

The Effect of Non-Dialogue Journal Writing on Enhancing Students' Writing Skills

Ainul Aqilah Aman¹, Hema Vanita Kesevan²

^{1,2}Faculty of Languages and Communication, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

ABSTRACT: This study investigated the effects of using non-dialogue journal writing on enhancing ESL students' writing skills. In this study, 20 secondary school students were selected as participants and descriptive analysis was used to analyse the data. In this study, the effects of using non-dialogue journal writing were investigated by comparing the mean scores on the overall writing ability based on pre- and post- writing test. The findings indicate that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of students' overall writing ability of the use of non-dialogue journal writing in ESL writing classroom. Therefore, the findings from this study suggest teachers to implement the use of non-dialogue journal writing in ESL writing classroom due to positive effect that it offers.

KEYWORDS: ESL Writing, Non-Dialogue Journal Writing, Descriptive Writing, Writing Skills, Writing Ability

I. INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, ESL writing is considered the most challenging skill for students to master (Mastan, Maarof, & Embi, 2017) even after KSSM was introduced as a new curriculum that allows students to learn English 2.6 hours per week (Parrikal et al., 2020). According to Li and Razali (2019), secondary school students tend to face challenges to write a good piece of writing due to lack of English proficiency and their behaviours in learning the language. Besides, ESL learners tend to have anxiety when they are required to write in English (Akhtar, Hassan, & Saidalvi, 2020) which causes them to struggle in enhancing ESL writing skills compared to other language skills namely, listening, speaking, and reading (Ganapathy et al., 2020).

In order to improve ESL students' writing skills, the use of non-dialogue journals can be practised by ESL teachers. Generally, the use of non-dialogue journal writing integrates a teaching approach known as process writing approach whereby students pay more attention to the process of writing (Pasand & Haghi, 2013) rather than copying model essays as one of the teaching methods that applies product writing approach (Sarala et al., 2015). According to Kurniasih et al. (2020), the implementation of process writing approach helps to reduce learners' anxiety levels in writing, thus guiding them to improve their skills in ESL writing. In this study, the practice of non-dialogue journal writing can also be defined as the situation whereby the teacher introduces the use of written journals in an ESL writing classroom but no feedback will be given by the teacher. This is different with the practice of dialogue journal writing that requires teachers to provide feedback in the form of dialogues based on the journal entries written by the students.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of practising non-dialogue journal writing on enhancing ESL students' writing skills in secondary school setting in Malaysia. By doing this, other than one of the ways to implement CEFR in ESL writing classroom, it will be interesting to investigate whether the use of non-dialogue journals can be chosen as one of the methods to improve students' writing skills. As CEFR focuses more on improving students' ability in writing, the use of non-dialogue journals can be applied in ESL writing classroom as it allows them to experience a student-centred learning environment.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

In teaching ESL writing, the main aim of introducing non-dialogue journal writing is to help in developing students' writing fluency and ideas on what to write (Sidek, 2010). As the use of non-dialogue journal writing applies process writing approach in an ESL writing classroom, it manages to help learners become independent by noticing their errors independently (Dewi, 2021). According to Gafur (2020), the implication of process writing approach managed to contribute towards improving students' overall writing abilities. Besides, a study done by Aman and Kesevan (2024) has revealed that majority of the teachers agreed that the

The Effect of Non-Dialogue Journal Writing on Enhancing Students' Writing Skills

practice of process writing approach plays a main role in motivating students to write. However, although research findings have revealed the advantages of practising journal writing in general (Ikayati, 2009; Kurnianingsih, 2009; Hogue, 2003; Langan, 2001), the practice of non-dialogue journal writing is not often practised by the teacher in the current classroom situation in Malaysian schools. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of non-dialogue journal writing in ESL writing classrooms.

