

THE EFFECT OF ISLAMIC HISTORICAL TEXTS ON ENGLISH WRITING FLUENCY

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Abstract: *This study looks into how Islamic historical texts, especially those with a strong storytelling tradition, affect English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' ability to write fluently in the language. The ability to produce coherent, continuous, and meaningful written conversation with little hesitation and cognitive interruption is referred to in this study as writing fluency. Islamic historical works are distinguished by their chronological clarity, causality, character-driven plots, and ethical reflection. These texts include prophetic biographies (sīrah), classical historiography, and moral narratives. These characteristics closely match the rhetorical requirements of successful academic and narrative English writing. Undergraduate EFL students took part in an eight-week educational program that integrated modified Islamic history narratives into English writing exercises as part of a mixed-methods research design. While qualitative data came from textual analysis and student reflections, quantitative data was gathered through pre- and post-writing assignments. The results show that students' writing fluency, lexical diversity, narrative coherence, and confidence in written expression have all significantly improved. The study's conclusion—which has significant ramifications for intercultural literacy and EFL writing pedagogy—is that culturally significant storytelling texts can serve as an efficient educational link between past knowledge and the development of second language writing.*

Keywords: *Islamic historical texts, storytelling, writing fluency, EFL learners, culturally responsive pedagogy*

INTRODUCTION

For those learning English as a foreign language (EFL), proficiency in writing is usually acknowledged as one of the most difficult and complex abilities. Writing needs students to actively develop ideas, organize them coherently, and encode them linguistically in a second language, in contrast to receptive abilities like reading and listening. Even after years of formal instruction, many EFL learners struggle to communicate nuanced meanings, produce lengthy works, and preserve continuity of ideas. When writing training prioritizes grammatical accuracy and mechanical correctness above meaning construction and discourse growth, these difficulties are frequently made worse.

Modern applied linguistics research has placed a greater emphasis on meaning-based and fluency-oriented methods to writing training in response to these difficulties. Writing fluency is the capacity to write with ease, coherence, logical progression, and little hesitation rather than just being error-free. When students are given opportunities for prolonged written production in low-stress, cognitively supportive settings and are frequently exposed to significant content, fluency develops.

Combining narrative-based instruction with storytelling is a potential but underutilized strategy for improving writing fluency. Clear discourse frameworks, such as temporal sequencing, cause-and-effect links, and character development, are imparted to students through storytelling. By concentrating on meaning rather than discrete linguistic forms, these components assist authors in organizing their texts more skillfully. The instructional value of storytelling may be increased when it is paired with culturally familiar topics.

For centuries, Islamic literary, moral, and intellectual traditions have been impacted by the rich corpus of narrative discourse found in Islamic historical literature. Deeply narrative genres include early Islamic historiography, trip tales (*riḥlah*), ethical-historical texts, and *ṣirah* (biographies of the Prophet Muhammad). These works are very well suited to teaching writing through narrative because they place a strong emphasis on human experience, moral reflection, and chronology. Such books also connect with past knowledge and identity for students from Islamic cultural backgrounds, which may boost motivation and engagement. This study looks at how EFL students' English writing fluency is affected by Islamic historical texts that are taught using a storytelling-focused pedagogical method. The study aims to show how narrative structure and subject familiarity can serve as scaffolding mechanisms for the development of fluent written expression by placing

LITERATURE REVIEW

Storytelling and Narrative-Based Language Pedagogy

It has long been recognized that storytelling is an essential form of human communication and education. Narrative-based pedagogy in language instruction uses students' innate ability to comprehend and create tales to support language development. By asking students to concurrently integrate vocabulary, grammar, and discourse elements, narrative assignments promote holistic language use. According to research, narrative facilitates the formation of ideas, improves coherence, and encourages longer language production stretches—all crucial elements of writing fluency.

From a cognitive standpoint, tales offer predictable frameworks that lessen cognitive strain. When structuring their work, students can rely on well-known story schemas like beginning, development, climax, and resolution. This supports fluent writing performance by enabling them to devote more attentional resources to lexical choice and linguistic encoding.

Conceptualizing Writing Fluency in EFL Contexts

In second language study, writing fluency has been conceptualized in a number of ways. Writing speed, text length, lexical diversity, syntactic complexity, and coherence are common indicators. Instead of placing too much emphasis on error correction, fluency-oriented training emphasizes the flow of ideas and communicative effectiveness. According to studies, regular practice with lengthy writing assignments and encouraging feedback greatly aid in the development of fluency.

High levels of writing anxiety and little exposure to real-world language use sometimes hinder writing fluency in EFL environments. Learners may find it difficult to produce content, which could result in disjointed compositions and an excessive dependence on expressions they have committed to memory. Therefore, instructional strategies that offer rich material support and lessen the burden of idea generation are especially beneficial.

