MakerSpaces into creative writing instruction could provide innovative resources and materials to support students' writing projects.

This study, therefore, seeks to examine the impact of incorporating MakerSpaces specifically tailored to the needs of Grade 3 learners in ESL contexts. By leveraging the principles of MakerSpace design, the study aims to develop a tool that fosters hands-on, experiential learning, encourages creativity, experimentation, and problem-solving within the context of creative writing.

While creative writing serves as a cornerstone for early childhood education, igniting critical thinking, problem-solving, and imagination, a major hurdle persists for Grade 3 English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. These students grapple with a multitude of challenges, including limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, spelling difficulties, and restricted exposure to diverse writing materials [1]. These obstacles create a barrier to their ability to effectively express themselves and translate ideas into captivating narratives. As it is emphasized, a restricted vocabulary significantly hinders students' capacity to craft vivid descriptions, engaging dialogues, and compelling storylines, ultimately undermining their overall writing proficiency [2].

Traditional classroom approaches, often heavily reliant on textbooks, fail to ignite a passion for storytelling and leave these challenges unaddressed [3]. The field urgently demands engaging pedagogical practices and meticulously chosen materials to cultivate a vibrant learning environment that fosters students' creative potential [4]. In this context, MakerSpace pedagogy, with its emphasis on hands-

on, experiential learning, emerges as a beacon of hope.

This study positions itself at the forefront of this critical issue. We aim to bridge the gap in existing research on creative writing in Kenya by investigating the transformative potential of MakerSpaces in ESL classrooms. While the literature acknowledges the positive impact of MakerSpaces on individual exploration, skill development, and student engagement [6], a dearth of research exists regarding their targeted application for ESL learners in creative writing contexts.

This project seeks to revolutionize creative writing instruction for Grade 3 ESL learners by harnessing the power of MakerSpaces. We envision a meticulously designed MakerSpace environment brimming with interactive tools, fostering a collaborative atmosphere that encourages self-directed exploration. This dynamic space will serve as a breeding ground for creative expression, allowing students to experiment with storytelling through engaging activities like multimedia presentations and narrative creation. Through this active participation, students will organically expand their vocabulary and refine their grammar and spelling skills through practical application.

We are driven by the belief that MakerSpaces offer a treasure trove of captivating and diverse resources, igniting curiosity and nurturing a love for storytelling. This, in turn, has the potential to unlock a new level of creative writing proficiency [6]. By fostering self-directed exploration and experimentation, MakerSpaces empower students to pursue personal interests and cultivate new skills. This intrinsically motivating environment fuels engagement, which can translate to significant improvements in creative writing performance and overall academic success [5]. Furthermore, we will integrate user-centered design thinking principles to ensure the educational resources crafted within the MakerSpace cater to the specific needs of Grade 3 ESL learners. This approach will not only promote creativity but also encourage collaborative analysis and reflective practice, further bolstering the development of creative writing skills [7].

This groundbreaking study will not only illuminate the impact of MakerSpaces on ESL learners' creative writing skills but also pave the way for the development of a replicable and adaptable MakerSpace design specifically tailored for this under-

resourced population. The findings hold the potential to revolutionize creative writing instruction in ESL classrooms across Kenya and beyond, empowering a new generation of young storytellers to embrace their creative voices.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1) *MakerSpace Pedagogy: Fostering Active Learning*

The need for engaging learners in active learning methodologies is well-established [8]; [9]. This stems from the imperative for educators to equip students with 21st-century competencies, as outlined by the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) [10], and to align teaching strategies with current job market demands [11]. Effective teaching and learning resources are therefore paramount. While the need for qualified educators is undeniable [12], focusing solely on teacher training can be cost-prohibitive [13]. Instead, creating effective teaching and learning resources is crucial [14].

In this context, MakerSpace pedagogy emerges as a promising approach. This method emphasizes offering learners hands-on tasks that necessitate critical thinking, thereby facilitating a natural learning process [5]. Research suggests that hands-on activities significantly contribute to improved student learning outcomes [15]. Thus, integrating MakerSpaces into educational practices offers a viable solution to address ongoing educational challenges.

