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***E-journaling and Writer's Workshop as Writing  
Scaffolding Techniques in Saudi EFL Classes***

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## **Abstract**

Writing in a second or a foreign language has been studied by many researchers using quantitative and qualitative measures over the past decades. Research has shown that writing is a challenging skill for students at both school and university levels. Concerning the latter, first-year undergraduates are reportedly faced with a considerable mismatch between high school L2 writing skills and the greater proficiency level required for potential course of university study. Phase two of a larger project (Mohammed et al., 2020) which has focused on writing apprehension, this experimental case study investigates the impact of e-journaling and writer's workshop techniques on enhancing learners' writing in a second language (L2). Carried out at an English as a foreign language (EFL) university classroom context in Saudi Arabia, this study contributes quantitative evidence indicating effective impact of the techniques of e-journaling and writer's workshop on enhancing L2 writing skills. This research signifies a resourceful input into EFL teaching and learning through investigating the findings associated with integrating these two techniques. Instruments featured a treatment course of study and a writing competence test of L2 writing skills. The randomised control-group post-test model was applied within the experiment. Participants ( $n= 50$ ) were randomly consigned to a treatment group taught using the treatment-programme and a control group ( $n= 50$ ) taught habitually. Ultimately, the two groups were post-tested using a writing skill competence test (WSCT). Statistical data revealed significant difference across the test scores of the two participant groups in support of the treatment trial. Writing competence scores raised by 38.63% ( $t = 6.210, p < 0.01$ ) and the effect size of the difference was significantly large in the calculated difference of Cohen's  $d$  ( $d = 1.242$ ). Overall, the findings suggest that in general that e-journaling combined with the writer's workshop techniques have major influence on improving learners' L2 writing competence. It was also shown that participants have welcomed the use of the aforementioned techniques. The empirical findings in this study provide a new understanding of enhancing learners' L2 skills at a university-level EFL classroom context. Taken together, these results also provide an actionable catalyst for researchers and educators at the study context.

**Keywords:** EFL, e-journaling, L2, writer's workshop, writing skill.

## التدوين الإلكتروني وورشة عمل الكاتب كوسائل تعزيز لمهارة الكتابة في

### فصول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالمملكة العربية السعودية

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المستخلص:

تمت دراسة الكتابة بلغة ثانية أو أجنبية من قبل العديد من الباحثين باستخدام مقاييس كمية ونوعية على مدى العقود الماضية. هذا، وتشير الدراسات بأن الطلاب الجامعيين في السنة الأولى يواجهون تبايناً كبيراً بين مهارات الكتابة باللغة الثانوية في المرحلة الثانوية ومستوى الكفاءة الأكبر المطلوب للدراسة الجامعية. كمرحلة ثانية من مشروع بحثي (محمد وآخرون، ٢٠٢٠) حول الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية، تبحث هذه الدراسة التجريبية في تأثير التدوين الإلكتروني وورشة عمل الكاتب على تحسين كتابة المتعلمين بلغة ثانية. تمحورت هذه الدراسة حول اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في محيط فصول دراسية جامعية في المملكة العربية السعودية، وتسهم هذه الدراسة بأدلة كمية تشير إلى التأثير الفعال لتقنيات التدوين الإلكتروني وورشة عمل الكاتب على تعزيز مهارات الكتابة في اللغة الثانية. كما تشير الدراسة إلى مساهمة كبيرة في تعليم وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من خلال النتائج التي تم التوصل إليها والمرتبطة بدمج هاتين التقنيتين. تضمنت الأدوات المستخدمة دورة علاجية للدراسة واختبار كفاءة الكتابة لمهارات الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية. تم تطبيق نموذج الاختبار البعدي لمجموعة التحكم داخل التجربة. تم إرسال المشاركين (العدد = 50) بشكل عشوائي إلى مجموعة علاج تدرس باستخدام برنامج العلاج ومجموعة ضابطة (العدد = 50) تُدرس بالشكل المعتاد. وفي مرحلة لاحقة، تم اختبار المجموعتين بعد اختبار الكفاءة في مهارات الكتابة. أظهرت البيانات الإحصائية تبايناً ذا دلالة إحصائية في نتائج الاختبار للمجموعتين المشاركتين تدعم تجربة العلاج حيث ارتفعت علامات الكفاءة في الكتابة بمقدار ٣٨.٦٣% ( $t = 6.210, p < 0.01$ ) كما كان حجم تأثير التباين كبيراً نسبياً في التباين المحسوب لكوهين ( $d = 1.242$ ) بشكل عام، تشير النتائج إلى أن للتدوين الإلكتروني جنباً إلى جنب مع تقنيات ورشة عمل الكاتب تأثير كبير على تحسين كفاءة

