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PRODUCT VERSUS PROCESS WRITING APPROACH IN ESL WRITING CLASSROOM

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Abstract:

This study compared the effects of practising product writing approach and process writing approach on ESL students' writing ability. This was done in order to investigate on which writing approach was more suitable to be applied in ESL writing classroom as it played a crucial role in assisting the students to improve their writing abilities. In this study, 40 secondary school students were selected as participants and descriptive analysis was used to analyse the data. Participants of product writing approach (n=20) received traditional writing instruction while participants of process writing approach (n=20) were exposed to stages in writing. In this study, the effects of practising product and process writing approach were investigated by comparing the mean scores on the overall writing ability based on text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language use. The findings indicate that there were no significant differences between the mean scores of students' overall writing ability of process and product writing approach. Thus, instead of only focusing on either process or product writing approach solely while teaching ESL writing in Malaysian classroom, the findings from this study suggest teachers to combine both process and product writing approach in guiding the students to become independent writers.

Keywords:

ESL Writing, Process Approach, Product Approach

Introduction

In Malaysia, in order to improve English language proficiency among secondary school students, English is taught for 2.6 hours per week as suggested by new curriculum known as KSSM (Parrikal et al., 2020). According to the new curriculum that adopt Common European

Framework of Resources or CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), teachers are required to guide students in learning all four skills known as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, among these four skills, teaching writing is the most challenging (Maarof & Murat, 2013) and many ESL learners are struggling with improving their writing skills more than other language skills (Ganapathy et al., 2020). According to Parrikal et al. (2020), writing is treated as the most challenging skill to be mastered by ESL learners due to the fact that they need to master other language skills namely listening, speaking, and reading first before they can produce a good piece of writing. Besides, when Malaysian learners are asked to write in English, they tend to have anxiety (Akhtar, Hassan, & Saidalvi, 2020) and due to their weak English proficiency, writing becomes the most difficult skill to be mastered by them (Juin et al., 2022).

In order to help enhance ESL students' writing skills specifically among secondary school students, employing an effective teaching approach can be applied by ESL teachers. Generally, in teaching writing, product and process writing approach were categorised as two common approaches practised by ESL teachers in teaching writing (Hilmi, et al., 2010). However, product writing approach tend to be a more popular option practised by ESL teachers around the world (Sarala et al., 2015) in which model essays are used as the main tool for students to write an error-free essay. Meanwhile, process writing approach focuses more on the writing stages practised by the students (Pasand & Haghi, 2013) in which they are trained to reflect on their ideas while writing and discover the meaning of their written products (Suryana & Iskandar, 2017). According to a study conducted by Kurniasih, et al. (2020), the practice of process writing approach in the classroom not only improved students' writing performance but also successfully reduced their anxiety levels in writing.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of practising product writing approach and process writing approach on ESL students' overall writing ability in Malaysian secondary school setting. By doing this, it will be interesting to see which writing approach is best to be practised in ESL writing classroom. Besides, with the introduction of CEFR descriptors that are used to measure the students' ability and boost English language standard to be at par with international standards, one of the ways to implement CEFR in ESL writing classroom is by practising suitable teaching approach that can guide students to write independently and improve their overall writing abilities. Besides, as CEFR emphasises more on learner's writing ability rather than accuracy, process writing approach should be chosen as the more suitable teaching approach that can be applied in teaching ESL writing as it creates a pupil-centred learning environment.

Problem Statement

In teaching ESL classroom, majority teachers agreed with the fact that teaching writing skills is more challenging than other language skills (Thulasi et al., 2015). In Malaysia, the quality of English writing among Malaysian students was still disappointing (Musa et al., 2012). In teaching writing, teachers usually practised product or process writing approach either directly or indirectly in order to guide the students in writing a good essay. In applying product writing approach, teachers would focus on the importance of linguistic features (Foo, 2007) thus making the students to write according to the provides sample essays. Compared to process writing approach, a lesson that is designed based on product writing approach is more teacher-centred. However, in order to adopt the CEFR in the English language curriculum, there is a need of creating a pupil-centred learning environment for the students as it is believed that students will become an independent learner while being facilitated by the teacher. Therefore,

the implementation of process writing approach in ESL writing classroom acts as one of the ways to provide students with opportunities to enjoy the process of writing itself without thinking too much on the final written product (Hartono et. al, 2019). Other than building learners' confidence in writing (Sheir et. al, 2015), the practise of process writing approach also managed to enhance their usage of vocabulary in writing (Avci, 2018). In this study, effects of practising product writing approach and process writing approach on students' overall writing ability were investigated in details by analysing the results of pre- and post- writing test. The findings obtained from this study would reveal on which teaching approach is better to be practised in ESL writing classroom: product writing approach or vice versa.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to investigate the effects of practising product writing approach and process writing approach on ESL students' overall writing ability.