2) *Design Thinking: User-Centered Resource Development*

The creative writing process is inherently complex, requiring skills such as creativity, critical thinking, and attention to detail [16]. Engaging Grade 3 learners in creative writing activities fosters effective writing skills and holistic development. Through imaginative exploration in storytelling, poetry, and other creative works, learners enhance essential 21st-century competencies like communication, problem-solving, digital literacy, and cultural understanding [17]. When educators create user-centered resources that address specific learner needs, they promote creativity, collaboration, and reflective practice, thereby enriching the creative writing experience and overall educational outcomes.

At the heart of any MakerSpace activity lies a design thinking approach. Design thinking involves stages that contribute to creating effective educational resources, considering learners' needs, promoting

creativity, collaborative analysis, and reflective practice [7]. Design thinking also transcends mere tool creation by adopting an empathetic lens to understand the specific needs and challenges faced by Grade 3 learners [18]. Through iterative cycles of empathy, prototyping, testing, and reflection, educators can identify the root causes of students' struggles and craft solutions that directly address these issues [2] [3].

Teachers begin by empathizing with learners, observing interactions, and gathering feedback. This feeds into brainstorming sessions where creative solutions are generated. These ideas are transformed into prototypes of creative writing activities, such as virtual word walls, interactive grammar games, or personalized writing prompts, which are then tested in the classroom. Learner feedback prompts iterative refinement, ensuring the tools are functional, engaging, relevant, and impactful [19]. This hands-on, collaborative approach fosters critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills, essential for 21st-century success [20].

While some critics argue that design thinking can be time-consuming or may not always yield practical results [21], proponents assert that its iterative nature and focus on user needs lead to more effective solutions [22]. Incorporating design thinking within MakerSpaces offers a powerful means for educators to design writing resources specifically tailored to Grade 3 learners' needs, enhancing writing skills and nurturing key 21st-century competencies [23].

3) *Growth Mindset: Fostering a Love of Learning*

The Kenyan education landscape faces a critical challenge in fostering creative writing within Grade 3 classrooms. Traditional methods, focused on rigid structures and writing mechanics, struggle to ignite passion and nurture a growth mindset. In contrast, MakerSpaces coupled with a growth mindset offer a promising path forward.

The growth mindset posits that intelligence and abilities are malleable and can be cultivated through effort and perseverance [24], contrasting with the fixed mindset that views intelligence as innate and unchangeable. For Grade 3 learners, a growth mindset fosters a love of learning and a willingness to tackle challenges, viewing mistakes as stepping stones for improvement and lauding effort as the driving force behind success [25]. For teachers, adopting a growth mindset translates to embracing

open-ended inquiry, celebrating diverse learning styles, and providing constructive feedback focused on progress and effort [26]. Strategies for cultivating a growth mindset include reflecting on beliefs about intelligence, seeking professional development, and collaborating with colleagues [27]. By embodying a growth mindset, teachers empower their students and embark on continuous learning and self-improvement.

MakerSpaces contrast traditional teaching by transforming learning into hands-on adventures with digital storytelling apps, coding platforms, and immersive technologies [28]. These spaces promote self-directed learning, exploration, problem-solving, and critical thinking – key skills for 21st-century success. However, true transformation requires a shift from a fixed to a growth mindset [24]. Mentorship programs can support this shift by providing safe spaces for reflection, collaborative problem-solving, feedback, encouragement, and community building [29]; [30]; [31]. Effective mentoring programs can empower Kenyan Grade 3 teachers, fostering a generation of young writers who thrive on experimentation, collaboration, and a belief in their limitless potential.

4) *Resource Development – CBC Alignment*

When designing writing resources in MakerSpaces, alignment with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) is essential. Creative writing within the Kenyan education system provided by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), guided by the CBC, aims to nurture learners' potential and prepare them for 21st-century job market demands, emphasizing core competencies like problem-solving, digital literacy, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking [32]. However, the objectives of the creative writing syllabus primarily focus on technical aspects, such as legibility and language structure [32], potentially neglecting creativity.

