Reflective Writing Method with the Assistance of the 'Writing Friends' Podcast to Improve High School Students' Narrative Writing Skills

Sigit Widiyarto[1], Aster Pujaning Ati[2], Windi Megayanti[3]

[1,2]Indraprasta PGRI Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia
[3]Universitas Islam Selangor, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Sections Info	ABSTRACT
Article history: Submitted: August 23, 2025 Final Revised:October 11, 2025 Accepted: October 16, 2025 Published: October 31, 2025 *Keywords:* Reflective Writing; Writing Friends; Podcast; Narrative Writing	**Objective:** This research aims to explore the implementation process of the reflective writing method, with the assistance of the 'Writing Friends' podcast, in high schools. It identifies integration steps in the classroom and determines the effectiveness of this combination in enhancing students' narrative writing skills. **Method:** The study employs classroom action research through two cycles**. Results:** The average score of students' narrative writing skills was 65 out of 100, reflecting a moderate level of competence. Many students struggled, particularly with story coherence and character development, as well as to some extent with grammatical accuracy and punctuation. The steps of the reflective writing method include: first, selecting a meaningful personal experience; second, drafting an initial story that expresses thoughts and feelings related to the experience; third, exchanging the draft with friends or peers who can provide constructive feedback; and finally, sharing the polished story with others or keeping it as a personal reflection. **Novelty:** This research enhances storytelling, self-awareness, confidence, and critical thinking in language teaching. It also contributes new knowledge by demonstrating how this specific integration fosters interconnected writing practices, promoting the comprehensive development of writing skills among high school students.

INTRODUCTION

Reflective writing is an essential educational strategy that encourages students to critically analyze their experiences, thoughts, and learning processes. It fosters a deeper understanding of content, enhances critical thinking skills, and promotes self-awareness, all of which are crucial for academic success and personal development. (Hanghøj et al., 2020). In recent years, innovative methods and technological tools have been integrated into teaching practices to enhance learning experiences (Widiyarto, 2023). Among these, the use of podcasts as educational media has gained considerable traction due to their flexibility, potential for engagement, and ability to support active learning (Saring & Widiyarto, 2023). Podcasts serve not only as content delivery platforms but also as resources that foster listening, speaking, and reflective skills among students (King & Watt, 2025). Digital storytelling, such as podcasts, motivates students to write and enhances their writing skills. It is hoped that this study will provide an alternative approach to teaching narrative writing and contribute to the existing body of literature. (Azmi Zakaria & Abdul Aziz, 2019)

Various studies have demonstrated the positive impact of podcasts on language acquisition and skill development. Wulandari et al. (2021) studies have found that using podcasts in teaching listening has a moderate effect on students' listening skills, emphasizing the role of audio materials in enhancing comprehension. Similarly, Gunawan et al. (2023) highlighted that students can recount podcast material to improve their speaking fluency and apply learned concepts to related tasks, such as image description and writing assignments. These activities promote not only language skills

but also critical thinking and creative expression through paraphrasing and evaluation (Abdalkader, 2022). Furthermore, peer feedback via podcasts, as discussed by Ketonen & Nieminen (2023), can serve as a control mechanism for listening comprehension while providing constructive critique, which enhances learner engagement and self-awareness. Insufficient evaluation and feedback on students' ability to care for patients has left students' written journals as the primary basis for assessment. Reflective writing can also help address the limited clinical competencies of health students in Korea (Kim et al., 2025).

Podcasts also support the development of speaking and oral communication skills. Santagata & Yeh (2016) reported significant improvements in students' speaking fluency and accuracy after creating podcasts, noting decreased pauses and mispronounced words over time. They also observed that producing podcasts helps learners recognize benefits and challenges, fostering a reflective attitude toward their language learning process, which aligns with the reflective writing approach (Mai & Bao, 2020). The pedagogical value of podcasts extends beyond language learning; it supports various contemporary teaching methodologies that emphasize active participation, creativity, and critical thinking (Muffels & Van Weyenberg, 2024).

