Collaborative Weblog-Based (CWB) Project Approach in Developing Language Learners' Writing Performance

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Abstract. Advancements in educational technology have kept teaching and learning undisrupted during unprecedented times. Individual and collaborative web-based learning activities have addressed language teachers' dilemma on how to approach teaching and learning remotely. Weblogging characterised by online journals has been considered to address students' difficulty in mastering writing as a productive skill. In this study, the effectiveness of a collaborative weblog-based (CWB) project approach was explored. Utilising a quasi-experimental design, 56 English pre-service teachers enrolled in a state university were purposively selected to be the study participants. The validated pre-post-test questionnaire, course syllabus, lesson exemplars, and scoring rubric were used to gather the needed data on students' writing skills. Results of the paired t-test revealed a significant increase in the three aspects: organisation, elaboration and grammar, usage and mechanics. The CWB project approach is an alternative way to improve students' writing performance. It is recommended that CWB project may be used by teachers handling writing courses and other related disciplines to address writing proficiency.

Keywords. Collaborative Weblog-Based (CWB) Project; elaboration; grammar, usage and mechanics; organisation; writing performance

1. Introduction

The academic landscape has abruptly changed due to the health crisis brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. This crisis is experienced by everyone across the globe

coming from all sectors regardless of gender and socioeconomic status. One of the sectors that are entirely changed amidst this pandemic is education. Schools' modalities to deliver instruction to learners are very limited which are mostly done online if not modular. Online education is currently the most suitable method which can be accessed easily and teaching can be delivered even in remote areas (Dhawan, 2020) as long as teachers and students have internet connectivity. With the multitude of inevitable changes, educators continue to seek for the most suitable approach which is a tailored-fit with the current situation everyone is facing.

Meanwhile, one of the challenges that beset every language teacher is to engage the students in their productive skill development of writing. Writing is hard in a sense that students conspicuously face challenges in the production of appropriate and correct texts (Madylus, 2015; Richard & Renandya, 2002). In fact, students consider writing as their weakest macro skill (Dayamanti, 2009) of which the same is also observed in the writing performance of pre-service teachers studying Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English in one of the state universities in the Philippines. These pre-service teachers are millennials who manifest huge interest in technology-based instruction as they were observed to be active on social media platforms and resources on electronic or digital formats. During this time, while there was no pandemic yet they were already accustomed and eager to learn through the use of Web 2.0. With this, it   then appears to be a tailored-fit approach to be utilised by language teachers to deliver a quality education during this unforeseen health crisis, hence it promotes distance learning through the use of free weblog software. Tan et al. (2008) concurred that blogging improves the teaching and learning of a language.

Sullivan and Longnecker (2014) mentioned that weblogs are becoming renowned as a teaching tool in university settings. For instance, in Canada, weblogging is used at Institut St. Joseph and students from the institute found it effective on the ground that it gave them a chance to communicate among them and motivate them to write. Furthermore, it provided them an opportunity to exchange their point of view with others all around the globe. In addition, schools and universities in the United States have introduced weblogs to pre-service English and foreign language teachers (Downes, 2004). Alsamadani (2017) claimed that students obtained a perception that their writing skills improved due to weblogging.

In the Philippines, an experimental study on weblogging was conducted at De La Salle University Manila. Cequeña (2013) says that weblogging has improved the writing performance of De La Salle students who participated in the said study. However, there are still very limited published studies of weblogging conducted in the Philippines. From these, it is very evident that the advent of technology has influenced the 21st century language teachers to contrive their instructions to augment the language skills of the learners. Considering the successful application of a weblog-based writing classes plus the learners' difficulty in writing, a weblog-based class is considered to augment the writing performance of the pre-service teachers in one of the state universities in the Philippines since it had been observed that they show difficulty in writing. To validate this claim, their writing outputs, such as lesson plans, compositions, etc., were revisited by the researchers and

found to have problems in terms of English grammar, diction and style. The researchers who have been with them are reliable enough to claim such difficulty of the group. On the other hand, considering the works of literature and studies perused, it is found that there has been very limited discussions on the specific skills in writing where the learners display improvement since the discussions mainly focus on the learners' writing skill in general; specifically, there is a limited discussion on the writing skills of the pre-service teachers. Thus, it has been found as the gap of knowledge. With this, three specific skills in writing are investigated to prove the established assumption that a Collaborative Weblog-Based (CWB) project approach can develop the writing performance of Filipino language learners.