To address this gap, a reevaluation of the creative writing syllabus objectives is necessary, explicitly including pedagogies that foster creativity and personalized learning experiences. Integrating MakerSpaces can enhance the creativity-focused objectives of creative writing, providing tools and materials beyond conventional writing, such as art supplies, creative writing prompts, storytelling games, and digital resources [19].

5) *Limitations and Considerations*

While innovative and engaging, MakerSpace pedagogy faces several limitations and criticisms. High initial costs and ongoing maintenance expenses can be prohibitive, especially for underfunded schools. Accessibility issues also arise, as not all students have equal access to technology [13].

Teacher preparedness is a concern, as many educators may lack the necessary technical and pedagogical skills. Aligning MakerSpace activities with existing curricula and assessment methods can be time-consuming and difficult to fit into standard school schedules [12].

6) *Research Gap*

While interest in using MakerSpaces to enhance creative writing skills in Grade 3 learners is growing, several research gaps exist:

- **Limited empirical research:** More studies are needed to establish the effectiveness of MakerSpaces in the Kenyan context and identify the most beneficial resources.
- **Alignment with curriculum and standards:** Research should explore how MakerSpace activities can align with the Kenyan CBC and its focus on core competencies.

B. *Conclusion*

Integrating MakerSpace resources into creative writing instruction can foster creativity, innovation, and critical thinking skills in Grade 3 learners. Addressing research gaps through further studies, developing effective resources, and supporting teachers can create a learning environment that empowers young writers to flourish.

C. *2.3 Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework aims to show how MakerSpace enhances grade 3 learners' creative writing skills. The central element is "Enhanced creative Writing Skills," representing the ultimate goal of improved creativity, fluency, grammar proficiency, and attention to detail in writing. The framework utilizes MakerSpaces as innovative learning environments, applying design thinking principles to create student-centered writing tools and activities. It fosters a growth mindset, encouraging learners to view writing as a journey of continuous improvement. The integration of digital tools and alignment with educational standards like the CBC enriches learners' creative writing experiences. The outcome is empowered learners who are confident writers, equipped with critical thinking

skills and a passion for self-expression. The framework fosters positive change in learners' attitudes towards writing and prepares them for future academic and personal growth.

change within a specific context [39]. Action research empowers both teachers and students to be active participants in the research process [40], ultimately leading to context-specific findings [41].

B. 3.2 Action Research Process

The study followed an iterative, three-phase action research design: **reconnaissance, intervention, and post-intervention.**

- **Reconnaissance Phase:** This initial phase involved assessing students' baseline writing skills through a pre-test [42]. Interviews with the teacher and document analysis of curriculum materials explored current creative writing strategies and resources used in the classroom. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes from the interview data [43].
- **Intervention Phase:** Collaboration with the teacher was central to this phase, as the researcher facilitated training and change within the classroom. Design thinking principles were employed to co-create a MakerSpace resource tailored to the specific needs of the Grade 3 learners. Students were then introduced to the MakerSpace and how to navigate e-book resources. Evaluation methods were used to assess students' application of newly acquired skills gained through the intervention.
- **Post-intervention Phase:** This phase involved administering a post-test to measure student progress in writing skills compared to the pre-test data. Additionally, semi-structured interviews [44] were conducted to gather student feedback on their experiences within the MakerSpace environment. Continuous analysis and adjustments to the intervention were made throughout the research process.