a. The specific objectives are:

1. To compare the effect of product writing approach and process writing approach with regard to students' overall writing ability.
2. To compare the effect of product writing approach and process writing approach with regard to text content.
3. To compare the effect of product writing approach and process writing approach with regard to communicative achievement.
4. To compare the effect of product writing approach and process writing approach with regard to organisation.
5. To compare the effect of product writing approach and process writing approach with regard to language.

Research Hypotheses

The results of the post-writing mean scores between Control Group and Experimental Group are discussed based on the following research hypotheses:

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

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of overall writing abilities between the students in the Experimental Group and Control Group in terms of content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language.

H_{a1}: There is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of overall writing abilities between the students in the Experimental Group and Control Group in terms of content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language.

Literature Review

Over the past decade, aspects related to suitable teaching approaches that can be implemented in ESL writing classroom have been widely explored by the researchers. Studies have focused either on the use of product or process writing approach in improving students' writing skills. However, there was no solid proof that showed product writing approach acted as the better teaching approach that could be used in teaching English writing or vice versa. In Malaysia, a study done by Palpanadan et al. (2019) has revealed that product writing approach is more preferred by primary school teachers to be applied in ESL writing lessons. However, it was also suggested the need of implementing process writing approach in order to help the students become competent. By applying process writing approach in ESL classroom, teacher is actually implementing Constructivist Theory while teaching. This is due to the fact that Constructivist Theory offers a learning environment similar with process writing approach in which students are allowed to apply their life experiences in learning (Sharma, 2020). Besides, process writing approach also helps in building social interaction between the teacher and students as well as encouraging the teachers to become facilitators in teaching (Nugroho & Wulandari, 2017).

According to Sharma (2020), constructivist classroom helps in encouraging the learners to become independent thinker with the help from teacher in training them to express their own opinions while completing the task (Jha, 2009). This is concurrent with Piaget (1954), who believed that the process of learning occurs in a natural way whereby students should participate naturally while learning. Besides, Piaget also emphasized the importance of development process for a learner to improve and the need of having social interaction in teaching (Simatwa, 2010). Other than Constructivist Theory, the application of process writing approach is also closely related with the concept of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978), it is very important for teachers to provide guidance while teaching language as a way for learners to master the learned skill independently. Instead of only focusing on the final product, Vygotsky highlighted the importance of paying attention towards the learners' capabilities in working to achieve something (Rana, 2018). Generally, the concept of ZPD allows the students to learn independently (Lasmawan & Budiarta, 2020) which somehow is closely related to CEFR and the implementation of process writing approach in ESL writing classroom. Other than promoting scaffolding, the practice of process writing approach also help learners in engaging with their written essays. A study done by Shokrpour, Keshavarz, and Seyed (2013) revealed that students' writing skills were improved after they were involved in the implementation of process writing approach in class for a three-month period in which they managed to become autonomous writers.

However, a study done by Mehrdad (2008) that investigated on how process writing approach could affect EFL tertiary students' writing skill after being involved in writing dialogue journals for four months has discovered that there was no improvement in terms of text organisation. Thus, there is a need to study the comparison on applying either product writing approach or process writing approach in ESL writing classroom to investigate the effects and what they offer. Besides, by comparing the effects of applying product and process writing approach in ESL Malaysian secondary school setting, the findings of this study would help in providing new insights on practising both teaching approaches in writing classrooms.