## E-journaling and Writer's Workshop .....

المتعلمين في الكتابة باللغة الثانية. كما تظهر كذلك أن المشاركين رحبوا باستخدام التقنيات المذكورة أعلاه. توفر النتائج التجريبية في هذه الدراسة فهمًا جديدًا لتعزيز مهارات المتعلمين في الكتابة باللغة الثانية في سياق الفصول الدراسية للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وبأخذ نتائج هذه الدراسة مجتمعةً، فإنها توفر أيضًا محفزًا عمليًا للباحثين والمعلمين في محيط الدراسة في تعزيز مهارة الكتابة لدى الطلبة.

الكلمات الدالة:

تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، التدوين الإلكتروني، اللغة الثانية، ورشة عمل الكاتب، مهارة الكتابة.

## **Introduction**

### ***Research Background***

Writing in English as a second/foreign language classroom contexts has received considerable scholastic attention over the past few decades given that writing is indeed at the heart of a learner’s competence in English. Research and practice have always shown that there is always a requirement to develop learners’ writing abilities to assist them become more proficient in English. This need, claiming that teaching people to write down, may be a critical goal for educators given the power to specific oneself is central to education, relating on to learning and thinking (Zheng and Warschauer, 2018). Several current patterns of writing disregard either the cognitive or sociocultural aspects which influence writing achievement, while others have overlooked “motivational resources writers wake the task of writing” (Cargill, 2019: 195). Such resources provide students with opportunities to become actively involved in their learning and makes their learning more meaningful. An additional review of the research work associated with writing instruction reveals that one in all the approaches employed in developing writing skills is that the writer’s workshop approach. Substantial benefits of the workshop technique, according to ElSaid (2006), include its manageability along with the potential of steering precise partaker requirements, at the most favourable times within the writing course. Typically, this technique consists of three successive phases: a) the primary phase is that the mini lesson where students are given linear instruction on certain writing skills, b) the second phase is that the writing time where students engage in numerous stages of the writing process, and c) the last phase may be a whole-class meeting where students discuss and celebrate what has been achieved (Cohen, 2018; Dunlap, 2016).

Researchers have not examined e-journaling in enhancing L2 writing in the Arab world in much detail (Baldwin, 2014) lamenting the recent introduction of this technique in language classes. Indeed, the duty of developing learners’ L2 writing is mutually shared by students, instructors, and action researches. The employment of e-journaling and writer’s workshop, in the current study, is aimed at catalysing this procedure by providing university freshmen at Taibah University Department of English with steady writing practice, thus enhancing their skills, preparing them for subsequent university-level writing

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requirements. Leer and Runck (2016) maintain that writer's workshops help growing self-reliance within the accomplishment of writing skills projects.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

First-year undergraduate students face a big discrepancy between pre-university L2 writing skills and the much higher aptitude degree required for their prospective course of study (Al-Mohanna, 2010). Drastically, research conducted in several Arab states has revealed that college undergraduates struggle with significant difficulty in English in general and writing in particular (Alsamdani, 2010). Correspondingly, it is assumed that the problem of first-year undergraduates at the present study's context which primarily lie in their dearth of confidence and lack of university-level writing skills could be tackled by a treatment-programme that integrates interactive e-journaling and communicative writer's workshop techniques (Mohammed et al., 2020). This, we argue, could improve the participating students' writing skills. Another serious educational challenge is evident in a high dropout rate of first-year both in our context, and other EFL context counterparts, due to various academic and professional reasons including learners' struggles with English language study and content subjects taught using English as a medium of instruction (EMI) which is increasingly adopted by tertiary institutions in Saudi Arabia.

