

Building Communication: Integrating Dialogue Journal in an ESL Classroom

Ana Lou Cahilig

University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines
Cagayan de Oro City
Philippines

Dr. Maria Angeles Hinosolango

University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines
Cagayan de Oro City
Philippines

Abstract

This study sought to determine the extent of integrating dialogue journal in an ESL classroom involving Alternative Learning System graduates who went through modular non-formal education during their secondary schooling. With dialogue journal, particularly its elements: written communication, dialogic conversation, and responsive relationship, students were able to communicate and practice their English writing skills. The study involved forty-four college students coming from various social and ethnic backgrounds; 16 were male and 28 were female. For this purpose, a researcher-made questionnaire was utilized which was examined by experts for content and face validity. It conducted in-depth interviews with 22 respondents substantiating the results of the study. Through descriptive design with mixed methods, the findings revealed that dialogue journal has been highly evident in written communication, dialogic conversation, and responsive relationship. It has enabled students to communicate their ideas openly with no threat and became a venue for student-teacher communication.

Keywords: Dialogue Journal, Written Communication, Dialogic Conversation, Responsive Relationship, ALS Graduates, Communication

1. Introduction

Communication is essential on how a person writes, behaves, speaks, and handles duties whether in the academic, business, or any other field to demonstrate professionalism (Prabavathi & Nagasubramani, 2018). Communicating to the students is seen very crucial for it will prepare them globally, and it has also been considered important due to the changes brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, communication skills must be greatly emphasized in a college classroom, particularly for those who went to non-formal education during their high school like the Alternative Learning System (ALS) graduates.

Writing skills play an important role in the day-to-day undertakings of each individual whether in a personal or professional level. This is one of the macro skills that is needed to be honed and developed in the 21st century. Furthermore, Stauffer (2020) highlighted that there are three categories of the 21st-century skills that learners of today's generation must possess, namely, learning skills, literacy skills and life skills. For the learning skills, these include: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. These two concepts are interrelated for communication could be in a form of writing and vice versa. Moreover, as one of the 21st-century learning skills, communication means that learners are capable of organizing their ideas, data, and findings and be able to share these through different forms of media effectively as well as in oral and written forms (Hixson et al., 2012). Thus, this certain skill must be possessed by ALS graduates for this will prepare them to face a globally competitive world as they graduate in college and settle in their own jobs. In addition, writing as a form of communication is very relevant in the academe world given that there are possibilities that education can go through different challenges (e.g. pandemic).

Stone (2019) recognized that studying Dialogue Journals is very helpful especially for people who are learning English as a Second Language (ESL). It is an activity wherein language learners can connect and create a bond with their teachers through written communication (Dabbagh, 2017). It is also an outside classroom activity wherein students would engage in a conversation with their teachers through writing in a form of a journal.

The use of dialogue journal will not only give a room for communication but will ultimately build confidence to the students' write-ups for them to be prepared in the global world. In the context of the ALS graduates, there is a significant

study by Colardyn & Bjornavold (2004) that ascertained that non-formal learners must be involved in meaningful learning experiences which means that there must be a venue for informal exchange of experiences and diverse points of view, thus, updating mobile teachers on the learners' current state of health, issues, and interests. Dialogue Journal as a student-centered activity taps on their writing abilities with consideration on opening the exchange of thoughts on topics that they are interested in will aid such concern.

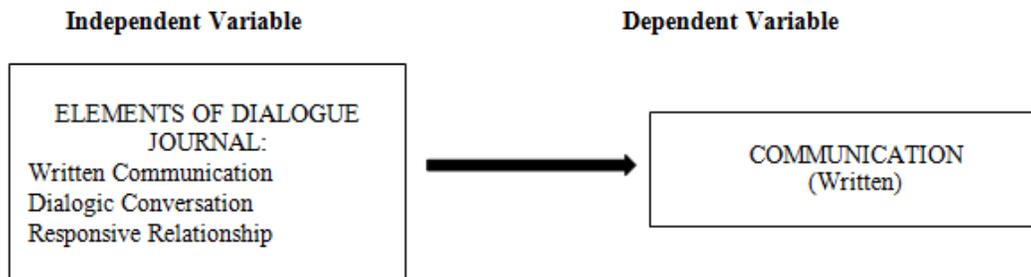
1.1 Theoretical Framework of the Study

The application of Dialogue Journal is anchored on Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) that puts emphasis on the function of language and the importance of social interaction as it heightens meaning of understanding as cited in the study of Suriyanti & Yaacob (2016). One of sociocultural theory's most distinctive characteristics is its emphasis on learning as a social process in which meaning is generated via language usage in a social environment (Behroozizad, Nambiar, & Amir, 2014).