In addition to individual learning benefits, podcasts facilitate peer interaction and feedback, as outlined by Ketonen & Nieminen (2023). Listening to peer-created podcasts fosters awareness of language use, content relevance, and presentation skills. This peer review process functions as a form of listening control, ensuring accountability and promoting continuous improvement. It echoes the concept that formative assessment, including peer feedback, enhances overall learning outcomes. The ability to give and receive feedback in a supportive environment nurtures learners' reflective capacities, which are vital in the development of narrative writing skills (Sriyono et al., 2022).

Furthermore, effective teaching and learning of literacy and media skills require instructors to continuously improve their expertise and reflect on instructional strategies. Afrilyasanti et al. (2024) emphasized that teachers should engage in ongoing professional development, reflection, and the promotion of lifelong learning to create meaningful literacy activities. Incorporating media like podcasts aligns with this approach by providing students with authentic and engaging learning experiences that develop their media literacy, critical thinking, and writing skills simultaneously. Mediated activities, such as reflective writing combined with podcast listening and creation, embody an integrated pedagogical approach that promotes comprehensive language development (Widiyarto et al., 2021).

Reflective writing, in particular, has been recognized for its ability to develop students' metacognitive skills, self-regulation, and critical analysis abilities. When combined with podcast creation, it offers a multilayered learning experience in which students can reflect on content, language use, and their own learning processes, making the educational experience more meaningful and personalized. This integration emphasizes that students benefit from interconnected writing practices—composing, revising, and reflecting—which promote the comprehensive development of writing skills (Setyowati et al., 2024).

Given these substantial benefits, it is proposed that applying the reflective writing method supported by the 'writing friends' podcast can significantly improve high school students' narrative writing skills. This approach encourages learners to revisit their experiences and learning processes reflected through podcast activities, subsequently

translating their reflections into well-structured narratives. The use of podcasts as a medium provides students with authentic language exposure, diverse expressive opportunities, and a platform for peer interaction and feedback, which collectively contribute to enhancing their narrative writing abilities (Bakhtiar et al., 2024).

The writing ability of high school students in one of the districts in Bogor Regency is still relatively underdeveloped. This observation was based on an initial assessment involving 38 twelfth-grade students, where only 13 students demonstrated good storytelling skills. The remaining students showed limited confidence, lack of clarity, or difficulty in expressing ideas coherently. This gap in oral writing skills can hinder students' academic performance and their future opportunities in both educational and professional contexts (Widiyarto et al., 2023).

Recognizing these challenges, the researcher was motivated to conduct a more detailed investigation into this issue. The focus is to analyze the underlying factors affecting students' speaking skills and to identify the specific difficulties they face in narrating stories (Khoimatun & Wilsa, 2021). To achieve a comprehensive understanding, the researcher plans to extend the study to two different senior high schools located within Bogor District. These schools represent varying socioeconomic backgrounds, which could influence students' language competencies.

This research aims not only to identify the current proficiency levels but also to provide insights that can guide teachers and educators in designing more effective teaching methods. In line with Grenner et al. (2020) students' writing skills improved with an approach of listening to a story. In the following three months, the quality of students' texts increased significantly, with various types of writing, including narrative writing.

Integrating podcasts and reflective writing enhances learning by fostering peer interaction, critical thinking, and metacognitive skills. This multimedia approach significantly improves narrative writing through reflection and authentic language exposure. Consequently, addressing underdeveloped writing skills requires innovative methods like podcasts and reflective practices, aligning with the need to improve teaching strategies and foster comprehensive writing development, especially in narrative writing skills.

This study aims to explore the implementation process of the reflective writing method with the assistance of the 'Writing Friends' podcast in high school settings. The focus is on identifying the specific steps involved in integrating these approaches into the classroom and understanding how these steps influence students' narrative writing skills. The research also seeks to determine whether the combination of reflective writing and podcasting as instructional tools effectively promotes the development of students' narrative writing competence

