

WRITING PROFICIENCY OF APAYAO STATE COLLEGE FIRST YEAR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract: The study generally aimed to find out the writing proficiency of the first year high school students of Apayao State College- Laboratory high school. Specifically, it determined the writing proficiency of the respondents' in terms of organization, grammatical accuracy and mechanics thereby determining the respondents general level of writing proficiency at the same time. The first year high school students were the respondents of this study. The study employed the descriptive method which made use of a questionnaire as the main instrument in gathering the data. The data were analyzed with the use of weighted mean. The analysis and interpretation of the data yielded the following results: The respondents writing proficiency in terms of organization is fairly proficient, likewise in terms of grammatical accuracy and proficient in terms of mechanics. The general level of the respondents writing proficiency is proficient.

Keywords: English , Writing proficiency, Apayao, High School students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the macro skills in English [1] which every individual should develop. Its importance in almost every facet of our life whether it be in business, education for communication is almost indubitable [2, 3]. It is used not only to converse with the rest of the world but also to understand much about literature of science and technology [4]. Indeed, it plays a vital role in this technology driven world [5] where communication of ideas through writing is imperative. Moreover, one's respect is sought if his writing skill conforms to the conventions in English writing usage.

Unfortunately, in the Philippines, the language problem on the deteriorating quality of the written English in many schools, poses a threat to the efficiency of our educational system [6,7]. This is because writing is very significant in the learning process. It must be noted that the modern society is in need of people who, aside from being able to read and speak could also write in English [8]. Hence, the students must acquire a solid foundation in writing which is primarily, though not solely, build on accuracy. It is one's view that once bad language habit has formed, it is difficult to break it. Moreover, for the students who are learning writing in non English speaking country, they just have a little chance to learn an acceptable form of English outside the classroom and for them to achieve accuracy, students or learners must have vigorous language training included in writing.

However, it is sad to say that proficiency in English has declined among students in spite of the fact that English is used as the medium of instruction. This problem is openly expressed in remarks such as "our students are poor in English". The truth, as revealed in so many researches, is that so many students today cannot write correctly in English. Teachers are very much aware of this fact, that many of their students are not fluent in expressing their ideas and feelings in writing. Thus, with the observed deterioration of the quality of English language writing proficiency among learners, this study was conducted.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

In any educational institution, writing is certainly one of the necessary ways for learners to master the basic literacy skills. Through the development of students' skill in writing, they will be able to accomplish tasks inside and outside the school premise that necessitate written outputs.

Experts agree that full development of literacy skills can only occur when learners do a lot of writings. Writings are more than putting a word on paper. Good writing could be taught by teachers who provide frequent and challenging opportunities for writing to enable the learners to develop their skills and confidence in writing.

However, there are some factors that affect one's mastery of the writing skills. The truth must be considered that children come to school with a variety of abilities, limitations, backgrounds, learning styles, and attainment span. All these would definitely be reflected in their written outputs as writing is a thinking process which is characterized by a purposeful selection and organization of experiences. In this study, the writing proficiency of the students would be looked into in terms of the organization of their ideas, accuracy of their grammar and correctness of their mechanics.

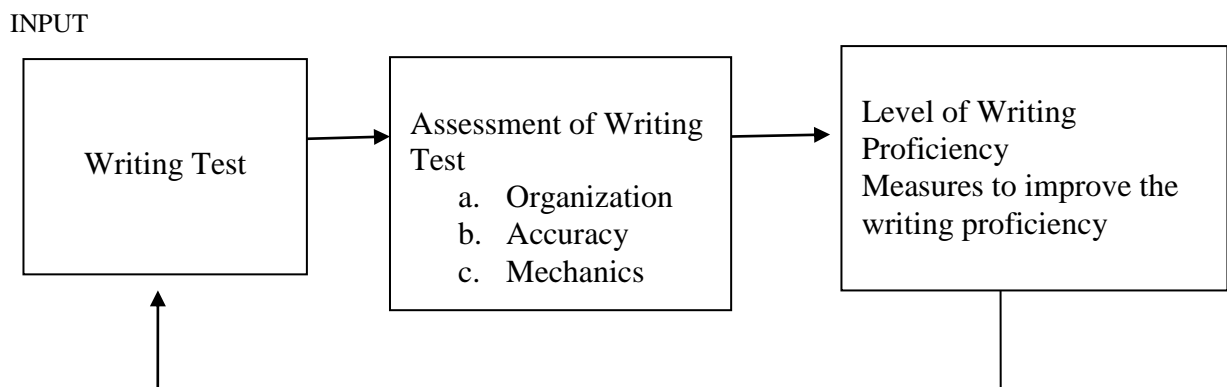


Figure.1: A paradigm showing the process of the research.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

This study aimed to find out the writing proficiency of the first year high school students of Apayao State College-Laboratory high school.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. .What is the writing proficiency of the respondents' in terms of:
 1. organization
 2. grammatical accuracy
 3. mechanics
2. What is the student's level of writing proficiency?

