

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

#### Introduction

This chapter presents the main findings of the study which seeks to investigate whether the use of models helps improve the writing performance of four low proficiency ESL learners. The students' initial and final writing tasks were evaluated and scored using an adaptation of the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule by Hughey et al (please refer to Ch. 3, p. 25 for details). The Initial and Final Writing scores obtained represent the overall writing performance of the students based on five components of the writing skill identified by Hughey et al. as Content Development, Text Organization, Vocabulary, Language Use and Mechanics of Writing. The subjects were also interviewed based on the Interview Schedule (see Appendix G, p. 91).

The data consisting of the Initial Writing scores, the Final Writing scores and the students' responses to the Interview Schedule were analyzed to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do learners using the "reading → analyzing → writing" approach based on model passages improve in their writing performance?
2. To what extent does this approach help meet the learners' writing needs?

The findings and their analysis will be presented in two parts. The first part attempts to answer the first research question, *To what extent do learners using the "reading → analyzing → writing" approach based on model passages improve in their*

*writing performance?* It discusses and compares the Initial and Final Writing scores for all four students under study. The writing performance of the students in this study was based on their writing scores, while a comparison of the two sets of scores determined the extent to which they had improved, or otherwise, in their writing performance.

The second part of the data analysis deals with the second research question, *To what extent does this approach help meet the learners' writing needs?* In this section, a close analysis of each of the students' Initial and Final writing texts would be integrated with their responses to the Interview. This would provide further insight into how the models had influenced the students' writing performance individually and thus, help meet their writing needs.

Research Question 1: To What Extent do Learners using the  
"Reading → Analyzing → Writing" Approach based on Model Passages  
Improve in their Writing Performance?

The first research question stated above will be discussed in terms of the students' Initial writing scores, Final Writing scores and a comparison between the two.

### Initial Writing scores

The Initial Writing scores were obtained from the evaluation of the Initial Writing task entitled "Major Causes of Crime in the City". The evaluation was based on the criteria provided by the adapted version of the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule. The distribution of the Initial Writing scores is given in Table 1 (p. 31).

Table 1

Distribution of Initial Writing scores based on the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule

Components of the Writing Skill and Proportion of Marks						
	Content development (15%)	Text organization (35%)	Vocabulary (20%)	Language use (25%)	Mechanics (5%)	Total: (100%)
Respondents						
Student 1	10	7	14	7	4	42
Student 2	10	7	14	9	4	44
Student 3	9	8	14	8	4	43
Student 4	11	8	15	10	4	48

For the first sub-skill, Content Development, Subjects 1, 2, 3 and 4 were rated *fair to poor*, scoring 10, 10, 9 and 11 marks respectively out of a total of 15. This was because of the inadequate development of content and topic in their essays.

On text organization, all four were rated *very poor*, scoring a dismal 7 to 8 marks out of a total of 35. This was because texts were poorly organized. The absence of paragraphing, topic sentence, concluding sentence and transitional expressions resulted in texts having disconnected ideas, and lacking in coherence and logical sequencing.

Vocabulary was adequate with occasional errors of word form but not serious enough to obscure the meaning of the text. Based on the criteria from the Evaluation Schedule, Vocabulary was rated *good to average* in all four essays. Students 1, 2 and 3 scored 14 marks out of 20 while Student 4 fared a shade better at 15. The relatively better performance in Vocabulary, as compared to the other sub-skills, was attributed to the ‘loaning’ of words and phrases from related texts which the students read at the pre-writing level.

Good language use, according to the Evaluation Schedule, refers to the mastery of sentence construction rules and the correct use of tenses, agreement, word order/function, prepositions, articles and pronouns. For the four subjects under study, Language Use was rated *very poor*, with marks ranging from 7 to 10 out of a total of 25. This was because major problems found in both simple and complex sentence constructions, as well as the profusion of errors in the use of tense, word order, agreement and prepositions, confused and obscured the meaning in the texts.

The component Mechanics of Writing was generally well executed with only occasional lapses in spelling, punctuation and capitalization. All four students were rated *good to average* in this section, scoring 4 out of a total of 5 marks.

Final Writing scores

The Final Writing scores were obtained from the evaluation of the Final Writing task entitled “Major Causes of Environmental Pollution”. The evaluation was based on the criteria provided by the adapted version of the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule. The distribution of the Final Writing scores is given in Table 2 below.

Table 2  
Distribution of Final Writing scores based on the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule

Components of the Writing Skill and Proportion of Marks						
Respondents	Content development (15%)	Text organization (35%)	Vocabulary (20%)	Language use (25%)	Mechanics (5%)	Total: (100%)
Student 1	11	20	14	15	3	63
Student 2	12	24	15	17	4	72
Student 3	13	25	14	16	4	72
Student 4	13	26	16	19	4	78



The four subjects were rated *good to average* for Content Development, with marks ranging from 11 to 13 out of a total of 15. Although the scope of their essays was still very much limited in terms of details, the subjects substantiated their points with sufficient examples relevant to the assigned topic.

