# Effects of Weblogging in English on ESL Students' Writing Apprehension at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sabah

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## ABSTRACT

*The affordances of technological advances such as the Internet have changed the way writing is taught and learnt. It undeniably impacts the cognitive and affective states in writing which include one's writing apprehension. Students, who are still in the process of acquiring English as a second language (ESL), commonly experience writing apprehension when writing in English. Thus, this study aims to describe the effects of using the weblog as a medium for essay writing in relation to writing apprehension among ESL students undergoing an Intermediate English course at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sabah. The quantitative research approach employing the Quasi-experimental design was used in this study. One hundred fifty-five diploma students participated in the experiment with 79 and 76 participants in each of the respective Experimental group and Control group. Writing through blogging was used with the Experimental group, while writing through non-blogging pen-paper method was used with the Control group. Both groups were pre-tested and post-tested with an adapted Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) questionnaire. The writing apprehension levels among the ESL students were found to be average. Writing through blogging was found to have insignificant effects on the ESL students' writing apprehension when compared to the writing through non-blogging pen-paper method. This implies that writing through blogging does not necessarily promote reduced writing apprehension and it may be as anxiety-inducing as the pen-paper writing method for the ESL students in the present study.*

**Keywords:** ESL learners, weblogging, writing apprehension

## INTRODUCTION

Writing is commonly regarded as a demanding task for most foreign language (FL) or second language (L2) students who often struggle in acquiring the writing skills, and many a time find it to be a very challenging endeavour. Yet, writing is a skill that has to be mastered in order to perform well in courses especially at the tertiary level of education where disciplinary knowledge and understanding are largely exhibited and valued through the medium of writing (Graham & Perin, 2007).

The lack of writing skills among students has often been associated with poor teaching, inadequate curricular requirements, a lack of stringent grading and evaluation, or simply failure on the part of schools and instructors to teach the basic writing skills more effectively (Hanna, 2009). While those are undeniably important factors that contribute to the students' performance and sense of inadequacy in writing, a far greater cause of student inability to write effectively may be due to students' writing apprehension (Daly & Miller, 1975; in Hanna, 2009).

In the Malaysian educational context, the issue of writing apprehension among English as Second Language (ESL) students continues to be an area of interest for research. This study stems from the scenario of ESL students' resistance to writing in an Intermediate English writing course at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sabah. Observation by the researcher of students' behaviour throughout six years of teaching different ESL groups has raised the awareness over students' common reluctance to writing which includes insufficient text length, poor quality, as well as low and late submission rate of written assignments (Atkinson, 2011; Hanna, 2009).

Writing apprehension is viewed as a problem in writing classes as it has consequences on students' learning experience, and for the decisions they make about engaging in writing activities, and teachers should be able to help learners overcome the debilitative effects of apprehension in view of its influence on students' success in writing (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). Furthermore, students' apprehension in writing tends to worsen at the university level due to higher expectations of the students' level of writing performance (Nor Aslah Adzmi, 2009). Hence, it is the intention of this study to explore the means in helping apprehensive student-writers

overcome their writing apprehension. One practical means of intervention that is viewed to offer some potential in overcoming the problem of students' writing apprehension is today's Internet-based computer-assisted language learning (CALL) tool represented by the weblog. As such, this research studied the effects of writing through blogging on writing apprehension among university students enrolled in an Intermediate English course at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Sabah campus. The main objectives guiding this study were:

1.  To determine the level of writing apprehension among ESL diploma students,

2.  To investigate whether ESL writing tasks through blogging has a significant effect in reducing the ESL students' writing apprehension.

In meeting the objectives of this study, the following research questions were formulated and examined:

1.  What is the level of writing apprehension among ESL diploma students?

2.  What is the effect of ESL writing task through blogging on the scores of writing apprehension before and after intervention for the Experimental group compared to the Control group?

3.  Is there any significant difference in the post test scores of writing apprehension after intervention/instruction between the Experimental group and Control group?

In addressing research questions (ii) and (iii), the following null hypotheses were tested in this study:

$H_{01}$    There is no significant difference in the score of the writing apprehension test before and after intervention (writing through blogging) for the Experimental group.

$H_{02}$    There is no significant difference in the score of the writing apprehension test before and after instruction (writing through non-blogging) for the Control group.