II. METHODOLOGY**Research Design:**

The descriptive method was used to collect data with the questionnaire as the main instrument in gathering data.

Locale of the Study:

This study was conducted at the Laboratory High School of Apayao State College at San Isidro Sur, Luna, Apayao during the school year 20014-2015.

Respondents:

The respondents of this study were the first year high school students of Apayao State College. Complete enumeration was used by the researchers to ensure more reliable results.

Research Instrument:

The main instrument used in collecting the data needed was the questionnaire lifted from the study of Saddam. It consisted of the writing test to measure the respondents' proficiency in writing. The test was composed of twenty-six items.

General directions were provided for the respondents to be guided accordingly. An answer sheet was likewise used for easier administration of the test and to facilitate checking it.

The students were asked to write a composition the title of which was already provided. The composition had 3 parts- introduction, body and conclusion. The students were asked to write three sentences for the introduction and conclusion. The body was composed of two paragraphs. Each paragraph was provided with a topic sentence and the students were asked to develop ten supporting details in each of the two paragraphs in the body.

III. DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the Principal of Apayao State College- Laboratory High School. Upon approval, the researchers personally floated the set of questionnaires to the respondents. The set of questionnaires was retrieved immediately after completion to avoid loss.

Furthermore, the compositions were checked and rated by two(2) graduates of MA in English to ensure the reliability of rating the respondents' proficiency in writing. Their answers were evaluated based from organization (coherence and relevance of supporting details), grammatical accuracy, (morphology and syntax) and mechanics (spelling, capitalization and punctuation).

Statistical Treatment:

Weighted mean was used to determine the writing proficiency of the respondents in terms of organization, grammatical accuracy and mechanics. The results of the respondents writing test were analyzed using the 5-point scale below:

Score	Point	Descriptive Value
22-26	5	Very Highly Proficient
16-20	4	Very Proficient
11-15	3	Proficient
6-10	2	Fairly Proficient
1-5	1	Not Proficient

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Table.I: The writing proficiency of the respondents' in terms of organization, grammatical accuracy and mechanics.**

Level	Mean	Descriptive Value
1. Organization		
a. Coherence	2.24	Fairly Proficient
b. Relevance	2.44	Fairly Proficient
Sub Mean	2.34	Fairly Proficient
2. Grammatical Accuracy		
a. Language Structure	2.55	Fairly Proficient
b. Word Diction	2.31	Fairly Proficient
Sub Mean	2.43	Fairly Proficient
3. Mechanics		
a. Spelling	3.2	Proficient
b. Capitalization	3.37	Proficient
c. Punctuation	3.06	Proficient
Sub Mean	3.21	Proficient

The data reveal that the respondents are fairly proficient with the mean of 2.34 in terms of organization, an upshot of the results they got for coherence and relevance with the means of 2.24 and 2.44 respectively, equally having the descriptive value of fairly proficient. The results imply that the written outputs of the respondents can be described as “foggy” which means that they are not lucid enough for the intended reader to grasp the ideas with ease and accuracy.

The data also show that pertinent to grammatical accuracy, the respondents are fairly proficient with the mean of 2.43, a result of the means computed for language structure and word choice which are 2.55 and 2.31 respectively both having the descriptive value of fairly proficient. The results imply that the respondents written outputs are incredibly faulty in grammar. They confuse tenses, fail to make predicates agree with subjects and so on. Their being beginning writers, the fact that they are still in first year high school, probably explains why they seem to be “most at sea” when it comes to word choice. They have a problem about how to word their thought.

The data further reveal that with the mean 3.21, the respondents are proficient in terms of mechanics, an outcome of their being proficient in spelling with the mean of 3.2, capitalization with the mean of 3.37 and punctuation with the mean of 3.06. The results imply that the respondents have a good grasp of the mechanics of the standard English.

Table.II: Respondents’ General Level of Writing Proficiency

Level	Mean	Descriptive Value
Organization	2.34	Fairly Proficient
Grammatical Accuracy	2.43	Fairly Proficient
Mechanics	3.21	Proficient
Grand Mean	2.66	Proficient

As reflected on the table, the respondents’ general level of writing proficiency is proficient with the mean of 2.66. This means that the respondents skill in writing is creditable taking into consideration their exposures to writing activities, their background, their individuality and noteworthy to mention, their level of education.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based from the foregoing findings, the following conclusions are arrived at:

The respondents writing proficiency in terms of organization, grammatical accuracy and mechanics could be due to their being freshmen. They are in the stage wherein as starting writers, their problem is centered on “How shall I word my thought?” and “What really is my thought?”

The respondents general level of writing proficiency implies that given the opportunity and “the push” the respondents could be potential writers.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the researchers offer the following recommendations:

1. Teachers should provide more exercises which are intensive in paragraph organization, grammatical accuracy and mechanics.
2. The administration should see to it that the school, particularly the laboratory high school, has sufficient and adequate reading materials which could enhance learning to write.
3. Teachers should make constructive follow-up and provide necessary materials for the improvement of their students’ basic skills in writing.

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