The students were rated *good to average* for the Text Organization component, with marks ranging from 20 to 26 out of a total of 35. The essays demonstrated generally good organization where topic sentences were evident and ideas sufficiently supported with examples in logical sequence. In addition, the attempt to use transitional expressions and concluding sentences helped lend the essays a general feel of fluency and structured cohesiveness throughout.

The subjects were rated *good to average* for the Vocabulary component in their final essays, with marks averaging between 14 to 16 out of a total of 20. The range of vocabulary was adequate and although occasional lapses occurred, general word choice and usage was effective. The “new” words and terms used in the essays were taken from the related texts which the students read at the pre-writing stage.

Under Language Use, Students 1 and 3 were rated *fair to poor*, scoring 15 and 16 marks respectively, while Students 2 and 4 were rated *good to average*, scoring 17 and 19 marks respectively, all out of a total of 25. All four students made use of the language patterns, linking cause to effect, (see Appendix C5, p. 81) which they had learned from the models earlier on, and applied them appropriately in their essays. Nevertheless, some problems still persisted in sentence construction and in word order/ function, prepositions and tense.

The minor lapses in punctuation, such as commas and full stops, and spelling resulted in a score of 3 to 4 out of a total of 5 marks allocated for Mechanics of Writing, for all four students.

Comparison between the Initial and Final Writing scores

Table 3 below compares the Initial and Final Writing scores based on the criteria provided by the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule.

Table 3

A Comparison between the Initial and Final Writing Scores based on the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule

Components of the Writing Skill and Proportion of Marks																		
Respondent	Content development (15%)			Text organization (35%)			Vocabulary (20%)			Language use (25%)			Mechanics (5%)			Total: (100%)		
	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G
Student 1	10	11	+1	7	20	+13	14	14	+0	7	15	+8	4	3	-1	42	63	+21
Student 2	10	12	+2	7	24	+17	14	15	+1	9	17	+8	4	4	+0	44	72	+28
Student 3	9	13	+4	8	25	+17	13	14	+1	8	16	+8	4	4	+0	43	72	+29
Student 4	11	13	+2	8	26	+18	15	16	+1	10	19	+9	4	4	+0	48	78	+30

Key

- I: Initial Writing Scores
- F: Final Writing Scores
- G: Gain Score (Positive/ Negative)

An increase in scores was recorded for all five components of the writing skill, with the greatest increment (13 to 18 marks) for Text Organization. This was followed by Language Use, which also registered a substantial increment, approximately 8 to 9 marks

for all four students. The three remaining sub-skills, Content Development, Vocabulary and Mechanics of Writing also recorded increments in scores, albeit a small amount, between 1 to 4 points for all four students. This shows that the models had helped the students improve their writing performance, particularly in text organization and language use. A possible reason for the substantial gain scored in these two components as compared to the others, is the greater emphasis placed on the teaching of these two components during the treatment stage (see Appendixes C2, p. 77 ; D2, p. 83 ; and E2, p. 87 for Analysis of Model and Appendix C5 , p. 81 for Language Pattern).

The data analysis thus far has given a broad picture of the students' writing performance in terms of their Initial and Final writing scores, all of which were discussed in relation to the first research question. The second part of the data analysis deals with the second research question, *To what extent does this approach help meet the learners' various writing needs?* This shifts the focus from a general overview of all four students to a student-by-students analysis, which would help throw further light on the findings for the first research question. The analysis would consist of a close examination of each of the students' texts, the findings of which would then be integrated with their responses to the Interview Schedule.

## Research Question 2: To What Extent does this Approach Help Meet the Learners' Writing Needs?

The second research question stated above will be discussed in greater depth with the case studies of each of the four students in the following section.

### Case Study 1

Profile of student. Student 1 is a female Malay student with a low English Language proficiency. She obtained an F9 in her SPM 1119 English Language paper in 1995 and scored a total of 33% in her English paper at the end of her second semester. Her level of participation in her English class is below average and she prefers to speak in Bahasa Melayu rather than English during the class. She is a rather passive learner and in the interview indicated that she dislikes writing because her poor command of the language hampers her progress. Nevertheless, she does believe the importance of reading up for information before embarking on a writing assignment. However, she admitted that she seldom does it because of time constraints and the fact that she does not possess any books in the English language. She found the second essay easier to write because she felt she was better prepared and armed with the necessary tools she picked up from the model passages she was exposed to earlier.

Initial and Final Writing Texts – A Comparison. Table 4 (p. 37) shows the distribution of the Initial and Final Writing scores of Student 1 while Texts 1(A) and 1(B) (p. 38) represent the Initial and Final writing samples of Student 1 respectively.

