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ENHANCING STUDENTS' NARRATIVE WRITING SKILLS THROUGH DICTOGLOSS: EVIDENCE FROM A VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL CONTEXT

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Abstract

Students' English narrative-writing skills remain weak, yet writing competence is essential in today's global context. This study investigated the effectiveness of the Dictogloss technique for improving students' narrative writing through a mixedmethod classroom action research design involving eleventh-grade students at SMK N 1 Tanjung Selor. Data were gathered from observations, students' worksheets, and writing tests, and analyzed using direct observation notes, selfassessment, and an analytical writing rubric. Findings revealed consistent gains across the five key aspects of writing—content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. From the pre-test to Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, students' average scores steadily increased, and by the second cycle 34 students (91.2 %) surpassed the passing mark of 75, demonstrating a substantial improvement in overall writing performance. These results confirm the strong positive impact of the Dictogloss method on students' narrative-writing ability. Pedagogically, teachers are encouraged to integrate Dictogloss as a regular classroom practice by providing structured note-taking activities, guiding pair or group reconstruction of texts, and offering focused feedback on content development, text structure, and precise vocabulary use. Such targeted strategies help students strengthen listening, collaborative, and writing skills simultaneously, ensuring more meaningful engagement and measurable progress in narrative writing. Overall, the research underscores Dictogloss as an integrative method that enhances not only writing accuracy but also collaboration and higher-order thinking skills highly relevant for vocational students preparing for the demands of a global workforce. The implication of the study is that students are encouraged to actively engage in the Dictogloss activities, as these activities help improve writing by developing listening, note-taking, and collaborative skills. It is important to focus on the text's content, structure, and vocabulary when working in pairs, as this will enhance their writing skills.

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INTRODUCTION

English has become a global language and is widely spoken across numerous countries. Thus, mastering all aspects of English is essential for students. Previous research indicates that English is a "lingua franca" in today's world (Conrad & Mauranen, 2003). Moreover, the English language dominates education, science, technology, and other fields beyond its role in trade and commerce. In the academic nuance, English is a primary medium of instruction, a language for research, and a crucial tool for effectively transmitting knowledge (Mahboob, 2014). The four core language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are interconnected and complement each other.

Furthermore, English skills are crucial and play a significant role in communication. It involves "creative thinking and the ability to connect new information with prior knowledge, making the new information meaningful" (Demir, 2013). Additionally, in mastering english, one of which is the ability to master writing aspects. Writing is fundamental to language proficiency, allowing individuals to express personal thoughts and mental imagery. Moreover, writing activities serve as a source of motivation for both first-language (L1) and secondlanguage (L2) learners (Harmer, 2004).

Writing plays a crucial role in developing other language skills and serves as a medium for expressing thoughts, emotions, and information. Rather than being viewed as a purely mechanical process, writing should be recognized as a skill encompassing comprehension, critical thinking, development, and production (Tok & Kandemir, 2015). Emphasized that writing shapes students' language abilities (Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015). In writing, individuals must construct their ideas clearly so that readers can easily understand the intended message. Due to its complexity, writing demands careful organization and logical structuring of ideas, which poses significant difficulties for many students (Braine, 1998). Similarly, research in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province revealed that even postgraduate students faced challenges in subject-verb agreement, verb tense, word choice, and spelling (Jamil et al., 2016). A study in Lahore focusing on college students found that second-language learners often struggle to present information well-structured (Farooq et al., 2012). Consequently, to develop strong writing skills, students should be able to produce well-organized texts, including narrative writing, while minimizing errors in sentences and paragraphs.

Narrative writing is a story telling technique that organizes events in a structured and coherent framework, usually adhering to a beginning, middle, and finish sequence (Boyd et al., 2020). Furthermore, it seeks to captivate readers by developing characters, situations, and a coherent plot, frequently integrating literary characteristics such as conflict, resolution, and dialogue. Narrative writings may be fictitious, encompassing short tales and novels, or nonfictional, comprising personal anecdotes and historical reports (White, 2010). The importance of narrative text writing is in its capacity to enhance creativity, critical thinking, and communication abilities (Habibi et al., 2018). Consequently, by crafting a structured narrative, authors improve their capacity to articulate ideas coherently and convincingly.