Process Writing Approach

In applying process writing approach in writing classroom, teachers are expected to be a facilitator while teaching (Bayat, 2014) by exposing students to three main stages in writing

namely planning, drafting, and revising (Medwell et al., 2011). Besides, giving appropriate feedback becomes the main focus of the teacher instead of highlighting the language errors (Peyton & Reed, 1990). Students are also trained to use their experiences and come up with own ideas in constructing sentences while writing (Novia & Saptarina, 2021). According to Graham & Sandmel (2011), in order to motivate students in writing, process writing approach can be applied as it manages to build their self-reflection and allows them to communicate with the teacher through their writing. In Malaysia, as CEFR promotes a pupil-centred teaching approach, process writing approach can be practised in order to guide the students to write from their hearts. Other than providing opportunities for students to express their thoughts freely, the practice of process writing approach manages to facilitate them to write based on the productive feedback given by the teacher (Taggart & Wilson, 2005). According to Dewi (2021), by applying process writing approach in teaching, teachers are allowing students to improve independently by guiding them to identify their writing errors by themselves. Other than treating writing as an enjoyable learning process and provide opportunities for students to experience a meaningful learning environment (Tan, 2006), process writing approach has been proven to affect students' attitude in positive ways thus helping them to improve their writing (Gafur, 2020).

Product Writing Approach

As compared to process writing approach, product writing approach is highly favourable by language teachers as they believed that it is quite useful in helping them finishing the syllabus on schedule (Sarala et al., 2015). A teacher is said to implement product writing approach when a model text is used in writing classroom, in which students are expected to imitate the structure of the sentences used (Hasan & Akhand, 2010) and linguistic accuracies become the main focus of the written essays (Sarala et al., 2015). In applying product writing approach, students need to focus on using correct grammar rules (Nystrand, 2006) and syntactical forms (Suryana & Iskandar, 2017). If process writing approach focuses on the role of teacher as the facilitator, product writing approach highlights the teacher's role as a proof-reader (Jalaluddin, 2019). This happens due to the fact that students are required to write an error-free essay by giving more focus on syntax, grammar, and mechanics while writing (Suryana & Iskandar, 2017).

Related Theories

There are several related theories that align with the topic of this study on the practice of product and process writing approaches in ESL classrooms. The Constructivist Theory (Piaget, 1954) highlights the importance of practising process writing approach in writing classroom while Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) introduced focuses on the importance of teacher scaffolding. Following is the table of theories related to the topic of this study:

Table 1: Theories Related To ESL Writing Approaches

Theory	Key Points	References
Constructivist Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning occurs as students apply life experiences and interact socially. Encourages independent thinking. 	Nugroho & Wulandari (2017); Sharma (2020);
Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning is a natural process requiring active participation. Emphasizes the importance of developmental processes and social 	Piaget (1954); Simatwa (2010)

	interaction.	
Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlights the importance of teacher guidance (scaffolding) for independent skill mastery. Focuses on learners' capabilities in achieving tasks. 	Vygotsky (1978); Rana (2018); Lasmawan & Budiarta (2020)

Theoretical Framework of Past Studies

The study draws on a combination of established theories to investigate the effects of practising product and process writing approaches in enhancing ESL students' overall writing ability. Following is the table of theoretical framework of past studies related to the topic of this study:

Table 2: Theoretical Framework Of Past Studies

Theoretical Component	Theory / Concept	Key Proponents	Relevance to the Study
Constructivist Learning	Constructivist Theory	Piaget (1954), Sharma (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasizes active, experience-based learning. Aligns with the process writing approach, allowing students to create knowledge through interaction and self-expression.
Cognitive Development	Stages of Cognitive Development	Piaget (1954)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggests learning occurs naturally through active participation. Supports the iterative, interactive stages of the process approach in writing.
CEFR Principles	Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)	Council of Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on communicative competence and student-centered learning, making the process writing approach ideal for fostering meaningful expression in ESL classrooms.
Linguistic Precision and Accuracy	Traditional Product-Oriented Learning Models	Suryana & Iskandar (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The product writing approach emphasizes grammatical accuracy and adherence to

			linguistic structures through imitation and correction.
Teaching Efficiency	Time-Saving and Structured Approaches	Sarala et al. (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The product writing approach allows teachers to cover syllabus requirements efficiently by focusing on pre-structured text models.

Findings from this study can benefit several stakeholders in our education system like English language teachers, ESL learners, and school administrators. Firstly, for ESL teachers, this study would provide an opportunity for them to apply the best teaching approach in ESL writing lessons in order to enhance student's writing abilities. As for ESL learners, the findings from this study provide them with pros and cons of learning writing either by using product or process writing approach. The exposure of these approaches then will help students to understand better on which teaching approach suits them the most in helping them to become an active writer. Lastly, as for the school administrators, the findings of this study would guide them on creating a suitable teaching tool based on either product or process writing approach in order to improve English language proficiency amongst the students.