Table 4

Initial and Final Writing Scores of Student 1 based on the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule

Components of the Writing Skill and Proportion of Marks																		
Content development (15%)			Text organization (35%)			Vocabulary (20%)			Language use (25%)			Mechanics (5%)			Total: (100%)			
I    F    G			I    F    G			I    F    G			I    F    G			I    F    G			I    F    G			
Respondent																		
Student 1	10	11	+1	7	20	+13	14	14	+0	7	15	+8	4	3	-1	42	63	+21

Key            I: Initial Writing Scores  
                  F: Final Writing Scores  
                  G: Gain Score (Positive/ Negative)

Text 1(A) (p. 38) showed weak Content Development as the two points presented, namely, poverty and lack of morals as causes of crime in the city, were not supported by clear illustrations. In contrast, Text 1(B) (p. 38) showed an attempt by the writer to develop its content by elaborating, albeit briefly, the two points in his essay, namely, factories and cars, as being causes of environmental pollution. This improvement was reflected in the marks awarded for Content Development in Text 1(B), that is, 11 out of 15, an increase of 1 mark from the 10 marks obtained in Text 1(A) (see Table 4 above).

Text 1(A)

Initial Writing Text by Student 1

Major Causes of Crime in the City

Nowaday most of major causes of crime in the city. By report from police station major crime happened in the city often is stealing, fighting and so on. The main causes a crime in a city is poverty. The government is very worried on this problem may happen in city. The causes poverty is a big problem. This situation causes parent not enough money to feed and clothe their children. Parent have no time for their children because they are very busy work. The children are alone and have no discipline. They run away from home because nobody take care them. Their parent don't teach them morals and they fight all the time. When they are hungry, they steal food from shops. Many poor people in the city have no house to stay in. They are always angry and they damage public facilities and destroy buildings and cars. (148 words)

Text 1(B)

Final Writing Text by Student 1

Major Causes of Environmental Pollution

Today environmental pollution is due to smoke from industries and cars. The public should be educated on the danger of the pollution and how to avoid it.

To begin with, factories send out harmful smoke into the air and polluting the air. Factories also throw their rubbish into the rivers and streams and cause the water pollution of river and streams.

Secondly, many cars which send out exhaust fumes. They contain carbon dioxide can cause health problem if we breathe them.

Lastly, another important step to stop pollution is to educate the public on the effect of pollution and how they can help protect the environment. Many people are still ignorant of the pollution which destroy use of material such as aerosol sprays with chlorofluorocarbons or disposable product.

In conclusion, pollution could be reduced if the government, factories and consumers work together to reduce pollution. (160 words)

Absence of paragraphing, topic sentence and concluding sentence in Text 1(A) resulting in a disorganized presentation with no logical sequencing, earned the writer a dismal score of 7 marks or *very poor* for the text organization component.

Text 1(B), in clear contrast, began with an appropriate topic sentence, *Today environmental pollution is due to smoke from industries and cars. . .* This was in turn supported in logical order by relevant illustrations. In addition, the pertinent use of transitional expressions, *To begin with*, while beginning the first point, *secondly* and *lastly* while introducing subsequent points, and a fitting concluding sentence, *In conclusion, pollution could be reduced if the government, factories and consumers work together to reduce pollution* was commendable and rendered the text its overall fluent presentation. This marked improvement in text organization earned the writer a score of 20 out of a total of 35, an increment of 13 marks from Text 1(A).

Text 1(A) showed little mastery of sentence construction rules, the language used throughout being restricted to a narrow range with inaccuracies especially in tenses, agreement and prepositions, such as in *the main causes a crime is ; they are very busy work ; nobody take care them; and the government is very worried on this problem*. As a result, Language Use was awarded a dismal score of 7 marks and rated *very poor* in Text 1(A).

Language use was notably enhanced in Text 1(B), however, with fewer errors in sentence constructions, and in particular, with the presence of certain language patterns linking cause to effect, which the students had “learned” from the models, such as, *Environmental pollution is due to industries and cars. . .* and *In conclusion, pollution*

*could be reduced if*. . . As a result the Language Use component in Text 1(B) was awarded 15 marks, up 8 marks from the previous score of 7 in Text 1(A).

The range of vocabulary used in both Texts 1(A) and 1(B) was adequate, scoring 14 marks out of 20 and rated *good to average* in both instances. Text 1(A) saw the appropriate use of words such as *poverty*, *public facilities*, *situation* and *damage* while in Text 1(B), terms such as *exhause (exhaust) fumes*, *carbon dioxide*, *effect*, *ignorent (ignorant)*, *earosol (aerosol) sprays*, *chlorofluorocarbons*, *disposible (disposable)* and *consumers* were used comfortably and appropriately throughout the essay. A possible reason for this phenomenon was the influence of the related texts, which the student was required to read up on prior to writing her essays. The new words were probably “imported” from their readings and inserted into her own texts.

