

Writing Fluency of First Year BSEd College Students: A Basis for Language Intensification Program

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ABSTRACT

This research study was conducted to determine the writing fluency level of the 77 first year Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) students of Isabela State University, San Mariano Campus enrolled during the SY 2019 – 2020. Data gathered were analyzed using frequency count, percentage and ranking.

The salient findings are as follows. Out of the 77 respondents, more than half of them demonstrated poor understanding of the topic given and therefore, confusion was evident in their outputs.

For the respondents writing fluency level on organization of ideas, majority of them had fairly weak performance in organizing and developing ideas and with no supporting details.

In terms of conventions which deal about grammar, correct usage, and mechanics, more than one half of the respondents' outputs were marked with numerous errors which significantly interfered with the meaning of their inputs.

About their level of writing difficulties applying style of writing, majority of them had serious and frequent problems with word choice and sentence structure.

KEYWORDS: *writing fluency, organization of ideas, conventions, writing style*

Article Received: 10 August 2020, Revised: 25 October 2020, Accepted: 18 November 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

It is a fact that writing as a macro skill in English once given adequate attention and seriousness can make students survive in difficult classroom writing challenges.

Students, therefore need to appreciate the impact of developing and enhancing one's writing potential for this can lighten academic life, asserted by Bangayan- Manera (2019).

Writing requires patience since this activity must be coupled with higher order thinking skill to produce outputs that can be labeled as acceptable.

It is true that these days, there are a lot of academic challenges that need equal attention and writing is one. This should not be undermined by college students, instead, seriousness and attention must be exerted for them to succeed in classroom writing activities.

Domantay and Ramos (2018) emphasized that to be able to succeed in academic writing and to perform effectively; students must possess a proficient English writing performance.

It is for this reason that an impactful activity in the form of conducting a research study which is relevant to the needs of the college students of the Campus is a major priority to become of great help in improving students' academic performance particularly in the area of

writing. This, when realized is a strong edge of graduates of the Campus in line to search for employment.

Communication through writing also enriches students' vocabulary and familiarizes them with style of writing that will stimulate and encourage them to think. In short, writing opens opportunities for self-expression and it is very necessary in carrying out various activities in the world of work.

1.2 Research Objectives

This study aimed to identify the writing difficulties of the respondents. Specifically, it aimed to:

1. trace the level of writing difficulties of the respondents in the following areas:
 - Content
 - Organization of ideas
 - Conventions (grammar, usage, mechanics)
 - Writing style
2. find out the weaknesses of the students in relation to writing; and
3. evolve extension activities that will strengthen writing performance of the respondent for employment advantage.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

Descriptive statistics was used in this study in order to determine the writing proficiency level of the respondents applying content, organization of ideas conventions and style of writing to evaluate the respondents' essay outputs.

2.2. Research Participants

This research study involved 77 first year Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) students of Isabela State University, San Mariano Campus enrolled during the SY 2019 – 2020.

2.3. Instrumentation

In order to obtain the essay outputs of the respondents, a questionnaire was used with a strict reminder that in developing their essay with a common title, observance of content relevance,

proper organization of ideas, conventions (grammar, correct usage, and mechanics) and writing style must be observed to ensure acceptable essay outputs.

2.4. Data Gathering

Before the questionnaires were floated, proper coordination was done in writing among concerned officials and faculty of the campus. Retrieval of the questionnaires was done systematically through one of the trusted colleagues of the researcher.

2.5. Data Analysis

Data gathered were analyzed using frequency count, percentage and ranking to determine the writing proficiency level of the respondents. Rubric was used to determine the writing proficiency level of the respondents.

3. Results and Discussions

Table I. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the First Year BSEd Respondents as to Their Writing Proficiency Level Focusing on Content and Focus

Content and Focus	BSEd		
	F	%	Rank
Demonstrates a thorough and clear understanding of the topic. An insightful response was given.	-	-	-
Demonstrates a sound understanding of the topic. Addresses the topic clearly, but a more effective response can be given.	2	2.60	4
Demonstrates a general understanding of the topic. It is well explained, though some aspects may have been developed into a more sensible response.	5	6.49	3
Demonstrates some understanding of the topic given, but some aspects were not clearly stated that resulted into developing a weak response.	30	38.96	2
Demonstrates poor understanding of the topic. Confusion is fairly evident.	40	51.95	1
Total	77	100	

The data show that out of the 77 first year BSEd respondents enrolled during the SY 2019-2020, 2 or 2.60 percent of them demonstrated a sound understanding of the topic but a more effective response can be given; 5 or 6.49 percent demonstrated a general understanding of the topic; 30 or 38.96 demonstrated some understanding of the topic given but some aspects were not clearly stated that resulted into developing a weak response; 40 or 51.95 percent demonstrated poor understanding of the topic hence confusion was

fairly evident; while none of the respondents demonstrated a thorough and clear understanding of the topic.

The data imply that as to content, the respondents' outputs did not express well what was asked in the topic; hence the need to improve their comprehension is necessary. This finding is backed up by the National Reading Panel describing comprehension as a complex cognitive process in which a reader must have a serious engagement with the text in order to succeed in writing.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the First Year BSEd Respondents as to Their Writing Proficiency Level on Organization of Ideas

Organization	BSEd		
	F	%	Rank
The response is coherently organized and developed, with ideas supported by reasons.	-	-	-
It is well organized and developed, with ideas supported by appropriate reasons.	-	-	-
It is adequately organized and developed, with generally supporting ideas with reasons.	5	6.49	3
The response is poorly organized and developed, presenting generalizations	20	25.97	2

without adequate and appropriate supporting ideas.			
It has a fairly weak organization and development, providing basic generalizations without supporting ideas.	50	64.94	1
The answer lacks organization.	2	2.60	4
Total	77	100	

Table 2 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents as to the level of their writing proficiency in relation to organization of ideas. As can be seen in the table, five or 6.49 percent of them had adequately organized and developed outputs; 20 or 25.97 percent had poorly organized and developed outputs; 50 or 64.94 percent of them had fairly weak organization and development and with no supporting details at all; 2 or 2.60 percent of the respondents' outputs showed non-observance of an organized writing outputs while none of them had coherently organized and developed output supported by appropriate reasons.