$H_{03}$  There is no significant difference in the posttest scores between the Experimental group and the Control group in writing apprehension test after intervention/instruction.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The emergence of the "globalisation" phenomena and the Internet revolution in the 21st century makes teaching and learning of writing even more challenging. It is practically impossible to deny the influence of the Internet revolution on the way English is used throughout the world including in the teaching and learning of English Language writing to L2 learners (Kroll, 2003).

### Weblogs and Blogging

The weblogs have emerged as a technological tool useful for writing via the Internet and remains the most appropriate and practical platform for encouraging writing despite the various Internet communication medium today (Arena & Jefferson, 2008; Farwell & Kruger-Ross, 2013). A blog consists primarily of text-based entries, or posts, pictures, audio or video, that are published at a specific web address (Norizan & Faridah, 2006) and may be updated as frequent as desired, and are typically intended for the general public consumption as blogs are "personal media with public attention" (Liu, 2008:11). Blog posts are time-stamped and the contents are presented in reverse chronological order (Stauffer, 2002) which makes blogging a unique writing activity in which the frequency and amount of writings can be easily monitored and thus, providing a direct indication of the student's level of activity in writing.

### Writing Apprehension and Resistance to Writing

Based on extensive research in interpersonal communication, writing apprehension has emerged as a distinct form of language anxiety (Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999). Daly (1978; Liu, 2008) regarded writing apprehension as an individual's general avoidance of writing and of situations that potentially require some amount of writing, particularly when it involves potential evaluation of that writing. Daly and Hailey (1984; Liu, 2008) identified five situational characteristics that affect the situational

state of writing apprehension which include evaluation, novelty, ambiguity, conspicuousness and previous experience.

The point, 'evaluation', is reflected in Aydin's (2008) and Atkinson's (2011) ideas on fear of negative evaluation which stated that L2 or FL learners often fear any situation that involves evaluation, particularly when they will be evaluated according to standards they are not competent at. This also relates to the idea of 'conspicuousness' when one's ideas, thoughts or actions are subject to public viewing, evaluations and judgements. Meanwhile, a situation that is novel and ambiguous is normally viewed as threatening and induces apprehension (Vasey & Daleiden, 1996; Pappamihiel, 2002). Previous experiences also affect one's perceptions of whether future experience is threatening or non-threatening, and leads to apprehension and determination about future attempts in the same situation (Trang, Moni & Baldauf, 2013).

Hence, writing apprehension is categorised as a dispositional aspect of the writer's affect which is characterized by the writer's general tendency to avoid writing situations, to fear having one's writing viewed and evaluated, and to find writing novel, confusing and unrewarding based on past experiences (Daly & Shamo, 1978:120; Liu, 2008; Reif & Stacks, 1988; Atkinson, 2011).

**Overview of Past Researches**

While evidence has shown that educational blogging is not a new phenomenon, and many studies have investigated how students have improved their writing via blogs in various countries including Malaysia (Nafiseh & Supyan, 2014), literature on the impact of weblogging on writing apprehension among ESL learners in the Malaysian context in particular, however, appears to be quite scarce to the best knowledge of the researcher. Nevertheless, previous related researches on the use of weblogs and computer-assisted writing tools in relation to writing apprehension suggested mixed results.

A study by Sahin-Kizil and Arslan (2012) on university students' perception of writing via blogging reported students' increased level of motivation and a greater preference for blogging over the traditional in-

class writing instruction. A similar positive result was reiterated in a more recent study by Yang (2013) who found that Chinese EFL non-English major college students gained more confidence in writing and engaged in thinking through blogging. Likewise, Lin, Li, Hung and Huang (2014) in their study on the effects of blogging and pen-paper writing method found that EFL students experienced less writing anxiety when blogging compared to writing using the traditional pen-paper method. A similar positive outcome was reported by Nadzrah, Hafizah and Azizah (2010; Nafiseh & Supyan, 2014) who found that students experienced reduced anxiety and increased self-confidence when the weblog was used as a pedagogical tool in ESL classroom. Likewise, Muhamad (2010; Nafiseh & Supyan, 2014), who studied writing apprehension among students who used the class blog in a language teacher training program, found that the majority of the respondents reported decreased writing apprehension after engaging in discussions via the class blog. Similarly, a study on the use of computer-assisted writing (CAW) medium and its impact on writing anxiety among foreign language learners by Fang (2010) revealed positive outcomes in which learners showed favourable attitudes in writing, became more confident when writing using the computer and experienced less fear of evaluation than in the traditional writing class. These positive results were attributed to the authentic writing environment using the computer which offered much autonomy, reduced peer pressure, time pressure, and minimised teacher control (Bahce & Taslaci, 2009; Jones, 2006).