The Mechanics of writing, which encompasses punctuation, capitalization and spelling, was generally well executed by the student in both her texts, with occasional lapses, such as in spelling, as seen in Text 1(B), *exhause (exhaust) fume*, *ignorent (ignorant)*, *earosol (aerosol) sprays*, and *disposible (disposable)*. This would probably account for the slight dip in marks from a score of 4 in Text 1(A) to 3 marks in Text 1(B). However, the spelling errors were not serious enough to eclipse the overall meaning of the text.

With its clear text organization, cohesive presentation and the use of appropriate phrasal expressions, it is no wonder Text 1(B)’s total of 63 marks far outscores Text 1(A)’s total of 42 marks.

From the interview with Student 1, it was learned that the use of models had helped simplify the writing task for her as she could now learn how to write in simple



steps and stages. As a result, she felt that this technique was suitable for her proficiency level. In her own words, “. . . saya dapat belajar cara menulis mengikut peringkat dengan mudah . . .sesuai dengan tahap penguasaan saya . . . sebelum ini saya tidak diajar cara menulis begini..”. She found the one single writing feature from the models that had impacted her and which she found extremely helpful to her writing was text organization, particularly, how to present the content in correct logical sequence. According to her, the model “. . . membantu saya menulis dengan betul . . . dengan memberikan isi-isi mengikut urutan yang betul and logikal . . . ”. It also helped her detect errors made during the writing process. The model, according to her “. . . memudahkan saya mengesan kesilapan sewaktu menulis. . . ”.

### Case Study 2

Profile of student. From the interview, it was found that Student 2, a male Malay student, likes writing because he believes that the more he writes, the further he will progress in the language and, in particular, the skill itself. He obtained a P7 in his SPM 119 English Language paper in 1995 and scored a total of 45% in his English paper at the end of his second semester. Although basically a quiet and unassuming person, he displays keen interest in the English class because of his relatively 'better' command of the language as compared to his peers. He tries as far as possible to converse in English and adopts a serious attitude towards his work. From the interview it was found that he makes it a point to read up other related literature before each writing assignment as he finds the literature very helpful in terms of content generation.

Initial and Final Writing Texts – A Comparison. Table 5 below shows the distribution of the Initial and Final Writing scores of Student 2 while Texts 2(A) and 2(B) (p. 43) represent the Initial and Final writing samples of Student 2 respectively.

Table 5

Initial and Final Writing Scores of Student 2 based on the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule

Components of the Writing Skill and Proportion of Marks																		
Respondent	Content development (15%)			Text organization (35%)			Vocabulary (20%)			Language use (25%)			Mechanics (5%)			Total: (100%)		
	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G
	Student 2	10	12	+2	7	24	+17	14	15	+1	9	17	+8	4	4	+0	44	72

Key

I: Initial Writing Scores  
F: Final Writing Scores  
G: Gain Score (Positive/ Negative)

Text 2(A) (p. 43) began with a somewhat extended description of how crimes occurred in the city. The topic on the causes of crime was only dealt with in the second half of the text. Two points, *overcrowded living conditions* and *limited resources* were offered as the causes but these were not sufficiently supported by clear examples. The writer compared city life with the simple *kampung life* but made no attempt to link it to the topic. Since the ideas presented were not sufficiently developed, the Content Development component was given a score of 10 marks out of 15 and rated *fair to poor*.

## Text 2(A)

## Initial Writing Text by Student 2

Major Causes of Crime in the City

Today, many crimes was happen in our city. The major crime that always we heard were happen are robbing and murder. The robber always rob some place like at street, jewellery shop and sometimes at someones houses. The murder were always happen when they were rob someones house and someone were see what is going on. Then to secret the rob, then they kill someone who see what they are doing. The main causes that were major crimes are city are over crowded living conditions and people fighting each other for the limited resources available. It if the case of "survival of the fittest", so that means only those people who are "fittest" and hardened can survive. In the kampung, not so many crimes because not crowded and kampung life is not so hard. People are kind and helpful not like people in city always selfish and greedy and evil. People in city have no time for you and become lonely. Sometimes you mix with wrong company and end up doing criminal things like drug-taking. (177 words)

## Text 2(B)

## Final Writing Text by Student 2

Major Causes of Environmental Pollution

Human beings, animals and plants, need a clean air for breathe. But the quality of clean air is lower now cause by environmental pollution. Environmental pollution is brought about by smoke from vehicle, chemicals pollution and open burning.

Firstly, is about smoke from vehicle. For example, smoke from vehicles like cars are including carbon monoxide gas, and it is very dangerous for human health.

Next, another cause of environmental pollution is chemical pollution problems. For examples, sometimes we don't realize that house equipment also can give effect to this problem like refrigerator. The freezer in refrigerator also contain chlorofluorocarbon gas. This gas is dangerous for covering layer of ozon.