III. LIMITATION OF STUDY

This study faced a limitation in which it only involved a small number of samples which consisted of 20 students drawn from only one secondary school in Temerloh, Pahang. Thus, the ability to generalise the findings from a sample to a population on the basis of a single research study is severely limited.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this study is to investigate the effects of practising non-dialogue journal writing on enhancing ESL students' writing skills. The specific objectives are:

- a) To investigate the effect of using non-dialogue journals in terms of improving students' overall writing abilities.
- b) To investigate the effect of using non-dialogue journals in terms of improving text content.
- c) To investigate the effect of using non-dialogue journals in terms of improving communicative achievement.
- d) To investigate the effect of using non-dialogue journals in terms of improving organisation skill.
- e) To investigate the effect of using non-dialogue journals in terms of improving language skill.

V. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The results of the post-writing mean scores are discussed based on the following research hypothesis:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of students' overall writing abilities based on their pre- and post-intervention scores.

H_{a1}: There is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of students' overall writing abilities based on their pre- and post-intervention scores.

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of students' overall writing abilities in terms of text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language based on their pre- and post-intervention scores.

H_{a1}: There is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of students' overall writing abilities in terms of text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language based on their pre- and post-intervention scores.

VI. METHODOLOGY

This study applied a quantitative research method as the aim of this study is to investigate the effects of practising non-dialogue journal writing on enhancing ESL students' writing skills. A total of 20 Form 4 students from a secondary school in Temerloh, Pahang were selected as participants in this study. Random sampling was utilized for the selection of the students. Before introducing non-dialogue journals to the participants, a pre-test in writing was conducted to identify students' overall writing ability based on text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language use.

After that stage, the participants then are exposed to the practice of non-dialogue journal writing in eight consecutive ESL writing lessons. In order to implement the use of non-dialogue journal in the class, students are exposed to journal writing on the second week whereby they are taught on how to draft, organise, and revise the ideas before writing a journal entry. They then are asked to write journal entries based on the given topics and they need to submit the written journals to the teacher. After the participants have sat for eight consecutive lessons of ESL writing, a post-test of writing task was carried out. Similar test paper was used for both pre- and post- writing tests in this study, in which students are required to write an article in about 200-250 words within 45 minutes. The effects of practising non-dialogue journal writing on enhancing students' descriptive writing skills was measured by investigating the differences of students' pre-test and post-test marks in writing tests. Figure 1 shows the activities conducted to collect data for this study:

The Effect of Non-Dialogue Journal Writing on Enhancing Students' Writing Skills

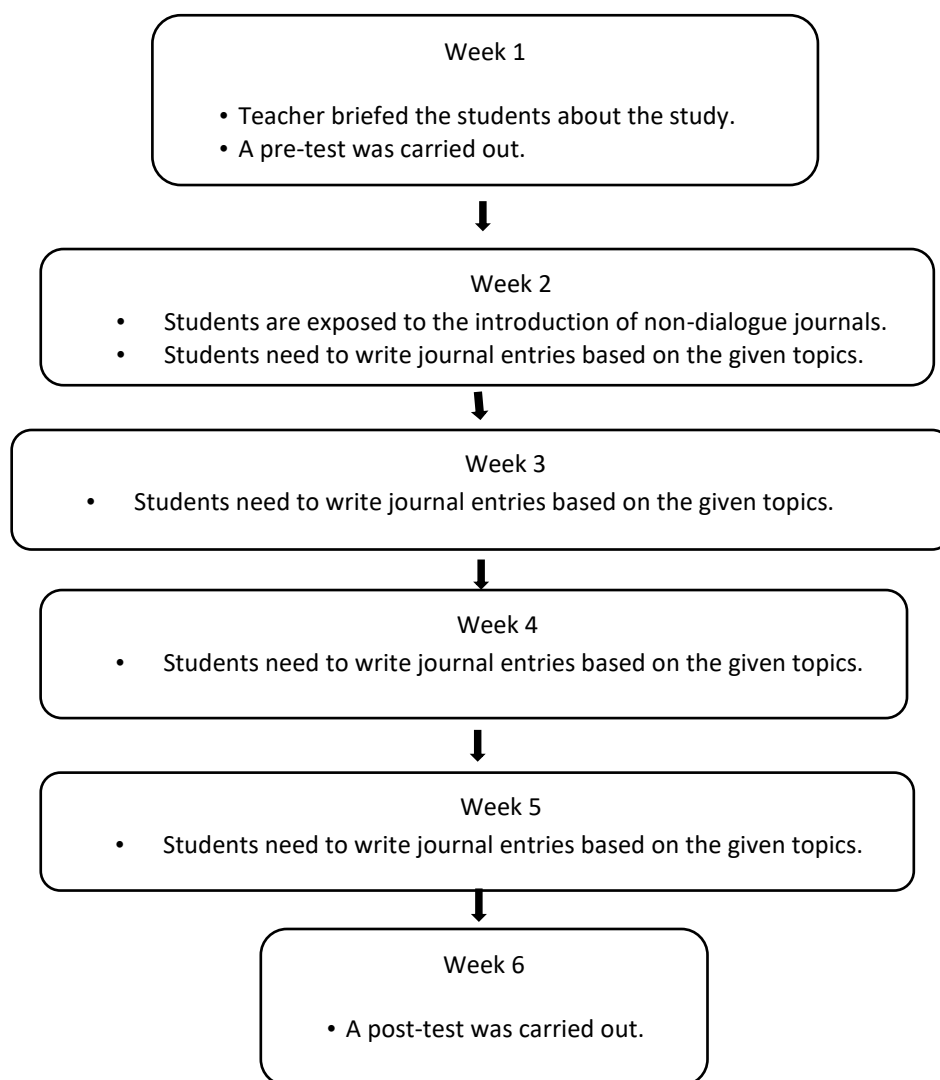


Figure 1: Research Schedule

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to examine the effects of practising non-dialogue journal writing in an ESL writing classroom. The post-writing mean scores indicated that after the students experienced the treatment of non-dialogue journal writing, there was a slight improvement in regard to text content ($M = 3.05$, $SD = .68633$) compared to the results of pre-writing mean scores ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .60481$). Similarly, in terms of communicative achievement, the students' scores in post-writing test were higher after they are exposed to the practice of non-dialogue journal writing ($M = 3.40$, $SD = .94032$) than before the practice ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .60481$). The use of non-dialogue journal writing has also enhanced students' writing skills in terms of organisation and language ($M = 2.85$, $SD = .87509$) and ($M = 2.35$, $SD = .58714$). Overall, in terms of overall writing ability, the treatment of non-dialogue journal writing has successfully helped students to score better in the post-writing test ($M = 2.35$, $SD = .58714$) compared to the results of pre-writing mean scores ($M = 2.10$, $SD = .55251$).

Table I: Results of Paired-Samples *T*-test

Category		Mean	SD	N	Std. Error Mean
Text Content	Post-test	3.05	.68633	20	.15347
	Pre-test	2.95	.60481		.13524
Communicative Achievement	Post-test	3.40	.94032	20	.21026
	Pre-test	2.95	.60481		.13524

The Effect of Non-Dialogue Journal Writing on Enhancing Students' Writing Skills

Organisation	Post-test	2.85	.87509	20	.19568
	Pre-test	2.35	.58714		.13129
Language	Post-test	2.35	.58714	20	.13129
	Pre-test	2.10	.55251		.12354
Overall	Post-test	2.35	.58714	20	.13129
	Pre-test	2.10	.55251		.12354

