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The Assisted Writing Model and Its Impact towards the Upper Secondary School Students

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Abstract

Written communication conveys information that can be used as record material or official documents for various purposes. However, this skill is often considered as the most difficult skill to be mastered, particularly among the upper secondary school students who will sit for Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) Paper 1, Section B for Malay language paper. Thus, this action research has been carried out which related to writing skill by using a model of 'SILA FOCKes SINI' on 35 students at a secondary school in Serdang. The findings of the study showed a direct impact on the mean for student achievement in the pre-test, which is 37.17, while the mean for student achievement on the post-test is 73.03. The mean difference between post-test and pre-test was 35.857, which indicates a positive increment. The correlation between pre-test and post-test was 0.690, and the correlation statistic was significant ($p < 0.05$). This positive correlation and a high coefficient ($r = 0.690$) showed that students who obtained high marks in the pre-test were more likely to get high marks in the post-test. Based on statistics, the t-test was significant ($t = 11.670$; $df = 34$; $p < 0.05$). Meanwhile, for the indirect impact, it showed an improvement of 11 criteria analyzed according to an identified scoring rubric of Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia. Teaching using the E-Writing model of 'SILA FOCKes SINI' has resulted in the development of better achievement in essay scoring. As an implication, this model is suitable to use as a reference for students, and teaching guide for teachers or prospective teachers at the upper secondary school level because it helps students to write in a structured, continuous, meet the requirements of the title and the writing to be more meaningful.

Keywords: Writing Skills, Writing Models, Teaching and Learning Guides, High School Students.

Introduction

Among the communication that is getting complex in this century is the communication between students and writing materials. According to Hawkins (2006), to understand a form of writing, one needs to understand how the writing process takes place. Writing skills are a combination of several language skills, including writing skills, organizing ideas, punctuation, vocabulary,

applying, interpreting, and evaluating (*Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum*, 2012). In daily life, writing is an essential communication tool despite various advances in communication technology. Through writing, an idea, information, opinion, and knowledge can be conveyed accurately, clearly, and effectively compared to the achievement orally. Therefore, every student needs to master writing skills as early as primary and secondary school levels. According to the *Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran (DSKP)* for the *Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah (KSSM, 2016)*, students should be able to write in a good manner and clearly, especially for writing letters, reports, taking notes, notices, announcements, rules, and other work in school. Based on the developmental stage of writing, there are six stages in composing skills which are;

- (a) Mechanical skill
- (b) Spelling skill
- (c) Word choice skills and grammar skills
- (d) Skills in selecting, collecting, and organizing content
- (e) Skills in using language style
- (f) Judgement skills

The essay teaching at the secondary school level is based on its objective to provide skills for students to deliver their thoughts, ideas, facts, views, comments, and others through written language, which quality is appropriate to the age and maturity of students. Among the academicians, linguists, and especially the Malay language teachers, they are aware of the correlation between a student's level of proficiency with the maturity level thinking skills, oral and writing skills to produce good writing (as cited in Roselan 2003; Zulkifli 2004; Marohaini 2004; Awang, 2006). Furthermore, in today's educational scenario, language teachers need to be more creative and innovative, so the teaching and learning of writing become effective and meaningful. Creativity means the ability of a teacher to create, produce and develop a lesson that shows an improvement on aspects of the subject taught in the classroom. Innovative is the ability of a teacher to start something new either in the methods, techniques, and systems of approach in language learning in general and the teaching of essays in particular (as cited in Saemah & Zamri, 2017; Siti Fatimah, 2011). High creativity allows the practice of teaching to shape students' minds, emotions, attitudes, and values.

Problem Statement

Until this day, there are still many students that are weak in essay writing skills. This situation has resulted in their daily work (Latifah, 2016) and the public examination of *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (LPM, 2018)*. Based on the findings of a study by Latifah (2016), the most frequent problem happened by students who sit for the *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* is their inability to produce essays that cover the question's requirements. The students are also found to have difficulty generating ideas and unable to organize thoughts in an orderly manner. The use of language in essay writing is also not stable, especially when students are having mechanical writing problems.

Research Objective

This study was conducted with the aim to,

- (a) Identify the impact of the E-Writing Model, 'SILA FOCKes SINI' on the results of student

essay writing.

(b) Compare the achievement of students' essay scores in pre-test and post-test.