Finally, is about open burning. Sometimes, open burning can increase the environmental pollution. For example, in Malaysia so many people did not know by burn something open like burn the rubbish in the area can cause the environmental pollution. This is happened because they don't have a conscience.

Therefore, to save the environmental from pollution, we should have some attitude to take responsibility to make sure that no more environmental pollution is happened again. (190 words)

Text 2(B) (p. 43) fared better in this component. Its three main points, *smoke from vehicles, chemical pollution and open burning* cited as causes of pollution, were substantially reinforced by examples and illustrations. Hence, a stronger Content Development here earned a score of 12, up 2 marks from the score in Text 2(A).

Features of text organization, such as paragraphing, topic sentence and concluding sentence were notably absent in Text 2(A), resulting in a mere score of 7 marks out of 35. In sharp contrast, evidence abounded in Text 2(B), showing how Student 2 had definitely followed the organizational patterns demonstrated in the model passages. This was clearly indicated in, for example, the use of an appropriate topic sentence, *Environmental pollution is brought about by smoke from vehicle, chemicals pollution and open burning*”; the presence of the concluding sentence, *Therefore, to save the environmental from pollution, we should have some attitude to take responsibility to make sure that no more environmental pollution is happened again*; and transition expressions, such as *firstly, next, finally* and *therefore*. All these effectively helped link up ideas expressed in the different paragraphs, resulting in a cohesive and connected text. Hence, a score of 24 out of a total of 35 marks, was awarded, a marked increment of 17 marks from Text 2(A).

Because of his weak command of the language in the written form, faulty language dominated the essay in Text 2(A). Hence, a score of 9 marks out of a total of 25 was awarded for Language Use. Examples of poor language use were . . . *many crimes was happen in our city* and . . . *to secret the rob, then they kill someone who see what they are doing* .

Language Use improved considerably in Text 2(B), registering a score of 17 here compared to 9 in Text 2(A), an increase of 8 marks. The presence in text 2(B), of certain

language patterns linking cause to effect, were specifically “learned” from the model passages. This clearly showed how the models had positively influenced Language Use in Text 2(B). Examples of such language patterns were . . . *Environmental pollution is brought about by smoke from. . .* and . . . *Therefore, to save the environment from pollution, we should . . .*

The range of vocabulary used in both Texts 2(A) and 2(B) was commendable, scoring 14 and 15 marks respectively, and rated *good to average* in both instances. Text 2(A) saw the appropriate use of words such as *over-crowded*, *living conditions*, *limited resources*, *"survival of the fittest"*, and *drug-taking* while in Text 2(B), terms like *chemical*, *carbon monoxide*, and *conscience*, were used comfortably throughout the essay. A possible reason for this phenomenon is the influence of the related texts, which the student was required to read up on prior to writing her essays. The new words were probably “imported” from their readings and inserted into his own texts.

The Mechanics of writing, which encompasses punctuation, capitalization and spelling, was generally well executed by the student in both her texts, scoring 4 out of 5 marks in both cases. Occasional lapses, such as in punctuation, seen in Text 2(A), *rob someones house...*” and in spelling, seen in Text 2(B), *ozon (ozone)*.

With clear text organization, cohesive presentation and the use of appropriate phrasal expressions, it explains why Text 2(B) scores a total of 72 marks as compared to Text 2(A), which could only manage a score of 44.

During the interview, Student 2 revealed that he found writing the second essay relatively easier than the first as he could make use of what he had learned from the model passages and apply it successfully to his writing. As he put it, “. . . bagi karangan

yang kedua, mungkin kerana saya sudah mengetahui tentang cara-cara melakukannya dari model, maka saya rasa lebih mudah untuk melakukannya. . . ”. He found the models as helpful guides to good writing and that he had learned much from them particularly features of content organization, use of transition expressions and new words. In his words, “. . . dengan menggunakan model sebagai contoh . . . saya mendapat panduan bagaimana cara menulis karangan yang baik. Saya mempelajari banyak perkara, antaranya tentang penyusunan isi, penggunaan kata hubung dan perkataan-perkataan baru . . . ”.

### Case Study 3

Profile of student. Student 3 is an active learner and although her command of the language is below average, she seems genuinely interested in the language and seldom fails to accord the goings-on in her English class her undivided attention. She is a female Malay student with a P8 in her SPM 119 English Language paper in 1995 and scored a total of 42% in her English at the end of her second semester. Although she speaks mainly Bahasa Melayu in class, she manages a smattering of English, and when spoken to in English, she tries her best to follow and understand what is being said. From the interview, it was found that she likes writing because she feels it is a difficult skill to handle and that she finds stimulating. She prepares well before any writing assignment by reading up other related texts as she considers these materials valuable as sources of information, language use and vocabulary.

Initial and Final Writing Texts – A Comparison. Table 6 below shows the distribution of the Initial and Final Writing scores of Student 3 while Texts 3(A) and 3(B) (p. 48) represent the Initial and Final writing samples of Student 3 respectively.

