

The Efficacy of Roundtable Technique on EFL Students' Writing Skills: An Experience Learned from a Remote Area

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Abstract

Writing is a skill to express ideas and thoughts to make a message explicit. To arrange an idea in written text the students' need soft skill in completing a text; grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary are the most important aspect in the writing skill that should be mastered by the students organizing the ideas. To attain the students' comprehend and overcome the obstacles in the writing skill, the researchers implementing a roundtable technique in the teaching process. The research aims to investigate the efficacy of the roundtable technique on EFL students' writing skills. Then, the researchers implement quasi-experimental design, Totally 46 students in each class. In addition, the researchers implement writing test as research instrument. The finding showed that the Roundtable technique is an effective way to improve students' writing skills and can stimulate students' attention to the writing skills. In addition, students found their identity and were more confident in elaborating the good ideas. The two classes proved that the significance of the experimental class is higher than the control and the significant score is 0.0. This means that the roundtable technique is an effective way to implement in the classroom. It can encourage students to more focus on the issue and update the new information to improve their writing skills. Moreover, it is an enjoyable technique to implement in the classroom to create a good atmosphere and can improve students' attention in the writing process. Roundtable As a recommended solution to the English teachers and lecturers in prioritize to students writing skills. These is design to specifically improve students' grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary mastery in writing skills.

Keywords: Roundtable technique; EFL students; writing skills

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INTRODUCTION

The teaching of language skills encompasses various challenges, among which writing skills are deemed particularly arduous for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. This complexity arises from the necessity for learners to simultaneously engage their cognitive, linguistic, and cultural knowledge in order to craft paragraphs that are not only grammatically correct but also exhibit proper cohesion and coherence, as highlighted by Haerazi et al. (2018). Furthermore, writing serves as a pivotal tool for both memory and communication. Sinaga (2017) emphasized that writing compels individuals to meticulously consider their thoughts before expressing them, thereby facilitating a clearer and more deliberate articulation of ideas. It enables individuals to convey their thoughts and emotions through written text, essentially allowing for a

structured expression of one's mental and emotional state. Echoing this sentiment, Haerazi (2020) posits that writing skills are fundamentally an endeavor to express the thoughts and feelings harbored within an individual, thereby underscoring the role of language in the articulation of personal experiences and emotions.

Many EFL teachers have implemented various learning strategies with the aim of enhancing their learners' writing abilities. Despite these efforts, there is a notable challenge as some educators report failures in adequately facilitating their students' development into proficient writers. This difficulty stems from a misunderstanding of the nature of writing transcends the mere process of assembling letters or symbols into words, phrases, or paragraphs (Sirait, 2022; Dunga, 2018). Writing encompasses more than just its linguistic components; it is a critical skill in all languages and is deeply intertwined with students' classroom activities. It plays a pivotal role in language learning by motivating students, as Husna & Multazim (2019) note, to focus on employing accurate language. Writing is not only essential for conveying thoughts, emotions, and messages but is also a key communicative skill. According to Parmawati (2021), writing is a productive talent that serves the purpose of communication, enabling the delivery of messages through letters and symbols. Hence, recognizing writing as a comprehensive skill that extends beyond basic linguistic proficiency to include cognitive and communicative capabilities is crucial for effectively teaching and improving writing skills among EFL learners.

One of the teaching strategy is roundtable technique that is designed in improving EFL learners' writing skills. The roundtable technique is a pedagogical strategy specifically tailored to enhance the writing skills of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners (Taha & Majeed, 2023; Roselli, 2016). This method is rooted in the collaborative learning paradigm, where students are encouraged to engage in discussions on writing topics within a structured group setting (Rusinovci, 2015; Rosmiyati, 2022). Typically, this involves forming small groups of 4-5 students, arranged in a way that facilitates open and equal participation among all members. The essence of the roundtable approach lies in its collaborative framework, where students are not just passive recipients of knowledge but active contributors to the learning process. During a roundtable session, the teacher plays a pivotal role in guiding the activity by preparing questions or prompts that are designed to stimulate critical thinking and discussion. These prompts are aimed at addressing specific aspects of writing, ranging from brainstorming ideas to solving complex writing problems.