Research Question

- (a) i. What is the direct impact of the writing outcomes after the students use 'SILA FOCKes SINI' as the E-Writing Model?
- ii. What is the indirect impact of the writing outcomes after the students use 'SILA FOCKes SINI' as the E-Writing Model?

Research Hypothesis

- (b) Ho1 - There was a significant difference between the mean for the students' achievement scores in pre-test and post-test based on t-test.
- Ho2 - There is a positive correlation between the mean for the students' achievement scores in pre-test and post-test.
- Ho3 - There is a high coefficient between the mean for the students' achievement scores in pre-test and post-test.

Limitations of the Research

This action research is conducted to determine the impact of the model used by obtaining empirical evidence to support the taken action. This method allows teachers to investigate problems in a scientific context so they can evaluate, improve, and strengthen the decision-making process and practice. It is expected to highlight the value of best practices in teaching and learning. In this context, writing means expressing the students' feelings and thoughts based on a topic in the number of words and time set by the teacher. At the end of the teaching and learning session, the students are expected to write an essay following the title, including important contents and elaborated using appropriate examples, interesting and effective content processing, language used grammatically, varied, excellent, and good fluent. While vocabulary is vast, it shows the maturity, simple expression, and selection of appropriate and accurate words (*Dokumen Standard Kurikulum dan Pentaksiran, Pusat Perkembangan Kurikulum, Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia, 2017*). Essay writing skills that will be focused on in this study are to produce writing related to a selected topic with a limited number of words or within a certain period.

Literature Review

There are much research has been carried out for teaching Malay language essays. One of them is a study that has been done by Marohaini (2004). She conducted a study on the attitudes of teachers and students based on writing behaviour. Her research findings show that students write essays to meet social needs, such as test and examination purposes. The students usually follow the teacher's instructions to write the essays in the classroom. The study also showed that in Semester I and Semester II, the teacher are focused more on the outcomes and paid less attention to the process involving knowledge and skills. Thus, the same goes for training on essay writing strategies or techniques. It can be concluded that the scenarios of essay teaching and learning are more results-centred and exam preparation.

Meanwhile, the study made by Chung, Leng & Peng (2017) found that the practice of teaching essay writing for the Malay language of form four students shows that teachers are still using a conventional structure which more focused on the teacher. The teachers still dominate most of the activities in the teaching and learning process of essay writing. The findings of this study are consistent with the research conducted by Zurani et al (2016) and Che Zanariah & Fadzilah (2011). They proved that teachers use teacher-centred strategies significantly. This teaching strategy will produce students who are passive in the learning of essay writing. In addition, the feeding method commonly applied in the teaching and learning of essays will make students who are active in receiving information. Meanwhile, according to Zamri & Fadzilah (2017), Redzuan (2014), and Zainol (2011) stated that the 'spoon-feeding method' did not stimulate active participation from students and only encouraged for memorizing. As a result, students cannot master problem-solving skills because they are not trained to search for data on their own. Memorization techniques applied by teachers in the teaching and learning process of essay writing will erode critical and creative thinking skills among students. Overall, these researchers think that method for the teaching only shows differences in essay writing approach due to personality factors and language ability as well as the respondents' ability to write. Most student essay writing strategies are similar and less effective. The student's writing behaviour was more focused on external aspects, did not consider the rhetorical elements, the purpose of writing, and the target audience. Students are more concerned with aspects such as information in the title to choose the content of the essay. Awang (2006) conveyed his experience of facing the essays of upper secondary and tertiary examination candidates and the essays of tertiary students, which often led him to make extreme conclusions. He said that students do not get enough exposure and orientation in writing even the book of knowledge for Malay Language writing by Za'ba that was written more than half a century ago. The actual essay is not written or composed appropriately.

With many studies that previous linguists on writing have done, it is clear to indicate a shift in orientation, that is, from the centralization of studies on the results of writing to the process of writing (Zamri, 2016; Roselan, 2003; Marohaini, 2004). According to Marohaini (2004), this can be seen from the growth of studies that have been conducted around the 1970s. Among the names of linguists mentioned by Marohaini in her book are (Emig, 1971; Stallard, 1974; Mischel, 1974; Perl, 1979; and Pianko, 1979). In that era, it can be described as 'the awakening period' for essay writing research. Research conducted in the 1970s and 1980s has successfully supplied basic empirical knowledge for understanding the writing process in this millennium. According to her, the result of understanding the knowledge for the process that forms the skills of writing essays has increased. The development in such understanding can be inferred from the advancement of perspectives on the writing process that can be viewed from three different angles: linear perspective, cognitive perspective, and social perspective.

