



# The Impact of Utilizing the Social Interactive Writing for English Learners (SWELL) Approach on EFL Learners Writing Skills

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## ABSTRACT

This research aimed to determine the impact of utilizing the social interactive writing for English language learners (SWELL) approach on EFL learners' writing skills, especially in writing analytical exposition text. This research was conducted during the academic year 2022/23 at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia Medan. This quantitative research was conducted using an experimental research design. The subjects of the research were 44 eleventh-grades students from SMK PAB 2 Helvetia Medan who were selected using a total sampling technique and then divided into two groups. The data were acquired using a pre-test and a post-test, and then analyzed using the t-test formula in the SPSS version 22 program. The difference between the post-test mean scores of the control and experimental groups was 77.57 and 84.40. The findings of this study indicate that the SWELL method is more effective than the Teacher-Centered method in improving students' writing abilities in exposition texts at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia, where the SWELL method was implemented.

**Keywords:** *Swell Method, Writing Skills, Exposition Text*

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## INTRODUCTION

The act of writing has been a global phenomenon for thousands of years (Graham & Rijlaarsdam, 2016). Writing has helped us to preserve our culture and heritage, communicate with others, and advance our knowledge and understanding of the world. Writing is also one of the crucial language skills for teaching and learning activities (Ortinau, 2011). It implies that students are taught and participate in producing text, that each student often finds something new to write or a new approach to convey ideas, and that students must find the appropriate words and phrases. As one of the most essential skills to cultivate, students' knowledge cannot be expanded without writing (Storch, 2011). Students must develop writing skills because writing in English is essential. In recent years, schools have emphasised the importance of being able to write, as evidenced by the curriculum's Basic Competency 4.1, which requires students to be able to construct spoken and written texts to express, inquire, and answer to expressions of making ideas and offers, while taking into consideration accurate and contextual social functions, text structures, and linguistic feature (Kemendikbud, 2013). To fulfil these objectives, the researcher wishes to propose a learning approach known as the swell method. This method is ideally suited to the curriculum's demands, and it is thought that it considerably aids students in meeting the demands of the basic curriculum.

Provided the significance of writing for language learners, it must be developed and encouraged throughout the language learner's process of study (Bayat, 2014). In this situation, teachers should be able to select the most suitable writing strategy for their students. The Senior High School in English curriculum emphasises the development of the students to be able to

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construct spoken and written texts to express, inquire, and answer to expressions of making ideas and offers, while taking into consideration accurate and contextual social functions, text structures, and linguistic feature. Therefore, Students are expected to be able to compose descriptive text based on their demonstrated competencies.

In fact, it is not easy to help students to achieve these writing competencies. In fact, students of class XI-MP 1 PAB 2 Helvetia Medan face many difficulties and challenges in writing. From the results of observations it is known that each student has a different background, level of understanding, interests, and learning styles. In addition, students often have difficulty staying motivated in learning to write. They may feel anxious or insecure about their writing abilities. Not only that, limited vocabulary can hinder students' expression. They find it difficult to find the right words to describe a particular idea or concept. Once they get an idea for their writing, students still have difficulty putting that idea into perspective. In addition, the education system at PAB 2 Helvetia Medan schools prioritizes preparation for standardized exams, which often place greater emphasis on reading skills. Writing skills often don't get the same attention in curriculum and testing. Writing gets less attention than other skills that tend to be reduced or relegated to the end of a teaching unit or to homework. This is because writing is often considered more complex and requires ongoing development (Amelia & Aina, 2021). furthermore, some teachers still apply a traditional teaching approach which is more dominated by lectures and repetitive exercises. This approach does not provide adequate opportunities for students to develop writing skills. Traditional teaching approaches, which are more dominated by lectures and repetitive exercises may not be effective in developing students' writing skills. Writing skills involve a deep understanding of concepts and the ability to think critically and be creative. Traditional approaches that focus solely on providing information through lectures and mechanical exercises may not facilitate the development of writing skills well. From these facts it can be concluded that some teachers still choose traditional teaching methods, especially in the context of teaching writing skills.

In order to deal with the problem at hand, it is recommended that English educators provide students with a wide range of acceptable answers. SWELL (Social-Interactive Writing for English Language Learners) answers the want for a proficient approach to instructing writing abilities, particularly in the context of analytical exposition texts. SWELL, also known as Social Interactive Writing for English Language Learners, is an innovative approach to collaborative writing that aims to enhance social interaction among the writers.