RESEARCH METHOD

The classroom action research (CAR) methodology followed Arikunto's (2019) framework, which employs a cyclical approach characterized by iterative phases of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. In the planning stage, instructional materials were prepared with a focus on narrative writing. During the implementation phase, students engaged in reflective writing activities guided by a podcast, concentrating on logical narratives. Observation involved monitoring the teacher's implementation and student engagement. Finally, the reflection phase included

discussing outcomes with the research team to identify areas for improvement and inform adjustments for subsequent cycles.
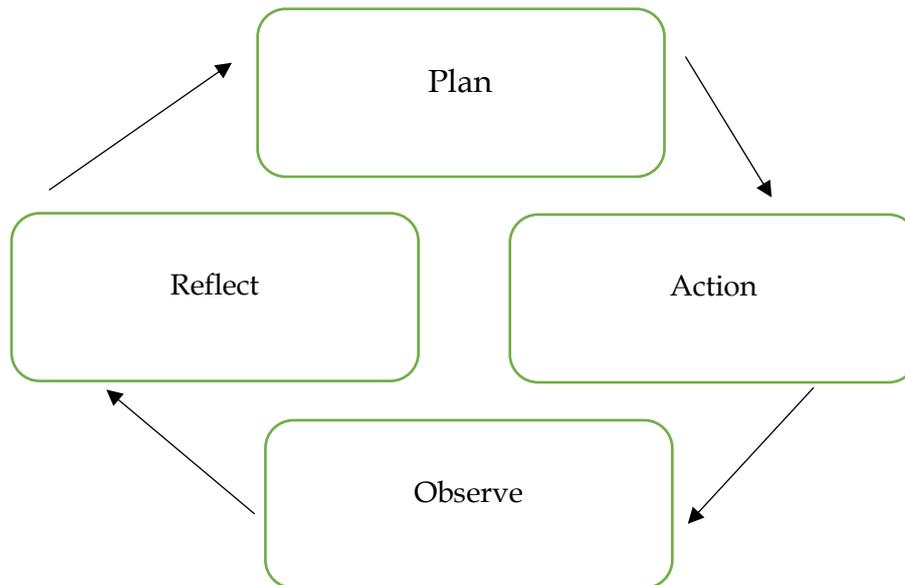

Figure 1. Procedure of Action research

The research was designed to be conducted over two cycles, each consisting of a single action. The total time allocated for each cycle was 70 minutes, divided into two sessions of 35 minutes each. During the planning stage, the researcher prepared instructional materials focusing on narrative writing with the theme "Travel to Palembang." The lesson was designed to utilize the Reflective Writing Method, supported by the 'Writing Friends' podcast.", accessible via the link *https://open.spotify.com/episode/2RuB9y7c3n7gFCW1k2WFRe*. To facilitate observation, a colleague served as an observer, helping to monitor teaching activities, record strengths and weaknesses of the teacher's delivery, and observe student activities during the learning process. Supporting tools such as field notes and documentation aids were also prepared.

Classroom Action Research (CAR) involved Plan-Action-Observe-Reflect cycles. In Cycle 1, researchers define a specific problem and measurable goals, design interventions, prepare instruments, obtain consent, and schedule activities. They implement interventions, such as reflective writing and peer feedback, monitor fidelity, and collect both quantitative and qualitative data such as samples, observations, rubrics, surveys, and journals. Reflection analyzes effectiveness, identifies challenges, engages stakeholders, and formulates concrete revisions.

Cycle 2 revises goals, refines interventions and instruments, adds support or training, and repeats implementation with improved fidelity. Observations and analyses evaluate changes, informing further reflection and sustained instructional improvement, contributing to evidence-based curriculum development and teacher professional growth.

Table 1. Rubric of Narrative Writing'Skill with Reflective Writing Method with the Assistance of Writing Friends Podcast