This study aims to ascertain the effectiveness of a CWB project approach to the writing performance of Filipino pre-service language teachers. It specifically seeks to determine the writing performance of the learners before and after the CWB project along the following skills: organisation, elaboration, and grammar usage and mechanics; and to identify the significant mean-gain between the students' pre-post (CWB) writing performance.

Therefore, the research questions were as follows:
1   What is the writing performance of the learners before and after CWB project along the following skills: organisation, elaboration, and grammar, usage and mechanics?
2   What is the significant mean-gain between the students' pre-post (CWB) writing performance?

2. Literature Review
The integration of technology to teaching has afforded more learning opportunities for learners, especially during this time of pandemic. Writing in this time of flexible learning modality requires the learners to do it online. Online learning platforms to teach writing and composition are used by teachers across the globe with learners of various ages from pre-schoolers to adults (Secoy & Sigler, 2019).

On the other hand, teaching is not the only duty of instructors conducted online, but it also involves assessing the learners' writing skills. Assessment as a core of teaching process has posed great challenges to teachers especially as they have to administer it online. For many English teachers, the online evaluation of students' writing has created a brand-new predicament and developing an online assessment tool has been challenging for language teachers (Handayani & Syarif, 2021). Lecturers must come up with a design of an effective assessment that can evaluate the learning outcomes of the students, one that ensures that students' writing skills are measured. One of the promising writing assessment tools online is through the use of weblogs, the utilisation of which is the focus of this research study.

This research study is supported by the theories of Flower and Hayes's (1984) Cognitive Theory of Writing and the New London Group's (2009) Concept of New Design. In their cognitive theory of writing Flower and Hayes explained the concept of writing as a problem-solving process of cognition and they

demonstrated a formal model of writing composition process. They emphasised that the writing process is a set of distinctive thinking process. Writers compose their write-ups following a hierarchical and highly embedded organisation. In the context of the CWB project, the learners were asked to create a literary piece, utilise WordPress software to publish their work, read each other's weblog entry, offer comments for suggestions, analyse their classmate's comments, review their work again for revisions, then republish it incorporating their classmates' comments. On the other hand, the Concept of New Design by New London Group (2000) illustrates that teachers need to approach learning by changing the nature of literacies to multiliteracies, which means that mode of meaning will not only be achieved through linguistic modes but rather it should be multimodal, such as an inclusion of visual meanings (images, page layouts, screen formats) which is exactly what the participants of this research were doing. They added related images to their write-ups when they published through their blogs.

These two theories support this study. The principle of the Cognitive Theory of Writing highlights the distinctive process, which involves careful planning, and then, as the process continues, problems are encountered such as issues found by their peers as they read and give comments to their peers' write-ups, with whom they are interacting through their weblog's comment section, editing, and republishing their works. Meanwhile, the utilisation of weblogs is corroborated under the theory of multiliteracies by New London Group (2009) through their Concept of New Design, hence weblogging allows the students to be multiliterate because their skills in web layouts, designing to make their weblogs unique and attractivet, are honed. Likewise, they also use images and/or audios to make their posts catchy as well as provide vividness to their readers. As Buripakdi (2013) stated, weblog in the context of design serves as an impetus for the learners to express themselves well, which will probably let them feel more a sense of ownership because they applied many elements on their literature to make it more appealing and meaningful to the readers. Thus, it makes a great deal of sense as written texts are incorporated with visual designs, such as images to make the output visual and significant.

On the other hand, a weblog, from edublogs.com, also known as a blog, is a type of website maintained by an individual or group of individuals, with regular entries of commentary, write-ups, descriptions of events or other material such as graphics or videos which are commonly displayed in reverse chronological order. Likewise, Jones (as cited in Cequena, 2013) defined weblogging as the act of keeping online diaries or journals which are dated in chronological order, catenated to different sites on the web, commonly to other blogs, resulting to the creation of a virtual community while WordPress (2018) described a weblog as a website which keeps a continuous journal of information. Weblogs are firstly created to be utilised as online digital writing and a tool for publishing writings in order to establish not only an online niche for people's interaction but also for writing their journals (Lin, 2013). Weblogs are known across the globe. They also attract attention from researchers and educators as their utilisation for academic purposes has been constantly making noise internationally. Lin (2013) affirmed that this writing platform has been the subject of a number of researchers as to how it is used in an educational context. Kennedy (2003) supposed that weblogs are

