BORANG PENGESAHAN STATUS TESIS

JUDUL: DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH THROUGH GROUP COLLABORATION BY USING NETMEETING: A CASE STUDY OF FIRST YEAR UTM STUDENTS.

SESI PENGAJIAN: 2003 / 2004

Saya NORZIYANI BINTI NOORDIN (HURUF BESAR)

mengaku membentuk tesis (PSM/Sarjana/Doktor-Falsafah)* ini disimpan di Perpustakaan Universiti Teknologi Malaysia dengan surat-surat kegunaan seperti berikut:

1. Tesis adalah hakmilah Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.
2. Perpustakaan Universiti Teknologi Malaysia dibenarkan membuat salinan untuk tujuan pengajian sahaja.
3. Perpustakaan dibenarkan membuat salinan tesis ini sebagai bahan pertakaran antara institusi pengajian tinggi.
4. ** Sila tandakan ( ) (Mengingati maklumat yang berdurjih keselamatan atau kepentingan Malaysia seperti yang termukuh di dalam AKTA RAHSIA RASMI 1972)

☐ SULIT
☐ TERHAD
☐ TIDAK TERHAD

(TANDATANGAN PENULIS)

Prof. Madya Dr. Wan Fara Adlina
Binti Wan Mansor

NAMA PENYELIA

Alamat Tetap:
NO. 35, BATU 2 ½,
JALAN DATO’ KAYAMAN,
02450 KANGAR, PERLIS.

Tarikh: 12th MARCH 2004

CATATAN:
* Potong yang tidak berkomen.
** Jika tesis ini SULIT atau TERHAD, sila lampirkan surat daripada pihak berlunus/organisasi berkomen dengan menyatakan sekali sebab dan tempoh tesis ini perlu dikelaskan sebagai SULIT atau TERHAD.
* Tesis dimaksudkan sebagai tesis bagi Ijazah Doktor Falsafah dan Sarjana secara penyelidikan, atau disertas bagi pengajian secara kerja kursus dan penyelidikan, atau Laporan Projek Sarjana Muda (PSM).
This Bachelor's Project Report Has Been
Approved and Accepted By

PROF. MADYA DR. WAN FARA A DLINA BINTI WAN MANSOR
Bachelor's Project Supervisor of Modern Languages Department,
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

On Behalf of
Faculty of Education
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH THROUGH GROUP COLLABORATION BY USING NETMEETING: A CASE STUDY OF FIRST YEAR UTM STUDENTS

NORZIYANI BINTI NOORDIN

This Project Report is Prepared As a Requirement for The Bestowal of Bachelor of Science and Education (TESL)

Faculty of Education
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

MARCH, 2004
"I admit that this project report (Title: DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS IN ENGLISH THROUGH GROUP COLLABORATION BY USING NETMEETING: A CASE STUDY OF FIRST YEAR UTM STUDENTS.) is my own piece of work except for citations and summaries whereby each and everyone of their sources has been duly acknowledge."

Signature : [Signature]

Name of Writer : NORZIYANI BINTI NOORDIN

Date : 12th March 2004
To my beloved

“Abah, Emak, Kak Sikin, Kak Kirah,
P.M. Fara and Ariff”
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, praise to ALLAH the almighty who has given me strength and ability to complete this project paper. Completing this project paper was a challenging task for me. This project would not have been possible without the advice, contributions and moral support of several individuals. Thus, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Madya Dr. Wan Fara Adlina Wan Mansor for her great guidance and endless effort in seeing me through this piece of work. May ALLAH shower all His blessings upon you. From the bottom of my heart, I would like to dedicate this project of mine to my beloved family for their love and never ending support. Last but not least, I would like to thank my dearest friend, Mohd. Ariff Jauhari who inspired me in my writing and those who had helped me in making this project a success.
This study was undertaken to investigate whether collaborative writing through NetMeeting is able to develop students’ writing skills in English together with problems encountered by the students. The participants are 10 First Year Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor students currently taking course in Remote Sensing. The objectives of this study have been narrowed down to investigate whether writing skills in English can be developed through collaborative writing by using NetMeeting and to identify the problems encountered by the students during the collaborative writing process through NetMeeting. The participants were given two tasks to discuss in the NetMeeting and the data of this study were analyzed subjectively. Other instruments namely observation and interviews were also being used for the purpose of this study. Findings were analyzed based on the concept of turn-taking and opinions developed by Brown and Yule (1983). The main aim is to produce a meaningful discussion in English. Analysis of findings suggests that NetMeeting may be able to help students in producing and sharing ideas or suggestions when discussing and developing an essay. Limitations of the study were also included along with recommendations for further research.
ABSTRAK

