

Research Article

A DEFINITIVE STUDY ON THE ENGLISH INSTRUCTORS' COGNITION ON THE WRITING ABILITY OF STUDENTS OF MINDORO STATE UNIVERSITY

* Romeo C. Castillo

College of Teacher Education, Dean and Faculty Researcher, Mindoro State University, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines.

Received 18th May 2022; Accepted 19th June 2022; Published online 30th July 2022

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the instructors' cognition on the writing ability of students in Mindoro State University. Fifteen (15) respondents were utilized for the purposes of this study. These are instructors currently teaching Purposive Communication, Organizational communication, Business English, Technical Writing, Morphology and syntax, and English-adjacent (World Literature, Teaching Methods in English, Modals etc.) subjects. This research employed a descriptive correlational design, also identified as the cross-sectional study under investigative research. The study also employed Pearson Correlation Coefficient, Standard Deviation and Mean to interpret the gathered data. The findings show that English Instructors were able to observe writing difficulties before during and after the students' writing exercises across the board. Writing difficulties were moderately observed in students during the writing exercises as well. It was also evidently shown that no significant relationship was identified in the writing difficulties of students before, during and after writing.

Keywords: cognition in writing, writing difficulties, writing skills and writing proficiency.

INTRODUCTION

One of the problems confronting the students in the tertiary level inside the classroom is on writing a formal, standard, acceptable and structured composition. There are reasons to believe at because of the flagrant and hapless writing performance of the students. Knowing only the basic and having insufficient knowledge on the elements of writing, erroneous grammar and usage, inaccurate choice of words, pitiable content and inadequate vocabulary words put them in quandary whenever writing activity is concerned. It is but incumbent on the part of the instructors to teach the students the necessary writing skills, exact style and techniques in composition or article writing. Writing involves coherence, organization, emphasis, clear and manageable ideas, intelligent arguments, word choice and unobtrusive point of view. Teachers should give emphasis on the organization of the materials, the elements of style and the clear expression of correctness. The reality behind this research is to find out how the teachers go over the process how they could reach a certain criterion how the writing ability of the students can be assisted and changed. There are grounds to conceive that students in the tertiary level could not find the precise construction and substance how they can strengthen their writing process. There are some students who do have problems before, during and after writing activities. The difficulties arise from the following reasons: (1) The vocabulary building. Some students have faced certain limits when it comes to vocabulary words because they are only accustomed to what are being accumulated in their minds. Practically speaking they don't have the initiative to enhance, add and at least use the synonyms and antonyms of words with difficult meaning. That is the reason why the result of their writing is somewhat reedy and mostly redundant. (2) Lack of planning and preparation. Students before the composition writing don't have the needed preparation in the sense that the needed elements of planning is devoid. The rules on

grammar and structure has not been given proper consideration and emphasis. The use of correct grammar in writing is very indispensable. This becomes the focal point of attention of the instructors because most of the students have the difficulty finding the right relationship between the subject and the verb. The ability to undergo brainstorming and group discussion is another significant factor why before writing, students crammed. They need to share their ideas among classmates and teachers. Mostly running berserk in writing and applying erroneous ideas will result to adversity. The role of the teachers in dealing with the correct and organized composition before during and after writing gave perfect outcome on the part of the students' work. There could be other ways where the writing of the students can be checked properly if they will follow the appropriate guidelines and rules set by the instructors. Sentence discourse showed another factor why the students don't have the proper reason to analyze the meaning and relationship of the different parts of the sentence. Little knowledge on sentence structure will bring inconsistencies and disorganization in composition writing. Students must bear in mind that synchronization and coherency of sentences are always essential. It is doleful to say that the teachers perceived these problems before during and after writing activities. The very core purpose of this study is to ascertain the knowledge of the teachers on how they can improve the ability of the students in writing and how to develop their motor skills. Giving them the proper guidance in writing could help them learn the accurate skills. How can we make them independent writers is primordial on the part of the instructors. The teachers must be vigilant and patient enough to sustain the necessary patterns, morphological structures, syntactic elements, grammar rules, the coordination and subordination of sentences, sentence analysis and paragraph structures as well. By doing such the students would have the complete parameter on how they could write effectively. The skills in writing can be developed and increased among the learners who always have the inclination and desire to improve their writing skills. Teaching them properly and ceaselessly on the proper mode and style of writing bolster the acquisition of writing skills.