On the other hand, a research outcome by Chuo (2007) found that the use of WebQuest Writing Instruction (WQWI) program among EFL college students did not affect the students' writing apprehension significantly compared to those who underwent traditional writing classes. Similarly, a study by Kelley (2008) on the impact of blogging on the affective conditions of undergraduates also found that the blogging group did not display a greater decrease in writing apprehension compared to the non-blogging group. Likewise, Lan, Hung and Hsu (2011) who studied the effects of using web-based guided writing instruction also found no significant difference in the younger students' level of writing anxiety when compared to those exposed to the pen-paper writing instruction. Meanwhile, Mohammed (2011) who assessed the effects of web-based pre-writing activities on college EFL students' writing apprehension found that the students' level of writing apprehension increased after the pre-writing treatment, and attributed

this to the pressure in using the multimedia concept mapping in the writing activities. A more recent study by Lin, Groom and Lin (2013) on the use of blog-assisted language learning (BALL) methodology among Taiwanese ESL student writers found that students' blogging activities were inhibited by feelings of anxiety and embarrassment about possible reactions to their work, and that students were not motivated to engage voluntarily in second language blogging activities.

Pennington (2003:289) stated that writing using the computer as the medium led an individual writer to write in a less self-conscious way and with greater engagement, and thus writing with freer mind and less "rewriting anxiety". This idea is coherent with Mortensen and Walker's (2002) claim that blogging encourages spontaneous writing which releases one of the expectations to write a perfect and polished piece of writing. Farwell and Kruger-Ross (2013) further highlighted that blogging fosters a sense of community that allows learners to be more open to constructive feedback and knowledge-sharing. Meanwhile, Kavalianskiene (2010) posited that weblog helps learners to overcome the fear of making errors in writing which causes writing anxiety as "blogs encourage a feeling of time which is different to that felt in traditional academic writing" (Mortensen & Walker, 2002:268) and hence, indirectly reduces the pressure and apprehension often associated with writing.

While a number of studies acknowledged the positive impact of blogging in developing spontaneous, timely and concise expression of thoughts, writing in the weblog also forces one to "confront one's own writing and opinions, and to see them reflected in the words of others" (Mortensen & Walker, 2002:269) evokes the anxiety in write-blogging. The fear of having one's samples writing viewed and ridiculed in the public forum of an Internet blog may inhibit a student writer from writing, and hence, the use of a blogging format in learning to write does not seem to have made writing any easier than learning to write in the traditional ESL writing classroom context (Lin, Groom & Lin, 2013). Besides, Strampel and Oliver (2008) and Instone (2005) suggested that blogging for a broad audience which included the public evoked uneasiness in writing that accentuated the feeling of inability to write among student writers which resulted in eventual avoidance of write-blogging. Song and Yuen (2008) reiterated this idea in which the willingness to write was inhibited by the feelings of boredom

and fear of writing for public viewing among undergraduates who used the weblogs as a reflective learning tool in a Malaysian university.

Pennington (2003) in her review of computer usage in writing summarised that students develop either positive or negative attitudes towards the computer writing medium and the context of writing, which may influence their cognitive and affective response towards English language learning.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed the quantitative approach and adopted the quasi-experimental research method mostly due to subjects that cannot be randomly assigned to groups. As such, two groups were formed without randomisation. It involved random assignment of intact group to treatment, rather than random assignment of individuals to groups in order to keep the existing classroom intact.

