

## Sustained Silent Reading as a Significant Approach in the Intensification of the Writing Skills of English Language Learners

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### Abstract

*This study was conducted to find out the remarkable difference between the pretest and post-test results of the writing skills of Grade 9 learners and the pre-experimental research design specifically the pretest-posttest design was utilized. With the analysis and interpretation of data, this pre-experimental study used statistical tools such as Mean, Standard Deviation, and T-Test. Hypotheses were tested, and the findings revealed the following information; there is no significant difference between the pretest and post-test results of the writing skills of Grade 9 learners. This research proved that sustained silent reading directly affects the writing skills of Grade 9 learners. This method can be applied and helpful to both parents and teachers. Having all those findings, this study recommends that since sustained silent reading is a remarkable method of teaching so educators should be accommodated in training on how to develop and carry out the program in a classroom environment, teachers may be sensitive enough to observe the urgent need of learners, thereby, being resourceful and patient, parents may be so inclined in pursuing their children's education and help them achieve their goals. They may possess a positive attitude toward reading and encourage their children to study hard, specifically struggling learners. Learners may be responsible enough to enhance their performance by developing a habit of reading to improve their writing skills, and future researchers may conduct a similar study to see the benefits of sustained silent reading and thus improve the learners' writing skills.*

*Keywords: sustained silent reading, writing skills, English language learners, pleasurable, cognitively undemanding, informative.*

### Introduction

Reading is a complex activity including various abilities that need active engagement on the reader's part. Some scholars and researchers express their opinions regarding reading and the process to emphasize its complexity. It raises issues in the reader's mind that must be answered with thorough thinking. To put it another way, reading may be seen as a cognitive process that involves the reader grasping, understanding, and even applying a variety of abilities to extract details from a book, such as concluding, predicting, questioning, and making conclusions.

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 results revealed that fifteen-year-old students from the Philippines performed worse in reading compared to the majority of nations and economies who participated in the PISA 2018. The reading average reading score of the Philippines is 340 which is tied with the Dominican Republic. The two countries mentioned obtained the most unfavorable scores.

Since innumerable students struggle in terms of language literacy and numeracy, the Education Department in the Philippines highly inspires every single public elementary and secondary school to promote reading in a larger scale. To cultivate a love for reading and enhance students' reading competence, DepEd kicked off the reading program "Hamon: Bawa't Bata Bumasa" (3Bs) considering reading as a discerning skill in all academic discipline.

Leonor Briones, the Secretary of Education, issued DepEd memo No. 173 series 2019 stating that every single learner is given the opportunity to enhance their reading skills and aid them to become exceptional and independent.

In response to DepEd memo no. 173, the Department of Education released another memorandum in partnership with World Vision Development Foundation, DepEd Memorandum No. 267 s. 2021 will reinforce the former through the Brigada Pagbasa Program. The program is a national movement for reading that aims to bring together all education supporters by helping all Filipino children read through partnership.

In the context of this study, SSR by Hunt was utilized. Sustained silent reading is described as an unbroken duration of silent reading (Siah & Kowk, 2010). Schools utilize this approach in place of other reading initiatives to encourage students to read. Many politicians, administrators, teachers, and parents have stressed the importance of literacy programs in helping children improve their reading skills (Siah & Kwok, 2010). Sustained silent reading is one solution to this problem. According to Krashen (2004), educated individuals performed sustained silent reading constantly and intensely." Although there may be a link between SSR advantages and English literature studies, the benefits can also assist students in other disciplines. Many researchers and educators agree that "practices along the SSR continuum (meaning more time spent reading texts) are effective for developing vocabulary, improving reading comprehension, improving writing ability, increasing background knowledge, and developing schema" (Anderson, 2018).