*Corresponding Author: Romeo C. Castillo,

College of Teacher Education, Dean and Faculty Researcher, Mindoro State University, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Determine the cognition of instructors on the writing skills of students:
 - before writing,
 - during writing, and
 - after writing.
2. Assess the significant relationship amongst the cognition of instructors on the writing skills of students before writing, during writing and after writing.
3. Ascertain the implications of the instructor's cognition on the overall writing skill level of the students.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Using the descriptive correlation method was applied in this study. Since this is a quantitative research, it answers questions that are specific in this research which are countable and tangible in nature. It is always predetermined and structured as well as very agreeable in the research study devising them possibly consistent. This involves the researcher(s) either intervening teachers' cognition in the writing skills of their students. The study design is chosen based on how well it can answer the research question of interest while being ethical and cost effective (National Council for Osteopathic Research, 2016). Descriptive correlation is used also because this is called a cross-sectional study of the people they are interacting with, it is a descriptive correlational study. This is called a longitudinal study. Descriptive studies generally use surveys or other methods of data collection that rely on existing records (Descriptive correlation research, 2016)

Research Procedures

For data gathering purposes, the researcher used a standard set of questionnaire that elicited the data and information on matters that pertained to the topic under study. This consisted of writing skills of students before writing, during writing and after writing. This is arranged and set to the instructors of MinSCAT. The following various scales are applied in terms of measuring the level of exposure of the respondents in their English level and perception of instructors before, during, and after writing.

Table 1. Scale used in measuring the level of exposure of the respondents in their English level and perception of instructors before, during, and after writing

SCALE	DESCRIPTIVE LEVEL	DESCRIPTIVE INTERPRETATION
4.20-5.00	Highly Observed	The students have great skills before their writing
3.40-4.19	Observed	The students have adequate skills before their writing
2.80-3.39	Moderately Observed	The students have limited skills before their writing
1.80-2.79	Not Observed	The students have little skills before their writing
1.00-1.79	Not Observed at All	The students have no skills before their writing

Sampling

The subjects of the study are the Purposive Communication, Organizational Communication, Morphology and Syntax, Technical English, and English-adjacent subject instructors of Mindoro State University Campuses, under the College of Arts and Sciences, BSIT, Education, BTV-TED and HMD. The respondents were teaching English and related fields during the conduct of this study. They are officially employed during the Academic Year 2019-2020.

Data Analyses

This research employed Standard Deviation, a measure of central tendency (Mean), and Pearson Correlation Coefficient to determine the correlation across variables. Pearson Correlation Coefficient, or Pearson's R, is used to determine a linear correlation across variables; a tool especially utilitarian for measuring significance. The standard deviation, according to Marshall Hargrave (2019) is a statistic that measures the dispersion of a data set relative to its mean, while the mean aims to generate a representative analysis from the data set.

Ethical Consideration

Before the conduct of this study, the respondents were fully and carefully informed of the procedures and each one of them was aware of the process applied to avoid some problems in the future. The respondents gave their consent of participation in the conduct of this study and all the data were treated with confidentiality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Writing skills before writing

Before Writing	SD	M	Description
1. Finds a topic or idea of personal interest appropriate for writing.	0.627	3.94	Observed
2. Generates ideas for writing by using strategies such as brainstorming, questioning, quick write, conferencing, clustering, webbing, discussing and drawing.	0.612	3.74	Observed
3. Accesses and gathers additional ideas and information from any sources.			
4. Selects and focuses on topics given.			
5. Develops a plan or approach.	0.619	3.84	Observed
6. Chooses a writing format.	0.615	3.79	Observed
7. Organizes ideas in writing.	0.600	3.58	Observed
	0.591	3.47	Observed
	0.600	3.58	Observed
Average Weighted Mean		3.71	Observed