Table 6  
Initial and Final Writing Scores of Student 3 based on the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule

Components of the Writing Skill and Proportion of Marks																		
Content development (15%)			Text organization (35%)			Vocabulary (20%)			Language use (25%)			Mechanics (5%)			Total: (100%)			
I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	
Respondent																		
Student 3	9	13	+4	8	25	+17	13	14	+1	8	16	+8	4	4	+0	43	72	+29

Key                I: Initial Writing Scores  
                      F: Final Writing Scores  
                      G: Gain Score (Positive/ Negative)

Text 3(A) (p. 48) suffers from general incoherence and indiscernible pattern of organization. The writer began rather abruptly by heading straight for the topic, *This problem have many reason.*, but did not elaborate on it. Then she cited the influence of questionable places like *karaoke* and *video arcades*, as being one of the causes of major crimes, but did not develop the idea further. Instead, she rambled on about the poor quality of family life in the city, and finally concluded with another mention of the influences of *karaoke* and *video arcades*. Content Development was definitely weak and lacking in detail, and thus merit only a score of 9 marks out of 15 (see Table 6 above).

## Text 3(A)

## Initial Writing Text by Student 3

Major Causes of Crime in the City

This problem have many reason. Prime Minister said urburn have create so much in the city but major causes of crime in the city very bad. Like murder, rape, robbing and extra. Many factor of main causes. In the city are many places of bad influence like karaoke, nightclub, video arked, massag parlor, girl barber and so on. Young people are easily lured to such places. Their parents always busy working and have no time for them. Because in the city too fast progress and their parents don't teach them about religion education and about God. So people in the city live a godless existence and life becomes very stress and lonely. So young people looked for new friends in places like video arked and karaoke lounges. As a result, crimes of all kinds are increasing in the city. (141 words)

## Text 3(B)

## Final Writing Text by Student 3

Major Causes of Environmental Pollution

Now world have many pollutions. There are the pollution of air, water, noise and others. Environmental pollution result from industries, vehicles, pesticides, and oil spills.

First, air pollution is produced by vehicles and factories. For example, the increasing vehicles on the roads which give out exhaust fumes. These contain carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, hyudrocarbon and other. Also, smoke and harmful gases from factories go into the atmosphere. When we breathe in these gases, it can cause health problems.

Next, water pollution is caused by rubbish from factories and pesticides and fertilizers from agriculture. For example, factories throw their rubbish into rivers contain chemicals that can endnager life in the rivers. Also, rain wash pesticides and fertilizers from agriculture into rivers and streams and they are dangerous to animals and plants in the river.

Finally, noise pollution is caused by vehicles and factories. For example, this pollution is found in Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) and other sites in the Klang valley especially at construction sites and industries areas.

In short, we could reduce the environmental pollution by reducing all the major causes of it. The most important way is awareness in all of us to take care of our world together. We have to be more cooperate to control environmental pollution. People must be educated by they parent or teacher to teach them how to take care of environment. (238 words)



In contrast, in Text 3(B) (p. 48), she was able to develop its content in logical sequence, citing three types of pollution, *air, water and noise*, as the three main points of the text. Each of these points was substantiated with details and backed up with sufficient examples. As a result, Text 3(B) was accorded a score of 13 marks for Content Development, up 4 marks from the score obtained in Text 3(A).

As mentioned above, Text 3(A) suffers from indiscernible organization with the topical sentence, concluding sentence and paragraphing conspicuously absent. Text 3(B) on the other hand, had most of the features of a well structured, well connected text. Using a pertinent topic sentence, *Environmental pollution result from industries, vehicles, pesticides, and oil spills. . .* ; a relevant concluding sentence, *In short, we could reduce the environmental pollution by reduced all the major causes of it.*; and accurate use of transitional expressions such as, *first, next, finally, for example*, and *in short*, ideas expressed in the different paragraphs were well connected, lending the text a sense of fluency and coherence. As a result, Text 3(B) chalked up an impressive score of 25 marks out of 35 for Text Organization, a creditable increase of 17 marks from Text 3(A).

Language Use in Text 3(A) was rated *very poor*, scoring 8 marks out of 25, due to a high frequency of errors found in the text, such as *this problem have many reason, many factor of main causes* and *because in the city too fast progress. . .*

In contrast, Text 3(B) registered a marked improvement in the Language Use component, scoring 16 marks out of 25, which was an increase of 8 marks from the score recorded by Text 3(A). This was attributed to the fact that several language patterns linking cause to effect, “learned” from the models, were accurately used in the text to facilitate the cause and effect function. Some of these patterns were, *Environmental*

*pollution result from industries. . . .; . . . air pollution is produced by. . .; . . . water pollution is caused by. . .; and In short, we could reduce the environmental pollution by . . .*

The range of vocabulary used in both Text 3(A) and 3(B) was commendable, scoring 13 and 14 marks respectively, and rated *good to average* in both instances. Text 3(A) saw the appropriate use of words such as *karaoke lounges, massage parlors, video arcades, lured godless existence*, while in Text 3(B), terms like, *exhaust fumes, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, hydrocarbon, atmosphere, pesticides, fertilizers, agriculture, endanger, sites, and awareness* were used comfortably and appropriately throughout the essay. A possible reason for this phenomenon was the influence of the related texts, which the student was required to read up on prior to writing her essays. The new words were probably “imported” from her readings and inserted into her own texts.

