THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT TO WRITING COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT FOR COMMUNICATION OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS, DEPARTMENT OF THAI LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to 1) assess the needs to develop writing competency for communication and 2) study the problems and obstacles of writing competency development for communication of first-year students, department of Thai language, faculty of education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The sample used in this research was randomly collected by the respondents 50 people, and by interviewing 25 people. The findings revealed that 1) the status quo was at the high level and the necessary condition was at the highest level 2) most the problems and obstacles of writing for communication in first-year students was incorrect writing words, and 3) the first-year students wanted practice different types of writing such as government letter writing, academic writing, research writing, etc., and variety of writing activity.

Keywords: The needs assessment, Writing competency development, Writing for communication

INTRODUCTION

Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University is a higher education institution with a vision of being a model for teaching, research, academic service, and to preserve arts and culture. One of the missions of the university is to produce excellent graduates in one way. As a result, the university has a policy for producing graduates by developing every course to increase competitiveness both nationally and internationally.

Faculty of education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University has accepted the mission and policy of the university. Therefore, one of the targets for the development of the faculty of education in teaching and learning is emphasis on producing graduates with knowledge and virtue as well as enhancing academic and teaching profession. For this reason, the researchers, who is a faculty member of the Thai language program, faculty of education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, want to develop the academic skills of students in this field to a higher level.

One academic skill, that is important to learning, lifestyle, and the professional practice of students, is communication skills, especially writing skills are the skills that students should develop the most competency because it is a skill that requires practice and learning to be able to have good writing performance.

However, writing skills are the least developed and practiced currently. As a result, students write to communications inefficiently and affect to their teaching in the future, for example, students use incorrectly prepositions and conjunctions to connect words and phrases, students use excessively the same words because they have low vocabulary, students use wrong language level, students cannot write clearly, etc. Therefore, students should urgently develop writing competency. By doing this, need to know the needs of students. Including the problems

and obstacles of writing in order to know the needs and causes of such problems, which will be able to further develop the students' writing competence.

From the foregoing, the researchers would like to assess the needs to develop writing competency for communication and to study the problems and obstacles of writing for communication of the first-year students in the Thai language program, faculty of education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Then, the researchers analyze and use such information to find ways to develop writing competency.

OBJECTIVE

1. To assess the needs to develop writing competency for communication of first-year students, department of Thai language, faculty of education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University
2. To study the problems and obstacles of writing competency development for communication of first-year students, department of Thai language, faculty of education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

METHODOLOGY

This research was evaluative research. The sample group in this research were first-year students in the Thai language program, faculty of education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, academic year 2021. The researchers selected by random method from 104 students divided into 50 respondents and 25 individual interviews from the respondents.

Research Instruments

1. A questionnaire to study the needs to develop competence in writing for communication, problems, and obstacles in writing for communication. The researchers collected concepts and information about the needs to develop writing competency for communication, problems, and obstacles in writing for communication from articles, research, and documents. It is divided into two parts as follows:

Part 1 Information about the status of respondents is check-list by asking about sex and age, and part 2 A questionnaire about the needs to develop writing competency for communication, problems, and obstacles in writing for communication. The questionnaire is a 5-level rating scale of the Likert Scale, with the following scoring criteria: 1 = Lowest level; 2 = Low level; 3 = Medium level; 4 = High level; and 5 = Highest level.

2. Interview Protocol to study the needs to develop writing competency for communication, problems, and obstacles in writing for communication to gain insights. therefore, the researchers conducted an individual interview form. It was an open-ended interview to study the needs to develop competency in writing for communication and barriers to writing in addition to the information obtained in the questionnaire. The questionnaire in the interview is a tool created by the researchers by studying questions from literature reviews, and related theoretical concepts.

Data Analysis

1. Data analysis from questionnaires

1.1 Information about the status of first-year students in the Thai language program divided into sex and age. Analyze the data by finding the percentage (%).

1.2 Data analysis from questionnaires. The statistics used to analyze the data were average ($\bar{x}$), standard deviation (S.D.), modified priority needs index ($PNI_{Modified}$), percentage (%), and content analysis, which performance levels are based on the following interpretive criteria: average 4.50 - 5.00 = Highest level; average 3.50 - 4.49 = High level;

average 2.50 - 3.49 = Medium level; average 1.50 - 2.49 = Low level; average 1.00 - 1.49 = Lowest level.