### ***Objective and Question of the Study***

The purpose of the present study is to assess the influence of e-journaling and writer's workshop techniques in scaffolding students' L2 writing. It accordingly examines statistically significant differences in first-year undergraduates' writing competence mean scores for control and treatment groups in terms of its five components (content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics) after implementation of the e-journaling and writer's workshop technique. This focus is guided by the following research question: Are there any significant differences in first-year undergraduates' writing competence mean scores for control and treatment groups in terms of its five components (content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics) after instruction of the e-journaling and writer's workshop technique? The hypothesis that will be tested is that there are no statistically significant differences in first-year undergraduates' writing

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competence mean scores for control and treatment groups in terms of its five components (content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics) after the implementation of e-journaling and writer's workshop techniques.

### ***Delimitations of the Study***

The current study included a 7-week instruction treatment-programme that integrated the e-journaling along with the writer's workshop techniques over the second term of the academic year 2019-2020. It was delimited to developing the writing competence of the subsequent skills: a) choosing suitable vocabulary, b) appropriate organisation of thoughts, c) producing fitting writing content, d) correct usage of language structure and grammar, and e) accurate use of writing mechanics, e.g. spelling, punctuation, etc. The present study is delimited to a sample of students (n= 100) of homogenous educational and social backgrounds at Taibah University Department of English. Divided into two groups for research purposes, the participating students were instructed by the same teacher, other than the researchers, to eradicate any inaccuracies caused by teacher discrepancy or any biases caused by the presence of the researchers in the classroom. All of the study subjects were aged between 18 and 19 at the time of the study.

### **Literature Review**

The theoretical framework of this study is diversely shaped by the related research of (Vygotsky, 1980; Gee, 2000; Prior, 2006; Perry, 2012; Wang, 2015; Hodges, 2017; Zheng & Warschauer, 2018; Cargill, 2019). The theory behind L2 teaching of writing is looked closely over, along with the models of writing workshop and e-journaling according to the following levels of abstraction:

- The cognitive process theory of writing and graphic organizing
- Vygotsky and the sociocultural theory of writing
- Social cognitive theory and self-efficacy in writing
- Ecological theory and building a writing-conscious environment
- Second language acquisition theory and writing teaching
- Major approaches and techniques of L2 teaching writing
- Causes, effects, and degrees of L2 writing apprehension

Moreover, this chapter reviews L2 writing theories and teaching approaches about PYP writing preparation then it highlights various

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ways of writing assessment. It also looks closely over the theory behind both the writing workshop and the e-journal models in L2 contexts as well as how they could merge together to enhance learning outcome. It further reviews the writing as a communal practice that builds on realistic communiqué among people and give students a more inspiring drive for learning writing creatively as well.

The targeted previous studies were performed by different researchers in different universal and regional countries. They also espoused diverse settings, methods and instruments to attain their objectives, as follows:

- Studies based on the writing workshop (Atwell, 1987; Ping, 2005; El Said, 2006; Kim, 2015; Kerr, 2017; Abrams, 2019)
- Studies based on the e-journaling (Rowen, 2005; Sim & Hew, 2010; Hou, 2015; Dunlap, 2016; Cohen, 2018; Wu et al., 2019)
- E-journaling and workshop impact on knowledge (Klatt, 1996; Boone, 2009; Agésilas, 2015; Head, 2017; Deus, 2018)
- E-journaling and workshop impact on performance (Aly, 2002; Wyatt, 2009; Tuan, 2010; Phipps, 2015; Abrams, 2019)
- E-journaling and workshop impact on apprehension (Walker, 2003; Song, 2007; Ahmad, 2013; Huwari, 2014; Arju, 2019)

Correspondingly, the workshop and the e-journaling techniques highly value the purposeful feature of the writing communication. They also promote the impression that writing skills grow rapidly once the written practice is authentic and expressive. Real determination to interconnect positively ought to be the decisive motive to achieve the writing assignment.