In practice, each student, in turn, is given the opportunity to present their ideas to the group. This sequential sharing ensures that every participant has a voice, promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the collective learning experience. The roundtable technique offers several pedagogical benefits. Firstly, it encourages students to listen actively to their peers, fostering a learning environment where ideas can be freely exchanged and built upon. This interaction not only helps in the generation of diverse ideas but also aids in the refinement of thought processes as students articulate their perspectives (Haerazi & Irawan, 2019; Kazemian et al., 2021). As ideas are shared and debated, students have the chance to catch new insights, which they can then articulate in sentences. This process of collective ideation followed by individual expression is instrumental in improving writing skills, as it enables learners to explore various ways of constructing sentences and expressing thoughts in writing. Furthermore, this strategy underscores the importance of collaboration in the learning process. By working together towards a common goal, students develop essential soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, which are invaluable beyond the confines of language learning. In sum, the roundtable technique is not just about

enhancing writing skills; it's a holistic approach that cultivates a supportive learning community, encouraging students to learn from each other and grow together.

The roundtable technique, as delineated by Taha and Majeed (2023), represents a group learning strategy designed to facilitate collaborative efforts among students towards achieving shared objectives. This approach is rooted in the principles of cooperative learning, wherein students are organized into heterogeneous groups. This intentional mix aims to blend varying levels of proficiency within each group, especially in the context of writing skills, so that students with greater ability can work alongside and support those with less proficiency. Such a structure is not only conducive to the task at hand—typically involving problem-solving discussions—but also promotes an environment where peer tutoring and mutual growth are possible. A key feature of the roundtable technique is its emphasis on the physical arrangement of participants, typically seated in a circle or around a table, to symbolize equality and ensure that every member has an equal opportunity to contribute (Taha & Majeed, 2023). This setting is instrumental in encouraging active participation from all group members, requiring each student to demonstrate and apply their existing skills within the collective effort.

The ultimate goal is to foster a sense of independence among students, encouraging them to take initiative in their learning process while simultaneously benefiting from the support and insights of their peers. The process approach, as Rusinovci (2015) suggests, plays a crucial role within the roundtable technique by providing a systematic framework for students to engage in cooperative writing tasks. This approach guides the students through various stages of writing, from brainstorming and drafting to reviewing and revising their work, all within the collaborative setting of their group. It is through this structured process that students can collectively navigate the complexities of writing, leveraging the diverse perspectives and skills within their group to enrich the learning experience.

Rosmiyati (2022) further elaborates on the benefits of the roundtable technique, highlighting its effectiveness in facilitating brainstorming sessions, drafting texts, and conducting peer reviews of drafts. This iterative cycle not only enhances the students' writing skills but also cultivates critical thinking, as they learn to evaluate and constructively critique each other's work. Moreover, the roundtable setting encourages a democratic exchange of ideas, ensuring that each voice is heard and valued, thereby enhancing the quality of the group's output. In summary, the roundtable technique embodies a holistic approach to learning, particularly in the context of writing. By fostering an environment of mutual respect, active participation, and collaborative problem-solving, this technique not only improves students' writing abilities but also prepares them for the broader challenges of communication and teamwork in diverse settings.

The novelty of this research focuses on students' competence in grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary in remote areas. In the teaching process, the researchers found that teachers and lecturers focus on the material given to students but not on the students' competence in elaborating their ideas through the three aspects mentioned previously. It is in line with Dewi and Ayunisa (2020) who argue that students have a good ability if they can arrange their ideas into written form in correct vocabulary with full attention in language use grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization in their sentence.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research was delineated as a quantitative study, employing a quasi-experimental design to systematically investigate the impact of certain educational interventions on student writing improvement. Quasi-experimental research, distinct for its application in situations where random assignment to groups is not feasible, provides a robust framework for comparing outcomes across different groups. In this specific study, the design involved the formation of two distinct classes: one serving as the experimental group, to which the educational intervention was applied, and the other as the control group, which did not receive the intervention. This setup allows for a comparative analysis of the intervention's effectiveness based on observable changes in the participants' writing skills.