### Subjects

The subjects of this study were 155 diploma-level students following an Intermediate English course at the university. The students represented five intact classes of an Intermediate English course. Seventy-nine (79) students formed the experimental group that received treatment or intervention in the form of writing through blogging, while 76 students from two intact classes were randomly assigned as the control group that only performed writing through the regular, traditional pen-paper method in this study. All these students had completed a prior Consolidating English course – which covered descriptive and expository essay writing skills, and followed the same Intermediate English course syllabus with the same number of six-contact hour per week. The subjects mainly used their mother tongue as their first language at home and in the campus. English Language was mainly learnt as a subject at the university as stipulated in the course curriculum, and it was rarely used as a medium for writing in their daily life.

**Measurements**

In answering the research questions, an adapted Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) questionnaire by Cheng (2004) was used as a pre- and post-test. It measures the degree to which an individual feels anxious when writing in an L2 based on three components or subscales – cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety and avoidance behaviour. It contains a total of 22-items all of which are to be answered on a 5-point Likert scale: *(1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) no strong feelings either way, (4) agree,* and *(5) strongly agree*. This scale was adapted from Cheng's original scale which indicates point-3 as 'Uncertain'. The term *'Uncertain'* was substituted with *'No strong feelings either way'* in this study in the effort to indicate the absence of strong feelings, as previously used in a study by Atay and Kurt (2006), instead of indicating uncertainty or indecisiveness (see Appendix A). The adapted SLWAI was found to be reliable in this study with a Cronbach alpha of .84.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Prior to carrying out the writing through blogging activity, students in the experimental groups were given a two-hour training session in the computer lab, where they were introduced to the weblog using the Blogger free weblogging software. These students were taught how to access, create, read and post required texts and comments to the weblog, while students in the control group were introduced to the requirement of writing tasks using the traditional regular writing through non-blogging pen-paper mode in the writing classroom.

The subjects in the Experimental and Control groups were pre-tested using the SLWAI questionnaire a week after they had enrolled for the course in order to eliminate other factors which may affect their anxiety level such as the anxiety of following a new course, anxiety over uncertainty about the new course and anxiety in meeting new course mates.

Both the experimental and control groups received similar intermediate-level writing tasks for essay writing which focused on the same type of essays (expository and argumentative), same themes and grammatical points as outlined in the Intermediate English course syllabus.

No attempt was made to differentiate the writing tasks between the two groups in terms of the essay questions and difficulty level.

Throughout the writing activities, both groups underwent similar process in writing (pre-writing, writing, and post-writing), produced multiple drafts and had peers and instructors responded to their drafts of essays. However, the means used in carrying-out the writing process differed between the control and experimental groups. The control group underwent in-class pre-writing activities to brainstorm ideas for given topics, and performed the writing activities as out-of-class tasks using the pen-paper method, and drafts were either submitted to the instructor or shared with classroom peers for feedback before they were revised, edited and resubmitted to be graded. Meanwhile, students in the experimental group underwent in-class pre-writing activities as well, and followed by the process of drafting their essays on their personal weblogs as out-of-class write-blogging activities. These drafts were then published as blog entries for their peers, instructor and the public at large to comment and provide feedback, and after which these drafts were revised, edited and republished. As blog entries are time-stamped, students' writing activities could easily be monitored to ensure the essays had been revised, edited and republished at least once.

Both the control group and experimental group produced a total of four essays whereby each essay was revised, edited and rewritten or republished at least once. These writing activities lasted for eight weeks after which another post-test involving both groups using the same SLWAI questionnaire was administered during the tenth week.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis in this study involved the analysis of quantitative data obtained from the SLWAI self-report questionnaires. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to perform descriptive analysis and inferential analysis of t-test in this study.

In finding out the distribution of students based on their writing apprehension level before and after treatment, the SLWAI questionnaire was analysed by summing up the respondents' ratings on a five-point Likert

scale of the 22 items. For the negatively worded statements, responses were reversed-scored so that the response indicating the most amount of apprehension was always assigned a value of 5 and the response indicating the least amount of apprehension was assigned a value of 1. Thus, in all instances, a high score represents high apprehension. Based on these scores, subjects were grouped into three apprehension levels determined by the mean and standard deviations (SD) of scores.

A separate paired-samples t-test was used to determine the difference between the pretest and posttest scores on SLWAI for the respective Control group (non-blogging) and Experimental group (blogging). The standard alpha level of p=.05 was pre-selected for the level of significance in all t-test in this study as commonly used by educational researchers (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009).