The Mechanics of writing were generally well executed in both the texts, with only minor inaccuracies such as spelling errors in Text 3(A), *urburn (urban), arked (arcade), massag (massage)*. Hence, a score of 4 out of 5 marks was awarded for both texts.

The total score of 72 marks for Text 3(B) represented an increase of 29 marks from the score in Text 3(A). The laudable performance in Text 3(B) was due to several features found in the text as a result of the influence of the models studied in Phase Two. These included good text organization, well-developed content and appropriate language use, all of which were notably missing in Text 3(A).

From the interview with Student 3, it was learned that the use of models had given her a new and rewarding experience in writing. She discovered that even with her low

level of proficiency in the language, she was able to transfer desirable features of the models, especially organization and language use, to her writing. It had taught her how to go about producing an essay in English, and that having this knowledge helped simplify the task of writing for her and helped her realize that writing in English was not as formidable as it used to be. In her own words, “. . . setelah diberi pendedahan ini, saya dapat rasakan bahawa tugas yang diberikan adalah mudah dan menarik . . . saya dapat mengalami pengalaman yang baru.....memantapkan lagi untuk saya menguasai Bahasa Inggeris . . .”

#### Case Study 4

Profile of student. Student 4, a male Malay student, is a confident extroverted learner who revels in the novelty of constantly trying out the new and the unfamiliar. He obtained a P7 in his SPM 119 English Language paper in 1995 and scored a total of 44% in his English paper at the end of his second semester. His level of participation in his English class is above average. He makes it a point to speak in English and does not allow mistakes and difficulties discourage him from trying. During the interview he stated that he prefers speaking to writing because he finds the former more challenging and rewarding. Nevertheless, he believes reading up before a writing assignment important and does so for his own writing assignments because he sets a high standard for himself in whatever he undertakes.

Initial and Final Writing Texts – A Comparison. Table 7 below shows the distribution of the Initial and Final Writing scores of Student 4 while Texts 4(A) and 4(B) (p. 53) represent the Initial and Final writing samples of Student 4 respectively.

Table 7

Initial and Final Writing Scores of Student 4 based on the ESL Composition Evaluation Schedule

Components of the Writing Skill and Proportion of Marks																		
Content development (15%)			Text organization (35%)			Vocabulary (20%)			Language use (25%)			Mechanics (5%)			Total: (100%)			
I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	I	F	G	
Respondent																		
Student 4	11	13	+2	8	26	+18	15	16	+1	10	19	+9	4	4	+0	48	78	+30

Key                I: Initial Writing Scores  
                      F: Final Writing Scores  
                      G: Gain Score (Positive/ Negative)

The writer began Text 4(A) (p. 54) by stating his first point, *inflation*, as being a cause of crime in the city, and took the reader on an elaborate explanation on it. However, his next two points were delivered in quick succession without any attempt to illustrate their link or relevance to the topic. Although content in Text 4(A) was generally related to the topic, it was limited in development and lacked details. Hence, Content Development in Text 4(A) scored 11 marks out of a total of 15 (see Table 7 above). In contrast, in Text 4(B) (p. 54), the writer demonstrated good content development by describing the three types of pollution, *chemical, water and air*, in three different paragraphs. Each point was discussed in terms of its causes and verified by sufficient

examples. Thus Text 4(B) earned a score of 13 marks out of a total of 15, an increase of 2 marks from the earlier Text 4(A) (see Table 7, p. 52).

Text 4(A)

Initial Writing Text by Student 4

Major Causes of Crime in the City

The Police Department today said that the rating of crimes were increase. His speaker said that major crimes are blackmail, kidnapped and robbery. All of this crimes happened because of inflation that attacking the country. Most of this crimes happened in the big city. According to economic specialist, the inflation happened because the people do not have enough money to live or to send their children to school in case of small salary. This is the big problem and we find that inflation are very difficult to solve it. So when salary not enough, people become stress and commit crime to find more money. Lack of job opportunities happened because the government did not provide social services to poor. Unemployed people live in the streets and often become violent and criminals. Many people in the city don't have houses to live because of overpopulation. (146 words)

Text 4(B)

Final Writing Text by Student 4

Major Causes of Environmental Pollution

Causes of environmental pollution are on the rise. Some of these are environmental pollution are chemical pollution, water pollution and air pollution.