Table 2 shows the writing skills of students before writing. Finds a topic or idea of personal interest appropriate for writing is observed (M=3.94), Generates ideas for writing by using strategies such as brainstorming, questioning, quick write, conferencing, clustering, webbing, discussing and drawing is observed (M=3.74), Accesses and gathers additional ideas and information from any sources is observed (M=3.74), Selects and focuses on topics given is observe (M=3.79), Develops a plan or approach is observed (M=3.58), Chooses a writing format is observed (M=3.47) and Organizes ideas in writing is observed (M=3.58). The overall average weighted mean (3.75) which is observed. This indicates that students have adequate knowledge and skills during their writing.

Table 3. Writing skills during writing

During Writing		SD	M	Description
1.	Explores ways to start.	0.596	3.53	Observed
2.	Puts ideas down in paper.	0.591	3.47	Observed
3.	Drafts, shapes, connects, composes and creates their writing.	0.575	3.26	Moderately Observed
4.	Experiments their writings.			
5.	Modifies, changes and solves problems.	0.554	3.00	Moderately Observed
6.	Reflects and clarifies.	0.558	3.05	Moderately Observed
7.	Talks over drafts with others.	0.567	3.16	Moderately Observed
		0.558	3.05	Moderately Observed
Average Weighted Mean			3.22	Moderately Observed

Table 3 shows the writing skills of students during their writing. It shows on the two variables which are Explores ways to start is observed (M=3.53) and Puts ideas down in paper is observed (M=3.47) which means that student here have adequate skills and knowledge during their writing. On the other hand the rest of the variables during writing is moderately observed which are Drafts, shapes, connects, composes and creates their writing M=3.26), Experiments their writings (M=3.00), Modifies, changes and solves problems (M=3.05), Reflects and clarifies (M=3.16) and Talks over drafts with others (M=3.05). The average overall weighted mean (3.22) which is moderately observed. This indicates that students have limited knowledge and skills during their writing.

Table 4. Writing skills after writing

After Writing		SD	M	Description
1.	Rereads during and after drafting.	0.584	3.37	Moderately Observed
2.	Rethinks what has been written.	0.584	3.37	Moderately Observed
3.	Reviews and edits content	0.600	3.58	Observed
4.	Reviews and edits form and organization	0.596	3.53	Observed
5.	Checks language for clarity, precision and appropriateness.	0.603	3.63	Observed
6.	Confers and discusses			
7.	Shows concern for overall appearance	0.588	3.42	Observed
8.	Shares by reading aloud, readers circle, displaying what he/she writes.	0.603	3.63	Observed
		0.600	3.58	Observed
Average Weighted Mean			3.51	Observed

Table 4 shows writing skills of students after the writing process. Two variables under after writing is moderately observed which are rereads during and after drafting and rethinks what has been written (M=3.37) it shows that students here have limited skills and knowledge after writing. Reviews and edits content is observed (M=3.58), Reviews and edits form and organization is observe (M=3.53), Checks language for clarity, precision and appropriateness is observe (M=3.36), Confers and discusses are observed (M=3.42), Shows concern for overall appearance is observed (M=3.63), and Shares by reading aloud, readers circle, displaying what he/she writes is observed (M=3.58). The overall average weighted mean (3.51) is observed which means that students after writing have adequate knowledge and skills after writing.

Table 5. Correlation result on the significant relationship between before, during and after writing

Variable	Computed r-value	Relationships	Hypotheses
1. Before vs. During	0.003	Not Significant	Accepted
2. During vs After	0.002	Not Significant	Accepted
3. Before vs. After	0.003	Not Significant	Accepted

Significant at 0.05 level, one tailed test, df at 17 with critical value of 0.410