The primary instrument utilized for data collection in this study was a writing test. This test was specifically designed to gauge the students' writing proficiency and to detect any improvements attributable to the intervention. It was administered twice: once before the intervention (pretest) and once after the intervention (posttest). Such a before-and-after comparison is pivotal in quasi-experimental designs, as it helps in establishing a causal relationship between the intervention and any observed outcomes. Both the experimental and control groups were subjected to the writing test activity, ensuring that any differences in writing improvement could be attributed to the intervention rather than to discrepancies in test administration.

In analyzing the students' written responses, the researchers meticulously filtered and considered the ideas presented to ensure objectivity and to prevent biased interpretations. This careful scrutiny of student responses was essential for extracting detailed and unbiased information related to the phenomenon under study. The emphasis on preventing bias in the interpretation of students' writings underscores the researchers' commitment to methodological rigor. By striving for a detailed understanding of the phenomenon, the researchers aimed to contribute valuable insights into how educational interventions can enhance writing skills. This approach not only ensures the reliability of the study's findings but also enhances its contribution to the broader field of educational research, particularly in the context of writing instruction.

Data Analysis Technique

In their methodology for data analysis, the researchers employed a two-pronged approach consisting of descriptive and inferential analysis, each serving a distinct purpose in the examination of the data collected from the pretest and posttest in both the experimental and control groups. The first step, descriptive analysis, was foundational in providing a comprehensive overview of the students' writing skills as evidenced by their performance on the tests. This phase of analysis focused on calculating and interpreting various statistical measures such as mean, mode, median, and standard deviation. The mean offered insight into the average performance of students, while the mode and median provided information on the most frequently observed data point and the middle value in the data set, respectively. The standard deviation was crucial for understanding the variability or dispersion of the students' scores, indicating the extent to which students' writing skills differed within each group.

Following the descriptive analysis, inferential analysis was undertaken to draw conclusions from the data in relation to the research hypothesis. This phase is critical in determining whether the observed differences in writing improvements between the experimental and control groups are statistically significant, thereby providing evidence to support or refute the initial hypothesis of the study. Inferential statistics enable researchers to make generalizations from their sample to the broader population, offering insights into the efficacy of the educational intervention being investigated. For the

purpose of conducting both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses efficiently and accurately, the researchers utilized SPSS-22 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 22), a widely recognized software tool for statistical analysis in social science research.

The use of SPSS-22 facilitated the handling of complex data sets, allowing for the quick computation of statistical tests and the graphical representation of data. This choice of software underscores the researchers' commitment to rigor and precision in their analysis, ensuring that the conclusions drawn from the study are based on reliable and valid statistical evidence. Through this meticulous approach to data analysis, the research aims to contribute meaningful insights into the impact of specific teaching strategies on EFL learners' writing skills, with potential implications for educational practice and policy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to find out whether the roundtable technique can be effective in teaching and learning English, how the roundtable technique can improve students' ability in writing descriptive text, and whether students who are taught using roundtable technique have better ability in writing descriptive text compared to students who are not taught using roundtable technique. The data was collected from the results of the pre-test and post-test of the students, the pre-test was conducted first on the experimental group and the control group. The results of the pretest provided information about the ability of both groups to write descriptive text. The post-test was given later to both groups after the experimental group received treatment and the control group was taught through conventional teaching.

The data from the pretest was aimed to measure the students' writing skills before getting the treatments, in the pretest, students' writing test was about descriptive text. After the researchers gave treatments by teaching them using the roundtable technique, the researchers conducted a posttest to find out whether there was an improvement in the students' writing skills or not. There were three levels score of the students' writing skills grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary. The whole of students' pretest and posttest scores are presented below:

Table 1. The score of pretest and posttest in the experimental class

No	Pre-Test	%	Post-Test	%
1.	60	3.52%	86	5.05%
2.	73	4.29%	93	5.47%
3.	60	3.52%	76	4.47%
4.	66	3.88%	80	4.70%
5.	80	4.70%	93	5.47%
6.	60	3.52%	80	4.70%
7.	46	2.70%	50	2.94%
8.	60	3.52%	86	5.05%
9.	40	2.35%	50	2.94%
10.	80	4.70%	86	5.05%
11.	76	4.47%	80	4.70%
12.	86	5.05%	93	5.47%
13.	80	4.70%	93	5.47%
14.	86	5.05%	93	5.47%
15.	86	5.05%	86	5.05%

No	Pre-Test	%	Post-Test	%
16.	60	3.52%	73	4.29%
17.	55	3.23%	73	4.29%
	average score		67,88	80,64

In the table above the average score of the pre-test is 67, 88 and the post-test is 80, 64. So, it can be stated that the roundtable technique in the experimental class significantly improves students' writing skills after implementing the roundtable technique.

Table 2. The score of pretest and posttest in the control class

No	Pre-Test	%	Post-Test	%
1.	80	4.44%	80	4.44%
2.	55	3.05%	55	3.05
3.	60	3.33%	80	4.44%
4.	80	4.44%	80	4.44%
5.	86	4.77%	93	5.16%
6.	76	4.22%	86	4.77%
7.	46	2.55%	60	3.33%
8.	60	3.33%	60	3.33%
9.	40	2.22%	73	4.05%
10.	80	4.44%	73	4.05%
11.	76	4.22%	86	4.77%
12.	86	4.77%	86	4.77%
13.	40	2.22%	46	2.55%
14.	53	2.94%	53	2.94%
15.	86	4.77%	93	5.16%
16.	60	3.33%	80	4.44%
17.	86	4.77%	93	5.16%
18.	80	4.44%	86	4.77%
	average score		68,33	75,72

In the table above the average score of the Pre-test is 68, 33 and Post-test is 75, 72. Thus, using conventional techniques in the control class to improve students' writing skills is still in the average category. In addition, the roundtable is an effective technique to implement in each of the classes. Five students got a 55 score with a percentage of 29.4%, 11 students got a 60 score with a percentage of 64.7%, and 1 student got a 65 score with a percentage of 5.9%. it can be concluded that students lack in mastering grammar in their writing skills. Students need the technique to elaborate more on their ideas through grammar aspects.

On the table above showed that 1 student got score 60 with a percentage 5.9%, 2 students got score 65 with a percentage 11.8%, 4 students got score 70 with a percentage 23.5%, 5 students got score 75 with a percentage 29.4 %, and 5 students got score 80 with a percentage 29.4%. It is significantly improve after the researchers were implemented roundtable techniques in teaching writing skills. In addition, this techniques can help students to master grammar in the writing skills. The table showed that 4 students got score 55 with a percentage 23.5%, 11 students got score 60 with a percentage 64.7%, and 2 students got score 65 with a percentage 11.8%. in this steps students more focus on the ideas till they forget the one important aspect namely

punctuation. Punctuation become the main point of the writing skill, the score showed that the students are lack in mastering the punctuation aspect in the writing skills.

On the table above showed that 5 students got 70 score with a percentage 29.4%, 5 students got 75 score with a percentage 29.4%, and 7 students got 80 score with a percentage 41.2%. Roundtable technique is the effective way in implementing in the teaching writing process. In addition, it proves that the students improve their punctuation in the writing skills. On the table above showed that 2 students got 55 score with a percentage 11.8%, 13 students got 60 score with a percentage 76.5%, and 2 students got 65 score with a percentage 11.8%. It can be stated that the students are still in the average in mastering vocabulary aspects. After implementing roundtable techniques the students got improvements score, it prove that 2 students got 65 score with a percentage 11.8%, 4 students got 70 score with a percentage 23.5%, 4 students got 75 score with a percentage 23.5%, 6 students got 80 score with a percentage 35.3%, and 1 student got 85 score with a percentage 5.9%. It can be stated that the students competence in mastering vocabulary after implementing roundtable is significantly improve on their writing skills.