Although narrative texts are designed to grab readers, and based on the preliminary study results, many students did not find writing engaging or enjoyable. For example, while they are familiar with various stories related to narrative texts, they struggle to create their own. The preliminary study revealed that many students struggle to generate and develop ideas. Some students may have ideas but struggle to express them in their own words.

This challenge highlights the need for studies meant to raise students' writing standards. Several studies emphasize the complexity of writing. Additionally, writing follows complex rules that cannot be overlooked. Students should consider various aspects, including spelling, punctuation, word choice, grammar, the purpose of their writing, and the clarity of their ideas (Petelin, 2016). However, research indicates that many students struggle to generate narrative texts based on their ideas. In regular verbs, students committed 233 misinformation errors, followed by 150 misinformation errors in other cases. Other common errors include addition (38 errors), omission (29 errors), and misordering (16 errors). Similarly, in another category, misordering (36 errors), omission (38 errors), addition (56 errors), and misinformation (156 errors) were observed. Furthermore, students at this level of achievement require substantial writing coaching from the instructor. Writing is vital for expressing thoughts and communicating with others. There are many situations where written language is necessary. Writing allows individuals to communicate with people across different times and locations. Therefore, dictogloss is a vital learning technique because it actively engages students in language learning, particularly in developing their writing skills.

Investigating dictogloss in English learning is essential because it promotes an interactive and engaging approach to language acquisition (Al-Alwan et al., 2013). In addition, unlike traditional dictation exercises, dictogloss encourages learners to actively process spoken language, take notes, and reconstruct texts collaboratively. Furthermore, dictogloss is an instructional technique designed to assist English Language Learners (E.L.L.) in comprehending grammatical structures within a textual context. It is employed to identify their language acquisition deficiencies and requirements, enabling more precise instruction in these areas (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Dictogloss is valuable because it integrates multiple language skills in a single activity. Learners practice listening by decoding spoken language, writing through text reconstruction, and grammar by analyzing sentence structures. Investigating dictogloss can help educators understand its effectiveness in different learning contexts, such as classrooms with diverse proficiency levels or online language instruction.

This method is advantageous for English Language Learners (ELLs) as it offers a structured and adaptable framework for comprehending grammar in a relevant context. Dictogloss allows learners to recognize and assess their linguistic errors and areas needing improvement, enabling educators to customize their instruction to better address learners' specific requirements (Dewi, 2017). This technique identifies grammatical challenges and language development gaps, functioning as a diagnostic tool that guides the implementation of targeted and effective teaching strategies (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Dictogloss helps address these issues by encouraging them to focus on meaning while paying attention to grammatical correctness (Modarresi, 2021). Thus, it is a valuable technique for improving students' ability to produce well-structured and meaningful written texts. The dictogloss technique, where students listen to a text, take notes, and collaboratively reconstruct the passage, has gained attention as an interactive approach that integrates listening, speaking, and writing skills. Previous studies have shown that dictogloss can enhance vocabulary development, grammatical accuracy, and cooperative learning. However, most research has focused on general high school or university students, leaving a gap in understanding how this method works for vocational learners who face distinct linguistic and motivational challenges. Addressing this gap adds novelty to the present study.

Nevertheless, many students, particularly those in vocational high school, mainly in SMKN 1 Tanjung Selor, struggle with structuring their ideas, using correct grammar, and selecting appropriate vocabulary. These challenges often lead to poorly organized and less engaging narratives. To address these difficulties, teachers need a practical instructional approach that enhances students' writing skills and encourages active learning and collaboration in the classroom, and one of many approaches is the dictogloss technique. The dictogloss technique in students' writing is effective in improving the ability to write coherent texts (Kooshafar et al., 2012).

