

**Incorporating guided writing to enhance Grade 9 learners’
argumentative essay writing skills in the English as a second
language (ESL) classroom at a school in Maseru**



BY

PHOOFOLO N. Z. (202001555)

**A dissertation submitted to the Department of Language and Social Education, Faculty
of Education in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
in Education (MA. ED) - English Language Education**

at the

National University of Lesotho

Supervisor: Dr. Mahao Mahao

July 2025


DECLARATION

I Ngakana Zeldan Phoofolo, hereby affirm that this dissertation titled *Incorporating guided writing to enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom at a school in Maseru* is my own work and that all sources have been duly referenced. It has not been submitted before to any other university for any other degree or examination.

Names: Ngakana Zeldan Phoofolo

Signature:  **Date: 29 July 2025**

Supervisor

Signature:  **Date: 05 November 2025**

Head of Department:

Signature:  **Date: 05 November 2025**

Dean - Faculty of Education

Signature:  **Date: 6th November 2025**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The successful completion of this study on ‘*Incorporating guided writing to enhance Grade 9 learners’ argumentative essay writing skills in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom at a school in Maseru*’ would not have been possible without the support and contributions of several individuals. First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to almighty God for seeing me through this hectic journey of writing my dissertation. I will forever be grateful to him for granting me the much needed energy, courage, finances and good health to complete my study. Indeed, my trust in God is armoured and I really believe that “nothing shall be impossible with God”, Luke 1: 37.

Similarly, I would like to sincerely thank my supervisor, Dr. Mahao Mahao. Throughout my journey, I profoundly relied on his guidance. The former head of department in the Languages and Social Education, Associate Professor Makhulu Makumane was always available when needed, regardless of her busy schedule. I know it was not easy for me to approach your office, but you sacrificed your time whenever I needed your assistance. My language editor, Ms. Matee, thank you madam for your language expertise and positive feedback. The faculty and staff of the Department of Languages and Social Education at the National University of Lesotho for their unwavering support and guidance throughout the research process. Their expertise, insights, and constructive feedback were invaluable in shaping the direction and quality of this study.

Moreover, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my mother and sisters for always being there whenever I needed them. Their support and words of encouragement are highly appreciated. Mme Sepanya-Molefi, you believed in me and encouraged me to continue even though it was not easy. Thank you for always being there whenever I called for assistance. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of the learners of English language who participated in this study. Without their contribution none of this would be accomplished. Their willingness to engage in the research activities and provide valuable feedback was crucial. The humanity that teachers and learners of Lerotholi LECSA High School showed me by giving me roof over my head when I had nowhere to go is highly appreciated.

Finally, I am particularly grateful to my classmates both full time and part time who provided moral support and encouragement throughout the research journey. Their understanding and patience during the demanding phases of my study are greatly appreciated. I am confident that

the insights and recommendations derived from this study will contribute to the on-going efforts to enhance writings skills in English as a second language in schools.

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this dissertation to my family, most importantly my mother, Makhokoane Augustina Phoofolo, my sister, Makanase Lydia Phoofolo and Thandy Phoofolo for the ultimate sacrifices they made to see to it that amid the challenges and spectacles of life, I get educated. This academic victory and success are dedicated to them who have always believed in me even when I had seemed to be discouraged. While I am almost at the finish line, I can just say this is just the beginning of great things to come from me.

ABSTRACT

The study's primary objective was to explore how the use of guided writing enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in English as a second language classroom. The study was guided by the lenses of Socio-Cultural theory by Vygotsky. The research employed a single group pre and post -test experiment in a mixed methods approach. One school was conveniently selected which was near the researchers' location and 12 Grade 9 learners were selected purposively. Data was collected through tests and focus group discussion. Quantitative data collected from pre and post-test were analysed by applying descriptive statistics through the use of SPSS version 27. Qualitative data generated from focus group discussions with learners were analysed thematically. The pre-test findings after categorisation with a pre-determined analytical rubric revealed that many learners' writing level were at emerging and developing levels. That is, learners' writing seemed to lack proper paragraphing, thesis statement and logic. After experimenting with the guided writing, the post-test results unveiled that learners writing have developed as many learners were on the proficient and competent level. Also the mean, median and standard deviation of the post- test were higher than of the pre-test which implied that the experiment was a success. The focus group discussions discovered that most learners preferred to be scaffolded, collaborating with their peers through grouping and paring and guidance from their teacher. The study concluded that the accomplishment of the experiment is influenced by clear instruction and collaborative learning environment. The study recommends that teachers should offer scaffolding and gradually release the assistance bit by bit as learners' progress. Future researchers may explore how guided writing can enhance other types of essay writing in ESL learners.

Keywords: Guided Writing, Argumentative essay, Writing Skills, English as a Second Language, Grade 9 learners

Table of Contents

DECLARATION	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
DEDICATION	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
CHAPTER 1	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	4
1.3 Research question	5
1.3.1 Main research question	5
1.3.2 Sub research question	5
1.4 Significance of the study	5
1.5 Delimitation and scope of the study	5
1.6 Structure of the study	6
1.7 Summary of the chapter	6
CHAPTER 2	7
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.0 Introduction	7
2.1 Theoretical Framework.....	7
2.1.1 The Socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky 1978).....	7
2.2 Literature based on the research questions of the study	14
2.2.1 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills	14
2.2.2 Impacts of Guided Writing.....	15
2.2.3 Guided writing steps that facilitate argumentative essay writing skills in ESL	18
2.3 Conceptual literature	20
2.3.1 Guided Writing.....	20
2.3.2 Writing Skill	20
2.3.3 Writing	21
2.3.4 Types of Writing and Paragraph Structure	21
2.3.5 Paragraph Structure.....	22
2.3.6 Parts of essay	22
2.3.7 Argumentative writing.....	23

2.3.8 Argumentative essay	23
2.4 Empirical studies	23
2.5 Gap and appraisal	25
2.6 Summary	25
CHAPTER 3	26
METHODOLOGY	26
3.0 Introduction	26
3.1 Research paradigm	26
3.2 Research approach	27
3.3 Research design	27
3.4 Population and sampling technique	28
3.5 Data collection techniques	29
3.5.1 Test Validity and Reliability Measures	29
3.6 Data collection procedure	30
3.7 Data analysis	30
3.7.1 Descriptive statistics	30
3.7.2 Thematic Analysis	30
3.8 Ethical considerations	31
3.9 Trustworthiness	31
3.9.1 Credibility	32
3.9.2 Confirmability	32
3.9.3 Dependability	32
3.9.4 Transferability	33
3.10 Summary of the chapter	33
CHAPTER 4	34
FINDINGS, DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	34
4.0 Introduction	34
4.1 Data analysis and Findings	34
4.1.0 Learners' Profile	34
4.1.1 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills	35
4.1.2 Guided writing steps in facilitating argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners	39
4.1.3 Impact of guided writing in enhancing grade 9 learners argumentative essay writing skills in ESL	42

4.1.3.1 General Writing Experience and Guided Writing	42
4.1.3.3 Motivation and Confidence	47
4.1.3.4 Tools and Mediation	48
4.1.3.6 Suggestions for Improvement.....	52
4.2 Summary of the chapter	53
CHAPTER 5	55
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	55
5.1 Introduction	55
5.2 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills	55
5.3 Guided writing steps in facilitating argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners	57
5.4 Impact of guided writing in enhancing Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL.	59
5.5 Summary of the chapter	60
CHAPTER 6	62
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	62
6.1 Introduction	62
6.2 Aim and purpose of the study	62
6.3 Summary of the findings.....	62
6.3.1 The use of guided writing to enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL classroom.....	63
6.3.1.1 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills	63
6.3.1.2 Guided writing steps in facilitating argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners	63
6.3.1.3 Impact of guided writing in enhancing Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL.....	64
6.4 Conclusions drawn from findings	64
6.4.1 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills	64
6.4.2 Guided writing steps in facilitating argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners	65
6.4.3 Impact of guided writing in enhancing Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL.....	65
6.5 Limitations of the study	65
6.6 Recommendations	65
6.7 Areas for further research	66
6.8 Summary of the chapter	67

REFERENCE LIST	68
APPENDICES.....	82
Appendix A: Pre and post-test questions	82
Appendix B: Marking guide adopted from Examinations Council of Lesotho.....	83
Appendix C: Participants' pseudonyms, pre-test and post-test scores and percentages.....	88
Appendix D: Pre-established analytical rubric that defined four levels of writing competence: proficient, competent, developing and emerging.....	89
Appendix E: Focus Group Discussion Guide	90
Appendix F: Letter of introduction	92
Appendix G: Turnit in report.....	94

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

The intention of this study is to incorporate guided writing in an experimental research to enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in English as a Second Language Classroom. This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions. It further elucidates on the significance of the study, delimitation of the study, and lastly wrap up the chapter.

1.1 Background to the study

English language is articulated and used as a medium of instruction in many countries. Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), (2019); Majara (2018); Tlali, (2018); Ekanjume-Ilongo, (2015) argue that in Lesotho English resumes an official language and taught as a second language that comes after Sesotho. It is a prestigious language that is used in trade, international relations affairs and diplomacy, education and social mobility. Moreover, MoET (2021; 2009) stipulates that from Grade 4, English shall begin to be used as a medium of instruction and continue to be taught as a subject and Grade 3 downwards mother tongue will be used. It appears that teaching and learning should emphasis more on imparting and improving learners' language skills.

Additionally, MoET (2019) asserts that writing "at Secondary level, aims at learners to use reading and writing skills to improve communicative competence and provide confidence to communicate effectively with clarity, relevance and accuracy through speaking and writing using standard English" (p.1). Thus, at this level, the teaching and learning of English Language comprises two language skills which are writing and reading. It further notes that "teaching and learning needs to be learner-centred" (p.29). That is, in the teaching and learning, learners are expected to be hands-on and actively involved given that teacher's role is to be a guide and a facilitator. It requires learners to construct new knowledge through their own interaction and through the guidance of more knowledgeable other (MKO). Therefore, the teacher scaffolds the learners until they reach their zone of proximal development (ZPD).

In the teaching and learning sphere, writing is believed to be the most important skill that learners need to master and it is a complex process. According to Yunus et al. (2019) and

Hidayati (2018) writing is the most challenging skill to acquire since it is a complex process that requires learners to think, plan and translate ideas into words. When writing, one must have indirect communication ability, language structure, writing techniques, and the ability to extract ideas from text (Baharudin et al, 2023; Srinawati & Alwi, 2020) and determining and putting ideas in writing logically and reasonably.

Furthermore, Tlali and Thamae (2023) elucidate that “writing skills need to be more emphasised because it is where learners’ ability to write is assessed” (p.214). Moreover, Ekanjume-Ilongo and Morato-Maleke (2020) and Bora (2023) affirm that writing require learners to be creative. That is, their ability to create or tell or retell scripts of information by narrating, describing or in the form of arguing. This then could imply that; all language skills need to be harnessed to ensure that all learners meet the requirements of English as a Second Language and be able to answer required questions accurately in their examinations. Hence for learners to write effectively, they need to master other language skills.

In the same way, there is a need to embark on assisting learners to write effectively. That is, this can be done through guided writing. In this regard, Dieni (2022) elaborates that guided writing is an effective way that encourages learners to write freely without having the fear of committing mistakes. Again, Martarini et al. (2020) concur by explicating that guided writing is a strategy to give the learners a chance to develop their own idea in the class activity. The activity can be done by the learners in groups or as individuals to construct a good text in their own way or independently.

To illustrate the afore-mentioned notion, some studies as outlined in this section were conducted globally in relation to guided writing and the results were positive. A study by Qin and Liu (2021) in China examined whether the types of reading texts have any influence on second language (L2) students’ argumentative writing in terms of the use of argument elements and its overall quality. Results show that students reading texts with opposing viewpoints presented more data and higher overall quality of argumentative essays than students reading texts with similar viewpoints, although the latter group presented more counterargument data.

In Malaysia, Keffeny et al. (2024) conducted a study on primary school learners’ perspectives on the benefits of using pictures and guided writing strategy to improve their writing skill. The study findings revealed that there are significant developments that showed improvement in learners’ writing skill when pictures and guided writing strategies are used. In the context of Europe, Yu- Feng et al. (2021) conducted a study to develop different guided writing strategies

based on media richness theory and further evaluate the effects of these writing strategies on younger students' writing attitudes in terms of motivation, enjoyment and anxiety. Their findings showed the rich media guided writing strategy had higher significant differences than the pen-and-paper guided writing strategy in terms of writing attitudes towards motivation, enjoyment and anxiety.

Further, in Africa, Wendimu and Gebremariam (2024) conducted a study in Ethiopia. The purpose was to examine the effect of teacher-student collaboration through guided writing. The results of the writing motivation questionnaires revealed that the mean score of the experimental group increased significantly in the post-test compared to the pre-test. These findings demonstrate the usefulness of guided-writing instruction in assisting students with writing difficulties and motivation.

Seemingly, it is essential to teach argumentative essay writing because it cultivates critical thinking in learners. It can build open, critical and analytic upcoming citizens of the country who may not accept whatever is deferred before their eyes. It necessitates critical skills that help learners think critically over decisions they make on any issue. To authenticate this notion, studies were carried out in different countries. Correspondingly, Tasya (2022) embarked on a study in Indonesia aiming to establish students' difficulties in writing argumentative essay and their causes. The study revealed that there is lack of proficiency in production skills, lack of knowledge related to the subject matter of the content to be written and lack of effective strategies for planning or revising essay.

In the Republic of South Africa, Nondabula and Nomlomo (2023) conducted a study to investigate Grade 9 learners' experiences of creative writing in English first additional language. Their study results showed that learners experienced language related challenges, linguistics and cognitive challenges. Apart from that, there are studies conducted in the context of Lesotho. Majara (2018) investigate the factors contributing to learners' inability to use a variety of sentence structures in their essay writing. The study revealed that among others, learners' lack extensive reading. Similarly, Tlali and Thamae (2023) investigated the causes of poor argumentative essay writing at Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE). Their findings showed that most learners fail to perform argumentative English essay writing well due to their failure to argue points convincingly.

However, it appears that most studies conducted singled out certain problems concerning essay writing. For this reason, writing remains the most challenging skill to be mastered irrespective

of the level of education (Amalia et al., 2021). The studies conducted in the context of Lesotho seem not to involve executing some interventions to solve raised problems. Moreover, there is a gap on pedagogical practices that need to be filled in order to eradicate the raised problem. Hence, the current study to incorporate guided writing to enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL classroom with the intention to improve classroom practises in Lesotho was conducted.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Argumentative essay writing as shown in the background of this study remains a challenge among LGCSE learners of ESL. Most studies conducted were investigative in the context of Lesotho. Against these odds, the challenge of learners' inability to coherently answer argumentative essay question correctly and accurately still exists. Examination Council of Lesotho (ECOL) (2023; 2024) recommend that "learners should be taught argumentative compositions to develop logical and complex arguments" (p.6). Most studies (Tlali & Thamae, 2023; Likhoeli, 2020; Majara, 2018) in Lesotho investigated learners' challenges. Little is known in regard to taken measures to eradicate challenges learners are facing when writing creatively. However, the problems are still existing which decline learners' performance in argumentative essay writing.

Learners seem to be facing challenges when writing creatively in LGCSE final examinations. Examiners reports from 2019 to 2024 raised major concerns about learners' lack of interest in attempting to answer argumentative essay questions. It seems that learners are unable to master the questions adequately. This may be due to either lack of comprehending English Language usage or inability to express themselves. Another contributing factor can be lack of understanding as it has been shown that learners are unable to take their stance and defend their arguments well, (ECOL, 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023; 2024). Consequently, inability of learners to respond to argumentative essay questions correctly and accurately has impacted their performances negatively. Along similar lines, Nkome (2016) proclaims that learners often demonstrate poor communication skills in English, as evidenced by their performance in national assessments and classroom activities. Again, Keffeny et al., (2024) show that having a good writing skill is important for every individual as it helps to grow and develop further in life.

Therefore, the gap of executing some interventions to the existing raised learners' challenges regarding essay writing has not been addressed regardless of the declining performance on

argumentative essay questions. Thus, there is a need to equip learners to work on this type of essay hence a need to incorporate guided writing to enhance learners' argumentative essay writing skills. Against this background, this research investigated how does the use of guided writing enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL classroom?

1.3 Research questions

1.3.1 Main research question

- ✓ How does the use of guided writing enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL classroom?

1.3.2 Sub research question

- ✓ What is Grade 9 learners' level of competence in argumentative essay writing skills in ESL?
- ✓ How do guided writing steps facilitate argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners?
- ✓ How do Grade 9 learners perceive the impact of guided writing in enhancing their argumentative essay writing skills in ESL?

1.4 Significance of the study

The study is expected to be significant to teachers, learners, and the education system at large. Teachers may benefit as the study may provide insights into the implementation of guided writing in the classroom, offering a practical orientation in their daily teaching and learning practices. It may serve as a resource for understanding how to engage learners to ensure collaboration as required by Lesotho Basic Education Curriculum Policy (LBCEP) of 2021. The education system may find value in adopting the intervention in their instructional practices. Lastly, I anticipate that the conclusions and recommendations regarding learners' writing skills may aid teachers in devising their pedagogical practises in the classroom. Finally, as a novice researcher, it will impart me with skills, knowledge expansion in research, professional and networking growth.

1.5 Delimitation and scope of the study

Amalia et al. (2021) defines delimitation and scope as the extent and boundaries of a study, which allow researchers to concentrate on specific aspects of their research. It is crucial for research to focus on essential data while avoiding irrelevant information. Clearly defining the

scope and delimitation ensures that the research remains within its set parameters and achieves its objectives within the constraints of time, budget and resources (Amalia et al., 2021).

The study focused on a single high school in Maseru that offers English Language as a subject, specifically Grade 9 learners. The study was restricted to the data collection period of five weeks' experiment from end of April 2025 to end of May 2025, the total number of lessons was 7 per week and it does not account for long-term effects or changes outside this timeframe.

1.6 Structure of the study

The current study is structured as follows: Chapter 1 introduces the background, problem specification, research questions, significance and delimitations and scope of the study. Chapter 2 covers the theoretical lenses, literature review on research questions, conceptual literature and empirical literature to identify prior research pertinent to the study. Chapter 3 details methodologies employed for data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 presents the findings and analysis. Finally, Chapter 5 provides the discussions, conclusions and suggests recommendations.

1.7 Summary of the chapter

This chapter presented extensive background to the study drawing from global understanding of what argumentative essay writing is and what it entails. It also highlighted how argumentative essay writing is a problem especially in ESL contexts. It also elucidated on the intended experimental intervention of guided writing showing its benefits from where it was used. The chapter further tabled research questions to unpack the main research question. It further showed the significance of the study and outlined beneficiaries. Finally, it delved on the delimitations of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter elucidated on the background, highlighted the problem, outlined research questions. Lastly it showed the importance of executing the proposed experiment of guided writing in the teaching and learning. This chapter is a review of the literature related to the study. It features the theoretical framework, learners' levels of competence in writing skills, impacts of guided writing, guided writing steps that facilitate argumentative essay writing skills, literature on key concepts and empirical studies. Finally, it provides a summary of the chapter.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Many theories have shifted and transitioned differently to make elucidations on how writing can be developed, challenging traditional pedagogies that were traditionally opted in the teaching and learning of writing. Again, there is a need to include theoretical lenses to guide studies. Therefore, this study adopted for Socio-Cultural theory.