unique because of their prominence on publication and their tag as a dynamic genre of web writing. He supported that the new platform drove educators to conduct experimentations utilising the new genre, which offers their students an interactive and immediate publishing tool. Weblog has multifarious features. It features diary-style commentaries and also allows users to access articles from other websites; the users' entries being presented in reverse chronological order. Weblogs have a large scope. One can create a personal weblog or even a political weblog, and a wide range of subjects can be chosen by the webloggers. However, many weblogs focus on a very specific topic, like travel diary, food, interior design, or one's daily endeavors. Anyone can start a weblog about a wide array of topics. Some weblogs are eclectic while others are very personal with the author presenting his daily engagements and thoughts. These features of a weblog give the 21st century learners and inkling on how interesting this writing platform is. It is highly evident that this platform integrates ICT and is very 21st century.

Kristie (2017) identified the three most famous types of weblogs in this generation as: journal weblogs, content marketing weblogs, and content creation weblogs. The journal weblog is created by webloggers in order to make content about their daily life, their personal experiences about things that they want to share. It can be about their outfit of the day, the food they eat, the restaurant they eat at, or the bus or train they take going to their respective destinations. It is something that happens to the weblogger that he or she shares. The content marketing weblog is a type of weblog which lets webloggers create content about their business, their business' newest product and promote it on their weblogs. They create content for profit and to attract more customers, while the content creation weblog is a type of weblog which gives emphasis on the contents. Webloggers in this type of weblog create content for entertainment and/or educational purposes. Webloggers create stories to inspire their followers and provide useful content to inform their readers about a phenomenon. Thus, the respondents of this study are content creation webloggers.

The very nature of creating weblog is the idea that it is fun and paperless and it lets the writers publish their writings and have it read by a wider audience through the World Wide Web. Every time the learners create a weblog they expose themselves to be more literate on technology. It allows them to explore Web 2.0 and be able to find meaningful use of it beyond searching facts, ideas, and theories.

3. Methodology
This quantitative quasi-experimental study looked into the effectiveness of the CWB project approach using one-shot case quasi-experimental design. It identified an experimental group of research participants and baseline characteristics were determined prior to the intervention. The independent variable was manipulated but the participants, the 56 English pre-service teachers enrolled in one of the state universities, were not randomly assigned as they compose the total population of the class taking creative writing course, thus, they are purposely selected to participate in this research.

Four expert-validated instruments were utilised- the course syllabus, the CWB project approach lesson exemplars, the pre-post researcher-made questionnaire,

and an adapted scoring rubric. The course syllabus used by the researchers followed the university's format, while, the pre-post researcher- made questionnaire contained the writing activity carried out by the participants. A parallel writing assessment was given before and after the intervention.

The study is limited to the eight-week timeframe which is composed of 24 hours covering the whole midterm. The course used for this research was Creative Writing, which is a major subject of the 56 participants. Furthermore, there were seven stories utilised to supplement students' learning and writing, thus exposing them to different stories: "The Haunted House" by Virginia Woolf, and Cecilia Manguerra Brainard's stories: "The Black Man in the Forest", "Flip Gothic", "Talking About the Woman in Cholon", "Vigan", "Tiya Octavia", and "Romeo". During the employment of the CWB project approach, the researcher used the free plan software of WordPress for the students' weblogs. The students had sole control of their group weblogs which the researcher only visited to check their entries, as well as the students' comments on each other's manuscripts. In addition, there were eleven groups identified in the class. Each group had one weblog. The gadgets mostly used were smartphones hence only a few students had laptops. Moreover, each group had one prepaid Wi-Fi provided.

Data collection started with the orientation and obtaining of the participants' informed consent. The orientation covered the different things the participants need to know, such as the use of WordPress, its features and functionality, and how to post their entries. The participants were grouped into five and, for three months they were exposed to the CWB project. Written outputs were rated by three experts with the use of scoring rubrics.

The CWB project process commenced following the different steps as evident in the assessment and closure phases of the lesson. It was noted that, at the beginning, the pre-service teachers were observed to be developing preliminary skills, such as creating their group's official e-mail address, signing-up to WordPress.com to create their group weblog, and deciding on their group weblog's domain name. In addition, they showed skills in filling-in their weblog with the initial information needed, such as the website's descriptions and reading sample literary pieces to supplement their understanding on the fundamental of Creative Writing discussed in that session.