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>PAGE NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THESIS STATUS APPROVAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUPERVISOR’S APPROVAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TITLE PAGE</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RESEARCHER’S ADMITTANCE</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ABSTRAK</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LIST OF APPENDICES</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PART ONE
### INTRODUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER I</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Background of Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Statement of Problem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Objectives of The Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.5 Significance of The Study 4
1.6 Scope of the Study 5
1.7 Definition of Terms
  1.7.1 Writing Skills 6
  1.7.2 Collaborative Writing 6
  1.7.3 NetMeeting 6
  1.7.4 Turn-taking and Opinions 7

PART TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER II  LITERATURE REVIEW  8

2.0 Introduction 8
2.1 The Importance of Writing Skill 8
2.2 Learning to Write Collaboratively
  2.2.1 Advantages of Collaborative Writing 10
  2.2.2 Developing Writing Skills through Group Collaboration 11
2.3 Collaborative Writing with and without Computers
  2.3.1 The Use of NetMeeting in Collaborative Writing 13
  2.3.2 The Main Features of NetMeeting 14

PART THREE
METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER III  METHODOLOGY  16

3.0 Introduction 16
3.1 Research Design 16
3.2 Participants of the Study 17
3.3 Procedures 17
3.4 Data Collection/Instruments and Analysis
   3.4.1 Students’ Essays 19
   3.4.2 Classroom Observation 19
   3.4.3 Interviews 19
   3.4.4 Chat Log 20
3.5 Conclusion 20

PART FOUR
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS 21

4.1 Analysis and Descriptions of NetMeeting and Chat Log 21
   4.1.1 Number of Turn-Takings and Opinions in Group A Chat Log 22
   4.1.2 Number of Turn-Takings and Opinions in Group B Chat Log 23
   4.1.3 Total of Turn-takings and Opinions in Discussion 1 25
   4.1.4 Total of Turn-takings and Opinions in Discussion 2 26
4.2 Responses To Interview
   4.2.1 Responses To Pre-Interview 27
   4.2.2 Responses To Post-Interview 28
4.3 Notes On Participant Observation: Online and Offline
   4.3.1 Group A: Discussion 1 and Discussion 2 29
   4.3.2 Group B: Discussion 1 and Discussion 2 31
4.4 Analysis on Group Essays 33
PART FIVE
CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER V DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION 37

5.1 Collaborative Writing through NetMeeting: Developing Writing Skills of Students 37
5.2 Problems Encountered During Collaborative Writing 38
5.3 The Participants’ Perception on Collaborative Writing in NetMeeting 38
5.4 Limitations of the study and Recommendations for Further Research 39
5.5 Pedagogical Implications 40
5.6 Conclusion 41

PART SIX
REFERENCES

References 43

PART SEVEN
APPENDICES

Appendices (A-D) 46
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE NO.</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1</td>
<td>Number of Turn-takings and Opinions in Group A Chat Log</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.2</td>
<td>Number of Turn-takings and Opinions in Group B Chat Log</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.3</td>
<td>Total of Turn-takings and Opinions in Discussion 1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.4</td>
<td>Total of Turn-takings and Opinions in Discussion 2</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPENDICES</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Interview Questions</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Tasks in NetMeeting</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Handout for Participants</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Chat Log</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group A - Discussion 1</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group A - Discussion 2</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group B - Discussion 1</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group B - Discussion 2</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The English language has been known to be one of the pioneer languages used widely all over the world by many nations. It has been used as a powerful tool in reaching some major decisions and negotiations. English in Malaysia, was viewed as the most prestigious and respectable language since a long time ago and especially nowadays. The importance of the language could be seen through the government’s action to declare English as the second language.