Hence, considering the merits of raising learners' awareness of narrative writing strategies and the effectiveness of dictogloss, the question remains whether dictogloss can improve student's writing is beneficial, specifically in the present research. At the same time, given the writing difficulties experienced by students at SMKN 1 Tanjung Selor, incorporating dictogloss into the teaching of narrative writing is a practical and innovative solution to improve their writing proficiency. Many students struggle to structure their narratives coherently, leading to disorganized and less captivating writing. Dictogloss, prioritizing active listening, note-taking, and text reconstruction, offers learners systematic assistance in crafting logical and well-structured narratives. Consequently, researching in this context will ascertain the efficacy of dictogloss in enhancing students' writing abilities by systematically and interactively addressing specific deficiencies. Examining its implementation at SMK N 1 Tanjung Selor will yield significant insights into how much this technique augments student interest and engagement, facilitating more effective writing instruction in vocational high school environments. From the explanation above, the research aimed to improve the Grade XI Students' Narrative Writing Skills through Dictogloss of SMKN 1 Tanjung Selor

RESEARCH METHOD

The research implemented was action research. In this research project, the investigator actively engaged in the study to address problems in the teaching and learning process of writing and to improve writing skills. The research was conducted at SMK N 1 Tanjung Selor. The primary objective of action research is to address problematic situations and implement enhancements in practice.

Research Design

This research consists of 2 cycles, with an evaluation after each cycle. The research was based on Kemmis and McTaggart's model. The research steps were planning, action, observation, and reflection. It can be seen in the following picture (Figure 1).

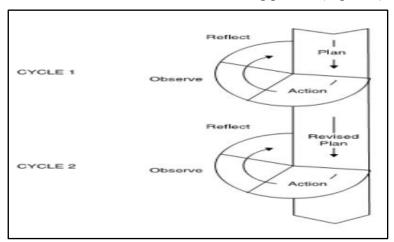


Figure 1. Spiral Model Steps in Classroom Action Research

Research Participants

The data were collected from SMK N 1 Tanjung Selor grade XI students during the 2024/2025 academic year. The researcher focused exclusively on the XI MPLB class, comprising 34 students who served as research participants, selected based on the English teacher's recommendations.

Instruments

The researcher employed various equipment to acquire the data. The materials included observation sheets, a test, questionnaires, an interview guide, and a camera. Observation sheets may assist the researcher in documenting all actions as they progress to the subsequent cycle. The alternative instrument was the assessments. There exists a pre-test and a post-test. The pretest and post-test display the students' scores. It encompasses the mean and standard deviation. The researcher then compared the scores from pre-tests and post-tests to conclude. In addition, the subsequent instrument was the interview protocol. The English teacher and the students would be interviewed before and after the meeting. The ultimate device is the camera. It would be employed to record findings during the research.

Data Analysis

This study included the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data consisted of opinions from the research participants. The quantitative data consisted of scores obtained from the pretest and posttest. The quantitative data from the pretest and post-test were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistics included the mean, standard deviation, and percentage of improvement to measure the effectiveness of

Dictogloss in enhancing students' narrative writing skills. Qualitative data is evaluated in several stages, namely: assembling the data, coding the data, comparing the data, interpreting the meaning, and reporting the outcomes.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION **Research Findings**

The research began with collecting information related to the teaching and learning of writing in XI MPLB class at SMKN 1 Tanjung Selor. To obtain this information, the researcher interviewed the English teacher and students, observed the teaching and learning process, and administered a pre-test. Through the interview with the teacher, the researcher identified several issues. Firstly, the teacher did not implement the writing process in her teaching. The researcher explained that time constraints made it difficult for her to guide students through stages such as planning, drafting, and revising, as this would limit time for covering other materials. Instead, the researcher often has students write immediately after completing exercises. Secondly, the teacher emphasized grammar more than content and text organization. The researcher focused on sentence-level activities, such as arranging jumbled words, as the researcher believed students needed a solid grasp of grammar for their final exam. Lastly, students lacked opportunities to explore their creativity. When given writing homework, some students resorted to copying content from the internet or textbooks.

The problems were also identified through interviews with the students. They expressed difficulty in writing, particularly in expressing their ideas clearly. The students noted that the writing exercises were primarily focused on grammar, with little opportunity to practice writing longer pieces or organizing their ideas effectively. They also mentioned that they struggled to start writing and often lacked guidance on developing their thoughts into cohesive texts.

Cycle I consisted of ten meetings, each focusing on improving students' writing skills through the dictogloss method and addressing the problems identified in the teaching and learning process. The cycle included planning, action and observation, and reflection. According to the implementation and reflection of both cycles, the study revealed several key findings regarding using the Dictogloss method to improve students' writing skills. Here is the table summarizing the general findings based on the implementation of the Dictogloss method.