Furthermore, merging the workshop and the e-journaling techniques would provide learners with ventures to use English freely and effectively outside the formal setting. Graham and Perin (2018) insist, “regardless of the variety of communicative pedagogies, their purpose remains to prepare learners to use the second language in the world beyond” (p.15). Additionally, this blend may give EFL learners multiple opportunities to express themselves without the restrictions of being anxious about falling in errors.

While this theoretical framework contributes substantially to the present study, it penitently addresses the writing workshop and the e-journaling techniques separately. No studies measure the effect of merging the writing workshop and the e-journaling techniques on the development of specific writing skills as content/ideas, organization,



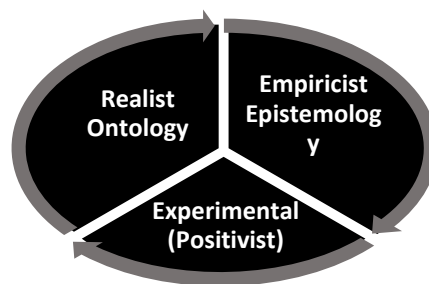
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vocabulary/word choice, voice, sentence fluency, and convention/mechanics. It is hoped that this study will add to the body of knowledge by investigating the effective value of merging the workshop and the e-journaling techniques in developing first-year undergraduates’ writing skills. Moreover, the following chapter shows some previous studies related to the two areas of interest of this study, namely the workshop and the e-journaling techniques and their impact on the present study.

### **Methodology**

#### ***Philosophical Underpinning the Current Research***

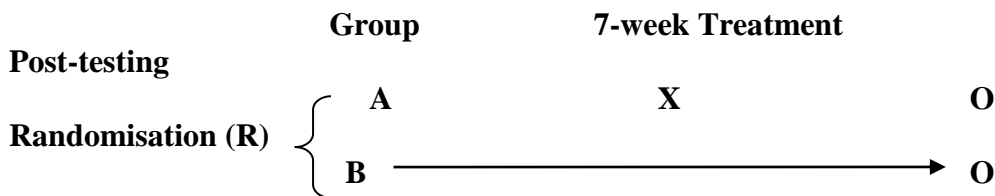
The researchers, within the current study, assume a causal realistic ontology that pursues the substantial domain of cause and effect. As illustrated in Figure 1 below, philosophy lets researchers detect the knowledge gaps as a magnifying lamp, which they ought to address in addition to the technique with which the gaps are filled (Hicks, 2013).



**Figure 1:** *Progression of the philosophical underpinning the study*

#### ***Research Model***

The current study implemented an experimental realisation model through the appliance of the randomised control-group post-test-only model. The treatment group participants were taught writing using the treatment-programme while the control group participants were not allowed to go through the same treatment. At the end of the treatment, the two groups were post-tested by the same writing skill competence test (WSCT hereafter).



***Treatment-Programme Model***

In modelling the treatment programme, the researchers pursued a number of subsequent steps. First, the objectives of the treatment-programme were defined for the participants. Second, the required writing sub-skills to upgrade the writing ability of first-year undergraduate student participants were identified: a) acceptable writing content production, b) proper choice of vocabulary and accurate organisation of thoughts, c) correct usage of language structures and grammar rules, and d) accurate use of writing mechanics. Third, the various modes of writing that ought to be mastered by the participating first-year undergraduate students were pinpointed: a) basics of writing skills, b) particular types of writing (including e-mails, postcards, reports, and biographies), and c) various types of descriptive writing and basic concepts of narrative writing. Finally, the instructional approach and pedagogy employed in instruction were employed.