Criteria	Indicator	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Need Improvement (1)
Reflective Insight and Logical Spelling, Punctuation (40%)	Depth of reflection on personal experienceconnect to podcast themes	Demonstrates deep, thoughtful reflection; strong connection between personal experience and podcast content; clear personal insights.	Shows good reflectionclear connection between experience and podcast; some personal insights present	Shows some reflection,connection to podcast is present but may be superficial; limited personal insights.	Shows some reflection; connection to podcast is present but may be superficial; limited personal insights.
Character Development (30%)	Believable characters; well-defined motivations,demonstrates understanding of characters' emotions	Characters are compelling and believable; motivations are clear and well-developed; demonstrates a nuanced understanding of characters' emotions	Characters are mostly believable; motivations are generally clear; demonstrates a good understanding of characters' emotions.	Characters are somewhat underdeveloped; motivations are vague; demonstrates a basic understanding of characters' emotions.	Characters are underdeveloped and/or unbelievable; motivations are unclear; demonstrates a limited understanding of characters' emotions.
Story Coherence (30%)	Logical sequence of events; clear narrative structure; effective transition	Events are logically sequenced and engaging; narrative structure is clear and effective; transitions are seamless	Mostly logical sequence; narrative structure is generally clear; transitions are smooth.	Some logical issues; narrative structure is somewhat unclear; transitions are awkward.	Illogical, or confusing sequence; narrative structure is unclear; transitions are abrupt or missing.

At the implementation stage, the learning process began with a warm-up activity, during which the teacher posed questions to link prior knowledge with the current theme. The core activity involved students engaging in reflective writing, guided by the podcast and following the phases of the reflective writing method. During this phase, students were encouraged to produce narratives with clear and logical temporal sequences, including the proper use of language, appropriate diction, and correct sentence structures. Students were then given a test to assess their narrative writing skills and overall understanding of the lesson (Pham et al., 2020).

The observation phase involved monitoring two aspects: 1) the implementation of the learning process conducted by the teacher and 2) the activities of the students during each phase. The focus was on assessing adherence to the planned instructions, student engagement, and the development of their narrative skills. The reflection phase included discussing the observed outcomes with the research team, identifying areas of success and aspects requiring improvement. The findings from the first cycle informed adjustments for the subsequent cycle, with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of the instructional approach.

The research involved 46 students from two senior high schools in Bogor Regency 20 students from SMA X and 26 students from SMA Y. Data collection instruments included tests from both cycles, with assessment indicators covering theme appropriateness, story

coherence, character development, setting, language use (diction and sentence structure), spelling, punctuation, and the ability to produce a logical, chronological narrative message. Additional instruments included interviews and observational records. The cycle continued until the results met the predetermined success criteria, ensuring that the research objectives were achieved effectively and efficiently.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The reflective writing method, enhanced by the 'Writing Friends' podcast for high schoolers, unfolds in distinct stages. It begins with selecting a meaningful experience for reflection, followed by drafting an initial story that captures related thoughts and feelings. The draft is then shared for peer feedback, allowing students to consider suggestions for improvement. Next, students revise the narrative to enhance coherence and storytelling. A reflection on the learning process is written, followed by final editing for clarity. The polished story is either shared or kept as a personal reflection, completing the process.

The combination of reflective writing and podcasting effectively cultivates narrative competence in high school students. Reflective writing deepens content understanding and critical thinking by encouraging the analysis of experiences. Podcasts offer authentic language exposure and promote peer interaction, further enhancing narrative abilities. By revisiting experiences through podcast activities, students translate reflections into structured narratives. This approach also improves storytelling, self-awareness, confidence, and critical thinking skills, making it a potent method for developing well-rounded narrative writing proficiency.

The results from the initial test were analyzed to establish a baseline of the students' writing proficiency. The average score of the students' narrative writing skills was 65 out of 100, reflecting a moderate level of competence. Many students struggled particularly with story coherence, character development, and to some extent, grammatical accuracy and punctuation. The analysis revealed that while most students could produce a story with a basic structure, many found it challenging to maintain a logical sequence of events or create compelling characters and settings that enhanced their narratives.

The research team planned targeted interventions aimed at improving the students' narrative writing skills. The use of podcasts was introduced as a supplementary learning tool, designed to enhance students' understanding of story coherence, character development, and language use. Podcasts provided an auditory learning experience, allowing students to listen to well-structured stories and discussions on writing techniques, which they could then incorporate into their own writing.

The implementation phase involved integrating podcast-based activities into the classroom, encouraging students to listen to the samples of good storytelling and subsequently practice their writing with increased focus on the criteria identified in the initial assessment. The goal was to improve students' ability to produce organized, logical, and engaging stories while paying attention to language accuracy and stylistic elements.