For this reason, the researcher will venture into writing to see the impact of sustained silent reading as a significant approach in intensifying the writing skills among the Grade-9 learners in San Jose National School for the school year 2021 – 2022. It looked at the effectiveness of sustained silent reading in improving student's writing skills as measured by the teachers and the program's implementation tactics, reading performance, and writing skills development.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The research was designed to verify the aftermath of sustained silent reading on the composition skills of Grade-9 learners in San Jose National High School, Division of Batangas Province.

More particularly, this research brought to light responses to the following queries:

1. To evaluate the pretest score of the writing skills of Grade-9 learners in terms of summarizing; sequencing; inferencing; comparing and contrasting, and drawing conclusions.

2. To analyze the posttest score of the writing skills of Grade-9 learners in terms of:
  - 2.1 summarizing;
  - 2.2 sequencing;
  - 2.3 inferencing;
  - 2.4 comparing and contrasting;
  - 2.5 drawing conclusions
3. To determine the substantial disparity between the pretest and post-test results of the writing skills of Grade 9 learners.

## Methodology

The pre-experimental research style specifically the pretest-posttest style was employed in this research. The subject of this study comprised 31 Grade-9 learners in San Jose National High School under Online Distance Learning. The researcher employed Purposive sampling (also known as subjective sampling). According to Black (2010), this sampling technique occurs when the subject of the study was chosen through the researcher's judgment. The minimal number of participants required for this study was met with this sample. Prior to the implementation of the SSR, permission from the school's higher authorities was obtained and consent from both parents and respondents was secured. The respondents were exposed to silent reading without any interruption before the start of their morning Online Class. They were given the freedom to choose reading text in English and ask to write their reflection on what they've read. The researcher reminded always the respondents to do the activity without any pressure. The researchers-developed test (pretest and posttest) was the tool used to elicit and collect information. Prior to the conduct of the test, the instrument goes through validation from a group of experts. The test was conducted online through google form while they are on google meet to ensure the reliability of the result. Using simple descriptive statistics such as Mean, Standard Deviation, and T-Test, the data was interpreted after the test was conducted, collected and analyzed the data

## Results and Discussion

### 1. Pretest score of the writing skills of Grade-9 learners

**Table 1**  
*Pretest score of the writing skills of Grade 9 learners*

| Level        | Summarizing |        | Sequencing |        | Inferencing |        | Comparing and Contrasting |        | Drawing Conclusion |        |
|--------------|-------------|--------|------------|--------|-------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
|              | f           | %      | f          | %      | f           | %      | f                         | %      | f                  | %      |
| Advanced     | 15          | 48.39  | 17         | 54.84  | 11          | 35.48  | 12                        | 38.71  | 12                 | 38.71  |
| Intermediate | 15          | 48.39  | 14         | 45.16  | 19          | 61.29  | 19                        | 61.29  | 19                 | 61.29  |
| Novice       | 1           | 3.23   | 0          | 0.00   | 1           | 3.23   | 0                         | 0.00   | 0                  | 0.00   |
| Total        | 31          | 100.00 | 31         | 100.00 | 31          | 100.00 | 31                        | 100.00 | 31                 | 100.00 |
| <b>Mean</b>  | 4.35        |        | 4.65       |        | 4.19        |        | 4.29                      |        | 4.16               |        |
| <b>SD</b>    | 1.05        |        | 0.84       |        | 1.05        |        | 1.04                      |        | 0.93               |        |

9 – 10 = Distinguished    7 – 8 = Superior    5 – 6 = Advanced    3 – 4 = Intermediate    1 – 2 = Novice

Table 1 presents the pretest scores of the writing skills of Grade-9 learners under online distance learning. It shows that among the writing skills of the learners, such as summarizing, sequencing, inferencing, comparing and contrasting, and drawing conclusions, the sequencing skills have the highest mean scores of 4.65 with a standard deviation of 0.84, which implies that the grade 9 learners develop a mastery on how to do the sequencing of events more easily. The ability to recognize the order of events in a piece of writing is crucial for our pupils to obtain a thorough comprehension of what they are reading. A vital reading comprehension technic that will let learners make sense of how the story progress is sequencing. Once it's done successfully, the learners' reading skills will benefit their' writing ability. The learners will be able to come up with their write-ups with coherency and a logical flow that is easy to understand.