The application of Sociocultural Theory is seen through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). As cited in the paper of Rana (2018), it refers to the gap between one's actual level of development as measured by independent problem solving and one's prospective level of development as determined by independent problem solving under adult supervision in cooperation with more competent peers. (Vygotsky, 1978). It digs in on the idea that teachers provide a task that students cannot do alone but can be achieved with the assistance of the teacher who now becomes "the more knowledgeable other" or is someone skillful on that task. It seeks to envision that learners learn more if they are guided within that Zone of Proximal Development. Considering the idea that not all students are at the same ZPD or is aligned on the same level of needs, they should be catered individually based on their distinct needs. This then leads to application of Dialogue Journals which can be a good method so that each learner will be assisted based on their respective ZPD. This is doable since dialogue journal is a conversation made by the teacher and an individual student. Therefore, when communication is well established between the two then the teacher can continually assist the learners and will lead to possible interventions in the future.

1.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1. Research Variables



In the Philippines, numerous state colleges are accepting ALS graduates as first year students. These set of learners are those who went through informal education during their high school. The ALS program aids to solve problems in illiteracy and high dropout rates, which also covers issues on lack of educational support for indigenous people, Muslim migrants, physically handicapped and other disadvantaged children (Atilano et al., 2016). Given this, a number of colleges has trouble dealing with these set of learners in a college classroom on the issue of communication. This affirmed the results shown among ALS learners which have a low level of acquisition of 21st-century skills (Tindown et al., 2017). Thus, it will be hard for them to battle in this globally competitive world without the skills needed in the 21st-century.

For the same reason, since there are a few studies related to ALS graduates/completers who are in college already, the present study would contribute additional thoughts on the educational system of the Philippines and with language strategies too. Furthermore, with the changes brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, having communication with the students in this time would help suggest possible interventions for teachers to consider in terms of their mental health and emotional well-being. Nevertheless, teachers can still opt for certain strategies that can cater and assist the needs of their students based on the contexts given.

This then leads to the idea that in order to build communication in the classroom, particularly to those students who have difficulty expressing themselves due to their limited educational experiences, the use of a student-centered activity through dialogue journal would be a great help.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The present study is intended to uncover the extent of integrating dialogue journal in the English classes involving ALS graduates of Bukidnon State University-Talakag Satellite Campus. It also aims to enumerate students' experiences and comments which will find out whether it has been effective in building communication. The results of the study would aid in integrating dialogue journal in teaching strategies and enrichment classes to improve their communication skills.

1.4 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent is Dialogue Journal integrated in the English classes in terms of written communication?
2. To what extent is Dialogue Journal integrated in the English classes in terms of dialogic conversation?
3. To what extent is Dialogue Journal integrated in the English classes in terms of responsive relationship?

1.5 Limitations of the Study

The present study is limited to second year students of the second semester of the Academic Year 2020-2021, specifically those who are ALS graduates in Bukidnon State University-Talakag Satellite Campus. The range of the study covered three-months of dialogue journal exchange through online platform (e.g. text messaging and messenger). It used a five-point Likert Scale and interview questionnaires as research instruments.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The results of the study would give an idea to language teachers handling ALS students or graduates in their classes on the importance of using dialogue journal. This then would be a very useful idea for the Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education in the Philippines as this would give them an option on how to deal with these set of learners. Additionally, this would be greatly beneficial to Bukidnon State University having considered the similar population, thus, when injected by teachers would yield similar results on the study. Lastly, this will be greatly of advantage for students to improve their communication skills and be able to have someone to share their weekly experiences as the pandemic freezes the face-to-face interaction in the nation.

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms presented the conceptual and operational definition of the study:

Dialogic Conversation. The element of dialogue journal; the writing process used to fully integrate dialogue journal and ensuring a real communication in the range of the study.