After the preliminaries on the CWB project, the pre-service teachers were assigned to create their literary pieces, to publish these to their weblogs, and to comment on each other's write-up. They were instructed to give comments to their classmates' posts, focusing on the style of the language, the quality of text, literariness, the use of English language considering the writer's choice of words, and mechanics such as punctuation, grammar, syntactic structure and semantics. With the time given to post and comment, they then analysed the different comments from peers and reviewed their write-ups. Thereafter, they were given time to update the changes and republish their write-ups. This was done for the entire semester with a total of 12 write-ups posted. A post-test was given before the end of the semester.

Results of the pre-test and post-test were analysed using paired T-test of correlated samples to determine the significant change of the pre-service teachers' writing performance before and after the employment of the CWB project approach. T-test of two correlated samples is commonly used in experimental research, when an intervention or treatment is applied such as a new method of teaching to improve students' performance using information technology (Abocejo & Pañares, 2014; Mann, 2004).

4. Results
The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the effectiveness of the CWB project approach to the writing performance of pre-service teachers. Results of the pre-test and post-test were analysed using paired T-test of correlated samples to determine the significant change of the students' scores. Results are presented along with the interpretations and implications towards developing students' writing competence.

Writing Performance of the Learners Before and After CWB Project
The writing performance of the learners before and after CWB project is presented per skill and shown in the graphs below. Each graph shows the number of students as well as the rating they received for each skill. The rating is either 1, 2, 3, or 4. Rating 1 generally pertains to a paper showing a consistent pattern of weakness in using the tools of language; rating 2 means less than adequate command of the tools of language; rating 3 demonstrates an adequate command of the tools of language; lastly, rating 4 means a superior command of the tools of language. Each of the skill has specific indicators for each rating. For more details about each rating, see Appendix 1.

Organisational Skill Rating
As initial information, 68% of the respondents had already taken three writing classes while 18% of them had only taken two writing classes. However, 100% of them did not have any exposures on weblogging as far as their previous writing classes were concerned while 12 out of the 56 respondents had a little knowledge on weblogging which they learnt from outside school tasks and/or activities. Palpably, the respondents of this study have either no knowledge about weblogging or have very limited knowledge about weblogging.
Figures 1 to 4 show the results of the pre-post CWB project students' writing performance along organisation, elaboration, and grammar usage and mechanics skills. On the other hand, Table 1 shows the pre-post mean gain per skill while Table 2 shows the pre-post mean gain summing up all-skill-rating. These figures and tables are presented in the next pages.

Organisation is a student skill which shows his/her calibre to produce well-developed ideas which present a logical progression and completeness of ideas in a write-up. Being organised is the learner's ability to balance their ideas and cascade to their readers.
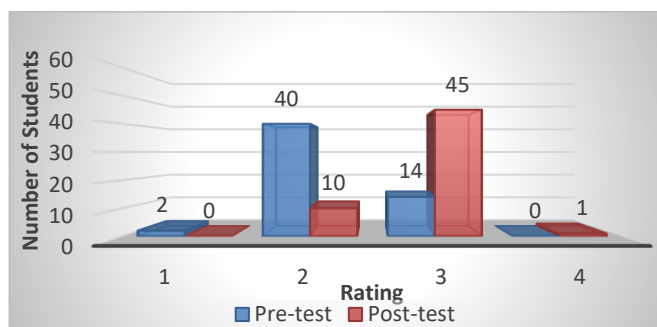
Figure 1: Pre-post CWB project organisation skill rating

It can be found that the respondents' rating in organisation criterion became better in the post-test. During pre-test, 2 out of 56 respondents had a rating of 1 while 40 respondents received a rating of 2, which means 71.43% of them created write-ups which did not show evidence of attentiveness to audience, focus on topic was not consistently sustained, some ideas had lack of distinction between main ideas and details, order of ideas were not effective and were seen to have no opening sentence, no closing and the piece seemed incomplete.