A. Effects of practising non-dialogue journal writing

The results from the paired sample *t*-test (Table 2) revealed that there was no significant difference in terms of text content before and after the treatment, $t(19) = .809$, $p > .05$. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. However, in terms of communicative achievement, the paired sample *t*-test revealed a significant difference before and after the treatment, $t(19) = -2.438$, $p < .05$. This indicates that the mean of communicative achievement after the treatment ($M = 3.40$) was significantly higher than the mean before the treatment ($M = 2.95$). The null hypothesis hence, is rejected. Meanwhile, in terms of organisation, the paired sample *t*-test revealed a significant difference before and after the treatment, $t(19) = -2.364$, $p < .05$. This indicates that the mean of organisation after the treatment ($M = 2.85$) was significantly higher than the mean before the treatment ($M = 2.35$). Thus, the null hypothesis is also rejected. Similarly, for language, the null hypothesis is rejected as the paired sample *t*-test revealed a significant difference before and after the treatment, $t(19) = -2.517$, $p < .05$. This indicates that the mean of language after the treatment ($M = 2.35$) was significantly higher than the mean before the treatment ($M = 2.10$). As for the overall writing ability, the comparison made between the pre-test and the post-test scores showed that there was a slight improvement as the paired sample *t*-test revealed a significant difference before and after the treatment, $t(19) = -2.517$, $p < .05$. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, this study revealed that the use of non-dialogue journal writing has contributed towards the students' improvement in terms of communicative achievement, organisation, and language which has also made them showed improvement in their overall writing abilities.

Table 2: The Comparison of Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test Essay Writing Scores

Paired Differences							t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Text Content	PreScore - PostScore	-.1000	.55251	.12354	-.15858	.35858	.809	19	.428
Communicative Achievement	PreScore - PostScore	-.45000	.82558	.18460	-.83638	-.06362	-2.438	19	.025
Organisation	PreScore - PostScore	-.50000	.94591	.21151	-.94270	-.05730	-2.364	19	.029
Language	PreScore - PostScore	-.25000	.44426	.09934	-.45792	-.04208	-2.517	19	.021
Overall	PreScore - PostScore	-.25000	.44426	.09934	-.45792	-.04208	-2.517	19	.021

The results from the paired sample *t*-test that compared mean scores of pre- and post- intervention scores showed significant differences ($p < .05$) in terms of communicative achievement, organisation, and language. Thus, it can be concluded that students' overall writing ability were improved in terms of communicative achievement, organisation, and language after they experienced the practice of non-dialogue journal writing in eight consecutive lessons of ESL writing. The findings paralleled previous study by Sholah (2019), where he reported that after practising journal writing for thirteen weeks, students were able to not only improving their writing skills, but also managed to express their ideas creatively in writing the journals. However, this study revealed that the practice of non-dialogue journal writing did not really contribute towards improving students' writing in terms of text content.

The Effect of Non-Dialogue Journal Writing on Enhancing Students' Writing Skills

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

This study was participated by a total of 20 secondary school students which aimed to investigate the effects of practising non-dialogue journal writing on enhancing ESL students' writing skills. The results revealed that non-dialogue journal writing was effective in enhancing students' writing skills and to be practised in ESL writing classrooms. Findings of this study suggest that ESL teachers can integrate the use of journal in teaching writing in order to encourage their students to write independently. However, teacher should briefly explain about the goals of practising non-dialogue journal writing in ESL writing classroom to enhance students' understanding about the practice and to encourage them to write with an open heart. Besides, it is also vital to monitor the practice of non-dialogue journal writing in ESL writing classroom along the way, in order to see the students' level of acceptance. Several factors such as students' proficiency and students' views toward the practice of writing journals should be considered. If the students show improvements after the practice of non-dialogue journal writing is introduced in class, then the teacher could continue practising it in order to guide them in becoming autonomous writers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to express deepest appreciation to the participants of this study for their cooperation in devoting their time to its completion.