To sum up, in current Malaysian ESL classroom, based on the new English language curriculum that adopt CEFR, the use of mainly product writing approach in writing classroom is not really suitable. This is because language teachers need to give more attention in improving learners' writing ability than accuracy. Thus, it is interesting to study the effects of practising product writing approach and process writing approach among secondary school students to examine on which approach works best in improving students' overall writing abilities.

Methodology

This study applied a quantitative research method and quasi-experimental research design is used in this study as the aim of this study is to investigate the effects of practising product and process writing approach in ESL writing classroom. Two groups known as control and experimental group acted as the subjects of this study. The Randomized Pre-test Post-test Control Group Design was conducted in this study in which both groups were given pre-test and post-test accordingly. However, only the experimental group experienced the treatment of process writing approach. Following is the figure of experimental design conducted for this study:

Pretest-Posttest Control Group Design

R	O_1	X	O_2
R	O_3		O_4

Figure 1: Research Design

Source: Leedy, P.D & Ormrod, J.E, (2010) Practical Research : Planning and Design

Before introducing product and process writing approach to the participants of both control and experimental groups, a pre-test in writing was conducted to identify students' overall writing ability based on text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language use. Following that stage, the experimental group then was taught by using process writing approach in eight consecutive lessons of ESL writing. As compared to the participants of control group, they were taught mainly by using product writing approach even though same lesson contents were applied to both groups. In order to implement process writing approach in the class, a writing template was used by the teacher before each session of writing, which required the students to plan and draft their essays before writing. They were also reminded to revise their essays by re-drafting their paragraphs after they have finished writing. This process was done in the eight consecutive lessons of ESL writing in order to make sure students understand and practise process writing approach while writing.

Meanwhile, as for the participants of control group, they only experienced product writing approach in the eight consecutive lessons of ESL writing. Before writing, students were given model essays and the teacher emphasised on the importance of the format and structure of the essays. Students then were reminded to write based on the model essays provided, in which they were allowed to write similar sentences taken from the model essays. After the participants of both control and experimental groups have sat for eight consecutive lessons of ESL writing, a post-test of writing task was carried out. In this study, the writing test paper consisted of a question that was created based on the syllabus of English Form 4 textbook. Students are required to write an article in about 200-250 words with an allocated time of 45 minutes for each test. The effects of practising product writing approach and process writing approach on ESL students' overall writing ability was measured by investigating the differences of students' pre-test and post-test marks in writing tests. Figure 2 shows the activities conducted to collect data for this study.