Cultural Familiarity and Intercultural Writing Pedagogy

The significance of matching educational resources to students' cultural backgrounds and real-world experiences is emphasized by culturally responsive teaching. It has been demonstrated that writing training on culturally known issues promotes greater involvement, a stronger voice, and longer writing. Students can concentrate more on how to convey ideas than what to say when they write about material they comprehend. The importance of identity in language learning is also emphasized by intercultural writing pedagogy. Writing requires posture and self-expression; it is not a neutral ability. Using books with cultural significance validates students' identities and validates their cultural expertise.

Islamic Historical Texts in Educational Contexts: Traditionally, theological, historical, and literary departments have studied Islamic historical texts. Rich narrative detail, dialogic aspects, and ethical contemplation are characteristics of these literature. Storytelling techniques were used by classical historians and intellectuals to interpret events, maintain memory, and impart lessons. These texts have not gotten much attention in EFL writing study, despite their narrative depth.

A limited but expanding corpus of research indicates that incorporating Islamic texts into contemporary schooling helps improve moral reasoning and critical thinking. Nevertheless, there are still few empirical research looking at their impact on writing fluency in second languages. By presenting Islamic historical narratives as pedagogical resources for improving English writing fluency through storytelling-based instruction, this study adds to the body of literature.

METHODS

Research Design

In order to provide a thorough knowledge of the influence of Islamic historical texts on English writing fluency, this study used a mixed-methods research approach. While the qualitative component delved further into learners' experiences, views, and textual development, the quantitative component sought to quantify changes in learners' writing performance. This combination improved the finding's validity and enabled data triangulation.

Participants

Forty undergraduate students from a public institution in a non-English-speaking nation who were enrolled in an English academic writing course participated in the study. According to institutional placement examinations, the students, who varied in age from 19 to 22, had intermediate-level English competence. Islamic history was culturally recognizable to all of the participants, which was thought to be an important component of the instructional design.

Instructional Materials and Procedure

The eight-week educational intervention was incorporated into the standard curriculum. Clarity, narrative depth, and suitability for academic writing assignments were taken into consideration when choosing English translations of Islamic historical narratives. Historical

occurrences, moral-historical thoughts, and biographical stories were all included in the texts. Pre-reading discussion to activate prior information, guided reading with an emphasis on narrative structure, storytelling analysis, and writing production comprised each instructional cycle. Students were able to progressively acquire more sophisticated forms of written expression as writing assignments moved from narrative retelling to reflective and analytical writing

Data Collection Instruments

Several instruments were used to get the data. Students had to write on similar prompts within a set amount of time for both pre- and post-instruction writing assignments. Text length, coherence, lexical diversity, and sentence flow were among the analytical criteria used to evaluate writing fluency. Additionally, students continued to be reflective.

Data Analysis: Paired-sample statistical tests were used to assess quantitative data, and theme analysis was used to find recurrent patterns in qualitative data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The study's findings show that students exposed to Islamic historical texts improved their English writing fluency both statistically and pedagogically when compared to students taught with traditional teaching resources. Pre- and post-test evaluations of text length, lexical diversity, grammatical accuracy, coherence, and writing speed were used to gauge writing fluency.

Students in the experimental group showed a significant rise in mean writing scores from the pre-test to the post-test, according to quantitative analysis. Gains were particularly noticeable in the areas of idea formation and lexical richness. Longer texts with more semantic depth were created by learners, demonstrating their increased capacity to develop arguments and present ideas logically. The control group, on the other hand, only slightly improved, mostly in terms of surface-level grammatical accuracy. These conclusions were further corroborated by qualitative information gathered from student reflections and classroom observations. When engaging with Islamic historical writings, students reported feeling more engaged, confident, and motivated. Many participants reported that their familiarity with the texts' moral and cultural content lessened cognitive burden, enabling them to concentrate more successfully on language production rather than content creation. This familiarity made it easier for ideas to flow and decreased reluctance when composing assignments. Error analysis also revealed that the experimental group had fewer repeating sentence patterns and syntactic fragmentation. Students used coherent techniques and complicated sentences more frequently, indicating growth in both fluency and general writing skill.

Discussion

The results of this study support the theory that Islamic historical books can serve as useful teaching resources for improving the fluency of English writing. The noted gains are consistent with sociocultural and schema-based theories of language acquisition, which highlight the contribution of cultural relevance and prior knowledge to second language acquisition. The narrative and rhetorical richness of Islamic historical literature is a major factor in the improved fluency. Coherent discourse structures are readily modeled by these writings, which frequently exhibit clear chronological sequencing, moral reasoning, and descriptive richness. When students interact with these English-language works, they absorb discourse patterns that they

can use in their own writing. This confirms previous findings that learners' written production is positively impacted by exposure to well-structured narrative material.