***Population and Sampling***

As randomisation was an added value of the control-group post-test-only technique, the participants were selected using computerised random number generators. All subjects had been identified before the experiment began and they were assigned numbers from 1 to 300 (the total number of subjects), and then a computer’s random number generator was used to assign the subjects to three study groups via these numbers. Subsequently, the researchers used the lot to randomly select an experimental and a control group out of these three groups. This technique was chosen to give each group an equal chance of being selected as experimental or control groups. The ages of the students were obtained from the university records, calculated and counted in months. Days less than fifteen were omitted and fifteen days or more were counted a month. Thus, excluding repeaters, the ages of the students ranged from seventeen to nineteen years old. Repeater, absentees and students who came from private or language secondary schools were

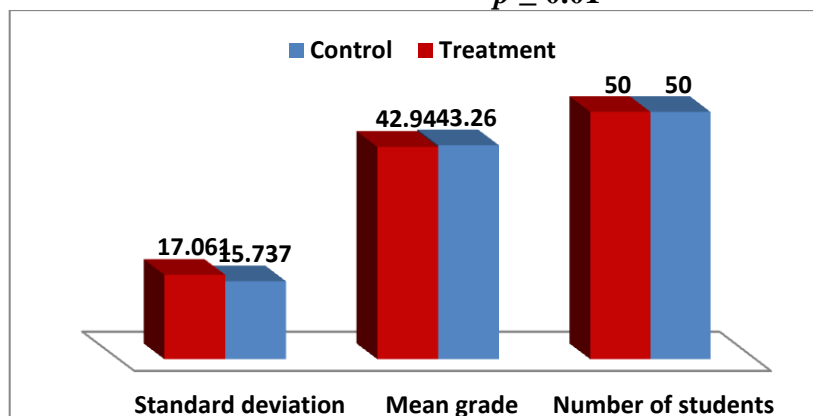
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excluded. As a result of these decisive filtrations, a sample of one hundred participants, first-year undergraduates at Taibah University Department of English, was randomly taken from a population of three hundred registered first-year student participants. They were randomly consigned to two groups, of fifty participants each, a treatment group taught using the treatment-programme and a control group taught habitually. To achieve equivalence, the (WSCT) was implemented to both groups before the appliance of the experiment. Utilising *t*-test method for independent samples, means of scores achieved by the participants of both groups indicated no major statistical significant difference, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 2 next:

**Table 1:**  
*The equivalence pretesting (t-test) scores of participants’ writing competence*

Class	Number of students	Mean grade	Standard deviation	Observed <i>t</i> -value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	50	43.260	15.737	0.097	0.923
Treatment	50	42.940	17.061		

*\*p* ≤ 0.01



**Figure 2:** *The equivalence pretesting results of participants’ writing competence*

***Research Instrumentation***

The research tools, as shown above, required special attention to avoid incorrect variants that may be caused by the experiment within the randomised post-test-only model (Creswell, 2009). Thus, the researchers thoroughly constructed and modified the subsequent instruments:

**1. The treatment programme:**

The treatment programme integrating the e-journaling along with the writer’s workshop techniques featured:

- a. Instructor handbook (effective instructional procedures and approaches).
- b. Student workbook (entertaining ultimate learning exercises).
- c. Collaborative model including the subsequent phases and schemes:
  - Mini-task (a brief tutorial provided explicit teaching of a particular element or writing skill).
  - Pre-writing “participants brainstorming and gathering of knowledge about the subject” (Rowen, 2005).
  - Composing the primary outline (utilising their thoughts spontaneously without worrying about correctness).
  - Reviewing (performing essential corrections concerning the content and arranging their thoughts).
  - Proofreading “for mechanics and fundamental errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation” (Ciampa, 2016).
  - Writer’s ring (the class cohort listen vigilantly and present feedback to their peers where applicable).
  - Whole class e-journaling (honouring participants’ accomplishments thru posting their writings on the e-learning channels).

**2. The Writing Skill Competence Test (WSCT):**

The researchers modelled and utilised the WSCT (see Appendix A) which features five parts:

- Part (1): Writing an extended paragraph describing someone.
- Part (2): Writing an extended paragraph describing an area.
- Part (3): Writing an e-mail.
- Part (4): Writing a report.
- Part (5): Writing a brief narrative.