In conclusion, the ultimate goal of a person learning a language is to enable them to communicate effectively orally or in writing. This brief statement is enough to explain the relationship between language skills and writing skills. No one deepens the language merely to understand and master the formulas but finally to make the best use of that knowledge of formal communication through thinking by writing.

Methodology

The design of this study is action research by using the method of one group pre-test and post-test design. Therefore, this study did not aim to compare the achievement of the dependent variables for the treatment group with the control group. To strengthen the research findings, the student essay writing script document was analyzed to see the differences in score achievement and changes in the aspects of writing observed based on the scoring rubric before and after treatment was given (Othman, 2011). A purposive population sampling was made deliberately to see the impact of using this model on a group of 35 students with a range of achievements from weak to excellent. The research instrument or measuring tool used is the scoring scheme for SPM Essay Writing, Paper 1, Part A by (*Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia, 2018*). Similarly, the pre-test and post-test essay questions are taken from the actual SPM questions. After answering the pre-test, students will be taught to write using the "SILA FOCKes SINI" model for four weeks. Then, the post-test is performed. Table I Below is the table of implementation followed by a description of the model used in this study.

Table I: Implementation of The Study

Conducting a Pre-test Optional Essay (Paper 1 – Section B) Time allocation: 1 hour 15 minutes Length of Essay: Must more than 350 words					
Table for the Implementation of Action Research					
Date	Time	Teaching and Learning	Exercise	Assessment	Respondent
Week 1	1-hour x 3 days	Writing Introduction by 'SILA'	Write 8 types of essay introductions	Oral & written	35 students
Week 2	1-hour x 3 days	Writing the body of the essay by 'FOCKes'	Write the content of the essay	Oral & written	
Week 3	1-hour x 3 days	Writing Closure by 'SINI'	Write a closing essay	Oral & written	
Week 4	1-hour x 3 days	Scoring rubric/ LPM Scheme	Essay Assessment	Score marks	
Week 5	Practice writing a full essay using a model 'SILA FOCKes SINI'				
Week 6					
Week 7					
Conducting Post-Test Optional Essay (Paper 1 – Section B) Time Allocation: 1 hour 15 minutes Length of Essay: More than 350 words					

In this study context, the impact is a significant effect, especially for something that just happened to a situation or an individual (Cambridge Dictionary, 2003). The impact is also an action that comes forcibly on something that collides with something else that gives a sign of impact or influence (Oxford Dictionary, 2012). The impact can describe a significant effect and explain the overall change that has been expected to occur based on the implementation or use of an intervention option provided. At the same time, the impact research means evaluating an intervention or teaching innovation developed, which is then considered from the aspect of the impact of the outcome either directly or indirectly. Direct impact refers to change in general,

while indirect impact refers to effects that can be observed and analyzed in related aspects involving the improvement or satisfaction of outcomes.

The Writing Model of 'SILA FOCKes SINI'

Essay writing according to the framework of this model can occur linearly or recursively that is reciprocal. Student essay writing is expected to become more structured after using this model. They can imagine in their minds that writing should follow the structure of an essay by starting to write with the introduction, main body, and end with a closing paragraph. This model can increase productivity, simplify and clarify concepts in the teaching and learning of writing at a very minimal cost. This clarity makes it easier for students to write an essay introduction based on acronyms **SILA** which are

S - *Skop* (scope of the title),

I - *Impak* (impacts on the title),

L - *Laporan* (report of the title), and

A - *Ayat* (title Sentence).

Students are free to write using grammatical and interesting sentences according to their language proficiency. This model does not restrict the idea of writing student essays but instead serves as an essential guide. Students can arrange the length of an essay in paragraphs balanced with the content that meets the requirements of the title. For the main body paragraph with the acronym of FOCKes, which is

F - *Fakta* (facts),

O - *Olahan* (description),

C - *Contoh* (example), and

Kes - *Kesimpulan* (small conclusion for the paragraph).

This acronym will be repeated several times based on the number of paragraphs to be written.

Lastly, for the last paragraph **SINI** acronym has been used.

S - *Simpul* (conclusion of the whole paragraph),

I - *Peringatan* (reminder),

N - *Nasihat* (advice to the readers), and

I - *Impian* (hope for the future).