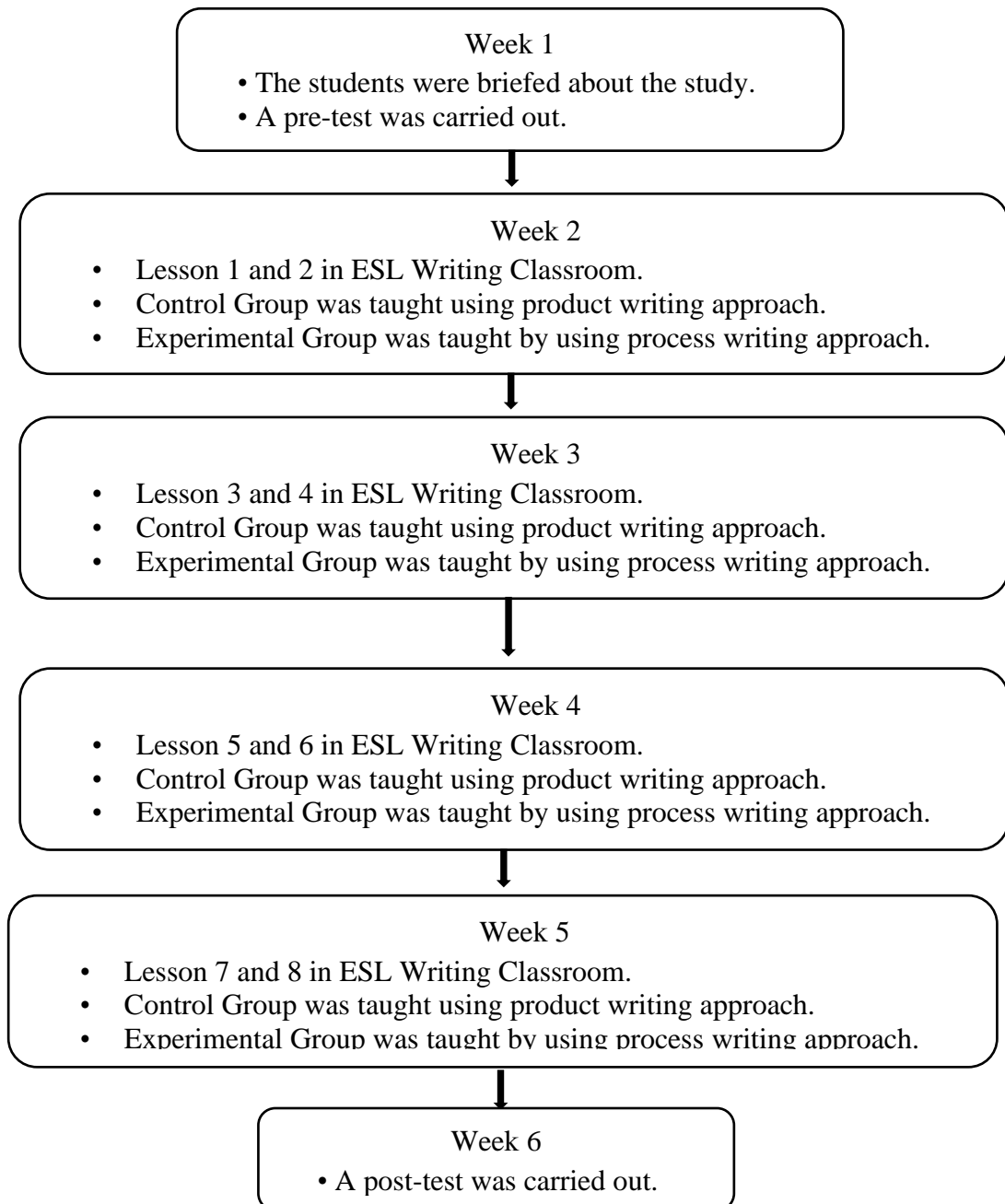


Figure 2: Research Schedule

Population and Sample Size

A total of 40 Form 4 students from a secondary school in Pahang were selected as participants in this study. In order to select the students, stratified random sampling was utilised. As there were total of 100 Form 4 students in the school, the researcher decided to ensure that the proportion of males and females in the study is the same as in the population. It was found that there were 67 males (67 percent) and 33 females (33 percent) in the population. The researcher decided to have a sample made up of 40 percent of the target population. By using a table of random numbers, the researcher then randomly selected 40 percent from each stratum of the population, which resulted in 27 males (40 percent of 67) and 13 females (40 percent of 33) students being selected from these subgroups. The proportion of males and females was the

same in both the population and sample. After the 40 students had been randomly selected, they were equally divided into an experimental and control group. The control group was taught mainly by using product writing approach whereby the participants of experimental group were exposed to process writing approach.

Data Analysis

This study used quantitative data analysis because it “provides precise, quantitative, and numerical data and it is useful for studying large numbers of people” (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 40). Data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. Inferential statistics was used in this study to compare students’ level of improvements in their writing skills between Control Group and Experimental Group. This type of data analysis allowed “.....making inferences about populations on the basis of random samples” (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012, p. 221). During the first class with the participants, the researcher conducted a pre-test in writing for both control and experimental group. The purpose of this is to investigate students’ current skills, knowledge and ability to comprehend the question and answer it thoroughly. Following that stage, the experimental group then was exposed to process writing approach in eight consecutive lessons of ESL writing. As compared to the control group, same lesson contents were taught, but there was no practice or even introduction of process writing approach at all. Instead, they were only exposed to product writing approach. After the participants have sat for eight consecutive lessons, the teacher then conducted a post-test of writing task for both control and experimental group. This step was done to analyse the differences of means of the students’ scores especially between the control and experimental group, in order to see whether both approaches namely product writing approach and process writing approach played an important role in improving students’ writing skills or vice versa.