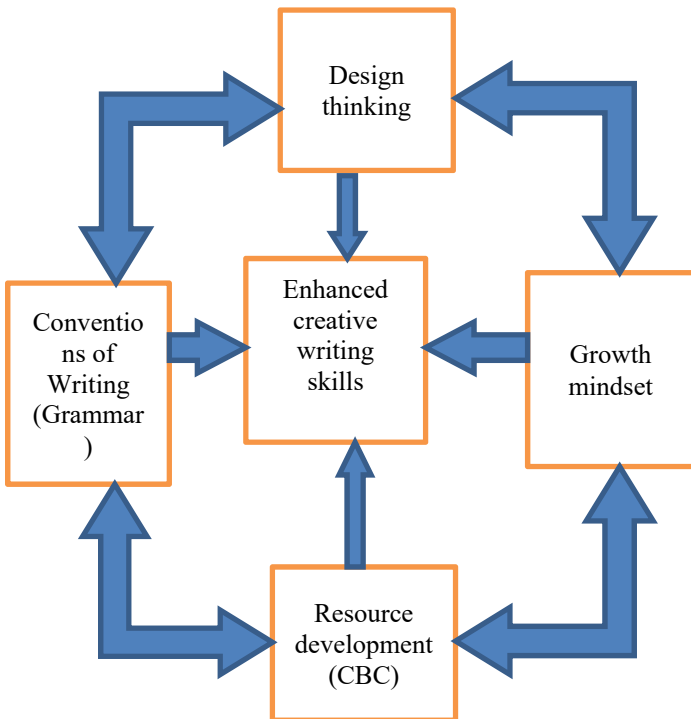


Figure 1: Conceptual framework: developed by the researcher.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. 3.1 Research Design

This study employed a **simultaneous mixed-methods approach** grounded in a **pragmatic philosophy** [33]; [34]. This approach combines qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to achieve **triangulation**, a process that strengthens the validity and reliability of research findings [35]. By incorporating diverse perspectives, this method aims to provide practical and efficient results [36].

To investigate the effectiveness of MakerSpaces in enhancing creative writing skills, an **action research design** was utilized. This cyclical and collaborative approach is well-suited for addressing real-world problems [37]; [38], and fostering improvement and

C. 3.3 Participants and Context

The research was conducted at a public primary school in Kilifi County, Kenya. This school, with approximately 4,000 students and a four-stream system, offered a diverse learning environment suitable for studying the implementation of creative writing strategies. The participants included a Grade 3 teacher with three years of experience at the school and their diverse student population. This combination

of an experienced teacher and a varied student body provided a rich context for exploring the effectiveness of the MakerSpace intervention.

D. 3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection methods were aligned with the iterative nature of action research [45] across all three phases: reconnaissance, intervention, and post-intervention.

- **Reconnaissance Phase:** As mentioned previously, a pre-test assessed baseline writing skills. Interviews with the teacher were conducted and analyzed thematically to explore current creative writing practices. Document analysis examined curriculum materials and teaching strategies used within the classroom [46].
- **Intervention Phase:** Classroom observations were conducted to analyze student engagement and identify any challenges encountered during the intervention [47]. Pre and post-conferencing with the teacher assessed the instructional impact of the MakerSpace intervention [33]. The effectiveness of the training sessions provided to the teacher was also evaluated [48].
- **Post-intervention Phase:** A post-test was administered to measure the development of writing skills, with effect size calculations used to analyze the data [49]. Semi-structured interviews provided student feedback on their experiences within the MakerSpace environment.

Data analysis included qualitative thematic analysis of interview transcripts and observational notes [44]. Quantitative analysis utilized paired-samples t-tests to compare pre- and post-test scores [33]. Triangulation, the process of comparing data from different sources, was employed to enhance the validity and reliability of the study's findings [35].

E. 3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical procedures were paramount throughout the research process. Approval was obtained from the relevant Ethics Review Committee (ERC) and the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) in Kenya. Informed consent was acquired from all relevant authorities, parents, and participants, adhering to the guidelines outlined by [50].

To ensure trustworthiness and rigor, data triangulation combined observations, interviews, test results, and resource utilization data to capture a comprehensive view of the research experience [33]. Member checking, a process where participants are engaged in validating interpretations of the data, was employed to enhance the accuracy and credibility of the findings [48].

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section explores the findings of the action research project investigating the impact of MakerSpaces on creative writing skills in Grade 3 learners. The findings are discussed in relation to the themes of teacher empowerment, classroom environment transformation, and increased student agency.

