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# UTILIZATION OF GUIDED WRITING STRATEGY IN IMPROVING THE NEWS WRITING SKILLS OF LANGUAGE UNDERGRADUATES

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#### Abstract

The effectiveness of guided writing strategy in improving the news writing skills was investigated in this action research. Its specific goal was to determine the students' level of performance in writing news stories applying guided writing strategy prior to as a teaching method, and the significant difference in their performance before and after using the intervention. This study used the Quasi-experimental method. This method aims to identify the effect of a particular intervention. The researcher focused on the BSEd English students of Pangasinan State University Lingayen Campus as the respondents in the study. The teacher used a rubric in determining the level of news writing skills of the students prior and after the implementation of the intervention. The study was conducted in the second half of the academic year 2021-2022. There were 20 respondents in this study. Based on the results of the study, it shows that the performance of the students after the intervention improve. It could be seen in the result that the t-value of -1.455 with a table t value of 1.729 is lesser than the level of significance set at 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis is rejected; thereby, this implies that there is a significant difference on the performance of BSEd English students in news writing skills on their pre-test and post-test. Further, this suggest that the intervention is effective.

Keywords: Guided Writing Strategy, Campus Journalism, News Writing, Intervention

#### INTRODUCTION

"No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances," according to Article 3, Section 4 of the Philippine Constitution of the Republic of 1987. Republic Act No. 7079, also known as the Campus Journalism Act of 1991 (CJA), was adopted to reinforce this law, ostensibly to defend and protect press freedom on college and to foster the development and growth of campus journalism, as stated in its statement of policies.

Campus Journalism plays a huge part in Philippine Education. Campus journalism according to Hayes (1994) as cited by Cubillos (2021) serves as a training ground for students interested in pursuing a career in journalism. The campus or school newspaper is important not only because it exposes aspiring journalists to what goes on in the newsroom, but it also polished students' interpersonal skills. Bulusan (2019) Both news and opinion should be based on truth but there is usually conflict in the latter precisely because of the fact that one's opinion is based mainly on feelings and belief. However, to be able to be a good writer one must possess skills in writing.

Writing is one of the four language skills which is just as important as the other three skills. The teaching and acquisition of English as a foreign language has increasingly focused on these four competencies as cited by Martarini N. et al (2020). It's more about the process than the product when it comes to teaching writing. According to Byrne (1988) as cited by Martarini N. et. al (2020) writing entails more than simply arranging letters to form words, phrases, or paragraphs and it is a difficult skill to master. It entails a number of elements, including vocabulary and syntax, text organization, meaning clarity, and concept coherency.

Writing according to Wich (2006) as cited by Martarini N. et al (2020) is a useful skill that requires a lot of practice and rehearsal on a daily basis. It suggests that in order to produce good writing, the writer must go through a lengthy process. A well-written product requires at least four processes from the writer: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Prewriting is the process of brainstorming ideas for writing themes. The next step is drafting, which involves putting the ideas into a series of sentences to form a paragraph; the third step is revision, which involves the writer revising the craft of writing; and the fourth step involves the writer reviewing the entire text to see if there are any remaining errors in the written product. If there are no further errors, the writing can be published.

However, in reality, the students' journalistic writing ability is poor. The majority of them are unable to meet those criteria. This condition was seen in a number of indications. The researcher discovered that the students have certain writing challenges based on the observation data. They lacked vocabulary mastery, struggled with tenses, struggled with acceptable grammar and sentence structure mastery, and struggled to organize their thoughts especially in writing news story.

According to the researcher's pre-research observations, students had the following issues with writing: (1) they lacked vocabulary mastery; (2) they lacked grammar and sentence structure mastery; (3) they were unable to explore and express their ideas in a good writing of news story; and (4) they were unable to begin writing especially the lead. The researcher used an approach to assist students in reinforcing their journalistic writing skills.

It is necessary to employ guided writing strategy in teaching journalistic writing. In guided writing strategy, an educator works with a group of students on a writing assignment. The task's objectives are based on what they've learned about the writing process so far. Guided writing is intended to assist students

with this psychologically and cognitively challenging activity. Guided writing can be fully utilized by providing learners with the necessary language to complete the work in collaboration with the teacher or lecturer.