***Validity and Reliability***

Validity, in research, is the degree to which an assessment process appraises what it is intended to appraise (Smith, 2003), and reliability is the degree to which research tools produce consistent results. Both validity and reliability considerations were taken into account in this study. Both the treatment programme and the WSCT were reviewed by a panel of EFL teaching specialists at Taibah University (n= 8). They were judged as authentic as well as appropriate for the rationale they were created for including limited recommendations and adjustments. The researchers modified the guidelines within the final edition of the treatment-programme and the WSCT. Grades given by the three raters participating within the pilot research were correlated using Pearson Formula. Table 2 below sets out correlation coefficients among the three raters.

**Table 2:**  
***Inter-rater correlation coefficients of the writing competence test***

<b>Raters</b>	<b>R1</b>	<b>R2</b>	<b>R3</b>
<b>R1</b>	<b>1.00</b>		
<b>R2</b>	<b>.87</b>	<b>1.00</b>	
<b>R3</b>	<b>.86</b>	<b>.88</b>	<b>1.00</b>

**The inter-rater reliability coefficient was calculated using the Spearman-Brown Formula (Aly, 2002):**

$$\text{Inter-rater reliability coefficient} = \frac{n(r)}{1+(n-1)r}$$

where, n = number of raters, r = mean inter-rater correlation coefficient. The calculated inter-rater reliability coefficient was (.95) which indicates high consistency in scoring the test by the three raters.

Cronbach alpha coefficient was also used to calculate the internal consistency coefficients of the items included in the writing skills competence test (WSCT). Results of the reliability analysis showed that the items in the WSCT had a Cronbach alpha value of (0.996) which indicated a rescoreable internal consistency.

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### ***Piloting***

The pilot included every tool of the research. 4 demonstrative units of the treatment course of study were managed to a selected at random group of forty participants (excluding the 2 groups involved within the major treatment of the research). Participants got an inclusive picture of the entire treatment-programme. The pilot research lasted for 14 days commencing on January 19, 2020 and ending on February 2, 2020. The pilot research of the treatment course of study targeted the determination of the appropriateness of the pedagogy and treatment course of study materials for the level of participants. It has also aimed at reaching an acceptable timeline for each session and the treatment course of study. In addition to analysing the applicability of the resources and the instruction established for teaching, it has also helped identifying challenges that appeared and proposing appropriate solutions. Piloting the research, together with dealing efficiently with some difficulties thru its implementation, has helped the researchers significantly within the employment of the treatment-programme.

### ***Variables and Measurement***

The independent variable of the present study lies in its 49-day treatment course of study integrating the techniques of e-journaling and writer's workshop. The dependent variable, on the other hand, is the writing skills competence of the participating first-year undergraduates. To realise equivalence between participants of the treatment along with the control groups, the subsequent variables were delimited: a) the research population exemplified similar social and cultural backgrounds, b) the two groups were instructed by the same teacher (on behalf of the researchers) to eradicate any inaccuracies caused by teacher difference and/or preconceptions instigated by the researchers, and c) to achieve equivalence of both groups, the subsequent variables were delimited: a) both classes were males and hence no significant differences could be attributed to learners' gender, and b) eliminating repeaters.

### ***Data Processing***

To manage the treatment of the study, the researchers implemented these data collection measures according to the second term calendar of the first-year undergraduate study at Taibah University academic year 2019-2020:

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- A preliminary seminar targeted orienting the treatment group on February 4, 2020.
- The instruction of the treatment course of study started on February 9, 2020 and concluded on March 10, 2020 (twice a week).
- The treatment and control groups were both tested using the WSCT on March 12, 2020.

The WSCT was accustomed to contrast the grades indicating writing improvement of the treatment group participants who were instructed writing thru a treatment course of study blending mutually the e-journaling along with the writer’s workshop techniques and also the control group participants who were not given the opportunity to experience such treatment.