Based on the phenomenon above, the researcher decided to conduct a study on investigating the impact of utilizing the social interactive writing for english language learners approach on EFL learners writing skills for eleventh grade of SMK PAB 2 Helvetia Medan. Furthermore, this research also aims at finding the effectiveness of this writing approach when it is implemented to teach analytical exposition text.

### **Social-Interactive Writing for English Language Learners**

SWELL, or Social-Interactive Writing for English Language Learners, is a system for teaching English writing skills. It is essentially a writing strategy supported by numerous ideas connected to collaborative writing theories, writing instruction methods, and the instructor as a feedback giver (Teo, 2007). According to (Wigglesworth & Storch, 2012), collaborative writing entails the student working with one or more peers to complete the writing process. Collaborative writing in class is a great approach to preparing students for future tasks that may involve teamwork. (Storch, 2011) stated that when students write together, they are dialoguing approach of collaboration acquisition of writing skills is highly encouraged in our situation where students must be the focus of the class and communicate with their peers as much as possible.

The SWELL approach included six steps: idea generation, drafting, reading aloud, editing, copying, and instructor evaluation (Teo, 2007). SWELL students are initially split into pairs depending on their English skill level. There are upper and lower-level students that work cooperatively as assistants and writers. Wishful thinking, higher-level students may assist

lower-level students in becoming not only more informed but also more understanding of language. As a result, the decision to join a group or duo has an impact on productivity.

### **The Advantages and Disadvantages of SWELL (Social-Interactive Writing for English Language Learners)**

Teo (2007) discusses some of the advantages of utilizing the SWELL method, including; (1) The SWELL Method improved the writers'/students' skill and confidence, (2) The student was pleased with the SWELL approach and actively engaged in the conversation. (3) SWELL assisted students in coming up with concepts for their writing. (4) SWELL assisted students in becoming autonomous thinkers and learners

The swell method has several disadvantages, including; (1) From the preparation, which takes a long time because the teacher has to learn the method that will be given by the researcher, (2) From the implementation, takes a long time because the teacher not only demonstrates or demonstrates the method only once but more material so that students are more understanding, (3) From supervision it takes a long time because the teacher must provide the best explanation so that the method that has been given is achieved in writing skills.

### **METHOD**

The location of this research was conducted at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia Medan. The research was conducted during the academic years 2022/2023. The population for this research was selected from the eleventh grade during the academic year 2022/2023, which consisted of two classes. There are 20 students in XI-Regular-I and 20 students in XI-Regular-II. The total sampling method was used to collect the sample. Total sampling is a strategy for determining a sample with certain factors in mind (Sugiyono, 2007). Using the total sample approach, the whole population of 40 students was used as the sample. For collecting the data, several procedures were used to collect the data as follows: 1) Giving pre-test to both of the groups. 2) Treatment in experimental group by utilizing SWELL Method in writing analytical exposition text. 3) Treatment in control group by Teacher Centered Method in writing analytical exposition text. 4) Giving post-test to both of the group.

In data collection, data was collected by giving essay tests to students. In this research, the condition of students before being given treatment in learning English is described as students with low English language skills who have limitations in speaking, reading, writing and understanding the language. In these cases, the SWELL method can serve as a first step to help students build the basics of English (Teo, 2007). The social interaction of writing together can help reduce anxiety and slowly improve speaking and writing skills. Some students before the treatment were less confident in speaking than writing. In this case, the SWELL method can provide a safe forum for them to practice writing while still involving aspects of social interaction. Group discussions and collaboration in writing can help students feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts in writing. When the SWELL method involves group work, students with different English abilities may complement each other. Students with better skills can help others to overcome obstacles. It can also stimulate fruitful discussion and exchange of ideas, enriching the learning experience for all students.

There were two groups in this research, the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group was taught using the SWEEL method. Meanwhile, the control group was conducted using the Teacher-Centered method. Both groups were given the pre- and post-tests. The students' score pre-test and post-test from both groups indicated that there many variation of different score in which experimental group was significantly affected by applying SWELL Method.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The sample of data consists of the experimental class and the control class, respectively. Class XI-MP 1 served as the control group, while class XI-MP 2 was the experimental group. Pre- and post-tests are administered to all students in each class to collect data. After that, students in each class were given a post-treatment assessment. After collecting data in class for data analysis, the researcher collected students' grades. Prior to data analysis, each class's pre- and post-test results were compiled in a table. They did pre-test and post-test which were carried out after the learning process with analytical exposition text material using the Teacher-Centered method and SWELL method. The Following data are:

**Table 1. Students Learning Outcomes Control Class**

Students' Initial	Control Class	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test
ANN	67	67
AT	78	89
CR	55	67
FH	56	72
FNH	72	74
GKZ	74	79
HH	81	83
IEBL	71	83
MN	70	79
NBK	56	77
N	67	79
NR	68	81
NB	59	76
NS	69	72
NT	70	78
PS	70	77
RLPS	72	79
RP	64	76
S	62	77
SNA	60	78
SAR	61	76
SPR	84	87

The data table above demonstrates that the control class's pre-test results were 4 students scored below 60, 8 students scored below 70, 7 students scored below 75, 1 student scored below 80 and 2 students scored below 85. Then the post-test scores of control class, 4 students who scored below 60, 3 of them increased to below 80 and 1 of them increased to below 70. 8 students scored below 70, 6 of them increased to below 80, 1 of them increased to below 90 and 1 of them cannot increase. 7 student who scored below 75, 7 of them increased to below 80. 1 student who scored below 80, 1 of them increased to below 90 and then 2 students who scored below 85, 2 of them increased to below 90. So the post test scores from control class 1 students scored below 70, 15 students scored below 80, 5 students scored below 90, and then 1 student cannot increase. From these data, there were 21 students who experienced an increased in scores, 1 student were constant, and 0 student decreased.

**Table 2. Students Learning Outcomes Experimental Class**

Students' Initial	Experimental Class	
	Pre-Test	Post-Test
AFA	76	87
A	65	82
BAL	70	85
CAD	68	80
DRA	70	85
DA	69	83
I	80	90
IYS	78	86
JRA	75	84
KF	81	92
KA	76	85
NR	83	88
NO	72	86
NH	80	85
RM	82	90
RA	76	81
SA	73	84
SF	65	80
SA	72	80
VA	70	82
W	75	86
WC	78	84

In comparison, the Experimental Class's pre-test results obtained were 4 students scored below 70, 13 students scored below 80 and 5 students scored below 90. Then the post-test scores of experimental class, 4 students who scored below 70, 4 of them increased to below 90. 13 students who scored below 80, 13 of them increased to below 90. And then 5 students scored below 90, 5 of them increased to below 100. So, from these data there were 23 students who experienced an increase in scores, 0 students were constant, and 0 student decreased.

### Data Descriptive Statistic

**Table 3. Data Descriptive Statistic**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test Experiment	22	65	83	74.27	5.302
Post-Test Experiment	22	80	92	84.77	3.308
Pre-Test Control	22	55	84	67.55	7.915
Post-Test Control	22	67	89	77.55	5.369
Valid N (listwise)	22				

There are a total of 22 students in the Control Class. Pre-Test mean scores for the Control Class is 67.55, with a minimum grade of 55 and a maximum grade of 84. The control class's post-test mean score is 77.55, with a minimum grade of 67 and a maximum grade of 89. It is clear from this that the grade has improved after learning process is carried out using Teacher-Centered method, with a 10,00 difference between the average Pre-Test and Post-Test's scores. Meanwhile in the experimental class with a total of 22 students, the average pre-test score was

74.27 with a minimum grade of 65 and a maximum grade of 83. Post-test average score is 84.77 with a minimum grade of 80 and a maximum grade of 92. With a mean score difference of 10,05 between the Pre-Test and Post-Test, this shows that there has been a great increase in student learning outcomes following the utilizing of SWELL method in the learning process. It is clear from these numbers that student scores between the two classes different. The SWELL method produced better results than the Teacher-Centered method.

### Test of Normality

A data distribution's normalcy can be ascertained using the Test of Normality. The modus, mean, and median are in the middle of the symmetrical normal distribution. There is a decision-making guideline that can be used to determine if a data distribution is normal or not. If the value of Sig. or the significance or probability value is less than 0.05, the distribution is not normal, and if it is greater than 0.05, the distribution is normal. (Nuryadi et al., 2017).

With the use of the SPSS 22.0 application, the researcher utilized the Kolmogorov-Smimov Test and the Shapiro-Wilk Test in this investigation to determine whether the data were normal:

**Table 4. Test of Normality**

	Class	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statisti			Statisti		
		c	df	Sig.	c	df	Sig.
Students Learning Outcomes	Pre-Test Control Class (Teacher-Centered Method)	.109	22	.200*	.965	22	.591
	Post-Test Control Class (Teacher-Centered Method)	.166	22	.118	.955	22	.396
	Pre-Test Experimental (SWELL Method)	.108	22	.200*	.964	22	.574
	Post-Test Experimental (SWELL Method)	.128	22	.200*	.953	22	.364

It may be inferred from the result above that the study data is normally distributed because the significance value (sig) for all data on the Kolmogorof-Smimov Test and the Shapiro-Wilk Test is larger than 0.05.

