

The Development of English Writing Skill of Grade 12 Students Using Journal Writing

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ABSTRACT

This Research aims to compare student's writing skill before and after using journal writing activity as a treatment. The sample is the class of grade 12 students from class 6/5 that was studying during the 2nd semester of Academic 2565 in Demonstration School of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The sample was selected using sample sampling. The research was conducted using the classroom as a research site, total of 4 sessions of 2 hours treatment was given 1 for each week consecutively for 4 weeks. The research instrument includes 1. Lesson plan containing the journal writing activity 2. English writing skills achievement test. After the research, the result shows that the journal writing activity have helped the samples improve their English writing skill and accuracy. The sample also achieves higher English writing score when after the treatment.

Keywords: English Writing Skill, Journal Writing

INTRODUCTION

English language is an important aspect of modern education. It can enable the student to communicate with other communities of the world.(Taweethong, 2018). Today, English remains one of the most essential language the student have to learn due to the fact that it can help the student communicates with other foreigner, be a form of self-development and also enable the student to be a part of larger community. It is undeniable that excellent command of English language is an essential skill for the student in today's world.

In English language learning, students need to master all 4 skills which are: listening, speaking, reading, However, it's seems that for Thai students, the hardest skill of all would be Writing. English writing skill is a very important skill because of how it relates to structure and grammar of the language. If the student has poor English writing skill, it can hinders them from conveying a correct message when they communicate and may lead to miscommunication.

Due to aforementioned reasons, it is compulsory that English language teachers need to find a techniques or methods that would help their students master their writing skill. However, in Thai education system, there is a stigma that English writing skill is boring and rigid. Students would give up on learning English writing altogether due to its formulaic, by-the-books nature. Using Journal writing as a solution to solve this problem would be the perfect answer due to the nature of its focus. Journal writing activity would focus on informal writing and break the stigma. Therefore, in this research, journal writing activity will be used to develop the grade 12 student writing skills.

REASERACH METHODOLOGY

Participants

26 grade 12 students from among population of population of 119 grade 12 students, who were attending the English creative writing course at the Demonstration school of Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. The reason of this selection was due to their low English writing skill for the majority of the class.

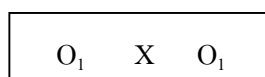
Instrumentation and procedure

The research was divided into 3 main stages: preparation, data collection, and data analysis

Stage I: Preparation: The researcher create the material needed in the experiment, this include: 1. Journal writing activity incorporated lesson plan 2.English writing skill achievement test. The sample was selected with purposive sampling targeting class with low English writing skill.

Stage II: Data collection: Pretest and posttest in the form of essay writing were employed as instruments to measure students' writing achievement score and spelling/writing test the student will first need to take a pretest. Then, the student would study in an English creative writing class that includes the journal writing activity for 2 hours every week for the total of 4 weeks. In the activity, the student were encouraged to write journal entries as much and as regularly as they could in their notebooks. The topic of each consists of 2 parts. The first part is to let the student write about what they have learned during their English creative writing class. The second part is an open-ended question about their emotion during the past week. The journal was then collected at the beginning of the week to receive feedbacks from the researcher, then given back to the student. After 4 weeks, the student will do a posttest to evaluate the development of their writing skill.

Stage III: Data analysis: The research was conducted using one-group pretest posttest design according to the following diagram.



O_1	means	Pretest
X	means	Treatment
O_2	means	Posttest

The student's score was then calculated into common statistic parameter which includes Mean and Standard Deviation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Impact of journal writing on learners' English writing achievement score

After the experiment, the writing skill achievement score are shown as follows.

Student's number	English writing skill achievement score			
	Pretest	Posttest	Differences	Differences (in percentage)
1	16	18	2	7.69
2	11	15	4	15.38
3	10	14	4	15.38
4	19	20	1	3.85
5	17	19	2	7.69
6	16	18	2	7.69
7	12	16	4	15.38
8	13	17	4	15.38
9	13	15	2	7.69
10	19	20	1	3.85
11	19	20	1	3.85
12	14	20	6	23.08
13	10	14	4	15.38
14	15	16	1	3.85
15	10	12	2	7.69

16	10	14	4	15.38
17	14	16	2	7.69
18	18	19	1	3.85
19	20	20	0	0.00
20	11	14	3	11.54
21	11	16	5	19.23
22	19	20	1	3.85
23	18	19	1	3.85
24	19	20	1	3.85
25	11	17	6	23.08
26	18	20	2	7.69
Average	14.73	17.27	2.54	9.76
S.D.	3.57	2.51	-	-

The data shows that all students who participate in the experiment have increased English writing achievement score after the experiment. From total of 26 students, the average score is at 14.73 for pretest and 17.27 for post resulting in 2.54 points or 9.76 percent of improvement after the experiment.

Impact of journal writing on learners' writing opinion on writing

In addition to their English writing achievement score, the student was seen to have changed their opinion on writing as well. Initially, during the first and second week of the experiment, most of the student just produced short sentences with simple structure in their personal journal. Some also use Thai words to replace the word that they does not know the meaning to complete their journal. During the first week of the class, when prompt with question: "What is your opinion on journal writing?" One of the students answer:

"I have never written any kind of journal before. I'm not sure what to write or if I will be able to write it every week."

After the first week, the student grew more and more confident with their writing. Even though most of grammatical mistakes were still found within the student journal, the student seems to be more courageous to write longer and more complex sentence without the fear of making any mistakes. On week three, one of the student in the class voiced their opinion about journal writing when the class was discussing about the task.

"I think journal writing is simple and easy. We don't have to think about how we will write or if it's going to be correct grammatically. I can write anything on my notebook and the teacher will correct my mistake. I can learn a lot just by revisiting my last entry. "

After the experiment is finished, the researcher wanted to explore if the student will be interested in journal writing, the researcher do a quick interview with one of the participating student.

Researcher: How do you feel after we finish 4 weeks of journal writing? Do you think its fun?

Student: I think so.

Researcher: Any particular reasons?

Student: I think it's helps me improve my English writing skill for a little bit.

Researcher: How did you think you have improved?

Student: Well, I got to learn some new vocabularies.

Researcher: What about your friends, do you think they like it too?

- Student: Not everyone, I don't think (so). I think some of the student feel like it's a chore, and some student also find it's hard to write the journal every week.
- Researcher: Do you feel that it's hard to write a journal every week?
- Student: A little bit, but I enjoy it. Sometime, I'm not sure how to express my feeling through text but I'll just write anything that I can think off so there's no big deal.
- Researcher: Thank you for your answer.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated the benefits of journal writing as a class activity to develop the learner's English writing skill achievement score. The data shows that all students who participate in the experiment have increased English writing achievement score after the experiment. In addition to their increase in score, over time, the students become more inclined to write English journal on their own to practice their English skill. The student also voiced that due to the informal nature of journal writing, their opinion on learning English writing skill have become more positive.

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