A prior independent t-test was performed to compare the overall pretest means for the writing apprehension variable between the Experimental group and Control group to ascertain that both the Experimental group and Control group were equivalent in ensuring the validity of the results (Huck, 2004). With the pre-selected standard alpha level p=.05 for the level of significance, the results indicated that there was no significant difference on the SLWAI pretest mean scores (p-value is .524) between the two groups. Hence, both the groups were considered to be equivalent in this study. This qualified for the use of Independent Samples t-test for hypothesis testing of posttest scores on writing apprehension between the two groups to find out whether the posttest scores of writing apprehension were significantly different between these two groups. The standard alpha level p=.05 was pre-selected for the level of significance in this independent-samples t-test.

## RESULTS

The results of this study are presented based on the research questions. The first research question – What is the level of writing apprehension among diploma ESL students? – was examined through descriptive analysis of data as in Table 1. The students were grouped into three apprehension levels. Scores that were one or more standard deviation above the mean scores were judged to be high-apprehensive, and scores that were one or more standard deviation below the mean scores were judged to be low-apprehensive.

**Table 1: Number of Students in Three Writing Apprehension Levels Before and After Blogging/non-blogging According to Roups**

| Apprehension Levels | Experimental Group (N=79) | | Control Group (N=76) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Before Intervention (Pre) | After Intervention (Post) | Before Intervention (Pre) | After Intervention (Post) |
| High Apprehension (HA) | 14 (17.7%) | 11 (13.92%) | 14 (18.42%) | 16 (21.05%) |
| Average Apprehension (AA) | 50 (63.2%) | 56 (70.88%) | 48 (63.15%) | 46 (60.53%) |
| Low Apprehension (LA) | 15 (18.98%) | 12 (15.18%) | 14 (18.42% | 14 (18.42%) |

The results for the experimental group show that the majority of students experienced average level of writing apprehension before (63.2%) and after (70.88%) writing through blogging activities. The pre-blogging result shows that 14 (17.7%) students experienced high apprehension (scores equal to or greater than 79) and 15 (18.98%) students had low apprehension (scores equal to or smaller than 57). After the intervention, there was an equal decrease of 3.79% students who experienced high apprehension (11 (13.92%) – scores equal to or greater than 78), and 12 (15.18%) had low apprehension (scores equal to or smaller than 59). The majority of students had average apprehension level before and after intervention with 50 (63.2%) and 56 (70.88%) students respectively.

The results for the control group revealed that there was an increase of 2.63% in high-apprehensive students after writing through non-blogging activities which was from 14 (18.42%) (scores equal to or greater than 79) to 16 (21.05%) (scores equal to or greater than 78). There was a decrease of 2.62% students who had average apprehension and no change in low-apprehensive students. The majority of students had average apprehension level before and after instruction with 48 (63.15%) and 46 (60.53%) students respectively.

The second research question – What is the effect of ESL writing task through blogging on the scores of writing apprehension before and after intervention for the Experimental group compared to the Control group? – was examined through null hypothesis testing using paired samples t-test. Results from the separate paired sample t-test performed for the Experimental group and Control group are presented in the following Table 2 and Table 3.

**Table 2: Null Hypothesis 1: Results of Paired Samples t-test on Writing Apprehension (SLWAI) Test Scores Before and After Treatment for Experimental Group**

| Posttest Mean (Std. Deviation) | Measure | N | Pretest Mean (Std. Deviation) | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 68.51 (10.144) | SLWAI | 79 | 69.41 (10.337) | .520 | 78 | .605 |

The result obtained for the Experimental group revealed that the mean for the pre-test and post-test scores of the writing apprehension test (SLWAI) was 69.41 and 68.51 respectively as shown in Table 2. There was a slight decrease mean of 0.899 after the intervention. Analysis of the comparison of mean shows that the t-value obtained was .520, and the two-tailed significance value ($p=.605$) was greater than the pre-selected significance value of .05 (p>.05), indicating that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores on SLWAI was not significant. Thus, the results have failed to reject the null hypothesis. The results indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference in levels of second language writing apprehension before and after intervention (writing through blogging) for the Experimental group.