A. 4.1 Teacher Empowerment

The intervention fostered teacher empowerment through various stages, from resource creation to classroom integration. When reflecting on the impact of MakerSpaces on her teaching, the teacher highlighted a newfound awareness of the importance of resources:

"I was able to learn that using resources is important in teaching," (Grade 3 teacher, September 25, 2023)

This indicates a shift beyond simply using tools but towards understanding their pedagogical value. The teacher's further comments demonstrate a change in mindset:

"I am inspired to use resources during teaching as they make students to be engaged during the teaching and also they answer questions well." (Grade 3 teacher, September 25, 2023)

These findings align with the concept of teacher empowerment through professional development. As outlined in the intervention phases, the teacher was equipped with skills for resource creation. This training not only imparted technical knowledge but also instilled confidence and a growth mindset.

Creating resources fostered a sense of ownership over instructional materials, aligning with the autonomy aspect of teacher empowerment. This shift empowers teachers to tailor resources to student

needs and interests, transforming them from consumers to creators of learning experiences.

These findings resonate with educational literature. The interactive nature of MakerSpaces allows teachers to engage with diverse tools, deepening their understanding of instructional concepts [5]. This empowers them to actively shape their professional practice and leverage resources to enhance student learning [51].

The teacher's newfound awareness regarding the importance of resources exemplifies the transformative potential of professional development programs [51]. Equipping teachers with knowledge and skills for resource integration contributes to their sense of efficacy and autonomy.

The teacher's observation that students are more engaged due to the resources aligns with research highlighting the positive impact of interactive teaching methods on student participation [52]. This signifies the teacher's proactive role in shaping the learning environment, contributing to student success.

B. 4.2 Classroom Environment Transformation

MakerSpaces positively transformed the classroom environment through visually appealing and interactive resources. The digitized picture book fostered a dynamic setting for creativity and collaboration. The Grade 3 teacher affirmed this transformation:

"The picture book really captured the attention of the learners because of the visual storytelling elements within the book. From the picture stories they were able to create their own stories individually without copying on the board as it had been the tradition" (Grade 3 teacher, September 25, 2023)

These findings illuminate a shift in the classroom environment due to MakerSpace resources. The digitized picture book created a visually stimulating and interactive atmosphere. The teacher's observation highlights the power of such resources to engage students through visual storytelling. This engagement, evidenced by students' independent story creation, signifies a departure from traditional methods of copying from the board.

The positive impact on the overall classroom atmosphere is further supported by the teacher's

observations of student enthusiasm during creative writing sessions:

"The students were very eager and enjoyed all the creative writing sessions done. They could not contain their excitement each time the picture book was brought in class for use." (Grade 3 teacher, September 25, 2023)

These findings align with educational literature emphasizing the role of interactive and visually stimulating materials in transforming classrooms [53]. The shift from traditional methods to a more dynamic environment not only enhances aesthetics but also fosters creativity and collaboration.

The teacher's observation about students creating independent stories resonates with the literature on interactive resources and student autonomy [5]. MakerSpace resources not only capture student attention but also empower them to express ideas more independently.

Furthermore, the students' heightened enthusiasm aligns with research indicating that positive learning environments impact motivation and learning outcomes [54]. Visually appealing and interactive resources contribute to a positive classroom atmosphere, fostering a love for learning and creative expression among students.

C. 4.3 Increased Student Agency

MakerSpace resources emerged as powerful learning environments, promoting deeper understanding and interactive engagement. These spaces are characterized by a wealth of hands-on resources, encouraging active participation. Unlike traditional classrooms, MakerSpaces provide a tangible and manipulatable learning environment, where resources are the medium for interaction with peers, teachers, and the materials themselves.

The hands-on approach promotes a more engaging and immersive learning experience. Students become active participants, manipulating and exploring materials to construct knowledge and solve problems. This active engagement deepens understanding and cultivates a sense of ownership and pride in the learning process.

The manipulatable nature of MakerSpace resources further enhances engagement. Unlike static textbooks or presentations, these materials invite exploration

and tactile interaction. Students can physically manipulate them, testing properties and experimenting with different combinations to achieve desired outcomes. This tactile engagement deepens their understanding of the concepts being explored.