2.1.1 The Socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky 1978)

The socio-cultural theory was opted for in guiding the study because of its language principles that more knowledgeable language users play a fundamental role in the acquisition of learners' communicative competence. Additionally, Luo et al., (2022) highlight that the sociocultural theory was developed by Vygotsky in the 1920s and 1930s and emphasises the important role of social relations and cultural structures in the development of human learning and thinking. Further, Rahmatirad (2020) highlights that the theory lays emphasis on the role which is played by social, cultural and historical artefact in the child's mental development. This seems to imply that contextual language should be emphasised, and internal processes should be involved in the acquisition of a second language. Social interactions assist learners to develop their ability to use language.

Again, the theory emphasises that language is socially created, and learners' understandings are interconnected to the backgrounds and experiences which arise inside the classroom and outside (Vygotsky, 1978). In line with Lantolf and Pochner, (2015) the theory articulates that "the most important forms of human cognitive activity develop through interaction within

social and material environments, including conditions found in instructional settings” (p.6). Equally important, Geerson (2012) states that a language is a tool for learning and creating ideas. In resonance to Panhwar et al. (2016) “the interaction of cultures in language learning and acquisition from the socio-cultural perspective situates the central dimension of the process of learning straight in relation to affective concerns such as inspiration, subjective, inter-subjective relationships and participants’ motives” (p.184). Additionally, Nurfaidah (2018) propounds that as far as teaching and learning of writing is concerned, sociocultural theory is of great importance in understanding the learners’ development in their learning milieu as well as the teachers’ intervention to the learners’ progress.

As argued by Dunsmuir et al. (2015) that by implementing the process writing approach, learners go through three distinct phases: before, during, and after writing. This may help them improve their writing abilities, fully appreciate their work, and most importantly, lessen their frustration with writing tasks in the classroom. Additionally, Haiyan and Rilong (2016) concur that a teacher should focus mostly on different activities in the language classroom that help with the production of the writing which may not be limited to brainstorming, revising, editing and other relevant activities to writing. Therefore, the collaborative process may allow learners to learn the concept in a social context before internalising it to apply on their own.

In teaching and learning a second language, teachers should provide scaffolding within learner’s zone of proximal development (ZPD) and create ZPD in the next step for learners. MoET (2021) emphasises more on learning to be collaborative. Therefore, language is perceived as something that develops through the interaction of people with different backgrounds and similar backgrounds. Thus, it provides valuable insights on how individuals learn languages by engaging actively and interacting with people around them. That is, without social interaction with others who are more knowledgeable, cognitive development does not occur. Therefore, scaffolding and ZPD are two sides of the coin for learning development as identified by Vygotsky (1978).

According to Bakker et al. (2015), scaffolding is elucidated as a process that enables a learner to solve problems, carry out an assignment or accomplish a goal which would be outside unassisted efforts. Therefore, in the context of this study, scaffolding used in classroom context refers to the intermediations that teachers make inside the learners’ ZPD to enable their learning and advance their existing knowledge and skills. ZPD according to Vygotsky (1978) is the distance between the real development level as determined over problem solving under mature

guidance or in alliance with more accomplished peers. That is, it is essential for teachers to understand the ZPD of every learner with the aim to attend to and assist learners appropriately.

Furthermore, the central theme of ZPD is that a more informed person can improve learners' knowledge by guiding them over the task, slightly above their level (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018). That is, as learners become more competent, the proficient adult slowly withdraws helping until learners can perform the task on their own. In this context, the teacher as a facilitator may present learners with meaningful tasks. That is, the language rich environment was created where learners had to interact with different language texts, form groups and engage in discussions and report to the entire classroom what was discussed in their groups.

In the context of this research, the above processes helped in the integration of guided writing and close the gap between the learners who understood the concepts to share with others and the teacher models' learners. A teacher as a more knowledgeable other, created a language rich environment in the classroom. That is, a language rich environment created by a teacher. As such, English reading texts and materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, and posters were made available to ensure that they are readily available for easy use of learners. Learners were grouped and paired to enable collaborative learning. Collaborative learning such as pairing learners of lesser capability with more advanced peers to help them learn. Discussion groups, small group learning and collaborative exercises enhance collaborative learning. This notion is validated by Vygotsky (1978) showing that ZPD happens under adult guidance and collaboration with knowledgeable peers, Mataka et al. (2021) expound that it is where learners can achieve on their own equated to their capabilities after teacher support.

Ayanwale and Puseletso (2025) concur that interactions restructure learners' cognitive constructions, leading to significant learning. This implies that in the language learning environment, learners should have access to English learning materials like magazines, pictures and books placed at their reach in the class. This kept them busy as the teacher prepares the board like writing dates and others. That is, as learners do things on their own, they communicate with targeted language. The teacher then intervenes by asking them questions to guide them as they pick some words from the word cloud provided in the classroom (impromptu speech) and this enhanced learners' communication skills in ESL.

Correspondingly, Dawson (2013) argues that in socio-cultural theory, communication is central to learning. This seems to imply that the discussions of main ideas of the selected texts in the stories to be read, learners were able to form their own meanings and discover their own

understandings. In this research context, this seem to imply that a teacher asked thought provoking questions after learners have read to foster critical thinking and debates among learners. Then a teacher guided learners and emphasis that how they debated, is the way they need to write. Practical writing sessions were done in groups till learners were able to write fully on their own.

According to Fadeev (2019), Vygotsky considered a more knowledgeable other to be a teacher or a peer who possesses a certain expertise in the object of study. In the process of interaction, the more knowledgeable other leads the learner to proximal knowledge through guidance and scaffolding. This implies that instructional activities are underpinned by social processes and teachers are considered as more knowledgeable other since their constructive role in the learners' development in providing the required social instruction within the classroom context. Therefore, in the context of this study, a researcher lead learners' group discussions and gave directives and let learners do things on their own. Learners worked with minimum guidance until they are able to work on their own.

Again, the social engagement and contribution also play a key role in learners' learning process as they are involved more in collaborative work (Ammar & Hassan, 2018). Moreover, reflective teaching practice is also rooted in a sociocultural perspective (Shokouhi et al., 2015) since teachers reflect on their teaching and learning activities in the classroom not only portrays their existence as social agents, the more knowledgeable others towards their learners, but also as parties seeking assistance from other experts in terms of teaching and learning as social process.

In other words, the teacher scaffolds the writing lesson by expanding learners' knowledge of what they are already familiar with and what they are not familiar with yet. The teacher deals with the unfamiliar things for the learners by measuring their learning capacity as well as keep motivating the learners by giving constructive feedback to their slips and errors (Lee, 2014). In that way, the teacher then can model the writing in such a topic with the idea that the learners have mostly understood what the text is all about. In the process of writing, therefore, the teacher shifted further to individual's comprehension through detecting and giving help in a constructive way on the slips or errors when they take place. Through this scaffolding activity, the teacher encouraged learners to have their control so that eventually will get used to involve in a more independent, constructive activity.

SanchezTeach (2025) adds that

Piaget's concept of the zone of proximal development suggests that children can learn and achieve more with the support of a knowledgeable adult or more skilled peers. Primary schools provide scaffolding by offering guidance, support, and appropriate challenges to help children progress to higher levels of understanding and skill development.

This notion appears to imply that learners learn effectively through guidance from a more knowledgeable who intervene in the teaching and learning process through the use of mediating tools in the classroom setting. This makes learners to be active participants in the knowledge construction which ensured that the co-constructed knowledge last longer.

Wood, Bruner and Ross's (1976) views on scaffolding

As learners need to be assisted, a teacher has to scaffold and enhance learners' active participation in the teaching and learning process. In concurring with Vygotsky (1978) of scaffolding, Wood et al. (1976) and Bruner (1976) propound that a knowledgeable person is in charge of providing necessary assistant from the expertise. This means a more skilled person or knowledgeable other is the one who can provide guidance to others, therefore Vygotsky affirms that scaffolding is performed by proficient person to less capable other. In the context of this research, a researcher as a teacher scaffold until learners were able to do things on their own.

That is, guidance was provided as learners embark on the reading process and when they write their argumentative essay, then withdraw assistance as learners' progress to perform the given tasks on their own. Additionally, Puntambekar and Hubschuer (2005) emphasise that the scaffolding construct is indicative of a process whereby a learner is supported in various ways so that they can function independently when the support is removed. It appears that there is a need to effectively utilise different media, materials and methods in order to achieve the intended objective set in class. It relies on teachers' knowledge to make on going scaffolding process in class a success. Thus, it is wise to clearly notify learners of the ultimate goal to be achieved during the process.

Wood et al. (1976) reiterate that effective scaffolding involves providing tailored support to learners within their ZPD, enabling them to achieve higher levels of understanding and skill. The process encourage collaboration between the learner and more knowledgeable peers or adults, facilitating the internalisation of knowledge necessary for essay writing. Their work

underscores the importance of social interaction and cultural tools in cognitive development, which are essential for effective learning and writing skills. In guided writing, teachers assess learner's current abilities and provide targeted assistance that challenges them just beyond their independent capabilities. It fosters cognitive development by allowing learners to engage with texts that they can understand with help, thus promoting skills necessary for writing. There should be book introduction and interactive discussions which facilitate comprehension and critical thinking. As learners progress through the ZPD, they gradually internalise skills enabling them to write independently overtime.

Piaget's views on social learning

Hochstler and Tilak (2022) emphasise that "Piaget's views on social learning looked at in relation to social, affective, and personality-related factors to understand how to design developmentally appropriate cooperative learning," (p. 59). This seems to imply that learners as individuals construct knowledge of the object world, they also develop abstract socio-moral and cognitive repertoires that they exercise throughout their lifespan repeatedly. Again, Vygotsky's ZPD emphasises the importance of social interaction and support in learning (Tudge & Winterhoff, 1993). This means every individual construct knowledge iteratively based on their affective and cognitive repertoires of schematised data from the environment.

In the teaching and learning, as learners interact with their peers and learn to write they communicate. Having normal conversations with friends and frequently being able to share ideas is another way to help children open up their perspectives of the world (Ormrod et al., 2020). Moderated debates and small group discussions driven by norms enable learners to discuss existing knowledge, and also accommodate new standpoints through civil discourse. This relates back to Piaget's idea that even unpleasant interactions are necessary for development because through debate, learners are able to open their eyes to many new perspectives on a topic that they may not have considered before.

As unpacking and repacking was done, learners worked within their zone of proximal development. It is not confined to solely a learner and an instructor (McLeod, 2019). Learners worked in groups. This may enhance collaboration as knowledge is socially constructed through peer interaction as less competent learners learned from those who already have mastered a specific skillset. It appears that, the theory requires teachers to be facilitators and act as a guider while learners co-construct knowledge. As shown in fig 1 below, learners have innate knowledge and abilities as there are certain things they can do. Thus, a more

knowledgeable other scaffold where learners are not able to do, slowly reducing the assistant to enable them work on their own zone of achieved development.

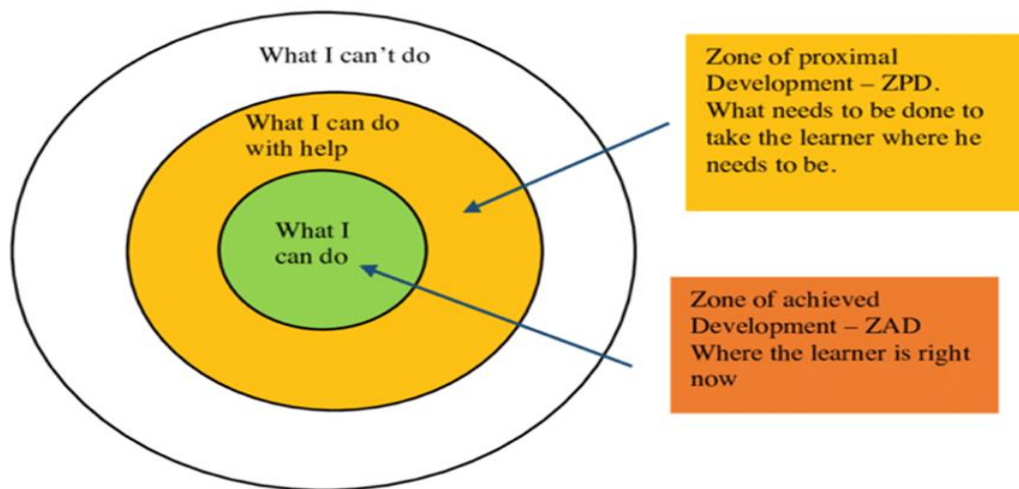


Figure 1: Scaffolding and ZPD, Adapted from Kurts (2020)

In the classroom, a teacher mediated and utilised different mediating tools in order to scaffold and enhance learners to work in their ZPD. It is better for teachers to use related pictures, words cards, posters and flashcards in the modern classroom to improve the overall language proficiency of the students (Nurlely et al., 2021). This is further suggested by Ermita et al. (2021), who argue that using picture-based learning in the classroom often makes learning more interactive and engaging by giving room for more personalised learning to take place. Martarini et al. (2020) support this, making it clear that the integration of pictures and guided writing strategy in the classroom increases motivation and lowers learning anxiety among the learners in a writing lesson.

This suggests that, using instructional media like pictures helps in engaging learners actively in the writing lesson. Furthermore, visual aids like mind maps were incorporated during the writing lesson so that learners cannot feel clueless or lost when it comes to writing as they were able to visualise the points and it gives them clues on what is expected to be written.

Finally, it can be argued that the use of ZPD and scaffolding in a learning environment can cultivate a collaborative learning space that utilises each learner's learning preferences and helps them approach tasks in a systematic manner. These concepts highlight the importance of personalised learning and the way social interaction can be of a great value during the learning process. Eventually, ZPD and scaffolding are versatile concepts that can be applied in a variety of contexts and cases. Piaget's ideas about social learning and socio-cognitive conflict suggest

that both comfortable and uncomfortable interactions with peers help kids develop new perspectives and see the world from a different point of view than their own.

2.2 Literature based on the research questions of the study

2.2.1 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills

Pacursa (2019) reiterates that competence level in writing the different parts of an argumentative essay, determining their competence level along with grammar, vocabulary, spelling can be enhanced through the use of guided writing. It seems to appear that learners at secondary schools are not left aside in as much as writing is a concern. In the same vein, ECOL (2022) reiterates that learners should be taught how to air their arguments convincingly as it notes that learners are incompetent to use language accordingly in their writing. This resonates that the writing process need to be enhanced and mastered accordingly.

Similarly, Klimova (2013) emphasises that learners need to set an objective for their writing, plan it carefully, think over its layout and logical structure. In the process of writing they have to use cognitive skills; they have to analyse their sources and then synthesise them in a compact piece of writing. Therefore, knowing how to write in L2 is a valuable asset in foreign language communication. A gradual approach to writing should take learners on a journey that starts from simple paragraphs, centred on the idea of coherence and cohesion, to more complex productions, such as lengthy argumentations.

Again, the proficiency to express ideas, stories, and emotions in an imaginative and artistic manner is what defines creative writing skills in English. This skill involves employing rich vocabulary, a distinctive style, and a broad imagination to create works that inspire and captivate readers. According to Fitria (2024), acquiring creative writing skills in English is crucial and provides various techniques and strategies to enhance this skill. The author also highlights the benefits of mastering these skills, such as self-expression and improved literary appreciation. Pérez et al. (2021) suggest that teachers can enhance learners' creative writing skills by offering authentic writing formats, such as a starting point for the learner to continue, a beginning and middle for them to conclude, or an entire text to evaluate and explain in their own words. Additionally, encouraging learners to reflect on different aspects of life through assigned topics can also spark creativity. As creativity is a vital personality trait, it requires a systematic and prolonged process in the classroom, with each step playing a crucial role in fostering it. This approach prepares learners to work independently beyond the classroom.

Many learners lack training, thus having great language difficulties, such as using cohesive devices and distinguishing oral and written language and correct use of tenses, articles, and preposition (Fareed et al., 2016).

Furthermore, argumentative writing is a cognitively demanding task, particularly for ESL learners who must manipulate ideas development, organisation, and linguistic precision. Guided writing offers a scaffolded approach that supports learners through structured stages such as brainstorming, planning, drafting, and revising. According to Fitria (2024), such structured support helps learners accomplish the cognitive burden involved in argumentative writing, allowing them to focus on one component at a time. Similarly, Ananda et al., (2024) demonstrated that ESL learners who received scaffolded instruction through guided writing produced more logically structured arguments and stronger thesis statements. Therefore, the ability to write persuasively depends profoundly on the learner's expertise of academic language, including cohesive devices, modal verbs, and persuasive vocabulary. Hence guided writing provides a contextualised environment for acquiring such language features.

2.2.2 Impacts of Guided Writing

According to Moses and Mohamad (2019), language instructors face considerable difficulties with teaching the writing skill and motivating learners to write more and better mainly as a result of inadequate vocabulary knowledge and poor spelling and grammar. This enhances language proficiency. Teachers have to mediate in order to enhance learners' writing competence. As argued by Harvey (2023) artefacts are essential to mediate discussions of teaching and learning. This seems to imply that, for learners to be able to meet the demands and standards of a coherent writing (ECOL, 2021) it relies on how teachers are providing support to learners. That is, there should be utilisation of different methods and materials in order to assist learners. The use of different materials and methods in the teaching and learning of writing, Keffeny et al.,'s (2024) study revealed that there are significant developments that showed improvement in students' writing skill when pictures and guided writing strategies are used. Therefore, this means that different teaching methods, media and materials should be fully utilised to permeate to desired goals.

According to Akmal et al. (2020) there is great emphasis of reading and writing enhancing creativity skills. When learners read widely, it enables them to be creative, which makes them to meet the creative writing demands. Additionally, the ability to be creative, means that in terms of classroom group discussions, learners can be fluent and be confident as far as speaking

is a major concern that need to be developed. In support, Miller and Merdian (2020) confirm that” If they don’t read, they don’t think and learn to write” (p.3). That is, for continuous learning, learners should be fully engaged in reading for them to master writing. Guided-writing instruction is known to help learners use the target language and express their ideas in writing (Wendimu & Gebremariam, 2024).

The notion is validated by (Sajid & Kassim,2019; Muhaimin, 2019 ; Huda et al., 2015) by highlighting that when learners are guided to write, it encourages learners to read and eventually starts to improve their reading comprehension, which in turn enhances their literacy levels and vocabulary. This seems to imply that, the integration of guided writing in ESL argumentative essay writing harness learners writing skills to make learners to be proficient as far as writing is a major concern. Therefore, not only writing skills can be enhanced, but a series of other language skills. Additionally, Ali Ghufron and Hawa (2016) emphasise on collaborative writing as a functional unit of collaborative learning. As learners were active in guided writing sessions, this enabled them to analyse their peers’ writings and learn new things as they interact with their peers.

More importantly, Roa, (2019) argues that guided writing ensures the right use of punctuation marks. It is a well-known fact that punctuation plays an important role in writing English. The wrong usage of punctuation not only leads the readers to misunderstanding the meaning of the sentence but also confuses them to grasp the right meaning of it according to the writers’ view. As there is a lot of change in the meaning when punctuation marks change their place, the teachers should teach the learners how to use punctuation marks well in their writing in English.

Lastly, Suastra and Menggo (2020) claim that writing skills require learners to employ their linguistic competence to generate main idea, supporting the idea, concluding the concept and have sufficient knowledge of diction choice, topic selection. The above claims seem to denote that learners’ competence in writing require mastery of many concepts of English as a second language for learners to be able to navigate in proper writing requirements. That is, teachers and learners need to be extra cautious to minimise the challenges that might take place. Rosli et al (2024) corroborates by showing that learners are expected to develop their thoughts and ideas into a well-structured and organised paragraph with relevant supporting details and evidence.