2. Data analysis from the interview

2.1 The researchers obtained the information from transcripts and recordings. Then, the researchers read several times in order to gain an overall understanding of the information and to consider important issues.

2.2 Arrange texts or sentences that have the same or similar meanings into the same group to categorize into a system. Then, summarize the ideas to become a semantic unit of information with a larger and more concrete level.

2.3 The researchers wrote a report in a descriptive format by analyzed the data together with the conceptual framework and related theories to find the answers obtained from the interview.

RESULTS

The analysis of data shows findings as follows:

1. The results of the analysis on the information about the status of the respondents

The respondents were first-year students in the Thai language program, faculty of education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, academic year 2021, totaling 50 people, divided into 11 males, representing 22% and 39 females, representing 78%.

2. The results of the analysis on the questionnaire about the needs to develop writing competency for communication, problems, and obstacles in writing for communication

Overall, the results showed that the status quo was at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.132$, S.D. = 0.674), the necessary condition was at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.561$, S.D. = 0.573, and the modified priority needs index ($PNI_{Modified}$) of the needs to develop writing competency for communication in the first-year students was 0.104.

For the modified priority needs index, when the researchers analyzed all 5 parts, the results showed that the first-year students in the Thai language program had the need for development of writing competencies for communication in communication and language using as first ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.163$). Second was using technology and innovation in education ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.128$). Third was learning management ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.088$). Fourth was measurement and evaluation ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.079$). Final was knowledge ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.064$)

When the researchers considered each part in detail, it was found that first part, knowledge, the status quo was at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.22$, S.D. = 0.667), the necessary condition was at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.488$, S.D. = 0.641), and the most need was sources to find knowledge about writing that had sufficient to their needs ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.156$).

Second part, communication and language using, the status quo was at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4$, S.D. = 0.649), the necessary condition was at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.656$, S.D. = 0.547), and the most need was able to sequence content in writing well and write with relationships ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.214$).

Third part, learning management, the status quo was at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.164$, S.D. = 0.659), the necessary condition was at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.532$, S.D. = 0.575), and the most need was learning management that consider the differences in writing skills of students ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.134$).

Fourth part, using technology and innovation in education, the status quo was at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.06$, S.D. = 0.72), the necessary condition was at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.58$, S.D. =

0.524), and the most need was classrooms have equipment to support the use of technology and innovation in learning management ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.157$).

Final part, measurement and evaluation, the status quo was at the high level ($\bar{x} = 4.215$, S.D. = 0.656), the necessary condition was at the highest level ($\bar{x} = 4.55$, S.D. = 0.547), and the most need was able to measure and evaluate the results according to the most realistic conditions ($PNI_{Modified} = 0.09$).

3. The results of the analysis on the interview to study the needs to develop writing competency for communication, problems, and obstacles in writing for communication

The information obtained from the interview was divided into 4 issues and details are as follows:

Issue 1 problems and obstacles in writing for communication of students. the results showed that the most problems and obstacles in writing for communication of students was use incorrect words, such as misspellings, using words were not suitable with the language level, use grammatical errors, using the wrong mark, etc., representing 44%.

Issue 2 the needs or necessities for the development of writing for communication of students. the results showed that the most the need or necessity of students were wanted to improve their writing correctly, and having styles for various types of writing, such as writing official books, research writing, letter writing, academic writing, etc., as a percentage of each need or necessity 36%.

Issue 3 support for the develop writing for communication of students. the results showed that the most students wanted was variety of writing activities, representing 40%.

Issue 4 suggestions for enhancing students' writing competency. On this point, some students provided information and found that 16% of students gave the most feedback on hands-on activities.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

In conclusion, from the results of the analysis on the questionnaire and interview revealed that the status quo was at the high level and the necessary condition was at the highest level. The most students needed to develop writing competencies in communication and language using, which corresponds to most the problems and obstacles of writing for communication was incorrect writing words. Moreover, the students wanted improve their writing correctly, practice different types of writing such as government letter writing, academic writing, research writing, etc., and wanted variety of writing activity.

the researchers thought that using inquiry process and feedback technique was one of the methods suitable for students, such as Aungsumalee Taveehluea, Tassanee Satthaphong, and Wipawan Eakwannang [1] said that, this method, students can seek knowledge and learn by themselves. They practice the thinking process of gathering and analyzing data to find conclusions or answers systematically according to the inquiry process. The feedback technique is a technique that enhances students' understanding of the work performed, and the teacher's feedback allows students to improve their writing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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