> Table 1 Change Observation after Implementation

	Change Coper, auton arter imprementation					
No	Aspect	Changes Observed				
1.	Vocabulary Usage	Students improved their vocabulary, learning new words from peers and applying them effectively in texts.				
2.	Understanding Text Structure	Understanding Text Better grasp of text elements such as plot, characters, setting, and				
3.	Student Engagement Increased enthusiasm and active participation dur collaborative activities like reconstructing texts.					
4.	Writing Skills Development	Students demonstrated progress in organizing ideas, writing coherent sentences, and producing structured texts.				
5.	Overcoming Writing Challenges	Structured activities helped students address difficulties in generating and organizing ideas.				
6.	Student Feedback	Positive feedback indicated that Dictogloss was an engaging and helpful method for improving writing skills				

The results of the implementation could be observed not only through the behavioral changes outlined in the table but also from the improvement in the students' scores. These scores were assessed based on five key aspects of writing such as Content, Organization, Vocabulary,

Grammar and Mechanics. The following table presents the mean scores of the students' writing performance across the five aspects.

Table 2
The Students' Writing Performance across the Five Aspects

	Mean Score			
Aspects of Writing	Pre- Test	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Improvement
Content: Topic Development	60	70	80	20
Organization: Paragraph Structure	55	65	75	20
Vocabulary: Word Choice/Diction	58	68	78	20
Grammar: Sentence Structure/Construction	50	63	73	23
Mechanics: Spelling, Punctuation, and Capitalization	57	67	77	20

Table 2 illustrates the students' writing performance across five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. In content, specifically topic development, the students demonstrated a significant improvement, with their mean score rising from 60 in the pretest to 70 in Cycle 1 and 80 in Cycle 2, resulting in a total improvement of 20 points. Similarly, the organization aspect, which focuses on paragraph structure, showed consistent growth, with scores increasing from 55 in the pre-test to 65 in Cycle 1 and 75 in Cycle 2, reflecting a 20-point improvement. For vocabulary, particularly in word choice and diction, the student's scores improved from 58 in the pre-test to 68 in Cycle 1 and 78 in Cycle 2, marking another 20-point improvement. Regarding grammar, which evaluates sentence structure and construction, the students made the most notable progress, with scores increasing by 23 points, from 50 in the pre-test to 63 in Cycle 1 and 73 in Cycle 2. Lastly, the mechanics aspect, which includes spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, also improved significantly, with scores increasing from 57 in the pre-test to 67 in Cycle 1 and 77 in Cycle 2, achieving a 20-point improvement.

Table 3 General Findings of the Students' Final Score

Assessment	Mean Score	Number of Students Scoring ≥75	Percentage of Students Scoring ≥75
Pre-Test	56	5	14.7%
Cycle 1 Test	66	15	44.1%
Cycle 2 Test	76	31	91.2%

Based on the table of students' final scores, there was a significant improvement in the number of students achieving a score of 75 or higher across the assessments. In the pre-test, only 5 students (14.7%) scored 75 or above. However, after the first cycle, the percentage increased to 44.1%, with 15 students achieving the desired score. By the second cycle, the improvement was substantial, with 31 students (91.2%) reaching or surpassing 75. The percentage of students who passed the passing grade reached 85%. This data highlights the positive impact of the Dictogloss method, which effectively enhanced the students' writing skills throughout the cycles. A short interview after the lesson revealed that students felt more confident in organizing ideas and choosing vocabulary after reconstructing the text together.

Discussion

In this study, the researcher aimed to address the challenges students faced in their writing skills, particularly in organizing ideas, using vocabulary effectively, and understanding writing structures. Moreover, the researcher tried to correlate the findings with the theory used in the previous research section. Specifically, the researcher used the theory from Brown and Harmer in writing aspects. The research began with a series of observations, interviews with the English teacher and students, and a pre-test to identify the problems in the teaching and learning writing process. The issues identified included students' lack of engagement in the writing process, difficulties in vocabulary usage, and challenges in organizing ideas into coherent texts. The study focused on using the Dictogloss method as an intervention. The Dictogloss method involves students listening to a text, taking notes, and working in pairs to reconstruct the text. This method encourages collaborative learning, enhances student engagement, and helps them internalize key elements of writing, including content, structure, and vocabulary.

