

## Improvement in Narrative Writing Skills with Communicative Teaching in Pakistani High Schools

Muhammad Samiullah\*

Aftab Ahmad†

Abdul Majeed Khan‡

Vol. V, No. I (Winter 2020)

Page: 119 – 127

p-ISSN: 2616-955X

e-ISSN: 2663-7030

ISSN-L: 2616-955X



Abstract

*The main objective of this research was to find an effect of communicative approach on narrative writing in 9th graders at secondary level. Relevant literature revealed that narrative writing can be enhanced with the help of communicative teaching. Pre-test post-test nonequivalent control group design had been used. To conduct the experimental study six (06) classes from two schools were selected conveniently were selected to gather data to achieve intended objective. There were 206 students involved in the experimentation. Communicative lessons were delivered in the experimental classroom only. The same pre-test was used as a post-test as well. Results of research depicted that communicative teaching had a remarkable effect on increasing narrative writing at secondary level. The outcome of research is valuable for teachers, curriculum specialists, syllabi designers and policy makers. In addition, communicative approach is recommended for teaching writing related to any genre in English.*

**Key Words:** Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Narrative Writing, Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Secondary Level.

### Introduction

The significance of English is established throughout the world because it is a language for international communication and the language of science and technology. It has got a status of compulsory subject in institutions of Pakistan from grade 1 to graduation. In Pakistan, research tells that maximum learners don't attain ability of writing narratively. [Rahman \(2002\)](#) witnessed that maximum pupils depend on memorizing rather than consuming their intellectual talent. They are not inculcated any training of narrative writing. The foremost cause of this condition is the teaching methodology used in classroom. Maximum teachers put into practice the grammar translation method (GTM) of teaching English which is obsolete nowadays ([Ali and Javed, 2004](#)). Because of the pitiable worth of teaching English, narrative writing is not advanced appropriately and the percentage of failure in English is the uppermost at secondary school level ([Rahman, 2007](#)).

Absence of apt guidance and training is one major obstacle in teaching narrative writing. Rahman (2002) detailed that in Pakistan, subject matter is conveyed to the schoolchildren through rote memorization. The independence to talk in classroom is wanting.

### Statement of Research Problem

This research study proposed to discover the effect of CLT on increasing narrative writing of schoolchildren at high school level.

### Objective of the Research

More precisely the purpose of the research was to see the effect of CLT on narrative domain of writing.

\*Assistant Professor, Department of ECE&ETE, Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: [sami.ullah@aiou.edu.pk](mailto:sami.ullah@aiou.edu.pk)

†Lecturer, Department of Science Education, Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad, Pakistan.

‡Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Mianwali, Punjab, Pakistan.

## Research Questions

The researcher tried to answer the questions ahead:

1. Does CLT benefit in enhancement of narrative domain of writing?
2. Has CLT the equal influence on girls' & boys' narrative skills of writing?
3. Has CLT the identical result for learners' narration in government and private zone?

## Significance of the Study

This research was an effort to advance narrative writing abilities by using CLT amongst 9<sup>th</sup> graders. Outcomes of research deliver evidence to educators about practice of CLT with support of which narrative writing talents of pupils at high school may possibly be value-added.

Results might be valuable for English instructors at high school because they propose an efficient instructional method to teach narrative writing skills.

Teachers training organizations might get advantage from outcomes of research for prospective educators of English at high school by concentrating on CLT and delivering future instructors' suitable pre-service preparation.

Teachers training institutes may possibly organize training gatherings for on-job English tutors so that they may advance their approaches concerning teaching narrative skills of writing.

The results of this research provide valuable data to syllabi specialists and curriculum designers of English in scheming communicative syllabi and books for high schools. In the light of outcomes, the experts will be capable to include CLT as methodological part of curriculum for high school.

Additionally, the outcomes of the research will be of assistance for the scholars who want to explore the arena of English teaching at high school.

## Literature Review

In mainstream of institutes due to addiction on memorization of notes, artistic ability of intellectual cognizance is not established rightly, reasoned [Siddiqui \(2007\)](#). Schooling supports cramming of information. Pupils just get respectable grades but narrative writing is not enhanced in this state of affairs.