However, scholars such as (Tursunboeva and Yuldasheva, 2024), highlight some few things that can cause a hiccup as far as guided writing is concerned. Learners often face several challenges when it comes to writing as follows

Fear of Judgment: Worrying about how their writing will be perceived can stifle their willingness to express themselves.

Limited Vocabulary: A restricted vocabulary can make it challenging to articulate ideas effectively.

Understanding Structure: Many learners are unsure of how to structure their writing, which can lead to disorganized essays or descriptions.

Editing and Revising: Some learners find it difficult to critique their work or understand the importance of revision, which is crucial for improving writing quality.

ESL classrooms often include learners with varying levels of language proficiency. Tailoring guided writing activities to meet the needs of both beginners and advanced learners can be complex. For instance, while some learners may struggle with basic sentence structure, others might be ready to tackle more complex writing tasks. This disparity necessitates differentiated instruction strategies to ensure all learners remain engaged.

Additionally, Basim (2021) propounded by conducting a study where technology was used in the classroom in a writing lessons. The study aimed to investigate the challenges and barriers encountered by ESL teachers when they implement technological tools in writing classroom. Interviews and classroom observations are done. The study results were not limited to lack of time and lack of technical support among other. This seems to imply that as writing seems to be a challenge, the use of technology can motivate learners however, writing remain a challenge.

Therefore, it appears that many learners struggle with generating ideas, which can lead to a lack of content. This difficulty in idea generation often makes it hard for them to organise their thoughts logically. They may feel overwhelmed by the belief that writing requires extensive effort in terms of composition and language, which can hinder their confidence and creativity. This can hinder effectiveness of integrating the guided writing in a classroom setting provided that the one executing it is clueless about it and lacks passion of being around learners.

2.2.3 Guided writing steps that facilitate argumentative essay writing skills in ESL

Further, Ashrafiyany et al. (2020) highlight that the writing process entails three main processes, which are; pre-writing, drafting and reviewing. More, planning refers to how the writers have a good plan for writing and it involves the topic and audience. Also, translating refers to how writers in drafting or writing the whole of the essay draft their work. Again, reviewing refers to how writers' check the whole organisation of the written essay. That is, after learners comprehended the writing, they were assisted to make their mind mapping to enable them to complete their task and simplify their writing process. All the highlighted processes above, can be enhanced through developing a mind map that enable learners to brainstorm their ideas so as to easy their writing.

Dewi (2018) articulates that learners should possess the following skills involved in writing tasks.

These aspects of the writing skills include (1) writing mechanics like grammar, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation, (2) planning a writing strategy, (3) communicating ideas clearly and concisely, (4) constructing reasoned demonstrable argument and (5) organizing ideas effectively.

The above notions seem to imply that learners for them to write coherently, there is a need to master above writing skills. This means, their written work might be accurate and meet the required demands. That is teachers need to ensure that they scaffold so that learners can be able to work on their own without any given assistance. Several scholars (Jee & Aziz, 2021; Dragomir & Niculescu, 2020; Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019; VanDerHeide et al., 2016; Cheung, 2016 & Klimova 2013) showed that there are different approaches to enhance the writing skills in ESL which includes; process approach, product approach, and dialogic approach. The approaches are elaborated below.

a. Process approach

Mukhtar (2023) and Klimova (2013) explained that the process approach sees writing as a multi-stage process that includes planning, drafting, revising, and editing/proofreading. This seems to suggest that learners must adhere to and use the aforementioned procedures when completing assigned writing tasks. Additionally, Ngubane et al. (2020) signify that by rearranging the plan as they start writing again, learners were able to modify the map concepts they were given to enhance their work. Thus, learners must evaluate their written work for

development and refinement after finishing. This must be completed prior to submitting the task in its final form.

b. Product approach

Selvaraj and Aziz (2019) and Klimova, (2013) define product-based approach as a writing process that aims to see the final product. Learners typically mimic a model text to produce one; in other words, learners mimic a model composition that the teachers provide. For example, in writing classes, teachers provide examples or model compositions for the learners to follow, and learners create a similar composition based on the models. There are four procedural outlines to be followed by learners to effectively embark on the intended product. They are as follows:

Learners need to read and take note on the distinctive features of a composition which are organisation of ideas, the use of language and mechanics writing.

Learners perform controlled practices to exercise the elements outlined in the model text.

Learners attempt to mimic the model essay by organising a collection of pre-set thoughts to suit the model.

Learners perform the task by using their skills, sentence structures and various level of vocabulary in order to compose the anticipated composition.

c. Dialogic approach

Finally, according to Ka-kan-dee and Kaur (2015), selecting the best approach to improve one's capacity for argumentative writing involves a number of considerations. Ka-kan-dee and Kaur (2015) state that these are:

Employing different topics and various activities in the classroom in order to motivate student to be an active learner. Analysing textual examples and presenting learners' understanding based on those texts in front of the class. Understanding students' learning styles and affording necessitates to develop their writing ability.

Related to those strategies, teachers need to take into account an effective students' social interaction and provide effective scaffolding. This might assist to eradicate or minimise learners' challenges in writing. Thumbarayan and Yunus (2024) reiterate that the competence

level of learners in writing skills encompassing accurate usage of tenses, sentence structure, punctuation, vocabulary and various grammar forms. However, implementing dialogic teaching is not a simple task. Mustapha (2021) also highlights that since dialogic instruction necessitates developing a strong relationship with the students, teachers may not always be able to cover the curriculum in a timely manner while still making time for classroom discussion.

Additionally, the size of the classroom may compromise the efficacy of this method. The way that learners view dialogic instruction is another important effect. Getting ESL learners used to an interactive teaching style takes time. The prior educational experiences of ESL learners might have been similar to Freire's banking model, in which the teacher is the unquestioned authority and instruction is monologue. Instructors should encourage their learners to adopt dialogic approaches and assist them in moving from a lecture-based learning environment to one where their opinions are valued in determining how they learn.

2.3 Conceptual literature

This section explicates more on the comprehensive review of the key reviewed in the current study, starting with a literature on guided writing and concluding with gap and appraisal.

2.3.1 Guided Writing

Hayati (2020) and Willson and Falcon, (2018) expounds that guided writing is a technique that involves a teacher with a group of learners writing a task. During the process, the teacher working with the group in purpose to support and guide them in creating the text. This means, teachers intend to harness a certain skill for learners to attain fully through guidance that slowly halts as it progresses. That is, a more knowledgeable other assists taking a learner from known to unknown which enables learners to be able to comprehend and enhance their lifelong learning career. This enhanced learners' comprehension and develops their vocabulary meaning their writing also developed.

2.3.2 Writing Skill

Ghosh et al. (2021) expound that writing skill is the ability of a person to express his/her thoughts, ideas, feelings, in a written form in paper or in digital form. They further make emphasis that it does not mean to accumulate words randomly side by side but it is an art of arranging words in a sequence to produce a fruitful meaning for self-expression.

2.3.3 Writing

Fitria (2024) defines writing as a “fascinating process that involves a great deal of divergent thinking rather than focusing solely on one idea”, (p.2). Koay (2017) adds that it is more than putting grammatical sentences on paper, but rather communicating one’s idea or argument as clearly and coherently as possible. It is also a way of expressing feelings, thoughts and ideas in the written discourse (Sundari & Febriyanti, 2021). This seems to imply that learners need to master coherence and organisation of their ideas as they write as this make their thoughts to be conveyed clearly. Therefore, at this level, writing comprises two types as discussed below.

2.3.4 Types of Writing and Paragraph Structure

i. Directed Writing

Directed writing requires learners to follow specific guiding points when answering a question (ECOL, 2022). According to Tlali (2018), learners must understand the setting, purpose, and audience to effectively structure their responses. They are expected to fully discuss all provided points within the required length.

ii. Creative Writing

Creative writing allows learners to choose from five essay questions, including argumentative essays (ECOL, 2022). MoET (2019) states that at the end of Grade 9, learners should construct varied sentences, develop structured paragraphs, and compose a coherent argumentative essay of 2–2.5 pages. Teachers must equip students with essential writing skills to meet syllabus expectations.

Creative writing

- *Construct a variety of sentences*
- *Develop well-structured paragraphs*
- *Compose a coherent argumentative composition of two to two and half pages (p.3).*

The notion above validates that learners need to be capacitated with necessary writing skills in order to meet the requirements as outlined in the syllabus. Teachers have to ensure that learners fully understood what is expected from them. Therefore, learners need to ensure that their paragraphs are well arranged in the style below:

2.3.5 Paragraph Structure

a) Topic Sentence

Mothebesoane et al. (2022) expounds that a topic sentence “as the foremost sentence that appears in every paragraph. Its central role is to help organize the paragraph by summarizing the information in a paragraph. It expresses what the paragraph is about”. For that reason, learners should be aware that it should be written in an effective way to help the reader get the main idea quickly.

b) Supporting details

Tlali (2018) clarifies that supporting details build on the topic sentences to create a logical and unified piece of writing that can easily be understood. Again, it includes examples, facts, reasons or descriptions that the writer uses to support the topic sentences. It is practical, therefore, to conclude that for a vibrant writing and to make clear strong arguments, learners need to be able to support their main ideas. This help to validate the raised points and convince the reader.

c) Concluding sentences

Concluding sentence summaries the entire paragraph by stating it in a different way (Tlali, 2018). This means that a writer wraps up entire paragraph in a different way. It signals the end of the paragraph and leaves the reader with important ideas to think about.

2.3.6 Parts of essay

The essay entails three main parts. Scholars like (Mutikiri, 2014; Mutikiri, 2016) pointed that the parts include introduction which is merged with the thesis into one paragraph. The **introduction** is a general overview of the problem one is addressing in the essay and thesis is the foundation of the essay on which one is building the rest of the essay. That is why it is regarded as a cornerstone that largely defines the rest of the essay.

The body has in the answers asked from the raised concerns in the introduction. The information is based on extensive research. The main purpose of the body part of the text is to present the evidence that guides audience along with the thesis statement all the way to the conclusion. **Conclusion** provides a summary of the presented ideas from the essay. It is put in a different way.

2.3.7 Argumentative writing

In resonance to Benetos & Bétrancourt, (2020) argumentative writing is a task that calls upon multiple and complex cognitive and metacognitive skills. These skills must often be acquired along with the domain specific learning outcomes that the argumentative writing process is expected to promote, with the quality of the argumentation within the text produced often serving as a measure of the attainment of the learning outcome. That is, learners need to possess the mentioned skills above so that it can be easily for them to be able to permeate easily in their writing.

2.3.8 Argumentative essay

According to Dang et al. (2020) argumentative essay is defined as an essay that argues a controversial topic or issue aimed at persuading readers so that they agree with the writer's point of view. Meanwhile, Setyowati et al. (2020) define an argumentative essay as an essay that requires learners to provide strong arguments or logical reasons that can defend their opinions on a topic or issue. On the other hand, this essay type is considered the most difficult type of essay for some ESL learners (Ananda et al 2024; Ozfidan & Mitchell, 2020; Setyowati et al., 2020). This is because it demands a high level of critical thinking. Learners must analyse complex issues, evaluate evidence, and make persuasive arguments based on logic and reasoning.

In addition, there are several elements of an argumentative essay that differentiate this type of essay from other types of essays. They include an argumentative thesis statement, evidence or source integration, counterclaims or counterarguments, and refutations (Dang et al., 2020; Ozfidan & Mitchell, 2020). The thesis stage includes a hook or attention grabber, background information on the topic, and a thesis statement. Meanwhile, the argument stage includes arguments or reasons supported by pertinent evidence. It also includes counterclaims and refutations to show that the opposing claim is incorrect. Finally, the conclusion stage includes a restatement of the thesis statement in different words and an affirmation of the arguments that have been discussed.

2.4 Empirical studies

Khatri's (2014) study explored the effectiveness of guided writing in teaching composition. The study was done in Grade 9 learners. To collect data, pre-test and post-test were the major tools used. The researcher divided learners into groups of experimental and control. The intervention was used in the experimental group. The use of guided writing was administered

in one group while the control group was taught without guided writing activities. The study results revealed that guided writing activities were more effective in teaching composition.

Further, Novita (2019) conducted a study on the implementation and the improvement of guided writing towards the student's writing skill. To collect the qualitative data, the researcher used observation. To collect the quantitative data, the researcher conducted tests before and after the research implementation. The result of the research shows that guided writing could improve the students' writing skill. Through guided writing, the learners showed great interest to be actively involved in the teaching and learning process. The learners were able to construct sentences correctly.

Similarly, Martarini et al. (2020) used a descriptive analysis to deal with the effect of guided writing strategy through first semester students. The result showed that when the students were treated to guided writing the mean of the result was 80.08 meanwhile when the students were treated by conventional writing skill was 76.77. It was concluded that according to the learning strategy, the group of learners treated through guided writing strategy was better.

More, Tep and Srey (2022) reported the results of action research conducted with student teachers in their second year at Phnom Penh Teacher Education College (PTEC). The purpose of the study was to examine whether guided writing could assist student teachers to enhance their expository paragraph writing abilities. Data from the pre-test and post-test were analysed using a t-test to examine the significant changes between both tests. The results showed that guided writing may help students enhance their writing skills. Based on the t-test value, it was proven by the mean score rate of the students' pre-test and post-test of the experimental group

Wendimu and Gebremariam (2024) study examined the effect of teacher-student collaboration through guided-writing instruction. A two-group quasi-experimental design was used with a pre-treatment-post-tests format. The participants in this study were 50 11th-grade students (aged 17–24; 28 male and 22 female) from Data Sana Memorial School in Wolaita Sodo City, South Ethiopia. Writing skills tests and questionnaires about writing motivation were used to collect data, which was then analysed using independent samples t-test analysis to determine the effectiveness of guided-writing on students' writing improvement and motivation. Although the pre-test results did not show a significant difference between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups, the post-test results of the writing skill tests showed a statistically significant difference between the means of the experimental and control groups. Additionally, the results of the writing motivation questionnaires revealed that the mean score

of the experimental group increased significantly in the post-test compared to the pre-test. These findings demonstrate the usefulness of guided-writing instruction in assisting students with writing difficulties and motivation.

2.5 Gap and appraisal

Based on the extensive analysis from the literature, researchers investigated and endorsed guided writing as an appropriate teaching technique to enhance writing skills in ESL. It is worth noting to elaborate the gaps identified that the study intends to address, precisely relating to the theoretical gap and literature in the context of Lesotho. It is evident that little is known concerning the utilisation of guided writing in the context of Lesotho. Even though, it is well-known on the contributions made by different scholars from other countries in English as both Second and Foreign Language writing. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to bridge the knowledge and pedagogic gap by systematically incorporating guided writing to enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL classroom with the intention to improve classroom practises in Lesotho.

2.6 Summary

The chapter presented the theoretical framework for the study, provided a comprehensive literature pertinent to the current investigation. It examined the previous studies related to the research and identified gaps the study intends to address. Therefore, the following Chapter 3 presents the methodology used to carry out this research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a widespread analysis of the relevant literature regarding the research focus. In continuance, this chapter expounds on the study's positioning, research approach, population, sample, and sampling technique. Additionally, this chapter illustrates on the techniques engaged for data collection, outlines the methods for data analysis, and outlines the procedures for data collection. Furthermore, this chapter explains on the observance on research ethics, which were instrumental in establishing the credibility, trustworthiness and validity of the findings. Finally, it provides a summary of the chapter.

3.1 Research paradigm

A research paradigm refers to the world view of a researcher. Rehman and Alhathi (2016) and Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) define a paradigm as a fundamental belief system and theoretical framework characterised by four key components: ontology, concerning beliefs about the nature of reality; epistemology, addressing the nature and forms of knowledge, including acquisition and communication; methodology, which refers to the informed approach to data production; and methods, detailing the processes of data collection and analysis. In other words, it is a way of understanding the reality of the world and studying it.

The pragmatic paradigm was used in the current investigation. Mitchell and Education (2018) maintains that pragmatism is considered to be philosophical partner of mixed-methods research. The pragmatic paradigm, according to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), promotes the application of a variety of techniques in order to comprehend human conduct. In other words, its epistemology is best defined by what a researcher deems appropriate for that specific study, and its ontology holds that there is no one truth because everyone has unique explanations for reality. More importantly, pragmatists consider that truth is continually inferred and renegotiated alongside the backdrop of new and unpredictable circumstances. Hence, pragmatists regularly mix positivist and constructivist doctrines in the same study, by means of qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate different components of a research problem.

The paradigm chosen informs the research questions as it addresses multiple realities derived from learner's essay writing. It enabled me to combine qualitative and quantitative methods to explore different facets of the research problem, adapt to changing circumstances, and focus on practical outcomes, ensuring that the findings are applicable and contribute to solving real-world problems. Again, it enabled me to assess learners' skills objectively and explores their perceptions and behaviours interpretively.

3.2 Research approach

According to Cohen et al., (2018), research approaches comprises the strategies of inquiry within the research approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Mixed-methods approach was used in this study due to the fact that they have generalisability, contextualisation and credibility (Dawadi et al., 2021). In line with George (2023), the use of different methods enables credible results. Again, it enabled me to place findings in context to make informed conclusions. Likewise, the mixed-methods research was selected since quantitative research offers breadth in research, and qualitative research increases depth to quantitative data (Dawadi et al., 2021) which appears that it leads to a more thoughtful understanding of the phenomenon under study and compliments the weaknesses of the other. Also, the methods complement each other and enables convergence to validate findings by comparing results from both approaches, increasing reliability.

3.3 Research design

A number of scholars (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Cohen et al., 2018; Creswell & Plano, 2015) posit that mixed methods research has a number of designs; Convergent parallel, Exploratory sequential, Explanatory sequential, Embedded and Transformative. The study opted for sequential explanatory design because of quantitative data gathering and analysis that occurs first, followed by qualitative data generation and scrutiny. Numerous scholars (Gogo & Musonda, 2022; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Smith, 2017; Creswell & Clark, 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015) signify that it is a two phase-data collection process, where a quantitative phase comes first followed by qualitative in second phase. In this explanatory design, a single-group pre-test post-test experimental (quasi-experimental) was integrated.

A single-group pre-test-post-test experimental design is a type of experimental research design where a single group of subjects were exposed to a treatment, and measurements were taken before and after the treatment to observe the effects. In this design, the "pre-test" provided a

baseline measure of the dependent variable before the treatment, which is Grade 9 learners argumentative essay writing skills, while the “post-test” offers a measure of the dependent variable after the treatment has been applied (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) which in this context is guided writing. This design allows researchers to determine the impact of the treatment on the subjects by comparing the pre-test and post-test scores. Additionally, this design requires careful consideration to ensure that the treatment effect observed in the post-test is truly a result of the intervention rather than other inessential variables that may have influenced the outcomes.

In the context of this study quantitative data was generated first which was the first phase of data generation. And then qualitative data complements the quantified data, which in this case was the second phase of data collection. Contextually, participants were exposed to the pre-test before the intervention. Then the post-test followed by the focused group discussions to understand why they behaved the way they behaved after the intervention. Seemingly, qualitative data was used to explicate the quantitative data and to probe deeper to have a clear insight of the phenomenon.

3.4 Population and sampling technique

In a research study, there is a population and as elucidated by Gay et al., (2011) it includes elements such as items, events and individuals. I used convenience sampling by selecting a school that was geographically accessible and easy to reach, minimising logistical costs. This ensured quick and efficient data collection, as the school was convenient to access. In line with McCombes (2019) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) convenient selection is a non-probability sampling technique in which the sample is chosen grounded on how easy it is for the researcher to get the required information. This definition is supported by Mataka et al. (2020) that convenient sampling is cost-effective and time-efficient as the decision on choosing the participants is based on their approachability and availability to the researcher.