The data reveal that most of the respondents had questionable writing outputs in relation to organization of ideas. This performance can be attributed to the fact that writing as an important macro-skill in English was not given so much attention during the past levels of education of the respondents undermining the basic principles of writing. According to Bachman and Palmer {2010}, organization is one of the two areas of language knowledge and encompasses grammatical knowledge and textual knowledge which needs focus among students especially during academic foundation years.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the First Year BSEd Respondents on Their Writing Proficiency Level Applying Conventions (grammar, usage, and mechanics)

Conventions (Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics)	BSEd		
	F	%	Rank
The response is generally free from errors in grammar usage, and mechanics (spelling, capitalization, punctuation).	-	-	-
Makes few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.	2	2.60	5
Makes some errors, but mostly demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.	3	3.90	3.5
It has an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, but minimally affects the meaning of the response.	15	19.48	2
The response is marked with numerous errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that significantly interfere with the meaning.	54	70.13	1
The activity has serious and recurrent errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that greatly interfere with the overall meaning of the answer.	3	3.90	3.5
Total	77	100	

Table 3 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents as to writing proficiency level applying conventions(grammar, usage, and mechanics).

Of the 77 respondents, 2 or 2.60 percent made few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics; 3 or 3.90 percent made some errors but mostly demonstrated control of grammar, usage, and mechanics;15 or 19.48 percent had an accumulation of errors in the same aspects but normally affected the meaning of their responses; 54 or 70.13 percent had numerous errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics; 3 or 3.90 percent made some errors but demonstrated control of the mentioned factors; another 3 or 3.90 percent had serious and recurrent errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that greatly interfered with the overall

meaning of their outputs while none among the respondents submitted an output that was free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.

The data imply that most of the respondents cannot manifest correct application of the grammar rules. Correct usage and mechanics were likewise noted as among their weaknesses which may be due to low level of seriousness in attending their English subjects during their basic education. This finding is similar to the findings of Lasaten[2014] after examining the common linguistic errors in the English writings of the teacher education students wherein the most common errors were on verb tenses, sentence structure, punctuations, word choice, spelling, prepositions and articles.

Table 4. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the First Year BSEd Respondents on Their Writing Proficiency Level Applying Writing Style

Writing Style	BSEd		
	F	%	Rank
Use a wide variety of sentence structures that show a superior control of word choice with a clear concise style.	-	-	-
There is a minimal variety in sentence structure but control of word choice with a clear style is evident.	-	-	-
There is a deliberate sentence variety showing an adequate control of word choice with inconsistently clear style.	4	5.19	3
Rudimentary sentence variety is shown though appropriate vocabulary is evident in the output.	16	20.78	2
Serious and frequent problems with word choice and sentence structure is evident, thus lack of style is shown.	56	72.73	1
Many run-ons and fragments are shown. Limited vocabulary is established and sentence variety is not evident.	1	1.30	4
Total	77	100	

Table 4 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents as to writing proficiency level applying writing style.

There were 4 or 5.19 percent whose outputs showed a deliberate sentence variety with adequate control of word choice; 16 or 20.78 percent of the respondents had rudimentary sentence variety though appropriate vocabulary was evident in their outputs; 56 or 72.73 percent had serious and frequent problems with word choice and sentence structure; and 1 or 1.30 percent had run-on and fragment output with limited vocabulary, hence, sentence variety was not evident.

The data reveal that most of the respondents' outputs were not in accordance to acceptable writing style due to serious word choice and sentence structure problems. This condition can be due to some factors like the poor foundation of the respondents, their low level of interest to respond to classroom writing activities and the dedication of some parents to perform their responsibility of providing motivation to their children. This finding has similarity to the finding of the conducted research study of emphasizing that structural errors were made by the respondents in writing sentences.

4. CONCLUSIONS

From the data gathered, the following conclusions were derived;

1. The respondents' outputs in relation to observance of content relevance were affected by their low comprehension level.
2. Most of the respondents' essay outputs were not properly organized and developed.
3. Majority of the respondents cannot manifest mastery of the grammar rules as evidenced by their erroneous outputs. Correct usage and mechanics which are considered important elements to succeed in writing were not also observed.

4. Most of the essay outputs of the respondents did not show a good style of writing.

5. Recommendations

1. Capability building activities in the form of Seminar-Workshops, Trainings and Tutorial sessions must be conducted to enhance
2. English teachers assigned to handle writing subjects every semester should possess a passionate characteristic or personal quality in reading, editing or proofreading students' writing outputs.
3. Adequate writing references should be available in the library for reading use of students.
4. The administration of ISU, San Mariano Campus must provide a conducive venue for the conduct of capability building activities in order to ensure an inspiring bearing atmosphere.
5. Extension activities focused on writing enhancements should be prioritized as a yearly extension activity for Senior High School students within at the Campus service areas.
6. The respondents must strengthen their commitment to respond to writing activities required by their instructors/professors.
7. Parents of the respondents should show cooperation in ensuring the formation of better study habits so that writing as an important macro skill will be given equal attention for the benefit of their children.

Acknowledgment

The author would like to thank Isabela State University Research and Development office for having this opportunity to conduct and implement research in the universities research endeavor.

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