One of the aims of English language instruction in Malaysian schools is to enable the learners to write essays besides developing their writing skills in English in a variety of topics and in many different ways. However, not many Malaysians have the capability to write in English clearly and meaningfully. This problem is not only faced by the pupils from rural areas but also those from the urban areas. Writing, in Malaysian schools is assessed as a part of exit examination of the English paper and as a requirement or ticket in furthering studies at colleges and universities. Most students think that there is no time for them to work collaboratively in writing as they have been practicing to work or to write individually in school.

Why does this happen? The starting point for the cause of this problem may be ascribed to our Ministry of Education on their curriculum designation and on the techniques and methods that have been used by practitioners, educators and also
learners. Sad to say, this problem had caused many undergraduate students to fail in their application for a good job especially in the big and famous company. Why are the students not able to write in the language? What makes them passive students or thinkers when the writing is in the English language? Majorities conjectured that the problem commences from educational institutions and the techniques and methodologies in learning and teaching writing.

The local newspapers as well as educational magazines have, for a long time, been printing English language activities and study notes for all the examinations such as UPSR, PMR, SPM and STPM. These efforts are certainly helping the pupils nationwide to improve their proficiency in English. This clearly shows that the media and the government are taking the problem of lack of English proficiency among Malaysian seriously.

There are a variety of methods of teaching writing practiced by educators to help the students in writing and to develop students’ writing skills. Nowadays, collaborative writing has been commonly used, in part, with the onset of the National Curriculum in Malaysia. The use of group work in the classroom is not a new phenomenon, although it is not widely applied. Learning to compose collaboratively is one of the best methods suggested (Bruffee, 1985). This proved that this method was best to overcome the problem in students’ writing in English. Unfortunately, this method will not give an efficacious effect to the students if educators did not bother to combine some improvements or changes in it. Nowadays, there are many software designed to support the collaborative writing such as NetMeeting. But, the problem is primarily due to our schools’ facilities and the educators themselves whereby they are afraid of using technologies.

In a regular English class, teachers would explain the concepts of writing composition and then assign writing exercises to train students in writing. Teachers would then give several model essays and ask the students to memorize the format and the terminologies in such essays in the examination. Many believe that students become passive and unable to be creative and imaginative in writing essays due to such method or spoon-feeding. Thus, when they enter colleges and universities, they will run into problems in writing in English such as writing an academic paper.
Statement of Problem

Although it is common to implement group work in higher institutions and in schools, not many would incorporate collaborative writing through NetMeeting in order to develop writing skills among the students.

In group collaborative writing through NetMeeting, some of the concerns are choosing the proper activities, time needed to implement it, a computer lab with NetMeeting facilities and perhaps the cooperation of the students in such activity. Collaborative writing had been proven as the best technique in improving students’ writing skills. In the real world, writing is a process that is developed through stages. The stages are exploring ideas, organizing ideas, connecting ideas, writing the first draft, editing and writing the second or final draft (Segal and Pavlik, 1997). Based on experiences, English classes in Malaysia do not provide enough practice in writing since process writing was not a regular practice in schools due to the large number of students in class. Thus, they only know how to memorize words and format of writing but not developing the writing skill itself. This problem will become more serious when they enter universities and colleges.

The purpose of this case study is to investigate whether collaborative writing through NetMeeting is able to develop students’ writing skills in English among a group of first year UTM students. This research was looking at the advantages of using NetMeeting and its ability in developing students’ writing skills. It focused on the low proficiency students. Simply put, this research worked on the improvement of students’ writing by developing their writing skills through collaborative writing technique.

Objectives of The Study

There are a few objectives related to the study. This study attempts to:
i. Investigate whether writing skills can be developed through Collaborative Writing through NetMeeting.

ii. Identify the problems encountered by the students during the collaborative writing process through NetMeeting.

1.4 Research Questions

In conjunction with the objectives of the study, the research questions are as follows:

i. In what way is collaborative writing through NetMeeting able to develop writing skills of students?

ii. What kind of problems do the students encounter when doing collaborative writing?

iii. How do the participants perceive collaborative writing through NetMeeting?