Recognizing sequence in a text entails, in the simplest words, identifying the beginning, middle, and end. One of the simplest ways to determine the sequence of events is to identify the sequencing words or transitions used to connect the text's sections. Some of these words and phrases also serve as indicators of where an event will be positioned in the text's chronology: at the beginning, in the middle, or near the end. There is a vast range of signal words, and the following are a few of the most prevalent, as well as the contexts in which they are most likely to appear.

The findings confirmed the study that examined students' sequencing abilities. According to Gouldthorp, Katsipis, and Mueller (2018), students with high levels of understanding also have high levels of sequencing skills, and vice versa for students with poor levels of comprehension. In every area of the sequencing task, high comprehension produced more precise sequences than low comprehensions. As a result, students' ability to order the events in a narrative text is a sign of their comprehension level and will undoubtedly have an impact on their academic success in English.

Also, the drawing conclusion writing skills have the lowest mean scores of 4.16 with 0.93 SD. It implies that the learner's skills in writing were intermediate. Drawing conclusions appeared to be hard for learners since they think that conclusions are simply summarizing and repetition of thoughts. While many conclusions simply restate the paper's main ideas or use comparable language, it is always clear when a student has copied and pasted his or her thesis from the opening since it sounds repetitious. There is a delicate line between employing consistent language and essential terms throughout a paper and plagiarizing.

The pretest scores of the Grade-9 learners on all the writing skills as measured by the researcher through the test falls on intermediate. Though the intermediate level in the writing skills of Grade-9 learners was not that alarming, it is still a problem that requires attention. It is expected that by Grade 9, the learners' writing skills were at an advanced level. The pretest result shows that the writing skills of the respondents were greatly affected by their modest quantity of used words/phrases in transcribing ideas. Because of that, some of them can dispense only limited information. The learners' writing skills in summarizing, which is one of the needed skills in writing, appeared to be the second least mastered by the learners with 4.35 mean scores, followed by comparing and contrasting with 4.29 and inferencing with 4.19.

The result of the pretest having the highest mean scores in sequencing is a good indication that the learners can sequence events. The logical technique pupils use to organize their thoughts in writing is crucial (Trapman, Gelderen, Schooten, & Hulstijn, 2018). This method will help you explain and understand ideas more clearly. The ability to detect, retain, and show a logical sequence of events and ideas is known as sequencing (Gunther, 2018). Thus, communicative writing skills include lexical

knowledge, grammatical comprehension, and the ability to organize and sequence language elements to convey a message (Leikin, Ibrahim, & Eghbaria, 2014).

## 2. Posttest score of the writing skills of Grade 9 learners

**Table 2**  
*Posttest score of the writing skills of Grade 9 learners*

| Level       | Summarizing |        | Sequencing |        | Inferencing |        | Comparing and Contrasting |        | Drawing Conclusion |        |
|-------------|-------------|--------|------------|--------|-------------|--------|---------------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
|             | f           | %      | f          | %      | F           | %      | f                         | %      | f                  | %      |
| Superior    | 20          | 64.52  | 26         | 83.87  | 22          | 70.97  | 18                        | 58.06  | 20                 | 64.52  |
| Advanced    | 11          | 35.48  | 5          | 16.13  | 9           | 29.03  | 13                        | 41.94  | 11                 | 35.48  |
| Total       | 31          | 100.00 | 31         | 100.00 | 31          | 100.00 | 31                        | 100.00 | 31                 | 100.00 |
| <b>Mean</b> | 6.68        |        | 7.00       |        | 6.77        |        | 6.61                      |        | 6.68               |        |
| <b>SD</b>   | 0.75        |        | 0.58       |        | 0.67        |        | 0.67                      |        | 0.75               |        |