Dialogue Journal. A writing activity that involves the elements of written communication, dialogic conversation and responsive relationship that enable students to have a one-on-one genuine communication with their teachers as they share topics of their own interest. For this paper, it was the student-centered activity that became the platform of communication for students and teachers in this time of pandemic, thus, giving emphasis on communication.

Responsive Relationship. The element of dialogue journal; the writing process used in order to fully integrate dialogue journal where students write freely without being corrected by the teacher.

Written Communication. The element of dialogue journal; writing process used in order to fully integrate dialogue journal and maintaining an exchange of conversation between the student-teacher for three months.

2. Review of Related Literature

Written communication is a formal mode of communication that is utilized in schools, universities, and the corporate sector, among other places (Prabavathi & Nagasubramani, 2018). It is also considered as an efficient mode to be used in the present due to COVID-19 restrictions in the academic sector.

College students, in particular, are more sensitive to the negative mental and psychological health repercussions of stay-at-home orders or lockdown measures, since they may jeopardize their emotional, physical, and mental health, as well as their developmental and educational progress (Singh et al., 2020).

The utilization of dialogue journal in these times will help students reach out to the teacher, share personal topics and be descriptive in areas that they wanted to share about. In addition, it is important to observe that students must also be able to possess skills necessary for today's generation. Mercado (2005) stated that communication skills is one of the most critical abilities to have in the modern era. It was emphasized that students should always voice their thoughts, and teachers, on the other hand, must give opportunities for them to do so. In the same way, ALS learners must comprehend and be prepared to communicate and collaborate with numerous persons worldwide.

2.1 Dialogue Journal

In a 2013 article, Bolton stated that Dialogue Journal is similar to the discipline of having daily physical exercise or playing a certain musical instrument, a “routine writing workout” (Uduma, 2011) is a need for students. The use of Dialogue Journals give means to this statement, as the composition of journal makes an interaction which is most likely compared to speech wherein the writer would make adjustments continually for him or her to be understood (Linnel, 2000). The proponents of this method view it as “an informal written conversation between the students and the teacher” (Larotta, 2008).

Dabbagh (2017) in his thesis, defined Dialogue Journal writing as an activity wherein language learners can connect and create bond with their teachers through written communication as well as practice different aspects of the target language. It contains three important elements: (a) the written communication, (b) dialogic conversation, and (c) responsive relationship (Staton, 1991).

2.2 Written Communication

According to Peyton (2000), Dialogue Journals are defined as written conversations wherein the student and teacher (or any other partner) practices communicating regularly which could be daily, weekly, semestral, on an academic year or course. Bolton (2013), in his paper, explained that students have freedom to write on a topic or topics they have chosen and the teacher writes a response individually. Students also has the opportunity to write their thoughts and experiences through journals (Linnel, 2010). Dialogue journal let students get increased motivation and confidence in communicating in the form of writing (Young & Crow, 1992; Peyton, 2010). Furthermore, it goes further compared to regular journals for there is a written conversation between the teacher and student. Dialogue Journals provides an opportunity for frequent regular writing, thus, having a natural conversation through the written word. It is a method of regular learner–teacher written interaction in which learners make initial decisions regarding themes, length, style, and format (Mirhosseini, 2009; Seyyed, 2009).

2.3 Dialogic Conversation

Peyton and Reed (1990) included qualities of Dialogue Journals and one of which signified that there should be good conversation between the writers and readers despite the fact that they are in written forms. Teachers should provide feedback or respond to each entries created by the learners and in turn, learners should reply to the teacher after reading the response written by the teacher (Tanner, 1997). Every week, teachers read and react to journal entries, which are generally in the form of letters that begin genuine discussions (not as language learner writings). Teachers respond to students' views, answer their questions, and pose questions, just as they would in any meaningful discussion (Mirhosseini, 2009). There should be a continuous conversation until both the teacher and learner have their queries satisfied and are over. One of the advantages as cited by Bolton (2013) included the building of good rapport between the two as dialogue journal takes place in a span of time (Garmon, 1998; Hennings, 1992).