Elaboration Skill Rating
Elaboration skill is a student skill which focuses on the student's capability to provide details of his theme, present varied sentence style, as well as his skill to describe and create vivid descriptions in his write-up. This is one of the skills assessed in this experimental study. As observed prior to the utilisation of the CWB project, the pre-service teachers manifested difficulty to give rich details to topics where they were asked to create compositions or even when they were required to create lesson designs by the researchers in their various major subjects in English.
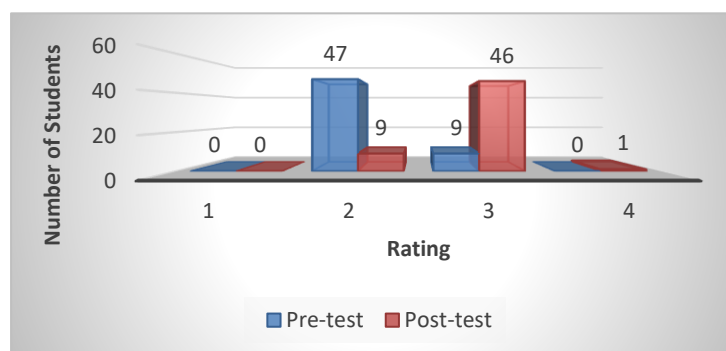

Figure 2: Pre-post CWB project elaboration skill rating

It can be identified in the figure above that one respondent made a perfect rating in elaboration criterion in the post-test from a 0 in pre-test. Likewise, an enormous drop of the respondents getting a rating of 2 is observed which paves way to a huge number of respondents getting a rating of 3. An 80.43% increase of the number of students found in the figure receiving a rating of 3, which means that, out of 56 respondents 92% of them have written pieces with the main ideas supported by details, but that details in some paragraph are sketchy yet narrative, details are generally sufficient to flesh out events, all details are related to the topic, some

details are not used effectively, transitions are also observed, varied sentence styles are shown and word choices are adequate to convey meaning and some precise and vivid words are utilised.

Grammar, Usage and Mechanics Skill Rating

Grammar usage and mechanics is a student skill which covers the student's sophisticated and consistent command of Standard American English which includes his/her knowledge in the rules of grammar, its usage, and the use of punctuations, which are the basic essentials in writing. Calanoga (2019) elaborated that pre-service teachers' competence along with accuracy in usage of mechanics and grammar are necessary.
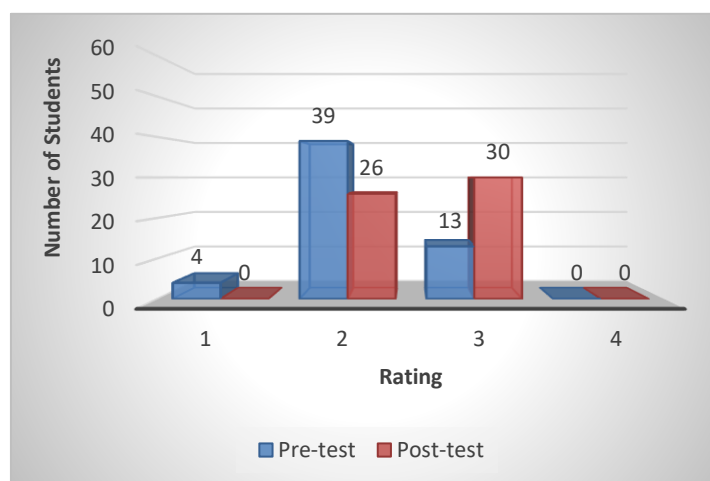

Figure 2: Pre-post CWB project grammar, usage and mechanics skill rating

It can be observed from the figure above that no respondent received a rating of 1 in this criterion after the application of the approach. However, there is a drop in the number of respondents getting a rating of 2, but there is only a 33.33% difference in the number of respondents who scored 2, from 39 of them during pre-test to 26 of them during the post-test. On the other hand, an increase of 56.67% in the number of respondents who receives a rating of 3 is very evident. Obviously, the learners' grammar usage and mechanics skill improved after the CWB project-based approach.

Students' Pre-Post CWB Project Writing Performance' Mean-Gain

This section answers problem number two mentioned in this study. The results are presented in tables below. The first table shows the mean-gain of the learners, very specific for each skill, while the second shows the learners' total rating across three skills.

Pre-post Mean Gain per Skill

The pre-post mean gain per skill shows the difference between test scores along the three skills namely, organisation, elaboration, and grammar, usage and mechanics obtained by the participants before and after the employment of the CWB project-based approach.