The initial testing phase provided valuable insights into the students' current narrative writing skills, highlighting specific areas for enhancement. With an average score of 65, it was clear that targeted approaches, such as incorporating podcasts, had the

potential to significantly improve students' storytelling capabilities. This initial assessment laid the groundwork for subsequent actions aimed at fostering more effective and expressive writing skills among the students.

The reflective writing method, with the assistance of writing friends, involves several important steps to improve narrative writing skills. First, one selects a meaningful personal experience or topic to serve as the material for reflection and narration. Next, the writer drafts an initial story, expressing thoughts and feelings related to the experience. Then, the draft is exchanged with friends or peers who can provide constructive feedback. After receiving input, the writer considers suggestions and comments from friends to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Following that, the writer revises the narrative based on the feedback, aiming to improve coherence, emotional depth, and storytelling techniques. It is also advisable for the writer to reflect on what has been learned during this process, including personal growth and skill development. Once the revisions are complete, final editing is carried out to ensure the story is clear, free of grammatical errors, and well-styled. Finally, the polished story can be shared with others or kept as a personal reflection. Through this method, social participation and collaborative learning significantly enhance narrative writing skills.

The initial phase of the classroom action research (CAR) began with a collaborative effort between the researcher and the Indonesian language and literature teacher, involving 46 students from the class.

Figure 2. Pretest in the Classroom

Before implementing the reflective writing method assisted by podcasts, a pretest was conducted to assess students' initial writing skills. During this pretest, students were asked to write a narrative story based on a given prompt. The results indicated that their performance was below expectations, revealing a need for improvement. Many students struggled with story coherence, character development, and language accuracy, including spelling and punctuation. Their ability to produce a logical and well-organized narrative was also limited. These findings highlighted the importance of incorporating new strategies, such as podcasts, to enhance students' understanding and overall writing skills in subsequent lessons.

Table 2. Cycle 1

	Story coherence	Character development	Setting, language use	Spelling, punctuation,	The ability to produce a logical	Average
	54	61	69	54	68	61.2
Cycle 1	57	63	70	63	68	64.2

Comparing the pretest results with those from cycle 1, there was a noticeable improvement in students' writing skills. The average score increased from 61.2 to 64.2. Specifically, scores for story coherence and spelling/punctuation improved slightly, indicating better organization and language accuracy. Additionally, character development and the ability to produce a logical story also showed improvement, demonstrating that students were beginning to apply enhanced techniques. Overall, cycle 1 reflected positive progress in their narrative writing abilities.

Figure 3. Reflecting Writing in the Computer Lab

The activities carried out during cycle 1 aimed to improve students' narrative writing skills, with the primary goal of enhancing their ability to produce well-structured and coherent stories. To evaluate the effectiveness of the cycle, the researcher, with the assistance of the teacher, conducted interviews and observations. These activities complemented the reflection results, which indicated that some students still lacked motivation and confidence in writing narratives, despite having understood the story flow and content through the podcast. The students' hesitation to write or express their ideas confidently pointed to emotional and psychological barriers that needed to be addressed.

In response to these observations, the researcher and teacher provided additional guidance and support to boost students' motivation. They emphasized the importance of self-confidence and encouraged students to practice more frequently. The materials were reviewed and reinforced to ensure students absorbed the essential techniques of narrative writing. Additionally, class activities were expanded with extra writing exercises conducted in the computer laboratory, providing students with a conducive environment to practice their writing skills online and receive immediate feedback.

Through these interventions, students gradually became more motivated and confident in their writing abilities. The activities also aimed to enhance their familiarity with story structure, character development, and language use. The combination of continuous guidance, repeated practice, and the use of technology helped address the psychological barriers faced by students, creating a more supportive learning environment. Reflections, interviews, and observations indicated that students showed progress; their motivation increased, and they became more willing to participate actively in writing activities.

Following these efforts, the results of cycle 2 were promising. The data revealed a further increase in students' writing skills, with higher average scores in the assessment of narrative components. The rise in motivation and confidence was a clear indication that the measures taken had a positive impact. Overall, Cycle 1 played a crucial role in identifying issues and implementing targeted strategies to facilitate better learning outcomes in students' narrative writing skills.