2.4 Responsive Relationship

Teachers respond to the student's message instead of judging their dialogue journals (Bolton, 2013). They are instructed to disregard grammar and spelling in favor of openly expressing their thoughts and feelings on paper (or screen). When students engage in this type of exercise, they might write journal entries about a variety of topics, from classroom events to highly personal worries (Mirhosseini, 2009). However, teachers should also bear in mind to be careful in the responses since it is advised not to write more than what the student has written for it might overwhelm the student's voice and might hinder encouragement (Peyton, 2000). Additionally, teachers should share opinions and be informal without the need to preach. The thoughtful responses that were made will assist students to focus on their own writing and not to simply provide answers to the queries (Bolton, 2013). In the paper of Young & Crow (1992), it was highlighted that through the use of dialogue journal, teachers will be able to familiarize and get to know their students more on the basis of their individual needs. Accordingly, this is something that only exist through dialogue journal and not in any other classroom setup. The use of dialogue journal also enabled learners to value response and have a meaningful conversation (Kim, 2005; Roe & Stallaman, 1994).

2.5 Dialogue Journal during the Pandemic

The present COVID-19 pandemic has also brought great changes in the lives of the Filipinos. It is hard to connect with students physically and even finds no ease in reaching out to them online for many students have limited access to internet- most likely those living in far flung areas. The challenge of not having the face-to-face teaching is really a concern. Dialogue Journals gave an opportunity for communication to happen despite this situation. This kind of writing activity enable teachers to make modifications based on the technology available to students. In an article written by Phadke (2020), a psychologist revealed that the most beneficial aspect of journaling during the pandemic is that it helps build a narrative, a feeling that life continues and that it is going ahead, even at times of impasse. Moreover, Son et al., (2020) indicated in their paper that there is really a need to create interventions and preventative initiatives to tackle college students' mental health.

Archibald and Jeffery (2000) explored another field of research into the teaching of writing in their paper, namely the development of effective tools and technology to assist student writers. When learners communicate with their teachers via dialogue journal writing, they have the ability to maintain a dialogue with their teachers and to share their opinions regarding other classroom activities. Through their comments and reflections, they can actively participate in teaching-learning methods (Crumley, 1998). With the application of Dialogue Journal in this pandemic, students are very much free to share their experience on their individual modular learning journey and at the same time enhance their communication skills.

3. Research Methodology

The following serves as the research methodology conducted in this study. This chapter presents and describes the research participants, research instrument, data gathering procedures, and statistical treatment of data.

3.1 Research Participants

There were 44 participants in the study; 16 males and 28 females. All of these respondents are bonafide students from the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) Major in Financial Management and Bachelor of Public Administration (BPA) programs of Bukidnon State University- Talakag Satellite Campus.

3.2 Research Instrument

This study employed a researcher-made questionnaire examined by experts in the field for content and face validity. It made use of a five-point Likert Scale in measuring the extent of integrating Dialogue Journal in the class. It covered the three elements (e.g., written communication, dialogic conversation, and responsive relationship) that focused on the students' writing experience. The questions were very much linked to the guidelines that should be done when using dialogue journal and linked it to the concepts of writing to prove that communication was really built. Moreover, a section was provided in the questionnaire that enabled students to write their comments and observations, thus, aiming to be more descriptive in the data gathered. A total of 25 questions were written on the questionnaires following the scale:

Response	Value	Range	Description
To a Large Extent	5	4.51-5.00	Extremely Evident
To a Moderate Extent	4	3.51-4.50	Highly Evident
To Some Extent	3	2.51-3.50	Evident
To a Small Extent	2	1.51-2.50	Less Evident
Not at All	1	1.00-1.50	Not Evident

Online in-depth interviews were also conducted to substantiate the results of the data. Due to the uprising cases of COVID-19 in the municipality, the researcher opted to use Facebook Messenger platform to collect the students' thoughts on the study. Twenty-two (22) respondents were interviewed and able to give their impression about dialogue journal.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

The five point Likert Scale was a researcher-made questionnaire that has also gone through face and content validity by the professors from Mindanao State University- Iligan Institute of Technology and the University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines. All of the instruments utilized in this study has been thoroughly checked by professionals in the English Language field.

3.4 Data Gathering Procedure

A letter of consent was sent to the Campus In-Charge and respondents for the conduct of the study. Afterwards, face-to-face orientation upon the distribution of the modules was given to inform each student about the study prior to the surge of COVID-19 in the municipality. When students gave their permission, the researcher asked for their contact details. The dialogue journal exchange was then administered for three months which was done on a weekly basis. Students were able to choose topics they got interested in, and it became the source of discussion once in a week. The topics were categorized into: personal, cultural, BSBA, BPA related topics for students to have a wide array of options. It was not only limited to the list given; students were also able to choose any topic they wanted to talk about. Dialogue journal was mainly practiced through text messaging and Facebook Messenger since there were no face-to-face classes. After the dialogue journal activity and survey questionnaires were completed, the data gathered were then analyzed. Lastly, in-depth interviews were conducted to substantiate the results of the study.