The researcher's journal reflections noted an increase in student creativity:

"As they engaged with the new resource, an increase in creativity was observed in their writing. Instead of merely replicating the teacher's sentences, they started to generate their own ideas." (Researcher's Reflection Journal, September 25, 2023)

Findings further reveal that MakerSpaces stimulate creativity and innovation:

"previously, most would not do the exercises claiming that they do not know what to write or they are unable to write, but with the picture book the learners could at least write what they had seen." (Grade 3 teacher September 25, 2023, 2023)

"The shift in teaching and learning dynamics was palpable, and the enthusiasm among students was encouraging." (Researcher's Reflection Journal, October 4, 2023)

"I think that the one you use I was very, very big impact. And this is an improvement. They can become the best, right?" (Grade 3 teacher, September 25, 2023)

These findings also suggest a positive association between MakerSpaces and increased student participation and engagement:

"It boosted their confidence in answering questions and even from the pictures they could create something and they were able to write something" (Grade 3 Teacher)

"The learners were very much engaged with the resource used during the lesson and the exercise given done at the end of the lesson was done by all learners." (Lesson observation, October 4, 2023).

D. 4.4 Impact of MakerSpace on Students Creative Writing

The post-intervention assessment revealed a significant improvement in the Grade 3 learners' creative writing skills following the makerspace pedagogy intervention. The overall mean score on the

creative writing assessment increased by 38% compared to the pre-intervention baseline. This finding suggests that the makerspace activities were effective in enhancing the learners' writing abilities.

A closer examination of the specific components of creative writing showed that the most substantial gains were observed in the writing domain, with a 45% increase in scores. Learners demonstrated marked improvements in their ability to generate original ideas, organize their thoughts coherently, and employ diverse vocabulary and sentence structures to convey their messages effectively.

The use of pictures to illustrate the written work also saw a notable 35% improvement. Learners were able to create more vivid and imaginative visual representations that complemented their written narratives, enhancing the overall creative expression. Additionally, critical thinking skills, as evidenced by the learners' ability to develop logical plot lines and explore diverse perspectives, improved by 32%.

Lastly, the storytelling skills of the learners, which encompass elements such as character development, setting description, and narrative flow, improved by 30%. This suggests that the makerspace activities, which encouraged hands-on exploration, collaboration, and problem-solving, had a positive impact on the learners' ability to craft engaging and imaginative stories.

These findings underscore the potential of makerspace pedagogy as an effective approach to improving creative writing skills among Grade 3 learners. The multifaceted nature of the improvements, spanning writing, visual representation, critical thinking, and storytelling, highlights the holistic benefits of this instructional strategy. These results have important implications for educational practitioners seeking to foster creativity and enhance language arts instruction in the early primary grades.

E. Discussion

This study investigates the impact of MakerSpace pedagogy on the creative writing skills of grade 3 learners. Like in other MakerSpace literature it suggests that moving beyond traditional, static classroom environments, MakerSpaces offer a dynamic landscape brimming with interactive resources that promote deep engagement and a hands-on approach to learning [55]. It is further similar to other studies when it suggests that unlike rote

memorization and textbook instruction, MakerSpaces provide students with manipulatable materials, fostering active participation in the learning process [56]. The study stands as evidence that this shift aligns with the core tenet of MakerSpace pedagogy: active engagement with physical materials fuels deeper understanding and knowledge construction through hands-on exploration [57].

The research presented here contributes to the growing body of literature on MakerSpaces in education. Previous studies have documented the positive influence of MakerSpaces on student engagement, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking [58]; [52]. This study extends this research by focusing on the specific impact of MakerSpaces on creative writing skills in young learners.

The core principle underlying MakerSpace pedagogy is the transformation of students from passive recipients of information into active creators [58]. By manipulating and exploring MakerSpace resources, students become problem-solvers, constructing knowledge through experimentation. This fosters a sense of ownership over learning and allows them to grasp abstract concepts in a tangible way [56]. Textbooks become companions on a journey of discovery, not the sole source of truth.

The affordances of MakerSpace materials themselves are central to their effectiveness. Unlike static presentations, these resources invite students to delve deeper, to test properties and experiment with combinations to achieve desired outcomes [56]. This tactile engagement isn't just fun and engaging, it's fundamental to solidifying understanding. Abstract concepts morph into something tangible, allowing students to bridge the gap between theory and practice [57].