Apart from that, both the lecturer and the students benefit from guided writing strategy. The first is that guided writing allows the lecturer to adapt the teaching material to the needs of the group; the second is that the lecturer is able to observe and respond to the needs of the students; and the third is that this method facilitates individual student teaching and learning. Students benefit from this strategy because it encourages them to be active participants in writing conversations and increases their confidence. As a result, the researcher hypothesized that guided writing strategy could help students enhance their skills in writing news story.

In guided writing, teachers have the opportunity to shape students' attitudes and promote motivation in their writing experience (Hall & Axelrod, 2014). This raises their self-efficacy which relates to students' intrinsic motivation to persist in overcoming their challenges and completing their writing task. Froiland and Oros (2014) found that intrinsic motivation, perceived competence, and classroom engagement as longitudinal predictors of adolescent reading achievement. Additionally, guided writing can promote collaborative discussions within the group setting by allowing them to verbalize what they are doing and the challenges they are facing during the session. Students can be motivated by sharing ideas with their peers or even coming up with an idea of their own.

Based on the explanation above, the student's condition, and the needs to improve student's new, the researcher decides to use guided writing to improve skills in writing news stories.

# 1.1 Review of Related Literature

(Dani's 2014) study entitled "Improving Writing Skills through Guided Writing of the Eight Grade Students of SMPN2 Selat in Academic Year 2013/2014" aimed to facilitate and to provide guidelines in writing. (Dani, 2014) noticed that many students fail to reach the standard score for the daily tests which is 70. The researcher selected the 27 eight grade students of SMPN 2 Selat section E consisting of 11 females and 16 males. The action research was conducted in India in a classroom at SMP N 2 Selat 2. The session was divided into two cycles (cycle I and cycle II) and each cycle consisted of four interconnected activities, namely: Planning (P), Action (A), Observation (O), and Reflection (R). Within the cycles as a series of tests such as a pre-test before a cycle starts and a post-test after every cycle. The researcher acted as observer and observed the situation. After the interconnected activities, the research conducted an interview. The data collected in the pre-test showed 48.40 errors meaning the students' writing skill were relatively low. The researcher also observed that most of the students looked confused and were not confident to write a paragraph. There were some problems in their writing ability such as the lack of vocabulary, the problem in writing grammatical sentences, spelling, punctuation, and limited vocabulary. When the researcher conducted cycle I and cycle II, the learners gained the mean figures of 61.66 and progressing mean figure of 77.81 respectively showed that their writing ability had improved after the intervention. In the qualitative aspect, the research reports the students were highly motivated in learning writing through guided writing because (62.78%) answered "A" with the description of "strongly agree."

Guided Writing is a strategy used by teachers to guide a group of students that have similar abilities in writing via explicit instruction, modelling, and scaffolding (Dyan, 2010; Hartanti, 2011; Juriah, 2015). During a writing session, the teacher provides high-levels of immediate targeted support by ensuring they write a full text while being supported. Students are scaffolded into writing independently after the completion of the sessions. The session of guided writing occurs after a whole class instruction and when students begin implementing the writing task. A group of students is then taken to begin a 15 to 20-minute session of guided writing. Walsh (2013) produced a framework through the Reading Rockets program which provides teachers with direction as to how to employ this strategy. A typical session includes 4 steps, these are (i) Collaboratively speaking to the students about their topic of interest in writing and brainstorming ideas through conversation, (ii) Planning of the writing strategies that will be used either verbally or by using a mind-map that supports students to integrate the strategy they would like to use, (iii) Students begin to write as teacher prompts, supports, and gives feedback so that students are actively learning and supported as to how they should write, and (iv) The students then share their products with the rest of their group, receive feedback and make any changes if necessary. It also allows the students to experience their written text as a whole. Internationally, a number of research studies have been conducted to study the advantages of using guided writing on writing skills in general (Dyan, 2010; Hartanti, 2011; Ningsih, 2016). Ningsih (2016) found that with EFL students in a junior high school in Indonesia, there was students' progress in their writing skills after 2 full cycles of guided writing. Similarly, Handayani, Dantes and Ratminimgsih (2013), reported that guided writing instruction had a positive impact on writing competency of high school students. Also, the students' achievement motivation increased. Studies have also explored guided writing impact specifically on narrative texts. In a study by Afifah and Robiasih (2018), it was found that 31 eighth grade EFL students had undergone a Guided Composition Technique (GCT) in their writing classroom. It was found that the average score in narrative writing texts increased. This is similar to the other studies where it was also found that the students' motivation in learning English also improved (Fathali & Sotoudehnama, 2015; Handayani, Dantes, & Ratminingsih, 2013; Nasihah & Cahyono, 2017).