Within this school, I purposively selected Grade 9 learners studying English as a second language based on the study objectives and because they are at a critical stage of cognitive and academic development, transitioning into high-order thinking skills and more complex learning tasks. Additionally, 12 participants were selected from the entire 22 participants group based on their pre-test performance level as it ranged between high, middle and lower.

Moreover, Nikolopoulou (2022) expounds that purposive sampling relies on researchers own judgement when choosing members of population to participate in the study as they had same characteristics. This method allowed for in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of interest. Concurring is Creswell and Creswell (2018), that purposeful sampling involves choosing participants who can provide insights into the central phenomenon being studied. It's a strategic approach to selecting cases that will most benefit the research, ensuring that the data collected was meaningful and contributed significantly to the understanding of the research topic.

3.5 Data collection techniques

Tests are considered effective assessment tools administered in Education, (Adom et al., 2020). The authors further explained that tests are standard techniques used to systematically measure a sample of behaviour by posing a set of questions. Hence, in the study, the pre and post tests were deemed ideal and learners were given an argumentative essay questions before and after the experiment. The questions were derived from ECOL past question papers. Cohen et al., (2018) articulate that tests can concern achievement (what a person can do or knows) diagnosis where the strengths and weaknesses of a learner are; where the learner is going wrong or having problems, aptitude (where the learner is doing good at). In the same vein, Thamae (2023) reiterated that pre-tests enable a research to critically identify critical areas of concern while post-tests demonstrate development after intervention or experiment.

Again, focus group discussions were used to collect qualitative data from learners after exposed to guided writing experiment. According to Toyon (2021), focus group discussions were conducted in groups of respondents who took part in the inquiry. The researcher sought the respondents' subjective or objective views. Therefore, learners' views about guided writing administered might dig in depth through engaging with them in a focus group discussion to explore shared experiences, improvements, opinions about the guided writing process.

3.5.1 Test Validity and Reliability Measures

Scholars such as, Creswell (2014), Creswell and Clark (2015) and Leedy and Ormrod (2015) reiterate that validity ensures that data collection tool is precise and measures the intended traits. Reliability concerns the consistence of the tool's outcomes across diverse samples. To enhance it, I used the already existing ECOL LGCSE argumentative essay writing questions. Learners were given two different topics on argumentative essay questions to choose from.

Their essays were marked by their teacher and the researcher to ensure validity and reliability of the results.

3.6 Data collection procedure

A research procedure refers to the systematic steps or methods used to conduct a study, ensuring that the process is organised, credible and capable of answering the research question. This experiment took five weeks, on daily basis of which week 1 I was introduced in the school, I had some interactions with learners for some days prior to administering pre-tests and marking scripts with their teacher. Week 2 to week 4, I experimented the guided writing strategy. Finally, in week 5, I administered the post tests, marking the scripts with their teacher and conducted focus group discussion. Then the generated qualitative data was transcribed and confirmed with participants through member checking.

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data to extract useful information for decision making. This enable an investigator to analyse different data gathered from different tools (Besele, 2023, Cohen et al., 2018). The use of software tools such as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS-27) to analyse pre and post-tests results in descriptive statistics way and focus group discussion data was analysed through thematic analysis.

3.7.1 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics as explained in resonance to Kaur et al. (2018) and Leedy and Ormrod (2015), entails condensing extensive data into summarised forms, presented through frequencies, percentages, means, medians and modes. In order to assess learners' current level of writing competence, pre-tests were administered and executed the experiment then assessed its impact through post-test.

3.7.2 Thematic Analysis

Moreover, Clarke and Bruan (2017) articulate that thematic analysis focuses on identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns of meaning within qualitative data. Similarly, Sepanya-Molefi (2023) argues that from transcribed data, codes can be formed and from codes, categories are formed more surrounding themes are developed to elucidate the data in a form that summarises it and retains the richness, depth and context of the original data. In this study,

qualitative data was sorted accordingly, conceptualised, refined, coded and organised into a coherent new structure.

3.8 Ethical considerations

In research, ethics refers to good values of managing behaviour which are held by a group or even by a professional or researcher (Govil, 2023; Arifin, 2018; Hasan et al, 2021). Again, ethical code of conduct is assurance of honesty and morality that forces the researcher to have respect for the dignity and confidentiality of those individuals who are the participants of the inquiry. These codes served as guidelines in pursuit of this study to unveil the truth from the participants and, therefore I understood that I had to carefully observe measures that would not offend participants.

The permission to conduct this study was requested from the National University of Lesotho Faculty of Education in the department of Language and Social Education (LASED). I then submitted the permission letter to the school principal (See Appendix F). I explained briefly the purpose of the study to the principal who is the gatekeeper of the school. Then I was introduced to the participants. I also explained the purpose of the study to the participants. Participants were ensured that they are free to participate and could withdraw any time they no longer feel comfortable to continue. They were assured to be treated as individuals and not objects and kept anonymous.

Data was analysed in a way that it does not tarnish the names of the participating learners. All participants were assured confidentiality when reporting the results by using pseudonyms instead of their real names. Research Integrity (2021) highlights that both the researcher and participants must have a clear understanding regarding the secrecy of the results and findings of the study. This was done by using information without giving specific names of the learners when data was collected. Data was shared with a supervisor and stored securely where it cannot be accessed by anyone except the researcher.

3.9 Trustworthiness

In research, trustworthiness concerns that the calibre, legitimacy, and dependability of a study's conclusions reflects participants' true experiences (Abidin et al., 2024; Stahl & King, 2020; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Although trustworthiness is also pertinent to quantitative studies, it is especially stressed in qualitative research. Being trustworthy guarantees that the study is

ethical, thorough, and yields reliable and significant findings. Four main standards are frequently used to evaluate it are explained below;

3.9.1 Credibility

This refers to the accuracy and truthfulness of the research findings. It is comparable to internal validity in quantitative research. Strategies to enhance credibility include triangulation (using multiple sources or methods), member checking (having participants review findings), and prolonged engagement in the field (Stahl & King, 2020). Some scholars point out that to ensure credibility, theoretical lenses need to be incorporated to direct the study and by using experts or peers to verify the researcher's interpretations (Abidin et al., 2024; Stahl & King, 2020). The verification of the data was done physically after transcribing as I was at the research side. I then enquired assistant from my three Master of Arts in Education students to verify the accuracy of the interpretations. Thus, this debriefing and member checking process significantly reduced unintentional biased analysis and inconsistency in data interpretation.

3.9.2 Confirmability

This guarantees that the conclusions are grounded in the facts rather than the prejudices, motives, or subjective viewpoints of the researchers. Techniques that aid in establishing conformability include audit trails, triangulation, and reflexivity (self-awareness of researcher impact). In resonance to Coker et al. (2025) confirmability is the description of how one person's perspective was minimized. This was done by presenting learners' scores in a tabular form. Again, images revealing learners' mistakes were also included in the presentations of findings in order to strengthen credibility of the results. For qualitative data, direct quotations were used to present the data generated through the focus group discussions. Therefore, confirmability is established through the use of raw data, representative images, and direct quotations.

3.9.3 Dependability

Dependability is the consistency and stability of the results over time and under many settings, just like it is in quantitative research. Peer debriefing and the maintenance of an audit trail a transparent record of research decisions, data collection, and analysis are two ways that researchers might improve dependability (Coker et al., 2025). Therefore, the research processes undergone by the researcher in carrying out this study were reported in detail to enable future researchers to validate the empirical findings about ESL learners' argumentative essay writing skills in the selected school.

3.9.4 Transferability

As alluded by Halkias et al. (2023) transferability relates to how generalisable the study's conclusions are to different situations or environments. While qualitative research does not strive for generalisability in the same manner as quantitative research, it does allow people to assess if findings are relevant to their own circumstances by offering detailed context and background information. In this study, transferability is enabled by providing comprehensive descriptions of settings, populations, and analysis methods to enable generalization within a specific context.

3.10 Summary of the chapter

The chapter delineated on the methodological approaches that were undertaken to carry out this study to address the research questions posed in Chapter 1. It started by deliberating on the research paradigm that informed the study and the used research approach. The research design was outlined, describing the location of the study. It further designated on the population and sample of the study showing how participants were chosen as well as the school where the research was carried out. Data collection techniques were explained, the tests validity and reliability measures' elucidated, then the data collection procedure was detailed. Finally, data analysis was dealt with outlining the software's used during data analysis. It concluded with the ethical considerations and issues of enhancing trustworthiness. Lastly, it provided a summary of the chapter. The succeeding is Chapter 4, which presents the research findings, analysis and discussions of those findings.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS, DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the study's methodology, including the research paradigm, approach, design, population, sample, data collection methods, validity, reliability, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations, and trustworthiness. This chapter presents the findings and analysis derived from assessment tasks and focus group discussions. Tables and excerpts from participant scripts are employed to enhance clarity. Quantitative data is discussed using percentages, means, medians, and standard deviations. The findings are structured around the following sub-headings, which correspond to the research questions presented in Chapter 1:

1. Learners' levels of competence in writing skills;
2. The role of guided writing in facilitating argumentative essay skills among Grade 9 ESL learners;
3. The impact of guided writing on enhancing argumentative essay writing skills.

Learners are identified using pseudonyms (A–L) to maintain anonymity. Before analysing the core research findings, the chapter presents participants' biographical information.

4.1 Data analysis and Findings

4.1.0 Learners' Profile

Table 1 below shows the biographic details of the participants based on their age and gender who participated in the experiment. It was a group of three male learners which makes 25% aged between 14-15 years old and two which make 17% aged between 16-17 years old. The female learners were similarly distributed across the 14–15 age group constituting 25%, and 16–17 age constituting 33%. Table 4.1.0 presents a summary of participants' gender and age.

Table 4.1.0: Learners experimental group biographic details

Learners' pseudonyms	Gender	Age Group	Total Number	Percentage
A, B, E	M	14-15	3	25%
H, K, D	F	14-15	3	25%
J, L	M	16-17	2	17%
C, F, G, I	F	16-17	4	33%

4.1.1 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills**Table 4.1.1: Participants based on their competence level for pre-test**

Learner pseudonyms	Proficient	Competent	Developing	Emerging
A		✓		
B			✓	
C		✓		
D			✓	
E			✓	
F			✓	
G			✓	
H				✓
I				✓
J				✓
K				✓



Table 4.4.1 shows participating learners' classifications according to their writing competency based on their pre-test scores in argumentative essay writing. Learners were sorted based on their competence level attainment after marking was done (appendix B).

The classification was informed by a pre-established analytical rubric that defined four levels of writing competence: proficient, competent, developing and emerging based on the shown marking memo (appendix D). Each learner, A through L, were assigned a pseudonym to improve anonymity. There were twelve participants. In regard to competent level, there are (2 learners, 17%). Learners A and C showed a reasonable grasp of argumentative writing conventions but had some weaknesses in either coherence, elaboration of ideas, or language use. Their writing showed potential but lacked the consistency or clarity found in the Proficient group.

Once more, at the developing level, there are (5 learners, 42%). Learner B, D, E, F, and G writing showed a basic understanding of argumentative structure but was limited in organisation and support for arguments. The ideas were present but not fully developed or logically connected. Lastly, at the emerging there are (5 learners, 42 %): Learners H, I, J, K, and L were identified as needing the most support. Their writing was marked by unclear argument structures, limited content development, and frequent language errors. Remarkably, no learners were rated as proficient at the pre-test stage. These learners struggled to express their ideas coherently and in alignment with academic writing standards as shown below from their scripts.

Grade 9

English Language

22-01-2025

Education should be free in secondary schools because They are some parent who does not have any opportunity to pay school fees for their children's education so education should be free so that other children may come to school so that they should be educated so they are most of ^{punctuate properly and proof read your work so that you can be able to correct minor mistakes.}

Children who are not able to achieve their dreams because of school fees because their parent they are not able to pay for them, education is most highest important thing because they are many people who find better jobs because of it ~~to~~ however any children needs education.

oo This is not a proper way to begin a paragraph
So that any children can be have bright future in the next generation, for example if someone can be educated their life is going to be change then ~~he~~ or she can ~~can~~ continue with ~~her~~ ^{the} life education is very important to us as the children, we should work hard so that ~~we~~ at the end of

you need to have topic sentences in your work.
The day we can experience our ~~own~~ life easily one more thing education is ~~an~~ a part of life and now some of people can communicate with others because ~~the~~ they have more ^{sp} knowledge and can help others so I ~~advise~~ advice many children to go to school ~~the~~ and they will have a good future and they will be successful. They are
Some children who does not afford to go to school because there is no money ~~in~~ at home.

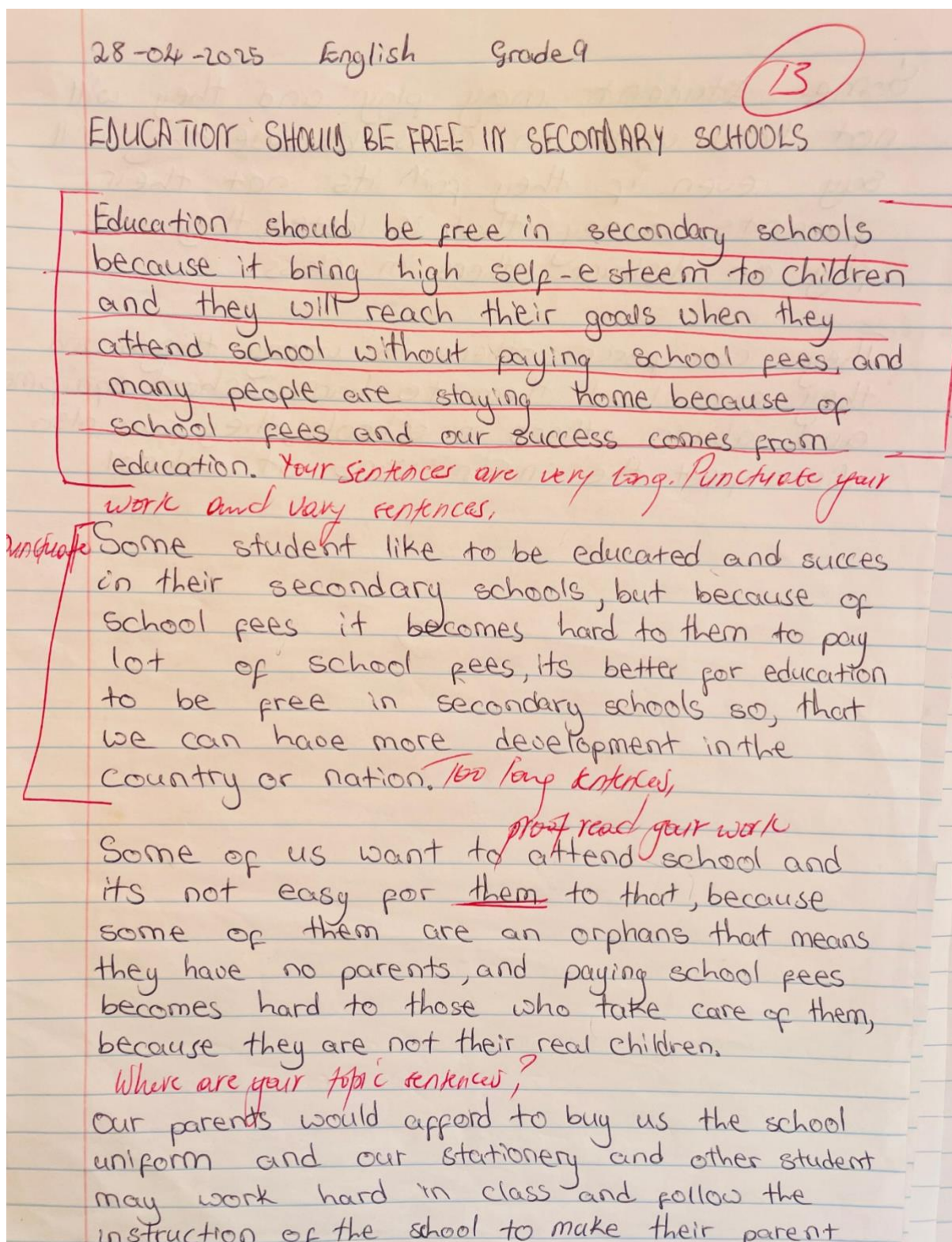


Fig. 1 participants' scripts before the experiment with guided writing.

The above presented participant scripts show that learners are indeed having some challenges. The required concepts to be followed seemed to be a challenge which are not limited to paragraph development, language use which is not limited to proper punctuation and proper

way to start a paragraph and produce a well coherent writing. This seem to imply that there is a need to act accordingly and bring solutions towards reflected problem. This calls for incorporating guided writing technique for the experiment to eradicated the faced challenges by learners.

4.1.2 Guided writing steps in facilitating argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners

Table 4.1.2 participants based on their competence level for post-test

Learner pseudonym	Proficient	Competent	Developing	Emerging
A	✓			
B		✓		
C	✓			
D				✓
E			✓	
F		✓		
G	✓			
H		✓		
I			✓	
J			✓	
K			✓	
L			✓	

Table 4.1.2 displays learners' classification after a post-test scores. Learners were sorted based on their competence level attainment after marking was done. The competence level criteria as shown in the (Appendix D) is categorised into the following: proficient, competent, developing and emerging based on the shown marking memo (Appendix B). Alphabetic letters A to L were

used as pseudonym's for participants' identification. More learners were on the developing level, (5) 42% learner E, I, J, K, L. At the proficient level and competent level learners are equal, which is (3) 25% namely: Learner A, C, G for proficient and learner B, F, H, at competent level. There is a noted improvement after a series of guided writing sessions and scaffolding as shown from learners' scripts below. There is a development compared to the concerns in the pre-test scripts.