The findings from this study resonate with existing educational research. The hands-on, participatory nature of MakerSpaces mirrors the active learning strategies being advocated [5]. Their work highlights how direct interaction with various tools and materials fosters a deeper grasp of concepts. MakerSpaces take this a step further – the interactivity ignites a passion for exploration, experimentation, and problem-solving, making learning an immersive and engaging experience [5].

Beyond fostering active learning, MakerSpaces nurture creativity and innovation. The open-ended nature of these activities encourages students to think

critically, craft original ideas, and explore unconventional solutions [53]. It's a space for self-expression through hands-on projects, a breeding ground for creative thinking skills that are crucial for success across disciplines and in the real world [53].

Collaboration is another key ingredient in the MakerSpace recipe for success. Research suggests that the collaborative and interactive nature of MakerSpace activities motivates students to actively participate in group discussions and activities [52]. The sense of ownership and autonomy that comes with these projects often translates into higher levels of engagement [52].

The quantitative data from this study offer compelling evidence for the effectiveness of MakerSpace pedagogy in enhancing creative writing skills. The integration of MakerSpace activities yielded a remarkable 38% improvement in the overall creative writing performance of grade 3 learners. Delving deeper into the specific components of creative writing reveals the nuanced benefits of this approach. The most significant gains were observed in the writing domain itself, with a 45% increase in scores.

This suggests that the hands-on, exploratory nature of MakerSpace activities effectively fostered the learners' ability to generate original ideas, organize their thoughts coherently, and employ diverse vocabulary and sentence structures. The use of pictures to illustrate written work also saw a notable 35% improvement. This finding aligns with the holistic approach to creative expression that underpins MakerSpace pedagogy. The environment itself encourages experimentation with a variety of materials and tools, empowering learners to create more vivid and imaginative visual representations that complement their written narratives.

The benefits extend beyond just colorful pictures. Critical thinking skills, as evidenced by the learners' ability to develop logical plot lines and explore diverse perspectives, improved by 32%. This resonates with the constructionist principles that underpin MakerSpace learning, where students are active participants in the process of making and problem-solving, fostering higher-order thinking skills [56].

Storytelling skills, encompassing character development, setting description, and narrative flow, also saw a 30% improvement. This suggests that the collaborative, hands-on nature of MakerSpace activities helped learners cultivate their narrative

abilities, cultivate their narrative abilities, allowing them to craft more engaging and imaginative stories. These findings add weight to the growing body of research that celebrates the power of MakerSpaces in education. By providing a dynamic, learner-centered environment that encourages exploration, innovation, and self-expression, MakerSpaces can effectively nurture the creative writing skills of young learners, setting them up for success in their academic and personal endeavors. As suggested, the interactive and manipulative nature of MakerSpace resources fosters deeper understanding and knowledge construction through hands-on exploration [56]. This study adds to this knowledge base by demonstrating the specific impact of MakerSpaces on the development of creative writing skills in grade 3 learners.

While this study offers valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The research was conducted in a single geographical location with a limited sample size. Further research with larger and more diverse samples across different contexts is necessary to strengthen the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, a qualitative component could provide a richer understanding of the student experience within MakerSpaces and how it fosters creative writing skills. Future research could explore how MakerSpace activities can be tailored to address specific learning objectives within the creative writing curriculum. Investigating the long-term impact of MakerSpace pedagogy on creative writing development and student motivation would also be a valuable area for further exploration.

This study has explored the transformative potential of MakerSpaces in fostering creative writing skills among grade 3 learners. The findings demonstrate that MakerSpace pedagogy, with its emphasis on active learning, exploration, and collaboration, can significantly enhance creative writing performance. By providing a dynamic and engaging learning environment, MakerSpaces empower young learners to become active creators, fostering not only their writing skills but also critical thinking, problem-solving, and storytelling abilities. As educational landscapes continue to evolve, MakerSpaces offer a promising approach to nurturing creativity and innovation in young learners, preparing them for success in the 21st century.