3.5 Statistical Treatment

In order to get an accurate analysis and interpretation of gathered data, statistical tools were employed in the study. Frequency, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to ascertain to what extent is Dialogue Journal integrated in the English classes when grouped according to the following elements: written communication, dialogic conversation, and responsive relationship.

4. Results and Discussion

Problem 1: To what extent is Dialogue Journal integrated in the English classes in terms of written communication?

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants' Extent of Dialogue Journal Integration (Written Communication)

Range	Interpretation	Frequency	%
4.51-5.00	Extremely Evident	7	15.91
3.51-4.50	Highly Evident	21	47.73
2.51-3.50	Evident	13	29.55
1.51-2.50	Less Evident	3	6.82
1.00-1.50	Not Evident	0	0.00
Total		44	100.00
Overall Mean Interpretation		3.7983	Highly Evident
SD		0.7766	

Questions	Mean	Interpretation	SD
Did you choose your own topic based on the list given?	3.70	Highly Evident	1.11
Were you able to respond appropriately with the topic you have chosen?	3.80	Highly Evident	0.98
Were the words used enough to capture your emotions and experiences?	3.91	Highly Evident	0.91
Were you able to arrange and organize your thoughts in the dialogue journal?	3.61	Highly Evident	0.99
Were you able to include accurate ideas and real experiences on the write-ups?	3.98	Highly Evident	1.07
Were you able to use proper tenses and sentence patterns in constructing your thoughts during the writing of entries?	3.57	Highly Evident	1.04
Did the language you used effective in communicating your thoughts and experiences?	3.91	Highly Evident	0.94
Were you able to use effective punctuations, capitalization and paragraphing in your overall message on the entries?	3.91	Highly Evident	0.88

Table 1 shows the overall extent of dialogue journal integration with focus on the written communication element. It was presented in this study that majority of the respondents experienced the process of having written communication

as **highly evident** during the three-month Dialogue Journal integration in the English Classes for the second semester. Additionally, written communication was very much observed on the comments and observations of the students as written on their survey questionnaire, and at the same time it has helped students in this current pandemic. Through this process, students were able to express themselves in a written form. Linnel (2010), in her study, mentioned that journals served as a tool where adult learners could write their experiences and cultural background as well. Additionally, since dialogue journal also provided an opportunity for students to read and respond to their teacher's writing, they, in turn, would be able to build confidence and trust their writing abilities (Peyton, 2010). This was also supported based on the comments of the students by which an individual response was also recorded below. The following responses were extracted from the student's individual thoughts on dialogue journal:

- *I did pick a topic based on the list given, through that topic I managed to introduce some of our tribe's tradition (Student 13).*
- *The topics were good and realistic (Student 11).*
- *I really base it on my experiences (Student 3).*
- *I think I was able to do some organization but sometimes I experience struggles (Student 16).*
- *I included accurate ideas based on my experiences and found it helpful to keep my sanity during this pandemic (Student 44).*
- *I'm having a hard time sometimes in using proper tenses, but I believe I'm trying (Student 4).*
- *The language used is effective and gave me the opportunity to harness my writing skills (Student 32).*
- *I learn to practice effective punctuations but sometimes I forget (Student 26).*

Problem 2: To what extent is Dialogue Journal integrated in the English classes in terms of dialogic conversation?