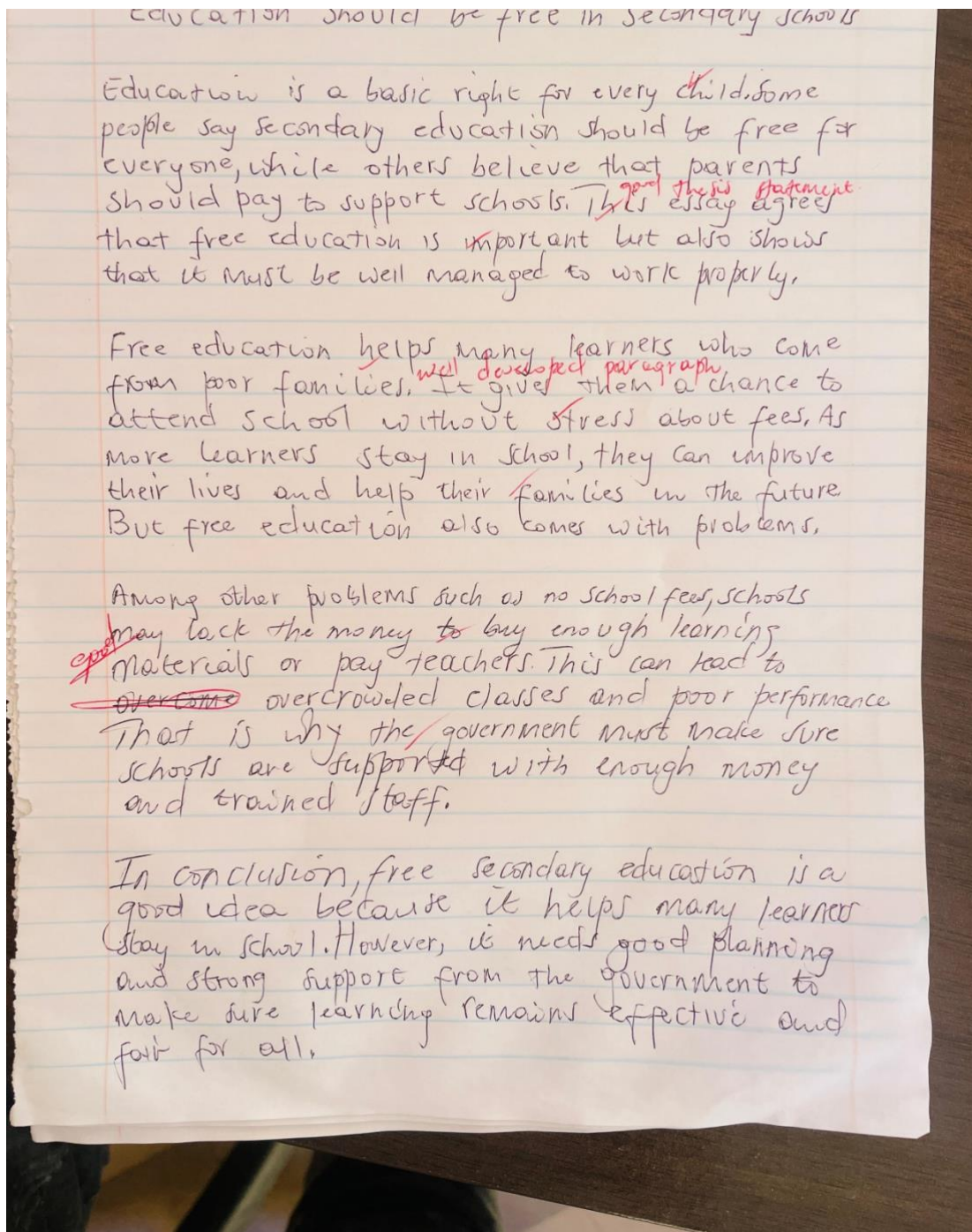


Fig. 2 shows participant scripts after the experiment.

Based on the foregoing presented participants post-test script (Figure 2) after the experiment, it has highlighted the improvement on the required argumentative essay writing structure where learners were expected to have introduction with thesis statement and others as shown previously in the literature section. The presented script portrays an improvement in areas such as paragraph development which was a challenge in the pre-test, the essay structure which entails introduction, body and conclusion. In the pre-test, learners' scripts lacked proper introductions and some lacked conclusions. However, those were dealt with accordingly and corrected through the series of guided writing sessions provided which signifies a rapid change compared to the previous scripts.

The presented data seem to imply that the guided writing experiment worked as the steps through the sessions enhanced learners to master required concepts in as far as coherent essay writing is a major concern. This meant that learners understood the required concept matter and mastered it. Reduced mistakes committed in the pre-test signifies an improvement and mastery of required skills for learners to produce a coherent argumentative essay writing. The participants' descriptive statistics follow to signify improvement after the use of guided writing.

Table 4.1.2 Mean, median and standard deviation of pre and post-tests scores

Descriptive Statistics	Pretest	Post-test
N Valid	12	12
N Missing	0	0
Mean	27.17	52.67
Median	28.50	50.00
Std. Deviation	14.192	23.051

Table 4.1.2 shows the pre and post test scores showing descriptive statistics (mean, median, Standard Deviation) of the administered experiment (guided writing) in Grade 9 classroom where learners were asked to write an argumentative essay. The percentages of the tests scores

were recorded and analysed with SPSS 27 (appendices C). The total number of participants was 12. Pre-test mean score was 27.17, median score was 28.50 and standard deviation was 14.192. Post-test mean was 52.67, median was 50.00 and standard deviation was 23.051.

Post-tests scores as shown by their mean, median and standard deviation are higher than the pre-test, therefore the implication is that the treatment worked based on the presented results. The average performance of learners nearly doubled, indicating significant learning gains. Higher median shows at least half of the learners improved to 50 or more compared to the pre-test mean scores. The standard deviation is high which shows learners' scores became more spread out, meaning some learners improved a lot more than others. This could indicate differentiated impact that the experimented strategy worked well for most but not equally for all. The results strongly suggest a positive effect of the guided writing experiment. The data supports the idea that learners' argumentative essay writing skills improved after they received instructional support.

4.1.3 Impact of guided writing in enhancing grade 9 learners argumentative essay writing skills in ESL

The focus group discussion of seven participants (7) was conducted in order to answer the research question: *How do Grade 9 learners perceive the impact of guided writing in enhancing their argumentative essay writing skills in ESL?*. The focus group discussion guide was broken down into six (6) themes namely; General writing experience and guided writing, Skill development, Motivation and confidence, tools and mediation, social interaction, language use and learning. Lastly, suggested improvements in regard to the used experimental intervention. In each thematic area, there were asked question during the discussion in order to generate rich data from the participants.

4.1.3.1 General Writing Experience and Guided Writing

Participants were asked to share how they feel about writing essays in English. Their responses were as follows:

Participant A: *“I feel nervous because sometimes I don't know how to write my ideas in English”*.

Participant B: *“I enjoy it. Before it was hard, but now I understand more”*.

Participant C: *“It's okay. I just don't like thinking of arguments, but I try”*.

Participant D: *“I get confused about structure, but I like expressing my opinion”*.

Participant E: *“I find it difficult, especially grammar and vocabulary”*.

Participant F: *“Sometimes I feel proud when I write a good essay”*.

Participant G: *“It’s hard, but it’s better than before we started the guided writing”*.

The presented findings above showed that few participants are relaxed when writing using English language. However, majority of participants are not relaxed as there are some raised emotions in regard to writing in English Language. This means that the participants are not relaxed when writing using English language. This implies that indeed learners when using or writing in English they encounter mixed emotions that contribute to them not be relaxed as a result, they may encounter some challenges as they write or proceed with their provided tasks.

Moreover, participants were also asked *whether they have participated in guided writing sessions and how they would describe their experience*. Their responses were as shown below:

Participant A: *“Yes. It helps because the teacher explains step by step”*.

Participant B: *“Yes, I like it because we can work together”*.

Participant C: *“I have. It helped me to plan before writing”*.

Participant D: *“Yes. I now understand how to start and end my essays”*.

Participant E: *“I did, but sometimes I didn’t finish on time”*.

Participant F: *“Yes. It gave me confidence to try on my own”*.

Participant G: *“Yes, and I learned how to support my opinions better”*.

All participants as shown in the responses confirmed that they participated. They had different experiences as they participated in the guided writing sessions. That is, as they participated they encountered some new things that made their writing simplified. It appears that it enabled them to master the intended concepts of their writing in the sessions. This means incorrectness that they encountered before being exposed to the guided writing experiment is reduced as they progress and deal with concepts in pairs and group through the guidance of their teacher.

Furthermore, participants were also asked *whether guided writing makes writing easier or harder for them and were required to provide reasons for their choice*. Their responses were as shown below:

Participant A: “*Easier. I know what to do now*”.

Participant B: “*Easier because we have planning time*”.

Participant C: “*Sometimes harder because I want to finish fast, but guided writing is slow*”.

Participant D: “*Easier, but only if the topic is not too difficult*”.

Participant E: “*It helps, but grammar is still hard for me*”.

Participant F: “*It’s easier because of all the examples and help*”.

Participant G: “*Harder at first, but now it makes writing more clear for me*”.

The above responses reveal a range of different viewpoints on guided writing. Some participants emphasised that it was easier. This seems to suggest that participants' work load was reduced as they managed to navigate easily with the experiment of guided writing session and fulfil the required tasks. Nonetheless, responses from other participants show mixed ideas as writing was harder and ended as easier after the use of guided writing. As majority of participants showed that it was easier, it seems to imply that the provided sessions enabled learners to be able to easily permeate around the required task fulfilment by learners in as much as argumentative essay writing is concerned.

The other question posed to the participants was as follows:

What specific activities or strategies during guided writing sessions were most helpful for you?

There were multiple responses shared based on the asked question. The majority of the participants showed that pairing and grouping enabled participants to easily brainstorm their points to make their writing to be much easier. Different activities that were used as highlighted from the presented responses from the participants. Participants' responses are shown below:

Participant A: “*Brainstorming with classmates helped me get ideas*”.

Participant B: “*Using sentence starters made my writing better*”.

Participant C: “*I liked filling in the essay outline before writing in groups*”.

Participant D: “*The teacher's examples showed me what a good essay looks like and we worked on it with my desk mate*”.

Participant E: “*Peer feedback helped me see my mistakes*”.

Participant F: “*Writing introductions together in class helped a lot*”.

Participant G: “*The paragraph building activities were really helpful*”.

From these responses, it seems that definitely the used activities or strategies through the guided writing had an impact on participants. work. This means the unnecessary mistakes can be easily avoided and meet the required form and standard enabling learning to produce a coherent argumentative essay writing free from errors. The collaborated activities between teacher and learners assisted learners and simplified the tasks they were expected to deal with. That is, as learners collaborate, they were able to provide further elucidations on the problems dealt with and make their peers understand better. In instances where further clarifications are need, a teacher is able to move from group or pair in the class to provide elucidations on the challenging concept.

4.1.3.2 Skill Development

In relation to the skill development, the participants were asked the following question:

Do you think guided writing has improved your ability to structure your argumentative essays? How?

Participants raised different issues concerning their improvement on their writing and provided some elucidations on their views. Majority of the participants showed that indeed guided writing has improved their writing. The other participant emphasised the ability to master some parts of writing as shown from the responses below.

Participant A: “*Yes. I know how to write the introduction, body, and conclusion now*”.

Participant B: “*Yes. I use linking words like ‘however’ and ‘because’ more now*”.

Participant C: “*Yes. I try to write each idea in a new paragraph*”.

Participant D: “*I think so. My essays look more organized now*”.

Participant F: “*Yes, especially the body paragraphs. I now give reasons and examples*”.

Participant G: “*Yes. Before I just wrote randomly. Now I follow a structure*”.

These responses from the participants imply that guided writing made an impact on how writing was done. Even though there were noted improvement, some challenges still persist as far as a coherent writing is concerned. This is in relation to what needs to be considered in the writing and organisation of presented ideas. For example, the response below shows a different opinion from others presented earlier.

Participant E: “*A little. I still forget sometimes what to put in each part*”.

This shows that more attention should be paid on ensuring that learners follow coherently and do what is expected from them. That is, more emphasis should be made to what need to be included and avoided so that learners are able to meet the demands of the examiner. Mastery of required concepts may make learners earn more marks and be proficient in their writing.

Also in regard to skill development, participants were asked to share *whether guided writing has helped them when brainstorming ideas or organising their arguments*. In response, majority of the responses highlighted that indeed it provided assistance as far as brainstorming ideas and organising them is concerned. Participants also cited some examples on how the experiment assisted them. Their responses and examples are shown below.

Participant A: “*Yes. For example, for the topic on free secondary education, I thought of points before writing*”.

Participant B: “*Yes. The mind map activity helped me plan better*”.

Participant C: “*Yes, the chart we used for advantages and disadvantages made it easier*”.

Participant D: “*I used to write everything together, now I plan before I write*”.

Participant E: “*Yes, but sometimes I need more time to think*”.

Participant F: “*Yes. I use a table to list ideas and examples before writing*”.

Participant G: “*Yes, it makes it easier to stay on topic*”.

The implication is that guided writing impacted how learners draft and organise their ideas. That is, as learners follow the guided writing steps, there can be change from what they are to write, meaning it can be easier for them to be able to produce a coherent essay as expected. Some disorganised ideas which lack logic are easy avoided which reduces the redundancy as learners write and present their work.

4.1.3.3 Motivation and Confidence

The question below was asked in relation to learners' motivation and confidence in regard to guided writing.

Do you feel more motivated to write when guided by a teacher? Explain

All participants responded that they are confident when guided by their teacher. They also provided some clarifications on why agreeing that they are motivated. Their responses and clarifications are shown below:

Participant A: *“Yes. I feel supported and I understand better”*.

Participant B: *“Yes, because I don't feel lost”*.

Participant C: *“Yes, it's easier to focus when the teacher helps us”*.

Participant D: *“Yes. I like writing more now than before”*.

Participant F: *“Yes. I want to try because the teacher believes in me”*.

Participant G: *“Yes. I feel like I can do better with support”*.

However, only Participant E raised a different idea as follows: *“Sometimes. If the topic is interesting, I'm more motivated”*.

That is as emphasised it is not always that the participant is motivated. This is because of the provided essay titles that contribute to the participant motivation. So, as shown above from the presented response, the claims can be that the participant has been provided with title that is not eye catchy, the participant may have mixed emotions concerning the provided title to be tackled. All presented responses seem to make an emphasis that even though learners can be motivated when offered guidance by their teacher, not all prefer such assistance. Thus, learning need to be learner centred to enable learners to take full control of their learning process and consult where necessary. This highlights that teachers as they offer scaffolding to their learners, there is no need for a prolonged assistance, but gradually the assistance needs to be reduced to let learners be on their own.

The participants were also asked to share *whether they feel confident in their argumentative essay writing skills after participating in guided writing sessions*. Their responses are as shown below:

Participant A: “*Yes, because I now know how to write an argument.*”

Participant B: “*Yes, because I’ve improved a lot.*”

Participant C: “*Not fully, but I’m getting better.*”

Participant D: “*Yes. My last essay got a higher mark.*”

Participant E: “*A little. I still make mistakes, but less now.*”

Participant F: “*Yes, I don’t panic when I see the writing task anymore.*”

Participant G: “*Yes. I feel more confident because I have a method now.*”

The majority of the respondents highlighted that they are confident with their writing after participated in the guided writing sessions. They also showed that there are some concepts that improved in their writing. For example: Participant A: “*Yes, because I now know how to write an argument*”. Most of their responses are positive showing that the experiment strategy impacted how they write their work. Although there are some few participants with different responses from others. That is, they encountered different things. An exemplification is drawn from the following participants’ responses as shown below:

Participant C: “*Not fully, but I’m getting better.*”

Participant E: “*A little. I still make mistakes, but less now.*”

The implication is that they are not confident like others in their writing skills. That is, there are some hiccups that they faced as the experiment progressed or it appears that they did not comprehend all intended skills. As the above responses show that there are minor mistakes committed even though there is little progress on how they are doing their work in regard to their writing.

4.1.3.4 Tools and Mediation

Participants were also asked some questions in relation to the tools used and mediation in their class teaching and learning. The question was: *What resources do you use in your learning process?* In regard to the asked question, participants raised different resources used to mediate their learning process. Their responses are shown below:

Participant A: “*The writing checklist.*”

Participant B: “*My notes provided by the teacher.*”

Participant C: “*Textbooks.*”

Participant D: “*Teacher's feedback on my first draft.*”

Participant E: “*Peer feedback and dictionary.*”

Participant F: “*Hand-outs from the teacher*”.

Participant G: “*Charts on the classroom wall*”.

From the presented information about mediating resources, there are many that are used in their classroom. The mediating tools include: textbooks, teachers provided hand-outs, prepared charts pasted in the classroom, provided writing checklists by the teacher, as well as notes that learners made during interaction with their teacher. For effective delivery of intended content in the classroom there is a need for teachers to have mediating resources that enable learners to understand the delivered content. That is, for effective teaching and learners’ engagement, those resources can aid the mastery of dealt concepts.

Participants were further asked to share their views on *how do these tools help or hinder their learning*. When addressing the question, different ideas were shared as shown below:

Participant A: “*They help me remember what to include*”.

Participant B: “*They make writing more clear and organized*”.

Participant C: “*Sometimes I forget to use them, but they help a lot when I do*”.

Participant D: “*They guide me when I don’t know how to continue*”.

Participant E: “*The dictionary is slow, but it helps with spelling*”.

Participant F: “*The checklist helps me edit my own work*”.

Participant G: “*They make the writing process easier to follow*”.

Based on the shared views from participants, it can be noted that the tools when used they bring impact to the learning process. All participants made an emphasis that they provide aid in different ways as shown above. It is important to remember that those resources are regarded as simplifying the learning process by providing immediate assistance to learners to enable them to easily permeate on abstract concepts with or without the guidance from their teacher in the teaching and learning sphere.

4.1.3.5 Social Interaction, Language Use, and Learning

In regard to the previous section, participants were asked *to describe any group activities or peer discussions during guided writing that helped them develop their essays*. Participants responses were as follows;

Participant A: “*Yes, group brainstorming gave me more ideas*”. This participant emphasised on the effectiveness of brainstorming together. That is, as the learners exchange and share ideas together, their learning is easy and simplified encouraging participation from each member and arouses their interests to learn and engage in debates. As they share information about their learning either in groups or pairs, they are able to assist one another or each other to do as expected. The responses from the participants below concurs that collaboration is enhanced and they are assisted by their peers.

Participant B: “*Yes, we gave each other feedback and that helped*”.

Participant C: “*Yes, talking about the topic in pairs made me understand better*”.

Participant D: “*Yes. My group helped me fix my topic sentence*”.

Participant E: “*We worked in pairs to write a paragraph. That helped*”.

Participant F: “*Yes. I copied a good sentence from my partner and learned from it*”.

Participant G: “*Yes. We shared ideas, and I used some in my writing*”.

Most of the responses from the participants, highlighted activities done which includes brainstorming ideas together, feedback, working in pairs and in groups. These responses show that as learners interact, they collaborated and their learning takes place smoothly. This means shared experiences from learners in their interaction enable them to construct new knowledge that is used to backup their learning and knowledge construction as they permeate within complex processes of their learning.

Additionally, participants were asked to share their views based on the questions below;

How do you feel when you work together with your classmates on writing tasks? Does it make writing easier or more challenging? Why?

The question was asked in relation to classroom collaboration as learners were expected to interact with their peers through the guidance of their teacher. As the Socio-cultural theory

pillars showed that learners learn best through interacting with others, participants' responses were as shown below.

Participant A: “*Easier. We learn from each other*”.

Participant B: “*Fun and helpful*”.

Participant D: “*It makes it easier because we don't feel alone*”.

Participant E: “*Easier because we share ideas*”.

Participant G: “*Helpful, especially when my classmate explains something to me*”.

The raised responses signify that indeed the interaction that happened in the classroom aided much based on the responses. That is, it is worth noting that when learners interact, learning happens and new knowledge is co-constructed among learners. That is, teaching and learning need to be driven by learners so that they are given responsibilities in their learning. Conversely, there are different ideas raised in regard to that question as shown above. Some participants responded differently. For instance, Participant C: “*Sometimes it's hard to agree, but mostly helpful*”. This participant response signifies that as there is interaction even though there are some misunderstanding in their pairs or groups that lead to prolonged discussion and not reaching consensus with a short time. But those long discussions also enhance their learning and gaining new knowledge from the prolonged discussions.

Additionally, there are also some setbacks faced as shown by the participant response below.

Participant F: “*Challenging if we're not focused, but good when we work well*”.

This shows that there is a need to ensure that teachers need to facilitate the discussions so that interactions can happen in a planned manner. That is, learners may be on the right track through the guidance of an adult with more knowledge as there may be provision of a go ahead where there is a misunderstanding.

Furthermore, participants were also asked to share their views on *how does receiving feedback from their teacher or peers influence their writing process and final essay*. There were various responses shared in relation to the asked question. Among the responses shared, it showed that both teachers and peers feedback plays a major role in their work. That is, it is wise to be given timely and wisely as it can impact how learners are tackling their work. The responses below resonate the above claims.

Participant A: “*It helps me fix mistakes before I hand in my work*”.

Participant B: “*I rewrite my essay better after feedback*”.

Participant D: “*I understand what to improve next time*”.

Participant E: “*It shows me what I did wrong*”.

Participant F: “*It helps me feel more confident*”.