The most similar to this study in terms of the rubric used for assessment is the study of (Aryaningtyas, Susilohadi, & Sarosa, 2012) entitled "Improving Students' Writing by Using Guided Writing." The purpose of the study is to identify whether guided writing can contribute significant improvements to the writing skills and learning motivation of second grade students of SMP Negeri Karangayar from August to October 2012. The research design was a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data were collected through pre-test and post-test and were analyzed through comparing the mean scores. The qualitative data were collected through interview, questionnaire, and field notes and were analyzed through five stages, namely, assembly of data, coding of data, comparing the data, building interpretations, and reporting the outcomes.

According to Camacho, Alves, and Boscolo (2020), Writing motivation could be considered a catalyst to promote writing in students. Their review of the motivation techniques that are specific to writing was published in 2020 and included studies that covered a span of over 10 years (2008 - 2018). Most studies indicated moderate positive associations between motivation and writing performance measures. The study also revealed that motivational constructs were understudied and to identify 5 evidence-based practices that could further support teachers in teaching writing to students (Camacho, Alves, & Boscolo, 2020).

# 1.2 Sociocultural Theory

The sociocultural perspective that denotes those activities, including writing, are situated in concrete interactions that are tandemly improvised locally and mediated by specific pedagogies or techniques. Hence, the writing process of guided writing enunciates the use of explicit instruction, modeling and scaffolding through interactions with the teachers and within a group (Prior, 2006). Lantolf (2000) further explains that the activity itself unfolds differently and hence, the need of the mediator within this activity is essential. When a student is writing he/she is guided into developing their skills through sociocultural interactions.

The sociocultural writing approach rules out writing as a process of short or long-term productions instead it describes it as a dialogical process of invention. It is an activity of mediated and distributed activity that extends upon the writer's sociocultural perspectives and within a collaborative means. Prior (2006) explores Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and extends it upon writing, describing it as not only a form of communication but also a mode of social action. Vygotsky highlights the role of the teacher in promoting and developing writing skills. He describes that an effective teacher implicitly provides students with the knowledge of how to write through thoughts and actions when students are struggling or making decisions in their writing. His discussion on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) features the impact of teachers on raising students' levels in writing while supporting their potential (Englert, Mariage, & Dunsmore, 2006). This allows the students to experience how 'experts' write through viewing models and instructional support from the teacher.

Boettger (2014) studied the effect of teaching writing explicitly using a control-group quasiexperimental design. It was found that the genre participants constructed texts demonstrated a significantly greater awareness of the audience, purpose, structure, design, style, and editing than participants taught through more traditional approaches. Usman and Rizki (2016) also studied the guided writing technique in an experimental and control setting, where the results from the study showed that there was a significant improvement in skills for writing analytical exposition texts from the experimental group students taught using the Guided Writing Technique whilst the control group taught by a standard teaching technique for writing did not show such improvement. The development of writing via the sociocultural theory model entails the use of a 'correct' methodology to make it effective. Hence, teachers or facilitators do not only help students develop their writers rather they scaffold the writing process. Sociocultural theorists believe that guided practice is an effective practice (Englert, Mariage & Dunsmore (2006)). They also believe that expertise within the practice should be practiced, distributed, and shaped to produce the needed outcome. Although guided writing does begin as a teacher-led strategy, it should evolve into a collaborative activity between teacher and student. As the student progresses, he/she must take an increased responsibility for the writing activity. The teacher continues to assist and coach in the process to further develop the students' writing skills.

Eventually, what started as a social activity, evolved into the internalization of the skills and hence, the development of writing skills as collaborative actions are turned inward to direct the students' own performance. Englert and Dunsmore (2006) studied the strategies of an effective teacher who used guided practice. The teacher used a 'step-in' and 'step-out' technique, where she stepped into model, prompt and instruct and then stepped out to transfer control to the students to take autonomy of their writing and use their acquired skills. Hence, the role of expert and novice was used fluidly between the teacher and student.

Where students would take the role of the expert when they were making decisions or problem solving in their writing. Dalton and Tharp (2002) explained that these instructional strategies allowed for teachers to transfer control of self-regulation, assess students' knowledge through their writing practice and provide explanations through coaching and modelling.