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants' Extent of Dialogue Journal Integration (Dialogic Conversation)

Range	Interpretation	Frequency	%
4.51-5.00	Extremely Evident	7	15.91
3.51-4.50	Highly Evident	25	56.82
2.51-3.50	Evident	10	22.73
1.51-2.50	Less Evident	2	4.55
1.00-1.50	Not Evident	0	0.00
Total		44	100.00
Overall Mean Interpretation		3.9347	Highly Evident
SD		0.7193	

Questions	Mean	Interpretation	SD
Were you able to maintain a private conversation with the teacher for three (3) months?	4.11	Highly Evident	0.89
Have you felt a real audience on dialogue journal compared to other classroom assessments?	3.80	Highly Evident	1.02
Did the teacher cover or replied with words understandable to you?	4.34	Highly Evident	0.89
Have you discovered new words that are relevant and useful on the range of the study?	3.98	Highly Evident	0.85
Have you felt no barriers in language usage between you and the teacher?	3.70	Highly Evident	0.90
Have you provided necessary and interesting information to keep the conversation going?	3.89	Highly Evident	0.78
Were you able to provide clear sequence of thoughts for the teacher to respond further?	3.73	Highly Evident	0.87
Have you further discovered proper usage of punctuations and spelling during the exchange of communication?	3.93	Highly Evident	0.93

Table 2 reveals the overall extent of dialogue journal integration with focus on dialogic conversation element. It highlighted that the element was **highly evident** during the Dialogue Journal integration in the English Classes for the second semester.

As part of the respondents' effort, majority have shown such willingness to participate and be open during the dialogic conversation; thus, they were able to maintain a conversation for three months. One factor was their comfortability of sharing thoughts to the teacher. In the study of Garmon (1998), it was mentioned that using dialogue journals in the undergraduate and graduate programs has revealed that there was a better communication and rapport was established well between the teacher and students in the language arts/reading courses (Hennings,1992). The teacher made sure to cater individual conversations by making sure to reply with words understandable in their level. Being able to assess individual communicative needs through dialogue journal has even become better and easier compared to classroom and class set-ups.

Furthermore, dialogic conversation was also recorded on the respondents' comments and observations. It was visible that the students have become more observant in their writing capacity as the exchange went on for three months. This was notable on the following comments:

- *I was able to maintain a private conversation because it helps me improve my English words (Student 1).*
- *The teacher was hands-on compared to others (Student 11).*
- *The conversation was very effective in a way that I openly expressed my thoughts (Student 36).*
- *The teacher often uses new words that is very rare to me (Student 16).*
- *I often feel awkward on how to respond in English for I am not used to communicate using this language but I believe I did my best and it helped me practice (Student 6).*
- *The conversation kept going for I was able to share about our tribe. The teacher was amazed and developed more interest in knowing our kind (Student 13).*
- *I think I was able to provide a clear sequence of thought but sometimes I feel like I still have to improve my grammar (Student 4).*
- *I did discover proper usage of punctuations but I was able to realize that for me spelling is much more important in every conversation (Student 18).*

Problem 3: To what extent is Dialogue Journal integrated in the English classes in terms of responsive relationship?

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Participants' Extent of Dialogue Journal Integration (Responsive Relationship)

Range	Interpretation	Frequency	%
4.51-5.00	Extremely Evident	7	15.91
3.51-4.50	Highly Evident	26	59.09
2.51-3.50	Evident	9	20.45
1.51-2.50	Less Evident	2	4.55
1.00-1.50	Not Evident	0	0
Total		44	100.00
Overall Mean Interpretation		3.9217	
SD		0.7184	

Questions	Mean	Interpretation	SD
Did the teacher suspend judgments in giving feedback?	3.48	Evident	1.32
Were you able to write freely on the dialogue journals?	4.02	Highly Evident	0.90
Did you feel comfortable (felt no threats) in grammatically constructing your sentences and thoughts?	4.00	Highly Evident	0.91
Have you observed any improvements in spelling and punctuation errors?	4.05	Highly Evident	0.83
Were there any improvements in terms of the technical aspects and overall layout of your journal entries?	3.89	Highly Evident	0.84
Were you able to completely interact and write to the teacher with all of your writing capability?	3.95	Highly Evident	0.99
Were you encouraged to elaborate your thoughts and be able to organize it throughout the study?	4.07	Highly Evident	0.93

Were you able to become more open given that there's a friendly language in the conversation?	4.05	Highly Evident	0.83
Were you able to comfortably utilize/use words in constructing your entries throughout the study?	3.80	Highly Evident	0.88