### **Findings and Discussion**

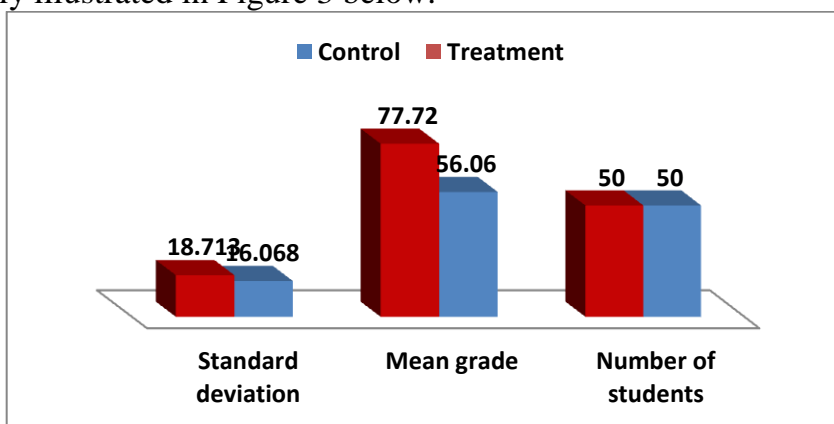
The study question is: “Are there any significant differences in first-year undergraduates’ writing competence mean scores for control and treatment groups in terms of its five components (content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics) after instruction of the e-journaling and writer’s workshop technique?”, and its null hypothesis is: “There were no statistical significant differences in first-year undergraduate student participants’ writing competence mean grades for control and treatment groups in terms of its five components (content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics) after the implementation of e-journaling and writer’s workshop techniques”. To examine this hypothesis, the researchers calculated and processed participants’ grades on the WSCT. Subsequently, they utilised the *t*-test method for independent samples to ascertain the assumption of the distinction between mean grades of the treatment group as well as the control group learners as illustrated in Table 3 below.

**Table 3:**  
*Post-testing t-test scores of participants’ writing competence*

Group	Number of students	Mean grade	Standard deviation	Observed <i>t</i> -value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	50	56.060	16.068	6.210*	.000
Treatment	50	77.720	18.713		

**\* $p \leq 0.01$**

An independent samples *t*-test was run on the treatment and control groups data to explore whether the treatment group participants improved in their writing competence because of their exposure to the treatment-programme. The outcomes indicated a statistically robust significant difference between the grades of the treatment group (M = 77.720, SD = 18.713) and the control group (M = 56.060, SD = 16.068) in favour of the treatment group resulting from the treatment-programme. The writing competence grade raised by 38.63% ( $t = 6.210, p < 0.01$ ) and the effect size of the difference was considerably large at Cohen’s *d* ( $d = 1.242$ ). The increase in the writing competence grade and the effect size of the difference both suggested that the integration of the e-journaling and the writer’s workshop techniques had an acceptable effect on participants’ writing competence. This major increase in the treatment group’s writing competence, compared to the control group’s grades, is visually illustrated in Figure 3 below.



**Figure 3: Post-testing findings of participants' competence of writing skills**



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Since both groups were homogenised before the experiment, this improvement within the treatment group participants' writing was attributed to the impact of the treatment-programme. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was acknowledged. This means that integrating the e-journaling together with the writer's workshop techniques has major influence on developing the treatment group participants' writing skills as compared to the control group.

According to the literature reviewed in this study, the detailed analysis of the scores confirmed the advancement of treatment group participants' writing skills on the five elements of the targeted writing skills. This could be credited to the efficient aspects of the e-journaling and writer's workshop techniques that were integrated thru the treatment course of study in relation to preceding research thru:

- Using cooperative techniques full of support.
- Employing collaborative techniques supported with student-led learning (Alzaanin, 2014).
- Emphasising the communal feature of English language learning along the lines of its personalised nature (Sanoff, 2006).
- Consolidating students writing acquisition and attitude positively (Huwari, 2014).
- Developing their feeling of autonomy, accountability, and self-assurance in learning (Tuan, 2010).
- Conserving the teacher's time for further practical matters, e.g. modelling and monitoring (Hassan, 2001).
- Fostering 'the absent' attractive long-lasting content and pedagogy (Samway, 1992).
- Establishing learner-centred environments that promotes independence together with cooperative learning, e.g. group editing, e-journaling, and publishing (Obeiah & Bataineh, 2016).