Siddiqui (2007) opined that educators implement tight controls, and deliver grammatical constructions. In such sort of English teaching situations, there is a lack of natural/communicative atmosphere available to scholar. Likewise, Hayes & Craig (2007) highlighted suppression of youngsters expressively and mentally by fathers, instructors as well as seniors. The kids are constantly anticipated to be submissive and obedient thoughtlessly. Due to these causes, schoolchildren do not grow self-reliance for the narrative writing skills. It occurs merely due to low quality of instruction and poor pedagogic services at the institute. Rahman (2007) found that pupils make sure of satisfactory performance in memorized subjects but show is much reduced in elementary intellectual capacity and comprehension of any theme. In addition, conceptions in the school books are incompatible to mental level of kids. In such state, the learners have the one and only choice to cram.

[Rasool \(2009\)](#) reported that extensive course outline with unfavorable attitude of school management are a difficulty in tactic of increasing narrative writing skills. The educators face an issue of accomplishment of course in accord with claim and hope of institutional management. In about 40 minutes for English lessons, attention of the tutor is accomplishment of course topics, leaving hardly any time for narrative writing. The scholars are inactive and quiet hearers. This state does not benefit scholars in recognizing their ingenious powers. Progressively these natural talents die within them as if capability is not used, finishes inevitably.

According to [Samiullah \(2013\)](#), "Narrative Writing is to describe an event or situation". He described that a narration of the happening can be explained verbally or in written format. Narrative Writing is an orientation acquired through perception. The schools should try to develop the skill of Narrative Writing in the learners. Narrative Writing genre discourse focuses on a point that writing should be used for communicative purposes. The situations of real-life offer advantage of developing writing skill of learners. The learners become competent in the desired goal of writing, i.e. communication. The quality of writing can be judged by means of communication being delivered through it. [Samiullah \(2015\)](#) elaborated that interactive discourse assists the

different sorts of learning conditions such as individual instruction, with group fellows or with a teacher. Group work has been found successful in raising motivation level of a learner, expanding social skills, and increasing the achievement level of students in academic performances. Interactive whole class and small group discussion stimulate the learning of writing skill. Discussion can be used in different subjects to support the acquisition of skills. [Samiullah \(2019\)](#) said that there is a need to use real situations for the teaching of technical skills like narrative writing. The special importance should be given on using correct English in narrative writing. It is required to use genuine, practical and relevant mode of writing in narratives. Samiullah and Qadeer (2018) considered that discussion in the classroom boosts the writing skills of students. They said that communicative approach and co-operative learning have some common attributes. Students take interest in project works such as connecting the different parts of narrative inside the classroom as well as outside the classroom. They had a view that teacher is considered as a resource of accomplishing the demands of national standards of Education to achieve the high literacy rate through teaching. This pressure restricts the teacher to adopt surface approach of teaching writing and do not develop the deep knowledge of students about writing. The students can become competent writers through the practical implementation of deep approach to teach writing. The proper assessment of writing can cause the deep involvement of teachers in teaching of writing into classrooms. Writing skill should be given priority in formulating the benchmarks of National Educational Policy. [Samiullah and Qadeer \(2018\)](#) proposed that a single approach to teach writing to students is not sufficient. The research should be conducted by giving intervention of teaching writing to various group of students through the practice of different approaches so that teachers, curriculum developers and policymakers can become aware of the use of proper approach of teaching writing. Samiullah (2015) had a view that during guided writing, teacher- student dialogues enhance their capacity of writing. Narrative writing comes under the category of guided writing. Teachers guides the student to attain competency in writing. Students are also motivated for writing by discussing and sharing their work with peers. Interactive discussion or dialogues create the coherence in writing. Feedback in writing induces positive outcomes. Writing treatment strengthens the determination of students to raise the level of achievement in improving writing, observed by Samiullah and Qadeer (2018). They also said that students can be skilled in writing if they are delivered instructions to produce constructive writing from the school level education. They depicted that Writing can act as an instrument to assess what is happening in student's mind with respect to a certain subject/event. The rationale of writing functions is to provoke the interest of students in writing skill. They anticipated that classrooms enriched with activities are operative for the progress of writing skill. The activities such as discussion can be adopted to create the comprehension of students about a topic. Discussion can be made generative through taking start from a question. Samiullah (2019) remarked that writing is discursive activity of origination. Writing should be the center of interest for a school. Unfortunately, schools are not independent to concentrate more on writing skill. Writing can be associated to different areas in a subject. Use of communicative disclosure can help to refine writing skill. It was reported that the practice of spelling and grammar is used in expressing the notions in written text. There is a need to conduct researches on writing mediations to produce good writers. Writing expertise such as narrative writing are required to be successful in professional life in both public and private sector. The blowing up electronic transmission has made the writing skill more common in proceeding than past. Most of the school students when enter in colleges are not able to write conveniently. Samiullah and Qadeer (2018) marked out that writing gives an apprehension of communication. Writing is a functional activity that can be used in connection with the achievement of desired outcomes. Writing involves the identification and assembling of different words to produce a sentence with correct punctuation. Writing is a mean to interact with external world.