As observed in table 5 on the correlation result on the significant relationship between before, during and after writing, It shows that the computed r-value of before writing versus during writing is 0.003 which is lower than the critical value of 0.410, which is defined as not significant, thus the hypothesis is accepted. During writing versus after writing shows the r-value of 0.002 which is also significant and the hypothesis is accepted. Lastly, before versus after writing shows the r-value of 0.003 which is significant and the hypothesis is accepted. The results show that there is no significant relationship between before, during and after writing which means the hypothesis is accepted. Writing skills among students greatly impact their learning process. Multiple factors are being observed among them before, during and after writing. The activity of producing a text is a complex one involving three main cognitive processes: Planning, translating, and revising. Although these processes are crucial in

skilled writing, beginning and developing writers seem to struggle with them, mainly with planning and revising (Limpo, Alves, & Fidalgo, 2016). When proper planning, translating and revising is demonstrated on the part of the students, there is an effect on the improvement of their writing skills since the increase in planning, revising and translating could contribute to the high-level skills of students' writing, supplementary instruction and practice among them (Limpo, Alves, & Fidalgo, 2016). before writing, the factors precluded in: generate ideas for writing, accesses and gathers information, selection of topics, develop a plan, chooses a writing format and organizes ideas, were observed among the respondents. The writing teacher plays an important role in the writing proficiency of students. Proper demonstration on how, where, what and when to write is given an emphasis among the students. It is always the intention to guide and develop sequence on the writing processes of the students

depending largely on the writing competence of the students in relations to the activity being taught in writing. It requires teacher to precise with their students on their writing activity outcome inside the classroom. The more the writing activity is defined well, the more the activity outcome result better writing proficiency among the students. Writing is one of the most important in the skills proficiency of the students. It cannot simply hit or miss that could manage by the teacher (Callaghan, Knapp, & Noble, 2016). During writing, explores ways to start, puts ideas down to paper, drafts, experiments writing, modifies, reflects and talks over drafts with one another is moderately observe among the respondents. The students know the process however they have difficulties in the formulation of their write-ups because they do not have enough knowledge on how to write, the words, vocabulary and the proper construction. However, the description and analysis of text, the interpretation of the process involved in writing and the exploration of the connection between and the institutional practices or what is being taught which are constituted and sustained through writing have a problem among them (Candlin, & Hyland, 2017). Note that students are non-native speakers and therefore English for them is new and it is a foreign language to them and that is the reason why they encounter difficulties in their writing skills. (Seyabi, & Tuzlukova, 2017). The gaps were examined in relation to the problems that school and college language learners encounter when writing in English and to the strategies they follow to overcome these problems. The examined problems concerned writing a correct English sentence; putting the ideas together in a coherent way; choosing the right vocabulary to express ideas and having ideas about the suggested topics and deciding how to start an essay/paragraph. Approaches to writing in the context of English as foreign language informed the study. The results indicated that both groups of students acknowledge that they have problems when writing in English (mean score 3.78 and 3.85). Data regarding writing problems suggest that majority of school and university students struggle with lexical and content aspects of writing, however college students' perceptions of the kind of problems they encounter and of the strategies to address them are more assertive. The study recommended alignment of school and university writing curricula with emphasis on ideas' development, content knowledge, critical and creative thinking. Therefore, the school or university is doing their very best to help the students improve their writing skills to enhance learning process among them. After writing, rereads, rethinks, reviews, checks, confers, shows and shares their writing which is observed among them, the students exerted a lot in their writing though they have difficulty in doing it, they are trying to follow the instructions given by their lecturer however, they have insufficient knowledge about their writing. Advances in technology, changes in communication practices, and the imperatives of the workplace have led to the re-positioning of the role of writing in the global context. This has implications for the teaching of writing in schools. This article focuses on the argumentative essay, which is a high-stakes genre. The writing practices can be inferred from material artifacts, as well as critical discourse analysis, it showed that the argumentative genre is complex, especially for novice first additional language English writers. The implications of planning, particularly in relation to thinking and reasoning, the need to read in order to write argument and how social and school capital are insufficient without explicit instruction of the conventions of this complex genre (Dornbrack, & Dixon, 2018). Since there is no significant relationship between before, during and after reading, this study must give emphasis on what a teacher do to be more vigilant in teaching writing to students to be more fruitful and the enhancement of writing skills among them will be alleviated if not to eradicate problems encountered by the students in their writing skills. Looking students at