**Figure 4:** *Promoting autonomy and collaborative learning thru learner-centred activities*

As demonstrated in Figure 4, it was comprehensible from the perceptive analysis of participants' grades that the secure and constructive atmosphere the treatment-programme supplied the students with played an efficient part in upgrading all the targeted components of their writing competence:

- Choosing suitable vocabulary.
- Appropriate organisation of thoughts.
- Producing suitable writing content.
- Correct usage of language structure and grammar.
- Proper use of writing mechanics (e.g. spelling, punctuation, etc.).

The wrapping of the positive results of this research are often qualified to the effectiveness of the treatment course of study integrating the e-journaling along with the writer's workshop techniques, featured within the present research. In contrast to most local instruction of writing techniques, during this treatment-programme each unit began with a mini-task during which the teacher delivered a theoretic instruction to supply the participants with the knowledge required in every unit. Likewise, the participants enjoyed the possibility to concentrate on their teacher's modelling, ask about and have any point they may have not grasped during this component. At the tip of every mini task, the teacher helped learners to write notes in their activity books about the salient features of each unit. This element of the treatment-programme represented an exclusive resource of information and evidence of authentic learning (Wu, Yang, Scott, Hsieh, and Yamamoto, 2019). It also allowed the learners to gain the knowledge

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essential aimed at enhancing their writing skills along with preparing them for the ultimate tests of the treatment course of study.

This verified efficacy was, almost certainly, the outcomes of many features of the suggested approach that are absent within the Arabic/Saudi framework. For example, the methodical teaching offered within the treatment course of study had a considerable influence on the standard of writing skills. The assistance delivered by the instructor together with the interactions that came about between him and the learners furthermore as among learners one another were effective in enhancing their writing.

### **Concluding Recommendations**

Supported by the results of this research, the researchers endorse instituting this projected approach (integrating the e-journaling along with the writer's workshop techniques) to be employed in the instruction of writing skills in first-year academic courses of study at a university-level. Moreover, this study proposes that providing apt emphasis on training EFL instructors on applying this, and other, new techniques. However, several limitations to this study need to be acknowledged. The sample size is relatively small which has been due to difficulties faced with student participant recruitment. This is attributable to the demand of academic study and long study hours first-year undergraduates deal with in their first year at the study context. In addition, it was not possible to recruit female students due to logistical and time constraint reasons. It is recommended however that this study is replicated with female EFL students at the study context to establish whether e-journaling and writer's workshop techniques have the same effectiveness in enhancing learners' L2 writing skills or otherwise.

That said, and reinforced by the outcomes of this research, it is recommended that the features of the examined techniques be presented to researchers, course writers, and decision-makers corresponding to these subsequent elucidations. The study calls for inspiring students to take part in authentic social activities like, interviewing and writing about it by means of e-journaling. It also recommends the incorporation of pre-writing tasks and assignments into L2 coursebooks to increase learners' self-confidence and personalised learning. Further, the study argues that the inclusion of L2 writing resources and instructions that attract the interest of students. Such materials should be complemented

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with visual aids, e.g. pictures, and an increased practise time. Dedicating more confidence to students through using e-journaling and social e-learning within the direction of making research, preparing projects, and writing reports about films, newspaper, and e-blogs is also recommended.

The findings of this study have several important implications for future practice. A key priority would be to expand the conception of pair and group work writing practise rather than the one-sided viewpoint of writing as a personal act. This involves preparing students to work and learn together in a more collaborative way. In addition, using learner-centred writing pedagogy, i.e., when learners start writing down, what learners recognise ought to be emphasised with instructor-involvement retained minimal. This could be accompanied by presenting further assessment types, namely self in addition to peer assessment, into writing activities before instructor assessment/review to develop their learning to learn the L2 skills. By and large, it is hoped that this study would signify an actionable methodical catalyst and contribution to related previous studies, precisely, in coping with the coronavirus pandemic and benefitting from the current digital occurrence in introducing extra attractive lifetime e-learning.

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