Samiullah and Qadeer (2018) gave a comprehensive view that writing is a rudimentary accomplishment of purpose in a school. Students can accumulate, memorize and measure their learning through writing. Remarkable considerations arise about learners' writing in all grades. It was observed that students' competency in writing is at a lower level than required for a grade. Motivation has a remarkable position to polish up the writing skills of students who estrange from writing. Samiullah and Qadeer (2018) also examined that teachers in universities claim that students are deprived of writing skill at higher level of education. Students cannot write periodicals, reports and descriptions at higher level of education due to lack of proper care and attention towards improving the writing skill of students in school level education. It is demand of the present age to assimilate the writing in

curriculum in genuine and significant manner. People who are not good writers suffer a lot of problems in practical life i.e., the job market. It is the requirement of present jobs that employees can write professional job documents i.e., letters, reports, brochures and memorandums in incisive and explicit form. Pupils should be given the training of narrative writing either individually or in groups from early level of education Samiullah (2013). The writing of a topic by students that is being discussed in the classroom not only help to make students brilliant in the classroom but also give insight to a teacher about students' line of thought on a discourse. The expansion of writing skill of students from imprecise format to regular format can be attained by contributing more time to writing in the classroom. Students should be encountered with various situations of writing within a day in the school during which they can write for existent viewers by keeping in mind definite objectives. The authentic directions are required to make students good writers. Students should be enabled to create association between different sections of writing. Feedback on writing is desired for the effectiveness of strategies used to develop writing skills. Maximum exposure of students to favorable conditions of writing beyond the grade can cause change in the existing deficiencies of their writing skill. Propose the different tasks of writing to learners for offering chances to write for different congregations. Teacher's perspective about writing causes problems to execute different approaches to teach writing at secondary level.

Samiullah and Qadeer (2018) described that instructions for writing can be successful in producing the desired results by appraising the following points.

- Teacher should be confident about his ideas and practical knowledge of writing.
- Instruction for writing should have capacity to raise the confidence and involvement of students in writing.
- Instructions for writing should be organized and adaptable to the need of situation.
- Instructions for writing should be delivered every day.
- Instruction for writing should consider the cooperation between instructors and learners.

"Sometimes students are asked to do something they're not given the tools to do. It's like telling people to dig a gold mine and not giving shovels and axes to do. The gold is down there, but they can't get to it without tools." (Karen Harris)

Samiullah and Qadeer (2018) said that the daily exercise of writing should be the integral part of teaching writing to make the students skilled writers. The productive teaching of writing constructs the intervention of writing for students through focusing on their insistence of writing and designing the goals of writing to make learners capable of writing efficiently. Feedback of teacher about student's writing produces marvelous furtherance in student's writing. Teacher's revitalization for student's writing is obligatory. It is axiom that teacher should reward a bucket of gold to his student for good writing. The objective behind this is to initiate corroborative domains of writing for learners' triumph in writing.