On the table above showed that 5 students got 55 score with a percentage 26.3%, 11 students got 60 score with a percentage 57.9%, and 3 students got 65 score with a percentage 15.8%. It can be stated that the students are still in the average in mastering grammar aspects. 1 student got 60 score with a percentage 5.3%, 8 students got 65 score with a percentage 42.1%, 7 students got 70 score with a percentage 36.8%, 1 student got 75 score with a percentage 5.3%, and 2 students got 80 score with a percentage 10.5%. It can be stated that the students competence in mastering grammar aspect is improve. On the table above showed that the, 5 students got 55 score with a percentage 26.3%, 9 students got 60 score with a percentage 47.4%, and 5 students got 65 score with a percentage 26.3%. It proved that the students are lack in mastering punctuation aspect in their writing skills.

Table 3. The Result of t-test calculation in the Experimental and Control classes

No	t	md	Sig	Category
1.	2.6	12.76	.01	Grammar
2.	2.6	12.76	.01	Punctuation
3	9.8	6	.00	Vocabulary
4.	1.4	7.38	.01	Grammar
5.	1.4	7.38	.01	Punctuation
6.	5.2	7	.00	Vocabulary

The data presented in the table clearly indicate that the students' scores in both the experimental and control classes were positively impacted, underscoring the efficacy of the implemented pedagogical approach. This observation is particularly validated by the significant scores achieved, which serve as compelling evidence of the roundtable technique's ability to enhance students' engagement with and proficiency in writing skills. The technique, by fostering a more interactive and collaborative learning environment, not only captures students' attention more effectively but also provides them with practical and effective strategies for improving their writing. Such an approach not only makes the learning process more attractive to students but also equips them with the necessary tools to excel in writing tasks. This combination of heightened engagement and practical skill development underscores the value of the roundtable

technique as a potent instructional method capable of significantly improving students' writing abilities.

Discussion

The efficacy of implementing roundtable technique has shown a positive effect on students' writing skills, the roundtable technique changes the way of thinking of students who originally thought that writing ability was a difficult skill for manifesting ideas, the strives to provide opportunities for students to elaborate concrete ideas. In this research, several problems were found that students often faced when writing down their ideas. The aspects found in this research are grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. Overall, students had a mean score in the experimental class in the pre-test, which was 67.88 and in the post-test students obtained a mean score of 80.64. In particular, grammar has a percentage value of 29.4% as a very good categorized, punctuation has a percentage value of 41.2% as a very good categorized, and vocabulary has a percentage value of 35.3% as a very good categorized.

In the experimental class structured around the roundtable technique, students are engaged in a collaborative learning environment where they are tasked with solving problems through group work. This pedagogical approach is carefully designed to foster deep learning and enhance writing skills. Initially, each group is assigned a problem to tackle, setting the stage for an interactive and dynamic learning experience. The process begins with students brainstorming and pooling their ideas, followed by drafting their responses based on the collective insights garnered from the discussion (Flora et al, 2020). The drafting phase is crucial, as it requires students to articulate their thoughts in written sentences. This is not a solitary task but a collective endeavor, where ideas are refined through deep discussions within groups.

The collaborative nature of this activity ensures that students are actively engaging with the content, negotiating meaning, and coming to a consensus on the best way to express their ideas (Flora et al., 2020; Parmawati et al., 2021). Moreover, the input from other groups is integrated as supporting sentences, promoting a culture of peer learning and constructive feedback. This iterative process of drafting and discussion culminates in the creation of complete paragraphs, evidencing the students' ability to synthesize information and express their thoughts coherently. The roundtable format is particularly effective in stimulating rigorous intellectual engagement. By sitting in a circle or around a table, students are positioned equally, ensuring that each voice can be heard and valued (Parmawati et al., 2021). This physical arrangement, combined with the task of discussing and solving problems collaboratively, challenges students to think critically and contribute their ideas or opinions on the learning topics discussed. It is in this exchange of diverse perspectives and the critical evaluation of different arguments that students' critical thinking skills are honed.

