Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Effectiveness: EFL Islamic Students' Writing Skill Enhancement

Rapi Hamdi Nur
Universitas Tomakaka

Rendra Kusuma Wijaya
Universitas Tomakaka

Abstract

This study investigates the efficacy of implementing Individual Learning Plan (ILP) to enhance the writing skills of eleventh-grade students at MAS, (*Madrasah Aliyah Swasta*) Guppi Mamuju, an Islamic private senior high school in West Sulawesi, Indonesia. Conducted through a pre-experimental approach, the research population comprised eleventh-grade students from MAS Guppi Mamuju, totaling one class. Utilizing total sampling, one experimental class of eight students was selected. The study employed a writing test as the primary research instrument, assessing various aspects including content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics using Jacobs' scoring scale. Data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel's Automatic Data Analysis tool. The results indicated a notable improvement in students' writing ability following the implementation of ILP, as evidenced by the significant increase in mean scores from the pre-test (57.00) to the post-test (70.63), with a range of 13.37 points. Statistical analysis using the t-test supported the rejection of the Null Hypothesis (H0) and acceptance of the Alternative Hypothesis (H1). In conclusion, the integration of ILP effectively enhanced the writing skills of eleventh-grade students at MAS Guppi Mamuju.

Corresponding author:
Rapi Hamdi Nur, Universitas Tomakaka, Mamuju, Indonesia
Email: tifahrapie01@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Language serves as a cornerstone of human society, facilitating communication and interaction among individuals. In today's globalized world, proficiency in English has become increasingly essential, offering myriad opportunities for personal, academic, and professional growth (Muallim et al., 2023; Noviasmy et al., 2023). However, in smaller private school communities like MAS Guppi Mamuju, an Islamic Private Senior High School nestled in the local surroundings of West Sulawesi, Indonesia, the emphasis on English writing skills may not be as pronounced as in larger public schools. Here, the Islamic ambiance often takes precedence over English language learning, creating a unique educational landscape (Arisman & Hasanah, 2023).

Despite the growing importance of English in the global arena, students at MAS Guppi Mamuju encounter notable obstacles in expressing their ideas effectively through writing, often grappling with issues such as limited vocabulary and motivation (Ali, 2021; Ansar et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2022). These challenges hinder their ability to articulate thoughts coherently and communicate persuasively. In response to these hurdles, the researcher proposes the implementation of Individual Learning Plan (ILP) as a strategic intervention to bolster students' writing proficiency (Bernacki et al., 2021; Watson & Watson, 2016). ILP offers a personalized approach to learning, empowering students to take ownership of their educational journey and tailor their studies to their individual needs and interests (Chitkara et al., 2016; Lockspeiser & Kaul, 2016). By integrating ILP into the curriculum, educators can create a conducive environment for fostering creativity, critical thinking, and self-directed learning (Chitkara et al., 2016; Solberg et al., 2018).

Against this backdrop, this study endeavors to investigate the efficacy of ILP in enhancing the writing skills of eleventh-grade students at MAS Guppi Mamuju. By examining the impact of ILP on students' writing proficiency, we aim to shed light on innovative teaching methodologies that promote language acquisition and proficiency. Through rigorous analysis and evaluation, we seek to provide valuable insights that can inform educational practices and contribute to the ongoing discourse on effective language instruction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The foundation of this research lies in addressing the empirical and theoretical problem of enhancing writing skills among students, particularly focusing on the efficacy of Individual Learning Plan (ILP) in an educational context. Several characteristics that may render teachers ineffective, including a lack of specific goals, self-driven motivation rather than student-centered motivation, blame-shifting onto students for perceived disciplinary issues, employment of bribery or threats instead of motivation, and possessing surface-level knowledge without substance (Chew & Cerbin, 2021; Walls et al., 2002).

Building upon this theoretical framework, contemporary research has delved into various aspects of language teaching and learning, particularly within the realm of writing skills development. A comprehensive scoring scale encompassing content, organization,

vocabulary, language use, and mechanics, which has become instrumental in assessing writing proficiency in educational settings (Setyowati et al., 2020).

In recent years, studies have underscored the importance of personalized learning approaches, such as ILP, in facilitating student engagement and academic success. There are the significance of ILP in promoting student autonomy and fostering a sense of ownership over the learning process (Lockspeiser & Kaul, 2016). Similarly, Bulger (2016) expounded on the benefits of ILP in catering to diverse learning needs and preferences, thereby enhancing overall learning outcomes.

Furthermore, recent research in the field of education has increasingly highlighted the significance of motivation in driving student achievement. (Ryan et al, 2021) introduced Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation, characterized by autonomy, competence, and relatedness, in sustaining engagement and fostering optimal learning outcomes. Similarly, studies within the realm of language education, such as those by Hasanah (2021) and Nur et al. (2021), have delved into the impact of motivational strategies on English language learning, emphasizing the pivotal role of intrinsic motivation in enhancing language proficiency. Additionally, Mohar et al., (2017) explored the effectiveness of various pedagogical approaches in improving writing skills among English language learners, offering insights into effective instructional strategies and interventions.