With proficiency in writing, the students are found to automatically improve their writing than anything suggested in the 'PLEASE FOCKes SINI' model. Their writing is more solid without neglecting any part to develop an essay.

Research Findings

Direct Impact

Table II: Comparison for the Student Score Before and After Using the 'SILA FOCKes SINI' model.

No	Form Four Student	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score	Score Improvement /Difference
1.	A	20	58	30
2.	B	56	90	34
3.	C	12	39	27
4.	D	65	84	19
5.	E	55	90	35
6.	F	34	78	44
7.	G	62	89	27
8.	H	20	73	53
9.	I	78	93	15
10.	J	71	82	11
11.	K	8	54	46
12.	L	32	89	57
13.	M	52	96	44
14.	N	76	87	11
15.	O	12	48	36
16.	P	64	90	26
17.	Q	80	93	13
18.	R	48	69	21
19.	S	30	63	33
20.	T	8	90	82
21.	U	12	36	24
22.	V	16	78	62
23.	W	67	88	21
24.	X	32	87	55
25.	a	52	72	20
26.	b	36	93	57
27.	c	32	93	61
28.	d	58	87	29
29.	e	24	65	41
30.	f	12	27	15
31.	g	34	75	41
32.	h	4	57	53
33.	i	20	45	25
34.	j	4	66	62
35.	k	4	33	29

The Graph of Student Achievement between Pre-Test and Post-Test Using the Model 'SILA FOCKes SINI'

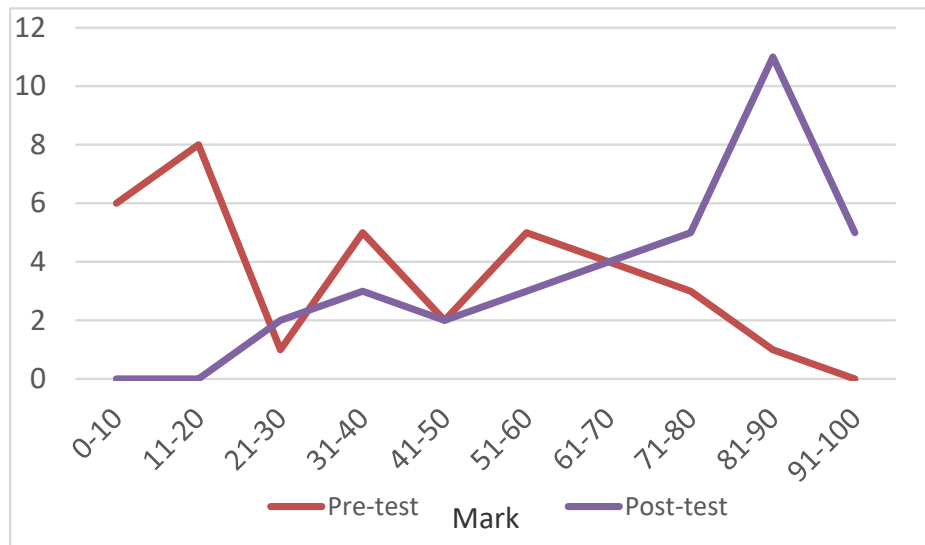


Table III: Basic Statistic

	Mean	N	Standard Deviation
Student Pre-test	37.17	35	24.781
Student Post-test	73.03	35	19.979

Table IV: Correlation Statistic

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Student Pre-test and Post-test	35	.690	.000

Table V: T-test Statistic

	Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error for the Mean			
Pre-test or post-test	-35.857	18.177	3.073	-11.670	34	.000

From Table II, the basic statistics show that the mean of student achievement on pre-test is 37.17 while the mean of student achievement on post-test is 73.03. The mean difference between post-test and pre-test was 35.857 (refer to Table V). The correlation between pre-test and post-test was 0.690, and the correlation statistic was significant ($p < 0.05$). This positive correlation and a high coefficient ($r = 0.690$) indicate that students who obtained high marks in the pre-test were more likely to get high marks in the post-test. Based on Table IV, the t-test statistics are significant ($t = -11.670$; $df = 34$; $p < 0.05$). It means that the innovation of teaching writing using the 'SILA FOCKes SINI' E-Writing model that was carried out has resulted in better achievement scores. In other words, innovation through action research conducted significantly succeeds in producing better performance.