Samiullah and Qadeer (2018) told that the proficient teacher has capacity to affect the classroom learning process and achievement level of students. They have a view that the concupiscent teacher can attract the attention of students towards writing skill by allocation of more time to writing. In their research, it had been stated that the development of writing practices in various disciplines of curriculum can enhance the writing capacities of learners. The value of writing can be raised by the teacher through inducing environment in classroom that can accept the mistakes of learners in writing patiently for effective outcomes, noticed by them. They put forward a point that writing process is affected by many general functions. It was also elucidated that the rehearsal for execution of writing with clearly defined objectives in specific field should be the part of teaching writing competencies to the learners. The frequent writing exercises as well as task specific writing assignments help to improve the narrative writing skills. Narrative Writing skills are analysed in terms of grammatical skills, punctuation and organizational skills. The researchers said that writing is a way of accomplishing science. The concept that writing is a fundamental scientific process originates from notions of the relationships between language and learning. Writing is the critical element of both scientific enterprise and school science. The learning in class cannot pursue without engaging the learner in writing activities.

From preceding argument, it might be determined that in Pakistan, instructional method is centered on structural approach. Outdated GTM stresses the rote-learning of structural forms as well as constructions. [Bajwa \(2004\)](#) reported that by using grammatical style, communicative ability is not created that is why Pakistani

students are inept to express themselves properly through script. In the same way critiquing grammatical method, [Cooze \(2006\)](#) had not been contented with structural method in language teaching.

Mainstream of scholars feel trouble to write their own idea, [Harmer \(2004\)](#) reported, but it should be necessary to form the habit of narrative writing. In the same concern, [Coombe \(2009\)](#) views that educators, managers, and school administrators are accountable to increase writing talents of pupils. [Graham & Johnson \(2003\)](#) indicated that there is a substantial concern that pupils do not improve their writing skills up to the mark for the school even. A common reason is that institutes do not do a decent job of educating this intricate skill. [Griffith \(2006\)](#) suggested CLT for development of writing domains. Similarly, [Zafar \(2009\)](#) perceived that CLT might be beneficial to promote narrative skills because it syndicates the practical as well as structural aspects of language. Siddiqui (2007) mentioned that an institute ought to support youngsters in progress of intellectual expertise together with narrative skills. [Raji \(2009\)](#) indicated that a little significance is granted to the talent of writing imaginatively. In schoolrooms the extra worth is granted to write grammatically accurate sentences whereas [Fatima and Zubeda \(2009\)](#) speak out that writing skill is best learnt in a collaborative environment. [Iqbal \(2011\)](#) too, favors the communicative approach for the development of communicative competence in writing.

## **Method and Procedure**

The details regarding method and procedure are as ahead:

### **Design**

The general plan of this research was quasi experimental design. More precisely, the Pretest Posttest Non-Equivalent Control Group Design was used. Two schools, one each from public and private sector, were selected for experiment.

### **Sample**

The total participants in experimentation were 206. There were 33 girls and 173 boys in the study. There were six sections of class 9 from two schools. The technique of "convenient sampling" was used. The schools and the participants were chosen on the basis of the criteria as under:

- Consent from the heads of the institutes.
- Accessibility to at least two sections of 9<sup>th</sup> class in the institutes.
- Readiness of the instructors to spare their classes willingly for the treatment.

### **Instrument**

The instrument for collecting data was the test to evaluate the narrative writing abilities at high school level. The four tasks were modified from the related literature. The test was authenticated by the professionals' opinion. The written compositions were assessed in the light of scoring rubrics quoted by "Arthur Hughes" in "Testing for Language Teachers"

### **Data Analysis**

This section describes analysis of data. The data were examined in the subsequent ways by using t-statistics with the help of SPSS:

- Over-all evaluation of experimental and control groups in narrative writing talents.
- Gender-wise differences of experimental and control groups in narrative writing abilities.
- The sector-wise comparison of experimental and control groups.

## **Overall Results**

Table 1 shows the evaluation of gain and effect sizes of together the control and experimental groups. It was difficult that pretest & posttest average scores of control & experimental groups should be same. It is clarified

that one control group performed better than its corresponding experimental group in pretest whereas two experimental groups performed better than their respective controls in pretest. It was hard to equalize the groups. However, data analysis has been done on basis of gain scores and effect sizes.