Table 3. Cycle 1 and 2

	Story coherence	Character development	Setting, language use	Spelling, punctuation,	The ability to produce a logical	Average
	54	61	69	54	68	61.2
Cycle 1	57	63	70	63	68	64.2
Cycle 2	67	75	78	75	77	74.4

The activities carried out during cycle 1 aimed to improve students' narrative writing skills, with the primary goal of enhancing their ability to produce well-structured and coherent stories. To evaluate the effectiveness of the cycle, the researcher, with the assistance of the teacher, conducted interviews and observations. These activities were essential in complementing the reflection results, which indicated that some students still lacked motivation and confidence in writing narratives, despite understanding the story flow and content through the podcast. The students' hesitation to write or express their ideas confidently pointed to emotional and psychological barriers that needed to be addressed.

Through targeted interventions, students gradually became more motivated and confident in their writing abilities. The activities were designed to build their familiarity with story structure, character development, and language use. The combination of continuous guidance, repeated practice, and the use of technology helped to address the psychological barriers faced by students, creating a more supportive learning environment (Pierson, 2014). The reflection, interviews, and observations indicated that students showed some progress; their motivation increased, and they became more willing to participate actively in writing activities.

Following these efforts, the results of Cycle 2 were promising. The data showed a further increase in students' writing skills, with higher average scores in the assessment of narrative components. The increase in motivation and confidence was a clear indicator that the measures taken had a positive impact. Overall, Cycle 1 played a crucial role in identifying issues and implementing targeted strategies to facilitate better learning outcomes in students' narrative writing skills.
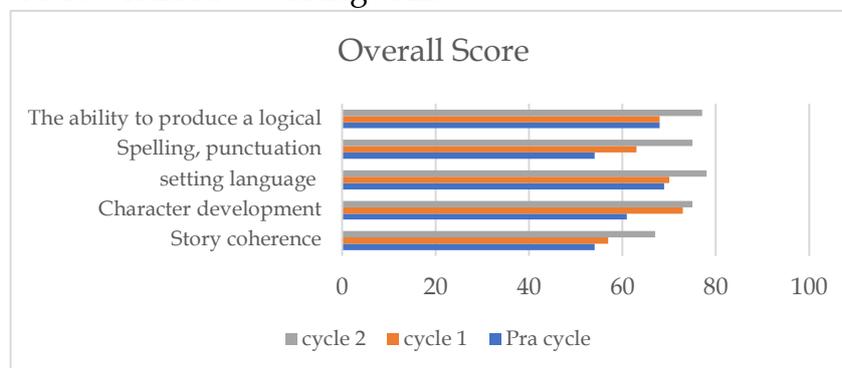

Figure 4. Reflecting Overall Score

Explanation Figure. 3 showed the overall scores for different aspects of writing across three cycles: Pra cycle, cycle 1, and cycle 2. The aspects include story coherence, character development, setting language, spelling/punctuation, and the ability to produce a logical text. The highest score appears to be in "The ability to produce a logical" within Cycle 2, reaching around 75-80. This indicates significant improvement in students' ability to structure their writing logically by the end of cycle 2. The lowest score

seems to be in the "Story coherence" area during the "Pra cycle," falling around 50. This indicates that story coherence was initially the weakest area. In general, the scores increase from "Pra cycle" to cycle 1 and again in cycle 2, indicating improvement due to the interventions or teaching methods used across these cycles. Areas like character development and setting language also saw noticeable growth, albeit not as high as logical production skills.

Discussion

The study's initial results, with an average score of 65, highlight students' struggles with coherence and character development, which aligns with existing research on challenges in narrative writing. However, targeted interventions, such as podcast integration, resulted in improved scores in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, particularly regarding logical structure. This supports the effectiveness of podcast-based learning (Gee, 2019). The increase in student motivation and confidence mirrors findings on podcast engagement and self-reflection, suggesting the intervention successfully addressed psychological barriers and enhanced writing skills (Yaacob et al., 2021).