The interactive dialogue and learning do not only happen between teacher and student, but it also entails the interaction among students. Sociocultural theory also enunciates the building of a community that promotes practice when using guided writing. When working with peers and teachers, knowledge is exchanged and hence, a literacy community is started. Especially in guided writing, students are of similar 'ability' or share similar needs to develop their writing. Hence, they may feel confident to express their concerns and confusions and request support from their peers or teachers.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Quasi-experimental method was used in this action research. This method aimed to identify the effect of a particular intervention. Moreover, quasi-experiment method offers a valid and unbiased estimate of the efficacy of the programs (Stratton S. 2019). This study will use the One Group Pretest-Posttests design. It will use the single group design that will utilize the pre-test and post-test instruments to determine the significant differences in the performance of the learners before and after the exposure of the intervention. One-group pretest-posttest design is a type of research design that is most often utilized by behavioral researchers to determine the effect of a treatment or intervention on a given sample. This research design is characterized by two features. The first feature is the use of a single group of participants (i.e., a one-group design).

This feature denotes that all participants are part of a single condition—meaning all participants are given the same treatments and assessments. The second feature is a linear ordering that requires the assessment of a dependent variable before and after treatment is implemented (i.e., a pretest-posttest design). Within pretest-posttest research designs, the effect of a treatment is determined by calculating the difference between the first assessments of the dependent variable. (Allen M. 2017)

The respondents were selected from a pool of the third year BSED English students of PSU Lingayen Campus with low performance scores in news writing. Students were selected using simple random sampling (Fishbowl method). The name of the pooled students was listed on a sheet of paper and randomly drawn in this sampling technique. Twenty sheets have been drawn to form the respondents.

The researcher utilized pre-test and posttest in the form of a performance task. The performance task is consist of a series of news writing activities and workshop. A rubric adopted from Enclosure No. 3b of DepEd Memorandum 176 s. 2019 was used in assessing outputs of the students. This rubric employed percentage score to assess the level of students' skills in writing news stories. The students were graded based on the criterion under technical, content and ethics. The researcher used the Paired T-test in the computation of the significant difference of the pre-test and post-test in this study.

To answer the question raised in number 1 and 2, on the level of news writing skills of the BSEd English students before/after utilizing the guided writing strategy, the researcher computed the Mean Percentile Score with its descriptive equivalent.

Mean Percentile Score Scale	Descriptive Equivalent
96 to 100	Mastered
86 to 95	Moving Towards Mastery
66 to 85	Average Mastery
36 to 65	Low Mastery
35 and below	Very Low Mastery

To answer the question raised in number 3 if there is a significant difference on the level of news writing skills of the BSEd- English students before and after utilizing the guided writing strategy, the researcher used the T-Test as shown in the formula below:

$$t = \frac{\overline{x}_1 - \overline{x}_2}{\sqrt{(s^2(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}))}}$$

In this formula, t is the t-value,  $x_1$  and  $x_2$  are the means of the two groups being compared,  $s_2$  is the pooled standard error of the two groups, and  $n_1$  and  $n_2$  are the number of observations in each of the groups.

A larger *t*-value shows that the difference between group means is greater than the pooled standard error, indicating a more significant difference between the groups. (Bevans R., 2020)

By comparing the calculated *t*-value against the values in a critical value chart to determine whether our *t*-value is greater than what would be expected by chance. Then, to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the two groups are in fact different.

### **RESULTS**

Performance of the Students in Journalistic Writing Skills-News Writing in the Pre-test and Post-test

Figure 1. shows the result of the BSEd English students in news writing skills in the pre-test and post-test through performance tasks. It could be gleamed that the highest score obtained by a student for the pre-test is 67 out of 100 which indicates average mastery, while the lowest score obtained is 56 out of 100 which indicates low mastery. This implies that the scores are below the passing rate. On the other hand, the highest score obtained in the post-test is 92 out of 100 which indicates that the student mastered the skills in writing news stories while the lowest score obtained is 80 which means average mastery.

The data clearly shows that the students' performance in news writing before the intervention is quite low, however after utilizing the guided writing strategy as an intervention, the students showed significant improvement in news writing.