**Table 1.** Overall Comparison from Pretest to Posttest Gain Scores of Control and Experimental Groups

Group		Pre-Test Mean	SD (Pre-Test)	Post-Test Mean	SD (Post-Test)	Gain	Effect Size	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
Control (N=101)	Narrative Writing	9.05	4.06	10.21	4.89	1.15	0.50	1.80	0.06
Experimental (N=105)	Narrative Writing	8.01	3.27	14.49	3.80	6.47	0.87	11.200	0.000***

The table 1 displays that the control group developed in narrative writing considerably. The experimental group was upgraded more significantly in average totals of narrative writing because the experimental group got effect sizes better than the control groups.

### Gender Wise Comparison

The analysis of data on the basis of gender has been shown in Table 2. It shows the comparison of the gain scores and the effect sizes of control and experimental groups highlighting the gender of the school-children. Control group girls got statistically insignificant improvement in narrative writing. On the other hand, boys in control group did substantial improvement in narrative writing scores. Experimental group boys and girls were upgraded significantly in narrative writing skills. Girls performed better than boys in narrative writing because of higher effect sizes as displayed in the table ahead.

**Table 2.** Gender Wise Comparison of the Gain Scores of Control and Experimental Groups

Group	Gender		Pre-Test Mean	SD (Pre-Test)	Post-Test Mean	SD (Post-Test)	Gain	Effect Size	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
Control (N=21)	Female	Narrative Writing	6.30	4.43	09.66	4.37	3.20	0.46	2.39	0.031
Experimental (N=12)	Female	Narrative Writing	10.50	2.67	15.60	2.67	5.00	0.84	5.84	0.000**
Control (N=81)	Male	Narrative Writing	7.20	3.87	10.32	5.01	3.00	0.50	5.21	0.000**
Experimental (N=92)	Male	Narrative Writing	7.60	3.71	12.11	3.70	4.40	0.74	9.10	0.000**

### Sector-Wise Comparison

The analysis on the basis of sector (public and private) is presented in table 3 as displayed ahead. The controls in public sector developed overall in narrative writing. Likewise, in private school the controls got noteworthy upgrading in narrative domains. The scores of experimental groups (both in public and private sector) were developed significantly on narrative writing skills more significantly. Private school students performed superior than those of government school students in collective narrative writing because of better effect sizes.

**Table 3.** Sector-wise Comparison of the Gain and Effect Size

Group	Sector		Pre-Test Mean	SD (Pre-Test)	Post-Test Mean	SD (Post-Test)	Gain	Effect Size	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
Control (N=54)	Public	Narrative Writing	7.10	3.54	9.90	4.33	2.80	0.42	3.00	0.000* **
Experimental (N=57)	Public	Narrative Writing	9.00	3.31	13.80	3.99	4.40	0.79	4.20	0.000* **
Control (N=47)	Private	Narrative Writing	9.10	4.37	12.60	5.17	3.50	0.51	3.11	0.000* **
Experimental (N=48)	Private	Narrative Writing	9.00	3.18	13.00	3.50	4.00	0.77	5.30	0.000* **

Some findings have been written after careful analysis of data.

### Findings

The findings observed from analysis of the data are as ahead:

In Public Sector school among the Control Group Boys, the progress in the average marks was 2.833 in the narrative domain of writing and in Experimental Group-Boys the progress in the average marks was 4.877 in the same domain of writing. Similarly, in Private Sector among the Control Group Boys, the progress in the average marks was 3.741 in the narrative writing and in the Private Sector: Experimental Group-Boys the progress in the average marks was 3.743 in the narrative writing skills. Among the Private Sector Control Group Girls the progress in the average marks was 3.250 in the narrative writing and in Private Sector Experimental Group Girls the progress in the average marks was 5.083 in the narrative domain of writing.

### Conclusion

The following conclusion was made from the findings and data analysis:

The narrative domain of writing might be upgraded significantly by using CLT among the boys and girls in public and private sector.