Research Findings

In order to investigate whether there is any significant difference between Control and Experimental Group prior to the treatment, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted for pre-writing scores. The results of pre-writing mean scores indicated that there were no significant differences between Control Group and Experimental Group in terms of overall writing ability ($t = -1.399$, $p > .05$) (refer Table 1). Besides, in terms of text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language, there were also no significant differences between the two groups ($p > .05$). Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 3: Results Of Pre-Writing Test Of The Experimental And Control Group

Category	Group	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Text Content	Experimental Group	2.75	.639	-.244	.740
	Control Group	2.70	.657		
Communicative Achievement	Experimental Group	2.35	.489	.946	.178
	Control Group	2.50	.513		
Organisation	Experimental Group	1.95	.686	1.525	.845

	Control Group	2.25	.550		
Language	Experimental Group	1.80	.696	.263	.067
	Control Group	1.85	.489		
Overall	Experimental Group	8.85	1.137	-1.399	.144
	Control Group	8.30	1.342		

Effects Of Practising Product And Process Writing Approach

The results from the independent sample *t*-test (Table 2) showed there was no difference in the overall writing ability [$t = -1.452$, $p > .05$] of the mean scores of post-writing test between Control and Experimental Group. For the Experimental Group, in terms of overall writing ability, the post-test mean scores was 9.9500 and the standard deviation score was 1.90498. Meanwhile, for the Experimental Group, the mean and standard deviation scores were 9.0500 and 2.01246. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. However, the comparison made between the pre-test and the post-test scores between Control Group and Experimental Group showed that there was a slight improvement in terms of overall writing ability. The pre-test mean score of Experimental Group was 8.85, and had increased to 9.95 during the post-test. As for participants in Control Group their mean scores also increased from 8.30 to 9.05. Thus, this study revealed that the use of either product or process writing approach itself in ESL writing classroom did not really contribute towards the students' improvement in terms of their overall writing ability. However, the participants from Experimental Group that experienced process writing approach showed a slight improvement in terms of text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language.

Table 4: Results Of Post-Writing Test Of The Experimental And Control Groups

Category	Group	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Text Content	Experimental Group	2.9500	.60481	.728	.512
	Control Group	2.8000	.69585		
Communicative Achievement	Experimental Group	2.6500	.48936	2.307	.516
	Control Group	2.3000	.47016		
Organisation	Experimental Group	2.2500	.63867	.954	.708
	Control Group	2.0500	.68633		
Language	Experimental Group	2.1000	.55251	1.057	.510
	Control Group	1.9000	.64072		

	Group				
Overall	Experimental Group	9.9500	1.90498	-1.452	.781
	Control Group	9.0500	2.01246		

The results from the independent sample *t*-test that compared mean scores of post-writing test for each category of overall writing ability between Control Group and Experimental Group showed no significant difference ($p > .05$) in terms of text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language. Thus, it can be concluded that students' overall writing ability were improved in terms of text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language after they experienced the practice of product and process writing approach in eight consecutive lessons of ESL writing. Compared with Al Kayed et al., (2020) that have discovered the different findings, whereby process writing approach helped in improving the participants' writing skills in three aspects namely grammar, vocabulary, and organisation better than those that experienced product writing approach, this study revealed that the practice of process writing approach on its own did not really contribute a lot towards the students' overall writing ability. Similarly, the participants of Control Group that experienced product writing approach did not really show much improvement. Table 3 shows the summary of main findings for this study.

Table 5: Summary Of Main Findings

Category	Findings
Combined Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neither product nor process writing alone led to significant post-test score improvements. Combining both approaches proved most beneficial for implementing CEFR and improving students' skills.
Learner Proficiency Consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intermediate learners showed adaptability to both approaches, but proficiency level should be considered before selecting the approach.
Teacher's Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers should act as facilitators, guiding students to produce meaningful, error-free essays. Explaining the purpose of both approaches helps reduce students' anxiety in writing.
CEFR Context in Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process writing is preferable due to its broader benefits, aligning with CEFR requirements in Malaysian classrooms.
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combining product and process approaches is recommended for fostering independent and proficient writers. Teachers are encouraged to use both approaches to enhance motivation and writing skills.

The findings of this study have shown that the practice of product and process writing approach played a significant role in enhancing students' overall writing abilities in terms of text content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language. The implementation of process writing approach in ESL writing classroom might be useful in enhancing students' motivation to write (Sholah, 2019), but product writing approach also plays its role in training the students to write by emphasizing on syntax and mechanics (Suryana & Iskandar, 2017). However, realising the fact that there is a need to implement CEFR in the context of Malaysian ESL classroom, process writing approach should be practised in ESL writing lessons due to positive benefits it offers. Besides, in terms of students' overall writing ability, the findings of this study revealed that students that experienced process writing approach showed a slight improvement in terms of mean scores of post-test marks as compared with those who received the treatment of product writing approach. Other than emphasising on the text content, process writing approach managed to build learner's self-confidence as well as making them aware on the importance of using correct writing skills (Deniz & Demir, 2019).