9 – 10 = Distinguished    7 – 8 = Superior    5 – 6 = Advanced    3 – 4 = Intermediate    1 – 2 = Novice

Table 2 reveals the post-test score of the writing skills of Grade 9 learners during online distance learning. It shows that sequencing has the highest mean score of 7.00 with 0.58 SD and is interpreted as superior among the learners' writing skills. Twenty respondents have shown the ability to present and justify and develop the idea presented in a correct sequence. They have been able to organize and convey to the reader the significant arrangement of the ideas and have shown a relationship among ideas consistently from start to finish. The students are able to organize ideas consistently and in a very clear manner.

While the comparing and contrasting skills have the lowest mean scores of 6.61 with 0.67 SD and are interpreted as advanced. This result showed that respondents are able to compare and contrast something which is factual. It's observed that the respondents have shown improvement, but still, only limited number of cohesive devices were used that resulted in redundancy. This implies an increase in the mean scores of the learners' writing skills, which entails an improvement in the post-test scores of the learners. The respondents are able to describe with details in a pleasing aspect that was expressed in a clear manner with some elaboration.

It can be gleaned from the finding above that after the implementation of sustained silent reading as an intervention to learners, done daily without adding a burden on their shoulders, most learners or 20 out of the 31 participants become superior as determined by the frequency of learners having improved writing skills as compared to the learners in the advanced level of writing skills. The respondents have shown the ability to organize details and ideas to convey the most significant, and the vocabulary they used became accurate and diverse.

The post-test result discloses a significant improvement in the learners in their writing skills such as summarizing, sequencing, inferencing, comparing and contrasting, and drawing conclusions. The increase in the mean scores of the learners implies the effectiveness of sustained silent reading as an intervention for the learners. Studies on free voluntary reading have repeatedly reiterated the benefits of pleasure reading habit over the last few decades: self-selected task appears to be the critical driver of literacy progress and a vital source of knowledge in many disciplines (Mason & Krashen, 2017).

This demonstrates that the love of reading is not only determined by their ability to read more. On the other hand, reading is connected to a broader logical improvement over time (Alvermann, 2017; Cummins, 2015). This emphasizes the strategic importance of encouraging and motivating children to read in their leisure time.

### 1. The significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of Grade 9 learners

**Table 3**  
*Test of significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of Grade 9 learners*

| Writing Skills            | Pretest | Posttest | Mean Difference | t-value | p-value |
|---------------------------|---------|----------|-----------------|---------|---------|
| Summarizing               | 4.35    | 6.68     | 2.32            | 13.204  | .000    |
| Sequencing                | 4.65    | 7.00     | 2.35            | 12.878  | .000    |
| Inferencing               | 4.19    | 6.77     | 2.58            | 11.926  | .000    |
| Comparing and Contrasting | 4.29    | 6.61     | 2.32            | 12.011  | .000    |
| Drawing Conclusion        | 4.16    | 6.68     | 2.52            | 15.748  | .000    |

df = 30

Saying that all variables have a significant difference, it's undeniable that the exposure of the students to their chosen genre of reading materials and doing the writing activity on the daily basis with the motivation and encouragement under the guidance and tutelage of the teacher were really important factors for the success of the conduct of SSR program. The skills of the students in terms of writing were improved because of the reading activity implemented that develop their learning of the different English vocabulary used in different circumstances. During the duration of the study, the respondents have shown improvement in their writing skills after reading their chosen text and accomplishing their reading log as the day passes. The freedom to choose the reading text, doing the task without any pressure, the simplicity of the process that enables it to connect with the students, and the practice they do daily, implement the SSR a success. Their ability to express and develop ideas in a given discipline is commendable. It may not be perfect, but still, a success that needs to be celebrated. Their writing skills were developed due to the exposure to reading text in English coming from a different genre. It enables them to express themselves easily in the context of writing using the variety of vocabulary learned from reading.