Meanwhile, the results obtained for the Control group show that the mean for the pre-test and post-test scores on the writing apprehension test (SLWAI) was 68.30 and 68.70 respectively as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Null Hypothesis 2: Results of Paired Samples T-test
on Writing Apprehension (SLWAI) Test Scores Before
and After Instruction for Control Group**

| Measure | N | Pretest | Posttest | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean (Std. Deviation) | Mean (Std. Deviation) | | | |
| SLWAI | 76 | 68.30 (11.140) | 68.70 (9.765) | -.678 | 75 | .500 |

There was an increase mean of 0.395 after instruction. Analysis of the comparison of mean shows that the t-value obtained was .678 and the two-tailed significance value (p=.500) for the pre-test and post-test indicated that p>.05, and thus the difference in the scores of SLWAI before and after instruction (writing through non-blogging) for the Control group was not significant. Therefore, the results have failed to reject the null hypothesis. The results indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference in the levels of second language writing apprehension before and after instruction (writing through non-blogging) for the Control group.

The final research question – Is there any significant difference in the post-test scores of writing apprehension after intervention/instruction between the Experimental group and Control group? – was examined through null hypotheses testing using an independent samples t-test as in Table 4.

**Table 4: Null Hypothesis 3: Results of Independent Samples T-test on Writing Apprehension (SLWAI) Test Scores after Intervention/instruction between Experimental and Control Group**

| Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Post WA Experimental | 79 | 68.51 | 10.144 | 1.141 |
| Control | 76 | 68.70 | 9.765 | 1.120 |

Independent Samples Test

| | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | Sig. | t | df |
| PostWA Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed | .021 | .886 | -.119 | 153 |
| | | | -.119 | 153.000 |

Independent Samples Test

| | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | Lower | Upper |
| PostWA Equal variances assumed Equal variances not assumed | .905 | -.191 | 1.600 | -3.353 | 2.971 |
| | .905 | -.191 | 1.599 | -3.350 | 2.968 |

The mean for the posttest scores on the SLWAI test after intervention and instruction for the respective Experimental and Control group was 68.51 and 68.70 respectively. There was a difference of 0.191 between these groups in which the Control group revealed a higher mean than the Experimental group. The result of comparison of mean after intervention/instruction revealed that the t-value obtained was -.119 and the two-tailed significance value (p=.905) for the posttest writing apprehension (SLWAI) test scores indicated that p>.05 and thus not significant. Hence, the results have failed to reject the null hypothesis. The results indicated that there

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was not a statistically significant difference in the level of second language writing apprehension between the Experimental (blogging) group and the Control (non-blogging) group after intervention/instruction.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The term "writing apprehension" commonly refers to the tendency of a person to avoid the process of writing (Cheng, 2004; Daly & Miller, 1975; Hanna, 2009) and it is one of the crucial determinants of success in writing. Hence, language instructors are to find viable ways in helping students deal with their apprehension in writing and weblogging appears to offer the potential in confronting this issue in this technological era.

In the present study, most diploma ESL students had average level of apprehension. The results from null hypothesis testing also indicated that writing tasks through blogging may not have affected writing apprehension in a way that is significantly different from the use of the traditional ESL writing method using pen and paper. In other words, ESL writing task through blogging does not necessarily engender reduced writing apprehension that promotes less resistant writers among second language learners. Hence, the findings contradicted the idea that authentic online learning environment represented by the weblog fosters stress and anxiety-free environment as suggested by Kavalianskiene (2010), Yang (2013) and Lin, Li, Hung and Huang (2014), to name a few. The results were also consistent with the claim by Strampel and Oliver (2008) and Lin, Groom and Lin (2013) that the public nature of weblogging clashes with Alm's (2009) idea of weblogs as a "safe, protected writing environment" for most L2 writers. Exposure of one's thoughts in the public space of the weblogs may have made students feel pressured and apprehensive in writing as opposed to feeling comfortable and secure (Farwell & Kruger-Ross, 2013; Kelley, 2008; Lin, Groom & Lin (2013) as well as Song & Yuen, 2008). Therefore, this study suggests that writing through blogging is as anxiety-inducing as writing using pen-paper in the traditional classroom that resulted in the insignificant impact of blogging in reducing the students' writing apprehension.

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