In the first cycle, students improved their writing, particularly vocabulary usage and text organization. By engaging in Dictogloss activities, they gain a better understanding of writing structures, including paragraph development, cohesion, and descriptive vocabulary. Observations during the cycle indicated that students became more confident in expressing their ideas and more proactive in participating in discussions and activities. The pre-test, Cycle 1, and Cycle 2 results showed a steady increase in students' writing performance across the five aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The improvement was most evident in vocabulary usage and sentence construction, where student had a greater ability to express their ideas clearly and with more variety.

By the second cycle, the improvement was substantial, with 31 students (91.2%) reaching or as 75. The percentage of students who passed the passing grade reached 85%. This data highlights the positive impact of the Dictogloss method, which effectively enhanced the students' writing skills throughout the cycles. Furthermore, the percentage of students achieving scores above the passing mark of 75 increased significantly, indicating the effectiveness of the Dictogloss method in enhancing their writing skills.

Through interviews and reflections, students shared that the Dictogloss method helped them better understand narrative and recount text structures. They appreciated the opportunity to work, which allowed them to share ideas, learn from each other, and clarify their understanding of the text. Many students also reported that the activity helped them improve their ability to organize and express ideas coherently. In theory, Writing is a fundamental aspect of teaching students. Writing is acquired by participation in a literate community, typically necessitating instruction from an educator (Brown & Heimberg, 2001).

The dictogloss technique is a form of dictation that combines listening, writing, and grammatical analysis, effectively implementing Brown's principles by encouraging active engagement and collaboration in the writing process. In dictogloss, students listen to a short passage read aloud, take notes, and then reconstruct the text in small groups, focusing on meaning and grammatical accuracy. This technique supports Brown's emphasis on writing as a cognitive and social process, as it encourages learners to analyze language structures, refine their ideas through interaction with peers, and develop their writing through repeated revision. By requiring students to reconstruct meaning rather than copy, dictogloss aligns with Brown's advocacy of writing as a communicative and analytical skill, which strengthens linguistic accuracy and discourse competence.

In the same way, Harmer also indicates the theory used, which aligns with the present findings. For example, he describes writing as a cyclical process akin to a wheel, involving interlinked steps: planning, drafting, editing, and finalizing the text. This process applies to nearly all types of writing, emphasizing the importance of structured development in writing skills. Additionally, Harmer discusses the mechanical aspects of writing, including motivation, collaboration, and communication, as vital components of writing. He introduces the concept

of "habit-building" to foster positive writing experiences. Besides Genre Awareness, Harmer covers various genres of writing, detailing their purposes and formats, and emphasizes the importance of genre in writing development. Last is collaborative writing, which is emphasized as a way to enhance learning, allowing students to engage in group writing activities and discussions.

Therefore, the correlation between theory and the Dictogloss strategy in teaching writing involves students listening to a short text read aloud and then reconstructing it collaboratively. This method integrates various aspects of writing, including grammar, vocabulary, and coherence, making it a useful tool in the writing process. Furthermore, research emphasizes that writing can be done collaboratively, fostering communication and peer interaction. This aligns with the dictogloss strategy, which promotes teamwork as students work together to recreate the text. The need for coherence and cohesion in writing is highlighted in the literature. Dictogloss encourages students to think about how sentences connect and flow, which is essential for paragraph writing. Writing is interconnected with reading, as students benefit from understanding text organization. The dictogloss strategy incorporates reading by providing a model text that students analyze and reconstruct. The writing process is depicted as interconnected steps: planning, drafting, and editing.

Dictogloss fits this model as it requires students to plan their reconstruction, draft it collectively, and refine their final product. In summary, Harmer's work serves as a comprehensive guide for teaching writing, blending theoretical insights with practical applications, making it valuable for educators in language instruction. The dictogloss strategy effectively correlates with established theoretical frameworks in writing instruction. Emphasizing collaborative writing, feedback, coherence, and process-oriented approaches serves as a valuable method for teaching writing in paragraphs. This strategy enhances students' writing skills and fosters a deeper understanding of language mechanics and text structure.