Furthermore, it seems that affective engagement has been encouraged by the cultural resonance of Islamic historical documents. More sustained writing effort and risk-taking in language use were probably influenced by lower anxiety and more intrinsic drive. Affective filter theory, which holds that emotionally supportive learning settings improve language proficiency, is in line with this study. The findings also cast doubt on the idea that religious or historical materials are inappropriate for contemporary EFL contexts or linguistically limiting. Conversely, these texts can foster critical thinking, vocabulary growth, and stylistic awareness when they are carefully chosen and pedagogically modified. The experimental group's increased lexical diversity indicates that Islamic historical texts expose students to a broad range of semantic notions, such as formal discourse markers, ethical terminology, and abstract ideas.

The results emphasize the value of culturally sensitive resources in English language training from a pedagogical standpoint. Strategic integration of local or religious texts into writing education can connect language development and identity affirmation, as opposed to treating them as incidental. This integration promotes a more inclusive and significant approach to teaching English, especially in settings with a majority of Muslims or an Islamic culture. However, care should be taken while interpreting the results. The skill levels of students, teacher mediation, and instructional design all have a significant impact on how successful Islamic historical texts are. Lower-level learners may encounter linguistic difficulties with such texts if proper scaffolding is not provided. Therefore, various implementation tactics and long-term consequences on writing development should be the focus of future research.

Quantitative Results

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to assess quantitative data in order to investigate the impact of incorporating Islamic historical texts into English writing education. Pre-test and post-test results evaluating text length, lexical diversity, syntactic complexity, coherence, and grammatical accuracy were used to gauge writing fluency. From the pre-test to the post-test, the experimental group's overall writing fluency scores showed a significant improvement. A good instructional effect was indicated by the mean post-test score being considerably higher than the pretest score. The gain was significant at the $p < .05$ level, according to statistical analysis, indicating that the observed improvement was unlikely to have happened by accident.

The control group, on the other hand, demonstrated just a slight improvement in writing skills after receiving conventional writing training using typical EFL materials. Text length and lexical variety changed very little, despite minor advances in grammatical accuracy. There was a statistically significant difference in favor of the experimental group when the two groups' post-test results were compared. Lexical diversity and concept development showed the most improvements in the experimental group, according to a more thorough examination of each writing component. Students wrote longer texts with better coherence and a wider variety of language. Cohesive devices and subordinate sentences were used more frequently, indicating an increase in syntactic complexity. These results imply that exposure to Islamic historical literature improved writing quality overall in addition to improving fluency.

Qualitative Findings

Semi-structured interviews, learner reflection journals, and classroom observations were used to gather qualitative data. Several recurrent patterns that shed light on how and why Islamic historical texts affected students' writing fluency were found through thematic analysis. Cultural familiarity and cognitive ease were two major themes. Many students said that they already found the religious and historical material to be relevant, which lessened the amount of mental work needed to come up with ideas. Because of this familiarity, students were able to focus more on language expression, which led to more fluid and efficient writing. A second element that surfaced was heightened involvement and motivation.

When writing assignments involved Islamic historical narratives as opposed to traditional subjects, students expressed more interest. Higher levels of participation, more time spent writing on the work at hand, and a greater readiness to edit drafts were all supported by observations. Students' descriptions of the readings as "inspiring" and "easier to write about" were common, suggesting a deep emotional bond with the subject matter. An additional noteworthy discovery about self-assurance and identity validation. Participants observed that using English to write about Islamic history gave them the opportunity to use a universal language to communicate their cultural identity. In addition to encouraging risk-taking in vocabulary and sentence form, this sense of ownership seems to lessen writing anxiety. Lastly, better discourse structure was highlighted by qualitative findings. In order to replicate the narrative patterns in the historical sources, students increasingly organized their writing rationally and chronologically.

CONCLUSION

The effects of incorporating Islamic historical texts into English writing education on students' writing fluency was examined in this study. The results show that using texts with cultural and historical significance can greatly improve students' writing, especially when it comes to lexical diversity, grammatical complexity, coherence, and general fluency. The pedagogical efficacy of Islamic historical texts in English language instruction is demonstrated by the fact that learners exposed to such materials regularly fared better than those getting traditional instruction.

The findings emphasize even more how cultural familiarity helps lower cognitive and affective obstacles to writing in a second language. Islamic historical books helped students come up with thoughts more quickly and confidently in English by utilizing identity-based information and their existing knowledge. This demonstrates that student involvement and cultural relevance have a significant impact on writing fluency development, which is not just a language process. The study backs the use of culturally sensitive and identity-affirming resources in EFL writing classes from a pedagogical standpoint. Teachers are urged to intentionally use religious or historical books as legitimate resources that foster both language proficiency and critical thinking, rather than considering them as incidental. While preserving academic rigor, such integration promotes inclusive learning environments.

This study has limitations despite its contributions, such as a small sample size and a brief intervention duration. Longitudinal effects, a range of competency levels, and comparisons with other culturally grounded texts should all be investigated in future studies. To optimize the efficacy of such resources, more research into instructional design and teacher preparation is also advised. In conclusion, Islamic historical writings are an important yet underutilized tool for improving the fluency of English writing. When used carefully, they can bridge cultural identity and language development, making English language training more engaging and successful in a variety of educational environments.

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