Other than that, apart from only focusing on either product or process writing approach in teaching ESL writing, a suitable teaching aid that adopt both teaching approaches should be designed in order to improve students' writing skills. In this study, the findings revealed that even product writing approach or process writing approach is implemented on its own in ESL writing classroom with the aim of improving students' overall writing abilities, it was found that the post-test mean scores did not really improve. Therefore, it is best to utilise both teaching approaches in ESL writing classroom as one of the ways to implement CEFR and also with the aim of benefiting the students in positive ways. Besides, in teaching writing, teachers can provide opportunities for students to experience pupil-centred learning environment through the use of process writing approach. By playing their roles as facilitators, teachers can guide students in writing not just a meaningful essay, but also an essay that is free from language errors. This will help in improving students' overall writing abilities. In order to prevent students from being shy in writing, it is best for teachers to explain the purpose of using both teaching approaches which are product writing approach and process writing approach in teaching ESL writing to the students.

In conclusion, this study has investigated on the effects of practising product and process writing approach on ESL students' overall writing abilities and revealed on whether the practice of process writing approach on its own is a better teaching approach than using product writing approach on its own in teaching writing. The data collected in this study proved that students learn best with both teaching approaches: process writing approach and product writing approach as there were no significant differences in their post-test marks between the two groups. Thus, it can be concluded that rather than only applying product or process writing approach in ESL writing classroom, teachers should combine both approaches in teaching writing to train their students to become an independent writer and a proficient language user. However, it is vital to consider students' proficiency in English language before deciding on using both teaching approaches in ESL writing classroom. As the participants of this study consisted of intermediate learners, they might not have any difficulties in understanding the writing lessons that implemented either process or product writing approach. To sum up, it is hoped that by being exposed to the benefits of applying product and process writing approach in ESL writing classroom, teachers will try making them as one of the teaching instructions in enhancing students' motivation in writing as well as improving their writing skills.

Conclusions

The objectives of this study have been successfully achieved, as evidenced by the findings. The study aimed to examine the effects of product and process writing approaches on students' overall writing ability. Based on the results of the mean scores obtained in the students' overall writing ability, it showed that there was a slight increase in the post-test marks between both Control and Experimental Groups. This revealed that both product and process writing approaches played a crucial role in improving students' overall writing abilities. However, the findings also revealed that there were no significant differences in terms of overall writing abilities between Control Group and Experimental Group. Thus, findings of this study suggest that language teachers can combine both product and process writing approaches in teaching ESL writing in order to help the students become an active and independent learner. Other than that, it is important for the teachers to identify their students' needs in writing before deciding on which teaching approach is best to be practised in classroom.

Limitation of Study

This study faced a limitation in that the sample was drawn from only one secondary school in Temerloh, Pahang, Malaysia. As a result, the findings have limited generalizability, making it challenging to extend conclusions to the broader population based on a single study.

Recommendations

There are several recommendations for future researches that can be done in order to improve this study. As this study only involved 40 secondary school students as the participants, in order to get a broader view on the practice of product and process writing approach in ESL writing classroom, more samples should be included in future research. More secondary schools can also be included to be involved in this study in order to study the effects of using different approaches in teaching ESL writing. With the increasing number of samples, better results could be produced. Apart from that, as suggested before, a study can be done on the effects of combining both product and process writing approaches in teaching ESL writing on students' overall writing abilities. It will be interesting to see the results as it can help teachers in deciding on the most effective way that can be done to help students improve their skills in writing. Besides, it is also advisable to involve primary school students in the future research in order to investigate their acceptance level on the use of process and product writing approach in ESL writing classroom.

Furthermore, other than just investigating the effects of applying product and process writing approach in ESL writing classroom, a study can be done to investigate students' perceptions on the implementation of both teaching approaches for educators to know the pros and cons of using both teaching approaches in the classroom. In order to get the best results of future research, it is advisable for researchers to combine both qualitative and quantitative methods in collecting the data. A classroom observation session can also be conducted as a way for researchers to observe how product writing approach and process writing approach are carried out in ESL writing classroom. To sum up, this study suggested a way of combining both product and process writing approaches in ESL writing classroom where students are allowed to express their feelings freely while writing as well as focusing on the format and structure of the written essay.

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