Moreover, studies have highlighted the unique challenges and opportunities within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. Maria and Ekaterina (2021) discussed the implications of globalization on English language teaching, emphasizing the need for innovative instructional methods to meet the evolving needs of learners in multicultural settings.

In summary, the existing body of literature provides valuable insights into the theoretical underpinnings of language teaching and learning, the efficacy of personalized learning approaches such as ILP, and the role of motivation in driving academic success. However, there remains a gap in research regarding the specific application of ILP in enhancing writing skills among Islamic EFL students, particularly within the context of MAS Guppi Mamuju in West Sulawesi, Indonesia. This research seeks to address this gap by investigating the effectiveness of ILP in improving the writing skills of eleventh-grade students in this unique educational setting.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research employed a pre-experimental design, specifically a one-group Pretest-Posttest Design, to investigate the effectiveness of the treatment. In this design, a single group of participants is pretested, exposed to the treatment, and then posttested to assess any changes resulting from the intervention (Gay & Mills, 2018). Focusing on eleventh-grade students from MAS Guppi Mamuju during the 2021/2022 academic year, the study involved a population of 8 students. Total sampling technique was utilized, involving the selection of all available participants within the target group. Data collection employed a writing test as the primary instrument, with a pre-test administered initially to establish

students' baseline writing abilities. Following the pre-test, the treatment was administered over four sessions. Subsequently, a post-test was conducted to evaluate any improvements in students' writing skills following the treatment. Students were instructed to write about their learning experiences, facilitating a comparative analysis of pre- and post-treatment performance. Data analysis utilized Microsoft Excel's Automatic Data Analysis tool to examine the differences between pre-test and post-test scores, thereby assessing the efficacy of the treatment in enhancing students' writing abilities.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Pre-tets Result

Based on the collected research data, the outcomes of the students' writing are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Distribution of Pre-test Scores

No	Classification	Score	Pre-test	
			Frequency	Percentage
1	Very Good	86-100	0	0%
2	Good	71-85	0	0%
3	Fair	56-70	5	62.5%
4	Poor	41-55	3	37.5%
5	Very poor	0-40	0	100%
	Total score		8	100%

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that the majority of students (62.5%) were categorized as fair, with five students falling into this group. Conversely, three students were classified as poor, while none were categorized as very good, good, or very poor. These findings underscore the prevalence of fair writing abilities among the students, highlighting the imperative for intervention to enhance their skills.

2. Post-test Result

Following the implementation of the intervention, the post-test results for the students' writing performance are summarized below.

Table 2. Distribution of Post-test Scores

No	Classification	Score	Post-test	
			Frequency	Percentage
1	Very Good	86-100	0	0%
2	Good	71-85	5	62.5%
3	Fair	56-70	3	37.5%
4	Poor	41-55	0	0%
5	Very poor	0-40	0	0%
	Total score		8	100%

Referring to the preceding Table 2, the data indicates that the majority of students (62.5%) were categorized as good, comprising five students. Additionally, three students (37.5%) achieved a fair classification. Interestingly, no students attained a very good rating. Notably, there were no students in the poor or very poor categories. These findings suggest a significant improvement in students' writing abilities, with a notable shift towards the good category following the implementation of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) intervention.

3. Pre-test Mean Scores for Writing Components
    The table below illustrates the mean scores for the various components of writing in the pre-test.

Table 3. Mean Scores of Writing Components in the Pre-test

No.	Component of Writings	Mean Score	Classification
1	Content	16.63	Very poor
2	Organization	13.63	Fair to poor
3	Vocabulary	12.50	Fair to poor
4	Language use	12.25	Fair to poor
5	Mechanic	2.00	Very poor

As depicted in Table 3, the highest mean score in the pre-test was observed in the content component, scoring 16.63, categorized as very poor. Following this, the organization, vocabulary, and language use components all fell within the fair to poor category. Finally, the mechanics component scored 2.00, indicating the lowest mean score among the components.

4. Post-test Mean Scores for Writing Components
    The following table presents the mean scores for the various components of writing in the post-test.

Table 4. Mean Scores of Writing Components in the Post-test

No.	Component of Writings	Mean Score	Classification
1	Content	22.50	Good to Average
2	Organization	15.88	Good to Average
3	Vocabulary	14.25	Good to Average
4	Language use	15.57	Fair to poor
5	Mechanic	2.25	Very poor

From Table 4, it is evident that following the treatment, the highest mean score in each component of the post-test was observed in content, achieving a score of 22.53, categorized as good to average. This was followed by organization and language use, both scoring around 15 points. Additionally, vocabulary scored 14.25, falling within the good

to average category. Lastly, mechanics improved to a score of 2.25, indicating an increase of 0.25 points after the treatment.