### Test of Homogeneity

A statistical technique called the Test of Homogeneity aims to demonstrate that two or more groupings of sample data originate from populations with the same variance (Nuryadi et al., 2017). The homogeneity test is thus utilized in this study to examine if the post-test data groups for the control class (Teacher-Centered Method) and the post-test experimental class (SWELL Method) are homogenous (same) or heterogeneous (not the same). In order to determine if data are homogeneous according to the homogeneity test, the significance value must be more than 0.05; otherwise, the data cannot be considered homogeneous. With the aid of the SPSS 22.0 application, the test is conducted as follows:

**Table 5. Test of Homogeneity**

		Levene			
		Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Students Learning Outcomes	Based on Mean	2.075	1	42	.157
	Based on Median	2.122	1	42	.153
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	2.122	1	33.448	.155
	Based on trimmed mean	2.043	1	42	.160

It can be inferred from the output above that the variance of the post-test data for the experimental class and the control class is homogenous or equal because the significance value (sig) based on the mean is known to be  $0.347 > 0.05$ .

### Independent Simple T-Test

To calculate the average difference between two independent populations/data sets, the Independent Sample T-Test is utilized (Nuryadi et al., 2017). This Independent Sample t-test has assumptions/conditions that must be met, namely the data is normally distributed, the two groups of data are independent (free) and the variables are linked numeric and categorical form (with only 2 groups). The Independent Sample t-test was used in this study to see if there were any differences between how to write analytical exposition text utilizing the Teacher-Centered Method and SWELL method. Using the SPSS 22.0 program, this test was conducted on post-test data for the experimental class (SWELL Method) and post-test data for the control class (Teacher-Centered Method):

**Table 6. Independent Simple T-test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Students Learning Outcomes	Equal variances assumed	2.075	.157	5.375	42	.000	7.227	1.345	4.514	9.941
	Equal variances not assumed			5.375	34.937	.000	7.227	1.345	4.497	9.957

It can be concluded from the output above that there is a difference between the average post-test of students utilizing the Teacher-Centered method and the SWELL method because the value of sig. (2 tailed) is  $0.000 < 0.05$ . The result of the analysis and the data obtained showed that the utilizing Social Interactive Writing for English Language Learners (SWELL) that can impact approach for teaching analytical exposition text and significantly improving students writing skills of analytical exposition text, as demonstrated by paired sample t-test analysis. The results of the paired sample t-test of the two samples are there is an influence from the utilizing the swell method on students writing skills in analytical exposition text. The magnitude of this impact is evident from the mean score Post-Test of the Experimental Class

which has improved from 74.27 to 84.77. So it can be said that there is a significant increase in writing skills of analytical exposition text by utilizing the SWELL method.

The effectiveness of the swell method can also be seen from the teaching learning process, which includes student activities where students become collaborative, creative, active and participative in the classroom, all of which improve their writing skills. Besides that its effectiveness can also be seen from the teacher's response in which the teacher thinks that the swell method sees a lot of positive potential in the SWELL learning method. However, as with every method, effective implementation and adaptation to student needs is the key to success

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research results that have been presented, it can be concluded that there is the impact and significantly improving students writing skills of the utilizing Social Interactive Writing for English Language Learners (SWELL). The results of the paired sample t-test of the two samples are there is an influence from the utilizing the swell method on students writing skills in analytical exposition text. The magnitude of this impact is evident from the mean score Post-Test of the Experimental Class which has improved from 74.27 to 84.77. So it can be said that there is a significant increase in writing skills of analytical exposition text by utilizing the SWELL method. The effectiveness of the swell method can be seen from the teaching learning process, which includes student activities where students become collaborative, creative, active and participative in the classroom, all of which improve their writing skills. Besides that its effectiveness can also be seen from the teacher's response in which the teacher thinks that the swell method sees a lot of positive potential in the SWELL learning method. However, as with every method, effective implementation and adaptation to student needs is the key to success. As a result, it may be said that there is a impact and significant increase in writing skills of analytical exposition text by using SWELL method in class XI Office Management SMK PAB 2 Helvetia Medan and the SWELL Method is more successful than Teacher-Centered Method.

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