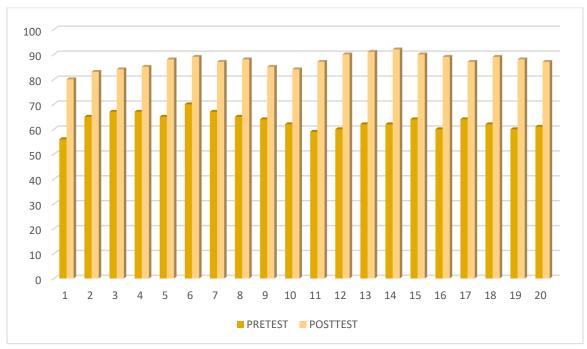


Figure 1 Performance of the Learners in news writing in the

Pre-test and Post-test

Table 1. Mean Performance of the Students in News Writing in the Pre-test and Post-test

	Mean	Mean Score Percentage	Descriptive Equivalence
Pre-Test	63.1	63.1%	Very low mastery
Post Test	87.15	87.15 %	Moving Towards Mastery

Table 1 shows the result of the pre-test performance with 63.1 as the mean which shows the low performance of the BSEd English students before the exposure of the intervention. The table also shows the post test result of the students with 87.15 as the mean which indicates an increase on the performance of the BSEd English students after the exposure to the intervention.

Table 2 Significant Difference Between the Performance of the Students in News Writing in the Pre-test and Post-test

t-value	Df	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
-1.455	`19	1.729	Significant

Table 2 shows the significant difference between the performance of the BSEd English students in news writing skills in the pre-test and post-test. It could be seen that the t-value of -1.455 with a table t value of 1.729 is lesser than the level of significance set at 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis is rejected; thereby, this implies that there is a significant difference on the performance of BSEd English students in news writing on their pre-test and post-test. Further, this suggest that the intervention is effective.

#### **DISCUSSIONS**

The result of this study is supported by the study of Novita and Dieni (2022) on the implementation and the improvement of guided writing towards the student's writing skill and to know the respond of the students towards the implementation of guided writing in the teaching and learning process at the second semester students of English Diploma III of Language and Culture Faculty in 17 Agustus 1945 Semarang University in the academic year of 2017/2018 the students showed great interest to be actively involved to the teaching and learning process. The students were able to construct sentences correctly. In this case, the sentences they constructed were based on the researcher's explanation. They also used more vocabularies in their writing. Their mean score of the pre-test was 63.3, while their mean score at the post-test, increased up to 76.1.

The findings on the study of Virgiawan M. et al (2020) also showed that the implementation of guided writing as teaching media effective to improve the students' writing achievement and the classroom situation. The mean score improved from 60.71 in pre-test, improved to 72.07 in post-test 1 and improved to 79.15 in post-test 2. The implementation of guided writing as teaching media also changed the class situation to be more active and interacting the students to join the teaching learning process. Same results on the study of Amiatul (2020), it has been found that most of the students in the experimental class performed mean score 75.79 higher than the mean score of control class performed mean score 53.60. these showed that students" achievement was greatly increased after the treatment.

Moreover, analysis of students' writing based on content, organization, grammar, vocabulary and mechanics shows that the basic writing competencies of students from the experimental class have better score than the control class. This implies that Guided Writing Technique is effective to increase students' writing skills in report text, (Wulandari ,2020). Based on the results of the data analysis in the study of Lestari (2019), the student pre-test results showed an average score of 75.16 and the student post-test results averaged 82.5. The results of data analysis showed that the value was 5.384 and the table was 2.045 at a significant level of 5%. It can be concluded as follows: t-value>t- table thus, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted. Therefore, there was significant difference in the increase of pre-test and post-test results in teaching writing using guided writing is effective for students of grade 10 MA Darul Ulum Ngabar in the academic year 2017/2018.

# **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

This action research determined the effectiveness of Guided Writing Strategy in improving performance of BSEd English students in News Writing. The study therefore concludes that the performance of the students before the utilization of the intervention indicates a low mastery level in news writing. On the other hand, the performance of the students after the utilization of intervention improved as

seen in the above data presented. It can be concluded that the utilization of guided writing strategy as an intervention is effective. The researcher recommends the continuing of this action research. It is added suggested that this strategy be tried in other subjects and /or alternate year level which its effectiveness be monitored through systematic knowledge gathering of the results. Finally, it's suggested that results of this action research be disseminated within the faculty additionally as within the campus to encourage replication of this study

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#### **LIMITATIONS**

This study delved only on utilization of guided writing strategy in improving the news writing skills of the students of Pangasinan State University - Lingayen Campus. *Focus*. This study focused on utilization of guided writing strategy in improving the news writing skills of the students *Respondents*. The respondents of the study were the 20 identified third year Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English students. *Place and Time*. This study was conducted at Pangasinan State University during the Academic Year 2021-2022.

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