REFERENCES

- 1) Akhtar, R., Hassan, H., and Saidalvi, A. 2020. "The Effects of ESL Students' Attitude on Academic Writing Apprehensions and Academic Writing Challenges." *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation* 24, no. 5: 5404–5412. <https://doi.org/10.37200/IJPR/V24I5/PR2020247>.
- 2) Aman, A. A., and Kesevan, H. V. 2024. "Product versus Process Writing Approach in ESL Writing Classroom." *International Journal of Modern Education (IJMOE)* 6, no. 23. <https://doi.org/10.35631/IJMOE.623018>.
- 3) Dewi, U. 2021. "Students' Perceptions: Using Writing Process Approach in EFL Writing Class." *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan* 13, no. 2: 988–997.
- 4) Gafur, A. 2020. "Implementing Process Approach to Improve the Ability of Writing Narrative Text of the Balikpapan State Polytechnic Students." *JSHP: Jurnal Sosial Humaniora dan Pendidikan* 4, no. 2: 130–140. <https://doi.org/10.32487/jshp.v4i2.878>.
- 5) Ganapathy, M., Tan, D. A. L., and Phan, J. 2020. "Students' Perceptions of Teachers' Written Corrective Feedback in the Malaysian ESL Classroom." *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction* 17, no. 2: 103–136.
- 6) Hogue, A. 2003. *The Essentials of English: A Writer's Handbook (with APA Style)*. Pearson Education.
- 7) Ikayati, U. F. 2009. *Teaching Writing Recount through Daily Activity*. Master's thesis, Universitas Ibnu Khaldun. <http://eprints.ums.ac.id/25105/19/JURNAL.pdf>.
- 8) Kurniasih, Sholihah, F. A., Umamah, A., and Sung, I. H. 2020. "Writing Process Approach and Its Effect on Students' Writing Anxiety and Performance." *Jurnal Arbitrer Universitas Andalas* 7, no. 2: 144–150. <https://doi.org/10.25077/ar.7.2.144-150.2020>.
- 9) Kurnianingsih, A. 2009. *Writing Diary as an Alternative Technique in Teaching Written Recount Text*. Bachelor's thesis, Universitas Negeri Semarang. Semarang State University Repository.
- 10) Langan, J. 2001. *College Writing Skills with Readings*. 5th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies Inc.
- 11) Li, K. L., and Razali, A. B. 2019. "Idea Sharing: Process-Based Approach to Writing in Malaysian English Education." *PASAA* 58, no. 1, Article 12. <https://doi.org/10.58837/CHULA.PASAA.58.1.12>.
- 12) Mastan, M. E. B., Maarof, N., and Embi, M. A. 2017. "The Effect of Writing Strategy Instruction on ESL Intermediate Proficiency Learners' Writing Performance." *Journal of Educational Research and Review* 5, no. 5: 71–78.
- 13) Parrikal, L. R., Ehsan, N., and Mohd, B. 2020. "The Use of Dialogue Journal Writing to Improve English Language Learners' Writing Skill." *International Journal of Management and Humanities* 4, no. 9: 177–185. <https://doi.org/10.35940/ijmh.i0885.054920>.
- 14) Pasand, P. G., and Haghi, E. B. 2013. "Process-Product Approach to Writing: The Effect of Model Essays on EFL Learners' Writing Accuracy." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*. \ <https://doi.org/10.7575/ijalel.v.2n.1p.75>.
- 15) Sarala, T. P., Fauziah, I., and Abdul Rahim, S. 2015. "Evaluating Product Writing Approach in the Context of Malaysian Classrooms: A Conceptual Paper." *LSP International Journal* 2, no. 2: 1–6.
- 16) Sholah, H. M. 2019. "Enhancing EFL Learners' Writing Skill via Journal Writing." *ALSUNA: Journal of Arabic and English Language* 2, no. 2: 96–116. <https://doi.org/10.31538/alsuna>.

The Effect of Non-Dialogue Journal Writing on Enhancing Students' Writing Skills

- 17) Sidek, H. M. 2010. An Analysis of the EFL Secondary Reading Curriculum in Malaysia: Approaches to Reading and Preparation for Higher Education. Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh.



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.