### Discussion

The said approach had been found effective by Griffith (2006) to help novice English language learners. The same results were reported by Raji (2009) in terms of improvement in narrative writing skills among high school students. Ali & Javed (2004) reported the significance of the methodology based on communicative approach. Similarly, Cooze (2006) had been arguing in favor of the said teaching methodology that is based on communicative approach. Iqbal (2011), Fatima and Zubeda (2009), and Zafar (2009) reported as well that the communicative approach had significance to help pupils improve their narrative writing skills. The similar results have been found by the researchers which are going to be reflected in the answers to the research questions ahead:

### Answers to the Research Questions

The replies to the research questions are ahead respectively:

Communicative Language Teaching assists in improving the narrative writing skills of high school students significantly. Communicative approach had better effect on narrative writing of girls than boys. CLT had more significant effect in private sector schools than in the public sector.

## **Recommendation**

CLT may be useful to teach play/drama writing. Likewise, it may be valuable to teach poetry composition as well as the said approach might be advantageous to teach prose writing. It is also recommended that CLT may be worthwhile to teach the writing of imaginative and argumentative essay writing. Comprehensively, CLT may be handy to teach writing any genre in English. Further, it is recommended that some communicative lessons/activities should be added into syllabus while formulation of policy and at the time of curriculum planning.

## References

- Ali, S. M. & Javaid S. B. (2004). *An approach to the teaching of English*, Lahore: New Kitab Mahal
- Bajwa, S. (2004). *Teaching of English*, Bahawalpur: Mian Brothers
- Coombe, C. (2009). *Washback and the impact of high-stakes tests on teaching and learning*, in Mansoor, S, Sikandar, A, Hussain, N, & Ahsan N. M. (eds.) *Emerging Issues in TEFL Challenges for Asia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Cooze, A. (2006). *100 ideas for teaching of English*, New York: Continuum
- Fatima, Z. D. & Zubeda, K. A. (2009). *Cooperative learning: Is it an aid to learning?* in Mansoor, S, Sikandar, A, Hussain, N, & Ahsan N. M. (eds.) *Emerging Issues in TEFL Challenges for Asia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Graham, L. & Johnson, A. (2003). *Writing journals*, Cambridge: United Kingdom Reading Association.
- Griffith, N. (2006). *100 ideas for teaching language*, New York: Continuum
- Harmer, J. (2004). *How to teach writing*, Pearson Longman: New Delhi
- Hayes, S. & Craig, H. (1991). *This is the bear and the scary night*, London: Walker,
- Iqbal, H. M. (2011). *Education in Pakistan: Developmental milestones*, Lahore: Paramount Publishing Enterprise.
- Rahman, T. (2002). *Language, ideology, and power: Language learning among the Muslims of Pakistan and North India*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rahman, T. (2007). *Denizens of alien worlds a study of education, inequality, and polarization in Pakistan*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Raji, M. Z. (2009). *Globalization and EFL/ESL pedagogy: Implications*, in Mansoor, S, Sikandar, A, Hussain, N, & Ahsan N. M. (eds.) *Emerging Issues in TEFL Challenges for Asia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rasool, N. (2009). *Quality issues in language teaching in higher education*, in Mansoor, S, Sikandar, A, Hussain, N, & Ahsan N. M. (eds.) *Emerging Issues in TEFL Challenges for Asia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Samiullah, M. (2013) *Teaching of English: Communicative Perspectives in Pakistan*. Lahore: Unique Educational Publishers
- Samiullah, M. (2015) *Development of Creative Writing through Communicative Approach at Secondary Level in Pakistan*. PhD dissertation: University of the Punjab Lahore
- Samiullah, M & Qadeer, Z. (2018) Effect of Communicative Approach on Proposal Writing Skills of Distance Learners at Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad. *Pakistan Journal of Distance and Online Learning*, 4(2) 119-128
- Samiullah, M. (2019) Effect of Communicative Approach on Creative Writing at Secondary Level in Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Education*, 36(1) 47-60
- Siddiqui, S. (2007). *Rethinking education in Pakistan: Perceptions, practices, and possibilities*, Karachi: Paramount Publishing Enterprise
- Zafar, S. K. (2009). *Computer mediated communication for language learning*, in Mansoor, S, Sikandar, A, Hussain, N, & Ahsan N. M. (eds.) *Emerging Issues in TEFL Challenges for Asia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.