Participant G: “*Feedback helps me to make my writing clearer*”.

However, as it is emphasised below by the other participant,

Participant C: “*Sometimes it hurts, but I learn from it*”.

This is, the provided feedback at times learners perceive it negatively. That can make learners develop negative attitude when they are given feedback with comments from their teachers. This need to be done in a vigilant way to avoid demotivating learners. As feedback is considered part of the learning process, not all learners regard it that way as shown by the participant response above. This relies on teachers’ intelligence on how best feedback can be given to learners without causing distraction and demotivate them as they progress in their learning journey.

4.1.3.6 Suggestions for Improvement

Participants were asked what aspects of guided writing do they think need to be improved to better support their learning. Participants responded in different ways sharing different ideas. The responses are shown below;

The responses show that participants have a concern that they need to be given enough time so that their work is properly done. For example, response from participant A: “*More time to write and revise*”.

Additionally, there is a raised concern that there is a need to go extra miles in dealing with those writing aspects. Participant B: “*We could use more examples*”. That is, teachers are expected to provide extra examples as they teach so that learners can be able to understand the concepts dealt with. Moreover, there is a further suggestion that pairing and grouping is advisable to be considered in the classrooms. That is, it does not only enhance collaboration between learners but it ensures that learners are able to share what they know with their peers

and exchange knowledge. As emphasised below by, participant C: “*Maybe smaller groups for more help*”.

Moreover, for learners to be able to understand and apply the guided writing steps for their practice, teachers need to be flexible enough and allow learners to use more culture specific topics that they may come up with on their own. For instance, participant D: “*Let us choose some topics we care about*”. This means for practise, this may enhance understanding the skills and in future be applied effectively as they progress in their work. The emphasis on more practise can ensure mastery of targeted concepts reducing challenges to be encountered. This was alluded by participant E: “*More grammar support during writing*”. Again, there should be enough teaching and learning aids to assist learners. This calls for teachers to create conducive learning spaces by ensuring that the environment is language rich in order to meet learners needs in the context of learning a language. This was reaffirmed by the response below;

Participant F: “*Add more visuals or videos to explain topics*”.

Lastly, as teachers proceeds and continue to offer scaffolding, there is a need to ensure that feedback if given timely. This ensures that repetitive unnecessary mistakes committed by learners are avoided. The last participant emphasised it as shown below;

Participant G: “*Give feedback faster so we can fix things quickly*”.

That is, teachers’ feedback in the daily activities of learners ensures that committed mistakes are avoided as reprimand is done timely and learners are able to learn from their mistakes as they regularly practice their writing. This implies that it is evident that for teacher to enhance learners’ mastery of guided writing, they need to be observant of the raised concerns from learners as presented above. This may ensure that suitable media and resources are provided so that learners diverse needs are fully met while ensuring that required skills are harnessed.

4.2 Summary of the chapter

This chapter presented and analysed both quantitative and qualitative findings derived from pre- and post-tests, as well as focus group discussions. Quantitative results revealed substantial improvement in learners’ argumentative essay writing skills following the guided writing intervention. Qualitative insights highlighted increased learner confidence, clearer structural awareness, and enhanced collaborative learning. However, variations in improvement suggest

a need for differentiated instructional strategies. The next chapter discusses these findings in relation to the study's research questions and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an in-depth discussion of the findings presented in the previous chapter, with particular emphasis on their alignment with the research questions and their congruence or divergence from established literature. It explores convergence and divergence with prior research in second language writing pedagogy and guided writing instruction. Additionally, the discussion interprets the findings through the lens of Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory, which underpins this study.

5.2 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills

To address the first research question, a pre-test was administered to Grade 9 ESL learners to assess their initial writing competence. The scores were analysed and recorded based on a developed pre-established analytical rubric. Their results revealed a clear need for explicit instruction in argumentative essay writing skills, particularly in developing coherent structures, supporting arguments with evidence, and improving grammatical accuracy. The large number of learners in the developing and emerging category also highlights the linguistic challenges faced by ESL learners when engaging in complex academic writing tasks. The findings underscore persistent linguistic challenges typical of L2 learners, including limited control over interlanguage forms, underdeveloped lexical range, and difficulties in managing cognitive load during complex writing tasks.

These findings suggest that learners generally lacked the necessary academic writing skills, which corroborates the assertion made by ECOL (2022) that many learners are "incompetent to use language accordingly in their writing," especially when tasked with argumentative essay writing tasks. The prevalence of learners in the emerging and developing categories emphasises the urgency of implementing structured writing support strategies in the classroom. They also substantiate Nurfaidah (2018) that there is a need to understand learners' development in their learning environment in order to be able to provide necessary assistance.

The observed performance further aligns with Pacursa (2019), who reiterates that writing competence in grammar, vocabulary, and the structure of an argumentative essay can be enhanced through guided writing approaches. The data evidently show the initial need for such

instructional support, as learners struggled with the foundational elements of effective writing. In light of Klimova (2013) emphasis on planning, setting objectives, and synthesising ideas, it is apparent that most learners lacked these cognitive strategies at the pre-test stage. Their placement in lower competence levels is attributed to insufficient training in metacognitive planning and essay structure. The author further claimed that these skills are essential in L2 writing, and their absence is often reflected in disorganised and incoherent text production.

Moreover, the difficulties learners had in organising logical arguments and utilising academic language support Fareed et al.'s (2016) findings that ESL learners often struggle with the use of cohesive devices, appropriate grammar, and formal written discourse. The five learners in the emerging category may reflect the group of learners lacking foundational language control and writing strategies. From learners' scripts, the following were noted: challenges of the layout such as introduction, body, conclusion that were lacking, punctuations mistakes, paragraph development. Incorporating creative elements in writing, as suggested by Fitria (2024) and Pérez et al., (2021), might also have been underdeveloped among learners at this stage. Although the goal of argumentative essay writing is different than that of other creative writing essays, the ability to eloquently and convincingly convey ideas is still important. Learners in the developing and emerging levels might not yet have acquired the vocabulary range or stylistic control necessary for persuasive, coherent argumentation.

Finally, these pre-test results highlight the cognitive load involved in argumentative writing skills. The results support Ananda et al., (2024) and Fitria (2024) that this genre demands simultaneous attention to logic, language, structure, and expression. Most learners, especially ESL ones, would find it challenging to meet all these expectations without scaffolding, which probably explains their poor performance before the guided writing sessions. Gonulal and Lowen (2018) concur that learners require to be guided as they perform their tasks.

In essence, the pre-test findings validate that most learners needed sufficient argumentative writing abilities at the beginning of the research, hence supporting the necessity of applying guided writing strategy as an experiment. The research supports the need of scaffolded learning, which helps learners to progressively understand the cognitive and linguistic requirements of argumentative essay writing techniques. The guided writing process should be able to close the distance from developing and emerging levels to competent and finally proficient levels.

5.3 Guided writing steps in facilitating argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners

After exposing learners to guided writing experiment sessions, a post-test was administered. The post-test results show an escalation in learners' argumentative essay writing skills competence. Post-test results display measurable improvements in learners' argumentative essay writing competence, particularly in structure, coherence, and use of transitional language. The proportion of learners in the Emerging level significantly dropped, while new gains were recorded in the Proficient and Competent levels. This suggests the usefulness of the instructional treatment incorporated in improving both academic performance and foundational writing skills, particularly for low-performing learners. The post-test mean, as it was higher than the pre-test mean, confirm the findings Martarini and Sastaparamitha (2020) validations that learners treated through guided writing strategy was better.

These findings corroborate with Ashrafiyany et al., (2020), who emphasise that writing involves a sequence of cognitive processes: pre-writing, drafting, and reviewing. Through guided writing, learners are scaffolded through each of these stages, an approach that demonstrably enhanced learners' ability to structure and refine their writing, as reflected in the post-test results. The progress is also consistent with Dewi's (2018) claim that grasping writing requires competence in mechanics (grammar, spelling, punctuation), planning, argument construction, and idea organisation. The 8% and 33% of learners who transitioned from Emerging or Developing to Competent or Proficient levels appear to have internalised these skills more effectively after receiving structured instruction.

Moreover, the results also reflect the influence of different writing approaches used in ESL contexts as many scholars reiterated. The process approach, as discussed by Mukhtar (2023) and Klimova (2013), aligns closely with the guided writing strategy engaged in this study. Learners were supported through planning, drafting and revising. This structured progression appeared to have contributed to their improved outcomes. The ability of learners to move from lower levels to competent or proficient levels supports Ngubane et al.'s (2020) argument that learners can enhance their writing through repeated, reflective writing cycles. Furthermore, the product approach, which involves mimicking model texts, may have also contributed to the learners' growth. Learners were modelled to proper write thesis statements, topic sentences among others. According to Selvaraj and Aziz (2019), modelling correct structure and language use helps learners internalise expectations for good writing. This might explain why more

learners were able to organise their thoughts and meet formal writing conventions in the post-test.

Lastly, the dialogic approach, as advocated by Ka-kan-dee and Kaur (2015), might have played a supporting role through peer discussions, collaborative tasks, and teacher feedback during guided sessions. This method enhanced interaction and engagement, which can foster confidence, motivation, and deeper learning especially for ESL learners transitioning away from passive learning models (Mustapha, 2021). For example, Participants A, B, D responses emphasised more on collaboration and interaction.

Participant A: *‘Easier. We learn from each other’*.

Participant B: *‘Fun and helpful’*.

Participant D: *‘It makes it easier because we don’t feel alone’*.

Although dialogic instruction can face practical limitations, such as classroom size and time constraints, its emphasis on interaction and feedback likely helped learners reflect on and refine their ideas. This may explain the movement of several learners from Developing to Competent levels.

The improvement of learners like A, C, and G to Proficient level through improved topic sentences, logic writing and well developed paragraphs (refer to post-test script) concur with Thumbarayan and Yunus (2024), who affirm that competence in writing involves accurate grammar, vocabulary use, punctuation, and sentence structure. These learners likely benefited the most from structured planning, feedback, and individual reflection, enabling them to craft well-reasoned, coherent, and linguistically sound arguments. Furthermore, Ashrafiyany et al. (2020) note the importance of mind mapping during the pre-writing phase. This strategy, likely embedded in the guided writing approach, seemed to have allowed learners to generate and organise ideas efficiently, especially those who showed improvements from Emerging to Developing or Competent levels.

Finally, incorporated series of activities enhanced learners’ mastery of concepts. This substantiates McLeod (2019) claims that unpacking and repacking enables learners to work on their zone of proximal development and enhances collaboration in the teaching and learning sphere. Again, these post-test findings confirm Rahmatirad (2020) statements that the Socio-cultural theory that social interactions assists learners to develop their ability to use a language

and that language is socially constructed. Through the grouping and pairing of learners during classrooms tasks, contributed to learners' attainment of required concepts. Similarly, Khatri (2014) findings agrees with the post-test results based on the noted improvement. The author results significantly noted that guided writing activities were effective in enhancing learners' attainment of intended skills in as much as essay writing skills is concerned.

To sum up, at the start, learners struggled with paragraph development and organising their ideas logically and coherently among seen challenges, indicating that these skills were beyond their current level of independent performance. However, through guided writing, a form of scaffolded instruction learners received the necessary support to bridge this gap. As argued by Vygotsky ZPD such improvement occurs when learners are assisted in tasks they cannot do alone but can accomplish with guidance. These designed support provided during guided writing sessions enabled learners to internalise effective writing strategies, gradually moving them from dependent to independent performance. Hence ability to produce required tasks within their ZPD.

5.4 Impact of guided writing in enhancing Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL

The qualitative data derived from participants focus group discussions revealed a spectrum of perceptions regarding the impact of guided writing. As most participants emphasised on collaboration with their teacher and peers, the findings concur with Novita (2019) claims that through guided writing, the learners showed great interest to be actively involved in the teaching and learning process. The learners were able to construct sentences correctly, hence the improvement as noted in the post-test results.

Again, learners emphasised more on enjoying working together in pairs and groups. Their results corroborated with Ayanwale and Mathaha (2025) that interactions restructure learners' cognitive constructions. That is, as learners collaborate, Mataka et al., (2021) concurs that learners achieve equated to their capabilities after support. This aligns with the socio-cultural theory where learners have to be scaffolded and gradually release the offered support. Additionally, their findings also substantiate Haiyan and Rilong (2016) that different activities help learners with production of writing and enhances collaboration.

More importantly, as learners showed that their writing has improved after the use of guided writing, those finding affirms Wendimu and Gebremariam (2024) that the usefulness of guided

writing instruction in assisting students with writing difficulties and motivation. That is, participants emphasised that having participated in the sessions of guided writing enabled them to approach writing tasks with increased clarity, confidence and strategic awareness. Keffeny et al., (2024) assertion support participants' response by articulating that there are significant developments that can be noted when using different media when scaffolding with learners in the teaching and learning sphere.

Some participants made an emphasis of not relaxing when dealing with English written tasks in their learning. Their findings align with Moses and Mahamad (2019) that language instructors face difficulties with teaching the writing skills and motivating learners to write. This may be due to limited vocabulary knowledge, spelling and grammar from learners. Therefore, participants' findings validate those authors claims. However, some participants suggested that teachers need to bring different mediating media in class to mediate learners to learn. These findings substantiate Tursunboeva and Yuldasheva (2024) claim that sometimes learners may face some difficulties and delay to grasp the dealt concepts as some learners may have limited vocabulary, which hinders their ability to express ideas effectively. As they may worry about how their writing will be perceived can stifle their willingness to express themselves.

Moreover, Ali Ghufroon and Hawa (2016) claims on collaborative writing as a functional unit of collaborative learning validate the findings from participants emphasis that they took part in the provided guided writing activities. In resonance to the presented post-test results, it can be noted from the improvement of some participants from emerging category to competent. Those recognised shifts within different categories concurs with Suastra and Menggo (2020) claim that writing skills require learners to employ their linguistic competence to generate main idea, supporting the idea, concluding the concept and have sufficient knowledge of diction choice, topic selection. Thus, the provided scaffolds enabled participants to master those concepts. Also the Socio-cultural theory supports offering assistance to learners and gradually halts to enable learners to drive their learning process.

5.5 Summary of the chapter

This chapter discussed the research findings in relation to the stated research questions and theoretical framework. The succeeding chapter provides a summary of the entire study,

provides conclusions and the recommendations concerning the discussed issues. Future research focus will also be explored in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the findings aligning them with the reviewed literature. It also connected the theory of Socio-cultural principles as the provided the study lenses. The current chapter provides a summation of the study through a brief outline of the findings, conclusions drawn from the study findings, limitations, provides recommendations and areas for future explorations. But first it recaps the aim and purpose of the study.

6.2 Aim and purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to incorporate guided writing to enhance grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills. Chapter 4 presented and analysed data which was collected through pre and post-tests and focus group discussions. Chapter 5 discussed the findings presented in Chapter 4. This was done alongside the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 to explore the convergence and divergence from existing research.

The study sought to answer the main research question: *How does the use of guided writing enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL classroom?*

The 3 sub research questions that guided the experiment are:

- ✓ What is Grade 9 learners' level of competence in argumentative essay writing skills in ESL?
- ✓ How do guided writing steps facilitate argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners?
- ✓ How do Grade 9 learners perceive the impact of guided writing in enhancing their argumentative essay writing skills in ESL?

6.3 Summary of the findings

The quantitative data from administered pre-test revealed areas that needed to be tackled, such as essay writing structure, paragraph development, grammar among others. These were significant as they contributed to low performance when attempting the argumentative essay

questions posed. However, the post-tests results showed significant improvement as the earlier concerns were solved even though not all learners achieved as intended. Qualitative insights further uncovered hindrances in learners to master the required concepts.

6.3.1 The use of guided writing to enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL classroom

The study results when addressing the main research which was *“how does the use of guided writing enhance Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL classroom?”* revealed that the guided writing strategy enhances learners' argumentative essay writing skills. The descriptive statistics analysis showed higher percentages of the post-tests compared to the pre-tests scores. That is, the experimented intervention worked and improved learners writing skills. This enabled learners to minimise committing certain errors in their writing which are not limited to grammar and good coherence of the structure of the essay.

6.3.1.1 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills

The study answering the sub research question on *“What is Grade 9 learners' level of competence in argumentative essay writing skills in ESL?”*, established that most learners were at the emerging and developing stages of their writing level when categorising their writing in terms of the scored marks from administered pre-test. It also affirmed that at those levels, learners writing is distorted as it entails some mistakes concerning paragraph development, layout and grammar among other things. As a results, they contribute to failure to meet the demands of a coherent writing and end up losing some marks hence it was important to act upon to explore what can be done to eradicate those raised concerns.

6.3.1.2 Guided writing steps in facilitating argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners

More importantly when addressing the sub-research question on, *“how do guided writing steps facilitate argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners”* more learners progress best through guidance and interactions with their teacher and peers. The use of different media in the teaching and learning enables learners to permeate with difficult concepts dealt with more easily. The unpacking and repacking done enabled learners to grasp intended subject matter and synthesise it and apply it accordingly. The series of guided writing sessions provided simplified the dealt subject matter and enable learners to navigate around it. Gradually the offered support as it was reduced, it supported learners to be able to drive their learning and co-construct knew knowledge and share ideas. The guided writing steps provided adequate practical exercises to strengthen and enhance learners' mastery of knew knowledge. The study

results were similar to the study findings of Wendimu and Gebremariam (2024). The experimented intervention mean scores of post-test were higher than mean scores of pre-tests scores. They revealed that the experimented intervention was useful and motivated learners based on the achieved tests results.

6.3.1.3 Impact of guided writing in enhancing Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL.

When addressing the sub-research question on, *how do Grade 9 learners perceive the impact of guided writing in enhancing their argumentative essay writing skills in ESL*, most learners after the exposure of the guided writing showed improvement. This was affirmed by the increase of learners from emerging and developing to competent and proficient levels. This implied that most learners perceived the impacts of the experiment positively as it enhanced their writing skills. Martarini et al, (2020) study results reiterate that learners treated with guided writing were better than those treated conventionally

Again, on the idea of collaboration enhancement (Novita, 2019) it seemed that it had provided some impact on how learners were expected to produce a well-structured and coherent essay writing. The incorporated mediation tools that enhances reduction of minor mistakes and enrich the standard vocabulary. Notiva (2019) study results emphasised that guided writing enhances participation and improves learners writing. Again, the provided scaffolding activities and mediating with different tools enhanced learners' participation and collaboration in the classroom. These enabled learners to exchange ideas as they learn and co-construct new knowledge. Again based on the presented findings, as they validated assertions made by different scholars in regard to the Socio-cultural theory tenants.

6.4 Conclusions drawn from findings

6.4.1 Learners' levels of competence in writing skills

From the presented findings, it can be noted that there are certain challenges in learners' competence in writing skills. That is, learners writing skills need to be harnessed and impart new knowledge to enhance their ways of writing so that they may be competent as they attested to required questions and be able to navigate easily within the assigned tasks. Contrary wise, their strengths included committing minor mistakes however, they can cost a lot in terms of gaining more marks in writing.

6.4.2 Guided writing steps in facilitating argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners

It can be concluded that guided writing steps are effective based on the findings. The improvements note that indeed the experiment aided positive results. Guided writing steps solely rely on implementers competence to ensure that it is a success. The need to incorporate different media to enable scaffolding to easily take place needs a competent individual to embark on its execution. However, it cannot be left out to mention that it required ample time and commitment when embarking on it. Pairing and grouping need an individual with a good classroom management.