this point of view, what we saw was not student failing to learn to write. We saw student succeeding in learning to write poorly. Student at succeeding at acquiring a skill in writing that would permit them with increasing economy of effort to meet the demand of the university or college and adult work. These students did not know one must ask what would cause them to care that the path they were on would at best to polish mediocrity and would most likely lead to writing of the kind of people point to in lamenting to decline literacy (Freedman, Pringle, & Yalden, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it was revealed that writing skills before the beginning of the writing process were observed by the instructors among their students, which means that English instructors were able to visibly observe the preparation, planning, and thought organization of students before they started their writing activities. This is a positive reflection on the part of the instructor, as the students were proven skilled enough to express their ideas at the initial process, with minimal hesitation. Writing skills during the exercises were moderately observed by the instructors among the students, which mean students have limited knowledge in terms of the actual writing process, especially in time-sensitive, classroom-enclosed writing activities. The instructor was also skilled enough to perceive these skills from a bird's eye perspective, without delving too deeply into the skill set of each individual student. This means that the instructors are also highly qualified to identify difficulties and strengths that they may encounter during their period of instruction, and thus tailor their methods according to the needs of their class in a general sense.

Additionally, writing skills after the writing process were also observed, which means that students also have adequate knowledge in writing, and that the instructor was able to assess the students' mastery of the writing skill from the starting point until the submission of their work, which can work as an effective vantage point in designing necessary interventions for future activities and lessons.

There is no significant relationship among the perceived writing skills, as seen in the observation of instructors before writing, during writing and after writing. This implies that the instructors see no visible pattern whether students are better versed at the start, during, or at the end of their writing activities. The results of the instructors' perception may either indicate a more scrutinized demand for instructors to evaluate their students' writing skills, a better assessment method on an academic and strategic level, or at the basest sense based on the results of this study, that a difference (or lack thereof) in writing skills across the three stages of the process do not affect the overall writing skill of the student. Thus, the writing skill remains constant so long as there are no visible indications of difficulty perceived by the instructor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is recommended that English Instructors must be more vigilant in the proper demonstration of writing skills among their students since students have difficulties in the writing techniques. Emphasis must be given to techniques in writing, accuracy, focus, development, vocabulary and coherence to improve writing skills among the respondents. A thorough study must be given emphasis since there is no significant relationship on the writing difficulties among the students in terms of before, during and after writing. This includes proper writing efficacy, level of capacity in writing, unity and proper methods of writing.

REFERENCES

- Callaghan, M., Knapp, P., & Noble, G. (2016). Genre in practice. The powers of literacy: A genre approach to teaching writing, 179-202.
- Candlin, C. N., & Hyland, K. (2017). Writing: Texts, processes and practices. Routledge.
- Chang, J. Y. (2017). The use of general and specialized corpora as reference sources for academic English writing: A case study. *ReCALL*, 26(02), 243-259.
- Descriptive Correlational Research. 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.cliffsnotes.com/studyguides/...in.../descriptivecorrelational-research>.
- Dornbrack, J., & Dixon, K. (2018). Towards a more explicit writing pedagogy: The complexity of teaching argumentative writing. *Reading & Writing*, 5(1), 8-pages.
- Ferris, D. R. (2018). Responding to student writing: Teachers' philosophies and practices. *Assessing Writing*, 19, 6-23.
- Freedman, A., Pringle, I., & Yalden, J. (2017). Learning to write: first language/second language. Routledge.
- Limpo, T., Alves, R. A., & Fidalgo, R. (2016). Children's high-level writing skills: Development of planning and revising and their contribution to writing quality. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 84(2), 177-193.
- National Council for Osteopathic Research. 2016. Retrieved from www.ncor.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2014/03/Quantitative_research_methods.pdf
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2018. Research Methods for Business Students. 6th edition, Pearson Education Limited p.288
- Seyabi, F. A., & Tuzlukova, V. (2017). Writing problems and strategies: An investigative study in the Omani school and university context. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 3(4), 37-48.
- Yang, Y. F. (2018). Preparing language teachers for blended teaching of summary writing. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 27(3), 185-206.