The comparison of Student mean scores between pretest and posttest on Components of Writing can be seen in Figure 1 below.
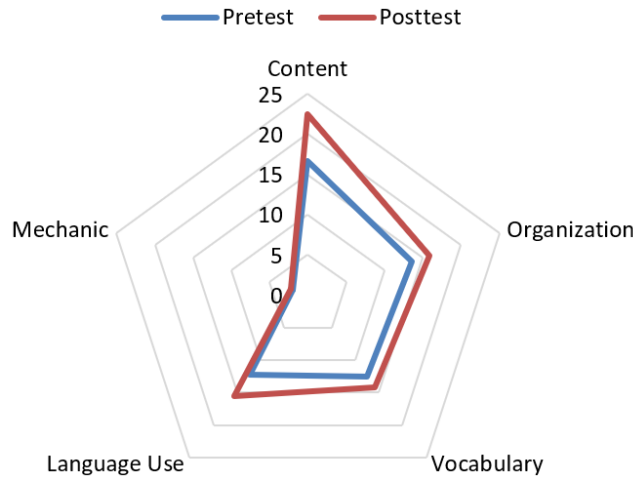

Figure 1. Comparison of Student Mean Scores on Components of Writing

It is clear from Figure 1 that students demonstrated improvement in each writing component; however, it is notable that they exhibited shortcomings in writing mechanics, both in the pre-test and post-test. Writing mechanics encompass aspects such as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, all of which are essential for effective communication. The proficient use of mechanics ensures clarity and coherence in writing, enabling readers to understand the writer's message accurately and efficiently. Therefore, addressing deficiencies in mechanics is crucial for enhancing the overall quality and effectiveness of students' writing.

5. Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores, and t-test Results

The statistical comparison between pretest and posttest mean-scores, as well as the t-test results, was conducted using Microsoft Excel and is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5. T-test for Paired Two Samples for Means

	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean	57	70.625
Variance	23.143	20.554
Observations	8	8
Pearson Correlation	0.852	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	7	
t Stat	15.054	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0	
t Critical one-tail	1.895	

P(T<=t) two-tail	0
t Critical two-tail	2.365

According to Table 5, the mean pre-test score stood at 57, while the mean post-test score exhibited a notable increase to 70.625. This indicates a substantial improvement of approximately 13 points between the pre-test and post-test scores. Moreover, with degrees of freedom (df) totaling 7 and a significance level (p) set at 0.05, the calculated t-test value (t-stat) amounted to 15.054, significantly surpassing the critical t-table value (t critical two-tail) of 2.365. These findings strongly imply a marked enhancement in writing skills among the eleventh-grade students of MAS Guppi Mamuju following the implementation of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) treatment. Thus, the data underscores a significant improvement in student scores attributable to the adoption of the ILP method in teaching writing, leading to the acceptance of the Alternative Hypothesis (H1) and the rejection of the Null Hypothesis (H0).

The analysis of the data presented in Tables 1 through 5 sheds light on the effectiveness of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) intervention in enhancing the writing skills of eleventh-grade students at MAS Guppi Mamuju. Initially, Table 1 reveals that a significant portion of students (62.5%) fell within the fair category of writing proficiency, with none achieving ratings of very good, good, or very poor. These findings underscore the prevalent need for improvement in writing abilities among the student, aligning with the conclusions drawn in previous studies by Hasanah et al. (2024) and Zaidi and Nashruddin (2021), which highlight the challenges faced by students in mastering writing skills.

Upon implementation of the ILP intervention, Table 2 demonstrates a notable improvement in students' writing abilities, with the majority (62.5%) now classified as good writers. This shift towards higher proficiency levels suggests the efficacy of ILP in fostering skill development, consistent with the principles of personalized learning advocated by Chew and Cerbin (2021) and Bernacki et al. (2021). Moreover, the absence of students in the poor or very poor categories post-intervention indicates a significant enhancement in overall writing performance, reflecting the benefits of tailored instructional approaches.

Analyzing the mean scores of writing components in Tables 3 and 4 further elucidates the impact of the ILP intervention. Initially, students exhibited deficiencies across various writing components, with content scoring the highest mean score in the pre-test but still falling within the very poor category. However, post-intervention, content scores improved significantly, reaching the good to average category, as evidenced by the findings of Setyowati et al. (2020), Sardi et al. (2017) and Walls et al. (2002), who emphasize the importance of content development in writing proficiency.

Furthermore, the statistical comparison presented in Table 5 provides robust evidence of the effectiveness of the ILP intervention. The substantial increase in mean post-test scores, coupled with a significant t-test value exceeding the critical threshold,

highlights the marked improvement in students' writing skills following the implementation of ILP. This corroborates the findings of Ryan et al. (2021) and Kasih and Munir (2023), who underscore the role of individualized learning plans in fostering student motivation and engagement, ultimately leading to enhanced academic outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore the effectiveness of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) intervention in enhancing the writing skills of eleventh-grade students at MAS Guppi Mamuju. Through the implementation of personalized instructional strategies and tailored learning experiences, significant improvements were observed across various components of writing, highlighting the importance of customized interventions in addressing individual learning needs comprehensively. These results offer valuable contributions to both EFL learners and teachers, as they provide evidence of the potential of ILP to facilitate student success and academic excellence. Additionally, the identified need for further research focusing on students' writing mechanics emphasizes the importance of ongoing investigation to offer targeted support for individuals who may still require additional attention in this crucial area. This study thus serves as a foundation for future research endeavors aimed at refining and expanding the understanding of effective pedagogical practices in language education.

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