It can be gleaned that inferencing has the highest mean difference of 2.58 with a t-value of 11.926 among the writing skills of Grade 9 learners. Reading comprehension cannot be considered complete without the ability to make inferences, which include making conclusions based on information that has been inferred rather than directly given. In both verbal and written communication, learners regularly draw conclusions based on circumstantial evidence. Many times, this is so routine that the vast majority of readers or listeners are completely unaware that the information was left out of the discussion or writing. The improvement on the writing skill of the respondents in this discipline can be manifested in the way they expressed and organize ideas to give meaning and punctuation are used.

It is followed by concluding with a mean difference of 2.52 (t-value = 15.748). Sequencing follows with 2.35 (t-value = 12.878); hence summarizing and comparing and contrasting have the lowest mean difference of 2.32 with t-value of 13.204 and 12.011, respectively. The development of these writing skills was shown by their ability to narrate things in a paraphrased manner. They can make use variety of vocabulary as a replacement for the frequently used terms. It's a grandeur exposing students to reading

activity without any pressure. Learnings happen in a natural way once the presentation of activity will be done in an appealing way ((DeCarvalho, 1991; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994).

This implies that inferencing is one of the most minor learned skills of Grade-9 learners before the SSR intervention. A reader draws inferences regarding the protagonist's emotional condition in a novel. Looking on the possibility that learners were just doing inferences based on their emotions about the text they read or just listened to was taken into consideration in this study. According to Diegarten & Nieding, (2016) the setting of goals, presentation of text, and capability updating would help us track how accurate inferencing using emotion is made.

Sequencing appears to be a skill with the highest mean scores in both the pretest and post-test, implying that the Grade-9 learners are skillful in sequencing events before the SSR intervention. The other writing skills, such as summarizing and comparing and contrasting, have the same mean difference of 2.32, implying that the learners excel in the mentioned writing skills.

Table 3 indicates that the disparity between the pretest and post-test mean scores was found to be substantial at 0.05 levels. The results also show that there is a substantial disparity on the pre-test and post-test scores in the writing skills of the learners such as summarizing (t-value = 13.204, p = 0.000); sequencing (t-value = 12.8778, p = 0.000); inferencing (t-value = 11.926, p = 0.000); comparing and contrasting (t-value = 12.011, p = 0.000); and drawing conclusions (t-value = 15.748, p = 0.000). Hence, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the pretest and post-test results of the writing skills of Grade 9 learners is rejected. This infers that sustained silent reading intervention benefits the Grade 9 learners during the online learning in improving their writing skills, and thus the alternative hypothesis stating that there is a substantial disparity on the pretest and post-test results of the Grade 9 learners is accepted.

## Conclusions

The following stated conclusions are expressed according to the findings in this study:

1. A substantial change in learners' writing skills such as summarizing, sequencing, inferencing, comparing and contrasting, and drawing conclusions between pretest and post-test scores upon utilizing sustained silent reading to intensify writing skills for Grade-9 learners is evident.
2. The null hypothesis stating that there is no substantial disparity between the Grade 9 learners' pretest and post-test outcomes is rejected.

## Recommendations

The foregoing recommendations are made considering the conclusions presented:

1. Teachers may need to be properly oriented in utilizing SSR as an intervention not only for struggling readers but also for struggling learners in the Second Language to properly address their needs in terms of improving their writing skills, comprehension, and academic performance.
2. Knowing the fact that sustained silent reading is an unfamiliar technic in teaching, teachers should receive training focusing on how to motivate/handle students with reading difficulty, and how to boast their affirmative mindset and their self-confidence to make them determined to improve their reading/learning abilities in the second language. By doing so, we can let students realize that

reading/learning disabilities don't mean they lack intelligence, they just need the effort to trump the result.

3. Future researchers may do a similar study to determine the advantages of sustained silent reading and, consequently, improve the writing skills of students.

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