6.4.3 Impact of guided writing in enhancing Grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL.

The findings showed higher turnout, it showed that learners indeed preferred to be at the forefront in their knowledge construction. Even though some participants perceived it negative. The findings confirmed ability for the experiment to provide positive results to learners. Moreover, it revealed learners' preference for collaboration between their peers through the guidance of their teacher.

6.5 Limitations of the study

Despite the promising potential benefits of the guided writing in enhancing learners' argumentative essay writing skills, the study is subject to several limitations. The findings may have limited generalisability as they are based on a specific class of Grade 9 ESL learners within a particular context. The short duration of the experiment may have also restricted learners' ability to fully internalise the writing strategies, thereby affecting long term skill development. As a researcher delivering the guided writing sessions, I may consciously or unconsciously influenced learners' performance. Again, the learners may perform better simply because they know they are being observed or studied. Finally, the language proficiency gaps may be a limitation as some learners are at different levels of English proficiency, some may benefit more than others from guided writing.

6.6 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations are suggested to enhance the practise and effectiveness of guided writing in developing argumentative essay writing skills among Grade 9 ESL learners. Initially, guided writing should be thoroughly integrated into the ESL curriculum to provide learners with structured support in conquering argumentative essay

writing. Teachers should be equipped with on-going professional development on the implementation of guided writing strategies, including effective modelling, scaffolding, and provision of timely feedback.

Moreover, to ensure consistency and transparency in assessment, educators are encouraged to use standardized rubrics that clearly outline the components of effective argumentative writing. Furthermore, instruction should be differentiated to accommodate diverse learner needs, particularly in classrooms with varying levels of language proficiency. On a learner level, encouraging reflection and metacognitive awareness throughout the writing process can enhance learners' ownership of their development. Finally, peer collaboration during guided writing sessions should be promoted, as it allows learners to share perspectives, practice argumentative essay writing techniques, and develop critical thinking through constructive feedback.

6.7 Areas for further research

This study has provided insights into the effectiveness of guided writing in enhancing argumentative essay writing skills among Grade 9 ESL learners, several areas worth further investigation. Future research could explore the long-term impact of guided writing interventions by conducting longitudinal studies that assess skill retention and development over an extended period. Additionally, as the study was conducted in remote area in Maseru in Grade 9 level, there is a need to examine the effectiveness of guided writing across different educational levels and backgrounds to determine if the strategy yields similar benefits across age groups.

More, research could also investigate how guided writing influences other genres of writing beyond argumentative essays, such as narrative, descriptive, or expository writing. Another promising area involves conducting comparative studies between guided writing and other instructional strategies to identify the most effective methods for ESL learners. Expanding research to include larger and more diverse samples, including learners from rural and urban schools or different language backgrounds, could also improve the generalizability of findings. Finally, future studies could explore the role of digital tools and technology in enhancing the implementation and accessibility of guided writing strategies in modern classrooms.

6.8 Summary of the chapter

The chapter summarised the entire study on incorporating guided writing in enhancing grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL. It provided a brief summary of the findings, conclusions, offered recommendations for numerous stakeholders and drawn areas for future research. The study findings contribute to a deeper understanding of learners' argumentative essay writing skills in ESL and offer practical suggestions for improvement. The chapter is then followed by a preceding reference list that fortifies the arguments of the research and statements.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, I. H. Z., Abd Patah, M. O. R., Majid, M. A. A., Usman, S. B., & Zulkornain, L. H. (2024). A practical guide to improve trustworthiness of qualitative research for novices. *Asian Journal of Research in Education and Social Sciences*, 6(S1), 8-15.
- Adom, D., Mensah, A. J., & Dake, A. D. (2020). Test, measurement and evaluation: Understanding and use of the concepts in education. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*. 9 (1).
- Akmal, S., Rasyid, M.N.A., Masna, Y., & Soraya, C.N. (2020). EFL learners' difficulties in the structure and written expression section of TOEFL test in an Indonesian University. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education and Humanities*, 7(2), 164. <https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v7i2.33.87>.
- Ali Ghufron, M. & Hawa, M. (2016). Teaching Writing of Argumentative Essay Using Collaborative Writing Technique Viewed from Student's Creativity: An Experimental. *Prosiding ICTTE FFKIP UNS2015*,1(1).
- Amalia, H., Abdullah, F., & Fatimah, A. S. (2021). Teaching writing to junior high school students: A focus on challenges and solutions. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 17(S2), 794-810.
- Ammar, A., & Hassan, R. M. (2018). Taking it through: Collaborative dialogue and second language learning. *Language Learning*, 68(1), 46-82.
- Ananda, C.R., Mardiah, R., Fajaryani, N. (2024). Writing Argumentative Essays: Jambi EFL Students' Challenges and Strategies. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 9(2), 339-357. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v9i2.1722>
- Anney, V. N. (2014). Ensuring the Quality of the Findings of Qualitative Research: Looking at Trustworthiness Criteria. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)*. 5(2):272-281.
- Arifin, S. R. M. (2018). Ethical considerations in qualitative study. *International journal of care scholars*, 1(2), 30-33.

- Ashrafiyany, N., A, Hasanuddin,F.& Nonny, B. (2020). The Students' Writing Difficulties in Writing an Essay Based on Cognitive Process. *LINGUA Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa*. 16(1). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34005/lingua.v16i1.560>
- Ayanwale, M.A., & Puseletso, M. (2025). Cultural and technological synergy: A new Pathway to learners success in development studies in Lesotho secondary schools. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 11,101313. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2025.101313>
- Baharundin, F., Ramli, N.H.L., Habali,M. A.H.,Azmi, A.A., & Rahmat.,H.N.(2023).Process of Writing: The Challenges in Writing Skill Among ESL Learners. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences*.13(10). <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v13-i10/18649>
- Bakker, A., Smit, J. & Wegerif, R. (2015). Scaffolding and Dialogic Teaching in Mathematics Education: Introduction and Review. Springerlink.
- Basim, A. (2021). Challenges of Implementing Technology in ESL Writing Classrooms: A Case Study. *English Language Teaching*;14(12). <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v14n12p36>
- Benetos, K., & Bétrancourt, M. (2020). Digital authoring support for argumentative writing: What does it change? *Journal of Writing Research*, 12(1), 263-290. <https://doi.org/10.17239/jowr-2020.12.01.09>
- Besele, M. J. (2023). *Assessment of Geography Students' Map Reading and Interpretation Skills, and The contributing factors: A case of three Schools in Maseru, Lesotho*. [Master's dissertation, National University of Lesotho]. <https://repository.tml.nul.ls>
- Bora, P. (2023). Importance of Writing Skill to Develop Students' Communication Skill. *Journal for Research and Scholars and Professionals of English Language Teaching*, 7(35), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.54850/jrspelt.7.35.009>.
- Bruner, J. (1975). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Harvard University Press
- Cheung, Y. L. (2016). *Teaching Writing*. In W. A. Renandya, & H. P. Widodo (Eds.), *English Language Teaching Today: Building a Closer Link Between Theory and Practice*. Springer International.

- Clark, V., & Bruan, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*. 12(3) 297-298, DOI: 10.1080/17439760.2016.1262613
- Cohen, L., Manion, L and Marrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education*. Routledge.
- Coker, D. C. (2022). A thematic analysis of the structure of delimitations in the dissertation. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 17, 141-159. <https://doi.org/10.28945/4939>
- Coker, D. C., Kaaki, W., & Miao, X. D. (2025). Qualitative Research in Leadership and Organizational Studies. In *Organizational Behavior: Current Science, Models, and Applications* (pp. 649-671). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Creswell J. W. & Plano Clark, V.L. (2015). *Understanding Research: A Consumer's Guide*. (2nd ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.
- Creswell, J. (2014). *Research Designs* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J.W & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Dang, T. H., Chau, T. H., & Tra, T. Q. (2020). A Study on the Difficulties in Writing Argumentative Essays of English-Majored Sophomores at Tay Do University, Vietnam. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejel.v6i1.3389>
- Dawadi, S., Giri, R., & Shrestha, S. (2021). Mixed-methods Research: A Discussion on Its
- Dawson, A. K., (2013). Sociocultural Theory and its Educational Application. *Education 589 Projects*. 3. https://scholar.umw.edu/education_589/3
- Dewi., D.S. (2018). Analysis of EFL College Level Learner's Writing Competence in Writing an Argumentative Essay. *Cahaya Pendidikan*, 4,23-33.
- Dieni, N. A. I. (2022). The Use of Guided Writing to Improve Students' Writing Skill. *Language and Culture Faculty*. 2(2654- 7708), 175-185.
- Dragomir, A. I., & Niculescu, B. (2020). Different Approaches to Developing Writing Skills. *Sciendo Land Forces Academy Review*, Vol.XXV, No.3 (99).

- Dunsmuir, S., Kyriacou, M., Batuwitige, S., Hinson, E., Ingram, V. & O' Sullivan, S. (2015). An Evaluation of the Writing Assessment Measure (WAM) for children's narrative Writing. *Assessing Writing*, 23.1-18.
- Ekanjume-Ilongo, B. (2015). The Teaching of English as a Second Language: The Case of the National University of Lesotho (NUL). *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 6, (6).1157-1164. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0606.01>
- Ekanjume-Ilongo, B., & Morato-Maleke, M. (2020). Error analysis in the essays of second year students of the National University of Lesotho. *Journal of African Languages and Literary Studies*, 1(1), 71–91. <https://doi.org/10.31920/2633-2116/2020/1n1a4>.
- Ermita, M., Emzir, & Lustyantie, N. (2021). Picture Word Inductive Model for Better Descriptive Text Writing. *Indonesian EFL Journal (IEFLJ)*, 5(2), <https://doi.org/10.25134/ieflj.v5i2.1736>.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2019). *Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education Mark Scheme report*. ECOL.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2020). *Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education Mark Scheme report*. Ecol.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2021). *Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education Mark Scheme report*. Ecol.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2022). *Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education Mark Scheme report*. Ecol.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2023). *Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education Mark Scheme report*. Ecol.
- Examinations Council of Lesotho. (2024). *Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education Mark Scheme report*. Ecol.
- Fadeev, A. (2019). Vygotsky's theory of mediation in digital learning environment: Actuality and practice. *Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics*, 5(1), 24–44. <https://doi.org/10.18680/hss.2019.0004>

- Fareed, M., Ashraf, A., and Bilal, M. (2016). ESL learners' writing skills: problems, factors and suggestions. *J. Educ. Soc. Sci.* 4, 81–92. doi: <https://doi.org/10.20547/jess0421604201>
- Fitria, T. N. (2024). Creative Writing Skills in English: Developing Student's Potential and Creativity. *EBONY: Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature*, 4(1), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.37304/ebony.v4i1.10908>.
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E & Airasian, P. W. (2011). *Education Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications (10th ed.)*. Pearson.
- Geerson, E. B. (2012). An overview of Vygotsky's language and thought for EFL teachers. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, 3, 41-61.
- George. T. (2023). *Mixed Methods Research, Definition, Guide & Examples*. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/mixed-methods-research/>
- Ghosh, A., Gayen, P., & Sen, S. (2021). Developing writing skills in English of secondary school students: A process approach. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Development*. 8(4). 26-29.
- Gogo. S & Musonda. I. (2022). The use of the Exploratory Sequential Approach in Mixed-Methods Research: A case of Contextual Top Leadership Interventions in Construction H&S. *International Journal of Environment Research and Public Health*. 19(1).
- Gonulal, T. & Loewen, S. (2018). *Scaffolding Technique*. John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Govil, P. (2023). Ethical Considerations in Educational Research. *International Journal of Advancements in Education and Social Sciences*. 1(2), 17-22.
- Halkias, D., Neubert, M., & Harkiolakis, N. (2023). Multiple case study data analysis for doctoral researchers in management and leadership. *Available at SSRN 4423757*.
- Harvey, F. (2023). The process of creating a useful mediating artefact in a professional learning community. *Thirteenth Congress of the European Society for Research in Mathematics Education (CERME13)*, Alfred Renyi Institute of Mathematics.

- Hasan, N., Rana, R. U., Chowdhury, S., Dola, A. J., & Rony, M. K. K. (2021). Ethical considerations in research. *Journal of Nursing Research, Patient Safety and Practise (JNRPSP)* 2799-1210, 1(01), 1-4.
- Hayati, N. (2020). *The Effect of Guided Writing on Students' Performance (A case study)*. Thesis submitted to Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Keguruan Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree Bachelor of Education in English Language Teaching. <https://repository.ar-raniry.ac.id/id/eprint/16699/1/Nurmala%20Hayati%2C%20150203197%2C%20FTK%2C%20PBI%2C%20085321383936.pdf>
- Hidayati, K. H. (2018). Teaching writing to EFL learners: An investigation of challenges confronted by Indonesian teachers. *Langkawi: Journal of the Association for Arabic and English*, 4(1), 21. <https://doi.org/10.31332/lkw.v4i1.772>.
- Hochsteltler, E., & Tilak, S. (2022). Applying Piaget to Classroom teaching: Stage development and social learning theory.
- Huda, M., Ali, O., & Kartanegara, M. (2015). The Effect of Learning Strategy of Reading Aloud on Students' Achievement in The Subject of Islamic Studies at Secondary School in Semarang. *International Journal of Education and Research*. 3. 577-588.
- Jee, S., & Aziz, A. (2021). The Application of the Process-Based Writing Approach in Composing an Argumentative Essay: A Case Study of a Suburban Secondary School of Mukah District in Sarawak. *Creative Education*, 12, 880-896. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2021.124064>
- Ka-kan-dee M, & Kaur S (2015). Teaching Strategies Used by Thai EFL Lecturers to Teach Argumentative Writing. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 208. Elsevier B.V. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.191
- Kaur, P., Stoltzfus, J & Yellapu, V. (2018). Biostatistics. *IJAM- International Journal of Academic Medicine*, 4(1),60-63.
- Keffeny, A.J., Hanita, H.I., & Melor, M. Y. (2024). Using Pictures and Guided Writing Strategy to Improve Malaysian ESL Primary Students' writing Skill. *International Journal of Academic Research In Business and Social Sciences*. 14.(8). <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i8/22452>.

- Khatri, D.K. (2014). Effectiveness of Guided Writing in Teaching Composition. *Journal of NELTA Surkhet*, 4.
- Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 6(5). <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n5p26>.
- Klimova, B.F., (2013). Approaches to the teaching of writing skills. International Conference on Education & Educational Psychology. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences* 112, 147-151
- Koay, J. (2017). What is writing? *EduMaxi educational design*.
- Lantolf, J., & Poehner, M. (2015). Sociocultural theory and development Theories of second language acquisitions, New York.
- Lee, I. (2014). *Teachers' reflection on implementation of innovative feedback approaches in EFL writing*. *English Language*, 69(1), 23-40.
- Leedy, P. D & Ormrod, J. E. (2015). *Practical Research: Planning and Design (11th ed.)*. Pearson.
- Likhoeli., B. M. (2020). *Challenges in the Teaching and Learning of Reading Comprehension in English Language. A case of Grade 10 in selected secondary schools in the Quthing district*. [Master's dissertation, National University of Lesotho]. <https://repository.tml.nul.ls>
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E.B. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage. [https://doi.org/10.16/0147-1767\(85\)90062-8](https://doi.org/10.16/0147-1767(85)90062-8)
- Luo, M., Chano, J., Chittranun, T., & Nithideechaiwarachok, B. (2022). Improving Chinese Reading and Writing Skills: Second Language Acquisition Theory Perspective. *Journal of Educational Issues*, 8(2), 325. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jei.v8i2.20148>
- Majara, M. H. (2018). *Factors contributing to learners' inability to use a variety of sentence structures in English essay writing. The case of Form E learners in three selected schools within the Maseru city*. [Master's dissertation, National University of Lesotho]. <https://repository.tml.nul.ls>

- Martarini, N. M. L., Ayu, N. N., & Sastaparamitha, J. (2020). The Effect of Guided Writing Strategy in Writing Skill. *Yavana Bhāshā: Journal of English Language Education*, 3(2), 44–55.
- Mataka, T. W., Mukurunge, T. & Bhila, T. (2021). Reading To Learn (RTL) Pedagogy: A Tool for Accelerating Language Proficiency and Reading For Comprehension in a Primary Class in Namibia. *International Journal of All Research Writings*, 31(1).
- Mataka, W. T., Makurunge, T. & Bhila, T. (2020). Social Stigmatisation of Lecturers by Departmental Leadership, Lecturers and Learners: A Case of Six Lecturers at an Institution in South Africa on Institutional Duty Outside the Country During Covid 19 Pandemic. *International Journal Of All Research Writings*. Vol 1 (11), 133-138.
- McCombes, S. (2019). Sampling Methods Types, Techniques & Examples. www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/. McLeod., S. (2019). *What is Zone of proximal development?* Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/zone-of-proximal-development.html>
- Miller, K & Merdian, H. (2020). 'It's not waste of time. Academics views on the role and function of academic reading: A thematic analysis, 20-35. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1277118.pdf>.
- Ministry of Education and Training. (2009). *Curriculum and Assessment Policy*. Ministry of Education and Training, Lesotho.
- Ministry of Education and Training. (2019). *Final Grade 9 English Language Syllabus*. Ministry of Education and Training, Lesotho.
- Ministry of Education and Training. (2019). *Lesotho Education Language Policy*. Ministry of Education and Training, Lesotho.
- Ministry of Education and Training. (2021). *Lesotho Basic Education Curriculum Policy*. Ministry of Education and Training, Lesotho.
- Mitchell, A., & Education, A. E. (2018, July). A review of mixed methods, pragmatism and abduction techniques. In *Proceedings of the European Conference on Research Methods for Business & Management Studies* (pp. 269-277).