The progress observed in story coherence, character development, and language use corroborates the idea that reflective writing methods, combined with multimedia, substantially benefit narrative skills (Yeh et al., 2021). The increased ability to produce logical texts further validates the use of structured techniques and podcast discussions (Suseno, 2024). The study's cyclical approach, with interventions based on initial assessments and student feedback, reflects best practices in instructional design (Afrilyasanti et al., 2024).

The findings indicate how educators can support and enhance writing skills by leveraging multimedia and reflective strategies. Collaborative learning through peer feedback helps boost overall competence and confidence in developing narrative writing abilities, which can have a lasting impact on students' communication skills and academic outcomes.

Additionally, the research findings strongly align with existing literature, demonstrating the effectiveness of integrating reflective writing and podcasts in enhancing narrative skills Matulewicz et al. (2020) suggest, podcast-based tasks created a reflective learning environment, boosting self-awareness and engagement. Similarly, the study's process, starting with choosing a meaningful experience and culminating in a polished reflection, mirrors Ramadhanti (2024) emphasis on reflective journaling for metacognitive awareness and autonomous learning.

The improvement in logical structuring, evident in Figure 3's increased scores, confirms Suseno (2024) assertion that podcasts bolster language production and coherent narratives. The rise in story coherence and overall writing skills through cycles reflects the benefits of podcast listening, as highlighted by Wulandari et al. (2021), improving vocabulary and understanding of story structures.

The impact on student motivation and collaborative learning corroborates Ketonen & Nieminen (2023) and Yaacob et al. (2021) findings on peer feedback enhancing listening and writing skills. Furthermore, the combination of methods aligns with Afrilyasanti et al. (2024) and Chen & Ben-Atar (2025) perspectives, promoting creative expression, active participation, and the development of crucial literacy skills essential for lifelong learning and academic success, especially the increase of the highest score related to "The ability to produce a logical writing". The result above strongly interpretes that the implemented

interventions were successful in fostering the development of students' writing skills. The observed improvements in logical structure, story coherence, and other writing aspects highlight the effectiveness of the teaching methods employed during the study. These results provide valuable insights into how educators can effectively support and enhance students' writing abilities, ultimately leading to improved communication skills and academic outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: Combining reflective writing with auditory learning tools like podcasts effectively enhances narrative skills by fostering comprehension, motivation, and confidence. The study has important pedagogical implications, emphasizing the value of multimodal instructional strategies in developing students' storytelling and language competence, as well as their psychological readiness to write. **Implication:** Emphasizing the integration of multimedia tools like podcasts into instructional practices can significantly enhance students' narrative writing skills, motivation, and confidence. Teachers should adopt multimodal, reflective, and peer-feedback strategies to foster collaborative learning and critical thinking. Schools need to invest in digital infrastructure and professional development to implement these innovative approaches effectively. Such methods promote inclusive, engaging, and student-centered learning environments, preparing students with essential 21st-century skills, including creativity, digital literacy, and collaboration. **Limitation:** The relatively short scope of the intervention, which may not fully capture long-term retention or sustained improvement. The reliance primarily on quantitative scores does not account for qualitative aspects such as creativity and emotional expression, which are also crucial in narrative writing and was limited to one class, restricting the generalizability of the results to other contexts or student populations. **Future Research:** The relatively short duration of the intervention may not fully capture long-term retention or sustained improvement. Additionally, the reliance primarily on quantitative scores does not account for qualitative aspects such as creativity and emotional expression, which are also crucial in narrative writing. Furthermore, the study was limited to one class, restricting the generalizability of the results to other contexts or student populations.

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*Sigit Widiyarto (Corresponding Author)
Postgraduate, Bahasa Indonesia education
University of Indraprasta PGRI, Jakarta
Jl. Raya Gedong Jakarta Timur, 13760, Indonesia
Email: sigit.widiyanto372@gmail.com

Aster Pujaning Ati
Economic education
University of Indraprasta PGRI, Jakarta
Jl. Raya Gedong Jakarta Timur, 13760, Indonesia
Email: asterpujaningati@gmail.com

Windy Megayanti
Departement of Doctoral Program in Education
Universitas Islam Selangor
Bandar Seri Putra, 43000 Kajang, Selangor, Malaysia
Email: 21pe01001@postgrad.uis.edu.my