A relevant previous study also showed similar findings. For example, research from Hadi & Karyadi, (2023) investigated the impact of social media-style fanfiction as a learning tool to enhance students' narrative writing skills. The study concludes that integrating social media-style fanfiction into learning effectively enhances students' ability to write narrative texts by engaging them in structured writing activities. On a different note, significant improvement in writing skills, engagement, and motivation of students in the experimental group who learned to write with the dictogloss technique compared to the control group (Alsamadani, 2022). The study highlights the effectiveness of dictogloss in enhancing language output and encourages training EFL teachers in its use. Additionally, it recommends using topic-based dictogloss texts to foster collaborative language skill development. Consequently, the discipline of dictogloss offers numerous advantages in both research and application. Collaborative writing tasks in L2 or L1 are frequently designated to promote reflective thinking (Kuiken & Vedder, 2002). When students engage in challenging their peers' arguments, they cultivate critical stances to support their own thoughts and writing.

In addition, Ellis, (2003) contends that form-focused education is significantly beneficial for learners, facilitating the modification of their interlanguage grammar and resulting in enhanced linguistic correctness. Dictogloss emphasizes meaning as it looks at the whole text (Mayo, 2002). Through practising dictogloss tasks, learners can draw their attention to the forms of the target language in such meaningful and productive contexts (Swain & Lapkin, 2000).

Research indicates that writing is a fundamental language skill that may be improved through many methods. Instructing L2 learners in writing skills via collaborative methods like dictogloss is more recommended. Dictogloss had considerable favorable effect on the writing skills and practices of EFL learners (Bataineh & Younis, 2016). Dictogloss favorably influenced the participants' writing abilities. Nonetheless, although the influence on the

organization and mechanics was beneficial, the usage, vocabulary, and content of the learners' writing were less impacted (Abbasian & Mohammadi, 2013).

In conclusion, the findings of this study support the effectiveness of the Dictogloss method in improving students' writing skills. By integrating listening, note-taking, and collaborative activities, students enhanced their ability to structure their writing logically. The study shows that the Dictogloss method can be an effective tool for teaching writing, especially for students who struggle with organizing their thoughts and using appropriate language. Based on the results, it is recommended that this method be integrated into the writing curriculum to foster greater student engagement and improve writing outcomes.

However, this study adds novel contributions because it focuses on the context of vocational high schools (SMK), where students face limited English learning time and different practical needs than regular school students. The successful implementation of Dictogloss here demonstrates the method's flexibility in motivating vocational high school students through collaborative learning. Limitations of the study include the relatively small number of participants and the duration of the intervention, which only included two cycles. Future studies could explore the long-term use of Dictogloss, combine it with digital technology, or examine its impact on other writing genres. Overall, Dictogloss is not simply a writing technique, but an integrative approach that fosters collaboration, critical thinking, and independent learning skills that are highly relevant for vocational high school students preparing for the global workforce.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings from the research, it can be concluded that the Dictogloss method has a significant positive impact on improving students' writing skills. The study addressed students' challenges in ideas organization, vocabulary usage, and understanding writing structures. By incorporating the Dictogloss method into the writing process, students showed marked improvement in these areas. Throughout the two cycles, students displayed increased engagement, better vocabulary usage, and improved organization in their writing. The collaborative nature of Dictogloss, which involves listening to a text, taking notes, and reconstructing it in pairs, encouraged active participation and enhanced students' understanding of key writing elements. This method also fostered peer learning, where students could share ideas, clarify doubts, and support one another in developing their writing skills.

The findings contribute to teaching practice by demonstrating that dictogloss is more than a listening writing activity; it is an innovative, integrative method that cultivates peer scaffolding and critical thinking while strengthening narrative writing competence. For vocational contexts where time for English instruction is often limited and student motivation varies dictogloss offers a practical approach that blends language learning with collaborative problem-solving skills relevant to the workplace. Curriculum designers and teachers are encouraged to integrate Dictogloss into regular writing instruction, either as a standalone technique or combined with digital tools and formative feedback cycles. Embedding such interactive, task-based activities in the curriculum can enrich students' writing development and provide a replicable model for other vocational settings.

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