- Moses, R. N., & Mohamad, M. (2019). Challenges faced by students and teachers on writing skills in ESL contexts: A Literature Review. *Creative Education*, 10(13), 3385-3391. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2019.1013260>.
- Mothebesoane, M., Thamae, K & Ncholu, M. (2022). *English Unlocked Grade 10-11 Learners Book*. Cambridge University Press.
- Muhaimin, A. (2019). *The Use of Reading Aloud Strategy to Improve Students' Fluency and Pronunciation Accuracy in Reading Skills of the Eighth Grade at Mts Nu Aswaja Tenganan*. [Unpublished Master Thesis]. State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) Salatiga.
- Mukhtar, N,A. (2023). *Using Process Approach in Teaching guided essay writing*. Sultan Idris Education University.
- Mustapha, C.M.M. (2021). A Dialogic Teaching Approach to Undergraduate ESL Instruction. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*. 9(.3). 1-13.
- Mutikiri, O. (2014). *Passwell English Language For LGCSE*. Oxford University Press.
- Mutikiri, O. (2016). *Passwell English Language For LGCSE*. Oxford University Press.
- Ngubane, N.I., Ntombela, B. & Govender, S., 2020, 'Writing approaches and strategies use by teachers in selected South African English First Additional Language classrooms', *Reading & Writing* 11(1), 261. <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v11i1.261>.
- Nkome., M. (2015). *Determining Reasons for Learners' Poor Communication Skills in English in some Lesotho Primary Schools*. [Master's dissertation, University of South Africa]. Uir.unisa.ac.za
- Nondabula, N., & Nomlomo, V. (2023). Learners' experiences of creative writing in English First Additional Language: Pedagogical implications. *Journal for Language Teaching* 57(1).
- Novita,A. D., (2019). The Use of Guided Writing to Improve Students' Writing Skill. *JELTII Journal of English Language Teaching and Islamic Integration*. 2 (1).
- Nurfaidah, S. (2018). Vygotsky's Legacy on Teaching and Learning Writing as a Social Process, 4(2), 149-156. <http://dx.doi.org/10.31332/lkw.v4i2.1038>

- Nurlely, L., Evenddy, S. S., & Arlini, A. (2021). The Influence of Using Visual Picture Sequence Towards Students' Ability in Writing Procedure Text. *Education and Human Development Journal*, 6(1), 52–61. <https://doi.org/10.33086/ehdj.v6i1.1871>.
- Ormrod, J.E, Anderman, E.M & Anderman, L.H.,(2020). *Educational Psychology: Developing Learners* (10th edition). Pearson.
- Ozfidan, B., & Mitchell, C. (2020). Detected Difficulties in Argumentative Writing: The Case of Culturally and Linguistically Saudi Back grounded Students. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 15–29. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/382>
- Pacursa, L.B., (2019). Competence level in writing the different parts of an argumentative essay of state university students. *QSU Research Journal*,8.
- Panhwar, H, A, Ansari, S., & Ansari, K., (2016). Sociocultural Theory and its Role in the Development of Language Pedagogy. *Advances in language and literacy studies*.7(6) [htt://dx.doi.org/ 10.7575/aiac.all.v.7n.6p.183](http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v.7n.6p.183)
- Pérez, M. L. G., Zayas, Y. C., & Farrill, I. E. O. (2021). *Teaching Creative Writing*. Editorial Pueblo Education.
- Puntambekar, S., & Hubscher, R. (2005). *Tools for Scaffolding Students in a complex learning Environment: What Have we Gained and What Have We missed?* *Educational Psychologist*, 40(1), 1-12.
- Qin, J., & Liu, Y. (2021). *The Influence of Reading Texts on L2 Reading-to-Write Argumentative Writing*. *Frontiers in Psychology* 12:655601. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.655601>
- Rahmatriad, M., (2020). A Review of Socio-Cultural Theory. *SIASAT Journal of Social, Cultural and Political Studies*, 5 (3) July 2020, 23-31. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33258/siasat.v5i3.66>
- Rao, P.S. (2019). Teaching of Writing Skills to Foreign or Second Language Learners of English. *ELT Vibes: International E-Journal For Research in ELT*.5(2).136-152.
- Rehman, A.A., & Alharthi, K. (2016). An Introduction to Research Paradigms. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 3(8),51-59.

- Research Integrity. (2021). *Maintaining Data Confidentiality*. <https://www.unr.edu/research-integrity/human-research/human-research-protection-policy-manual/410-mainataining-data-quality/>
- Rosli, F.N., Rahman, A.N., & Soon, G.Y. (2024). A Systematic Literature Review of Project – Based Learning on English Writing Skills. *E-Bangi Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.17576/ebangi.2024.2102.26>
- Sajid, M. K. M., & Kassim, H. (2019). The Effects of Reading Aloud Strategies on text Level Difficulties, Reading Proficiency and Reading Comprehension Skill. *International Journal of Language Education and Applied Linguistics (IJLEAL)*, 9(1), 85-97. <https://doi.org/10.15282/ijleal.v9.788>.
- SanchezTeach., (2025, January, 15). *How are Jean Piaget's ideas implemented in Primary classrooms today?* <https://mrsanchez.co.uk/2023/07/15/how-are-jean-piagets-ideas-implemented-in-primary-classrooms-today/>.
- Selvaraj, M., & Aziz, A. A. (2019). Systematic Review: Approaches in Teaching Writing Skill in ESL Classrooms. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 8(4), 450–473. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v8-i4/6564>
- Sepanya-Molefi, N. (2023). *Issues of Progression in Development Studies LGCSE Syllabus in Lesotho: Teachers Conceptions and Challenges*. [Unpublished Masters thesis]. National University of Lesotho.
- Setyowati, L., Agustina, F., Sukmawan, S., El-Sulukiyah, A. A., & Mabaroh, B. (2020). The Students' Problems and Solutions in Writing an Argumentative Essay on Gender Issue. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 5(3), 279. <https://doi.org/10.21462/jeltl.v5i3.424>
- Shokouhi, M., Moghimi, S. A., & Hosseinzadeh, S. (2015). Introducing reflective practice from a sociocultural perspective: Toward a strategically mediated reflective practice framework. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 2(4), 74-83.
- Smith, J.K. (2017). *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods (4th ed.)*. Sage Publications.

- Srinawati, W., & Alwi, R. (2020). Critical Thinking Ability in EFL Students' Argumentative Essay Writing: The Difficulties and The Strategies. *Jurnal Serambi Ilmu Journal of Scientific Information and Educational Creativity*. 21.(2)
- Stahl, N.A. & King, R. J. (2020). Expanding Approaches for Research: Understanding and Using Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 44(1).
- Suastra, I. M., & Menggo, S. (2020). Empowering Students' Writing Skill through Performance Assessment. *International Journal of Language Education*, 4(3), 432-441. <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v4i3.15060>
- Sundari, H. & Febriyanti, H.R., (2021). The Analysis of Indonesian EFL Argumentative Writing Using Toulmin's Model: The Structure and Struggles from the Learners. SCOPE: *Journal of English Language Teaching*. 5(2). 67-78. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30998/scope.v5i2.8544>.
- Tasya, M. A. (2022). *Students' Difficulties in Writing an Argumentative essay*. [Master's dissertation, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta]. <https://repository.unijkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/12345678/59169>
- Tayon, M.A.S. (2021). Explanatory sequential design of mixed methods research: Phases and challenges. *International Journal of research in Business and Social Science*, 10(5). 253-260.
- Tep, P., & Srey, S. (2022). *Using guided writing to improve student teachers' expository paragraph writing at Phnom Penh teacher education college: An action research study*. Action Research Series, 2, 81-94.
- Thamae, L., (2023). *Utilising Phonemic-Orthography to Accelerate Spelling Proficiency for the Development of Critical Literacy Skills in a 9th Grade ESL Classroom: An Action Research Case Study Conducted at a Secondary School in Maseru*. [Master's dissertation, National University of Lesotho]. <https://repository.tml.nul.ls>
- Thumbarayan, K. & Yunus, M.M. (2024). A Systematic Literature Review of the Impact of Blogs on Writing Skills. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*. 13(3). DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v13-i3/21374

- Tlali, G. P. (2018). *Learners' and Teachers' Perspectives about causes of Poor Argumentative English Essay Writing: A Case of Form D Students in three selected high schools*. [Master's dissertation, National University of Lesotho]. <https://repository.tml.nul.ls>
- Tlali, G.P., & Thamae, A.M. (2023). Causes of Poor Argumentative English Essay Writing at Lesotho Secondary Education. *Journal of African Education (JAE)*.4(3). 213-234. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31920/2633-2930/2023/v4n1a9>.
- Toyon, M.A.S. (2021). Explanatory Sequential design of mixed methods research: Phases and Challenges. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*,10(5), 2147-4478.
- Tudge, H. R.J.,& Winterhoff, A. P. (1993). Vygotsky, Piaget, and Bandura: Perspectives on the Relations between the Social World and Cognitive Development. *Human Development*. 36:61-81. Types, Challenges, and Criticism. *Journal of Studies in Education*. Looks incomplete.
- Tursunboeva, S.A. & Yuldasheva, D.S. (2024). Challenges and Implementing Targeted Approaches in Teaching Writing. *EXCELLENCIA International Multi-Disciplinary Journal of Education*. 2(9).
- VanDerHeide, J., Juzwik, M & Dunn, M. (2016). *Teaching and Learning Argumentation in English: A Dialogic Approach, Theory into Practice*, 55:4, 287-293, DOI:10.1080/00405841.2016.1208069
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wendimu, S. G., & Gebremariam, H. T. (2024). *Teacher-Students Collaboration: Using Guided-Writing Instruction to Assist Learners with Writing Difficulties and Low Motivation to Write*. *SAGE Open*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440241258020>
- Willson, A. M. & Falcon, L.A., (2018). Seeking equilibrium: In what ways are teachers implementing a balanced literacy approach amidst the push for accountability? *Texas Journal of Literacy Education*6(2), 73-93.
- Wood, D., Bruner, J., & Ross, G. (1976). *The role of tutoring in problem solving*. Nottingham: Oxford University Press.

- Yu-Feng, L., Chun-Ling, H & Hung-Ju, H., (2021). Effects of Guided Writing Strategies on Students' Attitudes Based on Media Richness Theory. *TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*. 10.(4).
- Yunus, M. M., Hashim, H., Sulaiman, N. A., Sulaiman, W. S. M., Richmond, R. L., Jarail, S., & Royal, N. (2019). *Students' Awareness and Perceptions towards "Pre -Writing Stage" as a Strategy in Writing Directed Essay*. *Creative Education*, 9(14), 2215-2223. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2018.914162>.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Pre and post-test questions

Incorporating guided writing to enhance grade 9 learners' argumentative essay writing skills in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom at a school in Maseru

Research questions

- What is Grade 9 learners' levels of competence in argumentative essay writing skills in ESL?
- How do guided writing steps facilitate argumentative essay writing skills in Grade 9 ESL learners?

Grade 9 learners' Pre-post-test argumentative essay writing questions

Name:.....

INSTRUCTIONS

TIME: 1hr

- Write on the answer sheets provide.
- Write on one of the topics that follow.

You are advised to write in 300-500 words or two to two and half pages

Total marks: 30

1. Education should be free in secondary schools. What are your views?
2. Technology has brought more harm to human kind. What are your views?

**Appendix B: Marking guide adopted from Examinations Council of Lesotho
ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY WRITING MARKING GUIDELINE ADAPTED FROM
ECOL 2021**

GENERAL ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES FOR WRITING

1. Communicate appropriately, with clear awareness of purpose, audience and register.
2. Communicate clearly and develop ideas coherently, at word level, at sentence level and whole text level.
3. Use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
4. Communicate creatively, using a varied range of vocabulary, sentence structures and linguistic devices.

The above objectives are assessed by impression using as guides the Band descriptors below:

Band 1 (30-27 marks)

- **Highly accurate**, apart from very occasional slips.
- **Sentence structure varied for particular effects.**
- **Verb forms largely correct and appropriate tenses consistently used.**
- Vocabulary wide and precise
- Punctuation accurate and helpful.
- Spelling accurate except for very occasional slips.
- Paragraphs have unity, are linked and show evidence of planning.
- Tone and register entirely appropriate.
- Argumentative essays are well developed, logical and even complex in argument.

Band 2 (26-23 marks)

- Accurate: occasional errors are either slips or caused by ambition.
- Sentence structures show some variation to create some natural fluency.
- Occasional slips in verb forms or tense formation but sequence consistent and clear throughout.
- Vocabulary wide and precise enough to convey intended shades of meaning.
- Punctuation accurate and generally helpful.
- Spelling nearly always accurate.
- Paragraphs have unity, are usually linked and show some evidence of planning.
- Tone and register appropriate
- Argumentative essays have clearly defined, cohesive and logical stages in their argument.

Band 3 (22-19 marks)

- Mostly accurate; errors from ambition do not mar clarity of communication.
- Some variety of sentence structures but tendency to repeat sentence types may produce monotonous effect.
- Errors may occur in irregular verb form but control of tense sequence sufficient to sustain clear progression of events or ideas.
- Simple vocabulary mainly correct, errors may occur with more ambitious words.
- Punctuation generally accurate and sentence separation correctly marked but errors may occur e.g with direct speech.
- Spelling of simple vocabulary accurate; some errors in more ambitious words
- Paragraphs may show some unity, although links may be absent or inappropriate
- Tone usually appropriate, although there may be slips of register

- Argumentative essays make a series of relevant points with some being developed; linking of ideas may be insecure.

Band 4 (18-15 marks)

- Sufficiently accurate to communicate meaning with patches of clear, accurate language.
- Some variety of sentence length and structure, not always for particular purpose.
- Errors in verb forms and tense consistency may cause uncertainty in sequence of events or ease of communication.
- Vocabulary usually adequate to convey intended meaning; idioms may be uncertain.
- Punctuation used but not always helpful; occasional sentence separation errors.
- Spelling of simple vocabulary accurate; errors in more difficult words
- Paragraphs used but may lack unity or coherence.
- Attempt to address topic but there may be digressions or failures of logic. May lack liveliness and interest.
- Tone may be uneven.
- Argumentative essays have mainly relevant points, but may be only partially developed with some repetition.

Band 5 (14-11 marks)

- Overall meaning never in doubt, but errors sufficiently frequent and serious to hamper precision and distract reader from content.
- Some simple sentence structures accurate but script unlikely to sustain accuracy for long.
- Errors in verb forms and tenses will sometimes confuse sequence of events.
- Vocabulary limited either too simple or imperfectly understood; some idiomatic errors likely.
- Simple punctuation usually, but there may be frequent sentence separation errors.

- Spelling of simple vocabulary accurate, frequent errors in more difficult words
- Paragraphs used haphazardly
- Tone may be inconsistent
- Argumentative essays make a few points but development is simple and not always logical, some obvious repetition of ideas.

Band 6 (10-7 marks)

- Many serious errors of various kinds of ‘single word’ type (i.e. they could be corrected without re-writing the sentence) communication established, although weight of errors may cause some ‘blurring’.
- Sentences probably simple and repetitive in structure
- Frequent errors in verb forms and haphazard changes of tense confuse meaning,
- Vocabulary conveys meaning but likely to be simple and imprecise significant idiomatic errors.
- Punctuation and paragraphing may be haphazard or non-existent
- Spelling may be inconsistent.
- Some recognition of appropriate tone.
- Argumentative essays only a few points are discernible and the argument progresses only here and there.

Band 7 (6-3 marks)

- Sense usually decipherable but some errors will be ‘multiple’ (i.e. requiring the reader to re-read and re-organize) meaning may be partially hidden by density of linguistic errors.
- Unlikely to be more than a few accurate sentences, however simple, in the whole composition.
- Little relevance or interest.

- Tone may be appropriate.
- In argumentative essays only very few points are discernible and the argument barely progresses.

Band 8 (2-0 marks)

- Scripts almost entirely or entirely impossible to recognize as pieces of English writing; whole sections make no sense at all.
- Where occasional patches of relative clarity are evident, two or one mark(s) should be given.
- The mark of 0 is reserved for scripts that make no sense at all from beginning to end.
- Argumentative essays are rarely relevant and may well be disordered.

Appendix C: Participants' pseudonyms, pre-test and post-test scores and percentages

Learner pseudo nym	Pre-test scores	Pre-test percenta ges	Post- test scores	Post- test percenta ges
A	16	53%	24	80%
B	13	43%	22	73%
C	15	50%	25	83%
D	10	33%	02	07%
E	08	27%	10	33%
F	10	33%	16	53%
G	12	40%	24	80%
H	06	20%	16	53%
I	02	07%	14	47%
J	04	13%	13	43%
K	03	10%	10	33%
L	05	17%	14	47%

Appendix D: Pre-established analytical rubric that defined four levels of writing competence: proficient, competent, developing and emerging.

Marks Learners competency table

30	27	Proficient
26	23	
22	19	Competent
18	15	
14	11	Developing
10	07	
06	03	Emerging
02	00	

Appendix E: Focus Group Discussion Guide

Research question: How do grade 9 learners perceive the impact of guided writing in enhancing their argumentative essay writing skills in ESL?

Objective: To explore how Grade 9 learners perceive the impact of guided writing on improving their argumentative essay writing skills in English as a Second Language (ESL).

Discussion Guidelines

1. **Introduction:** Briefly explain the purpose of the discussion and ensure participants feel comfortable sharing their honest opinions.
2. **Confidentiality:** Assure participants that their responses will remain anonymous.
3. **Participation Rules:** Encourage everyone to contribute while respecting differing opinions.

Key Questions

Section 1: General Writing Experience and guided writing

1. How do you feel about writing essays in English?
2. Have you participated in guided writing sessions? If yes, how would you describe the experience?
3. Does guided writing make writing easier or harder for you? Why?
4. What specific activities or strategies during guided writing sessions were most helpful for you?

Section 2: Skill Development

5. Do you think guided writing has improved your ability to structure your argumentative essays? How?
6. Has guided writing helped you with brainstorming ideas or organizing arguments? Can you give examples?

Section 3: Motivation and Confidence

7. Do you feel more motivated to write when guided by a teacher? Explain

8. Do you feel more confident in your argumentative writing skills after participating in guided writing sessions? Why or why not?

Section 4: Tools and Mediation

9. What resources do you use in your learning process?

10. How do these tools help or hinder your learning?

Section 5: Social interaction, Language use and Learning

11. Can you describe any group activities or peer discussions during guided writing that helped you develop your essay?

12. How do you feel when you work together with your classmates on writing tasks? Does it make writing easier or more challenging? Why?

13. How does receiving feedback from your teacher or peers influence your writing process and final essay?

Section 6: Suggestions for Improvement

14. What aspects of guided writing sessions do you think could be improved to better support your learning?

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix F: Letter of introduction

The National University of Lesotho

Telephone: +266 22340601
 Fax: +266 22340000
<http://www.nul.ls>



P.O. Roma 180
 Lesotho
 Africa

Faculty of Education

22nd April, 2025

The Principal
 Lerotholi High School
 Maseru
 Lesotho

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT LEROTHOLI HIGH SCHOOL

I am writing to request your kind permission on behalf of a postgraduate student in the Department of Languages and Social Education (LASED) at the National University of Lesotho to conduct research at your esteemed school. The details of the student and proposed research are as follows:

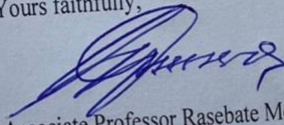
Student Name: Phoofolo N.Z.
Student Number: 202001555
Programme: Master of Arts in Education (English Language)
Academic Year: 2024/2025
Supervisor: Dr. Mahao Mahao
Research Title: *Incorporating Guided Writing to Enhance Grade 9 Learners' Argumentative Essay Writing Skills in the English as a Second Language (ESL) Classroom at a School in Maseru*

This study forms part of the student's thesis proposal in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Education (English Language). The research aims to investigate how guided writing strategies can support the development of argumentative essay writing skills among Grade 9 ESL learners. With your permission, Mr. Phoofolo would like to work with selected Grade 9 learners and English teachers at your school.

Please be assured that all ethical standards and university research guidelines will be strictly followed. Participation will be voluntary, and confidentiality of both the learners and the school will be maintained at all times. The findings will be used strictly for academic purposes.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your favorable response.

Yours faithfully;



Associate Professor Rasebate Mokotso
For: Head of Department
Department of Languages and Social Education (LASED)



Appendix G: Turnitin report

Ngakana Phoofolo

PHOOFOLO Final docx.docx

Practice Assignment
 Postgraduate Studies 2024_25
 National University of Lesotho

Document Details

Submission ID
 trnoid::1.3301752170

Submission Date
 Jul 24, 2025, 3:40 PM GMT+2

Download Date
 Jul 29, 2025, 12:36 AM GMT+2

File Name
 PHOOFOLO_Final_docx.docx

File Size
 2.4 MB

95 Pages
 26,146 Words
 151,074 Characters

turnitin Page 1 of 106 - Cover Page

Submission ID: trnoid::1.3301752170

turnitin Page 2 of 106 - Integrity Overview

Submission ID: trnoid::1.3301752170

14% Overall Similarity

The combined total of all matches, including overlapping sources, for each database.

Filtered from the Report

- Bibliography
- Quoted Text

Match Groups

- 16 Not Cited or Quoted 12%**
Matches with neither in-text citation nor quotation marks
- 42 Missing Quotations 2%**
Matches that are still very similar to source material
- 0 Missing Citation 0%**
Matches that have quotation marks, but no in-text citation
- 0 Cited and Quoted 0%**
Matches with in-text citation present, but no quotation marks

Top Sources

- 13% Internet sources
- 9% Publications
- 7% Submitted works (Student Papers)