In Table 1, the p-value signifies that there is a significant mean-gain between the students' pre-post CWB project writing performance in all three skills:

organisation, elaboration, and grammar usage and mechanics. However, among the three skills, grammar usage and mechanics has the least significant mean-gain difference. The respondents' grammar usage and mechanics skill does improve but not as much if compared to the other two skills.

Table 1: Pre-post mean gain per skill

Skill	Test	Mean	StDev	SE Mean	T-Value	P-Value
Organisation	Pre-test	7.857	1.151	0.154	8.79	0
(audience appropriate, distinct focus, logical flow, coherence,	Post-test	9.25	0.879	0.117		
catchy opening, effective closing)	Difference	1.393	1.186	0.158		
Elaboration	Pre-test	7.609	1.289	0.172	10.95	0
(main idea with supporting details, vivid word choice,	Post-test	9.589	1.058	0.141		
relevance to the topic, sentence style, precise)	Difference	1.982	1.355	0.181		
Grammar Usage and Mechanics	Pre-test	7.25	1.517	0.203	6.52	0
(Standard English consistency, free of spelling,	Post-test	8.482	0.991	0.132		
capitalisation, usage errors, precise syntax)	Difference	1.232	1.414	0.189		

Note. α (0.05) > p-value (0.00) = reject the null hypothesis; α (0.05) < p-value (0.00) = accept the null hypothesis

Pre-post Mean Gain of the Students' Total Rating
The pre-post mean gain of the students' total rating shows the difference between the participants' overall pre-test and post-test scores before and after the employment of the CWB project-based approach.

The p-value signifies that there is a significant mean-gain between the students' pre-post CWB project writing performance. This result affirms the individual result (per skill) shown in Table 2. Generally, the students' scores increased in the post-test. In addition, the statistical result implies that the CWB project approach is effective due to their increasing scores as shown in the mean gain difference. Their post-test results are better compared to their pre-test and their writing performance has improved.

Table 2: Pre-post mean gain of the students' total rating

Test	Mean	StDev	SE Mean	T-Value	P-Value
Pre-test	22.714	3.566	0.477	10.59	0.00
Post-test	27.321	2.566	0.343		
Difference	4.607	3.257	0.435		

Note. α (0.05) > p-value (0.00) = reject the null hypothesis; α (0.05) < p-value (0.00) = accept the null hypothesis

5. Discussion

The results show that after the employment of the CWB project-based approach the number of students receiving a rating of 2 dropped to 75% while a huge increase on the number of students getting a rating of 3 is observed, which means that,, after the employment of the approach, most of the students' write-ups are appropriate to the audience, focus is not clear at every point, some main points are underdeveloped, ideas may not be in the most effective order, an opening which is not really attention-getting and an attempt at a closing is evident as well as a sense of completeness is palpable.

Thus, weblogging as an approach in a writing class has enhanced the students' organisation skill. This result supports Farooq et al. (2015) who articulated that weblogging caused a significant gain to students' skill in sequencing and organising ideas. Similarly, Said et al. (2013) revealed that most of their participants in their study agreed that weblogging does not only make them use writing style and register correctly but also seasons them to choose the correct sentence and paragraph structure, helping them to decide on their word choice and spelling cautiously, and alter their writing style.

In the same manner, as shown in the results above, 30 respondents out of 56 submitted pieces which show a number and type of errors not sufficient to interfere with meaning, a consistent command of Standard American English is observed, few spelling, capitalisation and/or usage errors are found, and competence in coordination and subordination is shown. In the same manner, Said et al. (2013) mention that weblogging enables students to check and correct their grammar, while Akdag and Ozkan (2017) say that weblogging is an effective tool to improve students' writing skills in English. This result implies that enhancing students' grammar usage and mechanics skill takes more time to improve than the other two skills identified in this study. In addition, it can also be assumed that, due to the weblog's option of auto-correcting or easily correcting students' mistakes in grammar and the like, the respondents can possibly take such features for granted and not dwell further on the reason/s they committed such errors. Another possible implication is that the length of time where this approach is applied may not be enough to fully furnish students' grammar usage and mechanics skill, which means that augmenting students' grammar usage and mechanics is more difficult to achieve compared with organisation and elaboration skills. This finding may be an eye-opener to other researchers looking to employ the CWB project approach in his/her class. The students' grammar usage and mechanics skills require more time to be augmented. It is likely this skill is very objective, thus it is easier for teachers to objectify it than the other two skills measured in this experimental study.