Firstly, chemicals people throw into environment lead to chemical pollution. For example, a farmer use chemical to kill the insects and this might damage the environment and kill the other wildlife. Also the factories throw the chemical anywhere they like. When they throw the chemical at unsuitable place, it can cause environmental pollution.

Secondly, the water pollution is brought about by things thrown into the rivers and seas. For example, the people throw the rubbish into a river and it can cause pollution. In the same time, the factories throw their chemical and toxic into a river and cause the wildlife in that river death.

Finally, the most serious environmental pollution is air pollution produced by vehicles, factories and open burning. For example, the open fire activities caused a very bad air pollution. In fact, the smoke that contains plumbum and carbon monoxide gas can cause acid rains. Also, the factories that release their smoke without any filters process cause air pollution. In the same time, the vehicles also release the smoke and this can cause air pollution.

Therefore, if rubbish, chemicals and open fires cause environmental pollution, then they must be regularly checked by environmental laws to control them. (226 words)

Weak Text Organization in Text 4(A) resulted in a mere score of 8 marks out of 35. The essay was not lacking in ideas but the random manner in which these ideas were presented to the reader, minus the topic sentence, concluding sentence and paragraphing, rendered the text confusing and distracting. Text 4(B), on the other hand, had features of good organization, such as the topic sentence, *Some of these are environmental pollution are chemical pollution, water pollution and air pollution. . .*; the concluding sentence, *Therefore, if rubbish, chemicals and open fires cause environmental pollution, then they must be regularly checked by environmental laws to control them* and appropriate use of transition expressions such as, *firstly, secondly, finally* and *therefore*. As a result, Text Organization in Text 4(B) scored 26 out of 35 marks, a commendable improvement from Text 4(A)'s score of 7 marks (see Table 7, p. 52).

Recurrent grammatical problems in Text 4(A) obscured sentence accuracy and confused meaning in the text, resulting in poor Language Use which was graded a low 10 marks out of 25. Examples of these problems are as follow, *the rating of crimes were increase. . .* and *that inflation are very difficult to solve it. . .*

However, in the case of Text 4(B), the language patterns "learned" from the models were successfully integrated into the text, resulting in a score of 19 out of 25 marks for Language Use. Some examples were *Cases of environmental pollution are on the rise. . .*; *. . . chemicals people throw into environment lead to chemical pollution. . .*; *. . . water pollution is brought about by things people throw into the rivers. . .*; and *Therefore if rubbish, chemical and open fire cause environmental pollution, then they must be. . .*

Vocabulary in both texts 4(A) and 4(B) was sufficient with the inclusion of new terms learned from readings done during the pre-writing stage. Examples of these included *inflation*, *lack of job opportunities*, and *economic specialist* in Text 4(A), and *wildlife*, *toxic*, *plumbum*, *carbon monoxide*, *acid rains*, *release* and *filters* in Text 4(B) . Hence, out of a total of 20 marks, texts 4(A) and 4(B) scored 15 and 16 respectively.

Student 4 scored a total of 78 marks in Text 4(B), an impressive improvement from the 48 marks he obtained in Text 4(A). This was attributed to the good text organization, well developed content and improved language use, all of which were features of good writing “learned” from the models.

During the interview, student 4 stated that he had learned much from the model passages and believes that they had helped him improve his writing in the second essay, particularly in organization, as compared to the first essay. In his own words, “ I find that the reading a model passage is very helpful for me in my writing essays . . . now I understand how the essay works. I mean . . . how it built, the structure or organization of sentences, the conjunctions. . . ” However, he believes in having his own individual style of writing and feels that there is no necessity in following too rigidly to what a model subscribes as long as the fundamental features are in place.

### Conclusion

The findings indicate that the students in this study had gained considerably from their interaction with the models. Overall, the models are found to have facilitation effects on all five components of the writing skill, in particular, on Text Organization, Language Use and to a certain extent, Content Development.

The overall increase in total scores between the Initial Writing samples and the Final Writing samples clearly indicate that the models have helped improve the writing performance of the students in the study, thus answering the first research question. In terms of text organization, the effectiveness of models as a writing aid was evident by the impressive increase in marks scored in the final writing texts on this component as compared to the initial writing texts, clearly showing that the subjects had "learned" from their models. The writers' successful attempts to incorporate into their own writing, the language patterns "learned" from the models, resulted in an improvement in the Language Use component. The students had been specifically taught these language patterns during their interaction with the models in Phase Two.

Data collected from the interview revealed all four subjects were unanimous in the view that they had benefited much from the model passages. Most of all, they agreed the models had been extremely helpful in showing them how to structure their essays in order to produce a coherent and meaningful text. The relative ease with which they had written their second essays after being exposed to the models clearly indicated that they had made some progress in their writing, especially in terms of text organization, content development, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. They felt that their need to communicate well in writing has been aptly met by the use of models, thus answering the second research question.