F. Conclusion

This action research project investigated the impact of MakerSpaces on creative writing skills in Grade 3 learners. The findings suggest that MakerSpace resources positively influence teacher empowerment, classroom environment transformation, and student agency. The intervention fostered a sense of ownership and confidence in teachers regarding resource creation and integration. The introduction of visually appealing and interactive resources transformed the classroom environment, promoting a more engaging and stimulating learning space. Students demonstrated increased agency through active participation, exploration of creative ideas, and a deeper understanding of concepts facilitated by the hands-on nature of MakerSpace resources.

While the findings are promising, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this single-site study with a relatively small sample size. Further research with larger and more diverse samples across different contexts is necessary to confirm these findings and explore the long-term effects of MakerSpaces on student learning outcomes. Additionally, future research could delve deeper into the specific features of MakerSpace resources that contribute most significantly to the development of creative writing skills.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the potential of MakerSpaces to enhance creative writing instruction in primary classrooms. The findings encourage further exploration and integration of MakerSpace pedagogy within educational settings to foster a more engaging and effective learning experience for students.

G. Recommendations and Lessons Learned

This action research project on MakerSpaces and creative writing yielded valuable insights that can inform future practice. Here are some key recommendations and lessons learned:

- **Expand Teacher Training:** Provide ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their skills in creating and integrating MakerSpace resources across various subjects. This could involve workshops on using digital tools for creating interactive resources or exploring different types of hands-on materials for specific learning objectives.

- **Develop a Collaborative MakerSpace Environment:** Encourage collaboration between teachers from different subject areas to create MakerSpace resources that can be used for interdisciplinary learning projects. This would leverage the unique strengths of each subject and create a more holistic learning experience for students.
- **Foster Student Ownership:** Integrate student voice into the MakerSpace creation process. Consider involving students in brainstorming resource ideas, testing prototypes, and providing feedback on the effectiveness of the resources. This fosters a sense of ownership and increases student engagement with the learning materials.
- **Invest in Sustainable Resources:** Seek funding or explore cost-effective ways to acquire and maintain MakerSpace resources. Consider using recycled materials or collaborating with local businesses for donations to ensure the sustainability of the MakerSpace program.
- **Document and Share Best Practices:** Develop a system for documenting successful MakerSpace interventions and share best practices with other educators. This could involve creating online repositories, conducting workshops, or publishing articles in educational journals.

Lessons Learned:

- **Teacher Empowerment is Key:** Equipping teachers with the skills and resources to create MakerSpace materials fosters their confidence and autonomy, leading to a more engaging learning environment for students.
- **Engagement Through Interaction:** Visually appealing and interactive resources capture student attention and encourage active participation in the learning process. This leads to a deeper understanding of concepts and a more positive learning experience.
- **Hands-on Learning Promotes Deeper Understanding:** The manipulatable nature of MakerSpace resources allows students to explore concepts through experimentation and hands-on activities. This fosters a deeper grasp of the material and promotes critical thinking skills.
- **Creativity and Innovation Thrive in Open Environments:** The open-ended nature of MakerSpace activities allows students to

explore their creativity and develop innovative solutions to problems. This is an essential skill for success in the 21st century.

- **Collaboration Enhances Learning:** The collaborative nature of MakerSpace activities encourages students to work together, share ideas, and learn from each other. This fosters a sense of community and enhances the learning experience for all participants.

By implementing these recommendations and reflecting on the lessons learned, educators can leverage the power of MakerSpaces to create a more engaging, empowering, and effective learning environment for all students.

V. CONCLUSION

The incorporation of MakerSpace pedagogy, guided by design thinking principles, brought about a transformative shift in both pedagogy and student learning. The study demonstrated the potential of MakerSpaces to enhance creative writing skills, stimulate creativity, and create an inclusive and collaborative learning environment. The observed improvements in student engagement, participation, and confidence underscore the positive influence of MakerSpaces on primary education. These conclusions emphasize the importance of adopting innovative and learner-centered strategies to promote holistic skill development and a dynamic educational experience.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to thank all who participated in this research project. Their valuable contributions enabled the completion of this project. This research was funded by the F4L (Foundation for Learning) project.

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