Nevertheless, this approach still succeeds to cause an improvement to students' grammar usage and mechanics skill. It may not be an extreme improvement however; it is enough to claim that weblogging is an effective approach to develop students' writing skills which is very apparent in the result presented in Table 1. Likewise, this finding is similar to that of Akdag and Ozkan (2017) who elaborate that weblog writing enhances students' writing skills especially contributing to their syntactic accuracy, vocabulary, and even gives them incentive to write freely. In addition, the participants of this study also agreed that the CWB project-based

approach improved their grammar, usage and mechanics skill. According to them weblogging in a writing class has improved their competence to use English language in writing. They disclosed that the new writing platform using WordPress software has minimised their grammatical errors, enhanced their vocabularies, corrected their punctuation and spelling, and aided them to find synonyms of English words to be used in their write-ups. These answers justify the result of the survey where 34 of them said that weblogging had improved their grammatical competence in English to a high extent, while 32 respondents declared that weblogging enriched their English vocabulary.

In addition, 50% of the respondents disclosed that weblogging augments their accuracy in using punctuation, as well as provides them an easier way to look for synonyms to a great extent. Furthermore, this result supports Rahmany et al. (2013) who also elaborate that students are recognised to be more competent in vocabulary and grammar skills when their write-ups are shared through a weblog tool.

To validate further the effectiveness of the CWB project-based approach, the scores of the students per skill from three raters are summed up and the difference between the pre-test total and the post-test total is considered using paired T-test. Likely, the respondents of this study enjoyed the employment of weblogging in their writing class. More so, one of the reasons can be that the CWB project is an approach which utilises Web 2.0 and has remarkable features which aid students to know their mistakes as well as it is an approach which promotes collaboration and interaction. Vygotsky (1978) says that learning happens through meaning making that involves the process of sharing various perspectives and experiences in communities of practice.

Thus, this approach has allowed students such interaction. Likewise, the concept of weblogging is new and fresh and very much appropriate to the techy 21st century learners, which means that students prefer to share their write-ups than just to keep it to themselves. They also have fun with the weblogging process as well as it gives them low stress in terms of making their write-ups better because they have more resources in making it great compared to the conventional way of writing, where they are only given paper and pen to write their literature. This techno-driven approach, which characterises post-method pedagogy in developing the students' writing skills is supported by several studies. Bacus (2021) asserted that 21st century language teachers benefit from programmes that strengthen their belief systems in post-method pedagogy which capitalises on the necessity to communicate and collaborate despite the limitations of time and space.

In this study, the pre-service teachers also found the approach more interactive because they were given a chance to communicate with each other anytime anywhere with regard to their writings. There is so much that students can do in this approach. The CWB project approach does not only teach them how to weblog but also teaches them a great deal of useful information and skills that 21st century learners like them must acquire and possess. This approach is beneficial to the students especially in that writing skill is mostly neglected by learners. Yet, through this approach they were able to identify the benefits that the CWB project

brings to them. Pinkman (2005) says that weblogs can provide interesting, authentic and communicative resources that can serve a variety of purposes in language classroom and they can also be used to encourage interaction among students and between teachers and students (Gunduz, 2016; Yang, 2009). Indeed, the Collaborative Weblog Based Project (CWB) approach is effective in the teaching of writing among the university senior students taking up Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English. From their first post until their last post on their weblogs, it affords them many valuable things. Students really have improved in terms of their organisation, elaboration and grammar usage and mechanics skills. After the employment of the CWB project approach, students emerged as better writers than before.

Conspicuously, the CWB project approach has increased the students' ability to use English language in writing. Their appreciation of the approach in terms on how it helps their English language competency is very evident from their verbatim responses. This increase in the learners' English language competency has been reported by a plentiful number of research studies (Lin, 2015). Various research findings disclose that weblogging has improved the writing skills of the students, which covers their English language competency (Lin, 2015). The very nature of weblogging, which allows learners to correct their grammatical errors easily either by connecting to a grammar online checker or using the built-in proofread icon, has provided them an advantage. This advantage is resonated in their writings. In fact, the respondents appreciate it when they can easily search synonyms as well as when they can correct their writings in terms of grammar, spelling and vocabulary usage. Thus, weblogging advances students' communication's skills and enhances writing skills (Kuimova & Zvekov, 2016).