Indirect Impact

Indirect impact refers to effects that can be observed and analyzed in aspects related to writing that involve improving or satisfying work results. In this study, the outcome will be investigated based on the adequacy of excellent essay writing requirements and meet the needs of the Form Four Syllabus and meet the SPM scoring rubric by LPM. Indirect impacts were analyzed based on pre-test and post-test documents on several significant aspects resulting from the writing of essays for 35 respondents.

Table VI: Effects That Can be Observed and Analyzed

Num.	Criteria	Pre-test Analysis	Post-test Analysis
1.	Passed/Fail	Fail = 21 students	Fail = 4 students
2.	The total number of words written more than 350 words	5 students	21 students
3.	The total number of paragraphs is written	2 paragraphs = 10 students 3 paragraphs = 11 students 5 paragraphs = 11 students 7 paragraphs = 3 students	2 paragraphs = 2 students 3 paragraphs = 6 students 5 paragraphs = 5 students 7 paragraphs = 22 students
4.	Score increase more than 10 marks	-	35 students
5.	Number of students with/without writing an introduction	With Introduction = 14 students Without Introduction = 21 students	With Introduction = 32 students Without Introduction = 3 students
6.	Number of students with/without writing the content along with descriptions, and examples	With Content = 14 students Without Content = 21 students	With Content = 27 students Without Content = 8 students
7.	Number of students with/without closing paragraph	With Closing = 14 students Without Closing = 21 students	With Closing = 32 students Without Closing = 3 students
8.	Follow the title	15 students	32 students
9.	Unfollow the title	0 student	0 student
10.	Used "SILA FOCKes SINI' Model	0 student	35 students
11.	Mechanical writing Spelling/ punctuation/ paragraph balance/ neatness of writing.	Master mechanical writing = 35 students	Master mechanical writing = 35 students

Discussion and Recommendation

The student who is proficient in mechanical writing should not be burdened with complex writing formulas at the early stages of instruction. Instead, teachers need to clearly show the process of composing in stages so the students can imagine what the result of their writing will be. According to Baranovskaya & Shaforostova (2017) and Che Zanariah et.al (2011), the teachers need to reveal more to students examples of good essays as an experience to their

writing. This method is beneficial for students to produce better essays. The technique of writing using a model does not make the essay rigid or similar because the model is only the basic framework of writing (Norliza & Wan, 2018). Using models to write can sharpen thinking skills because students need to use mental ability to identify the things that form the basis of an essay. Even when they are proficient, students will develop their writing model, and the composing activity will be better if they have understood the writing mould. The mould can be more interesting with the creativity and writing style without neglecting the aspects of coherence and cohesion.

The 'SILA FOCKes SINI' essay model is beneficial and useful if used as a study reference for students, a teaching guide for the teachers at all levels, whether primary, lower secondary, or upper secondary, and even for general writing purposes. Noor & Yahya (2016), Latifah (2016) and Norliza & Wan (2018) also stressed that students need to be inundated with new knowledge-seeking experiences, getting ideas as the stream of cognitive theory sees humans as active learners initiating experiences, seeking information to solve problems and organizing what they know to gain new understandings. Thus, this model is also suitable for training purposes, competitions, courses or writing workshops, written examinations for promotion purposes, diagnostic tests, and even can be used to determine officers' level of language proficiency in public or private departments. This basic model is also suitable to be applied for book publishing. The 'SILA FOCKes SINI' model adheres to the most basic writing aspects, ideational, interactive, and textual (Rohaida & Zamri 2015; Norul, 2014) This model can be applied to all levels of learning and can be easily adapted according to the writing objectives. This model is easily adapted by teachers and easily applied by students while learning and writing. The information collected during the activity can be compiled based on this model without expensive tools/instruments, complicated materials, or complex models. There are no sentence formulas that students need to follow. Students are free to compose based on their language proficiency to convey the ideas in writing more systematically. Sometimes students become proficient by adding some more interesting elements other than the basics things suggested.

Conclusion

The uniqueness of teaching writing using this model allows the teacher to focus on a specific part essay to be taught either separately or as a whole. The teaching process will be easier because each component can be taught independently, reciprocally, recursively, and can even be taught linearly. Each element can stand on its own without affecting the cohesion and coherence of writing. Then, the skills in each element of the essay can be strengthened. This model can guide students to write from a simple essay to a long and complex essay. Ultimately, to produce a student with good writing ability, it should not only focus on the external aspects alone but need focus on what to be said and how something is written or spoken.

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