Table 3 presents the overall extent of dialogue journal integration with focus on responsive relationship element. Based on the results provided, the element was **highly evident** on the range of the study. Majority of the students have felt that a comfortable communication was built through good relationship and feedback. This is similar with Roe & Stallaman's (1994) study that showed dialogue journal has enable students to value the responses and feedback given to them and the chance to converse with their teachers. Kim (2005) stressed that dialogue journal enabled both the learners and teacher team up in order to build a community where participants are given an opportunity to have a meaningful dialogue with guaranteed connection with each other. Fortunately, majority was also able to give back a positive impression on dialogue journal which is reflected on the respondents' individual observations below:

- *The teacher refrains from giving feedbacks about my construction yet she teaches us to be responsible at all times (Student 2).*
- *The freedom on writing was there and I never felt that it was part of a study (Student 13).*
- *To be honest, I felt a bit of threat at first because I am scared to be judged by my grammar but thanks to Ma'am because she welcomes me always (Student 16).*
- *I think I was able to observe improvements in my spelling and punctuation (Student 1).*
- *I somehow felt that there is an improvement in my overall dialogue journal layout (11).*
- *I can interact with my teacher with all my writing capability because she always cheers me up in all means she can (Student 6).*
- *I was encouraged to elaborate my ideas (Student 18).*
- *The openness and the free flow of the interaction paved way so that I can express myself effectively (Student 13).*
- *I was comfortable to use words in constructing my dialogue journal (Student 31).*

5. Conclusion

The present study sought to identify the extent of integrating the elements of dialogue journal in the English classes composing of ALS graduates in a college classroom. Results have revealed that written communication, dialogic conversation and responsive relationship was highly evident during the three-month dialogue journal exchange. Moreover, based on the comments and observations of the respondents, they expressed that dialogue journal's element on: (1) written communication enabled them to share their experiences and ideas on topics they are interested in which diverted their attention during the pandemic, (2) dialogic conversation made them practice their English communication skills as they have felt a real audience in expressing their thoughts, and (3) responsive relationship gave them an opportunity not to fear English as they became more open and comfortable to the teacher.

Consequently, the students' dialogue journal experience became their way of building communication to the teacher as they have felt that despite the hindrances brought by the pandemic, they still were able to practice their writing skills without the worry of being judged. When asked, they would describe their dialogue journal experience as a memorable one for they have felt that they were heard and someone finds the time to listen to them.

6. Recommendations

The researcher recommends the following:

1. Teachers are highly encouraged to enable their students practice fluency in expressing their ideas before accurately correcting its form. Students must learn how to express their ideas without the fear of being judged so it will be mastered; then afterwards, correcting their grammar structures will follow.
2. Teachers are also highly encouraged to build good communication with the students specially if there are unpredicted occurrences that may hinder learning (e.g. pandemic). It is important to check on them and to assess lesson planning as well.
3. Language Teachers may opt to use dialogue journal if they have trouble dealing with students who are unable to communicate in writing effectively. This would add on the strategies they could come up with in dealing with student's writing difficulty.

References

Archibald, A., & Jeffery, G. (2000). Second language acquisition and writing: A multi-disciplinary approach. *Learning and Instruction, 10*, 1-11. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-4752\(99\)00015-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0959-4752(99)00015-8).