6. Conclusion and Recommendations
The Collaborative Weblog Based (CWB) project is one of the alternative ways to enhance the pre-service teachers' writing skills and weblogging experiences positively affect students' appreciation of the writing tasks. The ratings they have obtained per skill serve as evidence. This result can be further proven by the way students regard their weblogging experiences positively, which shows their appreciation of the approach.

In view of the findings, some practical academic recommendations are presented. First, the CWB project approach may be used by teachers who are handling writing or composition to address the need posed to teaching writing in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic and to promote writing achievement among the learners. Second, an awareness campaign in upgrading the teaching of writing through the CWB project approach may also be proposed in addition to the traditional classroom in order to engage the learners, although the use of blogs does not literally mean that it provides more achievement in comparison to the traditional classroom. Lastly, a parallel research investigation focusing on enhancing the learners' grammar and usage mechanics skills may be conducted as it appears in the results to be the least improved skill.

It should be noted that this research is limited to 56 pre-service teachers in the education department taking English language as their major of expertise in one of

the state universities in the Philippines which composed the entire population of those studying Creative Writing. Second, the study was limited to a one-shot case quasi experimental research design which includes pre-post-test and the treatment (experimental) group. Third, the focus of the research is confined to the dependent variable, the pre-service teachers' writing performance. In addition, the topics covered are limited to the midterm coverage of the Creative Writing class designed for the pre-service teachers. The main software used is the free plan of WordPress.

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Appendix 1

Writing assessment and evaluation rubrics

	4	3	2	1
Skill	A paper in this category shows a superior command of the tools of language. It exhibits some or all of the following characteristics:	A paper in this category shows an adequate command of the tools of language. It exhibits some or all of the following characteristics:	A paper in this category shows a less than adequate command of the tools of language. It exhibits some or all of the following characteristics:	A paper in this category shows a consistent pattern of weakness in using the tools of language. It exhibits some or all of the following characteristics:
Focus/ Organis ation	Responds to the prompt	Responds to the prompt	Responds partially to the prompt but is off-target in some way	Evidence of attempt to respond to prompt
	Appropriate to the audience	Appropriate to the audience	May not show evidence of attentiveness to audience	No evidence of attentiveness to audience
	Single, distinct focus	Focus not clear at every point	Focus on topic not consistently sustained	Focus on topic not sustained
	Generally well-developed ideas or narrative	Some main points underdeveloped	Some lack of distinction between main ideas and details	No opening or closing
	Logical flow of ideas or events	Ideas may not be in the most effective order	Order of ideas not effective	Piece is not complete
	Opening that draws in reader; effective closing	An opening, but not necessarily focused or attention-getting; attempt at a closing	May be no opening sentence; no attention to closing	
	Sense of completeness	Sense of completeness	Piece seems incomplete	
Elaborat ion	Each main idea supported by details/narrative brought to life by details	Each main idea supported by details, but details in some paragraphs may be sketchy/narrative details sufficient to flesh out events	Uneven development/ narrative details sketchy	Half or more of main ideas not supported by details
	All details related to topic	All details related to topic	Details may appear to be	Half or more details may be irrelevant

			listed rather than integrated into coherent flow	
	Choice of details effective	Some details not used effectively	Some details are irrelevant	No transitions
	Ideas/events related by effective transition words and phrases	Transitions used	Few or no transitions	Sentence style choppy
	Varied sentence style	Varied sentence style	Most sentences simple; overall style choppy	Vocabulary limited
	Precise, interesting, and vivid word choice	Word choice adequate to convey meaning: some precise, vivid words	Word choice adequate to convey meaning but few precise or vivid words	
Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics	Sophisticated and consistent command of Standard English	Number and type of errors not sufficient to interfere with meaning	Number and type of errors may interfere with meaning at some points	Number and type of errors obscure meaning
	Free of spelling, capitalisation, usage errors	Consistent command of Standard American English	Weaknesses in command of Standard American English	Inadequate grasp of Standard American English
	Precise syntax; competence in coordination and subordination	Few, if any, spelling, capitalisation, or usage errors	Some spelling, capitalisation, or usage errors	Frequent errors in spelling, capitalisation, and usage
	Few, if any, errors in punctuation	Competence in coordination and subordination	Some fragments or run-ons	Many run-ons or fragments
			Some errors in punctuation	Serious and frequent punctuation errors

Adapted from The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.