Furthermore, the roundtable technique enhances students' metacognitive competences. As they engage in discussions, reflect on their thought processes, and consider various approaches to problem-solving, students become more aware of their own learning. They learn to monitor and regulate their cognitive processes, a key aspect of metacognition. This awareness is instrumental in developing self-regulated learners who can adapt their strategies to optimize learning. The use of the roundtable technique in the experimental class not only improves students' writing skills by facilitating the collaborative construction of text but also significantly contributes to the development of critical thinking and metacognitive competences. Through this approach, students are equipped with the cognitive tools necessary for effective problem-solving and lifelong

learning, underscoring the value of interactive and reflective learning practices in education.

The implementation of the roundtable technique in educational settings has been systematically explored and evaluated for its effectiveness in enhancing students' writing proficiency. As documented by Flora et al. (2020), this pedagogical approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental components required to compose a well-structured paragraph. Students engaged in roundtable discussions are encouraged to critically assess and incorporate various aspects of writing, including content relevance and accuracy, organizational coherence, vocabulary richness, appropriate language use, and adherence to mechanical rules. This holistic focus ensures that learners are not merely practicing writing in isolation but are developing a nuanced appreciation for the multifaceted nature of effective written communication. Expanding on this premise, Saori et al. (2023) argue for the importance of extending the benefits of such educational strategies beyond the confines of the classroom. The objective is to equip students with versatile writing skills that are applicable in a wide array of contexts, transcending academic requirements to include real-world applications.

The emphasis on empowering students to write accurately and coherently, with a particular focus on addressing common pitfalls in grammar, mechanics, organization, and vocabulary, highlights the need for a robust educational foundation that prepares learners for the diverse challenges they will encounter outside the school environment. Supporting this perspective, research conducted by Yaqin and Al-Halim (2023) provides empirical evidence of the roundtable technique's efficacy. Their findings confirm that this interactive and collaborative approach to learning has a significant positive impact on students' ability to produce descriptive texts. The acceptance of the alternative hypothesis in their study underlines the tangible improvements in writing skills facilitated by the roundtable technique, signifying not only the success of this method in enhancing academic performance but also its potential to foster a deeper, more intrinsic understanding of effective writing practices among students. The roundtable technique emerges as a powerful instructional strategy that transcends traditional teaching methodologies by fostering an environment where students can collaboratively explore and refine their writing skills.

In applying the roundtable technique, the students are more focused and very enthusiastic in presenting the conceptualized ideas. This technique really supports students in starting concepts that are built when writing down the ideas, this technique includes student cooperation when conceptualizing ideas so that the results of students' writing have good meaning. The students' competence to write using the roundtable technique has increased significantly, In particular, it can be said that writing skills in aspects of grammar, punctuation and vocabulary have a very significant increase when the roundtable technique is applied in class. In line with the results conduct by Romadhoni et al (2022) roundtable is recommended for EFL teachers to implement since it can be one of the practical teaching strategies that significantly improve students' descriptive writing skills and increase their interpersonal and social skills.

CONCLUSION

Writing skill is a basic thing for students, it is hoped that students will improve these skills by mastering several aspects namely grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. This research further highlights students' difficulties using grammar, punctuation and vocabulary in writing skills. The roundtable technique is an effective way to improve students' writing skills and can stimulate students' focus on the writing skills. In addition, students found their identity and were more confident in elaborating the good ideas.

Moreover, It can encourage students to more focus on the issue and update the new information to improve their writing skills. Overall, roundtable is influential for the writing skills, particularly grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary. To future researchers are recommended to investigate the implementation of roundtable in teaching other English skill, such as; speaking, listening, and reading. it is possible that this technique will give positive impact to students' in other English skills.

RECOMMENDATION

To summarize all things in this research, the researcher hope that in implementing roundtable techniques in the future research should focus on the student's skill. The teachers and lecturers are the role model of the students; students will pay attention to the writing skill if the teachers and lecturers are motivating them to be serious. Writing is a skill to express ideas and thoughts in order to make message or meaning are easy to understand. In writing process, teachers and lecturers need techniques to improve students' writing skills. So, the students can share experiences, explain opinions, and giving information in written text. Writing is very important part in completing tasks such as reports, proposals, and scientific writing. Expressing thoughts in writing is not easy in foreign language learning for most people, especially students and it plays an important role in the learning process because writers must be able to explore their knowledge to be good ideas.

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