- Atilano, E.B., Omanito, R.A., Desipeda, C.J., Domingo, Z.J., & Garbin, S.N. (2016). Factors influencing the dropout rate in alternative learning system – accreditation and equivalency program. *The Online Journal of New Horizons in Education*, 6(4).
- Behroozizad, S., Nambiar, R., & Amir, Z. (2014). Sociocultural theory as an approach to aid efl learners. *The Reading Matrix : an International Online Journal*, 14, 217-226.
- Bolton, S. (2013). The dialogue journal: A tool for building better writers. *English Teaching Forum*, 51(2), 2-11.
- Colardyn, D., & Bjornavold, J. (2004). Validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning: policy and practices in EU member states. *European Journal of Education*, 39, 69-89. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0141-8211.2004.00167>
- Crumley, H. (1998). Dialogue journal as a tool in the introduction of a more student-centered approach in the esl classroom. *Language for specific purposes, Varna Medical University, Varna, Bulgaria*.
- Dabbagh, A. (2017). The effect of dialogue journal writing on efl learners' descriptive writing performance: A quantitative study. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 6, 2200-3592. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.6n.3p.71>
- Garmon, M. A. (1998). Using dialogue journals to promote student learning in a multicultural teacher education course: Rase. *Remedial and Special Education*, 19(1), 32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/074193259801900104>
- Hennings, D.G. (1992). Student's perceptions of dialogue journals used in college methods courses in language arts and reading. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 31(3), 15-31.
- Kim, J. (2005). A community within the classroom: Dialogue journal writing of adult esl learners. *Adult basic education*, 15(1), 21.
- Larrotta, C. (2008). Written conversations with Hispanic adults developing English literacy. *Adult Basic Education and Literacy Journal*, 2(1), 13-23.
- Linnell, K. M. (2010). Using dialogue journals to focus on form. *Journal of Adult Education*, 39 (1), 23-28.
- Mirhosseini, S. (2009). For our learn of English: Dialogue journal writing in efl education. *The Australian journal of physiotherapy*, 24, 40-48.
- Peyton, J.K. (1987). Dialogue journal writing with limited-English-proficient (lep) students: Q & a. *Los Angeles: Center for Language Education and Research*. Eric Document Reproduction Service No. ED 281 366.
- Peyton, J., & Reed, L. (1990). Dialogue journal writing with nonnative English speakers. A handbook for teachers and an instructional packet for teachers and workshop leaders. *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.*
- Peyton, J. K. (2000). Dialogue journals: Interactive writing to develop language and literacy. *ERIC Q&A*. https://cal.org/ncl/digests/dialogue_journals.html
- Phadke, M. (2020). When nothing makes sense, I journal. I'm not the only one. <https://www.vox.com/the-goods/21542132/journaling-bullet-journal-coronavirus-pandemic>
- Prabavathi, R., & Nagasubramani, P. (2018). Effective oral and written communication. *Journal of Applied and Advanced Research*, 3 (29). <https://doi.org/10.21839/jaar.2018.v3iS1.164>
- Rana, L. (2018). The use of dialogue journals in an esl writing class from Vygotskyan perspective. *Journal of NELTA Surkhet*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.3126/jns.v5i0.19481>.
- Ravitz, J., Hixson, N., English, M., & Mergendoller, J. (2012). Using project based learning to teach 21st century skills: *Findings from a statewide initiative Jason Ravitz Buck Institute for Education*.
- Roe, M., & Stallman, A. (1994). A comparative study of dialogue and response journals. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 10(6). ISSN 0742-051X. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X\(94\)90027-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(94)90027-2)
- Seyyed-Abdolhamid, M. (2009). For our learn of english: Dialogue journal writing in efl education. *The Australian journal of physiotherapy*, 24, 40-48.
- Singh, S., Roy, D., Sinha, K., Parveen, S., Sharma, G., & Joshi, G. (2020). Impact of covid-19 and lockdown on mental health of children and adolescents: A narrative review with recommendations. *Psychiatry Research*, 293, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113429>
- Son C., Hegde S., Smith A., Wang X., & Sasangohar F. (2020). Effects of covid-19 on college students' mental health in the United States: Interview survey study, 22(9). <https://doi.org/10.2196/21279>
- Staton, J. (1991). Creating an attitude of dialogue in adult literacy instruction. Writing our lives: Reflection on dialogue journal writing with adults learning English. *New Jersey: Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)*, 14-26. *National Clearing House on Literacy Education (ED333763)*.
- Stauffer, B. (2020). What are the 21st century skills. <https://www.aeseducation.com/blog/what-are-21st-century-skills>.
- Stone, S. (2019). Promoting English fluency through peer feedback and dialogue journals in an esl college classroom. *Theses and projects*, 284. <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/etd/284>

- Suriyanti, S., & Yaacob, A. (2016). Exploring teacher strategies in teaching descriptive writing in Indonesia. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 13(2).
- Tanner, M., & Clement, L. (1997). The effects of dialogue journals in enhancing esl student's writing. *Deseret Language and Linguistic Society Symposium*, 23(1). <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/dlls/vol23/iss1/19>
- Tindowen, D. J. C., Bassig, J.M., & Cagurangan, J. (2017). Twenty-first century skills of alternative learning system learners. *SAGE Journals*, 7(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017726116>
- Uduma, E.O. (2011). Journal keeping in an esl classroom: An innovative approach in language learning. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 2, 59-63.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). Mind in society. The development of higher psychological processes. *Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press*.
- Young, T., & Crow, M. (1992). Using dialogue journals to help students deal with their problems. *The Clearing House*, 65(5), 307-310. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30188718>